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BELLES-LETTRES

MIKHAIL SHOLOKHOV

And Quiet Flows the Don

EXCERPTS FROM BOOK IV

As a demobilized Red Army commander, Grigori was provided at Millerovo with a conveyance—an ordinary peasant's cart. On the way home he changed the horses at every Ukrainian village and reached the borders of the Upper Don district in twenty-four hours. At the first cluster of Cossack farmsteads, the chairman of the local Revolutionary Committee—a young fellow only recently returned from the Red Army—informed him:

"You'll have to take oxen now, Comrade Commander, because all the horses we've got is just one and even that's standing on three legs as it is. The horses were left on the Kuban during the retreat."

"Still, maybe I might somehow manage to get home on that one," Grigori said, drumming on the table as he looked tentatively into the smiling eyes of the sprightly young chairman.

"No, you wouldn't! You'd be a week on the road, and still you wouldn't get anywhere! But why worry about that? We have grand oxen, they can go at a good pace, and we're sending a cart into Veshenskaya anyway. We've got to send them some telegraph wire, it's been lying about since the war. So you won't have to change carts, it'll take you all the way home." The chairman smiled and added with a sly wink: "We'll give you the very best yoke of oxen and for a driver—a young widow . . . There's one here—you wouldn't find a better hussy even in your dreams. If you have her for company, you'll be home before you know where you are. I've been in the army myself—I know what a soldier wants . . ."

Grigori, meantime, was turning things over in his mind. There was no sense in waiting for any other conveyance going his way, and it was too far to walk. There was nothing left but to go on the bullock-cart.

It arrived an hour later. It was old and the wheels creaked horribly, the back was broken and the ends of the rails stuck out at various angles; the hay, carelessly piled in, hung down in wisps. "So this is what we get at the end of our fighting?" Grigori thought to himself, eyeing the dilapidated conveyance with disgust. The driver was walking alongside the beasts, flourishing her whip. She was certainly a fine handsome figure of

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Illustrated by S. Korolkov.

a woman, though a massive bust, too heavy in proportion to her height, somewhat detracted from her appearance, and an oblique scar on her round chin gave her a look of rather doubtful experience, and aged the young, dark, rosy face. There was a sprinkling of tiny golden freckles like millet over the bridge of her nose.

Straightening the kerchief on her head, she treated Grigori to an attentive scrutiny through half-closed eyes, and asked:

"Is it you I'm to take?"

Grigori was sitting on the steps. He stood up and fastened his coat.

"Yes. Have you loaded the cart yet?"

"Do you think I'm damned well going to load up for them?" the young Cossack woman retorted in ringing tones. "And me driving and slaving every blessed day of my life! So I'm to load for them? I reckon they'll be able to chuck their bloody wire into the cart themselves, and if they aren't, well, I'll leave it here!"

Nevertheless, she dragged the coils of wire to the cart, swearing loudly but not ill-humoredly at the chairman, and every now and then casting appraising glances at Grigori out of the corner of her eye. The chairman kept laughing all the time, looking at the young widow with genuine admiration. Occasionally he would wink at Grigori, as much as to say: "That's the kind of women we have got here! And you wouldn't believe me when I told you!"

Beyond the farms stretched the brown, faded autumn steppe. Blue smoke gushed across the road from the plough-land where they were burning clumps of dried toad-flax an fibrous grasses.

The smell of the smoke awakened sad memories: once he, too, had done his ploughing in the autumn steppe, and watched the winking stars come out in the black sky at night, and listened to the call of the wild geese far up in the dusky heights . . . He shifted restlessly in the hay, and looked sideways at the driver.

"How old are you, woman?"

"Nigh on sixty," she replied coquettishly, but only her eyes smiled.

"Come on, stop joking."

"Twenty-one."

"A widow?"

"Yes, a widow."

"What have you done with your husband?"

"He was killed."

"A long time ago?"

"Nearly two years back."

"In the rebellion or what?"

"After that, just coming into the autumn."

"Well, and how are you getting on?"

"I get along somehow."

"Find life dull?"

She looked at him attentively, pulling the end of her kerchief over her mouth to hide her smile. Her voice sounded muffled, and there were new intonations in it when she spoke again.

"There's no time to feel dull when you're working."

"Isn't it dull without a husband?"

"I'm living with my mother-in-law, there's plenty to do about the house, and there's the outside work as well."

"But how do you manage without a husband?"

She turned and looked him full in the face. The color deepened on her brown cheek-bones, reddish sparks blazed up for a moment and died out in her eyes.

"What are you driving at?"

"You know what."

She let the kerchief drop from her lips and drawled:

"Oh, there's no lack of that. Plenty of kind-hearted folks everywhere in the world . . ." After

a pause, she went on: "I didn't see much of married life with my husband. We only had a month together and then he was called up. I manage somehow without him. Now some young Cossacks returned to the village. Before that, of course, it was pretty bad. Hey, up there, baldy, hey! So now you know, soldier. That's the kind of life I have."

Grigori said no more. Perhaps he ought not to have started the conversation in that playful tone. He regretted it already.

The big, well-fed oxen plodded on at the same measured, ambling pace. The right horn of one of them had been injured and had grown inward, low on the forehead. Grigori lay resting on his elbow, in the hay, his eyes almost closed. He called to mind all the oxen he had had to work with in childhood and later. They had all been different in color, build, and character; even their horns had a peculiar form of their own. Once the Melekhovs had had an ox with a horn as twisted as this one; he was a cunning, wicked fellow, always watching out of the corner of his bloodshot eyes for a chance to kick when anyone came within range of his hind legs. At the busiest time, when the cattle were let loose to graze of a night, he would try to slip off home, or—what was still worse—to hide in the woods or in some out-of-the-way hollow. Often, Grigori had ridden about the steppe all day in search of him and, after despairing of ever finding him, would suddenly discover the one-horned devil somewhere at the very bottom of a ravine, hiding in an impenetrable thicket, or grazing in the shade of an old spreading crab-apple tree. The ox had found a way of slipping the rope from his horn, and at night he would lift the tie of the gate of the cattle-yard, go down to the river, swim the Don and roam the meadows on the other side. He had been the cause of a great deal of trouble and unpleasantness for Grigori in his day.

"Is that ox with the twisted horn a quiet fellow?" Grigori asked.

"Quiet enough. What makes you ask?"

"Oh, just like that."

"Even 'just like that' is good enough if you've nothing else to say," the woman said with a mocking laugh.

Grigori said no more. It was pleasant to think of the distant past, of pre-war days, of work, of anything that did not concern the war. He was sick to death of it; it had dragged on for seven years, and the very thought of the war, the recollection of any episode connected with his service in the army, nauseated him and aroused a dull irritation.

He was through with fighting. He had had enough of it. He was going home to start working and have his children about him, and Axinya by his side. While he was still out at the front he had made up his mind to take Axinya into his house, so that she would bring up his children and be with him for the rest of his life. Yes, that was another thing that had to be settled and the sooner the better.

He thought with pleasure how he would go home, take off his military overcoat and high boots, put on his comfortable shoes, tuck his wide trousers, Cossack-fashion, into his white woolen stockings, and, throwing a homespun coat on over his warm jacket, drive out to the fields. It would be fine to feel the plough-handles in his hands again, and follow the moist furrow, sniffing greedily at the damp, fresh smell of the turned soil, and the sharp scent of the grasses cut down by the ploughshare. Land and grasses had a different smell in

other places. More than once, in Poland, in the Ukraine and Crimea, he had rubbed the grey downy leaves of the wormwood in his palms, sniffed at it and thought with longing: "No, it's not the same, it's not like ours . . . "

The driver, meanwhile, was feeling dull. She wanted to talk. Leaving the oxen to themselves, she settled herself comfortably, and scrutinized Grigori closely while she picked idly at the ends of the knout. Long and furtively she watched his half-closed eyes, his quiet face; he was wrapped up in his own thoughts. "He's not so old, though he is grey. But he's a funny sort of fellow," she thought to herself. "Lying there with his eyes nearly closed up, squinting at nothing. What's he doing it for? You'd think he was worn out, as if he'd been dragging a cartload on his back . . . He's all right to look at, though. Only there are a lot of grey hairs in his head, and his mustache is nearly grey. Otherwise he's not bad. What's he thinking about all the time? At first he seemed ready enough for a joke and then he got quiet and asked me about that ox—I wonder why? Got nothing to talk about? Or is it that he's shy? Doesn't look like it, though. His eyes are pretty hard. Yes, he's a fine Cossack, only queer, somehow. . . . Well, he needn't talk to me if he doesn't want to, the sulky devil! I don't need you, I'm sure! I can hold my tongue, too, when I want to. Going home to your wife—can hardly wait till you get there, eh? All right, then, keep your mouth shut and good luck to you!"

She leaned back against the rails of the cart and sang softly to herself.

Grigori raised his head and looked at the sun. It was still quite early. The shadow of a last year's cotton-thistle that stood like a gloomy sentinel by the roadside was less than a foot long: it could not be more than two o'clock.

The steppe lay in dead silence, as though spell-bound. The sun shone with a mild autumnal warmth. A light breeze swept through the brown, scorched grass. Neither bird nor weasel could be heard, neither kites nor eagles hovered in the cold blue sky. Only once a grey shadow glided across the road, and before Grigori could raise his head to look, he heard the beat of heavy wings: there was a flash of white lining-feathers in the sun as an ash-grey bustard flew over him and settled on a far-off mound, where the hollow that the sun did not reach melted into the vague twilight purple of the distance. Only in late autumn had Grigori known such a profound and mournful stillness, when it had seemed to him that he could hear the wild asparagus rustling through the dry grass as it was borne by the wind far across the steppe.

The road appeared to be endless. It wound uphill, here dipped into the valley, there climbed to the crest of a knoll. And always the same deserted steppe, where once herds of wild horses roamed, stretched around him, further than the eye could reach.

A clump of maple on the slopes of a ravine aroused his admiration. The leaves, seared by the first frost, had turned a smoky crimson like that of dying coals sprinkled with ashes.

"What is your name?" the woman asked, touching his shoulder gently with the handle of her knout.

Grigori started and turned to look at her. She was looking past him.

"Grigori. What's yours?"

"My name's no name."

"You ought to hold your tongue, No-name."

"I'm sick of holding my tongue. I've been holding it for half the

day now, my mouth's fair parched with holding it. What makes you so cheerless, Uncle Grisha?"

"What's there to be merry about?"

"You are going home, you ought to be lively and in good humor."

"The time's gone by for me to be lively."

"Oh, you poor, old man. Tell me what's made your hair so grey, a young man like you?"

"You want to know everything, don't you? Must be the good life I've had that has turned me grey."

"Are you married, Uncle Grisha?"

"Yes, and you ought to get married, too, as soon as you can, Noname."

"What's the hurry?"

"You're a good bit too playful . . ."

"You think that's a bad thing?"

"Sometimes it is. I knew a flighty one once—a widow she was, too—and the end of all her playing and flightiness was—her nose started to cave in . . ."

"Oh, lord, how dreadful!" she exclaimed in mock horror, and added almost immediately in a brisk tone, "With us, widows, it's a case of 'keep away from the woods if you're frightened of wolves!'"

Grigori glanced at her. She was laughing soundlessly, through small, white, clenched teeth. The upper lip quivered, and through the fringe of lowered lashes, her eyes sparkled mischievously. He could not help smiling, and, impulsively, he laid his hand on her round, warm knee.

"You poor, unfortunate lassie," he said pityingly. "Only twenty and look at what life's done to you already . . ."

All at once not a trace remained of her gaiety. She frowned, pushed away his hand sternly, and blushed so deeply that even the tiny freckles on her nose were no longer visible.

"You pity your wife when you get home, I've plenty people to pity me as it is!"

"Come, come, don't get mad!"

"To hell with you!"

"I only said it because I pitied you."

"Well, you can go to . . . you and your pity!" she rejoined, and her eyes darkened and flashed as she swore at him with the expert ease and fluency of a man.

Grigori raised his eyebrows.

"You said plenty! What an unbridled tongue you've got!"

"And what about you? A saint in a lousy greatcoat, that's all. I know the price of folks like you! Telling me I ought to get married and all the rest of it. I'll be bound you haven't been saintly for so very long."

"No, that's true—not so long," he agreed, laughing.

"Well, then, stop preaching! I've got a mother-in-law to do that!"

"All right, that'll do, what do you want to get so worked up about, you silly thing? I just said what came into my head—I didn't mean any harm," he said in a conciliatory tone. "Look, the oxen have turned off the road listening to us talk."

As he turned away to settle himself in a more comfortable position in the cart, he glanced at the merry widow and saw tears in her eyes. "Oho, now it's something else! They're always the same, these women . . ." he thought, feeling awkward and vexed with himself.

Soon he fell asleep lying on his back, with the lapel of his coat shading his face. It was dusk, when he awoke. The first pale stars of evening were shining. There was a fresh and heartening smell of hay.

"Time to feed the oxen," she said.

"All right. Let's stop here, then."

Grigori unyoked the beasts. Then he got a tin of meat and some bread out of his knapsack, gathered a great heap of dry, strawy grass, and lit a fire a little way from the cart.

"Come on and sit down to supper, No-name, it's time you stopped being mad at me."

She sat down by the fire, and without saying anything, shook out of her bag some bread and a lump of bacon-fat rusty with age. During supper they spoke little, but in a friendly tone. Afterwards she lay down in the cart. Grigori flung some clods of dry ox-dung on the fire to keep it from going out altogether and stretched himself out by it, soldier-fashion. He lay there a long time, with his knapsack under his head, thinking of Axinya and the children, and stared up at the twinkling stars until he fell into a doze. He was awakened by a stealthy voice asking:

"Are you asleep, soldier? Hey, are you asleep or not?"

Grigori raised his head. His traveling companion was leaning over the side of the cart. Her face, lit from below by the uncertain glow of the dying embers, looked fresh and rosy; her teeth and the lacy edging round her head-kerchief were dazzling white. She was smiling as if they had never quarrelled and her brows twitched as she said:

"I'm afraid you must be frozen down there. The ground's so cold. If you're terribly frozen, come on up here by me. I've got a fine warm sheepskin coat! Are you coming?"

Grigori thought for a moment, then sighed.

"No, thanks, lassie, I don't want to. If it had been a couple of years ago . . . I don't suppose I'll freeze by the fire."

She sighed, too.

"Just as you like," she said, retiring and pulling the sheepskin coat over her head.

After a while Grigori got up and collected his belongings. He decided to make the rest of his way on foot, so as to reach Tatarskoye by daybreak. He couldn't think of himself, a commander, returning home after long service, in an ox-cart, in the broad daylight. There would be such talk, people would laugh . . . He would never hear the end of it. . . .

He woke up the driver.

"I'm going to walk the rest of the way. You won't be afraid to stay all alone in the steppe, will you?"

"No, I'm not the easily frightened sort. Besides, there's a village not far off. So you can't wait, eh?"

"You guessed right. Well, goodbye, No-name, don't think too hard of me . . ."

Grigori set out. When he reached the road he turned up the collar of his coat. A snow-flake fell on his eye-lashes. The wind had veered and was blowing from the north, and in its chill breath he fancied he caught the dear, familiar smell of snow.

At about eight o'clock in the morning Axinya raked the hot embers together in the stove, and, sitting down on the bench by the window, wiped her red, perspiring face with the apron. She had been up before daylight, so as to be done with the cooking early. She had made chicken soup with noodles, baked some pancakes, poured plenty of clotted cream over the curd dumplings and set them in the stove to brown: Grigori was fond of browned dumplings and she had prepared a regular Sunday dinner in the hope that he would be there to eat it with her.

She would have liked to drop in at the Melekhovs for a minute on some pretext, just to get a glimpse of Grigori. It was unthinkable that he should be here right beside her, and that she could not see him. But Axinya did not

yield to the impulse to run to the Melekhovs. After all, she was not a little girl. There was no excuse for acting giddily at her age.

She washed her face and hands more thoroughly than usual, put on a clean chemise and a petticoat trimmed with lace insertion. She stood a good while by the open trunk, wondering what she should wear. It would look queer to dress up on a work-day, yet she did not fancy keeping on her ordinary, work-day things. Unable to decide what to choose, she frowned as she carelessly turned over the well-ironed skirts. At last, with an air of determination, she picked out a dark blue skirt, and a light blue blouse trimmed with black lace, that she had hardly worn. It was the best she had. Surely it made no difference to her now what the neighbors thought. It might be a work-day for them, but it was as good as a holiday for her. She dressed hastily and went up to the mirror. An easy, surprised smile hovered about her lips. The eyes that looked out at her so gaily and curiously were young and had a sparkle in them. Axinya examined her face closely, severely, for a while, and then heaved a sigh of relief. No, her beauty had not faded yet! There was many a Cossack would turn to look after her with moonstruck eyes!

As she settled the folds of her skirt before the glass, she said aloud: "Now, watch out, Grigori Panteleyevich!" . . . and feeling the color rise to her cheeks, she laughed a soft, muffled laugh. Still, this did not prevent her from pulling out the few grey hairs she found at her temples. Grigori must not see anything that would remind him of her age. She wanted to be as young in his eyes as she had been seven years ago.

She managed somehow to stay at home until dinner-time. Then she gave in. Throwing her white fluffy shawl of goat's wool round her shoulders, she went to the Melekhovs. Dunyashka was alone. Axinya greeted her and asked:

"You haven't had your dinner yet, have you?"

"Who could have dinner at the proper time with folks who go gadding about the country? Misha's at the Soviet and Grisha's gone to the town. I've given the children their dinner, now I'm waiting for the grown-ups."

Neither by word or movement did Axinya betray her disappointment. Outwardly calm, she simply said:

"Oh, I thought you were all at home. When is Grisha . . . Grigori Panteleyevich coming back? Today?"

Taking in her neighbor's Sunday clothes at a glance, Dunyashka said reluctantly:

"He's gone to register."

"When did he say he'd be back?"

Tears started to Dunyashka's eyes, and she stammered reproachfully:

"You found a nice time to . . . dress up . . . For all you know he may never come back . . ."

"Not come back? What do you mean?"

"Mikhail says they'll arrest him . . ." the bitter, angry tears rolled down her cheeks. She wiped her eyes with her sleeve, and almost screamed: "What a cursed life this is! When will it all end? He's gone and here are his children going frantic, they won't give me a minute's peace: 'Where's our daddy gone, and when is he coming back?' As if I knew? I've sent them out to play, but my own heart's fit to break . . . Now what sort of a cursed life is this? Never a bit of peace, it makes you want to scream!"

"If he's not back by night-time, I'll go to Veshenskaya tomorrow and find out," Axinya said as cas-

Grigori and Axinya

ually as if it had been an ordinary matter not worth worrying about.

Dunyashka wondered at her calmness, and sighed.

"It looks as if there wasn't much use waiting for him now. It's only trouble he came home to and nothing else!"

"It doesn't look like anything of the sort yet. You stop bawling, or else the children will start to wonder. Goodbye."

It was late evening when Grigori came home. After a little while he went to Axinya's.

The anxiety she had felt all that long day took something of the edge off the joy of meeting. By evening Axinya felt as if she had been drudging all day without a moment's rest. Low-spirited and worn out with waiting, she lay down on her bed and fell into a doze. But, hearing steps under the window, she jumped up with the agility of a young girl.

"Why didn't you tell me you were going to Veshenskaya?" she asked as she threw her arms round him, and then unfastened his overcoat.

"I hadn't time, I was in a hurry."

"And here Dunyashka and I were crying and bawling, thinking you weren't coming back."

"No, it hasn't got to that yet," Grigori replied with a reserved little smile. He was silent a moment and then added: "Not quite."

He limped over to the table and sat down. Through the open door he could see into the inner room, with the wide wooden bed in the corner, and the dull gleam of the brass-bound trunk. Everything was as it had been in the days when as a young fellow he used to drop in when Stepan was out. He could see hardly any change. It was as though time had passed by without ever looking in at this house, which had kept even its old familiar smell, the heady smell of fresh hops, of well-scrubbed floors and a mere suggestion

of withering mint. It seemed such a little while ago now since he had left the house at dawn for the last time, and yet—how far away it really was. . . .

He stifled a sigh and began in a leisurely fashion to roll himself a cigarette, but for some reason or other his hands shook and he spilt the tobacco on his knees.

Axinya was laying the table hastily. The cold noodles had to be heated up. She ran for some shavings to the shed, and then, panting and rather pale, started to light a fire under the grate. As she blew on the chips till they blazed and crackled and threw off sparks, she looked at Grigori's bowed figure. He sat smoking in silence.

"How do things stand with you there? Did you settle everything?"

"Everything went on all right."

"Why on earth did Dunyashka get it into her head that they would be certain sure to arrest you? She frightened me to death."

Grigori made a wry face and flung away his cigarette in disgust.

"It's all because Mikhail's been dinning it into her ears. It's he that thinks of all these things, he'll bring down trouble on my head yet."

Axinya went over to the table. Grigori took her hands.

"And still, you know," he said, looking up into her eyes, "my affairs are none too good either. I was thinking myself as I was going there that maybe I wouldn't come out again. There are no two ways about it: I was in command of a division in the rebellion, and I was captain of a Cossack hundred in the tsarist army. Those are just the kind of people they're going to keep a sharp look-out for."

"What did they say to you?"

"They gave me a form to fill in, a paper you've got to write your whole career on. And I'm not much of a hand at writing. Never had to do so much writing in my life before. It took me about two hours, putting down all about myself and who my folks were. Then two more fellows came into the room and asked me all about the rebellion. They were all right, though, easy enough to get on with. The one in charge said: 'Would you care for some tea? Only you'll have to take saccharine instead of sugar!' I thought to myself—tea, indeed! Just give me the chance to clear out of here, that's all I want." Grigori paused a moment and then, scornfully, as if he were speaking of a stranger, he added: "Made a poor show of it when it came to paying up. . . . Lost all the old pluck."

He was angry with himself for having lost courage in Veshenskaya, and not being able to shake off the fear that had come over him. He was doubly angry because his fears had proved groundless. All that he had gone through now seemed absurd and shameful. He had thought about it all the way home, and that, perhaps, was why he was telling her about it now, laughing at himself and exaggerating a little all he had to go through.

Axinya listened to him attentively. Then she gently freed her hand and went to the stove. As she was attending to the fire, she asked:

"And what next?"

"I've got to go again in a week's time and be registered."

"You think you'll be arrested, after all?"

"Looks like it. Sooner or later—they're bound to arrest me."

"What'll we do then? How are we going to live, Grisha?"

"I don't know. Let's talk about it another time. Is there any water for me to wash in?"

They sat down to supper. And again the feeling of complete and

unalloyed happiness she had had that morning returned to Axinya. Grigori was here at her side; she could look at him all the time without fearing that strangers would catch her looking at him; she could say anything she wanted with her eyes, without disguise or embarrassment. Lord, how she had missed him, how she had wearied for him, how her body had yearned for those big, rough hands of his! She hardly touched her food; she sat leaning forward a little, watching him munching the food greedily. Her misty gaze caressed his face, the sunburnt neck squeezed into the tight upstanding collar of his tunic, the broad shoulders, the hands that lay so heavily upon the table. . . . She drank in greedily the acrid smell of sweat and tobacco, a familiar smell that belonged to him alone. By that smell she could have picked out blindfolded her own Grigori from among a thousand men . . . Her cheeks burned with a deep flush, her heartbeats were rapid and hollow. She could not be an attentive hostess that evening because she thought of nothing but Grigori. He needed no attention, however; he cut bread for himself, looked about for the salt-cellar and found it on the stove, helped himself to another plate of soup.

"I'm as hungry as a starved dog," he said, half-apologetically smiling at her. "I haven't had a bite since morning."

Only then did Axinya remember her duties. She jumped up.

"Oh, what a stupid head I have on my shoulders! I'd clean forgotten about the dumplings and the pancakes! Have some chicken, do. Eat plenty, my own dear boy . . . I'll put it all on the table this very minute."

But how long and earnestly he ate!—as if he had not been fed for a week. There was no need to help him to anything. Axinya waited patiently, but her patience wore out at last. She sat down beside him, drew his head towards her with her left hand, and, taking a clean embroidered towel, wiped her lover's greasy lips and chin. Then, shutting her eyes so that orange sparks flew out of the darkness, she held her breath and pressed her lips hard to his.

After all, people need very little to make them happy. Axinya was happy—at least that evening.

Grigori found it hard to be seeing Koshevoi again. Mutual relations having been defined from the first day, they had nothing more to say to one another and, indeed, there was no point in talking. It was, in all probability, no pleasure to Mikhail to see Grigori. He hired two carpenters to repair his own little house and they set to work without delay. The rotting beams of the roof were replaced by new ones, a crooked wall was taken down and built up again, other lintels, doors, and window-frames were put in.

After his return from Veshenskaya, Grigori called once at the local office of the revolutionary committee, showed Koshevoi his army papers stamped by the war commissariat, and left without saying goodbye. Then, taking the children and some of his things with him, he went to live at Axinya's. Dunyashka cried when it came to seeing him off to his new abode.

"Grisha, don't hold it against me in your heart. I've done you no wrong," she pleaded.

"Why should I hold anything against you, Dunya? Of course, I don't. What's got into you?" he soothed her. "Drop in to see us . . . I'm the only relative you've got left, I was always fond of you and sorry for you and I still am . . . Your husband—well,

that's another thing. But we aren't going to let it spoil our friendship."

"We'll be leaving the house soon, don't be angry with us."

"But I'm not!" cried Grigori, annoyed. "You can live there till spring, if you want to. You're not in my way. There'll be plenty of room for me and the children at Axinya's."

"Are you going to marry her, Grisha?"

"Time enough to think of that," he replied vaguely.

"Marry her, brother, she's such a good sort," Dunyashka said with decision. "Our mother said she was the only one you ought to marry. She got very fond of Axinya towards the end, she often used to go and see her the last days of her life."

"Sounds as if you were trying to talk me into it," Grigori remarked, smiling. "Who should I marry but Axinya? Old Granny Andronikha?"

Andronikha was the most ancient crone in all Tatarskoye. She was long past a hundred. Remembering the tiny, shrunken figure, bent almost to the ground, Dunyashka burst out laughing.

"What a thing to say, brother! I was only asking. You've never mentioned it, that's why I asked."

"Anyhow, I'll be sure to ask you to the wedding, even if I don't ask anyone else!" He gave his sister a playful slap on the shoulder and left his old home with a light heart.

To tell the truth, it was all the same to him where he lived, as long as they let him live in peace. But peace he did not find . . . Several days he spent in idleness and deep depression. He tried to do a few odd jobs at Axinya's place, but hardly had he started than he felt he could do nothing. The oppressive uncertainty tormented him and disturbed his life; never for a moment could he get rid of the thought that he might be arrested, thrown into prison—at best—or shot.

Whenever she woke up in the night, Axinya found him awake. He was usually lying on his back, with his hands clasped behind his head, his eyes—cold and resentful—staring into the dusk. Axinya knew what he was thinking about. She could not help him in any way. She herself suffered, seeing how hard he took things, and she guessed that her hopes of a life together were once more doomed to disappointment. She never asked him any questions. Let him work it out for himself. Only once, when she awoke in the night and saw the red glow of a cigarette beside her, she said:

"Grisha, you're not asleep yet . . . I was thinking, maybe it would be a good thing if you went away for the time being from this place, eh? Or perhaps we could go somewhere together and hide?"

He tucked the blanket in about her feet and said reluctantly:

"I'll think about it. You go to sleep."

. . . "And then we'd come back when things had quietened down here, eh?" And again, as though he could not make up his mind, he replied vaguely:

"We'll see the way things turn. Go to sleep, Ksyusha," then, cautiously and tenderly, put his lips to her bare, silkily-cool shoulder.

But as a matter of fact he had already come to a decision: he would go no more to Veshenskaya. The man from the Political Bureau[1] who had received him last time would wait in vain for a second visit. He had sat at the table, that man, with a military over-

[1] Every branch of the *Cheka* (Extraordinary Committee for Combating Counter-Revolution) during that period had a political bureau.—*Ed.*

coat carelessly thrown round his shoulders, and had affected to yawn and stretch himself till his joints cracked while Grigori was telling his story of the rebellion. Well, he was not going to hear anything more about it. All there was to tell had been told.

On the day he was to appear before the Political Bureau, Grigori would clear out of the place, for a long time if necessary. Where he would go he did not know yet, but his mind was made up to go. He had no intention of either dying or going to prison. He had made his choice, but he did not want to tell Axinya prematurely. There was no point in spoiling their last few days together; they were none too cheerful as it was. He would tell her the last day, he resolved. Meanwhile, let her sleep in peace with her face under his arm. She had often said these nights: "It's nice to be sleeping under your wing again." Well, let her sleep while she could. Not many nights were left her now, poor thing, to cuddle up close to him. . . .

In the mornings Grigori played with the children and then wandered aimlessly about the farms. He felt more cheerful among people. Once Prokhor suggested that they should all go to Nikita Melnikov's; some young Cossacks who had served with them would be there and drinks would be plentiful. Grigori firmly refused. He had gathered from the conversation of the local people that they were dissatisfied with the surplus-appropriation system and that during the drinking the talk was bound to turn upon this. He did not want to draw suspicion upon himself, and even with acquaintances he avoided talking politics. He had had enough of it, and he had paid heavily for it, as it was.

Caution was all the more necessary since the grain was coming in slowly, and, in connection with this, three old men had been taken as hostages and escorted by two men from the food-detachments to Veshenskaya.

The next day, outside the little cooperative, Grigori met Zachar Kramskov, an ex-artilleryman who was not long home from the Red Army. He was well under the weather and staggered, but when he saw Grigori, he carefully buttoned up his tunic which was all smeared with white clay, and said hoarsely:

"How do you do, Grigori Panteleyevich!"

"How are you?" Grigori shook the broad paw held out to him by the artilleryman, who was as thickset and sturdy as an elm.

"Recognize me?"

"Yes, of course."

"And do you remember how our battery helped you out of the fix you were in last year at Bokovskaya? Your cavalry would have had a bad time of it without us. The number of Reds we did for that time, it was something terrific, wasn't it? Once we gave them a volley and another time—shrapnel . . . It was I who was gunner that time at the first gun! I was!" and Zachar thumped his broad chest till it almost echoed.

Grigori looked about; some Cossacks were watching them from a little distance and listening to the conversation. The corners of Grigori's lips twitched, his white, even teeth bared in a wrathful grin.

"You're tight," he muttered between his teeth. "Go on home and sleep it off and don't gab so much."

"No, I'm not tight!" roared the tipsy gunner. "Or maybe I did take a drop to drown my sorrows. I've come home, and what do I find? Call this a life! It's downright hell! There's no life for the Cossacks nowadays . . . no, and there are

no Cossacks left, either. Forty-two poods of grain to pay, what do you think of that? Did they sow it, that they're so quick at grabbing it? Do they know what wheat grows out of?"

His bloodshot eyes glared stupidly; then he suddenly swayed forward and threw his arms round Grigori and hugged him like a bear, breathing the hot-heavy smell of home-distilled vodka in his face.

"What do you mean by wearing pants without stripes down the sides? Are you trying to make a *moujik* out of yourself? We won't let you! Good old Grigori Panteleyevich! We've got to fight it all out again. We'll say, same as we did last year: down with communes, long live the Soviets!"

Grigori pushed him roughly away, whispering:

"Clear off home, you tipsy lout! Do you know what you're saying?" Kramskov thrust out his hand with its thick, tobacco-stained fingers and mumbled:

"Excuse me if I've put my foot in it. Excuse me, please, but I was only talking the plain truth to you because you're my commander . . . Just the same as my own father—a commander is—you're my commander, all I know is—we've got to fight it all out again!"

Grigori turned away in silence and went home across the square. The impression made by that unfortunate encounter lingered all day; he kept remembering Kramskov's drunken shouts, the watchful silence and smiles of the watching Cossacks. "Yes," he thought to himself, "I've got to get away as soon as I can. No good'll come of waiting. . . ."

He was to show up at Veshenskaya on Saturday. In three days' time, then, he would have to leave his home again. But it all turned out quite differently. On Thursday night, just as he was getting ready for bed, there came an impatient knock at the door. Axinya went out into the passage. Grigori could hear her ask: "Who's there?" but no reply reached his ears. Prompted by a vague feeling of alarm, he got up and went to the window. The latch clicked in the passage. Dunyashka was the first to enter. Grigori saw her pale face and even before asking a single question, he picked up his cap and coat from the bench.

"Grisha, brother . . ."

"What?" he asked in a low voice as he thrust his arm into the sleeve of the coat.

"Brother, go away," Dunyashka said breathlessly, "right now! . . . There are four men from Veshenskaya here, they're sitting in our house this minute . . . They were talking in whispers but I heard them . . . I stood and listened at the door and I heard everything they said . . . Mikhail was telling them you ought to be arrested . . . He's telling them all about you . . . Go now, quick!"

Grigori strode up to her, put his arms round her and kissed her hard on the cheek.

"Thank you for this, sister! Run back now before they notice that you've gone. Goodbye!" He turned to Axinya. "Bread! Quick! Not a whole loaf, just an end of one."

So it was over—his brief spell of peace . . . And he acted as he did in war, swiftly but with sureness. He went into the other room, kissed the sleeping children cautiously, embraced Axinya.

"Goodbye! I'll let you know soon where I am, I'll send word by Prokhor. Take care of the children. Lock the door. If they ask for me, say I'm gone to Veshenskaya. Now, goodbye, Ksyusha, don't grieve for me!" He kissed her and felt the warm, salt tears on his lips.

He had no time to comfort her and listen to her helpless, incohe-

rent words. Gently he freed himself from her clinging arms, then strode into the passage, and listened a moment before flinging open the outer door. A chill wind from the Don blew full in his face. He closed his eyes for a second to accustom them to the darkness.

At first Axinya could hear the snow crunching under Grigori's feet. And every step was like a stab in the heart. Then the footsteps ceased and the creak of the wattle-fence came to her ears. Then it grew very still, save for the howling of the wind in the woods across the Don. She strained her ears to catch some other sound through the wind, but she could hear nothing. She felt cold. She went into the kitchen and blew out the lamp.

For three weeks after leaving home Grigori lived at the house of a Cossack who had served in the same regiment; it was at Upper-Krivskoy, near Yelanskaya. Then he went to the Gorbatovsky farmsteads, where Axinya had a distant relative, and lived there for over a month.

He lay the whole day in the inner room and only ventured out into the yard at night. It was like being in prison. Grigori was pining away, depressed by his enforced idleness. He yearned for home—for Axinya and the children. Often in those sleepless nights, he would jump up and throw on his coat, firmly resolved to tramp back to Tatarskoye. And each time, after thinking it over, he would take off his things again and fling himself face downwards on the bed. At last he could stand it no longer. His host, who was Axinya's uncle, sympathized with Grigori but even he could not keep a lodger of this kind for ever. One evening, when Grigori had gone to his room after supper, he overheard a conversation. In a voice shrill with hatred, the hostess demanded:

"What I want to know is—when is this coming to an end?"

"What? What is it you're prating about now?" the deep voice of her husband replied.

"When are you going to get rid of this good-for-nothing?"

"Hold your tongue, woman!"

"I won't hold my tongue! We haven't as much flour left as would go in a bird's eye with an awl, and here you go feeding god knows who every blessed day. How long will this go on, I'm asking you? And what if they find out at the Soviet? We'll lose our heads and your children will be left orphans!"

"Stop it, Avdotya!"

"I won't stop! We've got the children to think of! We haven't any more than twenty poods of grain left, and you're keeping an idle man in the house. What is he to you? Is he your own brother? Is he any blood-relation to you at all? No, he's no near kin of yours. He's neither here nor there—no relative at all, and here you're keeping him, feeding him. . . .O-oh, you old bald-headed fool! And don't you dare bark at me, else I'll go straight to the Soviet tomorrow and let them know what kind of folks you're harboring in the house!"

Next day the man went into Grigori's room and, keeping his eyes fixed on the matting, began:

"Grigori Panteleyevich! you'll just have to think what you like about it, but you can't stay here any longer . . . I respect you, and I knew your father who's dead and respected him, too, but it's getting hard for me to support you any longer . . . And then I'm afraid the Soviet will learn about you. So go where you like. I've a family. I don't fancy laying down my head all through you. Forgive my saying it, for the love of Christ, but leave us. . . ."

"Very well," Grigori agreed. "Thanks for your hospitality and for

sheltering me. Thanks for everything. I can see myself that I'm a burden on you, but where, in god's name, am I to go? All roads are closed to me."

"Go wherever you think fit."

"All right. I'll go tonight. And thank you, Artamon Vassilievich, for all your goodness to me."

"Don't thank me. It's not worth speaking about."

"I'll never forget your kindness to me. Maybe some day I'll be able to do you a good turn, too."

The Cossack, deeply touched by Grigori's gratitude, clapped him on the shoulder.

"Why talk about it at all? I can tell you—if it depended on me alone, you could have stayed another two months and welcome! But it's that wife of mine, nagging me day and night, god damn her! I'm a Cossack and you're a Cossack, Grigori Panteleyevich. We're both against the Soviets and so I'll help you. Go tonight to Yagodnoye, there's a kinsman of mine living there, he'll take you in. Tell him what I say: 'Artamon says you are to take me in and treat me like your own son, and feed me and keep me as long as it's in your power. And he'll make it up to you afterwards.' Only go today. I can't keep you any longer, this woman is playing the devil and I'm scared the Soviet may get wind of it . . . You've stayed your stay with us, Grigori Panteleyevich, and now you must be going . . . I value my own head, too, you know . . ."

Late that night Grigori left the place. He had hardly reached the windmill on the hill, when three mounted men appeared before him as if out of the ground and stopped him.

"Halt, son-of-a-bitch! Who are you?"

Grigori's heart stood still. He halted without saying a word. It would have been madness to attempt to run: there was no cover, no bank, not even a bush, only the bare steppe on every side. He would not be let go even two paces.

"You'll be a Communist, I reckon. Back with you, else I'll show you! Look sharp now!"

Another made as if to ride him down, and ordered:

"Take those hands out of your pockets! Take them out, I'm telling you, or I'll slash the head off you!"

In silence Grigori took his hands out of the pockets of his overcoat, and, still unable to grasp what had happened to him and who the people could be, asked:

"Which way?"

"To the farms. Turn back."

Only one rider escorted Grigori. The other two left them when they reached the field, and galloped back to their place. Grigori walked on. When they came to the road, he slackened his pace and spoke for the first time: "Listen, I want to know who and what you all are?"

"No talking! Go on! And put your hands behind your back, get me?"

Grigori obeyed in silence. After a while he asked again:

"But can't you tell me who you are?"

"Orthodox Christians."

"I'm not a sectarian myself."

"Be thankful you're not, then."

"Where are you taking me?"

"To the commander. Go on now, you reptile, else I'll . . ." The escort stuck the point of his saber lightly into Grigori. The cold keen sting of the steel caught Grigori's bare neck, just between his coat-collar and the edge of his sheepskin cap. Terror leapt up in him for an instant and gave way to impotent rage. He turned up his collar and, glancing round at the other, ground out:

"No fooling, do you hear? Or else I might take that thing off you . . ."

"March, you viper, and not a word out of you! I'd like to see you take anything off me! Hands behind your back!"

Grigori went on another two paces and then remarked:

"I'm not doing much talking as it is, why swear at me? Muck like you, too . . ."

"Don't look round."

"I'm not looking round as it is."

"Shut up and get along a bit quicker!"

"Like me to go at a gallop maybe? Just say the word . . ." said Grigori, wiping the clinging snowflakes from his lashes.

The other said nothing, but urged on his horse. The animal's chest, moist from the damp weather and perspiration, struck Grigori in the back, the hoofs squelched in the melting snow by his feet.

"Come, less of that!" Grigori shouted, pressing hard on the horse's mane.

The escort brandished his saber at about the level of his head and said in a low, threatening tone:

"If you don't go on, you son-of-a-bitch, without any more talking, I'll knock the life out of you before we get there. I'm a good hand at that. Sst . . . not another word!"

They went on in silence until they reached a cluster of farmsteads. At the last one the rider drew rein and said:

"Go in at that gate."

The gate was open. Grigori went in. Away back in the depths of the yard he could see a big house with an iron roof. The neighing and champing of horses came from a shed. Half a dozen armed men were standing at the steps. The escort replaced his saber in its sheath and, dismounting, said to Grigori:

"Go straight into the house, keep straight on, and it's the first door on the left. Stop looking round, how many times have I to tell you, else I'll knock the stuffing out of you!"

Grigori went slowly up the steps. A man in a long cavalry coat was lounging by the rail and asked:

"Made a catch, eh?"

"Yes, he's a catch alright," the escort's husky voice replied reluctantly. "Just by the windmill—we got him."

"A Party secretary or something?"

"Hell knows what he is. Some dirty son-of-a-bitch, we'll find out just now what he is."

"This is either one of the anti-food-detachment bands or it's the Veshenskaya Chekists up to some tricks. I'm in for it now. I'm caught like a regular fool," Grigori thought to himself. He dawdled as long as he could in the passage, trying to get his wits to work.

The first person he saw when he opened the door was Fomin. He was sitting at the table, surrounded by a number of men in military uniforms, whom Grigori had never seen before. The bed was heaped with coats and sheepskin jackets; carbines stood side by side against the bench, on which sabers, cartridge-belts, wallets and saddle-bags had been thrown down in confusion. And from people, coats and equipment alike came the same strong smell of horse-sweat.

Grigori took off his cap and said, not very loudly:

"Good evening!"

"Melekhov! Well—it's a true saying, the steppe is wide but the road narrow! So we did meet again. Where have you come from? Take off your coat and sit down." Fomin rose, went up to Grigori and held out his hand. "What brought you to these parts?"

"Business."

"What business? It's a good long way for you to have come . . ." Fomin paused and looked Grigori over inquisitively. "Tell the truth,

you've been hiding hereabouts, haven't you?"

"That's the whole truth of it," Grigori replied with a reluctant smile.

"Where did my lads pick you up?"

"Just beyond the farms."

"Where were you going?"

"Nowhere in particular."

Fomin looked sharply at Grigori and smiled.

"I'll be bound you think we've nabbed you and we're going to take you to Veshenskaya? No, my boy, that road's closed to us . . . Don't worry! We're not tied to Soviet apron-strings any longer. Couldn't get on with her. . . ."

"Had to get a divorce," boomed an elderly Cossack smoking by the stove.

One of those around the table burst into a roar of laughter.

"You haven't heard anything about me?" Fomin asked.

"Not a thing."

"Well, sit down at the table, let's talk things over. Hey, there, soup and meat for the guest!"

Grigori did not believe a word of what Fomin was saying. Pale and reserved, he took off his coat and sat down at the table. He was dying for a smoke, but he remembered that he had been out of tobacco for two days now.

"Got anything to smoke?" he asked Fomin.

The latter promptly offered him his case. It did not escape his eye that Grigori's fingers trembled as he reached for a cigarette. Fomin smiled behind his wavy, red mustache.

"We've risen against the Soviets. We're for the people, against the surplus-appropriation system and the commissars. They've been leading us into a mess long enough—now we're going to lead them into a mess. Get me, Melekhov?"

Grigori said nothing. He lit a cigarette, and took several hasty pulls at it. He felt rather dizzy and sickness was rising to his throat. All the last month he had had very little to eat, and only now he noticed how weak he had grown in that time. He crushed out his cigarette and fell upon the food greedily. Fomin gave him a brief account of the rising, the first days of roaming the neighborhood. He dignified his wanderings by the name of "expeditions." Grigori listened without interrupting. He bolted his bread and the fat half-cooked mutton almost without chewing them.

"It's thinned you down a lot, hasn't it, going on these friendly visits?" Fomin observed with a good-natured laugh.

Hiccoughing from the unaccustomed surfeit of food, Grigori growled:

"It's nothing like living at your mother-in-law's, of course."

"You bet it isn't. Go on, have some more, get as much into you as you can, we're not the grudging sort . . ."

"Thanks. I wouldn't mind a smoke now . . ." Grigori took the cigarette offered him, and, going over to the iron pot on the bench, shifted the wooden lid, and scooped himself some water. It was very cold and slightly brackish. Feeling a little unsteady after the food, he gulped down two big mugs of it. Then he smoked with great pleasure.

"The Cossacks aren't any too glad to see us," Fomin continued sitting down by Grigori. "They were pretty well weeded out last year during the rising . . . Still, there are some volunteers. About forty people have joined us. But it's not that we want. What we want is to raise the whole district, and get the neighboring districts—Khoper and Ust-Medveditsky—to help us as well. Then we'll be ready for a little heart-to-heart talk with the Soviets!"

The men around the table were carrying on a loud conversation. Grigori covertly observed them as he listened to Fomin. Not a single face he knew! He was still mistrustful of Fomin, still wary of a trap, so he cautiously said nothing. But it was impossible to sit and say nothing all the time.

"If you're really in earnest about this, Comrade Fomin, what exactly is it you want to do? Start a new war?" he asked at last, striving to shake off the drowsiness that overcame him.

"I've told you already."

"You want a different government?"

"That's it, exactly."

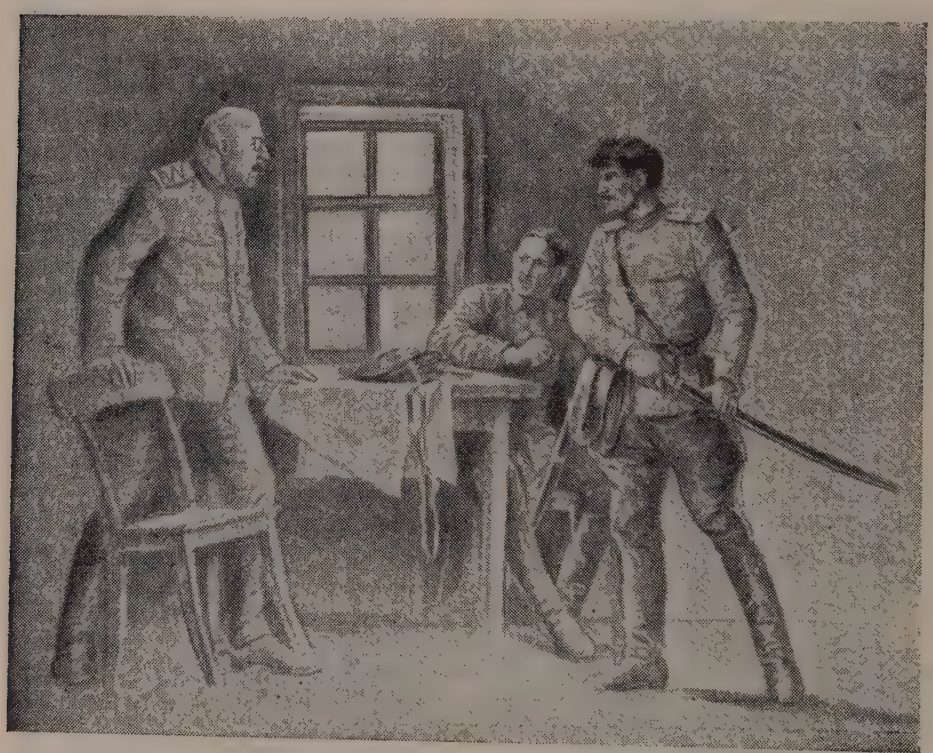
"And what kind would you set up?"

"Our own—a Cossack government!"

"The *atamans*[1] again?"

"Well, there'll be time enough to talk about the *atamans* afterwards—this can wait a bit. We'll set up the government the people themselves choose. But—you can't do that in a day, and I'm not much of a hand at politics, I must confess. I'm a fighting man, my business is to wipe out the commissars and the Communists, and as to the kind of government—Kaparin, my chief-of-staff, will tell you all about that. He's got schooling. He's the brain of the business. Got a head on his shoulders and knows what he's about." Fomin bent closer to Grigori and whispered: "He's an ex-second captain of the tsarist army. Oh, a clever fellow, I'm telling you! He's asleep in the

[1] Cossack chieftains



Grigori rebels against the White command

other room just now, got sick or something. I suppose it's because he's not used to it, we've been doing some pretty long marches."

There was a noise in the passage, the tramping of feet, a groan, a scuffle and a muffled cry of: "Give him one in the guts!" The conversation round the table ceased instantly. Fomin got on his guard and eyed the door. It burst open. The cold air sent steam billowing into the room along the floor. A tall fellow, hatless and dressed in a khaki quilted jacket and grey felt boots, was pushed into the room with a resounding blow in the back. Taking several hasty stumbling steps from the impetus of the blow, he struck his shoulder hard on the ledge of the stove. And before the door was banged to again, someone called cheerfully from the passage:

"Here's another for you!"

Fomin stood up, straightening his belt.

"Who are you?" he demanded.

The man in the quilted jacket panted, passed his hand over his hair and tried to move his shoulder-blades. The movement evoked a grimace of pain. He had been struck in the back-bone with something heavy, probably the butt of a rifle.

"Why don't you answer me? Lost your tongue? Who are you, I'm asking?"

"A Red Army man."

"What division?"

"The Twelfth food-detachment regiment."

"A-ah, now that's a find!" one of the men at the table exclaimed with a smile.

Fomin went on with the examination.

"What were you doing here?"

"I was in one of the detachments . . . we were sent . . ."

"That's quite clear. How many of you were there?"

"Fourteen."

"Where are the rest?"

The prisoner said nothing. He opened his lips with an effort. There was a gurgling in his throat, blood trickled out of the left corner of his mouth down his chin. He wiped his lips with his hand, looked at the palm and rubbed it on his trousers.

"Those sons-of-bitches of yours . . ." he said, swallowing down the blood, "they've beaten my lungs out. . . ."

"Don't worry! We'll cure 'em!" said a squat Cossack, getting up from the table and winking at the others.

"Where are the rest?" Fomin repeated.

"Gone to Yelanskaya with the grain."

"Where are you from? Where were you born?"

The Red Army man glanced at Fomin with feverish blue eyes, spat out a clot of blood, and in a clear, deep, ringing voice, replied:

"I'm from Pskov gubernia."

"A-ah, these Pskov and Moscow folks . . . We've heard about them," Fomin said mockingly. "You came a long way, my lad, to grab other people's bread . . . Well, there's no more to be said, I think. What are we to do with you, eh?"

"You ought to let me go."

"And a simple chap you are, to be sure . . . Maybe we ought to let him go, though, boys, eh? What do you think?" and, laughing behind his mustache, Fomin turned to the men at the table.

Grigori, who had missed nothing of what was going on, noticed the restrained smiles on the dark, weather-beaten faces.

"Perhaps he ought to serve with us a month or two and then we'll let him go home to his wife," said one.

"Yes, that's true, maybe you'd like to stay with us?" Fomin asked,

vainly trying to hide his smile. "We'll give you a horse and a saddle and boots with shaped calves instead of those felt boots of yours . . . They don't give you much to wear, those commanders, do they? That's no sort of footwear for this time of year . . . It's thawing and you're going about in felt boots. Why don't you join us, eh?"

"He's only a *moujik*. He was never on a horse in his life," one of the Cossacks lisped in a high voice, calculated to produce the impression of a village idiot.

The prisoner said nothing. He stood leaning against the stove, taking in the whole company with his clear eyes, which had brightened now. From time to time he winced with pain and opened his mouth a little when he found it difficult to breathe.

"Will you stay with us or not?" Fomin asked again.

"Who are you?"

"We?" Fomin's eyebrows went up and he stroked his mustache. "We're—the defenders of the toiling people. We're against their oppressors—the commissars and the Communists. That's who we are."

Then Grigori saw the face of the Red Army man break into a smile.

"So that's who you are! . . . and I was wondering who you could be." When he smiled they could see his blood-stained teeth. He spoke as though he had been pleasantly surprised by the news, but there was something in his voice that set them on their guard. "So you call yourselves defenders of the people? Is that so? We call you simply bandits. And to think that I would join you? Well, you're fond of your little joke, I can see!"

"You're a bright sort of fellow, yourself, now that I come to look at you . . ." Fomin said, screwing up his eyes quizzically. "Are you a Communist?"

"No, for goodness' sake, what makes you think so? I'm not a member of the Party."

"You look to me like one."

"No, I'm not, honestly."

Fomin cleared his throat and turned back to the table.

"Chumakov! Take him out!"

"I haven't done anything to be killed for," the prisoner said softly.

His words were received in silence. Chumakov, a handsome, stockily-built Cossack in a sleeveless English leather jacket, got to his feet rather reluctantly, smoothing back his already smooth light hair.

"I'm getting sick of this job," he said in a brisk tone, finding his weapon among the pile of sabers and testing the edge on his thumb.

"There's no need for you to do it yourself. Tell one of the boys in the yard to do it," Fomin suggested.

Chumakov looked the Red Army man over, coldly, from head to foot and said:

"Go on ahead of me, my lad."

The prisoner staggered away from the stove and dragged his stooping body slowly to the door. His wet felt boots left tracks on the floor.

"You ought to have wiped your feet when you came in! You came and made tracks and dirtied the place up. . . . What a slovenly chap you are!" Chumakov grumbled in pretended displeasure at the departing prisoner.

"Tell them to take him into the lane or the threshing-yard. Don't do it in front of the house or our host will be offended!" Fomin called out after them.

Then he went over to Grigori and sat down.

"A short trial, wasn't it?" he asked.

"Very," said Grigori, avoiding his eye.

Fomin sighed.

"Can't help it. That's the way

it has to be . . .” He was about to say something else, but at that moment there was a loud scuffle on the steps, a shout—and then a single echoing shot.

“What the hell are they up to now?” Fomin exclaimed in annoyance.

One of the men at the table jumped up and opened the door with a kick.

“What's up there?” he called into the darkness. Chumakov returned.

“What do you think of that for a slippery fellow?” he said excitedly. “Jumped off the top step and tried to make a run for it! We had to waste a cartridge on him. The boys are finishing him off now out there . . .”

“Tell them to take him out of the yard, into the lane.”

“I've told them that already, Yakov Efimovich.”

There was a hush in the room for a moment. Then someone, stifling a yawn, asked:

“How's the weather, Chumakov? Is it clearing up?”

“Cloudy.”

“If it rains, it'll wash the last of the snow away.”

“And what do you want it for?”

“I don't want it for anything. But I hate floundering about through slush.”

Grigori went to get his cap off the bed.

“Where are you off to?” Fomin asked.

“Got to go out in the yard a minute.”

Grigori went out on the steps. The moon had appeared from behind the clouds for a moment and shed a vague, misty light. The spacious yard, the roofs of the out-houses, the bare, lofty crowns of the pyramidal poplars, the picketed horses covered with saddle-cloths, all stood out in the ghostly blue of midnight. A few yards away from the steps, the dead prisoner lay, with his head in a faintly-glimmering pool of melting snow. Three cossacks were bending over him, talking in low tones. They were doing something to him.

“He's still breathing, I declare to god!” one of them said. “How did you manage to hack him like that, you clumsy devil? I told you—go for the head! Aye, you unhandy lout!”

The husky-voiced Cossack who had escorted Grigori replied:

“He'll soon stop! He'll twitch a bit and then he'll be done. Now, then, raise his head a bit. I can't get it off. No, take him by the hair, that's right. Hold on now.”

There was a plop in the water. One of the men standing over the dead man straightened up. The husky one squatted down and, grunting, started to tug the wadded jacket off the corpse. After a pause he explained:

“I've got a light hand, that's why he's not quite dead yet. I remember at home, when we used to kill a boar . . . Hold him, can't you, don't drop him. Oh, hell! . . . Yes, when I'd start to kill a boar, I'd slash him in the throat, right to the very guts, I'd think, and he'd get up, damn him, and go trotting about the yard. For quite a long time, too! All in blood and groaning and panting, and still he'd keep on his feet. Nothing left to breathe with and still he wouldn't die. That means I have too light a hand. . . . Well, you can drop him now . . . What, breathing yet, is he? Just look at that, now. And I slashed the neck right through to the bone nearly. . . .”

The third Cossack spread out the garment stripped from the dead man.

“The left side's all bloody . . . sticks to your hands, ugh! blast it!”

"It'll wear off. It's not grease," the husky-voiced Cossack said easily, squatting down again. "It'll wear off or wash out, that's nothing."

"Are you going to take his pants off as well?" the first man asked in a dissatisfied tone.

"If you're in a hurry, go on to the horses, we'll get on all right without you! Can't let things go to waste, can we?" the hoarse one snapped.

Grigori turned away sharply and went into the house.

Fomin studied him for a moment and then rose.

"Let's go into the other room. It's too noisy here to talk in peace."

The big room was hot and smelt of mice and hemp-seed. A smallish man, dressed in a khaki military jacket, was lying asleep on the bed. Feathers and fluff had got into his thin hair, it was matted and tousled. His cheek was pressed hard to the soiled pillow, which had no white pillow-slip on it. The hanging lamp illumined a pale face darkened by a beard of some days' growth.

Fomin roused him.

"Get up, Kaparin," he said. "We've got a visitor. He's one of us. Grigori Melekhov, ex-captain of a Cossack hundred."

Kaparin swung his legs over the side of the bed, rubbed his face with his hand, and stood up. He held out his hand to Grigori with a slight bow.

"Very pleased to meet you. Captain Kaparin."

With an appearance of great cordiality Fomin offered the visitor a chair and sat down on the big trunk. He could see by Grigori's face that the killing of the Red Army man had made a very unfavorable impression upon him. He attempted to dispel it.

"You mustn't think we're that severe with everyone. That fool happened to be from the food-detachment brigades. We give them and all these commissars no quarter. The rest we let go. For instance, we caught three militiamen yesterday; we took their horses, and saddles and arms and then we let them go. We don't want to kill them; why should we?"

Grigori said nothing. He sat there with his hands on his knees, thinking his own thoughts; Fomin's voice seemed to come from a long way off, as if in a dream.

. . . "That's the way we've been fighting so far," Fomin continued. "We think we'll be able to raise the Cossacks. The Soviets can't last long. We hear there is fighting everywhere. Risings in every part of the country—in Siberia, in the Ukraine, and even in Petrograd itself. The whole fleet has mutinied in that fortress—what's the name of it, now?"

"Kronstadt," Kaparin prompted.

At that, Grigori raised his head and glanced first at Fomin and then at Kaparin with eyes as empty and expressionless as if they were sightless.

"Here, have a smoke," Fomin held out his cigarette-case. "So it appears that Petrograd's been taken already and they're on their way to Moscow. It's the same tune everywhere. We mustn't miss our chance now. We'll raise the Cossacks, get rid of the Soviets, and if the Constitutional Democrats will only lend a hand, things will be going nicely for us. Let some of their people who have learning set up a government, we'll help them." He was silent a moment and then went on: "What do you think, Melekhov, if the C-D's were to push in from the Black Sea and we were to join forces with them, would we get credit for it? Surely, it wouldn't be cast up in my teeth that in 1918 I led the 28th cavalry regiment away from the front and served the Soviets for some two years or so?"

"Ah, so that's what you're getting at! A fool, but a cunning one..." Grigori thought to himself and smiled involuntarily. Fomin was waiting for an answer. It was evident that this question bothered him a good deal.

"That's a long business," Grigori forced himself to say.

"Of course it is," Fomin agreed readily. "That's just what I was saying. It'll be clearer as time goes on, but now we ought to act, and round up the Communists from the rear . . . They'll have no life with us anyhow! They put their infantry into carts and they think they can come after us that way. . . Just let them try. Before their cavalry reinforcements arrive, we'll turn the whole district upside down!"

Grigori stared down at the ground between his feet, thinking. With a few words of apology, Kaparin lay down again on the bed.

"I get terribly tired. We have to do such long marches, and we don't get much sleep," he said, with a listless smile.

"It's time for us to be getting some rest, too," said Fomin, laying a heavy hand on Grigori's shoulder. "You did damn well to listen to my advice, Melekhov, that time in Veshenskaya! If you hadn't hidden then, they'd have got you for certain. You'd be lying in the waves of the Don now at Veshenskaya with your nails rotting off. . . . That's as plain to me as if I was seeing it in clear water. Well, now, have you made up your mind? Tell us what you think and let's get off to bed."

"What is there to tell you?"

"Are you joining us or not? You can't spend your life hiding in other people's houses, can you?"

Grigori had been expecting the question. The choice lay before him; either he was to be a homeless, half-starved wanderer, pining for his own folks and waiting till the master of the house where he sought shelter gave him up to the authorities; or he should give himself up to the Political Bureau, or go with Fomin. For the first time that evening he looked Fomin straight in the eyes, and with a wry smile, said:

"I've a choice like warriors in a tale of olden times: go to the left and you'll lose your horse, go to the right and you'll be killed. There are three roads before me and none of them looks promising. . . ."

"You'd better make your choice without any fairy-tales. We can swap tales afterwards."

"There's nothing for it, so I've made my choice."

"Well?"

"I'll join your band."

Fomin winced at the word, and gnawed his mustache in displeasure.

"You'd better drop that word. Why 'band'—as if we were robbers or something? The Communists called us that, but it's not the thing for you to do it. We're simply people who have rebelled, that puts it in a nutshell."

His displeasure was only momentary. He was obviously delighted at Grigori's decision and could not disguise the fact. Rubbing his hands cheerfully, he said:

"So our numbers swell! Do you hear that, Captain Kaparin! We'll give you a platoon, Melekhov, and if you don't want to command a platoon, you can work on the staff with Kaparin. I'll give you my horse, I've got a spare one."

It was still a long time before daybreak when Grigori rode into the meadow facing Tatarskoye. A little below the farms, at a spot where the Don was shallow, he stripped, bound his clothes, boots

and weapons to the horses' necks, and, taking his cartridge-satchel in his teeth, plunged into the water. Its unbearable cold seared him. He strove to warm himself by striking out rapidly with his right arm, while keeping the bridles in his left. The horses groaned and snorted. Grigori urged them on and encouraged them in a low voice.

Reaching the other bank, he dressed hurriedly, tightened the saddle-girths and set the horses at a gallop to warm them. The dripping overcoat, the wet wings of the saddle, and the damp shirt chilled his body. His teeth chattered, shivers ran up and down his spine, he was shaking from head to foot, but soon the swift ride warmed him up and as he neared the farms he slackened his pace. He looked about him and strained his ears for every sound. He decided to leave the horses at the bottom of the steep bank. As he descended the stony slope the pebbles crunched and sent out sparks under the impact of the hooves.

He tied the horses to a withered tree he remembered from childhood and went towards the houses.

There it stood—the old Melekhov house, the dark clumps of apple-trees, the windlass of the well right under the Great Bear. . . . Breathless with excitement, Grigori went down towards the Don, clambered cautiously over the wattlefence of the Astakhov yard, and crept up to the unshuttered window. He could hear nothing but his own rapid heart-beats and the dull throbbing of the blood in his head. He tapped softly on the pane, so softly that he himself hardly heard the sound. Axinya went up the window and peered out. He saw her hands clutch at her breast and heard an almost inaudible moan. He made a sign to her to open the window, and unslung his rifle. Axinya flung open the lattice.

"Ssh! Hello! Don't open the door, I'll climb in through the window," he whispered.

He climbed on the earth-bank built up around the house to keep out the cold. Axinya's bare arms went round his neck. They trembled so convulsively on his shoulders, those dear arms, that their agitation was communicated to Grigori . . .

"Ksyusha, wait a minute . . . take my rifle from me," he stammered faintly.

Steadying his saber with his hand, Grigori threw one leg over the sill, got inside and closed the window.

He was about to embrace Axinya, when she dropped heavily to her knees before him, flung her arms about his legs, burying her face in his wet coat, burst into muffled sobs that shook her from head to foot. Grigori raised her and sat her on the bench. She bent over and hid her face on his chest. She made no sound, but her body still twitched convulsively and she clenched her teeth on the lapel of his coat to stifle her sobs, for fear of waking the children.

Strong as she was, suffering had broken even her at last. Yes, she must have had a bitter life of it these last few months . . . Grigori stroked the hair hanging loose down her back, and her hot, moist brow. He gave her time to have her cry out, and then asked:

"Are the children alive and well?"

"Yes."

"And Dunyashka?"

"Yes, Dunyashka's . . . alive and . . . well, too."

"Is Mikhail at home? Now wait a minute, can't you? Stop crying, my shirt's wringing wet with your tears . . . Ksyusha, my love, that'll do! There's no time for crying, we haven't a minute to spare . . . Is Mikhail at home?"

Axinya wiped her face and pressed Grigori's cheeks with her

damp palms. Smiling through her tears, she said with her eyes fixed on her beloved:

"I won't do it any more . . . I've stopped crying . . . No, Mikhail's not at home, he's been in Veshenskaya for two months now, serving in some division or other. Go, take a look at the children. Oh, we little expected or hoped ever to see you alive again!"

Mishatka and Polyushka were asleep in the bed. Grigori bent over them, lingered a while and then tip-toed away. He sat down by Axinya in silence.

"What happened?" she asked in a passionate whisper. "How did you manage to get here? And what if you're caught?"

"I've come for you. It won't be so easy to catch me. Will you come?"

"Where?"

"With me. I've left the band. I was with Fomin, did you hear?"

"Yes. But where am I to go with you?"

"To the south. To the Kuban River or even further. We'll make a living somehow, eh? I'll do any sort of work I can get. My hands need work, not fighting. It's fairly worn the heart out of me these few months . . . But we'll talk about that afterwards . . ."

"And what about the children?"

"We'll leave them with Dunyashka until we see how we get on. Then we'll take them to live with us. Well? Are you coming?"

"Grisha . . . Grishenka . . ."

"Don't! No more tears. That's enough! We'll do our crying together when we'll have more time . . . Get ready, I've got horses waiting down in the gully. Well? Are you coming?"

"And what do you think?" she said aloud. Then her hand went to her lips as she glanced at the children in fright. "What did you think?" she repeated in a whisper. "Do you think it's been all milk and honey for me here, alone? Of course I'll go, Grisha, my own dear Grisha! I'll go on foot, I'll crawl after you on my hands and knees, but I'll never stay behind without you again! It's no life for me without you . . . No, you'd do better to kill me than leave me alone again!"

She pressed him to her with all her might. He kissed her and glanced at the window. Summer nights are short. It was time to be going.

"Maybe you'd lie down a while?" she asked.

"No! Good lord!" he exclaimed in alarm. "It'll be light soon, we've got to be out and away by then. Get dressed and go for Dunyashka. We've got to talk to her. We must reach Dry Hollow while it's dark. We'll hide all day in the woods and move on at night. Do you think you'll be able to go on a horse?"

"Lord save us, I'd go on anything, never mind a horse! I keep thinking it all must be a dream. I often see you in my dreams . . . and never twice in the same way . . ." Axinya was hastily doing up her hair as she spoke, the hairpins were in her mouth, and she spoke softly, almost inaudibly. Dressing quickly, she went to the door.

"Are you going to wake the children? You might . . . just to have a look at them."

"No," Grigori said firmly.

He took his tobacco-pouch out of his cap and started to roll himself a cigarette, but as soon as Axinya had gone out, he hurried over to the bed and kissed the children many, many times. And he thought of Natalia and of much that had happened in his own hard life and he wept.

"Welcome home, brother," said Dunyashka as she crossed the threshold. "So home you've come at

last! No matter how long you've been wandering about the steppe . . ." she went off into a string of lamentations. "But your children who were left orphans in your lifetime have lived to see their father . . ."

Embracing her, Grigori said sternly:

"Hush, you'll wake the children. Stop that, sister! I've heard that tune before. And I've enough tears and sorrows of my own to bear . . . It wasn't for that I sent for you now. Will you rear the children for me?"

"Where are you going?"

"I'm clearing out and taking Axinya with me. Will you take the children home with you? I'll fetch them away as soon as I get work."

"Well, of course. If you're both going, I'll take them. They can't be left out in the street, and you can't ask strangers to take them in."

Grigori kissed her.

"I'm very grateful to you for this, sister. I knew you wouldn't refuse."

Dunyashka sat down on the trunk.

"When are you going?" she asked. "Right away?"

"Yes."

"And what about the house and everything?"

"I'll leave that to you to see to," Axinya said hesitatingly. "You can let it to someone . . . or whatever you think fit. As for the clothes and things, take them to your place . . ."

"What am I to say to people? If they ask after you've gone, what shall I tell them?" Dunyashka asked.

"Tell them you know nothing about me, that's all," Grigori turned to Axinya. "Hurry up, Ksyusha, get ready. Don't take much. A warm bodice and two or three skirts, whatever linen you've got, and food. Nothing else."

Dawn was just breaking when Grigori bade Dunyashka goodbye and kissed the children again. They did not waken. Then he went out with Axinya. They went down to the Don, and kept along the bank till they reached the spot where the horses were tied.

"It's like the time we went together to Yagodnoye," he said. "Only you had a bigger bundle with you then and we were both a good bit younger . . ."

She felt a thrill of joyous excitement, and glanced sideways at him.

"I keep wondering . . . I'm afraid it'll all turn out to be a dream. Let me just touch your hand—I can't believe it unless I do." She laughed softly and pressed close to his shoulder.

He saw her eyes, swollen with weeping and radiant with happiness, he saw her cheeks, wan in the chill dusk before the dawn. And he thought with a tender little laugh: "She got ready and came along just as if she were going on a visit . . . Nothing frightens her. What a woman!"

As if responding to his thoughts, Axinya said:

"You see what I am . . . you only had to whistle and I came running after you like a little dog. It's my love and longing for you, Grigori, has made me like that . . . I'm only sorry at leaving the children, but as for myself, I won't say as much as 'oh, dear!' I'll go with you anywhere, I'd face death itself with you!"

Hearing their footsteps, the horses neighed. Dawn was at hand. The faint bar of light on the eastern horizon was turning rosy. The mist was rising from the waters of the Don.

Grigori untied the horses and helped Axinya into the saddle. The stirrups were too long for her. Annoyed with himself for his lack

of forethought, he shortened them, and then mounted the second horse.

"Keep behind me, Ksyusha! As soon as we get out of the gully, we'll go at a gallop. It won't shake you so much. Don't let the bridle out of your hands. That horse of yours doesn't care for that sort of thing. And mind your knees. Sometimes he gets playful and tries to catch a knee in his teeth. Now, we're off!"

It was about eight versts to Dry Hollow. They did it in record time, and by sunrise had almost reached the woods. On the fringe of them Grigori dismounted, and helped Axinya down.

"Well, how do you feel? Riding's pretty hard when you're not used to it, isn't it?" he asked with a smile.

Axinya was flushed with the ride and her black eyes sparkled.

"It's great! Much better than walking. Only my legs . . ." she broke off with an embarrassed smile . . . "Turn away, Grisha, while I look at my legs. The skin seems to smart . . . they must have got chafed."

"That's nothing, it'll go off," Grigori soothed her. "Stretch yourself a bit, your legs are trembling I can see . . ." Then, screwing up his eyes quizzically at her, he added tenderly: "Aye, a fine Cossack you'd make!"

He chose a little glade on the floor of the ravine and said:

"This will be our camp. Settle down, Ksyusha."

He unsaddled the horses, hobbled them, and hid the saddles and weapons in the bushes. The dew was thick and the grass was grey with it, and on the slope where the morning twilight was still melting away it was shot with a faint blue. Orange bees dozed in the half-open cups of the flowers. Larks sang high above the steppe. From the grain and the myriad sweet-scented grasses of the steppe came the monotonous piping of the quail: "Time to sleep! Time to sleep!" Grigori trampled down the grass under a clump of young oak the height of a bush, and lay down with his head on the saddle. And the regular beat of the quail's call, and the lulling song of the larks and the warm breeze blowing from the sands beyond the Don, sands that even night had not cooled, all made him drowsy. And who but Grigori, after several sleepless nights, should want to sleep. The quail persuaded him, and overcome with sleep, he closed his eyes. Axinya sat beside him in silence, thoughtfully, plucking the purple petals of the scented comfrey with her lips.

"Grisha, no one will catch us here, will they?" she asked softly, touching his bristly cheek with the stem of the flower.

Rousing himself with difficulty from the oblivion of drowsiness he said hoarsely:

"There's no one about the steppe. This is the quiet time. I'll have a nap, Ksyusha, and you keep an eye on the horses. Then you'll sleep. I'm dying to sleep . . . the fourth night . . . We'll talk afterwards."

"Go to sleep, love, sleep well."

She bent over him, pushed back a lock of hair from his brow and touched his cheek very gently with her lips.

"My own dear Grishenka, what a lot of grey hair you have now . . ." she whispered. "You must be getting old. Yet not so long ago you were a young boy . . ." and she looked into his face with a mournful smile.

He was asleep, his lips parted; she could hear his even breathing. The tips of his black eyelashes were a little scorched by the sun, and quivered slightly. The upper lip lifted and exposed the close,

white teeth. Looking at him attentively, Axinya only now noticed how greatly he had changed during the months of absence. There was something stern and almost relentless in the deep lines between his brows, in the lines of his mouth, in the strongly-marked cheekbones. . . . And for the first time she thought to herself how terrible he was riding at full tilt into battle, brandishing his saber. Glancing down she caught sight of his big, knotty, muscular hands and for some reason or other heaved a sigh.

After a while she got up quietly and crossed the clearing, picking up her skirts to prevent them getting wet with the dew. Somewhere nearby a stream was purling and tumbling over its stony bed. She descended to the floor of the hollow, where, among the slabs of stone covered with green mold and ground-bees, she found a spring. She drank the fresh cold water and washed herself and dried her now rosy face on the kerchief she wore around her head. Her eyes shone, the smile never left her lips; Grigori was at her side once more! Again the unknown future beckoned, promising a phantom happiness. Many and bitter were the tears Axinya had shed those lonely, sleepless nights; terrible the anguish she had borne those last few months. Working in the garden the day before, she had heard the neighbors singing, as they weeded the potato-patch, a mournful song women sing. And her heart had contracted painfully.

Cackle, cackle, my grey geese, homewards,
'Tis time for you to be done with swimming,
Time for a goose to be done with the water
Time for a woman to be done with tears. . . .

The high voice sang plaintively of implacable fate. Axinya at last broke down and burst into tears. She tried to forget her troubles in work, to dull the heartache by keeping busy, but the tears dimmed her eyes and pattered like rain upon the green potato plants, on the hands that suddenly refused to work; she could see nothing for tears, and she had to give up. She threw aside her hoe, and, lying down on the ground, covered her face with her hands and let the tears flow freely. . . .

Only yesterday she had been cursing her existence; everything had looked grey and dreary as rainy weather, and today the whole world was bright and joyous again as after a passing summer shower. "Never mind, we'll have our day, too!" she thought to herself, gazing absently at the serrated oak-leaves glowing in the oblique rays of the rising sun.

Gay, sweet-smelling flowers grew under the bushes and in the sun. Axinya plucked a big bunch of them and sat down cautiously a little way from Grigori. She remembered from childhood how they used to plait wreaths and began to plait one now. It turned out a beauty. She admired it for some time, then stuck a few wild pink roses into it and placed it by Grigori's head.

It was about nine o'clock when he awoke. The neighing of the horses roused him. He sat up, looking wildly around, and groped for his rifle.

"There's no one about," Axinya said softly. "What was it that frightened you?"

He rubbed his eyes and gave a sleepy smile.

"I've got into the habit of living like a hare—I sleep with one eye open, and jump at every sound . . . It's not so easy to get out of the habit, my girl. Have I been asleep a long time?"

"No. Maybe you'll sleep a bit longer?"

"I'd have to sleep the clock round to have my sleep out. Let's have breakfast instead. There's bread and a knife in my saddle-bag, you get them out and I'll go and water the horses."

He got up, took off his overcoat, and shook himself. The sun was hot now. The breeze stirred the leaves and the rustling drowned the singing of the brook.

Grigori went down to the water, dammed it up in one spot with stones and boughs, dug up some soil with his saber and filled the interstices of the stones with it. When the water had formed a pool by his hastily-constructed weir, he led the horses down to it. They drank their fill, he took off their bridles, and let them loose to graze again.

"Where are we going from here?" Axinya asked as they were having breakfast.

"To Morozovskaya. We'll ride to Platovo and walk from there."

"And what'll we do with the horses?"

"Leave them somewhere."

"Oh, that'd be a pity, Grisha! They're such good horses, I can't admire that grey one enough. And you want to leave him. Where did you get hold of him?"

"I got hold of him . . ." Grigori said with a mirthless laugh, "I got him by robbery . . ."

After a brief pause he said:

"Yes, pity or not, we'll have to leave them. . . . We can't trade in horses."

"Why have you taken weapons with you? What do we want with them? God forbid anybody should see us with them, we might get into trouble."

"Who is there to see us at night? I kept them just in case of anything. I feel scared without a weapon. . . . When we give up the horses I'll give up my saber, too. I won't need it then."

After the meal was over they spread his coat on the ground and lay down. Grigori struggled in vain with his drowsiness while Axinya, resting on her elbow, told him how she had lived in his absence and how much she had suffered. Her level tones reached him through the overpowering lethargy, but he could not open his heavy eyelids. Sometimes he ceased to hear her at all: her voice retreated to a great distance, grew fainter and fainter and died away altogether. Grigori would awake with a start, only to close his eyes again a few minutes later. His weariness proved stronger than his desires and will.

. . . "And they missed you so, they would keep asking: 'Where's our Daddy?' I tried all ways to soothe them, I coaxed them and petted them. They got used to me, and were fond of me and they didn't go so often to Dunyashka's after that. Polyushka is a quiet little thing. I made her dolls out of scraps and she sits and plays with them under the table. But once Mishatka came running in from the street and he was trembling from head to foot. 'What's up with you?'—I asked him. He just burst out crying, and so bitterly. 'The others won't play with me, they say my father's a bandit! Is it true, Mamma? Is he really a bandit? What are bandits like?' 'He's not a bandit at all, your father isn't,' I said, 'he's only . . . a very unfortunate, unhappy man. Then he started to cross-question me. What made him unhappy?—he wanted to know. I couldn't make him understand. . . . They started to call me Mamma of their own accord, Grisha, don't think I put it into their heads. Mikhail was quite nice and kind to them. He never used to speak to me, he would turn his head away and pass

by, but he brought them sugar twice from Veshenskaya. Prokhor was always bemoaning you. He's done for now, he'd say, god knows what's happened to him. Last week he dropped in for a bit of a chat about you and he even cried. . . . You know there was a search, they were looking for arms, they ransacked the place, looked under the roof and down the cellar and everywhere. . . ."

Grigori dozed off before she came to the end of her story. Overhead, the leaves of the young elm whispered as they stirred in the breeze, and dappled his face with yellow light. For long after he was asleep Axinya kissed his closed eyes, till at last she herself fell asleep, smiling, her cheek on Grigori's arm.

Late that night, when the moon was up, they rode out of Dry Hollow. Two hours later they were descending the hill to Chir. The cry of the corncrakes came from the meadow, frogs were croaking in the rushy creeks of the river, and away in the distance they heard the deep muffled moan of the bittern.

The orchards that stretched all along the river-bank looked gloomy and unwelcoming in the night-mists.

Not far from a bridge Grigori drew rein and listened. The hush of midnight had fallen on the farmsteads. He touched the horse's sides lightly with his heels and turned his head. Somehow he did not care to cross that bridge. He mistrusted the dead stillness, feared it.

By the last farm they forded the river and had just turned into a narrow lane, when a man sprang out of the ditch. Three others followed him.

"Halt! Who goes there!"

At the challenge Grigori started as if he had been struck, and drew rein. In a moment he recovered himself and called out "Friends," then turning his horse sharp round, whispered to Axinya: "Back! Follow me!"

The four men from the food-detachment brigade who had not long since arrived to spend the night, went towards them unhurriedly. One even stopped to light a cigarette. Grigori lashed Axinya's horse. The animal started and tore away at top speed. Crouching down on his horse's neck, Grigori galloped after Axinya. A few seconds of silent suspense, then a volley like a peal of thunder, and spurts of flame lit up the darkness. He heard the whistle of bullets and the long-drawn out cry of:

"Fi-ire!"

Two hundred yards or so from the river Grigori overtook the grey horse going at a great pace, and, riding alongside it, he cried:

"Down, Ksyusha! Crouch down on his neck!"

She tugged at the rein, and, flinging herself back in the saddle, slipped over sideways. Grigori was just in time to save her falling off her horse.

"Are you wounded? Where? Tell me! Speak to me, Ksyusha!" he pleaded hoarsely.

She did not answer. Her body hung heavier on his arm. Clasping her to him without slackening his pace, he whispered breathlessly:

"For god almighty's sake! A word! Just one word! What's wrong?"

But neither word nor moan came from Axinya's lips.

When he was about two versts from the farms, Grigori turned sharply off the road, and descended into a ravine. Here he dismounted, and, taking Axinya in his arms, laid her carefully on the ground.

He took off the thick bodice she was wearing, tore open the thin cotton blouse and the chemise and felt for the wound. A bullet had

entered her left shoulder-blade, splintered it, and come out under the right collar-bone. With shaking, bloody hands Grigori got his clean under-shirt and a roll of bandage out of his saddle-bags. He raised Axinya, supported her with his knee, and began to bind up the wound, striving to check the blood, that was spouting from under the collar-bone. The strips of shirt and bandage turned black almost instantly, soaked through and through. Blood was flowing from her half-open mouth, gurgling and churning in her throat. And Grigori froze with horror as he realized that it was all over with her, that the most dreadful thing that could possibly have happened to him, was already happening.

Carrying Axinya in his arms, he went cautiously down the steep side of the ravine by a narrow track strewn with sheep-droppings. The lifeless head drooped against his shoulder. He heard the whistling, choking breath that came through her lips, felt the warm blood leaving her body and pouring out of her mouth onto his chest. The horses followed him into the ravine, where, snorting and rattling their bits, they began to munch the juicy grass.

Axinya died in Grigori's arms a little before daybreak. Conciousness never returned to her. He kissed the cold lips, salt with her life-blood, and, laying her tenderly on the ground, rose to his feet. An invisible force struck him in the breast and he staggered and fell on his back, but sprang up immediately in fright. He fell again, striking his bare head hard on a stone. This time he did not try to get to his feet, but, kneeling, drew his saber and started to dig a grave. The earth was moist and yielding. He was in a great hurry, but he felt as if he were suffocating, and he ripped open his shirt to get his breath more easily. The freshness that comes before the dawn struck a chill to his sweaty chest and he found it less difficult to work. With saber and hands he scooped and dug at the earth without a moment's respite, but even so, a long time passed before he had dug a grave waist-high.

He buried his Axinya by the bright light of early morning. When he had already laid her in the grave he folded the sunburnt hands, now bleached in the pallor of death, across her breast, and covered her face with the kerchief from her head, that the earth might not fall into the half-open, dimming eyes fixed on the sky. He bade her farewell in the firm belief that their parting was not for long. . . .

With his hands he smoothed the moist, yellow clay of the mound and for a long time knelt with bowed head, rocking gently, by the grave.

No need to hurry now. It was all over.

In a smoky haze the sun rose over the ravine. Its rays silvered the thick grey strands on Grigori's uncovered head, and slid over the pale face, terrible in its immobility. As if awaking from a deep sleep, he raised his head and saw above him a black sky and the dazzling black disk of the sun.

Translated by Anthony Wixley

POEMS

VLADIMIR MAYAKOVSKY

You think
la Parisienne
is pretty grand,
gorgeously gesturing
with a
gemmed hand;
proud head tossing
on a pearled
neck,
and one-two-three
dandies
at her
back.

Sorry,
boys,
truth's
stricture
calls on me
to change
the picture.

Look,
men,
Here's
my
Parisienne!

Is she old?
is she young?
this poor drab
hung
to the top
of a mop
and stuck
in a den.

Here
you see
la Parisienne.

She's housekeeper
and guardian haunt
in the privy of
a restaurant.

There come to disgorge
those who follow
too big a bite
with too deep a swallow.

—And here's
mademoiselle
to ease
their spell.

Deft
with towel
and steering hand
done
with an artist's
nice command.

The perfect
pose, she's
mute and
simple—
while you
at a mirror
peck at a
pimple
attention
oozing

from her smile
and powder
flying
from her fingers
on to your cheek.
Meanwhile
with "the scent
that lingers."
Then out
you have
and she
mops the puddle
that you leave.
Let me
again
apostrophize my
Parisienne.
There she stands
with soap
and towel,
gluttony's drudge
in his public
bowel.
Serving
through dayless
stretches of day
sun
unseen
and stars
away

for an income
figured
at two cents per,
swilling and spilling
customer.
Over the washstand
soaping away
Right through the perfume
I want to say:
"Mademoiselle
in a way
you're swell
but all my romantic
notions
you spoil.
Your appearance
is hardly
according to Hoyle.
To grow old
in a privy

Drawing by Kukryniksy

is some career
for an actual
life-size
Paris
dear;
Either
what all
they said was
baloney
Or,
mademoiselle,
you're a poor
little phony.

Your cheek
is genuine
consumption
white,
not silk
your stockings
or gay
your night.

The gents
with the bankrolls
who visit
these bowers

don't stop
to dally,
don't send
you flowers."

No answer gets
my unsaid
question
from this
servant
of digestion.

All we hear
is heedless
din
from the dining room
leaking
in.

Out in the street
in a
carnival Mass
jitters
the desperate
Montparnasse.

Pardon,
my readers,
these gnashing
verses,
where you hear
echoes
of my curses.

Pardon
the puddle,
the ill-waked
dream,

You see
I took Paris
for my theme!

But Paris is hard,
is sly
and ungiving

To women
unsold
who work
for a living.

1929

The Best Poem

Dear
respectful
audience,
delirious
with literary
fever.

you pant
in my face
dropping memories
like a retriever—

"Read Comrade
Mayakovsky
the best
of your
poems."

To which
shall I throw
the election?
Choice is hard—
choosing
is also rejection!

I lean
on the table
and set for the test
spread out
in my mind
like a table
the sheets
of my
verses.
Which
is the
best?

While I shuffle
among them
and the
hushed audience
waits

The editor
of the Northern Worker
tiptoes
beside me
And in
thrilled whispers
relates. . . .

How I roared
spattering
the poetic
hush!

Noisier
than
the Jericho
crush!

"Comrades!"
I cry,
"The Cantonese
workers
have taken
Shanghai!"

As if
they were rumpling
tin sheets
in their palms,
their shrilling
applause
through the big hall
storms.

Five minutes
ten minutes,
fifteen,
and so on

Yaroslavl
applauded
Canton.

I heard
our sharp
Yaroslavl storm
blowing
wide
over Asia
through India
going. . . .

To Chamberlain's
notes
our red
reply
slapped
in his face
in new Shanghai
in whose harbor
at Canton's sound
the dreadnoughts
turn
their steel mugs
around.

No, Yaroslavl,
no shuffling
through pages
no further test.
You've chosen
the best.

Where
is
comparable
strength
alive
to the
solidarity
in the workers'
hive!

Clap
Yaroslavl,
clap
dairymen
clap
waiters
Cheer on
the Chinese coolies
Your brother
liberators.

Translated by Isidor Schneider

1927

向正在爲獨立而鬥爭的中國作家及中國人民致熱烈的敬禮！

逕啓者：查貴刊銷行全世，早著令譽，對中國抗戰文藝尤時予選登，中國作家暨全體人民同深欽感！

現本會擬編輯中國抗戰文藝專號，專選抗戰以來作品昭示世人，以明中國抗戰之熱情與決心。貴刊素來同情中國抗戰，想必樂予贊助。　順祝著祺！　此致

國際文學編委會

中華全國文藝界抗敵協會

二十八年十二月

中華全國文藝界抗敵協會：

敝會很感謝貴會寄來懇摯的信和獎勵的評語。接到友人馬耳寄來的中國文學家底作品，一部份登在本期上。敝會希望收到將來出版的抗戰文藝專號，並希望在不久的將來，不但英文讀者們，而且連俄文讀者們也能讀到。

蘇聯人民很同情並很關心那爲自由幸福解放而鬥爭的中國人民。敝國各界對中國抗戰文藝很感興味，敝會願將貴會作家底良好作品登載在敝會雜誌上。希望加強我們友誼的關係。希望貴會幫助敝會得到中國人民抗戰的文藝作品。敝會也很樂意爲貴會効力而介紹貴會以蘇聯文化和文藝底新現象。致

友誼的敬禮！

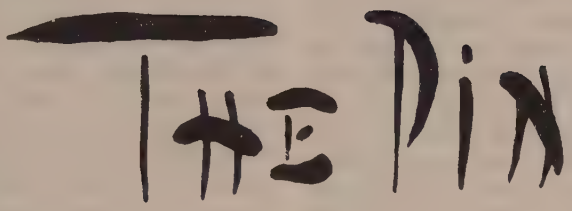
國際文學編委會

一九四〇年四月

Above is a letter from the Anti-Japanese Literary Association of China to the Editors of INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE and the Editors' reply.

GREETINGS TO THE CHINESE WRITERS FIGHTING SIDE BY SIDE WITH THEIR HEROIC PEOPLE FOR THE INDEPENDENCE OF CHINA!

HANS RODENBERG



They sat, the two friends, the seven year old Yei and the eight year old Wu, at the foot of an ancient yew tree whose bole was so thick that ten men could not span it. They sat facing the tree, and gazed at the wrinkled bark, they gazed at a face that looked back at them, a tiny point in the gigantic bole: but it grew and grew the more they gazed on it, and the wind which came from afar, rustling the branches of the yew, seemed to be that of the man whose face was as well known to them as their own, and whom Wu had named Great Father. The bold curve of the nose, the mustache, the energetic chin, the calm, serious eyes, the wisdom and fatherly kindness in these features . . . all this was familiar to them. Wu's happiest hours were those he spent at his mother's behest picking berries, which grew as thickly on the bushes that covered the hillside as the bristles and pimples on the cheeks of the baker. Then he would climb up to the yew, where he felt no fear, although the old folks had a lot of ghost stories to tell about it, and some of the grown-ups dared not climb to the top of the low hill. And after he had stuck the picture of the Great Father in the bark, he would sit for an hour or even two, and would talk with his friend Yei, facing the picture. Wu would tell his best stories, better than even those told by the story-teller who would come to the village on holidays, and Yei had made himself a reed flute and played the proper accompaniment to Wu's tales. Wu was sorry that he did not have a rattle in his hand, to illustrate the shooting at the most exciting parts. Nobody noticed a flute, but anyone approaching unnoticed and hearing the rattle would at once have discovered the story-telling, and, what was worse, the pin.

Wu stood up. Dusk was beginning to fall. From a small bag, slung on a string under his skirt, the boy took a long, narrow soapstone box, a present from his father. Carefully he drew the pin out of the bark and laid it in the box. Yei watched this ceremony with longing eyes;

never was he allowed to touch the pin, which was Wu's most sacred possession. It had been a long time before the friendship between the boys grew close enough for Wu to tell the younger lad the tale of the pin. This had come about under special circumstances.

Wu's and Yei's parents were neighbors, living on the outskirts of a little Chinese town. Both fathers had worked as day laborers on the rice fields. A tiny plot of land behind the house was all they possessed; but as a result of bad harvests they were so burdened with debt that more often than not they went hungry. When Wu was four years old his father suddenly disappeared, and when he returned, Wu hoped that he would have tales to tell of far journeys, thrilling adventures, and victorious battles. But his father had become silent. Only from time to time he would go to Yei's father, and several times other laborers came to their hut in the evenings. But on these occasions the children were sent away from the house, with the exception of Wu's eldest brother Ho, who was already fifteen years old.

And then Wu's father went away again: no one knew whither. Only a year ago he had returned, very changed, still thinner, his face seamed with deep lines. But now he spoke—of the enemies of the Chinese people, of bloody battles, of holy duty, of the dawn breaking for the poor, and of the night in which the rich would sink. And then he gave the children presents—the soapstone box for Wu, a red flag with a white star surmounted by a hammer and sickle for the little girl, Tse, and for Ho, the eldest brother, the pin with the picture of the man whom they called the Great Father.

Wu would have given anything in the world to have touched the pin just once; but his father had said to Ho: "Guard it well; when you look at him, he will give you strength. And never let it fall into the hands of the enemy!" Wu heard that. He had begged Ho to let him touch the face on the pin, but Ho had refused angrily.

Wu listened to his father tell the story of the pin, and he was depressed to find the tale so simple; he imagined how such a story should be told—forcefully and vividly, intoxicatingly, with all kinds of ornamentation. Wu loved stories; that was why he liked best to sit alone among the bushes on the slope of the hill, where there was a wide view of the whole town and the rice fields, and he would invent stories. And it was always the pin that filled his thoughts, and the face of the man portrayed on it. In a loud voice he related tales of this man, as he imagined them, and embellished his father's stories with ever new scenes and events. And only through chance had it come about that he confided in the neighbor's son and told him the story of the pin.

It happened on the day Wu's and Yei's fathers were shot. Early in the morning enemy airplanes appeared over the town, and within less than two hours left nothing but smoke and ashes of most of the huts. Many corpses lay around on the streets, among them the little girl, Tse, with the red flag in her hand. The only living beings were those who had run away to the rice fields and splashed despairingly through the water, or fled to the mountain and crept under the bushes.

During the night the people returned to the town, sought out their dead and raked the ruins of their huts. Groans and lamentation rang through all the streets. But Wu's father gathered a number of men together, and they agreed to leave the next morning and go where they would find weapons and

friends so as to fight the enemy. But the day had not yet broken when the enemy entered the town, so swiftly that one hardly realized what was happening. And then the baker went with them from house to house, from ruin to ruin, and at every place he stopped, the enemies surrounded the men, bound them and led them to the edge of the town to be shot.

But Wu, his brother Ho and the neighbor's son, Yei, had not returned home; they had remained hidden among the bushes, and saw the men brought from the rows of huts. They could recognize the faces of the men and saw that their fathers were among them. Then shots rang and the men fell.

After sitting for a long while motionless, Ho stood up and beckoned to Wu to follow him. He embraced his younger brother and said softly: "I will go away to the place where I can find weapons and friends, to fight the enemies of our people." Then he drew out the pin from the lining of his jacket, put it into Wu's hand and whispered in his ear: "Look well at him. This is your father, too, now. Come to this place every day at this time. If anyone comes to you with the pin, you will know he comes from me. Help him in every way he asks, as though it were I who asked it of you."

Wu gazed into the eyes of the man on the pin. He absorbed every line of the face, so as never to forget it. First it seemed to him strange and unfamiliar, because it was so unlike the faces he knew; but ever more he felt himself drawn to the face on the little pin, which he now knew belonged to the Great Father. Then he nodded and returned the pin to Ho. Ho disappeared among the bushes. Wu went to Yei, sat down behind him and began to tell him stories. Now that both their fathers had been shot by the enemies of the people, Wu told Yei the tale of the pin, as he had heard it from his father.

He told of how his father had got it from a mortally wounded student whose father had been in the land where a freed people thanked the Great Father for their happiness, where work and bread were part of everyone's life, where the children of all parents could learn as much as their heads would hold, where no one had to crawl on their knees before the angry eyes of the rich, where the enemies of the people had been defeated for ever. Wu had also heard from his father that the Great Father loved all Chinese people and their children as much as his own, that his glance pierced the darkness of the future.

But why had his father failed to tell him about the great white horse which the Great Father rode, with thousands and thousands of children in his arms, before him, in back of him—just such children as Wu and Yei? And he fed them with white bread, and all wore on their breast pins with the picture of him who bore them on his snow-white horse; and he gave them all of his wisdom, so that they became wiser than the *mandarins* and the elders of great temples used to be. And Wu will also ride on this horse, but only when he'll be older, because now he must stay here—but he mustn't say what for.

Yei was excited over Wu's story, he admired Wu, he believed it all and begged him to tell why he couldn't go at once to ride on the snow-white horse. But Wu was silent. Then Yei wanted to know if Wu would show him the pin sometime. But Wu only said: "Some day I'll show it to you. . . ." And thus they became friends. And for the hundredth time Yei heard the story of the pin from Wu's lips, and always there were tales of new,

mighty events, concerning the face on the pin.

But Wu was no longer sleeping at home. He would come for the meager meals, which became ever more meager. He collected berries for his mother to sell at the market, and he begged in the streets, like the other boys. Wu lived on the mountainside. Every day at the appointed time he sat among the bushes at the place where his brother Ho had taken leave of him.

With Yei things were different. His mother did not mourn for long, and soon another husband took the place of Yei's father who had been shot. This was a laundryman, a clever, business-like fellow, who knew the vegetable dealer and the baker, and the baker had dealings with the police, and the police with the enemies of the people, so that quite a different atmosphere soon made itself felt in the hut where Yei lived. No longer was he allowed to run about as he liked, and he was threatened with punishment if he had anything to do with Wu, for Wu's mother was now much, much poorer than Yei's mother; and Yei's mother had quite forgotten that once upon a time she had been just as poor herself. Now she thought the same way as her new husband, who could only talk about the great ammunition-dump in the town, and the still bigger food depot; and how in the town more than a hundred soldiers were quartered, elderly people who had nothing against doing a little business and would prefer to return to their islands as soon as possible. Already he no longer named these soldiers "the enemy," but in a friendly tone spoke of them as "the soldiers billetted on us." He had his hands full all the time, negotiated here, adjusted there. Several good turns were done him by the baker, who now wore a foreign suit. And on those days when the trucks would arrive empty in the town, to drive out again next day with a load of grenades or sacks of rice, the laundryman would not come home at all, but would trade in opium and *sake*.

Everything Yei heard at home he related to his friend Wu, for it was his ambition to be as good a story-teller as Wu. Yei paid no heed to his mother's ban, and found ever new ways to slip off. He wanted to see the pin. He wanted some day to convince himself that it was real. And at last this happy day came.

When the autumn clouds were racing over the sky, the wind whistled round the mountain and the fog was like fine rain, at the hour before sunrise Wu sat in his place. He was so used to the time and place, that he was like a bush himself. He had no thoughts, no wishes, he only waited.

One day, when the milky fog hid all around him, he felt a touch on his shoulder. He started—not because of the touch—that was bound to come, but he had been asleep with open eyes and blamed himself for not having seen the messenger at once.

Beside him sat a young man of about twenty. He put his arm round Wu's shoulders and held out the pin to him. Wu examined the pin carefully, conscientiously, although at the first glance he had seen that it was the right one. Then he put the pin, his pin, in the soapstone box which he carried under his skirt. Without waiting for questions, he told the messenger all he knew from Yei's tales of the talk at home, about the ammunition-dump, the food depot and the trucks; what the laundryman was up to with the baker, the baker with the police and the police with the enemy; that the enemy soldiers were elderly men and did business, that the laundryman traded in opium . . . The messenger listened attentively

and praised Wu with friendly words. Then he asked him to get something to eat if possible, a flat cake or a handful of rice, but only if it would not be in the least difficult. It was much more difficult to find five men, whose names Wu must remember, and bring them unobtrusively in the night to him, the messenger, to that same place. Wu memorized the names.

"But while the five men are with me," said the messenger, "I shall ask you to sit nearby, so as to catch any approaching sound. If you could then warn us by chirping like a grass-hopper. . . ." Oh, Wu could easily warn them with a grass-hopper's chirp; he could also cry like a screech-owl, crow like a raven, howl like a wolf. The screech-owl would have been best, he thought; but he said nothing, because he did not want to boast of his accomplishments. Once more he repeated the names of the five men. . . .

First he sought out Yei, the only one who could get food. Wu's mother had nothing. Yei did not want to be a coward, so he did what Wu asked of him. To his friend's great admiration he soon brought a bowl of rice, two flat cakes, two pieces of cold meat and an earthen bottle with some of the *sake* that the laundryman always bought in a great jar from the enemy, and sold at great profit to those Chinese who could pay for it. Wu's mouth watered. How long it was since he had tasted meat! Just to put a tiny, unnoticeable bit into his mouth—only to taste it . . . He took off his skirt, wrapped up the food and prepared to go. But Yei was curious, wanted to know who the food was for; for it was out of the question that Wu would ask for it for himself. At last Wu said: "For a friend." And nothing more could be got out of him.

After feeding the messenger, he went to seek out the five men. This was very difficult. Finally, he found four of them—the fifth had recently been shot.

During the night he brought them one by one to the foot of the mountain, so carefully that no one noticed it. Then he led them to the place where the messenger was awaiting them. Thirty paces away he sat down.

All night long he sat there. Everything was so silent, that he could not even hear the sound of the men's talk. As dawn began to break he felt sad, for he had had no chance to chirp like a grass-hopper. At the same time, however, he began to feel uneasy, for the men should be at home before sunrise. He wondered if it would be the proper thing to approach their council, but in the end decided to do so. He crept through the bushes to the place agreed upon. But the place was empty. The men had gone. And the messenger had also disappeared. . . .

If Wu expected any changes after this, he was disappointed. The front was far away. The enemy soldiers lived peacefully. The trucks came and went. The laundryman grew ever busier, Yei's mother ever more genteel. And yet, everything was quite different from what it had been before. For now, Wu had the pin. And Yei's wish also had been fulfilled. Despite his mother's strict ban, he sat almost every day with Wu before the yew and gazed at the face on the pin, and lost himself in his friend's stories.

But on this particular day when Yei came home, his flute in his hand, his ears filled with Wu's triumph over the enemy's defeat, he was grabbed from behind the door, flung onto the mat and beaten until his screams weakened and died away. He prayed and implored, but nothing helped. It was only when the laundryman's arm tired that Yei was asked where he ran off to all the time. Yei was silent. But

when his mother urged his stepfather to go on beating him till he confessed, Yei was filled with trembling terror and he told, told everything, sobs shaking him through and through, told of the flute, of the hill, of the gigantic tree and the pin, of the face of the Great Father, of Wu and his tales, of the food which he had stolen, but he did not know for whom. But it was all so mixed up that no one could understand it, and the more they questioned him the more confused everything was. The only thing clear was, that if it had anything to do with that vagabond Wu, it must be a bad case. It was certain that he was a thief. But Yei stammered about flutes, pins, the mountain and the picture of the Great Father—it was a disgrace for any family to have such a stupid son.

They told everything to the baker, who told the police, who in their turn discussed it with the enemy, and next day Yei's mother promised mockingly that they would talk to Wu in the same way as they had to Yei. She was well able to mock, for Yei lay crumpled up on the mat, his body covered with thick, blood-suffused welts.

The mother went, and Yei was left alone. He crawled over the floor to the door, opened it cautiously. He tried to walk, but after two steps collapsed from the pain in his chest and back, dragged himelf across the courtyard like a whipped dog and thus got to Wu's hut. Here he was so exhausted that he had to rest. For a long time he lay in the grass, pressed close to the house wall. Then he heard Wu's light steps, and called him. Startled, Wu rushed out to him. With tears of shame Yei told his friend how he had weakened under his stepfather's blows, and had told everything. Wu held the little fellow in his arms. He said nothing. Then, supporting Yei, he helped him back home.

They had not yet reached Yei's hut, when Wu saw from afar a policeman, a thick stick in his hand, accompanied by one of the enemy soldiers. Wu let his friend sink in the grass—the last few steps he would have to make alone. Like the wind he fled along the bank of the dam to the foot of the hill which rose gradually from the water of the rice fields. But he did not choose the easy way up, he went around to the other side of the mountain, where the way was shorter. At first sight it would have appeared impossible to climb here; the mountainside was like a wall. Whereas the other side had a gradual ascent, covered with bushes, here there was only a smooth, naked cliff. But Wu could do what others could not, and knew what no one else knew. Step by step, crawling, pulling himself up, sometimes slipping a little, finally he came victoriously to the top of the steep part. In his head rang his father's words, when he had given the pin to Ho: "Guard it well. Never let it fall into the hands of the foe!"

The last part of the climb was easier. Wu ran to the yew standing in the center of a small treeless space, and with all his strength rolled a heavy stone about the size of a dog to the foot of the tree. He climbed on top of the stone, grasped the edge of a small opening in the bark, pulled himself up and dropped through onto the other side; the tree was hollow. This was known to nobody except Wu. He had not told this secret even to Yei.

Here, within the tree, he sat as if in a small, dark room. How often had he sat here and dreamed of seeking refuge from the pursuit of the foe, awaiting the right moment to fall upon them again. Through the opening he had thrown in a sufficient number of fair-sized stones

to enable him to make a small pile which he used when he wanted to get out again.

After waiting a moment to recover his breath, he drew out his little box, took from it the pin—here it was too dark to make out the face—and stuck it on the inner side of the tree, where the bark was rotten and soft. He bowed. He felt that he had done the right thing.

Untroubled, a weight off his mind, singing softly, he trotted down the easy slope through the bushes, and ran right into the arms of the policeman and the soldier. He wanted to run away, but the soldier grabbed him and tied his arms with a long rope. Then, despite his resistance, they drove him up the mountain and halted at the foot of the yew. They demanded that he tell them where he had hidden the stolen goods, but the only reply they got from Wu was: "I am no thief. There are no thieves in my honorable family." Then they struck him for the first time, but Wu did not cry. Then they demanded that he admit to having stolen the commandant's golden cuff-links, and a fountain pen from a clerk. Wu looked at them scornfully. Then they struck him the second time, but Wu did not cry. Then they said that the boy Yei, his fellow culprit, had confessed everything. He would be brought there as a witness and Wu would be shot. Wu only replied: "Yei is a blockhead."

Then the policeman threw the long rope which fastened Wu's hands over a bough of the tree. With the soldier's help he slowly drew up Wu's body till the feet no longer touched the ground. Never had Wu imagined that there could be such torture. Not once, but a thousand times the pain ran in streams of fire through every fiber of his body. It was as though he were being cut with razor blades. From far, far away he heard the voice of the policeman: "Thief. . . father shot . . . revolutionary . . . root out . . . shoot you . . . who did you get the food for? . . ." Like thunder the blows of the policeman on his hanging body rang through his head, while the soldier held the rope. And it seemed to Wu that he would have to tell everything, everything and more, whatever they asked him, that he could not stand it one moment more if he did not tell everything. Let him only lie down.

Then from the inner side of the bark the face on the pin seemed to shine through, grew larger and larger, came nearer and nearer. The man's mustache was almost touching Wu's mouth, his eyes met Wu's eyes and a voice, his deep voice spoke: "Keep calm, Wu. Think quietly, Wu. Be strong, Wu. You are my son, Wu." And ever these words were repeated, and ever again, even when the policeman had allowed the unconscious body of the boy to drop to the ground, and, shrugging his shoulders, after a last kick, went down the hillside with the soldier. On the way they laughed because it seemed that Yei with all his tales really had been a blockhead, for Wu would certainly have confessed if he had really done anything; but anyhow, it would be a good lesson for him, teach him not to wander around; and could only do him good.

Wu lay there all day, all night, until dawn was breaking. He had spoken much and long with the Great Father. He had accused all those against whom he had accusations to make, and all whom he loved, he had commended to the love of the Great Father.

Towards morning the fever left him. With his teeth he untied the rope round his arms. It was difficult, but he managed it. He tried to stand up. It was difficult, but he managed it. He felt a raging hunger. He crawled to the edge of the

mountain. Then he heard furious machine-gun firing.

In the town the wildest confusion reigned. Half dressed, the soldiers were running about the streets and fired wildly in all directions. The commander was shouting, trying to get his men together, but the sentries had already been overpowered and the partisans were forcing their way into the town from both sides.

The four men, with whom the messenger had spoken, had not been idle. They had picked out a large number of people who also were resolved not to continue living in slavery and servitude. At the first sound of firing they rose. Everything had been planned. They cut the telegraph and telephone lines, disarmed individual soldiers and seized the policeman, the baker and other persons whom they knew to have sold themselves to the enemy.

Wu could wait no longer. He ran down the mountainside, stumbling, slipping, falling, tearing his shirt on the bushes, shouting incoherent words. Now the hour has come. The blows, the torments, burned in his heart. What had happened, the boy did not know. He only knew that there was fighting, and he wanted to fight too, to help. He felt a new, great strength. All that he had dreamed, all that his imagination had pictured must now come true.

Then he heard voices—quite near at hand. Like a little animal he disappeared into the bushes and waited, hardly daring to breathe. Gradually it was getting lighter. Shouting and cursing, a detachment of about twenty soldiers was dragging two machine guns up the hillside. Wu could plainly see the officer in his steel helmet driving the soldiers on. Some of them were carrying heavy boxes. The officer cursed and struck the soldiers who were not going quickly enough. In his hatred, Wu could have thrown himself at the officer with his naked hands, but he did not do it. Inaudibly—he could slip through the bushes like a weasel—he followed the soldiers. Time seemed endless to him. Often he turned and saw people like ants running about confusedly in the town. And the firing was becoming more and more continuous.

Finally the soldiers stopped. About a hundred meters below the peak, they placed the machine-gun between two bushes. With their spades they dug an emplacement, opened the boxes, took out large bands and then began to fire.

The sudden firing from the hill burst like a thunder-bolt upon the partisans. With hand grenades they had stormed the headquarters, and the food depot was in their hands. But the ammunition-dump was surrounded by barbed wire, and here the soldiers had fortified themselves. The partisans had one machine-gun with which they were firing at the soldiers. They were already preparing for an attack when suddenly, from the hill, bullets came whistling over the square, killing several partisans. To move meant to die. There could be no advance until the enemy on the hill was silenced.

The partisan leader, a young student with a clever, energetic face, finally ordered a troop of eighteen men, commanded by Wu's brother Ho, to storm the hill, cost what it might.

Even the advance over the short distance along the dam to the foot of the hill brought them serious losses. But when they tried to make their way up the slope, they found that the murderous fire of the enemy made all advance impossible, and had to retreat. On the edge of the town they took cover in holes, behind walls, trees, in trenches, and from there directed their rifle fire on the mountain. But nothing could come of that. The whole undertaking was at stake. Then some of the partisans began to lose hope. The

soldiers behind the barbed wire took heart.

Little Wu had crawled right round the town. At last he found a place where he could safely enter. Behind headquarters he found the partisan leader, who was greatly surprised to see an eight-year-old boy appear before him. But Wu only said:

"I know a way to climb the hill without being seen. If you'll give me a few people who can climb well, I will lead them."

The leader immediately picked out ten of the most agile of the younger partisans. The rope with which Wu had been bound, he had tied around his body. Now he asked for a revolver, which he fastened with the rope. It was difficult for the men to climb as Wu did. Slowly, slowly they advanced, Wu going ahead and showing them every step, every spot to place their feet. It took an hour before they got to the top.

The leader himself had gone to the detachment which was under cover at the edge of the town. And at the moment the hand-grenades of the partisans exploded, the ones below left their cover and in a furious attack stormed the mountain.

As the partisan leader appeared on the peak, he saw a touching sight—the partisan Ho with the boy in his arms. But the latter soon tore himself free and asked the men to roll the heavy stone to the foot of the tree. When he got as far as the opening in the tree, he had to take off the revolver in order to get through. And when he again emerged he held in his hand the pin with the picture of the Great Father. On tiptoe, glowing with happiness, he fastened the pin onto his brother Ho's jacket.

In the afternoon, after burying the dead, they left. They drove away on nine trucks taken from the enemy, and loaded with ammunition and food. At the edge of the town they stopped once more, and Wu and Ho entered the hut where Yei was lying, abandoned. They lifted him and took him with them; the little boy was speechless with joy.

On the first truck sat little Wu with his brother Ho and the young student. And here it was that Ho took the pin from his jacket and fastened it on his brother's breast. Many wonderful things the student told about the man whose picture was on the pin and with the deepest reverence little Wu for the first time pronounced the name Stalin.

Translated from the German by Eve Manning

WOO YEH

Departure

Early in the morning, as usual, Hsiao Hsiao stuffed his books into a bag and called his sister.

"Ah Fei, Ah Fei, come on, let's go."

She sat silent, lost in thought, paying no attention to her brother.

"Sister!" he entreated.

She raised her head and her eyes fell on the portrait of their deceased father, hanging on the wall. She stared at it for a long while. Were he alive, she thought, she would not have had to teach in the school under the Japanese. She would have been at the university, with her friends, studying and happy.

But those golden days had vanished like a puff of grey smoke. The Japanese had invaded the old city of Soochow. Her family fled from their ancestral home in panic, and had been robbed on the way of all their valuables and the family treasures. And then a piece of shrapnel had struck her father—ripping him open—spattering his blood across the road.

Revengeful anger burned in her heart after that. Several times she had tried to go to the army, but her brother's little hands and her mother's tears held her back.

Now they had returned to their home again. The house was now but four bare walls. The floor boards had been ripped up and carried off and the looters had even dug into the ground beneath, searching for buried money. All their painfully acquired furniture was gone.

A wretched life—no money for rice. Then the mother found a job for her as a teacher in the elementary school recently established by the local Japanese puppet "Peace Maintenance Committee." Although a monthly salary of twenty dollars could not make ends meet, yet it was better than nothing. But the girl would not have the job. She sat brooding over her hatred.

"All this would not have happened," the mother murmured as she watched her daughter, "had the shrapnel hit me instead of your father."

These words and the tears running down her wrinkled face stung the girl into accepting the job.

To avoid the shame of teaching Chinese children the virtues of being Japanese subjects, she had chosen arithmetic and handicrafts as two subjects far removed from "politics." But even here the same problems appeared. A third grade boy asked her gravely how much 802 plus 116 made. She explained that the sum, 918, stood for the 18th day of the ninth month—the date of the Japanese occupation of Mukden.[1] In her handicrafts class the children were making airplanes.

[1] The people of China observe the anniversaries of such events as the Japanese seizure of Mukden as "Days of National Humiliation."

"Miss Wang," a boy with cheeks like apples asked her, "shall I paint only a sun on this airplane, or with twelve rays around it?"

The sun with rays was the Kuomintang symbol on the Chinese national flag.

She choked and could not answer. Then, "Which do you think best?"

The boy set to work, carefully dipping his brush, his head bent in heavy concentration. In a little while he proudly displayed his work—a big sun with twelve rays on each wing!

She was beside herself with joy and looked at the design again and again—turning it this way and that. The boy stared, perplexed.

"Dear, why did you do it this way?" she stroked his head.

"Because I am a Chinese!" he replied gravely.

She caught him up and held him close to her.

In this school, children received ten blows on the hand whenever they would forget the lesson. Hearing them sob under the punishment, she would weep and the hate within her would grow. The very thought of the stupid teachers and their cruelty made her dread another day at the school. Each morning when she woke she shuddered at the prospect of going through the same shameful routine again.

"Ah Fei, it is time to go," her mother called.

Her brother, his books packed, tugged at her sleeve. Wearily she got up, and said goodbye dully.

It was early morning and the fresh spring wind swept along the street, but with it came the sickening smell of opium from the dens. It was only after the Japanese had established their "Opium Prohibition Committee" that these dens appeared all over the city.

She stopped. Wasn't she, too, aiding in the enslavement of her people? Was not a school teacher under the Japanese also a puppet? A traitor? The brother stared at the sailing clouds—following her gaze.

"Look! Sister, how fast that cloud sails! And that bird—he drops like an arrow," and he pulled her by the hand. They walked on down the street.

II

The school yard was deserted—no children were playing ball on the court. The spring winds were sweeping bits of paper into the corners and a servant bent to pick them up.

No one was in the sitting room and the floor had been newly swept. The ink-stained wrapping paper was gone and snow-white sheets now covered the table. More new Japanese textbooks on the shelf and the *Maxims of Mencius* conspicuously displayed. What had come over the school?

In the kitchen all was dirty as usual. Dirty bowls and chop-sticks were piled helter-skelter. No hot porridge in the kettle—only stale water.

Seated on a stool the cook was tearing up books and throwing them into the fire. He tossed the *Comprehensive Map of China* into the flames.

"Burning? Burning books! But why?"

The cook said by way of answer, "I wanted to save this one," handing her the *History of China*, "because the paper would be fine for wrapping coppers. But no. His lordship, the master, said all of them must be burned. What harm is there in a calendar? But here I've got to burn it, too." And the book followed the others into the stove.

So that was it. "Is a Japanese inspector coming today?" Ah Fei asked.

"Don't talk about it. They've had me clean the floors, wipe the tables

and do this and do that—and none of it my job. All this because some Japanese devil is coming to see the school."

Clatter of many feet and loud shouts. The brother ran out to join his schoolmates. Ah Fei walked into the sitting room, frowning.

"Good morning, Miss Wang. You have come just in time." The superintendent clasped his hands over his fat paunch and bowed.

Such unexpected courtesy from the fat, little man embarrassed her and she flushed.

"Just now, I've had a meeting with all the pupils." The chair squeaked under his weight. "For the good of the whole population I am working to preserve peace and order, you know. And you realize, I am sure, that I am a practical man—yes, a very practical man. I want to do something practical—something really beneficial for the community. That's why I have accepted the position of superintendent of this school. With some help from the teachers I have succeeded in making the school run smoothly and I can be proud of what I have done for our citizens. And now we are to be honored with a visit from one of the highest officials. We are educators, and therefore we must set good examples. Do you agree, Miss Wang?"

"Yes, quite." She could find little else to say in reply.

"Consequently we must maintain complete order. In fact, this has been our aim from the beginning. What I am stressing now is the need for even greater order. Because the objective circumstances require . . ." Here the superintendent scratched his forehead. "We can hardly avoid admitting that in some respects we have been neglectful. For instance, the *Comprehensive Map of China* and the *History of China* had not been burned. Fortunately I discovered this disgrace in time. Had I not, I cannot imagine what catastrophe might have befallen us."

And he went on, words rolling out of his mouth, the same soft words. Finally he came to the end and, patting her knee, said, "I want you to examine carefully all the work of your students. Anything inconvenient to the present situation must be—you understand—it must be taken care of at once!"

She went to her desk and began to look through the arithmetic exercises. How long those fools would crawl, she thought. The bell rang for class and then the superintendent hurried up to her.

"Miss Wang, have you carried out my instructions?"

"I am teaching arithmetic and handicrafts. They have nothing to do with the 'present situation.' Everything is all right."

The children were so excited that she had difficulty in getting them started on their exercises.

III

In the sitting room Ah Fei found all the teachers laughing and chattering around the superintendent.

"You're really an experienced, capable professor, Mr. Lu. When the boys were repeating their lessons from *Mencius*, the sounds, the pause and the accent were perfect."

"Ooooo—" the old one waggled his head with joy.

"How difficult it is to give a correct definition to the phrase, 'filial piety,'" the teacher of moral science broke in to show his profundity. "It means so much more than just a son's regard for his parents. There is a deeper meaning—something almost intangible."

But none had ears for him. All were eager to catch the smiling eye of the superintendent who had himself shown the high official about. Ah Fei sat silent in a corner. She tried to appear to be listening to

the moral science expert but he threw his cigarette butt on the floor and turned his back on her.

The class bell rang. The teachers seemed not to hear—they talked on and on. Finally they went out—patting each other on the back.

"Have you a class this hour, Miss Wang?" The superintendent was scowling.

"No."

"Very good. I should like to talk to you for a moment."

" — — — "

"As I have already pointed out," he paused for breath. "We must avoid every possible difficulty under the present circumstances. The proverb well says, 'Under another's roof, we must bow our heads.' Don't you agree?"

" — — — "

"Now, Miss Wang, I was really distressed by some of the work done by your pupils. I cannot make out why you assigned them such impossible exercises. What does 763 plus 50 mean?[1] Why not 763 plus 51? And the most shocking thing of all was the Chinese national flag painted on an airplane. How could such a thing have happened?"

"He wanted to paint it that way. I found no reason to forbid him."

"Indeed! And why? You must forbid it! How can a child know what is right? The whole aim of our education is the correction of such errors."

Ah Fei could think of no answer.

A long pause. The superintendent lighted a cigar and contemplated the cloud of smoke he puffed out.

"A few days ago, I talked with a friend. He had made a tour some months back of the war areas—he visited Hankow, Canton, Chungking. He found deplorable conditions there—such weaknesses. And now both Canton and Hankow have been sold out by the Chinese. Chiang Kai-shek has been duped by the Communists. Today he realizes this—but it is too late. There is no hope for China—we educators must understand the objective conditions."

Silence.

Suddenly he spluttered, "Clever as you are, I take it for granted you understand me. So I hope we can avoid trouble in the future."

"I'm not so sure we can 'avoid trouble.'"

"Can't! Are you being funny?" He dropped his cigar, flushed with anger and said menacingly, "Two teachers have applied for positions at the Education Bureau. Things are different today, Miss Wang. Think it over."

Down the hall. Footsteps. He was gone.

Now she saw it all clearly. She was aiding the Japanese. But no more. No longer would she help them make slaves of her people. There was work for her to do. The Army needed political workers. There she could help—help drive these arrogant devils out of her country. Her mother and brother would have to go to relatives in the village. She was needed.

IV

"Miss Wang, what are you doing out here?" The rosy-cheeked one clutched her hand.

"I am going away—far away."

"But why?"

"I cannot be your teacher any more—I too am a Chinese—and there is work for me to do for our country."

"Will you take me too?"

"No, my sweet, I can't take you with me. Some day you can come and work, too." Then she shuddered—she remembererd what these children would be taught. But it could not be for long. Someday—and soon—they would be Chinese—free Chinese again.

[1] On the 13th day of the eighth month, or August 13, 1937, the Japanese launched their invasion of Shanghai.

LIU CHIN

NEW COMRADE

As we advanced down the hillside, the night grew ever darker. Flames from the burning village of Kwangyang luridly flashed over the bent trunks and withered branches of the trees about us. As we neared the scene of the fighting, we no longer smelled the familiar odor of the village barns and hay, but the sweet and rancid stench of human blood and gunpowder. Our hearts were as frozen as the snow crunching under our tired feet.

The battle had started at three in the afternoon, but now only an occasional rifle shot sounded from the hills where the Japanese were retreating. One victorious detachment pursued them westward, while the others occupied the surrounding hills.

Yesterday the Japanese had taken Kwangyang, but we ambushed them in the hills facing the village, and in the afternoon drew them out and forced them to retreat.

Now as evening was falling, our troops were entering Kwangyang. With the Chief Commissar and bodyguards, eight of us, political workers, tramped down the slopes toward the smoldering ruins of our countrymen's homes. Our task was to uncover any Japanese soldiers who might have been left behind. The Commissar's order was to capture the enemy soldiers alive. "Killing is strictly forbidden!"

We advanced through the columns of smoke, the dying fires giving enough light for our work. Of the Japanese we found nothing but corpses. There was no one there, and, as a signal, the Chief Commander pulled out his revolver and fired a volley of shots into the air. Tired and weary, we decided to rest in a shabby, cave-like house, which had not been touched by the fire.

Anyone who has served in the army for long becomes prudent and highly sensitive to danger. Before we crossed the threshold, the Commissar flashed his hand-torch into the gloom. Something was moving.

"A ghost!"

"Stay calm. It's a man."

Everyone was tense with excitement. The Commissar knew what to do. He called out in Japanese:

"Surrender your rifle! We won't kill you! We are Chinese soldiers."

No sound. It was deadly quiet in the house. The guards wanted to open fire, but we stopped them. Then we saw a rifle aimed at our heads. A guard grabbed the barrel and we shouted in Japanese:

"The Chinese Army always treats captives well!"

By now, troops had put out the fires and the flames had died down. so that the night was pitch-black, Not even a star shone above us. The suspense continued for some time, with no response from the

person at the other end of the rifle. Finally, the Chief Commissar entered the house, revolver in hand. We followed close behind.

The Japanese soldier was pale with fright. His teeth were chattering. He wore no cap over his long hair, and he scarcely looked like a soldier. The Commissar had great trouble getting him to surrender the long sword he wore at his waist. Later we learned that the Japanese greatly treasure these *samurai* blades which they use for giving commands.

None of us could speak much Japanese and so we talked with him by writing Chinese characters. First the Commissar asked him why the Japanese had invaded China; and he replied that it was because the Chinese were barbarians. He wrote:

"You see—your troops were the first to attack us today!"

But the Commissar was not nettled by this obstinate ignorance. He went on writing to him about many things. Finally the Japanese wrote:

"What I have said is what our authorities say. I, myself, don't know anything about it."

Our captive was well-educated, for we found that he could write classical poetry. In his diary he had written two stanzas, called "Adieu, My Fatherland."

I leave my entire life in my father-land;
I go across the water to horizon's end.
My brother and sister know not my heart,
They hold my sleeves and ask when I will return.

The sword at my side signifies my will;
I will fight devils and behold clear sky.
Oh, I left my parents in tears—
What career in my country is there for me?

That night he stayed with us; and the next day we brought him to the mass meeting in Kwangyang. The soldiers and the people all shouted at us and threatened our Japanese captive; but we quieted them down. The captive was greatly troubled by this and asked us in broken English if he might change his clothes. We gave him one of our uniforms and a cap with our Chinese badge—a white star on a blue background. The spectacle made all the soldiers and people laugh.

We stayed two days in Kwangyang. Before our departure, our captive sent me a note saying:

"I order Chu Teh to prepare a chicken for me."

I turned the note over to headquarters; and after a while the head of the Administration Department sent over a cooked chicken and asked me to communicate a few words to the Japanese for him.

Our captive had a strange way of eating. He threw away everything but the best flesh, which he seemed to prefer at a lukewarm temperature. When he had finished his meal, I said:

"General Chu Teh is the Commander of the Eighth Route Army and has no time to take care of supply details. Next time, when you want something, you can just ask the Administration Department."

His face grew very red.

In January, we came to Linfeng. In a village near the city I met the Japanese captive once more. He had been with us scarcely two months and I found him making a speech to a crowd in his own tongue, telling about the lies the Japanese generals tell the soldiers. Everyone was listening intently. Our Japanese was still rather shy, for he hung his head and spoke in a low voice. I had other duties that day and so there was no time to talk with him.

Then for three months I heard nothing more of him. I was with the Army in West Shansi; and in April, I set off westward. When I said goodbye to the Chief Commissar, he asked me to write him about the work in the rear. Two days after I reached Yenan I wrote the following:

"Comrade Chen,

"I arrived here the day before yesterday after walking on foot for fourteen days. And so I am very tired—especially since I got no sleep last night, for I was chatting with a friend.

"I wonder if you can guess who he is. You will be surprised to know that he is our Japanese captive. I met him last night at the political department and he is quite changed now—he has gained weight, his cheeks are red and he is in high spirits. He pressed my hand very warmly.

"Now he speaks a little Chinese, and he called me 'Comrade.' He had many questions to ask about the front and he mentioned you several times. He tells me he wants to write to you for he hopes to join our section.

"He has little work to do now—every day he plays poker with the *hsiao kwei*.[1] He knows the people here very well and everyone calls him 'Comrade.' He says, 'Yenan is really a nice town.'

"At the mass meeting for the Peace Campaign today, he spoke to the audience. I can still remember how he spoke before in Linfeng, and today he seems like a different man. He was as much excited as we were, and he cursed the militarists and capitalists in his fatherland. There was more thunderous applause than when our Chairman Mao Tse-tung speaks.

"Many foreign correspondents come to see him every day. Some days he is a very busy man giving interviews and making speeches.

"Do write him a letter. He'll appreciate it greatly. I knew you would want this news from the rear. We all remember that night at Kwangyang and are very proud of what has happened.

"With national liberation greetings,

Liu."

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[1] *Hsiao kwei* or "little devils" is a popular name for the boy orderlies in the Eighth Route Army.

CICIO MAR

Chinese Literature and the War

The Sino-Japanese War did not begin in 1937. Actually the seizure of Manchuria in 1931 was the start of it—this last stage of China's struggle for freedom and democracy. The struggle first began under Dr. Sun Yat-sen and it was at the outset and has continued until today to be a struggle against foreign domination, economic and political, through the concessions, extraterritoriality, or through corrupt feudal warlords, bureaucrats and landlords.

And China's literary renaissance has embodied the same aspirations and the same fight. The first phase began in 1915 with the movement for enlightenment of May the Fourth, which was strongly anti-feudal and advocated science and reason. The left literary movement of 1927 was the second phase and a direct continuation of the tradition. By 1927, however, the outlook had broadened and China's problems were viewed in relation to those of the world. Japan's seizure of the Three Northeastern Provinces (Manchuria) in 1931 further sharpened the issues between progress and reaction both in political and in cultural life.

Shortly before his death in 1937, Lu Hsun, revolutionary writer and guiding spirit of the younger generation, wrote in *On Our Present Literary Movement:*

"The problem for every Chinese today is how to preserve our national life. The only way out is for our people to unite and drive the invaders out of our country."

National liberation meant action. Battles on paper were not enough. Skirmishes no longer sufficed; there had to be national united resistance against the aggressors attacking our country. With the peaceful conclusion of the Sian Incident[1] late in 1936, political unity of various parties was achieved. With this as a basis, the National United Front of all the people was possible; and in it the writers, dropping past differences, joined hands for the common good of the nation.

Long smoldering underground, the fire of the war blazed forth in North China on July 7, 1937 and by August 13 the flames had spread to Shanghai, the economic and cultural center of China. Then they engulfed Nanking, capital of the nation. The outbreak of war heralded again the liberation of a race which has endured humiliation and suppression for a century. It again raised hope for the building of a new country, a country that would stand as a pillar in the defense of world culture and democracy, against fascist destruction.

The first shots at Lukouchiao, however, dazed the writers of China. United formally, they yet had no concrete plan of action. Publishing plants closed down and the bewil-

[1]The author refers to the well-known events in 1936, as result of which the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party reached an agreement for the creation of a united front against Japanese imperialism. —*Ed.*

derment was intensified by the suspension of such well-known literary organs as *Wen Hsueh* (Literature), *Wen Tsun* (Literary Collection) and *I Wen* (Translation).

But as the nation rallied, so the writers joined their forces and began to issue publications of their own. *Na Han* (Mass Call), a weekly, was edited by Mao Tun, famous progressive novelist and critic, and Ba Chin, author of more than forty books. This was soon followed by the monthly *Chih Yueh* (July), edited by the progressive critic Hu Feng and widely acclaimed for its fine reportage and sketches of the war. *Kuang Ming* (Light) appeared at the same time under the editorship of the famous playwrights Sheng Chiyu and Hung Sheng. It soon found a wide public for the excellent drama and poetry it published. In addition, half a dozen newspapers featured literary pages, chiefly edited and supported by younger writers. Perhaps the most influential has been that of the *Ta Kung Pao*, a daily paper edited by Hsiao Chien and Yang Kang.

War brought far-reaching changes in the life of writers in China. Bombs and bullets drove them away from idle chatter in the teahouses, away from old books in their snug studies. They went to drive trucks at the front, to write letters for the wounded in the hospitals, to teach illiterate refugees in the camps; they went to help in all the tremendous tasks created by the war. Thus they saw wartime life and they saw the needs of the people. They saw what messages they could bring and how they could help the people realize the needs of the nation. For the first time since the start of the literary renaissance, Chinese writers put into practice their slogan: "To the People!"

The evacuation of Shanghai and of Nanking did not mean the death of writing and publication. In North China writers went into the occupied areas behind the Japanese lines and carried on their work of teaching and writing. Others established cultural bases in provincial towns throughout the interior. Thus in Hankow appeared *Chan Tu* (Fighting), a fortnightly edited by Kung Rosen and Feng Naichao and devoted to general cultural problems and writing; *Chan Ti* (Battlefield), edited by the Manchurian novelist Hsu Chun and the authoress Ting Ling and which has become famous for its fine short stories and drama; *Wen I Yueh Pao* (Literary Monthly), a Kuomintang literary periodical edited by Wang Pinling; and *Shih Tiao* (Current Singing), edited by the young poets Mu Mutian and Chiang Hsiching and publishing superb poetry and folk songs.

Through their widespread activities in the towns of the interior and the countryside, writers have discovered the great gulf which lies between the masses of the people and current writing. They have come to see the importance of reviving the movement for enlightenment of 1915, but with new content and answering new needs of the war. They have begun to use new forms—forms long familiar to the people but new to writers. In the magazine *Shih Tiao*, the young poet Feng Naichao sponsored "poetry for declamation," by writing,

Let poems be read by hawkers,
washerwomen and peasants!
Poetry shall grow among them.
Let our voice be heard; and let
them join our singing
In their own language, the language
of liberation.

This poem by Feng Naichao was first sung in Hankow at the meeting commemorating the third anniversary of the death of Lu Hsun and it created a sensation. Soon similar poems began to appear everywhere, written by young poets, and declaim-

ed on the streets or read over microphones by the poets themselves.

In drama and fiction there has been the same movement. Many younger writers have undertaken work on "street plays" for presentation along the roads and in the villages. Such a play is ordinarily divided into three acts allowing fifteen minutes for each act. The stage is the street corner and properties are of the simplest. *Lay Down Your Whip* and *Return Our Homeland* are two popular examples.

Fiction writers, too, publish tales of daily life in the spoken language of the people, designed to be recited before them. Chinese peasants, like people all over the world, have always loved to hear ballads and stories. For centuries professional story-tellers have roamed about our country, staying in a village for weeks or even months to relate their stories to the people in the evening after the work is done.

The war entered a new phase in the spring of 1938. Despite their capture of Shanghai and Nanking the Japanese were not able to liquidate the "China incident." Seeing the failure of their policy, they launched a desperate offensive on all fronts. But the soldiers of China, baptized in the fight for national liberation, have proved their courage and firmness by repulsing the enemy on one front after another. And the national unity of the people has grown firmer with each victory. The writers, too, have raised their voices for greater solidarity:

"We must unite all our forces into one solid unit," declared the Manifesto signed by more than two hundred writers which called for the formation of a national federation of writers. "We writers should help with our pens to mobilize the people, to defend our country, to destroy the enemy and to win the final victory. The destiny of our nation is the destiny of our literature."

Throughout the country writers have responded enthusiastically to this call. The Federation of Chinese Writers was formed at a mass meeting of all the writers of China at Hankow, April 1938. Soon affiliated societies were set up by local writers in every part of the country. *Kang Chan Wen I* (Anti-Japanese Literature) was issued as the official organ of the Federation, while many local affiliates publish their own journals. Some of these are *Pi Cheng* (Pen Front) published in Chengtu, *Literary Post* in Kunming, *Wen I Chan Hsian* (Literary Front) in Yenan. Their excellent stories and essays have made these magazines popular everywhere in the nation.

In Shanghai, too, once the cultural center of China, literary work has revived with full vigor through the dauntless struggle of writers. *Wen I Hsin Chao* (Literary Current), a monthly, is under the competent editorship of the young poet Chiang Hsiching and publishes some of the finest stories appearing in China today. *Wen I Chan Chen* (Literary Great Wall) is designed for overseas Chinese. *Lu Hsun Feng* (Lu Hsun Tradition) fights against traitor writers. Recently a monthly, *Wen Hsueh Chi Lin* (Literary Collection), appeared in Shanghai, edited by Professor Cheng Chento, pioneer of the Chinese Renaissance. The monthly publishes highly competent and brilliantly written articles on literary history and problems.

Thus, as the war goes on and China struggles for her national life, the new types of people produced by the war are portrayed by the pens of her writers. Remnants of the old feudal society who have hitherto been screened from view are now exposed to the public by the war. These are the swindlers, old and new; the war-time bureaucrats, the profiteers and the quack propagandists. Such are Mr. Hua Wei, depicted in the story of that

name by Chang Tienyi; Wang Ching-wei in *Wang Ching-wei Before the Camera* by Huang Kang; Cheng Kuo-shui in *Mr. Cheng Kuo-shui and His Group* by Huang Yomien.

At the same time there are types of the new leaders of the people, new soldiers and new peasants, heroically fighting for the future of the world as well as for their own fatherland. There is the farm laborer Chabancheh Makai[1] in the story of that name by Yao Hsueh-yin; the soldiers in *Attack and Defense* by S. M., the collective farmers in *Virgin Soil* by Yeh Hung; the villagers in *Under the Wutai Mountains* by Liu Paiyu and a host of others.

Critics too are urged to take up again the work they did so well before the outbreak of the war. "In this war of resistance," wrote Mao Tun in *Anti-Japanese Literature*, vol. 2, No. 1, "the responsibilities of the critics have become more serious, and their work is of greater importance than ever before. The war has produced a far reaching change in the life of our people; it has illuminated their virtues and exposed their defects. And just as our country is a huge country, with a wide range of climate and terrain, so does our great population vary in temperament and way of life. Each section of the people reacts in a different way to the war. It is difficult for the writer to grasp the trend of national events and even more difficult is it for him to achieve profound understanding of his people during this great crisis. But understanding of the people is *the* task of the critic as well as of the writers."

As the new China has begun to emerge out of the bloody struggle, so has the new literature sprung up in answer to the fundamental demands of the people. New writing in China becomes more Chinese and belongs more and more to the people themselves. Critics and writers are re-surveying their country and their people. For instance, under the sponsorship of the Federation of Chinese Writers, in the winter of 1939, a group of writers went on a tour of the interior, of the fronts and the occupied areas. Their reports are published in the periodicals of the Federation. Likewise, current discussions of how writing can become national in character are directly inspired by the stubborn, invincible struggle of our countrymen, the tremendous efforts at construction of industries, railroads and highways.

As Ai Suchi says, we must "merge the new achievements in literature with our heritage of old in order to create the new national Chinese literature for the people of China and for the needs of the war of liberation." ("Problems of Old Literary Forms," in *Literary Storm Troop*.) Or, as Mao Tse-tung has remarked in *The New Stage*: "Not an artificial 'Europeanization' but the removal of empty, abstract ideas, the extermination of dogmatism, and the creation in its place of an original Chinese style based on Chinese temperament—a literature that is lively, fresh, agreeable and that will be treasured by the masses of China." The new national literature should "in form, style and temperament move forward in the creation of new characters; in content, it should reflect the reality of the struggle for national liberation." (Ai Suchi, "Fundamental Principles of the Utilization of Old Forms," *Literary Front*.)

This, then, is the trend of the new writing in China today. If it is to grow and develop it must go forward hand in hand with the desperate struggle of the Chinese people for the building of a new China—independent and free.

February, 1940.

[1] *Chabancheh Makai* was published in our magazine (No. 2, 1939).—*Ed.*

YURI LUKIN

Mikhail Sholokhov in 1940

Here are the Sholokhov volumes on my bookshelf.

The edition of Book One of *And Quiet Flows the Don*, published in 1933, was 50,000, of Book Two and Book Three—100,000 each. In the years 1934, 1935, 1937, and right up to the present time enormous editions were issued one after another. In 1935, an edition of 100,000 copies of Book Three appeared, and in 1938 the same number was reached by Book One.

In a separate pile lie the special *And Quiet Flows the Don* series of the *Roman-Gazeta* (Newspaper-Novel), of which much larger editions have been issued. For example, 340,000 copies of Part Seven of Book Four were published in this series in 1938.

All these have been issued by one publishing house—the State Literary Publishing House, in one city—Moscow. It does not include the publications in other cities and the translations from Russian into the languages spoken by the various peoples of the U.S.S.R., nor the editions that have come out abroad.

Who are the readers of these hundreds of thousands of copies of Sholokhov's books and what do they think of them?

Once I happened to be sailing down the Don with Chikil, a Don Cossack, famed all over the district as a fisherman. In this part of the Soviet Union everybody has read *And Quiet Flows the Don* and *The Soil Upturned*. As we were passing one of the prettiest of the clusters of farmsteads, described in *And Quiet Flows the Don* as Tatarskoye, I pointed to the spot where the river bank sloped away from the farms and said: "I suppose that's the very place where Grigori spoke to Axinya for the first time." "Now, how could you think that, Yuri Borisovich?" Chikil exclaimed. "Why, it's all sand over there, and it *doesn't say in the book that Grigori rode over the sand. . . .*"

Another striking instance: the attendant in a railway car I once traveled in was a stern, sullen-faced woman. The train was to arrive in Millerovo at two o'clock in the morning. One of the passengers asked her if she happened to know of a house where he could stop overnight in Millerovo . . . "Then you're not going to stop in Millerovo itself?" "No, I'm going much further, some hundred-and-fifty kilometers more." "Not to Sholokhov's, by any chance?" "Yes, you guessed it." The change in that stolid, rather unfriendly face was a sight to see. For the remainder of the journey she showed a touching solicitude for the wants of this passenger and took as much care of him as if he had been a newly-discovered relative. And this only because he was *going to see Sholokhov*.

I

Sholokhov has earned the affection of the Soviet people both by his works and his life. He is bound up heart and soul with the people, both as a writer and as a true Bolshevik. He is active in the af-

fairs of the Soviet state and is sensitive and responsive to the hopes and needs of the Soviet people. It was fitting that they should demonstrate their faith in him by electing him deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., fitting that the Government should confer upon him the highest of all awards—the Order of Lenin. The latent qualities that Sholokhov saw in the Don Cossacks and showed us in his powerful characters have attained a rich maturity at the present time, when they have been encouraged and given free play by the Revolution.

Sholokhov's creative talent is so forceful that his types cease to be fiction and become part of our everyday life.

His books are splendid examples of Socialist realism in literature, examples wholly imbued with the spirit of Socialist humanism.

In the autobiography published in 1931, the author of *And Quiet Flows the Don* and *The Soil Upturned* writes of himself with his usual modesty:

"I was born in 1905 at the Kruzhilin Farms, near the Cossack settlement of Veshenskaya in the Don River Region (formerly called the Don Cossack Military District).

"My father came from the district of Ryazan and until the day of his death, in 1925, constantly changed his occupation. He was in turn a cattle-buyer, a tiller of Cossack land that he bought, a clerk in a small local business, the manager of a steam-mill, and so on. My mother was half-Cossack, half-peasant. She learned to read and write only after my father took me away from home to the high school; she wanted to write letters to me without his help. Until 1912 both she and I owned some land—she had the right to own it as the widow of a Cossack and I—as her son. But in 1912 my father, Sholokhov, married my mother (they had been unmarried until then), thus making me his legitimate son. And after that I was registered as the son of a middle-class citizen.

"I went to various high schools until 1918. During the Civil War I was on the Don. From 1920 on, I served in the Red Army and trudged all over the Don district. For a long time I worked in the food-detachments. We went after the bandits who were to be found everywhere on the Don until 1922, and the bandits went after us. Everything was as might be expected. I was in many a tough spot, but it is all forgotten these days.

"I have been writing since 1923, when my first stories were printed in Young Communist League newspapers and magazines. My first book was published in 1925. I have been working on my novel *And Quiet Flows the Don* since 1926. . . ."

Sholokhov lives in Veshenskaya, where he is in direct contact with the people of whom he writes, and can study their lives. But he is no mere observer of the life around him: he takes an active part in it both by means of his creative writing, and his daily work. His activities are extremely varied and he devotes a tremendous amount of energy to them. During the last few years, of course, his duties have increased greatly, for as Deputy to the Supreme Soviet he has to take care of many problems presented by his electors.

Sholokhov's books have been adapted for stage and film. The play based on *The Soil Upturned* has been performed at many of the theaters, *And Quiet Flows the Don* was filmed; operas based on the two novels had a great success at the Moscow Bolshoi Theater of Opera and Ballet.

II

This year marks the completion of *And Quiet Flows the Don* and fifteen years since the publication of his first book of stories.

A. S. Serafimovich, the author of *The Iron Flood*, wrote long ago of Sholokhov's *Don River Stories*:

"Sholokhov's book of stories, a vivid patch of color, stands out like a flower of the steppe.Simple, lucid—you can see the things described—they stand before your very eyes. Sholokhov's language is picturesque, the colorful language of the Cossack. It is concise and this conciseness is intense and full of life and truth.

"The sense of proportion, the restraint, observed even at the most crucial moments, makes them all the more telling. There is exhaustive knowledge of his subject, a keen, discriminating eye, and an ability to select the most characteristic touch out of a multitude.

"Everything points to the fact that Sholokhov is developing into a valuable writer; what remains for him to do is to grow, to work on every story he writes, to be in no great haste."

The best that distinguished his art in those days has been brilliantly preserved and developed. The themes of the *Don River Stories* are heard again, only more forcefully, in *And Quiet Flows the Don.* Before completing his epic of the Don Cossacks during the years of the Civil War, Sholokhov wrote in 1933 *The Soil Upturned*, a remarkable novel, describing the new, collective-farm Cossacks; it is the best Soviet novel depicting collectivization.

Now that *And Quiet Flows the Don* has been completed, it is possible to sum-up the value and significance of this veritable poem of the Don Cossacks.

In the main, *And Quiet Flows the Don* is devoted to the historic destiny of the Don Cossacks during the period extending from 1914 to 1921, a difficult period of transition from service to tsarism which sought to make blind, devoted tools of them, to a noble struggle for the liberation of the people. During the Civil War the better part of the Cossacks joined the ranks of Budyonny's cavalry and for ever linked its destiny with that of the Soviets.

The literature of the nineteenth century has given us what is on the whole a superficial and exotic picture of the Cossack. The part played by Don Cossacks in the suppression of the revolutionary movement among the Russian workers and peasants and the national-liberation movement of the oppressed peoples in tsarist Russia has made memorable the figure of the "Cossack with the knout."

Sholokhov was the first to show in a work of art how the same processes of class division and class struggle of which Lenin wrote—as being applicable to the peasantry and to the Cossacks as well—went on among these peasant-military. Here, however, these processes were complicated by peculiar conditions. Now, instead of the "Cossack with the knout," the official suppressor of the Revolution, we are shown, on the one hand, representatives of the gentry, the rich farmers, and the chieftains or *atamans*, and their supporters (the devoted old-soldier type such as Peter Melekhov), and their opposites: Grigori Melekhov—the restless seeker after truth, Ivan Alexeyevich Kotlyarov—the Bolshevik, and Mikhail Koshevoi.

The profound realism of Sholokhov's work lies in his presentation of life in all its contradictions. The unusually complicated interweaving of class relations and the ideas of a privileged caste instilled into the Cossacks by tsarism is shown with the courage and power of a genuine artist.

The tsarist government granted the Cossacks all sorts of privileges and isolated them in every possible way from the influence of "rebellious" thoughts and ideas; from generation to generation it encouraged in them an illusory conception of them-

Sholokhov in a London book shop (1935)

selves as being on a higher plane, and played on their pride in their military exploits and sense of the honor of belonging to a military caste set apart from the rest of the Russian peasants. Never for a moment losing sight of its aim, which was to train a permanent body of hereditary servants, blindly obedient, tsarism built up with infinite care a special way of living for Cossacks, and laid down rules for their behavior. Large allotments of land, privileges, a system of military settlements, the cult of the *ataman* or chieftain, the instilling of a fanatical devotion to "the faith, the tsar and the fatherland," the fanning of the age-old animosity to "the foes of tsarism at home and abroad"—these were the outstanding features of the methods with the aid of which tsarism sought to make reliable supporters of the Cossacks. With the same end in view, the tsarist government set them against the non-Cossack population of the Don River Military District and against the non-Russian peoples it systematically oppressed, thus hoping to deflect the thoughts of the Cossacks from questions of class struggle within their own ranks as well as throughout the country.

For many long years the tsarist "doctrine" hung like a curse over the lives and destinies of Cossacks.

Sholokhov portrays the fierce class struggle that went on among the Cossacks themselves, the uprooting of traditional conceptions and illusions among them and about them.

This main theme lies in the title itself, which is, in Russian, "Quiet Don." It is, on the one hand, the traditional colloquial name of the river, like "Don Ivanovich," or in another case—"Mother Volga" or "Volga the Russian River." On the other hand, it lays emphasis on the illusory nature of the old conception of tranquillity and well-being and a peaceful spirit of cooperation

among the Don Cossacks and contrasts it with the storms that, after brewing so long, burst at last over this "quiet" Don during the Civil War.

The road which brought the mass of the Cossacks to the Revolution was extremely complex and difficult. The Don became the base for a Russian Vendée,. and not without reason. As far as the best of the Cossacks were concerned, their destinies were bound up with that of the Revolution, from the beginning of the Civil War. But the power of tradition, the influence of an alien ideology and caste prejudices clouded the understanding of many Cossacks among those who by right ought to have been supporters of the Soviet Government, but who, mistakenly, took the road that could never have been theirs, and laid down their lives for an inglorious cause against their own people.

The bitter sorrow for these in whom Sholokhov saw much that was good, and of value for our country, is felt throughout the book. The author and the reader mourn both for the Cossacks who died a heroic death in revolutionary battle, and for those who died not finding their true path. It is not regret for Mitka Korshunov, the *kulak's* son from the Cossack punitive corps, nor for Lisnitsky, the inveterate enemy of the Revolution, nor for Yakov Fomin, the leader of the bandits. Even old Melekhov, ever watchful of the honor and glory of the Cossacks, refuses to have anything to do with Korshunov. As for the young and the old Lisnitsky, the reader will agree with Grigori: "To hell with them! I'm sorry for the decent sort of people who've gone to their death, but nobody's going to regret these." And the same of Yakov Fomin: "'Well, it was bound to turn out like that,' Grigori observed indifferently."

III

The great humanist, Gorky, masterly portrayed characters that, had they not been warped by capitalism, might have been splendid: he depicted them in such a way that, as the Soviet writer Makarenko said: "their human qualities and their most precious potential powers were to be clearly seen." Sholokhov's Grigori Melekhov is just such a character crippled by tsarism, yet possesing splendid potentialities.

The unforgettable, tragic Grigori is the main character of the novel. After his return from the front where he fought throughout the imperialist war, Grigori sides first with the Reds and then with the Whiteguards, then goes back to the Reds again. But he leaves the Bolsheviks again for various self-styled "defenders of Cossack independence," who prove in each case to be conscious or unconscious instruments in the hands of the Whiteguards and the interventionists.

In the beginning, Grigori's "rebellion" was confined to his personal life. This belongs to Book One, which tells the story of the love of Grigori and Axinya Astakhova. Gradually, the influence of his Bolshevik friends, and his acquaintance with Stockman, the professional Bolshevik revolutionary, becomes apparent. One after the other, the illusions with which tsarism drugged the Cossacks were shattered. The whole sale slaughter in the imperialist war broke down the traditional conceptions of god, of service for the tsar. The seed sown by the Bolshevik agitator, Garanzha, with whom Grigori lay in hospital, falls on soil that is ready to receive it. But tradition still retains its hold, and, on his return home, Grigori falls once more under the old *kulak* and *ataman* influence, though modified by the new conditions of conflict that have arisen on the Don.

His whole life is one long tormenting search for truth which, however, he cannot see, blinded by the caste prejudices firmly rooted in his consciousness.

Sometimes he comes very close to an understanding of that truth. In a moment of enthusiasm, almost of exaltation, he proves capable of leading the mass of the Cossacks after him. The best part of his biography is his service in Budyonny's First Cavalry Army. The reader learns of it in Part Eight. But after this rise comes a new fall and new vacillations.

Grigori's tragedy is that at the last stages of this development he loses contact with the people and perishes before he can realize to which camp he belongs and with whom he should fight to the end; or, rather, he realizes it but his courage fails him.

Grigori could have been quite different.

Was the author right in seeing these potentialities in Grigori? The lively interest with which the reader follows Grigori's tormenting doubts and waverings, the profound regret he feels at the culmination of the tragedy, bear witness to the rightness of the author's conclusions.

As regards the mass of the Cossacks, history has supplied us with conclusive proof that these potentialities do exist, and that they have been realised and put into action on an unprecedented scale.

Does our Soviet country need steadfast fighters who will bring her glory in battles and campaigns?—warriors who are ready to take up arms in defense of the new order in which millions still enslaved all over the world see the only hope of liberation? Does the country need those who have for generations been trained in habits of military discipline and the arts of war, and the qualities necessary for the acquirement of these? Does it need people whose outstanding characteristics

The Melekhov family. Illustration by S. Korolkov to Vol I "And Quiet Flows the Don"

are manliness, honesty, the will to struggle, love of labor, and martial labor as well?

To all these questions life and history, especially the history of most recent times, has given an answer; we have but to recall the Soviet liberators of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia, among whom there were many heroic sons of Soviet Cossacks.

The Cossack traits of heroism, the sense of military honor, the eagerness to give themselves in service for the people, proved powerful enough under Soviet conditions to purify them of all that had eaten into their consciousness while they were the subject of the unceasing attentions of tsarism and the parasitic upper strata of the Cossacks.

The Revolution was the answer to the toiling Cossack's age-old yearning for a free life. And, here, as in every stratum of the population of the Soviet Union, the Revolution has liberated and encouraged native talent. The new Soviet Cossacks have added many glorious names, many renowned people to their country. The virgin soil has been upturned and yielded an abundant harvest. Working in the fields of the collective farms, fighting the enemies of the Soviet people, defending the frontiers of their country—the Soviet Cossacks have proved their devotion to the cause of Socialism. A new intelligentsia has sprung up among them and given thousands of teachers, agronomists, engineers, writers and poets to the country.

Thus have the latent powers of the Cossacks been brought out by the Revolution.

IV

And Quiet Flows the Don is the brilliant culmination of the searchings of the young author, the peak of craftsmanship reached by a mature artist, one of the greatest masters of Soviet literature.

What strikes one is that his craftsmanship is steadily improving, and that, both as psychologist and artist, he has been growing steadily. The restraint and sense of proportion, the delicate handling of contrast and parallel, the noble breadth and simplicity of drawing, the painstaking finish of detail, the depth of content—these are among the outstanding qualities of this work. *And Quiet Flows the Don* is imbued with a wonderful harmony, a dazzling purity of color which make the characters and scenes stand out as vividly as if lit by bright sunlight. So convincing and typical are the characters that innumerable "prototypes" are found everywhere. When *The Soil Upturned* appeared, a collective farmer by the name of Vorobyov was renamed Grandpa Shchukar after a character in the book, although, contrary to the assertions of the correspondents of some of the papers, Vorobyov did not serve as the prototype. The Soviet writer Perventsev has pointed out that there are several "Kondrat Maidannikovs" living on the Don, and it would be entirely useless to try to dissuade them that they are not the people described by Sholokhov. Grigori Melekhovs are sought all over the Don.

One cannot help mentioning the completeness, purity and strength with which human emotions are portrayed; the two mothers—Koshevoi's and Grigori's—are unforgettable. The attitude of children and grown-ups to one another is another profoundly developed theme. There is a peculiar haunting charm about Axinya towards the end of the book. Love, so often and so variously described by writers of all ages, is startlingly new and fresh and convincing in all its phases

in *And Quiet Flows the Don*; we stand amazed at the sensitiveness and knowledge with which the author portrays it.

Sholokhov's creative work has absorbed the finest traditions of the classics and the best tendencies of our Soviet literature, and, in its turn, has served as a living stimulus for the further development of the art and letters of our country. The publication of Part Eight of *And Quiet Flows the Don* confirms us in the opinion formed long ago that this novel is one of the most important events in the history of Soviet literature; we are witnessing the birth of a Soviet classic.

This is largely due to the fact that Sholokhov's creative work belongs so completely and organically to the people. *And Quiet Flows the Don* is an epic of the people. This is reflected in everything about the novel: the characters, the medium of portrayal, the language, which, especially in the dialogue, abounds in local turns of speech, inventiveness, the wisdom and experience of everyday life, and keen observation.

V

Probably no other writer has received so many letters containing suggestions and wishes as to what fate should be met by one or another hero of his book as Sholokhov. This is explained, in the first place, by the power of the novel itself; in the second place, by the fact that it had been written over a fairly long period, and, in the third, by the fact that nowhere else in the world does the writer feel so responsible to the reader about the fate of his hero, as in the Soviet Union.

Some readers demanded that the author make Grigori a Communist, others asserted that his guilt, his active armed struggle against the Soviets, was much too great an obstacle. Others were for making him lead a Budyonny squadron to an attack and being killed in battle . . .

Readers who anticipated a happy ending were mistaken. And so were the others.

The conclusion, though extremely subtle, is an obvious one and astoundingly true.

Grigori's fate is gloomy and terrible.

On closing the book we feel that something overwhelming has happened. Then comes a touch of bitter regret.

Why should it have happened like that?

Sholokhov writes:

". . . It was not so simple. Life seemed by no means as simple as it did a little while ago. He had imagined in his silly childish way that all he had to do was to go home, change his military overcoat for the old one he wore at home, and everything would go as on oiled wheels; no one would say a word to him, no one would reproach him, everything would settle down of itself and he would spend the rest of his life as a peaceful tiller of the soil and a model husband and father. But no, in reality, it was not as simple as all that."

We have something of the feeling of children seeing death for the first time. Grigori dies in this book, though he remains alive until the last page. He dies before our eyes.

We would have liked everything to have turned out differently; this is a kind of childish wistfulness evoked by the author's ability to show Grigori's and Axinya's lives so vividly and to maintain the reader's interest in their fate to the very end. I once asked a comrade who had just been reading the manuscript of the last part of the book what he thought of

it. "Oh, it's hard to say . . . I have the sort of feeling as if something dreadful had happened in my family . . ."

What led to this end?

Finally disillusioned in the White-guard movement, Grigori goes with the Budyonny Cavalry to fight on the Polish front, and fights with all the fury of his ardent nature. At that moment he becomes once again an expression of the will and the feelings of the middle mass of the Don Cossacks who poured into the ranks of the Red Army and linked their fate with that of the Soviets. It would appear that the development of the character is complete. But more than once the author has emphasized, both in his book and in public speeches, that there was much that was purely *individual* in Grigori's fate. It was this individual quality that eventually separated Grigori from the people. His wavering continue even after the people have found their right path.

The guarded attitude of the commissar and the Communists to him as a former rebel officer offends him, and he accepts his demobilization with bitter satisfaction. "Yes, it's a good thing they did demobilize me. At any rate, it's all the nearer to the end," he says, confiding in Prokhor Zykov. He does not deny that he should have done differently. "Of course, I should have stayed in the Red Army to the end. Then, perhaps, everything would have gone right for me." Yet, when he is demobilized, he returns home with peaceful, though naive, intentions and aims. ". . . And in the army and all the way home he had thought of how he would live close to the land again, and rest in the bosom of his family, and forget the hell. It was no joke—he hadn't been off the horse's back for nearly eight years! And nearly every blessed night you dreamt of the same thing: either you were killing someone or someone was killing you . . ." Things were much more complicated at home than they used to be. The Civil War was by no means over. Passions still ran high. On the one hand, his former friend, Mikhail Koshevoi, meets him like a possible and even a probable enemy. Not everything is forgiven, Koshevoi says, and bygones are not always allowed to be bygones. "He's shed a good deal of our blood. We'll have to see which outweighs the other." Koshevoi insists that Grigori, as an ex-officer, should go at once to the Cheka and register. Grigori learns from his sister Dunyashka, who is married to Koshevoi, that the latter expects him to be arrested and even shot. His former regimental comrades don't let him alone and try to draw him into another rebellion. They are from the well-to-do class of Cossacks who are dissatisfied with the surplus-appropriation system and have nothing in common with the Soviet regime. The most active of them is Yakov Fomin, the chief of a band of rebels. Grigori hears of the discontent and risings in the district. It is bad news for him, he thinks. Even without that he had expected to be severely punished for his offence against the Soviet Government, and, since the situation is so strained, it may still further complicate his position. Warned by Dunyashka that her husband is insisting on his arrest, Grigori leaves home and goes into hiding. He falls into the hands of Fomin's rebels and, unable to strike the right path for himself, joins them. He feels nothing but loathing for them and enters their ranks in the same mood as if he were committing suicide. But he dreams of escaping at the first opportunity, and of taking Axinya with him

M. Sholokhov (right) and Y. Lukin

and clearing out to the Kuban River. There, he thinks, he will live quietly and wait "until it all blows over." Fomin's "defenders of the rights of the Cossacks" prove to be no better than bandits. Day by day, their enmity to the people becomes more apparent to Grigori. He leaves them and makes his way home at dead of night. Axinya and he start out for the Kuban. On the way Axinya dies. And Grigori realizes "that the most dreadful thing that could possibly have happened to him, was already happening." Even the light of the sun darkens before his eyes, as the author shows.

In the last pages we see Grigori at the end of his life's journey. He is no longer the man we knew. He is a broken Grigori, claiming our pity and censure rather than our sympathy. "With the death of Axinya he had lost both his wits and his former boldness." "Death had deprived him of everything, had brought everything to ruin. Only the children were left now. Yet he himself clung convulsively to the earth, as though this broken life of his could be of any value to himself and others . . ."

But even this comes to an end. The longing for home and the children would not let him stay in peace among the deserters with whom he is hiding in the woods. ". . . At night, the longing awaked by memory overwhelmed him . . ." "If I could only go back to the old places again, just once, and look at the children, then I wouldn't mind dying . . ." Without waiting for the amnesty which was to be granted on the First of May, he goes home. For one moment we catch a glimpse of the old, fiery, impatient Grigori who held that to wait was the rottenest job of all. On his way home he throws his weapons into the Don, and goes to give himself up.

The closing episode, the meeting with his son, is a worthy culmination to a remarkable book.

Still, many will ask: what was it in Soviet life that repelled Grigori? Was it not that he was subject to moods very similar to that of the White Cossacks? Had he perhaps remined "white" even after joining the Reds?

". . . he thinks I'm so keen on the Whites that I can't do without them. Rubbish! I'm about as fond of them, I can tell you as . . . Why, not long ago when we were marching on the Crimea, I happened to fight one of Kornilov's officers, one of these smart lieutenant-colonels with a silly little mustache under his nose in the English style—like two bits of snot. And I went for that fellow with a will—it made my heart sing! Nothing but half a head and half a cap was left on that poor colonel's shoulders . . . and the white cockade flew off . . . That's all my devotion to the Whites is worth!"

Grigori is perfectly sincere in saying this. It is simply that he fell behind one side, yet didn't join the other. His people have gone on ahead while Grigori was hesitating. He is alone, cut off from either side. He has ceased to live. The former commander of a Red squadron stoops to become the leader of a gang of bandits! Then we see him a fugitive, one of the five who remained after the bandits were suppressed. Such is his sad end in Part Eight, up to the moment when he goes to give himself up to the Soviet authorities.

He was unable to extricate himself from the web of caste prejudices for centuries woven about the Cossacks by tsarism. He actually could have been a loyal citizen of the Soviet land, but he became hopelessly confused and bewildered. Therein lies, to my mind, the tragedy portrayed in the book. The web of contradictions and connections proved too complicated for him and he could find no outlet—at least, none that could have saved him. In this lies what would be called in esthetics his "tragic guilt," determining the tragic conclusion.

His own painful thoughts expressed in the conversation with Koshevoi are revealing in this connection. "They're only privates, and you went and put them up to this mutiny", said Koshevoi. "I wasn't the one who put them up to it, I was commander of a division." "And that's not much, I suppose?" "Whether it's much or little is not the point . . . If the Red Army men hadn't been going to kill me that time, during the merrymaking, maybe I wouldn't have taken part in the mutiny." "If you hadn't been an officer, no one would have touched you." "And if I hadn't been called up, I wouldn't have been an officer. . . . Oh that's a long story." "A long story and a nasty one." "No use going over it now, it's too late." Then, again, in the talk with Prokhor Zykov, Grigori said: ". . . I've been going up and down and hither and thither like a drunken man ever since 1917. . . . I left the white side and didn't remain with the Red . . . Here I am drifting about like dung in an icehole."

He admits himself that he has lost touch with the mass of the Cossacks, with the people who have gone over to the side of the Soviets. His realization of this is described in a painful dream:

" . . . In his dreams Grigori saw once more the broad steppe the regiment deployed and ready for attack. From somewhere in the distance the command: 'Squ-a-dro-n!' rang out, when he suddenly remembered that his saddle-girths had been loosened. He leaned heavily on the left stirrup—the saddle slid from under him. . . . Overcome with horror and

shame, he sprang down off his horse to tighten the girths and at the same moment heard the swift thud of horses' hoofs receding almost as soon as it had begun. The regiment had gone into action without him . . ."

Thus Grigori remained alone. Does the interest in the book wane, does the sense of it become less profound because of this? No. Because the significance of Grigori Melekhov, who ceases to be a Cossack frequently expressing the mood of the middle strata of Cossacks, and becomes a solitary creature who no longer feels the solid ground beneath his feet, his significance narrows down and at the same time it broadens. Escaping beyond the bounds of the Cossack environment and life on the Don in 1921, he becomes for us a typical example of a man who could not find his way to the Revolution, whose world of ideas has crashed, who has come to spiritual ruin, who has set himself adrift from the millions of individuals who make up a victorious people.

This is, to my mind, the solution of the tangle of individual and typical motives in the character of Grigori Melekhov.

That is why one is so deeply affected by that part of the book where Axinya tells Grigori about his son's, Mishatka's, talk.

". . . Mishatka came running in from the street and he was trembling from head to foot. 'What's up with you?' — I asked him. He just burst out crying, and so bitterly. 'The others won't play with me, they say my father's a bandit! Is it true, Mamma? Is he really a bandit? What are bandits like?' 'He's not a bandit at all, your father isn't,' I said, 'he's only . . . a very unfortunate, unhappy man! . . .'"

It is interesting to study the very complicated and subtle way in which Sholokhov has responded to the suggestions made by his readers.

Though Grigori remains alive, he is actually dead. Axinya dies but, as the reader wished, they were united. Grigori's destiny is, in the end, bound up with hers. His personal fate is tragic in that he has drifted away from the people. The Melekhov family is broken up, but the young shoots of the old tree—Dunyashka, whose vivid character charms one in Book Four, and Mishatka, Grigori's son, who is being brought up by Koshevoi and Dunyashka—grow strong in the new life.

The keen psychological observation in the book makes a profound impression. Several of the scenes, especially those in which Ilyinishna or Grigori and Axinya are shown, are extraordinarily telling. Even the most accidental of the figures is convincing and full of life. Take, for instance, the woman who drives the cart on which Grigori goes home, or Prokhor Zykov—a younger edition of Grandpa Shchukar (one of the most lively of the characters in *The Soil Upturned*).

The folk songs abundantly quoted throughout the novel are unforgettable with their amazing lyricism and beauty.

Certain details cannot be forgotten: the summer's day that Ilyinishna recalls from her long past youth; practically everything about Axinya; her meeting with Grigori; her death and Ilyinishna's; and the words "my youngest one" on the old woman's dying lips; red tulips, flying like drops of blood from under the horse's hoofs; the songs and dancing of the "robbers" on the lonely island; the orange sparks in Axinya's eyes; her agitation and the hands pressed to her breast; Grigori and his having

"about a hundred teeth"; Grigori burying his Axinya in the light of the sunny morning; Mishatka watching attentively how the lumps of ice he flung from the top of the bank rolled down it; and many, many other little memorable details.

And most striking of all is the harmony maintained in the book; the absolute justification for the presentation of every detail, however insignificant, which contributes to the unity of the book; the manly, laconic style.

After one has read it through, one feels for a long time as if stunned by its force.

The book stirs one, makes one think.

And one of the first thoughts that comes into one's head is that a great writer is living amongst us—Mikhail Sholokhov.

Grigori and Axinya *Illustration by S. Korolkov to Vol. IV*

Emile Zola

The ashes of Emile Zola rest in the Pantheon, the magnificent burial place of thinkers, writers, artists and political figures whose names are the glory of France. But the official representatives of present-day France, using the war as a pretext, have refused to hold a public celebration to mark the hundredth anniversary of the birth of this remarkable writer and great son of the French people. Some of the newspapers devoted a few brief and indifferent paragraphs to the anniversary. The other papers ignored it altogether.

The war, however, is but a flimsy pretext. Actually, the French bourgeoisie is afraid of reviving the memory of Zola among the large masses of the people. The French bourgeoisie cannot proclaim its appreciation of Emile Zola without being hypocritical about it, for only recently, in a trial staged in the neighborhood of the Pantheon, it wreaked vengeance upon Communists in a travesty of justice, infinitely surpassing the famous Dreyfus case in infamy, fraudulence, and judicial and political cynicism.

Today, Emile Zola's wrathful *"J'accuse"* resounds louder than ever. Like an inexorable accuser, his shadow rises over France, where the faded tinsel of the Third Republic is used to cover up the restoration of the worst practices of the Second Empire. The France of Daladier and Blum is but a cheap imitation of the reaction of Napoleon III, which was itself a parody on military dictatorship.

Zola combined the conscientious thoroughness of the scientist with powerful artistry in exposing the utter rottenness of the aristocratic and bourgeois circles of France. He was a devotee of that great school of French realism which counted Balzac and Flaubert among its representatives. Young Zola belonged to the small circle of writers which included Turgenev, Daudet and Edmond Goncourt. It was in this school and from his great teachers that Zola acquired his predilection for comprehensive literary works, for representing large social phenomena, for depicting the history of a people by depicting the lives of its most important social types. In following in the footsteps of the exponents of the French realistic school, Zola set himself the great task of giving a literary interpretation of the appearance of the bourgeoisie on the historical scene, of the changes wrought by capitalism in every sphere of life—in economics, politics, science and culture, literature and the arts, in the everyday life of the people and in their psychological make-up. He went his own way, different from the one taken by the epigones of the French realistic school, in

whose works Balzac's profound insight into events and phenomena was replaced by a naturalistic representation of life as seen on the surface. Saltykov-Shchedrin, the great Russian satirist, who ridiculed the French writers of the naturalistic school, made an exception for Zola. In his own way, Zola strove to penetrate into the heart of social processes. His aim was to show to his countrymen the soil on which flourished the "new" man who was defiling the great traditions of the French people.

Zola was the head of the naturalistic school, but this did not prevent him from resorting to the method of symbolism. Thus he presented France as it was toward the end of the Second Empire, France of the bankrupt monarchy and a debauched bourgeoisie, in the character of the prostitute Nana. It is a powerful and bold novel. The last pages are particularly stirring. Nana, now a victim of a disease contracted as a result of her dissolute life, is rotting alive in a hospital. At the same time trains loaded with soldiers are speeding towards the frontier—towards the inevitable defeat at Sedan.

The period immediately following Sedan is described in the remarkable novel *The Downfall*—a stern indictment, not only against the monarchy which led France to ruin, but also against the arrogant, thick-skulled and rude military clique, which outlived the monarchy and is still lording it over the country, persisting in the mistakes of the past.

Zola's motto was: truth. He demanded of the writer documentary proof, scientific analysis, a study and knowledge of life in all its details. Zola was forceful and merciless in his descriptions of life. Lenin highly appreciated the truthfulness of his novel *How Jolly Life*

Emile Zola in the 'nineties

Is! which shows the agony and the horror, and also the joy, of the birth of a human being.

The dialectics of the historical processes conditioning social phenomena was a closed book to Zola. His social philosophy was rooted in the mechanistic materialism of the middle of the nineteenth century. To a certain extent, Zola reduced literature to a natural science, and turned to biology and medicine in quest of the principles underlying social psychology. The result of his passion for the theory of heredity was that in a number of his works the evolution of social types became transformed into the physiological degeneration of a typical family. Later Zola discarded his biological approach and the social aspects of life became more vividly manifest in his representation of man and the world. He saw and gave a powerful description of the class struggle in bourgeois society. In order to depict a work-

ingman he went down into the pits and studied the life and the views of the workers. In his famous novel *Germinal*, he took his readers into the world of hard exhausting labor in the mines—a world which was shunned by the elegant and decadent literature of the French bourgeoisie of the time. Zola's sympathy was entirely with the workers, although he did not fully grasp the historical role of the working class as the most revolutionary class in capitalist society.

Zola saw the Paris Commune. *The Downfall* ends with the entrance of the Versaillais into Paris. Here the disgraced generals are wreaking their vengeance on the workers. Zola showed his profound sympathy for the victims of the frenzied bourgeoisie. But he failed to understand the Commune. He considered it a huge blunder on the part of the working class and the progressive intellectuals. With the civil war raging around him, the writer endeavored to preserve the "objectivity" of a scientific investigator.

The central place in Zola's literary work belongs to his series of novels entitled *The Rougon-Macquart*. The people presented in these novels are so depicted that they present the history of the degeneration of the French aristocracy, and of the rise, success and disintegration of the capitalist bourgeoisie. Zola lashed out against the low parliamentary morals and the corruption of France's rulers. The history of the Rougon-Macquart family is essentialy the history of the "two hundred families" which still keep France in their clutches. In his novel *Money* Zola describes, with penetrating artistic insight, the advent of finance capital to power. The adventurer and disreputable schemer Saccard represents a type of man who is still alive in our day, having preserved all his features and acquired some additional ones even more disgusting.

It is the Saccards who rule present-day France. They defend the sacredness of private property just as Zola's Saccard did. They have the blessing of the church. The venal press sings their praises. Will they be able to conceal their bankruptcy as long as the bandit financier in Zola's novel?

Zola showed in his novels also the representatives of the middle classes of France, of its intellectuals and of the theatrical and literary world. Zola gave a splendid picture of how a small shopkeeper evolves into a representative of big business. The department stores have ruined many petty merchants, and this became the source of their hostility towards the rich which is based on envy. It is this hatred combined with envy that has given rise to the petty-bourgeois French politicians who combine radical—at times even "Socialist"—phrases with an inordinate passion for money and power and servile worship of capital. The childhood and adolescence of politicians of the type of Leon Blum is depicted in a number of Zola's novels. Particularly the novel *The Ladies' Paradise* might have been based on the story of the "two hundred and first" family—the family of the owners of the "Blum" firm.

To Zola, the backbone of the nation was the small honest toiler, particularly the peasant. That was the source of Zola's irrepressible hatred for big capital, for the financial bourgeoisie, for the stock exchange. The peasantry of France was closest to his heart. In the rural districts, with their patriarchal relations still intact, Zola saw the force that was destined to regenerate the country and strengthen bourgeois democracy. But Zola did not close his eyes to the fact that the peasantry was igno-

rant and conservative, that the land held the peasant in its grip and determined the social and political narrow-mindedness of the capitalist countryside. Zola did not gloss over reality. In his novel *The Soil*, Zola gave a highly convincing artistic picture of the conservatism and backwardness of the French countryside. The convinced petty-bourgeois democrat that he was, Zola cherished the illusion that the countryside could be transformed by the spread of enlightenment and knowledge. Zola is unsurpassed in his descriptions of external objects, of the things that surround man. This mastery of his was a result of his extremely painstaking study of life in all its outward manifestations. It is as if Zola were taking each thing in his hand, turning it around, touching it. He does not trust his eyes and is not content to examine things at a distance. He tries to get their taste, he smells them. Every detail is important to him, and under his pen it really does assume significance. Any other writer would be tedious and tiring if he tried to enumerate and describe every piece of merchandise in a shop. But Zola gave a classical description of the big markets in his novel *The Fat and the Thin*, and this description still lives in literature, it is unforgettable. In order to depict a locomotive driver in his novel *The Monomaniac*, Zola made a trip in a locomotive, and he really succeeded in breathing life into the engine. The picture of the rails, with their glimmering steel separating and merging again, crossing each other in the glow of signal lights, makes an indelible impression and cannot be forgotten, just as the mines in the novel *Germinal*.

Zola's powerful pen brought him recognition and fame. But that took time and effort. The conservative critics kept him out of literature for a long time. They were indignant at his lack of manners. They represented his naturalism as pornography. Faguet, a conservative literary critic, wrote of Zola quite recently, in the *History of the Nineteenth Century*: "In France posterity will judge him sternly for his heavy style, lacking nuances and elegance.... But the incipient posterity which is represented by foreigners appreciates Zola rather highly; this is a fact that should be noted."

The comical superciliousness of these words betrays the author's philistine aristocratism; the French proletariat is represented as "the incipient posterity" of *foreigners*. It is precisely the workers of *France* who have always highly appreciated Zola. The mass reader, the reader who represented the common people, supported Zola. He supported his writer when the latter was pushing his way into literature, retaliating with blows for fillips and wielding a club against the refined fencing of the esthetic critics.

Zola was neither a Socialist nor a revolutionary. His political views were moderate. He set them forth most fully in his novel *His Masterpiece*, a petty-bourgeois utopia of a union of labor, capital and science. Zola was interested in Socialism. He referred to it in several of his works, but only in passing, without attributing any particular significance to it. His portraits of Socialists are lifeless and inconsequential. In *Money* Zola tried to depict a Marxist. He did it with great warmth, but Zola's Marxist turned out to be a youthful dreamer without roots in reality. Zola remained true to his nature; he remained a petty-bourgeois democrat, a French intellectual of the Enlightenment school.

He was, however, an honest intellectual. In his novels *Lourdes*

and *Rome* he exposed, on the basis of documentary material, the foul machinations of the Catholic church; he showed how the Vatican was waxing fat on the deceit of ignorant believers, and how this monstrous octopus whose tentacles entwined countries and nations, was rotting alive. The Vatican retaliated with a vicious howl, and Zola's novels were included by the Pope in the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum.*

The traditions of 1789 were not a hollow sound to Zola. With the truthfulness of a great artist and the honesty of a genuine democrat he exposed the fraud of the French "Republic without Republicans." But to the end of his days he remained under the spell of the illusions of a democratic republic.

It was in the name of that republic that he came out in 1898 as the angry accuser exposing the crimes of the gang of ministers and generals that ruled France at the time and steered it toward catastrophe. The Dreyfus case was used as a screen to cover up the preparations that were being made for a military dictatorship and the restoration of monarchy. An officer of the General Staff, Captain Dreyfus, a Jew by birth, was charged with espionage and condemned to imprisonment on Devil's Island.

Caricature by the French artist A. Gill, Zola's contemporary

The court-martial which tried Dreyfus was held in camera. The Right press shrieked "treason." The liberal intellectuals were frightened. In the meantime it became known that the trial was a frame up, and that Dreyfus had been condemned in order to shield a real spy, the officer Esterhazy. Public opinion was aroused. Now the issue was no longer Captain Dreyfus and his alleged guilt. It was the ruling clique of ministers and generals which was bent on saving its prestige, on retaining its position and power.

It was at that time that throughout France, throughout the whole world, Zola's voice resounded:

"J'accuse!"

Zola accused the President of the Republic Félix Faure, the Minister of War Mercier, the entire government and the judges—of concealing the truth, of lying, of fraud. . . . The ruling bourgeoisie became alarmed. All the forces of reaction were set into motion against Zola. He was threatened with death. He was hounded in the press. As the most outstanding French writer of his time, he was a candidate for the Academy of the "Immortals." But he was declared ineligible at the insistence of the enraged reactionaries, just as some time later tsar Nikolai demanded that the name of Maxim Gorky, the great proletarian writer, be stricken from the list of members of the Russian Academy. The French bourgeois republicans and the Russian tsarist ministers were really worthy of each other.

Zola was tried and sentenced to imprisonment for one year. He

Front page of "L'Aurore" in which "J'accuse!" appeared on January 13, 1898


L'AURORE
Littéraire. Artistique. Sociale
J'Accuse...!
LETTRE AU PRÉSIDENT DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE
Par ÉMILE ZOLA
LETTRE À M. FÉLIX FAURE

fled to England. But he attained his purpose none the less. Jaurès supported Zola's accusation. The progressive section of the intellectuals, now grown bolder, came out in support of Zola. Fearing the working class, and at a loss in the face of the growing movement, the reactionaries decided to make concessions. Dreyfus was pardoned and returned from Devil's Island. He was fully rehabilitated years later.

Zola died in 1902. His funeral became the occasion of a huge popular demonstration. Hundreds of thousands of people followed his bier. Anatole France called him France's "conscience." The government did not dare to refuse him recognition after his death. Although he had not been admitted to the Academy, the government was compelled to open the doors of the Pantheon to his remains. He is buried in the Pantheon next to Victor Hugo, who, like Zola, was a great writer and a great Frenchman who fought for the rights of the people against the forces of reaction and the military caste.

It is all this that one inevitably recalls in connection with Zola's anniversary. The name of this courageous, truthful and honest writer and citizen assumes a particular significance at the present time, when political reaction is again triumphant in France, when power is held there by people of the same political stamp as those who forty years ago persecuted Zola, put him on trial for saying the truth, sought his death and, at his funeral, tried to assassinate Dreyfus.

The present government of France was afraid that a public celebration of Zola's anniversary might again turn into a popular demonstration. That would be dangerous to the present rulers who fear every bold and honest word about the criminal imperialist war. On the occasion of the anniversary, the Minister Sarraut and the President of the Chamber Herriot cowardly sneaked into the Pantheon. They were the sole representatives of the government. The press maintained silence. Only close friends and relatives were invited. A wreath of roses was placed on the tomb by members of Zola's family. Not a word was uttered. *Le Petit Parisien* reported that in the evening Mr. Herriot made a speech at a family dinner.

The insincere tribute paid to Emile Zola by the French bourgeois critics, and the lying compliments of a Mr. Blum are but a desecration of the writer's memory.

His memory will be cherished only by the working class of France,

the sole legitimate heir to everything that is great and progressive in French culture and literature. True, the working-class press has been gogged by the brutal hand of the French gendarme. At the very time Mr. Herriot was sneaking into the Pantheon in order to perform the rite of official hypocrisy, the senile anti-Dreyfusers of the court-martial passed sentence on thirty six French Communists, elected representatives of the people who honorably fulfilled their duty to their country. Open praise for Emile Zola and public commemoration of his name is now regarded in France as anti-war propaganda, and the aged admirers of the butcher Mercier and the spy Esterhazy demand capital punishment for telling the truth about the war. But the people know the truth all the same. "*La verité en marche!*" ("Truth marches on!") With those words, the attorney, F. Labori, concluded his speech in court in defense of Emile Zola. Truth—the inexorable truth of life—arrived then, and it will again arrive now.

Zola exerted a marked influence on world literature. Many writers in Europe and America have paid tribute to Zolaism. In the United States, Upton Sinclair and Theodore Dreiser have reflected Zola's influence in their striving to present large canvases depicting great social processes.

And we, in the Soviet Union, remember Zola with gratitude. Zola loved Russian literature, was a friend of Turgenev, and wrote for a Russian magazine. In the 'seventies, when Zola was hounded in his own country and could find no publisher for his works, he found support in Russian literature. Zola once wrote: "In those terrible days of financial hardship, Russia revived my faith and gave me strength by providing me with a tribune and the most responsive, sincere and ardent audience." His novels were read in Russia no less widely—probably more—than in France. And to this day they are a necessary part of every Soviet library.

DAVID ZASLAVSKY

Zola . . . lives in seclusion; works like a horse. He is steel-tempered, stubborn and rough-edged, but for all that, good-natured, simple and very ambitious.

IVAN TURGENEV to P. Boborykin

In him (Zola) you have acquired a contributor with whom both you and your readers will be satisfied. . . . You ought to know that he works day and night, and although he lives very modestly, even penuriously, he can scarcely make ends meet. He was obliged to send articles to the provincial magazines, but now he has given up most of them to devote himself con amore *to the "Vestnik Evropi."*

IVAN TURGENEV to M. Stasulevich on the novels and letters of Emile Zola, published in the *Vestnik Evropi*, March 13, 1875

ANATOLE FRANCE

Oration Delivered at the Funeral of Emile Zola

Montmartre Cemetery, October 5, 1902

Messieurs, having been requested by the friends of Emile Zola to say a few words over his grave, I first wish to pay my respects and condolences to the lady who for forty years was the companion of his life, who had shared and assuaged the fatigues of his early career, who enlivened the days of his glory, and who sustained him by her untiring devotion in his hours of agitation and suffering.

Messieurs, in rendering to Emile Zola, in the name of his friends, the honor which is his due, I shall not give voice to my pain and to theirs. It is not by plaints and lamentations that we should honor those who have left a great memory behind them, but by sturdy praise and a sincere picture of their work and their lives.

The literary work of Zola is immense. You have just heard the President of the Writers' Society describe its character with admirable precision. You have heard the Minister of Public Education expatiate on its intellectual and moral significance. Permit me, for a moment, to dwell upon it in my turn.

Messieurs, when we saw this work being erected stone by stone, it was with surprise that we measured its grandeur. Some admired it, others were astonished at it; some praised it, others blamed it. Praise and blame were equally vehement. This powerful writer was sometimes reproached sincerely, yet unjustly (I know it, for I did so myself). Invective was mingled with eulogy. Yet his work went on developing.

Today, when we descry the colossal form in its entirety, we also recognize the spirit with which it is imbued. It is the spirit of goodness. Zola was good. He had the grandeur and the simplicity of great souls. He was profoundly moral. He painted vice with a rude but virtuous hand. His apparent pessimism, the somber humor with which so many of his pages are tinged, but ill concealed a genuine optimism, an obdurate faith in the progress of intelligence and justice. In his novels, which are social studies, he censured with a vigorous detestation a society of idleness and frivolity and a base and pernicious aristocracy, and he combated the evil of our times: the power of money. He was a democrat, but he never flattered the people, and he endeavored to bring them to realize the bondage of ignorance, the dangers of alcohol, which rendered them imbecile and turned into helpless victims of every oppression, of every misery and of every shame. He combated social evil wherever he encountered it. Such were his hatreds. In his last books he displayed his fervid love of humanity in all its fullness. He made

the effort to divine and predict a better society.

He wanted an ever larger number of men to enjoy the fruits of happiness on this earth. He placed his hopes in thought and science. He expected from the new force, machinery, the progressive emancipation of laboring humanity.

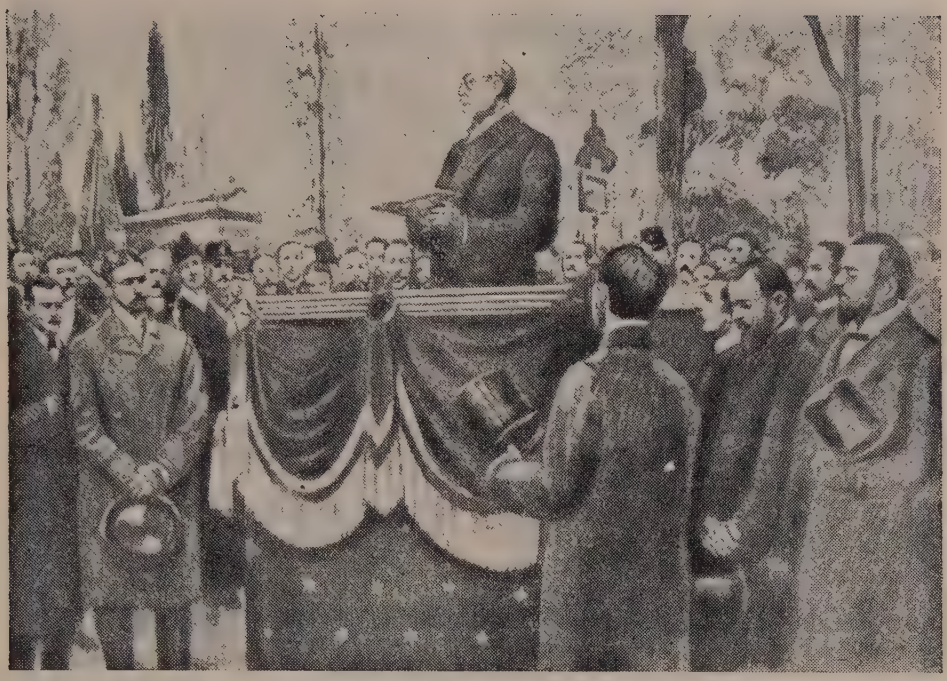
This sincere realist was an ardent idealist. His work is comparable in grandeur only to that of Tolstoy. They are two vast idealistic cities raised by the muse at two extremes of European thought. Both are generous and pacific. But Tolstoy's is the city of resignation, Zola's is the city of labor.

Zola won fame when he was still a young man. Tranquil and celebrated, he was enjoying the fruits of his labors, when he suddenly tore himself from his repose, from the work he loved, from the peaceful joys of his life. The words we pronounce over a coffin should be grave and serene; we should betray nothing but calm and harmony. But you know, *Messieurs*, that there is no calm but in justice, and no repose but in truth. It is not of philosophical truth, the object of our eternal disputes, I am speaking, but of that moral truth which we can all grasp because it is relative, tangible, conformable to our nature, and so near to us that an infant may touch it with its hand. I will not betray justice, which bids me praise that which is praiseworthy. I will not conceal the truth by craven silence. And why should we be silent? Are they silent who calumniated him? Over this bier I will say only what should be said, and I will say all that should be said.

Before recalling the fight that Zola waged for justice and truth, can I remain silent about those who were determined to encompass the ruin of an innocent man, and who, knowing that if he were saved they would be lost, attacked him with the brazen audacity that is born of fear? How can I keep them from your sight when it is my duty to show you Zola rising, feeble and unarmed, against them? Can I be silent as to their lies? That would be to conceal his heroic rectitude. Can I be silent as to their crimes? That would be to conceal his virtue. Can I be silent as to the outrages and the calumnies they heaped upon him? That would be to conceal his recompense and his honors. Can I be silent as to their shame? That would be to conceal his glory. No, I shall speak!

With that calmness and firmness which the spectacle of death lends us, I will recall those dark days when selfishness and fear held their seats in the councils of government. The iniquity was becoming known, but one felt that it was being sustained and defended by public and secret forces so powerful, that even the staunchest hesitated. Those whose duty it was to speak, held their peace. The best of them, who did not fear for themselves, feared, however, to plunge their party into frightful dangers. Deceived by monstrous lies, excited by odious exhortations, the mass of the people were infuriated, for they believed themselves betrayed. The masters of public opinion all too frequently accepted the error which they despaired of destroying. The shadows thickened. A sinister silence reigned. And it was at this moment that Zola wrote to the President of the Republic that measured and terrible letter in which he denounced chicanery and perjury.

With what fury he was then assailed by the criminals and by their interested protectors and involuntary accomplices, by the coalition of all the reactionary parties and by the deceived crowd! You have witnessed that yourselves, and you know of many an innocent soul



Anatole France speaks at the burial of Zola

who in saintly simplicity joined the hideous cortège of his hired vilifiers. You have heard the howls of rage and the savage calls for his death, which pursued him even in the Palais de Justice itself, and throughout that long trial, which judged in deliberate ignorance of the case, on the testimony of false witnesses, and amid the rattling of sabers.

I see here among us several of those who stood faithfully by his side in those days and shared his perils. Let them say whether greater outrages were ever inflicted on the just! And let them tell us of the firmness with which he bore them. Let them tell us whether his robust goodness, his manly pity, and his mildness ever forsook him, or whether his constancy was ever shaken.

In those villainous days many a good citizen despaired of the welfare of his country, of the moral fortune of France. It was not only the republican defenders of the regime who were crushed. Even one of the most resolute enemies of that regime, an irreconcilable Socialist, was heard to exclaim in bitterness: "If this society is so corrupt, then even its ruins will be too infamous to serve as a foundation for a new society!" Justice, honor, thought—all seemed lost.

But all was saved. Zola not only exposed a judicial error; he denounced a conspiracy of all the forces of violence and oppression that had united to kill social justice, the republican idea and free thought in France. France was aroused by the courage of his words.

The consequences of his act are incalculable. They are unfolding today with a potent force and majesty; they stretch on endlessly; they have started a movement for social equity which nothing can halt. They are giving rise to a new

order of things, founded on better justice and a deeper knowledge of the rights of all.

Messieurs, there is but one country in the world in which these great things could have come to pass. How admirable is the genius of our country! How beautiful is the soul of France which in past centuries taught the rights of man to Europe and to the world! France is the country of embellished reason and benevolent thought, the land of just magistrates and humane philosophers, the land of Turgot, Montesquieu, Voltaire and Malesherbes. Zola has deserved well of his country in not despairing of justice in France.

Let us not pity him for having endured and suffered. Let us rather envy him. Elevated on the most prodigious pile of outrage that folly, ignorance and iniquity have ever erected, his glory has attained to heights inaccessible.

Let us envy him: he has honored his country and the world with an immense work and a great deed. Let us envy him: his destiny and his heart have earned him the greatest of fortunes: *he was the conscience of humanity at that moment.*

Letter Read at a Meeting in Memory of Emile Zola

October 1, 1904.

Mr. President,

I deeply regret that I am unable to attend the grand meeting arranged by the League for the Rights of Man. I would have joined you in acclaiming to the best of my ability the name of Emile Zola. He was a man of energetic labors and of great deeds. As a novelist, his work is immense. I may express the admiration he inspires as a writer, without being suspected of complaisance, for if at first I combated with less restraint than sincerity certain rude manifestations of his genius, in many an article I recognized the power and goodness of his literary work long before those days of struggle when I ranged myself on his side.

In an instant, that man of thought became a man of action. When he wrote his letter, *J'accuse . . .!*, he performed a revolutionary act whose potency is incalculable, and whose beneficent results have never ceased to manifest themselves in our moral and political life, and make their influence felt even in foreign countries.

His courage and his rectitude brought him to the forefront in that small group of men who fought for justice in those infamous days: Scheurer-Kestner, Grimaux, Duclaux, Gasten Paris and Trarieux, who have died in battle. And others, too, who have survived and rise in our memories: as Ranc, Jaurès, Clémenceau, Séailles, Paul Meyer, that noble Picquart, and Louis Havet, whose honest and staunch words you will hear today, and you, Francis de Pressensé, whom our friends Quillard and Mirbeau saw calm, firm and tranquil beneath the shower of abuse and blows in Toulouse and Avignon where the White Terror raged.

That was the time when, amid

the peaceful solemnity of a prize distribution, in the presence of high generals of the French army, the Dominican monk Didon exhorted the military chiefs to depose a pusillanimous government and excited the Catholic youth to massacre in the streets those proud intellectuals who could not tolerate injustice in silence! It was the time when the Minister of War, Cavaignac, informed his colleagues of his scheme to try in the High Court, on the charge of high treason, all those who had defended Dreyfus, even his lawyers, Demange and Labori!

You will agree that it is with a certain feeling of joy and pride that one remembers that one had such adversaries as these.

All you who suffered contempt and who bore the name of Dreyfusites with pride must be just and admit that you owe a lot to your enemies.

Yours has been a strange and glorious destiny, that, seeking at first to secure the reparation of an error of justice due to a handful of unscrupulous perjurers, you gradually saw all the forces of reaction and oppression rise against you, and that your courage grew as in grandeur with the growth of the task. Your task grew more formidable.

That task is not yet accomplished. You have struck a deadly blow at the false plea of interests of state, at the abuse of public power, at the abominable practice of secret trial. But is it not an infamy that military tribunals still exist after so many vile conspiracies and so many monstrous arrests?

A great deal remains to be done. But let us not lose courage. The Dreyfus affair rendered our country the inestimable service of bringing openly face to face the forces of the past and the forces of the future, bourgeois authoritarianism and Catholic theocracy, on one side, and Socialism and free thought, on the other. The ultimate victory of organized democracy is beyond doubt. Let us render to Emile Zola the honor that is due him for having courageously flung himself into the perilous fight and for having shown us the way.

It was six years ago that we saw Zola's life threatened by an ignorant crowd seduced by criminals, as he left the *Palais de Justice*. The Municipal Council of Paris, recaptured by the Republicans and the Socialists, will perform an act of reparation in renaming the Boulevard du Palais as the Boulevard Emile Zola.

Apart from his great talent, Zola is quite a fine, reliable person.

The Dreyfus case has got up steam, but is not yet in its proper stride. Zola is a noble soul, and I am delighted at his vehemence.

ANTON CHEKHOV to Suvorin, January 4, 1898

. . . The feeling everybody has here is that a new and better Zola has been born. He has been cleansed in this case of adventitious grease spots as though in a bath of turpentine, and he now sparkles in the eyes of the French in all his brilliance. No one suspected such purity of soul and moral grandeur.

ANTON CHEKHOV to Suvorin, February 6, 1898

In general, Balzac's art of depicting people by means of words, his art of making their speech alive and audible, and his perfect mastery of dialogue has always amazed me . . . I also liked the books by the Goncourts, dry and precise as pen drawings, and the somber canvases by Zola, done in dark colors.

GORKY. *On Literature*, 1928

Zola's Centenary in the U.S.S.R.

Literary and scientific societies, universities, libraries and factory clubs in various cities of the Soviet Union joined in commemorating the centenary of Emile Zola.

In Moscow, the Union of Soviet Writers jointly with the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. held an open meeting dedicated to Zola. Academician I. Luppol presided. Professors I. I. Anisimov and E. L. Galperina read papers dealing with Zola and his work. The meeting wound up with a showing of Renoir's film *Nana*.

At the celebration arranged by the Moscow State University, Professor Eichenholts delivered a lecture on Zola's life and works and some of the most outstanding Moscow actors read excerpts from Zola's works.

Lectures on Zola and readings from his works were broadcast by numerous Soviet radio stations.

Illustration by N. Kuzmin to the new edition (1940) of Zola's "The Fortunes of the Rougons".

A Zola exhibition was held at the Central Library of Foreign Literature in Moscow and at the Lenin Library.

Many Soviet newspapers printed special articles on the occasion of the centenary. *Pravda* published an article by David Zaslavsky. This article, with additions made by the author specially for our magazine, is printed elsewhere in this issue.

The Russian edition of *International Literature* devoted a whole section to Zola. Professor Anisimov contributed an interesting article, *Zola's Work and Example*. Citing the opinions of Anatole France, Heinrich Mann and Henri Barbusse, Prof. Anisimov writes:

" . . . Zola proved closer to Balzac than he himself suspected, for, like Balzac, he penetrated into the mysteries of social life. On the other hand, it so happened that precisely where Zola felt that he could go further than Balzac, believing that 'Balzac's criticism lacks method,' and opposing to Balzac's 'method' Taine's pseudo-scientific positivism, he proved incomparably inferior to Balzac.

"In reproaching Balzac for being 'incapable of profound synthesis' Zola not only misjudged Balzac but overestimated his own ability to arrive at a synthesis. He was handicapped in this by the positivist theory which is profoundly inimical to synthesis. It does not follow from this, however, that Zola's works lacked synthesis entirely, but it was a synthesis which he arrived at in spite of his pseudo-scientific 'theory,' and it was never as profound as Balzac's synthesis.

" . . . If he was to avoid the limitations of naturalism, and, in the words of Barbusse, be able to see 'the social structure as a whole,' the realist writer of the second half of the nineteenth century needed a clear conception of the role of the proletariat in the struggle for emancipation . . . Zola's historic significance lies precisely in the fact that he began to feel his way towards this solution and that makes him a 'model' for many modern writers."

The same issue of the Russian edition of *International Literature* carries a little-known essay on Zola by Maupassant, the

famed speech of Anatole France (published also in the present issue), and an article by Zola directed against his literary opponents.

Lev Nikulin, Soviet author, writes in the Russian edition of *International Literature* of the meaning that the works of the great French realist have for Soviet writers. "To us, Soviet men of letters, Emile Zola is the embodiment of great talent combined with amazing staunchness, straightforwardness and honesty as a citizen and public figure. That is why we feel a strong kinship with him, and why he is one of our most beloved writers, both in French and world literature."

The French and German editions of *International Literature* also feature articles on the life and work of Zola and on his connections with Russia.

Zola as art critic is dealt with in an article by A. Tikhomirov in the magazine *Iskusstvo*. Entitled "Zola and the Impressionists," the article discusses the role of Zola as art critic, as the author of many fine literary, theatrical and art reviews, most of which were originally published in the Russian journal *Vestnik Evropi* (European Messenger). Some of these were subsequently reprinted by the Paris *Figaro* and evoked considerable controversy in France.

Newspapers and magazines published in the various Soviet republics also carried articles on the Zola centenary.

M. Zabludovsky in the Kazan newspaper *Komsomolets Tatarii* (Tatar Young Communist) writes of the part Zola played in the Dreyfus case. The author further points out that Zola's novels have been published in editions of hundreds of thousands in the Soviet Union and that his books can always be found in the hands of workers, students,and collective farmers.

The State Literary Publishing House has issued a large illustrated edition of *The Fat and the Thin* and *The Fortunes of the Rougons*. The "Soviet Writer" Publishers are putting out a book by Prof. Eichenholts, *Zola's Creative Methods*, illustraaed by many manuscripts unknown in France.

The interest shown to Zola in the Soviet Union is an expression of the appreciation and real understanding which the works of the great French writer find in the land which is a living confirmation of Zola's words: "Socialism—that is the future."

Illustration by N. Kuzmin to the new edition (1940) of "The Fat and the Thin"

ZOLA ON PUSHKIN

I am happy and proud to associate myself with you in thought and with all my heart as a writer on this day, when you are celebrating the genius of your immortal Pushkin, the father of modern Russian literature.

I got to know him chiefly through my great friend Turgenev, who has often spoken to me of his glory as a man who belongs to the universe, an admirable poet, a profound and keen romancer, a lover of liberty and progress, and an irreproachable model whom you hold up to your youth learning to write and to think. I have loved him as we should love all great minds whose national works are part of the treasury of mankind.

I send you across the frontiers the assurances of my homage for him. He should be celebrated by the homage of men of letters all over the world. And that will be a true bond of peace, a universal celebration of civilization.

On the 100th anniversary of Pushkin's birth, 1899

ERNEST KRENKEL

Four Comrades

Excerpts From the Diary

HEADING FOR THE POLE.

May 20-21, Rudolf Island-North Pole.

Well, we're off at last. The dogs bark furiously in farewell. It is about four kilometers to the airdrome, the road uphill all the time, up over a big glacier. Situated on the ice cupola is the northernmost aviation base and airdrome.

It takes almost an hour to get there, and our sleds move at walking pace. We sit on the sleds, our feet dangling, chatting quietly, smoking and keeping our faces turned away from the biting wind.

The sun and the snow were blinding. Had to wear our snow goggles. The station building grew smaller and smaller as we crawled uphill.

A remarkable view opened to the south of us. We could discern the island and the grim capes on the eastern side of the British Channel. There were big fissures in the ice-covered sea with ice piled in ridges here and there. Far on the horizon vast ridges sparkled brilliantly.

As we rose a bit higher, the panorama of Bay Teplits came in view. It was from here that many ill-starred foreign expeditions attempted to reach the North Pole.

At times our Stalinets tractor would sink deep into the firm snow covering the glacier. In anticipation of sharp jolts, some of the passengers would jump off. Turning at a right angle the Stalinets would force its way out of the snow and would continue to plow upward.

Reached the cupola. The radio station was out of sight.

At the airdrome we made for the planes to stow away "contraband" odds and ends each of us was trying to take along and to help the mechanics tune up the planes. A blizzard buried the planes' skis. Deep, wide trenches must be dug to extricate them.

It snowed several days ago. The snow on the orange wings was at first soft in the sun, but then froze fast. No brush could sweep it off; we, however, had to get rid of it somehow because of its weight and the streamlining of the wings. Six to eight people were kept busy at each wing, knocking the frozen snow out of the folds with sticks. A terrible clatter and noise arose.

Someone advanced a fine rationalization proposal when the job had almost been completed. The tractor drew up a water heater and the remnants of the snow were washed away instantly by a stream of hot water. Thick clouds of steam enveloped the plane.

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Illustrated by I. Rerberg.

In the meantime, the U-2 plane was doing some snappy work, serving as a sort of air-taxi, much to the admiration of everyone. It brought Otto Yulyevich Schmidt to the airdrome and at once rushed back to the station. Soon Dzerdzeyevsky, our weather man, arrived with the latest reports. A fog was creeping onto the cupola. The weather was getting bad. Soon everything was shrouded in a fog moving in waves and settling on the cupola. There were reassuring reports, however. "The fog won't last long," Dzerdzeyevsky insisted. As a matter of fact, there was no need to console us. By now we had learned to wait patiently, no matter how capricious the weather.

The engines on Vodopyanov's plane were tested. Everything was ready. Now all depended on the weather, and the weather was certainly bad. But the mechanics continued to tinker with the motors. A surprising tribe, these aviation mechanics. They are first to come and last to go. It seems as though everything is ready, but no. They are sure to find something to do, and again are fixing things, improving, adjusting.

FIRST DAY.

May 21, North Pole.

Beaming faces, a commotion near the hatch. Everyone wants to get out on the ice, to see what the Pole looks like.

The first out was Mark Troyanovsky, the cameraman. After him the remaining twelve tumbled out of the plane. Spirin and Fyodorov pulled the astronomic instruments out with them. The sun feebly peered through the clouds.

How good it feels to have a smoke at the North Pole after abstaining for six hours!

We congratulated each other, admired the flight and the landing. It was hard to believe we had made the Pole, hard to believe that the dream of mankind had been accomplished in such prosaic circumstances. However, general elation and one's own excitement confirmed the great event.

We ought to crack a bottle on this axis of the globe! A bottle of cognac and aluminum cups were produced from the plane. The cups were placed on the ice, and I found myself in charge of the drinks. I hid the cork in my breast pocket; some day I'll show it to my grandchildren.

To ration one bottle among 13 is rather a delicate job, but as the drinking was only a matter of tradition, no complaints about small doses were lodged with me.

"Comrades, to our splendid country, to our Stalin! Hurrah!"

A single toast, brief, but everything said. We raised our cups.

Three hurrahs rang through the air. The cup was cold, and the cognac, grown thick from the frost, burned the lips, but to such a toast one would down anything.

This concluded the festive part of our program.

And now began the work which occupied our minds for many months, and for which we had been preparing meticulously, down to the minutest detail.

We had to pass a test, pass it well, for no other chance would be given.

The mechanics covered the motors. Two men handed things from the plane. The pile of most necessary articles—maps, tents, kitchen utensils and warm clothing—grew bigger and bigger.

Schmidt and Vodopyanov had already pulled the first sled towards the nearest ridges of ice. The future camp moved some distance from the plane to avoid blocking the landing field for other planes.

Sima Ivanov was busy examin-

Ernest Krenkel

ing his radio. He was to establish contact. Our last message reported that we had passed the 89th parallel. Then contact was lost. The transmitter had gone out of order.

Communications, communications by all means and as soon as possible.

"What's wrong, Sima?"

"Bad business; the generator burned out."

"Can it be fixed?"

"No . . ."

Further questions were useless; how can one fix the winding consisting of hundreds of meters of wire packed tightly into the grooves of the armature.

To our regret, we didn't have our complete radio set, which was constructed specially for the drifting station. It weighed more than half a ton. We only had apparatus essential to establish a radio station and get on the air. We took along only one set of batteries and a small benzine motor for charging. We had no wind engine or bicycle engine to feed the transmitter in case of emergency.

We expected that, immediately on landing, communication with Rudolf Island would be established by the more powerful set on the plane, so that we could take time in assembling our own station. The break-down of the plane's radio upset our plans. Of course, we could try to fix it, but repairs would take a lot of time and most likely would be unsuccessful.

That is why I had to begin setting up our radio at once. The apparatus was removed from the plane. There it was, packed in sturdy veneer, canvas-covered boxes. Box No. 1 held the main set and No. 2 the reserve one. Each box had a set of tools, two folding masts, sewn in brown cloth. Each article was labeled in large letters, and a list, indicating where everything was placed, lay in each box. But neither labels nor lists were needed. I knew everything by heart. You could wake me in the night and I could tell immediately whether one or another part was to the right or to the left, at the top or at the bottom of the box.

Without much talking everyone understood that at the moment communications were the most important thing.

Everyone gave me a hand. Papanin and Shirshov set up a small, dark-green tent. Spirin and Babushkin were mounting the radio masts and their wirings.

The temperature was low—minus 15 deg. C.[1] The weather was dismal, and the fresh wind chilled our bare hands. One had to hurry and yet cover things, put the tools away, since it was beginning to snow. Empty pockets were stuffed with pieces of cord. A pity to throw them away.

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[1] All temperature is given in Centigrade, unless otherwise indicated.—*Ed.*

"A piece of cord? Let's have it. Even a cord might come in handy."

Here, as nowhere, the grim law of the Arctic is in force: each nail is worth its weight in gold when the cost of transportation is figured.

In unloading we were especially careful with the batteries. There were two of them; one—a 17-volt battery feeding the transmitter motor, the transmitter and receiver filaments; the other—an anode battery. The 12-volt battery weighs 40 kilograms.

There was no time to lay out the tools properly, no time to think of comforts. Everything was placed on the snow in the tent. A fur jacket served both as a floor covering and chair. I had to connect wires and adjust everything, standing on my knees. Do I hate to work in this position!

It all took much longer than I would have liked it to. More and more packages had to be opened for some little thing: a screw driver, paper, voltmeter.

Assembling the station took almost four hours. At last, after 3 p. m. on May 21st, I started the transmitter. The apparatus had been tested on Rudolf Island and there could be no hitch now. The muffled hum of the machine hidden in the box showed that everything was in order. But only seemingly so. No sooner had I started tuning the transmitter, when the humming died down and the number of revolutions dropped rapidly. A voltmeter merely confirmed the bitter truth. The batteries were low. Here I was to blame. I had had too high an opinion of these batteries. During our stay on Rudolf Island we had expected to take off any day. The batteries were charged, packed and stored in the plane. They were kept in the plane for two weeks during which time they ran low. Trouble again. We had to drag the engine with the dynamo to the tent, unpack it, set it up on the ice and charge the batteries.

Papanin worked the motor. It was a small 3-hp, air-cooled engine of 3,000 r. p. m. The stakes in the snow could not keep it stationary, and we had to take turns standing on its frame, feeling as though we were getting medical treatment; the swift vibration of the engine resembled a message.

Removed the corks from the batteries. To withstand the frost, the acid solution was made very strong, as we had occasion to learn several hours later by our thumb and index fingers which were not washed due to lack of water.

A one hour charge was insufficient but the batteries came to life. Now it was possible to get on the air. I switched on the receiver and it worked faultlessly. On Rudolf Island they knew it would take us no longer than six to seven hours to fly to the pole. However, even 11 hours later, at five in the evening, the first thing I heard was the work of the Rudolf Island radio beacon. It meant that they thought we might still be in the air.

Other radio beacons in the Kara Sea region were working too.

The signals were rhythmic and monotonous. Doleful, over and over again, they had a ring of alarm and anguish about them. We felt in those signals that the people were filled with anxiety about us.

But enough of listening. There was nothing on the air but the beacons. I had to get the transmitter going and to keep calling, calling until one of our stations would respond.

Prior to departing from Rudolf Island we had arranged a definite system of communications. Every hour they were to search for us on long waves, about 600 meters, and every half hour—on short waves, about 60 meters. One of these wave-

lengths was sure to reach Rudolf Island.

The transmitter worked well. There was radiation current in the antenna, and the wave bands had been checked previously.

The tent was crowded with apparatus. Wires hung overhead and I had to work lying on my side. To book, the tent was too short and my feet stuck out on the snow.

To the right of me, bent over a box, Schmidt sat silently. One can't help but envy him his outward calm. Not a single agitated remark from him, which would have been natural under the tense circumstances.

Hour after hour passed. Alternately I listened in and worked my transmitter. Again a forced halt; the batteries had to be recharged.

I could rise for a short while, stretch my legs and the side that had grown numb. But not for long. Thirty or forty minutes later I again listened in and worked the transmitter. Everything was running smoothly, had been tested and checked dozens of times. I was busy working, always on edge, and had to keep myself in check all the time.

Now everything depended on communications. Should we fail to establish contact, there might be irredeemable consequences. There must be communication.

And Rudolf Island kept on droning away all the time. It was clear that among the powerful signals they were unable to distinguish the weak call of our 20-watt transmitter. All other stations were farther south and surely audibility was even poorer there.

But at last, at 5 p. m., I heard all radio beacons ordered to stop work and to watch for us on all wave-lengths.

Rudolf Island also stopped work.

"Watching all wave-lengths. . . ."

Our calls, however, remained unanswered. Again the batteries had to be charged. A half hour later I stopped the motor. No patience. Again and again I tried to get in touch with the mainland. . . . Short calls on the wave-lengths agreed upon.

Each time I switched on the receiver I expected Rudolf Island's answering call. How much time was needed to start the transmitter there? Fifteen-twenty seconds . . . no more. I looked at the watch. Let's wait 20 seconds. They passed, then ten more, and yet Rudolf Island was quiet . . . No results . . .

At 9.30 p. m. I called again.

"Ukb Ukb de Upol pse kk." (Rudolf Island, Rudolf Island, North Pole calling, please reply.)

While working the transmitter, I suddenly felt: here is where we come through and they answer us. I felt so certain of this that for a moment I had an impulse to tell Schmidt at my side about it. But there were dozens of calls without any results. The time and the place were somehow unsuitable for black magic. Better keep quiet.

The transmitter was started again. In a flash Rudolf Island appeared on the air. The dots and dashes forming our call-letter rushed through the ether with terrific speed. A nervous hand, indistinct keying. At such moments even old-timers become nervous and make mistakes.

Judging by everything, they had heard our call. A smile spread over my face. I turned aside to conceal it from Schmidt. So far, these were merely signal calls. Let's see what Rudolf has to say.

And here came the message:

"Some excitement here . . . Where are you, let's have your report."

Schmidt and I shook hands.

"Will they wait while I write a message?" Otto Yulyevich asked.

"Of course."

Who said there was no music in the heavenly spheres? In full possession of my senses and of sound mind I maintain that there are even more beautiful things. For example: establishing communication between a group of people on drifting ice at the North Pole and their native land, and after 12 hours of silence at that.

While Schmidt was writing his message, I conversed with Rudolf Island.

Of course, the one to hear us first was Kolya Stromilov, the well-known wave sniper of theArctic.

First of all I keyed:

"Upol. See you clearly, 88!"

"See you clearly" is our short wave jargon, while "88" when translated into ordinary language means "love and kisses."

Then reported the main thing:

"All well, plane in order . . . Sima's main station burned out. My batteries low . . . writing radiogram. Our ice—the best in the world!"

Stromilov was excited as he keyed his reply.

I learned about the anxious hours our comrades had spent on Rudolf Island. The day had ended in anxiety and night had fallen. The usual jokes and gayety were gone. Moscow had sent inquiry after inquiry. A thick fog enveloped the cupola where our friends were ready to prepare planes to look for us.

And suddenly the frantic shout of Stromilov.

"I hear them!"

In the next room people jumped from their beds. Half-dressed they came from neighboring buildings, some running barefoot across the snow. In a moment the radio room was crowded to capacity like a Moscow tram during the rush hours.

Stromilov took down our message, while Moshkovsky, bending over his shoulder, read every word in a loud whisper.

Radiogram No. 1 from the North Pole was about to be dispatched. The Pole was talking now. The message was addressed to Moscow—Northern Sea Route Administration, to Shevelev on Rudolf Island.

"At 11.10 a. m. plane U.S.S.R. H-170 piloted by Vodopyanov, Babushkin, Spirin and senior mechanic Bassein flew across the North Pole.

"To make certain, flew a bit further. Then Vodopyanov descended from 1,750 meters to 200. Breaking through continuous clouds, began to search for ice floe for landing and setting up scientific station.

"At 11.35 Vodopyanov made splendid landing. Regret, while sending telegram about reaching Pole, a sudden short circuit occurred. Generator out of order, radio communication interrupted—reestablished after setting up radio at new Arctic station.

"Ice floe on which we landed is situated approximately 20 kilometers other side of Pole and somewhat west of Rudolf Island meridian. Will ascertain position more precisely. Ice floe fully suitable for scientific station remaining to drift in center of Polar zone. Can make here excellent airdrome for other planes carrying supplies for station.

"Feel that by interrupting communication unwillingly caused you much anxiety. Greatly regret. Hearty greetings.

"Kindly report to Party and Government fulfillment of first part of task.

"*Schmidt*, Head of Expedition."

Hardly did I get acknowledgement of the receipt of our message than I began to receive the answer of Rudolf Island.

"North Pole, Schmidt, Vodopyanov, Papanin, entire crew and winterers.

"Congratulations, embraces, kiss-

es. Proud of you. Happy at the achievement of our country. Entire staff gathered in radio cabin. With bated breath are watching every word as it comes from Stromilov's pencil.

"Details will be given only in person. Awaiting your order to take off.

"On behalf of entire collective,

Shevelev, Molokov."

After this came prosaic details.

"Krenkel give us meteo!" demanded Rudolf Island.

"Instruments not set up yet, can give you only description."

"Want it in a hurry, now."

"Keep your shirt on. For nineteen hundred and thirty seven years after Christ was born no one knew the weather on the North Pole. You can wait another half hour."

"Have it your way, gb (goodbye)."

"gb."

Thus ended the first exchange of radiograms between the North Pole and Rudolf Island.

We agreed as to the procedure and time for future work. The first contact was hard and took a long time, but now it should run as easy as greased wheels.

It was past midnight. The next time for radio communication had been set for six o'clock. Free time had to be utilized for charging the batteries. Everyone was asleep. Tiny flakes of snow fell from a sullen sky. A sharp wind blew in gusts. Felt cold after lying motionless on my side so long in the tent near the radio set. In addition, rheumatism, honestly acquired in the Arctic, made itself felt.

It was hard to get used to the idea that there was no place where one could warm up. It constantly seemed as though one were about to run in somewhere and let one's chilled bones get some warmth. But, alas, there was no such place. The only way to warm up was to imbibe some tea or pile on some more warm clothing.

The charging of the batteries was completed finally. I was terribly sleepy but in the morning we had to transmit the first weather report. Together with Papanin, I set up a cabin for weather observations, installed the instruments in it.

We didn't drink tea—had no patience to bother with the kerosene stove. Climbed into the tent. Lying next to each other, Shirshov and Fyodorov were asleep for quite a time already. And next to them our inseparable friend Mark Troyanovsky, the cameraman. The place was crowded, but because of this, fine warmth soon radiated through one's body. Plans for the next day were mingled in my mind with the realization that we were on the North Pole and that everything was going fine.

Yes, that was a tough day. Sleep.

CAMP AT THE GLOBE'S AXIS

May 22.

No chance to get a good, long sleep. About three hours later I was awakened. Everyone had risen long ago, and now I was being pulled out of my sleeping bag. The first weather report had to be transmitted. I hate to get out of a warm sleeping bag, but it's not so terrible if done fast.

Fyodorov entered the first weather report in the journal.

"North Pole, May 22, 6 o'clock Moscow time. Pressure 761, temperature minus 12, wind 8 meters west (Greenwich Meridian) in gusts. Fog. Sun shines through. Visibility one kilometer. Slight snow falling."

The first weather report from the North Pole! It was received at Rudolf Island. From there our report would go to all continents and be included in the international

weatherchart for the Northern Hemisphere.

Until, now, while compiling their charts, the weather men drew on the reports of several Canadian and the numerous Soviet Arctic stations. The huge territory of the Central Arctic zone remained untouched. The weather men could draw any charts their heart desired there. The isobar lines were cut short somewhere beyond Spitzbergen and Franz Joseph Land. Through no fault of their own, the weather men had literally to hide their ignorance behind the unexplored ice of the Arctic Ocean.

With our coming to the North Pole the situation was changed. We were presenting exact information on the weather. How to coordinate our reports with those of other Arctic stations was a matter for the weather experts.

Our weather wizard, B. Dzerdzeyevsky, who provided some fine prognostications to our expedition, declared frankly and honestly:

"Now it's much harder. Before, one could draw any old lines. No one could tell whether they were right or not, that was shrouded in mystery. But now one has to take into account your reports."

Shevelev reported today that during our flight to the Pole yesterday we had landed in a cyclone that had been "overlooked." This cyclone moved from Greenland to the south west. No wonder it was overlooked. It could have been observed by the stations in Spitzbergen only after the cyclone had hit them.

The three planes of the expedition remaining on Rudolf Island will find it easier to come to the Pole. To begin with, they know that we have a good landing field here. In addition, having our weather reports, they can take off from Rudolf Island even in bad weather.

Should these planes be unable to locate us at once, it had been decided that no precious fuel was to be wasted looking for us, but that they should land somewhere in the vicinity of the Pole. They were to establish radio communication with us and then decide who was to fly to make contact.

Today spent a whole day puttering about with the radio station and the engine, frequently maintained contact with Rudolf Island. Had no chance to look around and get a good view of the ice floe on which we will have to spend many months.

May 23.

Stromilov reports that today's Moscow newspapers had printed telegrams of our landing at the North Pole. People are standing in line to get a newspaper. Would I like to see one! Even though our station has not been fully assembled we decided to give each one of the first 13 Pole dwellers a 25-word message. Write to whomever you wish.

The messages were all alike; "dear" and then follows a woman's name. Let all our Natashas, Marusyas, Olias and Anyas rejoice and take pride.

One of the men had to write to two addresses, and I, on my own authority, increased his ration by five words. If you can share your feelings then you ought to be able to share your telegrams as well. Mark Troyanovsky is definitely at a disadvantage—his girl friend's address alone takes up 11 words.

Tremendous unexpected joy in the afternoon. Received a Government radiogram signed by Stalin, Molotov and other leaders of the Party and the Government.

"Government message Nr. 2768, 106 words 5-23-20:12.

"To Comrade O. Y. SCHMIDT: Chief of North Pole Expedition,

to Comrade M. V. VODOPYANOV: Commander of Aviation Detachment.

"To all members of the North Pole Expedition.

"The Party and the Government warmly greet the glorious members of the polar expedition to the North Pole and congratulate them upon the fulfillment of the task assigned, the conquest of the North Pole.

"This victory of Soviet aviation and science culminates a splendid period of work in mastering the Arctic and the northern routes, which are so essential to the Soviet Union.

"The first stage has been covered, greatest difficulties have been overcome. We are confident that the heroic wintering party remaining at the North Pole will fulfill with honor the task assigned to them of studying the North Pole.

"Bolshevik greetings to the brave conquerors of the North Pole!

"J. Stalin. V. Molotov. K. Voroshilov. L. Kaganovich. M. Kalinin. A. Mikoyan. A. Andreyev. A. Zhdanov."

The tent dwellers crawled out on all fours, people kept running over from the plane.

Schmidt read the message in an even, loud voice.

Dead calm prevailed and the snow was falling gently. . . . And next came routine. The whole day Papanin, Shirshov, Fyodorov and Troyanovsky were busy cutting a hole in the ice. What thickness! The crowbars are a bit too heavy. Your hands begin to ache after you swing one for a while. The trench had to be made wider in order to use a spade. Gradually the trench became narrower. After digging for two meters we had to revert to the old method, *i. e.*, to leave the ice in the center untouched and to dig all around it.

Great care had to be exercised. Should the ice be broken through in one spot, the water would gush forth and flood the whole works. The ice was getting grey gradually, until we reached water. After this we had to work with a long crowbar for a whole hour, trying to knock the center piece out. The ice was three meters and ten centimeters thick!

From Rudolf Island Stromilov inquired whether he should transmit the congratulatory messages or send them by plane.

A club of one of Leningrad's factories challenged us to a chess tournament by radio, to begin at once. To make sure that we entertained no doubt as to the seriousness of the offer we were informed that only first category players would play against us. Just the sort of thing we need now. All had a good laugh.

May 29.

Up to our necks in work. Hardly any time for sleep. We rest only in snatches.

All these days hurried to unload the planes. Now at last the job is done. The planes stand empty on our airfield, but we keep on going to and fro, placing and counting the boxes and cans as though we expected to pump something else from the planes.

Gradually, our settlement on the ice is being established, and it is assuming a "lived-in" air. Our living quarters, the black tent covered with canvas, stand out sharply against the snow background.

Assembled the tent, put a cover over it and laid fur skins inside. It is warm and cozy now. Are now building a snow entrance and kitchen. We will have a nice three-room apartment. A short distance away rises the radio cabin and six other tents. We have a real little city.

When the first part of our "construction" was done, we held a

housewarming. Moved from the temporary light silk tents to our "home." Incidentally, our home is also light and can easily be picked up and carried away.

Our wind-driven electric station is working. Under the influence of the Arctic wind it waves its hands merrily, brightens the landscape and gladdens our hearts. This station is "working full blast" and has already charged our batteries. Now we have an inexhaustible supply of energy for radio communication.

While the planes are with us, the camp is very lively, but it will soon be deserted.

Are impatiently waiting to get on with our studies of the Pole. Fyodorov and Shirshov are already conducting regular meteorological observations. But beneath our feet, under the three meter layer of ice are the unexplored and unmeasured waters of the ocean. We long to sound its depths, take samples of the ocean bottom.

May 30.

Workdays are here. All work is proceeding according to a strict schedule, broken only in cases of emergency. But in addition to our regular activity there is also "capital construction." Our time is all taken up.

We are jacks of all trades, builders, freight handlers and commodity experts. By now we have sorted out all our goods, are distributing them in several bases located in different ends of the ice floe. In case of ice jamming we won't lose all our supplies.

Our living quarters are the object of envy of the other members of the expedition. The floor is covered with deer hides and the walls draped to keep the place warm. It is called the "House of Soviets," a house of Soviet people on the North Pole.

June 6.

Well, now we have all our things. The planes may leave for the south, for Franz Joseph Land. They have to hurry, spring is advancing to the Pole.

Had known all along that we four were to remain behind, but somehow the last day arrived suddenly and unexpectedly.

All were anxious to write home but had found no time for it. At the last moment, scribbled something on pieces of paper spread on our knees. All this was sent over there—home.

At five in the afternoon we called a meeting dedicated to the hoisting of the colors and the opening of the drifting North Pole Station. A sled served as platform, two bamboo masts as the flag poles.

A short speech by Schmidt, followed by Papanin.

"Hoist flag!"

The flags flutter in the wind. One of them is the State flag of

Scientific Work

the U.S.S.R. and the other carries a silhouette of Comrade Stalin. A triple volley of rifle and revolver shots. We stood with our heads bared, singing the *Internationale*. Were accompanied by the roar of the 16,000 horse power plane engines—the mechanics were warming them up.

The last moments arrived. We kissed and embraced everyone, saying confidently: "See you soon." The pilots handed us presents. Babushkin, a deck of cards; Molokov, a *primus* (kerosene stove), and Mazuruk—a phonograph and a set of records which he had taken along over and above his scheduled freight.

The sky was grey and foggy in spots. One after another the planes took off. Vodopyanov was last to leave. The cabin was closed.

One more circle above us, and the plane was lost in the clouds. The drone of the engines grew weaker and weaker. Then everything was silent.

At first we felt somewhat uncomfortable. After all, in childhood we hadn't been trained to stay at the North Pole in a foursome. One must get used to everything.

Decided to stay up until we learned that the planes had landed safely at Rudolf Island.

FOUR ON AN ICE FLOE

June 21.

A month passed very quickly. Grew accustomed to the complex household brought by the planes. Everything had been put in order, every article was in its place. We were, however, still on a summer footing. The eiderdown covers had not been placed about the tent as yet; were afraid that dampness might ruin them.

Prior to the take-off of the planes, we looked searchingly at them; they had so many things that would come in handy. The business-like Papanin threatened to send the flyers back with nothing but their shorts on. We disdained nothing, accepted everything with thanks. And yet the impossible happened: one of the planes made off with our frying pan. Still can't get over it.

Our day is one solid round of activities. Shirshov and Fyodorov are busy sixteen hours a day with their scientific research, and take part in emergency work only in cases of great urgency. I sit in the radio shack or putter about in the kitchen: am proud of the fact that I provide both material and spiritual food to our entire collective. Papanin handles all the so-called outside work—inspection of the bases, watching the supplies and the ice.

We all rise at six. A solid breakfast and then a workday lasting until 10 in the evening. Dinner is served about 6. The menu is varied: the first course usually is soup—pea, barley, *borshch*, *shchi*,[1] vegetable and fish. Second course is porridge, chicken or meat cutlets, fresh pork, green peas, sausages. For dessert we have tea, coffee, cocoa, fruit compote. It is with a feeling of great gratitude that we think of the Food Institute which has provided us with an ideal diet.

The personnel of many factories worked selflessly to provide us with first rate equipment. Thanks to Caoutchouk Factory, to engineer Maria Gulbis, for the excellent tent. Our gratitude goes to the N.K.V.D. radio laboratory for the fine radio station. And thank you, engineer Perli, for the fine wind engine and automatic winch.

At times it seems to us that we live somewhere in the steppes. But fissures of water in the distance are stern reminders of the treachery of the Arctic. We keep an eye on the old cracks in the ice. Our ice floe is

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[1] *Borshch* and *shchi* are beet and cabbage soups, respectively.—*Ed.*

so solid that we hardly have cause to fear direct jamming or the piling of ice. Nevertheless, several sleds stand in readiness to transfer our supplies, if need be.

We have two deep-water stations to our credit. Guard the samples taken from the ocean bottom as the apple of our eye. All four of us work at the hydrological station; the total weight to be hoisted is 80 kg. It took us six hours to raise the first samples, and four and a half the next. "Doctor" Shirshov is worried that our extensive work outdoors will make us so robust as to rob him of his medical practice. Once he said:

"I bet the first aid I render will probably be the last." That is why we try not to burden him with calls.

The flood of congratulatory messages from all parts of the Soviet Union continues unabated. Unable to answer all of them individually, we thank them all through the *Pravda*. Will do everything in our power to justify the confidence of the Fatherland.

Demolished our snow kitchen which had almost completely caved in, and put up a big white tent in its place. Very convenient and cozy. Now we have dinner in the tent. It's clean and warm and the soup plates do not have to be carried far.

We had thought of taking off half a day and resting on the occasion of our month's jubilee, but matters certainly turned out differently. We spent almost the whole day in setting up and fixing the tent.

At ten in the evening learned that the planes of our expedition arrived safely in Archangel.

Had supper at midnight in the new kitchen tent. Placed a real, though wobbly, table in the kitchen, and on it a bottle of cognac. We took this table from the Moscow custom house where it had been sent as a sample. It is a folding table with detachable legs. The table bears the trade mark of the firm which produced it—the word "Frappant" meaning "amazing." It does amaze us by its instability, and we frequently call it various other names unfit for print.

June 26.

From now on the midnight watch will be mine. At midnight made my first independent meteorological observation. I must manage to code it in 20 minutes before calling Rudolf Isle.

After this, buckled down to the radio. In the early hours of the morning one can receive Europe well on the 20 meter band, reception from America is poorer. But about 3 to 4 o'clock Brazilians come in bunches. By five there were but a few straggling Europeans on the air and Americans reigned supreme.

Many times I keyed the signal, CQ ("calling all stations"), but no one replied. Suddenly I heard a French radio amateur and began calling him. The Frenchman replied. I said: "This is the North Pole." He replied: "The city of Rheims is listening to you." When the Frenchman learned he was the first French radio amateur with whom I had established contact there was no end to his joy. I began to look for Rheims on our small globe but couldn't find it. In any case it is in the same latitude as Kiev or Kharkov. The Frenchman persisted in asking where he could write to get confirmation of contact with me. Told him: "Send letter to Moscow."

Began calling again but no answer. No matter which way I turn, distances are great, and I have but a 20-watt set.

At 6.52 some station began to answer loudly to my signal. When it came to its call letters, could only make out the first letter W.

An American. But as luck would have it, half a dozen amateurs suddenly swarmed onto the ether and drowned him out. Was barely able to make out the end of his message. Began calling again. The American station answered. His call-letters were W2cys. Had to tell him who we were and where we were located. To my regret, in the big hubbub of amateurs could not make out his answer. What a pity that the first communication with an American station was interrupted. In any case we have each other's call-letters, and on returning to the mainland will exchange cards with him. Judging by my list, the station should be situated in or around New York.

From early morning each of us is busy with his own affairs. Shirshov is fixing up a snow hut built over the winch. Vodopyanov's parachute, which served faithfully on the plane and then as a roof on the radio shack, has now moved to Shirshov's hut.

Moscow reported that at a banquet in the Kremlin Comrade Voroshilov toasted our quartet. Hearty thanks to Kliment Yefremovich. If need be, we will land in any place wherever necessary and will use not only scientific instruments but any other equipment the situation may demand.

After morning tea, went to sleep till noon. At twelve transmitted the weather report, and again went to sleep—had a headache.

In the evening the boys had tea and I dinner. Then washed up, something I haven't done for several days—also washed the dishes.

The weather is absurd. Fog, drizzle and clear weather interchange. At times spots of the sky are clear. A fine rainbow lingers over the ice for several hours. The temperature of the air is about minus one. We sink in the wet snow which is thawing in real spring fashion. Keep a 24-hour watch. The sun shines without a let-up, though dimly.

June 27.

Made a weather observation at night and then assumed the regular watch. There is no wind and I go easy on the batteries. Hardly called amateurs at all.

I like these night hours. One has a chance to concentrate a bit, to do some dreaming, to make entries in the diary. There is no chance to do this in the day-time; either there is some work or when you have a free moment you get into a conversation. Obviously, day dreaming under such circumstances is impossible.

Wrote and dispatched another article to *Pravda*. At seven in the morning the "Comintern" radio station broadcasts them.

Papanin is cutting a store house in an ice block. A way has to be found to preserve our veal and pork. Fifty kilograms of cutlets were spoiled on the plane. We began to eat them, though not without aversion, but finally had to give them to Vesyoly, our dog. Vesyoly's good luck continues. Now fifty kilograms of pork chops have spoiled. This is how the problem of storaging fresh meat on the North Pole originated.

Papanin himself feeds Vesyoly every morning. The dog is given his rations of spoiled chops. Before devouring them he waves them about for a long time, evidently airing them. Clever mutt!

Today Petya[1] lowered a plankton net to a depth of 1,000 meters. The catch was unusually good. Lots of red mollusca and even some medusae. There were so many of them that they cluttered the whole net. Even at the North Pole there is an abundance of life. This is indeed a remarkable discovery!

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[1] Short for Pyotr Shirshov.—*Ed.*

Shirshov just showers Latin names about, and the three of us listen reverently and draw only one conclusion: the size of a Latin name is in inverse proportion to the animal in question. For sake of simplicity we called the entire haul "sea fleas" and let it go at that. They had to be preserved at all cost but the alcohol had been left on Rudolph Island. Hence our next problem—alcohol.

EVERYTHING MOVES

July 1.

Since morning have been transmitting long messages to four addresses: Northern Sea Route Administration, *Tass*, *Pravda* and *Izvestia*. More than a thousand words. The first summary of the scientific work during the stay on the ice. It came out extensive, interesting and weighty.

Next, together with Papanin, undertook moving, or to be more exact, completely shifting the kitchen tent. The snow on our field had settled completely. It is difficult to walk. You sink knee deep, and beneath the snow there is water. The stakes don't hold up the tent and inside everything is lopsided.

We packed the snow and again placed boards under the tent. Drove stakes into the ice. Spent more than half a day doing it.

Dug a "well" or, simply, dug in the snow until we reached ice. There is a layer of 10 centimeters of water between the ice and the snow, and we draw on it.

The weather is just splendid! Not a speck of cloud in the sky and the sun is beating down for all it's worth. You can't be out for a moment without goggles. Without them you can't see a thing and your eyes begin to smart at once. Wore only jerseys and even then worked up a sweat.

Petya began to make a daily hydrological station. He takes samples every two hours.

Received a message from the political administration of the Northern Sea Route: a combined Party and Young Communist League group has been formed on our station, consisting of Papanin, myself and Fyodorov. We will hold a meeting in the near future, for Petya intends to file an application to become a sympathizer.

Mark Troyanovsky telegraphed that the film of the expedition to the North Pole was ready and would soon be released. That's fine. Good work. Real Arctic tempo. . . .

July 6.

The Greek philosopher who coined the expression "everything is in a state of flux" hardly suspected his words would prove correct even at the North Pole.

Summer at the Pole is one endless fog, drizzle, wet snow and puddles of water. The temperature hovers around the zero mark.

At first our tent stood on even snow. Now the snow all about it has settled, and small lakes have appeared. The field itself now consists of slightly discernible hillocks and hollows. Water accumulates in the hollows, and we frequently sink in it. Though the rubber overshoes on our felt boots are pretty high the water reaches above them. Through a stroke of luck our tent is on a slight hill, but the entrance is blocked by a puddle of water. We placed a wide board across it.

To preserve the hill upon which our tent is pitched, we were forced to undertake a strange job for the North Pole. We must pile snow up around the tent.

The resources of snow near the tent are exhausted and now we must haul snow on sleds from afar. Never thought we would have a shortage of snow up here.

Krenkel prepares tea

Papanin is digging a ditch. He is trying to divert the puddle from our tent. This is the first artificial canal on the North Pole, and from here we draw our supply of water for the kitchen. It is very difficult to move about on the ice floe. Placed boards in many spots. There is water everywhere.

The only dry spot in the entire Polar zone is the interior of our tent. It withstands the pouring rain well.

Scientific work is proceeding normally.

Today marks a significant date; a month has elapsed since the planes left us. We have been living on our own for a whole month now, without outside aid.

Established communication with a Dutchman and then with Moscow (Vetchinkin). He can hardly hear me (audibility four points; audibility is classed by a nine point system—nine point is the highest). I heard him well—audibility eight points. But this was my first Moscovite, the first direct contact between the North Pole and Moscow.

Vetchinkin told me that he had been hunting for me for six nights.

A steady fine wind was blowing in the daytime. Batteries well charged.

Will sleep at night. Zhenya[1] is conducting a twenty-four hour magnetic observation and will replace me.

For the first time today calculated how many days remain to the end of the drift. There are yet 267 days till the first of April. Less than a year anyway.

A TRAFFIC LIGHT AT THE CROSSROAD OF MERIDIANS

July 11.

Fyodorov kept watch at night while I slept. Rose in the morning and did not go back to sleep as I usually do. Breakfasted with Zhenya; the same egg and sausage omelette. These sausages, notwithstanding their tin foil wrapping, are becoming moldy. Papanin and Shirshov won't eat them, so the two of us have it all to ourselves. No complaints from us.

After tea, was busy with all sorts of things. Tightened the stakes of

[1] Zhenya—short for Evgueni Fyodorov.—*Ed.*

the masts. The puddles around the shack have turned into azure lakes. Dry snow has disappeared completely. Water at every step. It's a good thing our boots are strong and waterproof.

Today received greeting from people of the Stalin district of Moscow where evidently members of our expedition were feted.

Congratulated Shirshov. The political administration reported that he was accepted as sympathizer of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks). Petya is attached to our Party and Komsomol group. An interesting group; one member of the Party, one candidate-member, one sympathizer and one YCL'er.[1]

Regardless of the great occasion, Shirshov sticks to his work. He is taking samples of the plankton from various depths: 3,000, 2,000 and 1,000 meters. We have to pay out 6,000 meters of cable. Papanin and Shirshov are busy at it. Don't envy them. Medusae and all sorts of animals were hoisted up from a depth of 3,000 meters. There is the lifeless Arctic for you! After work Shirshov set up his fine microscope, and all of us with bated breath peered at the fascinating catch.

The samples are corked in bottles and, like everything else of value, are stored at the head of Shirshov's sleeping bag.

But, it seems we won't have enough alcohol to preserve all the samples.

Usual weather; fog, drizzle, at times snow. Temperature around zero. Last night a thin crust of ice had formed on the water puddles. That's good.

Late at night received a report that Gromov's flight along the route Moscow-North Pole-North America has been set for July 12 at three a. m. Just for spite, after having been fine for the past two days, the weather grew terrible, poor visibility, can't even see the clouds, everything is shrouded in fog. Those letters for us from Moscow might just whizz by!

ARCTIC SUMMER

July 25.

During the last day the lakes and puddles found an outlet, and the fresh water receded considerably. There is hardly any snow on the ice, just a little of it remaining near the ridges. The ice is melting noticeably. The stakes supporting the radio masts stick out of the ice some 40 centimeters.

Yesterday one of the stakes was thawed out completely while the others were submerged in ice no thicker than two fingers. The mast itself sank a half meter in the ice and now stands without supports. Here is something interesting: any piece of paper, the tiniest wood splinter dropped on the ice sinks into it 20 or even 40 centimeters. The wrapping of a chocolate bar was lying near the tent. On that spot there is now a hole big enough to put one's foot into. Especially queer is the way pieces of cord freeze in the ice. They form a sort of block. Their thickness is exactly that of the cord.

Though there are few sunny days, the sun rays break through the clouds. Our tent, originally black, turned brownish.

Shirshov, catching plankton yesterday at a depth of 1,000 meters, found that the so-called biological spring is in full force at the ocean's depth. The algae are blooming.

After morning tea, undertook with Papanin to cover the tent with snow. Hauled 15 sleds of snow. They are heavy, the two of us can barely move them. The snow is almost like water; by the time we

[1] YCL—Young Communist League.—*Ed.*

haul it over our hands tire and I feel a sticking pain in the heart. Finished the job by noon. Hope this snow will last for ten days. When will the early frosts come at last?

Fried pancakes prepared with soda. It's hard to fry in butter, it burns and smells up the place . . . But I don't want to open a new box of provisions before August first. We have everything but biscuits. I don't feel like opening a fresh case just to get biscuits. So I suffer and make cakes. And as luck would have it, they come out well. Last time fried 60 cakes and expected them to last four days, but the boys stowed them away in a day and a half.

July 26.

Mother writes from Kislovodsk: "Your telegrams received promptly, after 36 hours stop they caused sensation stop all send congratulations greetings to the courageous four stop my reply put post office people in quandry they asked for detailed address stop I said 'bear's lane.'"

Indeed my sympathy is with the telegraph operators. The "North Pole" station is not listed in any telegraph code book. Therefore it does not exist.

July 28.

Received two radiograms at once from Natasha.[1]

"Daily overjoyed at beauty of country home. Now busy fixing up playground, soon will plant fruit trees. Regret upper story not painted yet, evidently summer cottage will be completed only at your arrival. Kisses." And the second: "Seldom go to city, that is why I do not reply promptly to your radiograms. Now came to see about furniture for cottage. Wish to have it very cozy when you come. Will have to work all winter. Children look very well. All gained weight. Kisses."

It seems that Natasha is all excited about fixing up the summer cottage. Wrote her she should at least abstain from building subway to cottage.

Yesterday, the wind engine worked for twelve hours. After a long interval at last charged the batteries to the full. In the evening the four of us were engaged writing articles for newspapers. We had had nothing for them for a long while.

July 29.

Wet snow fell at night. Temperature zero.

It would be hard to conceive of worse weather. Disgusting slush, dampness, fog, a biting wind. Wearing raincoats to protect our fur clothes. Have a headache and swallowed several dozes of the life-saving *pyramidons*.

As long as the batteries were low had no urge to hunt about in the ether. But now with well-charged batteries couldn't withstand the temptation. Transmitted a 700 word article to Rudolf Island and again charged the batteries.

My heart of a radio operator was overjoyed. Here was a chance to wander about in the ether and hunt amateurs of distant lands.

Till one o'clock Europe was working, while America slept. The air was quiet then. Only some inveterate radio hounds could be heard. There was little chance for establishing communication, but should you manage it, you may be sure that it is someone very far away.

Radio amateurs in all countries are well informed of our expedition. Many courteously offer their services to relay our messages to Moscow. All amateurs send us greetings and congratulations.

There are some, however, with whom our conversation, should we happen to strike them in the ether,

[1] Krenkel's wife.—*Ed.*

is limited to a chilling courteous report on audibility. To the query who we are and where we are located we reply: "Soviet expedition at North Pole."

At 13.55 received the reply K6 to a general signal. A rare call-letter. Looked it up. "Hawaian Isles." That's grand. A banjo, Hawaii and the North Pole, that's going some . . .

The Hawaian reports five point audibility and can hear everything well. Gives the highest rating to the tone of my transmitter. To make sure asked his name. Introduced himself: Mr. Trowles of Honolulu. His power is 125 watts. The weather in Honolulu is warm, cloudless, temperature 80 Farenheit.

He knows all about our expedition from press reports. Was glad to communicate with me, asked me when I am on the air, so he could tell others who would be on the lookout for me. What other distant communications did I have? Told him that so far this was the farthest and the best of long-distance communications we had had. The conversation was going on excellently without a single repetition . . . and continued for 50 minutes. Finally Mr. Trowles from Honolulu announced that it was time for him to retire, whereupon Mr. Krenkel from the North Pole bade him good night.

Had a look at our school globe. Pretty far off this Honolulu, almost 8,000 km. But even there people know about our expedition.

But as the saying goes, "The appetite is whetted in the course of the meal." After scanning the globe for a while, went to work again. Who is VK2, Southern Australia? Doubt if our set can pull that far, it's weakish, 20 watts in all. But the devil take it, why not try. Kept calling him four minutes but the Australian did not reply. True he asked once "Who is calling me?" But after my repeated call he became silent. I thought that communication was interrupted. But a little patience! Half an hour later I came across him again. But this time he kept on droning louder than the first time. I could discern my call letters clearly. The Australian, however, is rather pampered. "Hear you poorly only three points. Poor conditions, good bye." And that's all. My dear fellow, if you only knew whom you had contacted. You would have jumped out of your skin . . . Well, it does not matter as long as communication was established.

My transmitter's 20 watts can't be expected to feed the loud speaker of Southern Australia. Covered 15,000 kilometers. Only Cape Horn, Tasmania and New Zealand are situated more to the South. It's too bad the set has no hand, I should like to shake it.

This contact is, of course, a record. It is of interest for appraising how radio waves of small-powered sets spread. Twenty watts were sufficient to get to Southern Australia. I guess that's a record hard to beat. Should I try to contact amateurs on Cape Horn, Tasmania or New Zealand? Little chance of that, and there are probably very few of them there. Well, the distance is not much farther than Southern Australia. It's hardly worth trying. I behaved today as though it were my birthday; am accepting congratulations and even my headache is gone.

In the evening, sent an article about all these doings to the *Pravda*. Incidentally told about the interesting map that Zhenya drew up.

Having calculated the average velocity and direction of the wind, Fyodorov entered them on the map. So far the direction coincides remarkably with that of our drift. Is our drift a wind drift?

Spoke to Stromilov in the evening.

Next spring Yasha Libin intends to fly to the heart of the Arctic Ocean and land at the 85th parallel, to stay for a month or two and conduct work similar to ours. Moscow agreed to it. All the necessary equipment will be delivered by ice-breaker in the autumn.

August 1.

Began the night watch by transmitting a long telegram of Fyodorov to *Komsomolskaya Pravda* about our radio station. Then sat down to calculate the mean temperature for July. Lined up a whole battalion of figures and suddenly Vesyoly barked. Ran out from the shack. The dog was barking at a sea-gull flying some distance away.

The rain drums on the tightly stretched roof, the wind howls, while the wind engine beats rhythmically. The boys are cuddling up in their warm sleeping bags. Only I, like an outcast, stick in the radio shack.

At three o'clock Vesyoly barked furiously again. I went out to see what was the matter. A fine sight. A she-bear was calmly walking about with her cubs near our clipper boat, next to our northern base. They kept on prowling about the base, sniffing at everything. The cubs were evidently born in 1937. They came over from the north-west. The revolving wind engine apparently attracted their attention.

Shouted into the tent.

"Bears!"

Grabbed a gun. The bears noticed me, turned round and began to run.

I had no time to wait for the boys and decided to shoot. The distance was quite big, and the bears were getting away. The hind parts of the bears kept bobbing up and down. Not a very good target. I took seven shots without landing a single one, however.

Chased after the bears. Papanin and Shirshov ran on skis. Vesyoly rolled after them like a black little ball. Tied to a sled, he dragged it with him for a while and finally broke loose.

Ran a long time and forded a lake. At times when reaching a high ridge the bears would stop and look back. We couldn't shoot. They were out of range. The chase was unsuccessful. They got away in the fog, vanishing among the ridges.

Anxiously awaited the return of Vesyoly. The exhausted dog returned three hours later.

The appearance of bears was a big sensation. Obviously bears find food even at the Pole or else the solicitous she-bear would have abstained from such lengthy family excursions.

Papanin nagged me for quite a while.

"The thing for you to do was to wait for us and not to shoot," he admonished me.

On the way back I slipped in the middle of the lake, fell into the water and hurt my knee. Tried to pour the water out of the boot by lying on my back and raising my leg. The water trickled into my underwear . . . Brr . . . in general we have a real hydrotherapeutic hospital here.

Changed clothes in the tent.

The wind steadily grew stronger and a regular gale blew by morning. The wind engines refused to work, folding up automatically under the gusts of the wind. The tent flaps rattled like a drum; at times the entire tent trembles like a leaf; feared it may be carried away. Wet snow is falling. Then came a downpour, and the only thing left dry in the camp was our mood. Just the weather to tidy up the kitchen and wash the dishes. Luckily today I turn the kitchen over to Papanin for 15 days.

August 6.

Every month we celebrate two dates; the 21st, the day we landed at the Pole and the 6th, the day the planes left our camp and we began life "independently." On these days we wash (undress to the waist) and shave. Got rid of my mustache which I had been raising since May 1. It looked too much like dirt. My face seems better and cleaner without a mustache.

This reminded me of my father. Once, when I complained that my mustache was growing too slowly he advised me to apply pigeon droppings on the outside and chicken droppings on the inside. One would pull on the hair, he said, and the other would push it up. I decided, however, to disregard paternal advice.

A fresh westerly wind. The wind engine works fine. But there is no current. Evidently the commutator is clogged. Have to investigate. Too bad a good, even wind was wasted.

At times it snows and it is getting colder; the snow crunches under one's feet.

There is still a big fissure to the east and the hummocky "shores" loom dark.

After a shave and a wash felt very good. Boiled some black coffee.

In the morning the three of us worked on the wind engine. First we had to spot the source of trouble. Climbed up. A precarious position to work in. One must be on the alert all the time to avoid a tumble. Hands froze. Inspected dynamo. Everything in order. Cleaned the rings. They're alright, too. At last discovered that the trouble was with the cable.

I never expected this. Changed cable and the wind engine began charging the batteries normally.

At 6 p. m. the Moscow news bulletin reported: weather growing colder at North Pole. Next followed details about the weather. We had sent them no special reports, but our meteo was being decoded. Yes, the slushy weather is coming to an end; the snow hardens under our feet.

Sent a message to Natasha. When is her birthday? Of course, I forgot it again. Is it on August 18th or the 26th?

August 18.

Your day, Natasha, your birthday.

An east wind since noon. Had a chance to charge the batteries. But this year Natasha received no congratulatory telegram for her birthday.

The loss of Levanevsky's plane has upset everything.

We are depressed and grieved. For hours on end dozens of stations, ours included, listen carefully. There is still hope. "Perhaps Levanevsky's radio will begin work." But hours and then days pass, and nothing is heard.

During the watch at night the wind grew stronger. Our tent is wobbly. Fastened it from the outside. Visibility was poor. Wet, clinging snow, at times rain. Temperature minus 0.8. Rain drops freeze on the tent and antenna; everything becomes coated with a thin layer of ice. So slippery, one barely manages to keep one's balance. Dmitrich[1] hasn't slept a wink all night, listening to the wind. I visited the bases and rearranged their tarpaulin covers.

Kept on wondering all the time: how are the six of the Levanevsky crew getting along now. Perhaps there is nothing left of them but a pile of wreckage in the ice ridges. A feeling of sadness, pity and regret overcomes one.

Went to the eastern edge of our ice floe. The big fissure is completely covered with ice, just a little

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[1] Dmitrich — reference to Papanin by his patronymic.—*Ed.*

ice piled here, no higher than a man. Went there mostly to calm my nerves. Feel uneasy whenever there is a strong wind. At such times it seems as though a big ice wave is about to descend on us. But one look at the massive barrier of old hummocks is enough to reassure one.

Today I harbor a very modest desire; to drink tea and eat a piece of black bread. Bread and vegetables. . . .

At three in the morning drank two cups of cocoa and ate three biscuits. At one in the afternoon, again two cups of cocoa and two biscuits. At six in the evening a plate of *borshch* and several spoons of buckwheat porridge. Washed it down with some tea. Since I didn't rinse the cup, the tea was rather muddy. At eleven in the evening will most likely drink another cup and have some more biscuits. This is our entire "menu." And so day in day out. You can't call these meals fancy, but they still one's hunger. And what difference does it make, biscuits, soup, porridge; if one does not feel like bothering with the *primus*, one simply gets along on a bar of chocolate. The kitchen tent is very crowded. The dishes are unwashed. We use the *primuses* sparingly and that is why hot water is so precious.

The dishes are all so greasy, they slip from one's hands. Soot, kerosene and benzine. All sorts of articles, instruments and products are piled up here. It is difficult even to move about. The kitchen is damp and cold, and the tent shakes in the wind. It is clear that under such circumstances one does not feel like making *vatrushki*[1] or *ponchiki*[1] with raspberry jam, all the more so since we have no raspberry jam. It's enough that Dmitrich and I regularly cook a two-course dinner. Under the circumstances one would naturally appreciate even a tiny piece of black bread, ordinary black bread. We surely don't appreciate these little things in Moscow!

Since noon could get nothing on short waves. They don't come through. Rudolf has no contact with Dickson Island and the weather report is relayed via Cape Desire. Can't even hear the powerful stations. What chance is there of hearing the weak Levanevsky radio even if it were working. But continue to listen in just the same.

Our mood is depressed, but no matter how it hurts, we must look at things in perspective. Did the glory of Amundsen's great deeds fade because the courageous explorer perished in the Arctic wastes? No, this is not the fame of Herostratus. Herostratus set fire to the temple of Diana and has gone down in history as a barbarian. But the names of Sedov, Barents, Scott, Amundsen, Levanevsky will be remembered by future generations with gratitude, respect and warmth. For they blazed new trails for humanity and perished in battle with the elements, defending the power and greatness of man, the master of nature.

"To the daring of the brave we sing," Gorky wrote. They look at life with eyes open wide. Death horrifies them only if it is meaningless. I admit that in the possible death of Levanevsky and his comrades there is an element of the senseless, part of our weakness. But their labor and heroism is one of the finest achievements of the Soviet people, is integral and, perhaps, even a necessary part of the struggle for them. The subjugation of the Arctic is a battle, and losses are inevitable in battle. These losses, of course, will be reduced with the growth of our knowledge, our experience. Still, there always will be

[1] Various kinds of dumplings.—*Ed.*

losses, just as there was the loss of the *Chelyuskin* . . .

Stalin teaches us to value the blood not shed in vain, the blood that is bearing fruit. In the future, cities and airports will arise along the air route from Moscow to America. And monuments to Levanevsky will stand at the squares in all of these cities. His exploit will not have been in vain or forgotten.

August 21.

A quarter of a year has passed since we landed at the North Pole. Quite a long time! Just before falling asleep, I make all sorts of estimates and calculation. We left Moscow five months ago. Another month makes it half a year. On August 29th we will mark the hundredth day of our drift. Another fine date to celebrate!

By November 7th, we will have covered half of our drift. But the other half will be the more difficult—Arctic night and frost. On the other hand, we have grown used to the surroundings. It is pleasant to know that with the coming of light we will be removed from the ice floe. We will move southward from the region of the Pole to Spitzbergen, and then our station will lose its significance as an Arctic station. All these estimates and calculations merely go to prove that I am a bit tired. I haven't rested after my stay on Severnaya Zemlya and am rather lonesome for the family and home atmosphere.

Cleared the airdrome in the morning. Holiday dinner: barley soup, "fresh" fish, milk jelly and liqueurs. The fish was obviously not of recent catch. Admired it but little and ate still less of it. More successful was the milk jelly. Cooked a liqueur. Mixed cognac with a little water, lemon juice and lots of sugar. Managed to get some of the cognac taste out of it. The drink went over big.

August 28.

Dmitrich couldn't fall asleep for a long time. Arranged a coffee party. Took a pot and some of our splendid cheese to the tent. The night passed very swiftly.

The wind is subsiding and the weather improving.

Today there was a special broadcast for the North Pole.

Could hardly hear Moscow but could make out the words. A children's concert began at five p. m. Five-year-old Galya recited her own verses. Papanin's article printed in a children's magazine and my answer to Kolya and Seryozha Bibins' poem were read.

Next Irochka, my daughter, spoke for a minute and a half. She spoke like a grown-up, in a mellow voice, spoke well, distinctly, and without a trace of nervousness. She has grown lonesome in the country and wishes to go back to Moscow. Next autumn she will walk to school alone since the building is across the street. Wants to take up drawing at the House of Pioneers. Had a good rest at the country home. A stray, grey Siberian cat joined them and will now live with them. (Well, Ernest, old boy, here is cause for rejoicing, the population of your collective farm is growing.) Irochka told me that she is quite grown up. Mama is going to make her a new fur coat since she has outgrown the old one completely. Improved in the country and was even allowed to bathe. (Where do they bathe out there? I bet in that miserable little ditch on the way to Molokov's cottage.)

Lusia spoke next. Her voice hasn't changed a bit. "The Pistol," as we call her, still has that squeaky voice. She was nervous and stumbled a bit. She finished the first grade with excellent marks. There were many bushes in the country where one

could play hide and seek, but mama (oh, these mamas) had the bushes cleared and now there is no place where to hide.

"Mama doesn't allow us to do many things. For instance, climb trees. When you come home we both will climb trees."

Had a good laugh. That's the thing I have been dreaming of all my life. Fine girl Lusia for climbing trees. We will climb together, by all means. Lusia is lonesome without me, but is waiting patiently knowing that "we are doing a big thing."

My little girls speaking over the air brought me great joy and raised my spirits considerably. Whenever things become hard, or it gets real cold, the very thought of the children cheers me up.

Alik Shirshov also spoke over the radio. A five-year-old tot, his voice boomed almost like a basso.

August 29.

Wrote to Irina and Lusia that I am enthused about the prospect of tree climbing. Advised them to pick a sturdy tree and fasten a case of beer high up on it. Otherwise I just wouldn't climb. And what's more, all this was to be kept a secret from mama.

Translated by Leo Lempert

(To be concluded)

The heroic four

Culture in Spain Under Franco

More than a year has passed since Madrid was taken by Franco as a result of treachery on the part of a handful of Spanish generals. Since then Spain has been plunged into the darkness of the Middle Ages. The long-suffering Spanish people again find themselves in the grip of the Inquisition, against which they had fought with such admirable courage and self-sacrifice during thirty-two months of the war.

The country is now in a state of complete dislocation and chaos. Most of its highways, railroads, ports, mines and factories were destroyed in the war. The restoration of the ruined economic life of Spain requires the expenditure of 20,000,000,000 pesetas, a huge sum for that country. Factories are at a standstill due to lack of raw material. In a number of areas agriculture has been completely abandoned and the fields remain uncultivated.

The Spanish reactionaries are seeking a way out of the situation by savagely repressing the workers and peasants. The working people have been robbed of all their gains of the past few years; the rights and liberties of the people have been abolished, as have also the rights and liberties of the national minorities. The extent of the terror can be seen from the fact that the military tribunals try about four hundred cases a day, and that sentence of death is passed in seventy cases out of a hundred.

The former soldiers of the Republican army have been drafted into disciplinary battalions and are put to work without pay to cultivate the fields of the landlords and the church. The government service has been subjected to a purge, as a result of which tens of thousands of government employees have been thrown out on the street. The wage scales that prevailed in 1936 have been introduced everywhere. All wage agreements have been annulled. Taxes have been considerably increased. The land which had been taken away from the landlords has now been returned to the former owners and the tenants are being compelled to pay not only the old arrears but also rent for the period of the war. In a year of his administration, Franco and his ministers have turned Spain into a land of starvation and poverty. On the walls of houses and prisons one may see the significant inscription: *Menos Franco, mas pan blanco* ("Less Franco, more white bread").

Spain's great culture, like the Spanish people themselves, is being strangled in the grip of Franco's Inquisition. No sooner had he come to power than Franco and his henchmen proceeded to eradicate everything that had been created by Spain in the sphere of culture at the time of the People's Front, during the thirty-two months of heroic struggle. In this foul work he has the zealous support of the Catholic Church. During the war, Jose Bergamin, speaking in the name of all progressive Spain, proclaimed at the Madrid Writers' Congress in Defense of Culture, that Spain's culture is "popular, continuous, traditional and revolutionary." In reactionary Spain, the Spain of god and Caesar, a contrast is drawn between "authentic and unauthentic," or "legitimate and illegitimate" Spanish culture. By the former they mean the culture associated with the ideals of the "Greater Spain," that is, the monarchical Spain of the Middle Ages, the "Spanish Empire," and above all with the Catholic church, the Vatican, and the all-powerful Order of the Jesuits. Cardinal Segura, Archbishop of Seville and representative of reactionary Spain, declared in a "pastoral letter" that "the Spanish press is first and foremost a Catholic press."

When we bear in mind that by the "Spanish press" Cardinal Segura means every printed publication in general, it will be realized how far-reaching his assertion is. Cardinal Segura plays a big part in clerical affairs; he is virtually the head of the Spanish church. His pastoral letter is in effect a ban on the publication of everything that is not religious propaganda or propaganda in favor of

the political order that has the support of the Vatican and the Jesuits.

On coming to power, Franco entrusted the cultural life of the country to the priests. To be sure, he now and again makes a speech and adopts some independent decision; but this independence is illusory. Actually, Franco's policy in cultural affairs is entirely guided by the princes of the church and by the Jesuits.

It is the aim of the church and the Jesuits, of course, to eradicate the very idea of a traditional and revolutionary culture from the minds of the Spanish masses, and particularly of the intellectuals, and to destroy all the cultural gains of the Spanish people during the three years of struggle that followed the victory of the People's Front in February, 1936. The Spanish reactionaries have worked out a regular program for the extermination of dangerous heresies and heretics—the Spanish popular culture, and the intellectuals—writers, artists and scientists—who are its vehicle. The main points in this program are: to destroy the sources of contamination (by burning books and forbidding and withdrawing from circulation works of art, and so on); to do away with those who spread popular culture (by shooting writers, artists and scientists); to reconstruct the Spanish schools and various cultural organizations by placing them under the strict control of the church. This last point means the undoing of all the work done by the Spanish People's Republic in the sphere of public education during the three years of the struggle. Besides these measures, the purpose of which is chiefly of a punitive character, the reactionaries are resorting to more subtle ones, such as systematic slander and the attempt to rob the people of the writers, artists and scientists now dead whom they held in reverence, by claiming that they were allies of Franco, and that they had pronounced themselves republican only because they happened to be living on republican territory. Similar measures are being resorted to by the reactionaries in regard to classical Spanish literature and art.

DESTRUCTION OF CULTURAL TREASURES

The destruction of books and the banning, as well as the sale abroad of works of art, is being accomplished in two ways. First, books are destroyed "at the discretion of local authorities." It was in this way that revolutionary publications were destroyed all over Spain, that is, all the newspapers, magazines and pamphlets published by various political parties and organizations and by the Commissariat of Propaganda (*Mundo Obrero*, *Frente Rojo*, *Trebal*, etc.) during the period between February 1936 to March 1939. In the same way were destroyed all books by Spanish revolutionary writers. The works of Rafael Alberti, Garcia Lorca, Sender, Arconada, Antonio Espina, Emilio Prados, Bergamin, Jarnes and others have been withdrawn from the libraries. The censorship is particularly vigilant with regard to progressive and revolutionary writers of Western Europe and America, particularly when it concerns books written in defense of the Spanish Republic.

It need scarcely be said that the main fury of the Spanish reactionaries is directed against Marxist and Leninist works and against books on the history of the world revolutionary movement. No less furious are the attacks on Soviet literature. The works of Gorky, A. Tolstoy, Sholokhov, Fadeyev, Fedin and others have been withdrawn from the libraries and destroyed. In the Spanish libraries under Franco there remain only the writings of the Church fathers and of religious philosophers and mystics. It is with such books that the Spanish workers, peasants and intellectuals are expected to satisfy their spiritual hunger.

In addition to the purge of libraries effected in each locality by the authorities and priests at their own discretion, another purge is carried out in accordance with lists of prohibited books. Long lists of this kind were drawn up even before the final victory of the reaction, by special juntas in Burgos and Valladolid. These books were sequestered all over the territory formerly occupied by the rebels, and burned.

One of the most notorious of these lists was the one compiled by the Burgos government towards the end of 1938 and signed by José Saldaña, Inspector of Public Instruction "on the order" of the Minister of Education, Sains-Rodriguez. This *index librorum prohibitorum* was promulgated in the form of a government ordinance and contained a list of hundreds of books dubbed as *libros erejes*, heretical works. This list, however, was not the first; it had been preceded by others, in which figured such authors as Dickens and Molière.

Here are some of the works included in José Saldaña's index: Goethe's *Faust* and *Werther;* Flaubert's *The Sentimental Education;* Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship;* Rafael Altamira's *History of Spanish Civilization;* Pedro Lorado Montero's *Social Force of Law and Authority;* Espronseda's *The Devil's World* and poems; José Frances' *Articles on Art* (published

in *La Esfera* from 1916 to 1920); Mariano José Larra (Figaro), *Articles on Everyday Life;* Ramon Y Cajal, *Woman;* Fernando de Rojas, *Celestina;* José Maria Salaverría's *Bolivar the Liberator;* Stendhal's *The Chartreuse of Parma;* Sterne's *Sentimental Journey;* Tylor's *Anthropology* and other works; Juan Valera's *Comendor Mendoza, Doña Luz, Juanita, Illusions of Dr. Faustino, Pepita Jimenes,* etc.; Prosper Mérimée's *Carmen;* Abbé Prevost's *Manon Lescaut,* as well as all the works of Balzac, Leo Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Ibsen, Anatole France, Victor Hugo, Azorin, Ibañez, Francisco Jiner-de-los-Rios, Gabriel Miró, Antonio Machado, Ramon Perez-de-Aylala, Benito Perez Galdos, Freud, Unamuno, Valle Inclan, Juan Ramón Jimenez, José Ortega y Gasset, Alexandre Dumas and Pio Baroja (with the exception of the latter's last book, written against the Republican government).

In a word, the church is now settling the accounts of many centuries with "heretical" writers. Side by side with Fernando de Rojas' the *Tragicomedy of Calixto and Melibia,* written at the end of the fifteenth century and widely known under the name of *Celestina,* there figure in the index the famous novelists Larra and Espronseda, classical writers of the 1890's (Galdos, Pardo Basán, Valera, Palacio Valdés), and writers of the generation of 1898 (Unamuno, Valle Inclan, Baroja, Perez de Aylala, Antonio Machado, Juan Ramón Jimenez, Miró, etc.). It will be seen that the amplitude of the index is considerable and embraces nearly the whole of Spanish literature for the last two centuries. The index reflects the struggle waged by the Catholic church against the idea of a popular, continuous, traditional and revolutionary Spanish culture.

The extent of the purge may be seen from the following. The *Vanguardia,* a Barcelona publication, states that in April 1939 over one hundred thousand volumes were withdrawn from the libraries of that city. The greater bulk of them were sent to the pulping mills, but a part was retained for the public bonfire.

These book *autos-da-fé* are arranged in the same way as in the days of the Inquisition. True, the ceremonials have been somewhat modified, but the representatives of the higher priesthood and the civil authorities are always present. A bonfire of this kind was arranged in May 1939 by the Spanish University Union (*Sindicato Universitario Español*) as the closing feature of the traditional book fair. The books were piled in a heap, drenched with kerosene and burnt. Another bonfire was arranged in June on the campus of the Madrid University. This *auto-da-fé* was widely advertised; it was hinted that the works of the most dangerous of the "heretics" would be destroyed on this occasion. It was therefore performed with great pomp. Among the "heretics" whose works were burned were Marx, Voltaire, Rousseau and others who are supposed to be responsible for recent events in Spain. As we know, to this day the Spanish clergy cannot forgive Voltaire and the other Encyclopedists for the article on Spain in the Encyclopedia, which they regard as the source of the "black legend" about the Spanish priesthood which has so helped to undermine its prestige among the Spanish people.

The Spanish reactionaries, however, have other weapons in their armory. One of these, as we said above, is the defamation of the memory of the Spanish Republican and classical writers. Even during the civil war and intervention, the fascist press tried to attribute the shooting of Garcia Lorca to an "unfortunate misunderstanding." Lorca, it is claimed, was arrested and shot as a "vagrant," whose identity could not be established. As a matter of fact, the reactionaries declare, Lorca was a "traditionalist poet" and a supporter of Franco. The impression created in Europe and America by the murder of Lorca came as something of a surprise to Franco and his followers, and they tried to soften it by the dissemination of lies and slanders.

The death of another great Spanish poet, Antonio Machado, near the tragic end of the struggle of the Spanish people, caused no less indignation among progressive circles in Europe and America. The Franco authorities have placed a ban on Machado's poems (his collected works figure in José Saldaña's index), but they are trying to create the impression that he was a "victim of the Republican regime." They claim that he was forced to remain in Republican Spain because he could not make his way into the Franco zone.

The high respect enjoyed by the works of Goya among the genuine Spanish people is generally known. They justly regard him as one of the greatest artists giving expression to the Spanish folk spirit and of the Spaniards' passionate love of freedom. It was to his works that Corpus Barga devoted his speech at the Madrid Writers' Congress. Barga called upon the delegates to follow in Goya's footsteps and champion the cause of the Spanish people as passionately as he had.

The Franco authorities resorted to their favorite trick in the case of Goya, too. They arranged a national *homenaje* (memorial festival) in his honor, and proclaimed him a "traditionalist" artist.

The *homenaje* was a fiasco, but this did not halt the campaign of slander.

Although Franco has not yet published an index of banned works of art (paintings, sculpture, etc.), this does not mean that no precautionary measures have been taken in this field. The works of all painters and sculptors who remained faithful to the people during the civil war (Victorio Macho, Castelao, Alberto and others) have been withdrawn from museums and galleries. Picasso is the object of the particular fury of the Franco authorities; his pictures have been withdrawn not only from public but even from private galleries. The works of Goya, whom the Spanish reactionaries have tried so unsuccessfully to use for their own purposes, are under a ban. While endeavoring to depict him as a spokesman of the traditional ideas of "greater Spain, of the Spanish God and Caesar, of the Pope and the Emperor," the reactionaries are fully aware of the true significance of his pictures. That is why they have forbidden his famous *Caprichos*, as they have all the drawings in which he castigated the reactionary regime of Ferdinand VII and the church.

We shall mention in passing that many public memorials and statues of great artistic value have been destroyed.

Franco, by the way, has another method of dealing with the great artistic treasures of Spanish painting and sculpture. It might be called the "commercial" method. Unlike the People's Government which took the utmost pains to prevent the destructions of Spain's artistic treasures by the modern Vandals, Franco is quite willing to dispose of them in order to secure funds for the payment for military supplies ordered in large quantities abroad.

On the basis of the facts presented, one can get an idea of the zeal and persistence with which Franco, the Falanga and the church are waging their struggle against the idea of a popular, traditional, continuous and revolutionary Spanish culture. Only that which is connected with the church has escaped destruction. But even the church Fathers have been taken under strict control. In José Saldaña's index, which includes Altamira, Freud, Tylor, Haeckel, Ribot and a large number of works on natural science and biology, we find the translation of the scripturess by Cipriano Mera. Under the Franco regime, devout Catholics are allowed to read only the so-called Vulgate, translated by Father Sio de San Miguel, with a commentary supplied by Rome.

FYODOR KELYIN

NEWS AND VIEWS

U.S.S.R.

IN MEMORY OF VLADIMIR MAYAKOVSKY

On April 14 the entire Soviet Union marked the tenth anniversary of the death of its great poet, Vladimir Mayakovsky. On that day a meeting attended by thousands of people was held on the Mayakovsky Square in Moscow, where the cornerstone was laid for a Mayakovsky monument.

In the evening, a meeting in memory of the poet was held in the Bolshoi Theater. The meeting was attended by writers, scientists, Stakhanovite workers of Moscow's factories and mills, actors, Red Army men and representatives of public organizations. The main speech was delivered by Alexander Fadeyev, Secretary of the Union of Soviet Writers, who said in part:

"Ten years have passed since the death of Vladimir Mayakovsky. Great events have taken place in this period. Socialism has been built in our country, and we have entered upon the path of the gradual transition to Communism. Much of what has been written by us, Soviet authors, has grown out of date in these stormy and glorious years. But the brilliant force of Mayakovsky's verses does not fade and grows ever stronger.

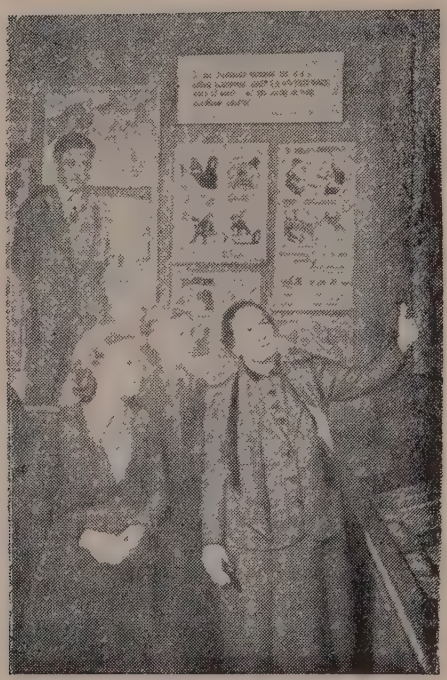
"The secret of Mayakovsky's poetic power and his growing fame is that in his works poetry and Communism have for the first time in history merged into a single whole.

"Mayakovsky possessed the sense of the new, of the modern, as no other poet before him. He was the only writer and poet who fully kept pace with the revolution and with its every turn. Reading the successive volumes of his poetry is like re-living the various stages of the Revolution: October 1917, the Civil War, the period of the New Economic Policy, the First Five-Year Plan. And even the times that Mayakovsky did not live to see are to be discerned in his works, in his unusual prevision or in his aspirations. Not a single big political event passed unnoticed by him. He revealed the important, as well as the small changes in everyday life and laid bare many of its ugly aspects.

"Communism was Mayakovsky's dream, his passion and his cause. He gave his entire poetic power to the fight for the cause of Communism. And he deserved the high and noble appraisal given him by the great Stalin: Vladimir Mayakovsky is the best, most gifted poet of our Soviet era."

Meetings in memory of Mayakovsky were held in every city and village throughout the Soviet Union, for his poetry is known to all Soviet people. The workers of three Moscow plants, the Stalin Automobile Plant, the Kaganovich Ball-Bearing Works and the Kirov Plant held a conference in memory of Mayakovsky. The subject of the conference was "Mayakovsky in Our Plant." This, however, did not refer to any personal contact Mayakovsky might have had with these plants, none of which existed in Mayakovsky's lifetime. The speakers at the conference dwelt on the effect of Mayakovsky's verses, which to this day help the workers in their fight against

Alexander Fadeyev, the Secretary of the Union of Soviet Writers speaks at a Mayakovsky memorial meeting in Moscow



The poet's sister Lyudmila with a group of visitors at the Mayakovsky Museum in Moscow

bureaucracy, in the struggle for improving production and higher cultural standards.

The Kharkov House of Folk Art conducted a contest for the best rendition of Mayakovsky's verses. Similar contests were held in Leningrad, Rostov-on-Don, Smolensk and other cities.

An exhibition in Rybinsk featured early editions of the poet's works. In Novosibirsk, Siberia, at the Mayakovsky Movie House, artists recited the poet's verses at every performance. In far-off Tajikistan the name of the poet was given to the State Drama Theater.

Papers on Mayakovsky's works were read at a special session of the Institute of Literature of the Academy of Sciences, in Leningrad.

Writers and poets from the various republics of the Soviet Union came to Moscow to attend a conference dedicated to translations of Mayakovsky's works. A number of guests recited their translations of the poet's works into the Ukrainian, Georgian, Byelorussian and other languages. One of the speakers was the ninety-four-year-old Kazakh bard Jamboul.

A number of new translations of Mayakovsky's works have been completed for the anniversary; among others, into the Kirghiz and the Tajik languages.

In Soviet times the works of Mayakovsky have been issued in 6,387,000 copies in 22 languages. Especially popular is the poem *Vladimir Ilyich Lenin*, which has been issued in 16 editions totalling 605,150 copies. New editions of the poem have been published in many languages this year in connection with the seventieth anniversary of Lenin's birth.

Soviet poets, artists and composers marked the anniversary by creating new works dedicated to Mayakovsky. The poet Nikolai Aseyev has completed a big novel in verse *Mayakovsky Emerges*, a chapter of which was published in our issue No. 4-5 last year. The Leningrad composer V. M. Bogdanov-Berezovsky has written a new symphony on the texts of two poems *Good* and *Vladimir Ilyich Lenin*. Monsvetashvili, a Tbilisi artist, and Popov, a sculptor, have completed a panorama of Bagdadi, the birthplace of the poet which has been renamed after Mayakovsky by decision of the Soviet Government. A bust of Mayakovsky has been carved by the Leningrad sculptor Yakovlev. The artist Belyayev has completed a series of water colors and drawings entitled *Mayakovsky's Moscow*.

The press in Moscow and other cities carried many articles on the poet, reviews of his works, reminiscences of meetings with him and of his lectures and trips in the Soviet Union and abroad.

The tenth anniversary of Mayakovsky's death was also observed in many countries outside the Soviet Union. According to incomplete data Mayakovsky evenings were held in Latvia, Estonia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Lithuania, Great Britain, China and the United States. A number of articles on Mayakovsky were published in the foreign press.

The Latvian magazine *At Uta* carried an article by Janis Plaudis. The author discusses at length Mayakovsky's life and work, emphasizing the originality of his verses. "Vladimir Mayakovsky, finest singer of the Revolution, is a gigantic figure. . . . His works rank with the classics of Russian literature."

The Bulgarian newspaper *Zarya* devoted a whole page to the memory of the poet. Marko Marchevsky, one of the contributors, writes: "The force of Mayakovsky's poems, verses, epigrams and dramas lies in the fact that in them the poet raised vital social problems which he treated with inimitable brilliance. The extraordinary poetical quality, wealth of imagery, originality and other merits of his poetry lend tremendous force to Mayakovsky's works. His verses are the greatest achievement of Russian poetry."

The well-known Bulgarian author Lyudmil Stoyanov writes: "Mayakovsky's poetry encompasses everything that is vital in contemporary life, it reflects the dynamics of our epoch. His poetry will resound under the cupola of the future. Mayakovsky fully realized that the new that came with the October Revolution could not have been truthfully reflected by the old iambic or trochaic verses of traditional poetry. In vivid, mighty and unforgettable images Mayakovsky expressed the grandeur of the epoch and its link with the future."

In a statement published by a group of Lithuanian writers, and signed by Liudas Gira, Petras Zvirka, Antanas Venclova and others, we read: "Mayakovsky's work left an indelible and significant mark on modern Lithuanian poetry. Mayakovsky holds the attention not only of writers but of the masses of Lithuanian readers, particularly the youth. Lithuanian progressive writers are making a profound study of the brilliant heritage left by Mayakovsky."

The Lithuanian poet Antanas Venclova writes: "Vladimir Mayakovsky is one of the great poets who cast their words across state frontiers far into the future. In a way, a parallel could be drawn between Byron and Mayakovsky. But Mayakovsky came forth as the poet of the new proletarian society, and in his works he brilliantly depicted not the rebellion of the individual but all the might and power of the Great October Revolution. Mayakovsky spoke 'at the top of his voice.' His mighty voice, the trumpet of the revolution, was heard not only in the U.S.S.R. but also far beyond its borders. We, modern Lithuanian writers, eagerly listened to his every word about the great revolution in Russia.

"Mayakovsky's books appeared in Lithuania in the first years of the October Revolution. Charmed by the great power of the poet, we memorized his stirring verses. We began to study the Russian language to be able to read in the original Pushkin, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Gorky and Mayakovsky.

"Mayakovsky's name became popular at once among students and progressive writers. His influence on Lithuanian literature was tremendous. And suddenly one day in 1930 the telegraph brought the news of the sudden death of Mayakovsky. The death of the great poet profoundly stirred progressive Lithuanian society and particularly the progressive writers of Lithuania. The names of Gorky and Mayakovsky are held in the highest esteem in Lithuania. They will live on for the ages.

"One may state without fear of exaggeration that no other poet has been as popular in Lithuania as Mayakovsky. The mighty voice of this titan of the poetry of our days rang across state frontiers. It is a clarion call awakening in people the striving for a new life, the desire to struggle for this life."

Petras Zvirka, well-known Lithuanian author writes: "After Pushkin and Lermontov, Mayakovsky is the brightest figure in Russian poetry. No other poet has ever and anywhere been so intimately connected, body and soul, in word and in deeds, with his epoch, with his class, as Mayakovsky was. In mighty verse and with great poetic originality he depicted the spirit and aspirations of his epoch. Simultaneously with the Great October Revolution, which destroyed capitalism and created a new society, Mayakovsky broke the old forms of poetry, creating not only a new poetry but also a new type of poet, the poet who is an agitator. Mayakovsky has rendered great services to Soviet poetry; his influence is felt far beyond the bounds of the Soviet land. An entire movement in literature

The great bard Jamboul on his arrival in Moscow from distant Kazakhstan to participate in the Mayakovsky anniversary

has sprung up in our country, in Lithuania, under the influence of Mayakovsky. Mayakovsky has many followers, and one may assume that many generations of poets will learn from Mayakovsky not only 'how to make verses' but also how to link their destiny and their poetic activity with the daily struggle of the working people for a bright future of mankind."

In an article published in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, Moscow, Hugo Huppert, German writer, points out that in his early years Mayakovsky was under the influence of certain contemporary West European writers and also Walt Whitman. This influence was insignificant, however. Likewise poets of other lands knew but little about Mayakovsky's poetry in his lifetime.

The influence of the West on the literary style of Mayakovsky was negligible, Huppert notes, but adds that the West undoubtedly exerted important influence on the themes of Mayakovsky's works. The German writer regards the study of Mayakovsky's poetry and acquisition of his style by poets in the West as a task of great historic significance. "For the most gifted poet of the Soviet epoch was at the same time the most international of modern poets," Huppert emphasizes.

LITERARY CONTEST AT FACTORY

A literary contest was recently held at the Kirov Dynamo Plant, Moscow. Like many other Soviet plants and factories the Kirov Plant has its own literary circle, which functions under the auspices of the plant's library.

The contest attracted many participants, who submitted short stories, sketches, verses, dramas, film scenarios. Poetry is leading the list; most of it is rather naive, but its sincerity is moving. Lyrical notes prevail in the efforts of the young poets. Love, friendship, the joy of life in a Socialist country are the main themes of the verses.

Of particular interest is the *Kirov Song* by the worker Vasili Abakumov. It sings of the plant, its work and achievements and of the Bolshevik Sergei Kirov, whose name the plant bears. At the request of the workers Reingold Gliere, well-known composer, put the words of the song to music, and now, at demonstrations and during parades, the workers of the Dynamo Plant march to the tune of their own song.

Autobiographical details form the plots of many of the short stories. Young people who but recently came from the countryside relate in their stories their first impressions of the big city, how work

The well-known Soviet author, Leonid Leonov, among the participants of the contest

in a factory changes their outlook on life, etc. The older workers draw primarily on the past, particularly as contrasted with their new life under Socialism.

An interesting story entitled *Friendship* was penned by Lewis, an employee of the technical bureau. In symbolic form the author describes the history of the class struggle in Russia beginning with the year 1905. The plot is built around the life story of Major Pyotr Gladyshev. Lewis is a Hindu and he wrote his story originally in English. Members of the literary circle who study English translated it into Russian.

Some of the members of the circle submitted critical essays. T. Dagnovskaya, a woman employee at the plant, submitted a well-written article on the works of Chernyshevsky. The poetry of Mayakovsky was the subject of a number of other essays.

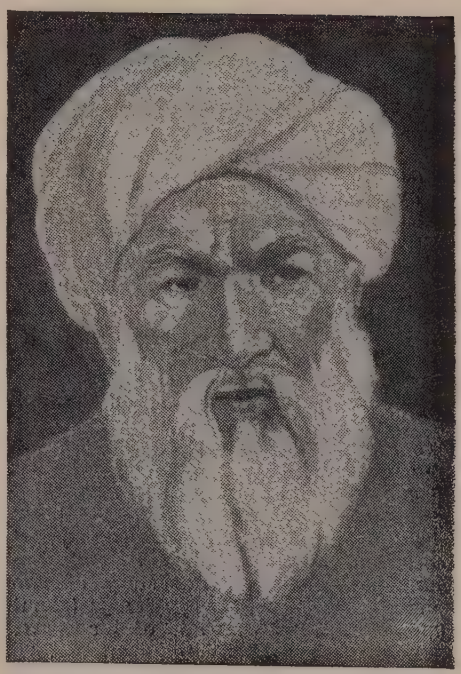
The Trojan War is the title of a film scenario submitted by V. Orlov. The author wrote in his foreword: "I have taken the subject of the Trojan War in order to interest our workers in the history and literature of Ancient Greece." Though the scenario as such is rather an immature work, the author accomplished his purpose, since many workers, as reported by the factory librarian, read or reread the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* in order to prepare for the discussion, which proved highly interesting.

The jury of the contest consisted of the writers and poets L. Leonov, V. Inber, P. Antokolsky and Professor of Literature Belchikov. A joint meeting of the jury and participants of the contest was held at the plant's library. The jury presented a report on the works submitted, gave their advice to the non-professional authors, analyzed the shortcomings in their literary efforts, and encouraged the members of the literary circle to carry on their activities.

Eleven of the best works were published in the plant's newspaper *Kirovets*. Several members of the literary circle will be enrolled in literary institutes.

500th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF UZBEK POET

Preparations to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the birth of Alisher Navoi, founder of Uzbek literature, are now under way in Uzbekistan and other Soviet republics. The celebrations fall due in February 1941. Navoi's poems and collections of his verse are being issued in Tashkent. Some of his works are now being translated into Russian, Ukrainian and Georgian.



Alisher Navoi. By A. Yankin, a contemporary Uzbek artist and poet

Alisher Navoi was born in Herat in February 1441. His father was close to the court and the boy studied together with his future sovereign, Sultan Hussein.

In 1469 Navoi was appointed keeper of the Sultan's Seal. Though this was a minor post, the poet carried on considerable activity establishing new schools and extending and improving the irrigation system.

His activity evoked the enmity of the court entourage and intrigues resulted in the poet being appointed governor of Astrabad, which was tantamount to exile.

His banishment from the capital did not appease his enemies, and they demanded from the sultan that Navoi be poisoned. Rumors of this reached Navoi and, leaving Astrabad on his own, he returned to Herat to fight it out with his enemies. The poet's great popularity apparently prevented the courtiers from carrying out their design. Alisher obtained the right to remain in Herat, but was released from government service.

The poet died in 1501.

Navoi's literary activity dates back to his youth. He was interested in almost all spheres of art, being a connoisseur of painting and architecture, a gifted com-

poser and master of all literary genres of his time.

Out of deference to tradition Navoi penned his first works in Persian. But he soon began to write in his native language, thus elevating it to the status of a literary language. The poet desired his works to be read not so much by the court circle as by the people.

His epic *Farkhad and Shirin*, written in the Uzbek language, has a fascinating plot and is remarkable for its fresh metaphors, its vivid characters and colorful descriptions. It is an epic of a great love, a love that transforms man, an epic of noble friendship and heroic self-sacrifice for the sake of truth.

Like all other works of Navoi, *Farkhad and Shirin* is permeated with impassioned love for humanity. Navoi says: "If you are a man do not call a man one who has no compassion for man's sufferings."

Navoi's other works include the poem *Khamse* (8,038 lines), directed against the rulers and the clergy; *Leili and Medjnun*, the famed oriental story of two lovers (7,000 lines); *Seven Planets* (about 10,000 lines). The biggest of his works, *Alexander's Wall* (more than 14,000 lines), criticizes the political system and the despotism of the Timurides. *Chardivan* or *Treasure Chest of Ideas* is a collection of lyrical verse. In many of his poems Navoi drew on folklore; folk sayings, proverbs and aphorisms are lavishly used in his works. Navoi also penned a number of historic and philosophic treatises and memoirs.

At the Exhibition of Lithuanian books in Moscow

EXHIBITION OF LITHUANIAN BOOKS IN MOSCOW

An exhibition of Lithuanian books, sponsored by V.O.K.S. (All-Union Society for Cultural Relations With Foreign Countries) has been opened at the State Museum of Modern Western Art in Moscow. The 1,000 exhibits are illustrative of the development of Lithuanian national culture.

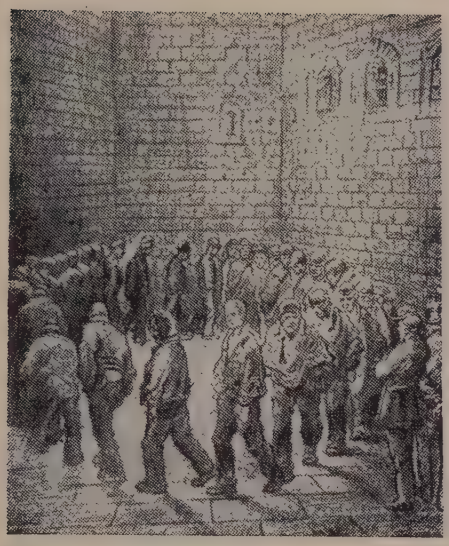
The Lithuanian people has great cultural traditions. The exhibits include a number of scientific works dealing with folk songs of the XIV-XVII centuries and with various dialects of fishermen on the Baltic coast. The publications of the folklore commission of the Lithuanian State University include a collection of Lithuanian folk songs, riddles and proverbs, a series of almanacs entitled *Our Folklore*, archive annals on folklore and a volume on Lithuanian folk melodies.

The writer Duonelaitis, who lived at the end of the 18th century and whose works were first published in the beginning of the 19th century, is considered the founder of Lithuanian literature. Among the exhibits is a monograph on the life and work of Duonelaitis by Prof. M. Birjichke, and excerpts from the writer's poem *Seasons of the Year*. The epoch of romanticism, which supplanted Duonelaitis' realism, is represented at the exhibition by the works of Duakantas, Strazdas, Valancins, Klimentas and Poska. The life of the Lithuanian peasants is depicted in the novels of Zemaite, Petkevicaite, Peleda and Bilunas, which appeared during the second half of the nineteenth century.

The development of Lithuanian literature, however, was hampered by the policy of Russification pursued by tsardom in Lithuania.

The formation of the independent Lithuanian Republic (February 1918) opened the possibilities for the development of Lithuanian literature. A diagram on display shows that while during 1916-25, 1,672 titles were published in Lithuania, the number of titles rose to 4,796 in the five years from 1931 to 1935, and to more than 5,000 in the last five years.

Prof. V. Kreve-Mickevicius, many of whose works on folklore are on view at the exhibition, holds a prominent place in



A Pilgrimage. By Gustave Doré. This drawing inspired van Gogh's famous "La Ronde Des Prisonniers"

modern Lithuanian literature. *Under a Thatched Roof*, collection of realistic tales from life in the Lithuanian countryside, dates back to the early period of the writer's career. His latest works are *The Death of Mindovga* (1935) and the historic plays *Skirgaila* and *Saruna* (1939).

The contemporary young progressive writers tried at one time to set up their own organization known as *The Third Front* which, however, did not exist long. Some of the most outstanding members were Petras Zvirka, Salomea Neris, Antanas Venclova.

Sometime ago we published one of Zvirka's stories. His latest novel *Frankas Kurk* is a biting satire on bourgeois ethics and religion. His book *A Master Craftsman and His Sons* presents finely drawn portraits of petty artisans—tailors, blacksmiths, carpenters. Among the best known of the other writers of this group are the poetess Salomea Neris, some of whose poems are on revolutionary themes, and the novelist J. Marcincevicius, whose novel *Benjaminas Kardusas* portrays the ruin of the poor peasantry.

A section of the exhibition is taken up by translations from the Russian. Works of the Russian classics, as well as many books by modern Soviet writers, have been translated into the Lithuanian language.

Various publications on problems of art, literature, history, agriculture and technology are also on display. The section of children's literature has a number of well-illustrated tales, stories and verses for the younger generation.

EXHIBITION OF ENGLISH REALISTIC NOVELS

The Central Library of Foreign Literature has arranged an exhibition of the English realistic novels of the 19th century. Writing on the English realistic novels of his time, Karl Marx stated in an article in the *New York Tribune* (Aug. 1, 1854):

"The present splendid brotherhood of fiction writers in England, whose graphic and eloquent pages have issued to the world more political and social truths than have been uttered by all the professional politicians, publicists and moralists put together, have described every section of the middle class from the 'highly genteel' annuitant and Fundholder who looks upon all sorts of business as vulgar, to the little shopkeeper and lawyer's clerk. And how have Dickens and Thackeray, Miss Bronte and Mrs. Gaskell painted them? As full of presumption, affectation, petty tyranny and ignorance; and the civilized world have confirmed their verdict with the damning epigram that it has fixed to this class 'that they are servile to those above, and tyrannical to those beneath them.'"

Homeless *By Gavarni*

Among the books on display are the best works of Dickens, Thackerey, Charlotte Bronte, Elizabeth Gaskell, Disraeli, George Eliot, etc.

Included in the exhibition are the opinions expressed of the works of English realists by Marx, Engels and Lenin, as well as by Russian critics and writers.

A number of cartoons, satirical drawings and prints of English artists of the 19th century are among the exhibits.

Albums illustrating the London of that period have also been displayed at this exhibition. The illustrations shown on the previous page are from these albums.

NEW TRANSLATIONS OF BYRON, BAUDELAIRE

New translations of Byron and Baudelaire were read at evenings held at the Writers' Club, Moscow.

The new translation of Byron's poems by G. Shengeli was recognized by the audience as representing a distinct improvement over existing translations into Russian.

The first translation of Byron's works appeared in Russia in 1819, and numerous translations have been made since then. Many of them, however, are quite inadequate, since the Russian text does not convey the intonations typical of Byron's verses; the political sting of some of his poems has also been toned down to a great extent.

A thorough study of the poet's works and of his epoch enabled Shengeli to produce translations that are close to the original and at the same time retain the color, music and the power of the English original.

A new translation of Baudelaire's *Fleurs de Mal* was read by the poet V.Shershenevich. Earlier translations date back to 1907-1909.

The new translation was subjected to thorough analysis by those present. The consensus of opinion was that Shershenevich succeded in producing a translation that is more adequate than, and considerably superior to, existing Russian translations.

ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES IN CHUVASHIA

A district review of amateur talent held in Alatyr, Chuvashia, drew as many as 1,500 participants. The import of this number can fully be appreciated when it is remembered that Chuvashia was one of the most backward sections of tsarist Russia. Today this small autonomous republic has more than 1,200 various amateur art circles.

From among the more gifted amateurs and students of the Chuvash theatrical and music school three collective farm theaters have been formed, as well as a state song and dance ensemble.

The repertory of the collective farm theaters includes Russian classic plays and the work of young Chuvash playwrights.

The collective farm theaters tour the entire republic, visiting even the most remote villages. Last year alone they gave 480 performances attended by more than 120,000 persons.

Many workers, office employees and collective farmers are also taking up painting and drawing in studios for amateurs. The progress in this field may be judged from the fact that The Chuvash State Art Gallery has by now a collection of more than 1,000 paintings by Chuvash artists.

ARTIST'S IMPRESSIONS OF WESTERN BYELORUSSIA

A series of water colors on life in Western Byelorussia have been sketched by the artist V. Goryayev.

"A group of people surround a man who holds a Soviet newspaper," *Sovietskoye Iskusstvo* writes, discussing the sketches. "The intense and concentrated expression on the faces of the people shows that each one is anxious to read in the newspaper about his future life.

"In the hustle and bustle of the city the artist has discerned some street scenes characteristic of the past life of Poland that is rapidly vanishing. One water color portrays a street-seller of hats who stands next to a glass box, a showcase with a mannequin of a feminine head. The passers by hurry on without glancing at the salesgirl's wares.

"Particularly characteristic of the artist's manner is a group of pictures portraying political prisoners meeting their relatives and friends after their release from Polish jails. Goryayev has three sketches on the subject. The last one is very impressive. This, however, is attained not by any affected poses or outward expression of great joy. Here is a girl meeting an elderly woman, probably her mother. She can find no words to express her joy, seems to be unable to believe in the reality of what is transpiring and, as though seeking conviction, clutches the hand of the elderly woman . . . "

In the words of *Sovietskoye Iskusstvo* "in this composition the artist has succeeded in conveying the intensity and depth of great human emotions."

"MIKHAS PODGORNY"

A new Byelorussian opera, *Mikhas Podgorny*, was presented by the Minsk Opera and Ballet Theater. Composed by G. Tikotsky to a libretto by the playwright Petrus Brovka, the opera has a rather simple plot. The action is laid in the years of the first imperialist war and the Great Socialist Revolution.

Marysya, a peasant girl, and Mikhas, a poor peasant boy, are in love. But Zmitrak, the rich man of the village, seeks to marry Marysya. Mikhas is drafted into the army and sent to the front. News comes that he has been killed. Marysya's father, tempted by Zmitrak's wealth, forces her to marry Zmitrak.

At the height of the wedding festivities Mikhas appears. It turns out that he has not been killed. But it is too late, the wedding ceremony has been performed and according to the ideas of the times that settled the matter forever.

After the Revolution in February 1917 things remain the same on the whole. Zmitrak gains even more power in the village. When Mikhas tries to call on the peasants to rise, Zmitrak has him arrested. After the Great Socialist Revolution Mikhas again appears in the village. Here he heads his fellow-villagers in the fight against Zmitrak, their exploiter who is now deprived of his power. Marysya becomes the wife of Mikhas.

Though the opera is not without ist shortcomings, *Pravda* points out, it rates high as a dramatic work on the Soviet opera stage. *Pravda* writes:

"In the Byelorussian songs (and there are many of them in Tikotsky's opera), in the instrumentation of the music, we seem to recognize the clearings and meadows amidst the silent forests, the blue mirror-like surfaces of ponds and lakes, the rivers that glitter with silver and the babbling brooks, solitary groves of birches with their pink-white carved trunks that stand like brides. There is an air of inimitable charm about the folk tales and songs of the Byelorussians, at times somber and sorrowful, for gloomy and bitter was the life of the people in the recent past, at times imbued with a wonderful child-like abandon, untrammeled gayety, for this gifted people has a youthful soul, and because its present is wonderful and its future cloudless . . ."

"The plot develops with great dramatic intensity," *Pravda* notes further. "The choruses and dances are exceptionally fine.

"The love duet of Marysya and Mikhas belongs to the best pages of Soviet opera music."

The actress and singer L. Alexandrovskaya, who plays the part of Marysya, created a touching feminine portrait of a girl whose love is boundless.

Scene from "Mikhas Podgorny"

Success in the part of Mikhas was scored by the young actor N. Lazarev, who but recently sang in the chorus.

"The opera represents an outstanding achievement of Belorussian art and is an important event in Soviet music," Pravda concludes.

SYMPHONIC SEASON IN LWOW

The city of Lwow had its first season of symphony music this winter, following the formation of a regular symphony orchestra at the beginning of the current year. Lwow, the largest city of western Ukraine, had no regular opera or symphony under Polish rule. An operatic cast would perform for several months and its orchestra would give occasional concerts.

The new orchestra of 70, which includes many first-rate musicians, is headed by Mikola Kolessa, outstanding Ukrainian composer, with I. Pain as conductor.

60,000 ORIENTAL MANUSCRIPTS

The Oriental Department of the State Public Library of Uzbekistan has a collection of about 60,000 manuscripts in Arabic, Persian and various Central Asiatic languages. Among these are many original works dealing with history, medicine, astronomy, chemistry and music.

This unique collection contains many autographs, such as a letter of Timur to his descendants, and manuscripts of the great poets Hafiz and Jami. The library has more than 500 letters addressed to the Uzbek poet Alisher Navoi.

HONOR JEWISH ACTOR ON FIFTIETH BIRTHDAY

Theatrical and literary circles of Moscow paid hearty tribute to People's Artist of the U.S.S.R. S. Michoels, outstanding Jewish actor, on the occasion of his fiftieth birthday. A number of newspapers carried articles on the life and work of the actor who heads the Jewish State Theater. Michoels, the actor—the reviewers noted—is distinguished by his great versatility as well as by the originality and profundity of his interpretation of the characters he has created in the twenty years of his work on the stage. He has displayed his versatility in his methods also, which range from pure stylization to full-blooded realism.

Michoels is renowned for the gallery of characters from the Jewish plays by Sholom Aleichem and Mendele Moikher Sforim, which he created. The pinnacle of his work on characters from the works of the Jewish classics is the title role in *Tevye der Milkhiker*, a play adapted from Sholom Aleichem's stories. Tevye, as portrayed by Michoels, is a real man of the people, suffering, dreaming—somewhat naively and primitively—but already realising that a better life can come only with a change in the structure of society.

The ugliness and brutality of the old order put their stamp on life, and that is the source of the tragic pathos which is present in the classic characters Michoels recreates on the stage. At the same time Michoels has always striven to bring out the instinctive groping of these characters for a new, freed consciousness.

It is in the works of Soviet playwrights that Michoels has found the characters which fully embody the new consciousness, such as the character of the Deaf in Bergelson's play, who personifies the protest against capitalist exploitation; of the elder Ovadis in Perets Markish's

The Chairman of the Supreme Soviet M. I. Kalinin presents Government orders to Michoels and other actors of the Jewish State Theater

play *The Ovadis Family*, who finds happiness and joy in the new life with its everyday heroism; of Yulis, the Bolshevik, in Daniel's play.

Michoels' art, however, is not confined to the interpretation of Jewish characters. One of his greatest achievements is a remarkable portrayal of Shakespeare's *King Lear*.

PUPPET THEATER ON KAMCHATKA

Travelers in Kamchatka may sometimes encounter an unusual caravan; two dog sleds carrying five persons and a lot of unusual paraphernalia. This is the Kamchatka Regional Puppet Theater on one of its regular tours. In the four years of its existence the group has visited 200 settlements and given 450 performances. Its repertory consists of *The Master and the Shepherd, Three Little Pigs, Greedy Raven, Little Goose, Signor Tomato*, Koryak and Chukchi folk tales as well as some vaudeville performances.

The traveling puppet theater has toured a great part of the Far Eastern section of the Arctic. Here is one itinerary of 2,400 km. The group with its baggage and stage props embarked on a vessel at Petropavlovsk for Anadyr. From there they traveled by dog teams to the Markovo settlement, a district center of Chukotka. Next came a trip of 300 km. by sled to the village of Penzhino.

The actors visited the reindeer breeding state farm at Slautneye, the Aklano-Lamut collective farm and the Koryak educational center. Here the actors encountered the most difficult part of their journey; they had to cut across mountain ranges covered with eternal snow to reach Korf Bay, where they gave performances for workers at the fisheries.

TWO FILMS ON THE SOVIET FAR EAST

Two films on the Far East, the Maritime Territory and Sakhalin Island, have been released by the cinema studios in Khabarovsk.

P. Rusakov, the cameraman, visited with his camera the most picturesque spots in the Maritime Territory and has filmed some of its finest landscapes, its natural wealth and the people who inhabit this abundant region.

The film about Sakhalin shows the Island, which in the past was a place of exile and penal servitude. From the city of Alexandrovsk the cameraman takes the spectator into the interior, the agricultural districts, and down the river Tym to the Okhotsk Sea. Next comes the city of Okha, the oil center of the Far East, and after a visit to the fisheries along the western coast the spectator is brought back to Alexandrovsk.

N. Valbert, who portrays Gorky in "My Universities," is popular among the Soviet youth

FILM ABOUT MAYAKOVSKY

A film about the life and activity of Vladimir Mayakovsky has been released on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the poet's death. The film shows the youth of the poet, adolescent years, secret activity in the Bolshevik organization and various periods of his creative work.

CHINA

SOVIET PHOTO EXHIBITION IN CHUNGKING

A large exhibition of photos about the Red Army and on the life of Lenin was organized in Chungking at the new club of the Society for Cultural Relations Between China and the U.S.S.R. The exhibition attracted considerable attention. In the evening Soviet films were shown to large audiences.

The visitors' book carries many entries commenting on the might of the Red Army and calling for strengthening the friendship between China and the U.S.S.R.

A still from the Chinese film "The Lone Battalion"

"The Red Army is mighty and splendid," wrote Marshal Feng Yu-hsiang. "If Chinese are united and resist to the end, we will also be able to create a mighty army."

Characteristic of most of the entries are the following:

"The might of the Red Army is a source of inspiration to us." "The Red Army is an army of the people; it defends peace. The Chinese army which fights for national liberation is also an army of the people."

SOVIET FILMS AND PLAYS IN CHINA

"Soviet Films and Plays in China" is the title of an article by Kwang I-hang, Chinese theatrical critic, in the magazine *Culture of China and the U.S.S.R.*

"Chinese moviegoers have seen mostly English and American films, but nonetheless prefer Soviet films," he writes. "The Chinese cinema industry, which had developed under the strong influence of Western and particularly American films, is now beginning to follow the best examples of the Soviet cinema . . .

"The Chinese people who are fighting for liberty and independence, for emancipation from oppression, ignorance and backwardness, acclaim that art which helps in the revolutionary struggle, the struggle for a better future for mankind . . .

"The profound impression left by Soviet films is due not only to their content, but also to the mastery of Soviet directors and the fine acting."

It is natural that films on defense themes should attract particular interest, since these films, according to the critic, "inspire to struggle, teach persistency and steadfastness, show visually that only by staunch resistance to the enemy can we defend our independence."

Particularly great admiration and interest is evoked by the film *Chapayev*. "With bated breath the entire audience follows the progress of the battle," the author writes. "The Whites seem to be gaining the upper hand, they outnumber the Reds and are forcing them back. A wave of hatred and wrath rises in the hall. The spectators shout, heap insults and threats on the White officer, as though the battle were taking place right in the hall and not on the screen. When the fatal bullet strikes Chapayev the entire hall is plunged into silence, more expressive than the loudest wailings."

Newsreels, particularly those showing military or physical culture parades in Moscow, enjoy invariable success. "And when the leaders of the Soviet people,

Stalin, Molotov, Voroshilov, Kalinin, who are well known to the Chinese spectators, appear on the screen, they are greeted with hearty, prolonged cheers."

As regards the theater, the situation is somewhat different from that of the cinema. The average Chinese theatergoer hardly knows any Soviet plays. Chinese intellectuals, however, including many writers, producers and actors, are well familiar with the Soviet stage. As for the Russian classics—Gogol, Ostrovsky, Chekhov and Tolstoy—they are known not only to professionals but also to the broad public. A number of classical Russian plays have been staged at various times in Chinese theaters in Shanghai, Nanking and other cities.

Plays by Soviet authors have also been translated into Chinese. Among the better known are Gorky's *Yegor Bulychev and Others*, *The Lower Depths*, and Vsevolod Ivanov's *Armored Train*.

Soviet works relating to various theoretical problems of the stage have also been translated into Chinese. These works are widely studied by people in the theatrical profession, particularly the stage method of Stanislavsky, whose death, in the words of the critic, "evoked sincere sorrow among our men of letters and art."

Kwang I-hang expresses the wish to see "in China performances by Soviet theaters and to show the achievements of our young art to Soviet spectators."

LITHUANIA[1]

COLLECTION OF STORIES BY LITHUANIAN AUTHOR

A collection of short stories, *Night*, by the well-known Lithuanian writer Antanas Venclova has been published recently. Venclova's first works appeared in print in 1926. Since then the writer issued a collection of stories entitled *Birches in the Wind*, a novel *Friendship*, and translations from the works of Maupassant, Gorky and Katayev.

The new collection was given a high rating by the Lithuanian press. "This book at once advances its author into the front ranks of the creators of modern Lithuanian artistic prose," notes *Culture*, a scientific and literary magazine.

The best story in the collection, according to the magazine, is *A Tree and Its Offshoots*, which presents "one of the most original and true-to-life types of women in Lithuanian literature."

The story *Meeting* deals with the life of a schoolmaster in a village school. *Night* is a grim and tragic story of the first imperialist war and is of a definite anti-militarist nature.

LITHUANIA'S CULTURAL RELATIONS WITH THE U.S.S.R.

Friendly relations between the Soviet Union and the Lithuanian Republic are reflected in the growing cultural ties between the two states. Several years ago a large group of Lithuanian newspapermen visited the U.S.S.R. This was followed by a visit of Soviet journalists to Lithuania.

Numerous exhibitions on various phases of Soviet life were organized in Lithuania in recent years. The Lithuanian Society for studying the culture of the Soviet peoples recently arranged a Lermontov exhibition in Kaunas. It sponsored guest performances by Soviet actors and singers in Lithuania, and by Lithuanian singers in the Soviet Union. It has also been instrumental in arranging rebroadcasts of concerts from Moscow by Lithuanian radio stations.

Two solo singers of the Lithuanian opera, Staskevicius and Kuczingis, visited Moscow recently. The recitals by the Lithuanian singers in the Bolshoi Theater were met with acclaim and served to bring closer the music circles of both countries. The Soviet public had a further opportunity to learn about the cultural life of the Lithuanian people at the exhibition of Lithuanian books held in Moscow recently (reported elsewhere in this issue).

The State Theater of Lithuania is now rehearsing the Soviet ballet *The Red Poppy* and Gorky's play, *The Philistines*.

LATVIA

TO HOLD SECOND WRITERS' CONFERENCE

Preparations are now under way in Latvian literary circles for the second writers' conference to be held this summer. Known as "Writers' days," these conferences aim to discuss major problems of literature and art, new works of writers, poets, playwrights and critics.

The first "Writers' days" were held last summer. The aim of their sponsors was to bring the writers, who usually lead a secluded life, into closer contact with one another and with public life, to stimulate the development of literature.

The first conference, according to the magazine *Daugwa*, was conducted without sufficient preparation and as a re-

[1] This was written before the change of the Lithuanian and Latvian governments last June, as a result of which a number of the men of letters mentioned here have been advanced to positions of prominence in the political life of their respective countries.

sult some of the problems agitating the writers of Latvia were not dealt with thoroughly.

"The greatest importance of the 'Writers' days,'" J. Rudzitis, one of its participants wrote, "is that it has rallied our literary circles and have brought poet and critic, writer and reader closer together."

Following the example set at the first conference, it has been decided to invite representatives of Lithuanian and Esthonian literature to the second conference.

LATVIAN PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

Latvian painting developed in the main under the influence of the Russian and Scandinavian schools; after the first imperialist war, however, the influence of French decadent trends became strong in Latvia. In recent years, in the words of Silins, outstanding art authority, there is a "striving toward realism, toward life's grim simplicity."

The Government of the Latvian Republic and various public bodies make considerable efforts to foster national painting and sculpture. The works of Latvian artists are displayed in state and private collections, in the halls of the Art Academy in Riga, the State Historic Museum, the Art Museum, at exhibitions of the Cultural Fund, the Chamber of Art and Literature, and other organizations.

Latvia has a number of fine artists of the older generation, such as the landscape painter Purvitis, the portrait artist Tilbergs, and Kuga, designer of stage settings. There is also a group of gifted young artists, students of the Art Academy: Kalnins, Skride, Vardaunis and others.

An exhibition of the works of Reinhol Kalnins, one of Latvia's greatest painters, was held in Riga recently. The artist has his permanent residence in Paris where he has lived for the past eighteen years. The artist has been in dire straits in recent years and has earned his livelihood by selling sketches of Paris street scenes to foreign tourists.

The Latvian press acclaimed the work of the artist.

Stevedores — *By the Latvian artist R. Kalnins*

BULGARIA

BULGARIAN WRITERS ACCLAIM MAYAKOVSKY

The following collective statement was issued by a group of prominent Bulgarian writers on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of Vladimir Mayakovsky's death.

"Mayakovsky is the poet of the future, the herald of new human culture, truly the best and most talented poet of the Soviet epoch!

"The tenth anniversary of Mayakovsky's death coincides with the new imperialist war when, caught in the chaos of its own contradictions, the old world is burning its last bridges, and when the ideals that inspired Mayakovsky's poetry find millions of followers throughout the world. This poetry is destined to play a tremendous part in stimulating the new consciousness and new will of the large masses of the people in the encounter with the remnants of barbarism and in their efforts to create a new universal humanist culture—Soviet culture.

"The significance of Mayakovsky as poet and organizer of the thoughts and emotions of people of the Soviet era will continue to grow in the entire world, which seeks an answer to the innumerable problems with which the great historic changes constantly confront it.

"That is why the influence of Mayakovsky's poetry extends far beyond the Soviet Union, reaching not only the poetically-minded but also wide circles of intellectuals. To make this influence still greater is a vital task of the writers of all countries.

"The bourgeoisie is well aware of the significance of Mayakovsky and his poetry for educating the masses. That is why it resorts to a Draconic censorship in order to suppress his works, or simply ignores his name.

"Mayakovsky's poetry is very popular in Bulgaria, and his name is widely known there. Bulgarian progressive writers have done and are doing everything to popularize Mayakovsky, the poet and exponent of new truths. Mayakovsky became known in our country in the very first days after the Great October Revolution thanks to the translations and articles of the young poet Geo Milev, who soon perished at the hands of the reactionaries.

"Together with the Soviet people and the Soviet intelligentsia we deeply revere the memory of Mayakovsky and love his poetry. The tenth anniversary of his death is to us not only an important biographical date but an opportunity for acquainting the masses of the people with the profound idelogical content of his poetry."

ARGENTINE

CONGRESS OF ARGENTINE WRITERS

The second congress of Argentine writers was held recently in Cordoba. Problems of copyright and the popularization of literature among the masses figured prominently on the agenda.

The congress instructed the Argentine Writers' Union to ask the government to institute prizes for the best works in literature, to arrange an exhibition of modern Argentine books and to sponsor lectures on the works of modern writers.

Considerable attention was devoted at the congress to the problem of setting up a united front of culture. With this aim in view, the writers' union will establish close contact with the organizations of artists, composers and actors.

The plays presented at the theaters in Argentine were subjected to severe criticism by the writers, who pointed out that only the so-called independent theaters are real centers of culture.

Argentine has no law on author's rights, and a special commission was appointed by the Congress to consider the problem of "just and systematic remuneration for literary work by publishers, the press, radio, cinema and others." The congress also decided to appeal to the government to abolish custom duties and other taxes on foreign publications which "facilitate the development of Argentine culture and are a valuable aid to Argentine writers in their work."

CUBA

NEW BOOK ON LIFE OF PEASANTRY

Tragedia del Guajiro (The Tragedy of a Peasant) is the title of a book by Ciro Espinosa, instructor of Spanish literature at the Cuba University. The book was appraised by the critics as a valuable contribution to the study of Cuban folklore and the condition of the peasantry on the island.

"The book gives a vivid picture of the tragedy of the peasant," Anatolin Garcia, Cuban critic, writes, "the peasant who lives on fertile soil, amidst luxuriant nature, but is doomed to poverty, arduous, unbearable toil, and a life of misery of which most of our city dwellers have no idea, for their ideas about the peasantry are gained from poetic legends and tales that sing peans to life in the open.

"It is an absorbing book. The interest of the reader grows as the vivid and ter-

rible pictures unfold before him," the critic adds. "The author does not confine himself to showing the hard and tormenting life of the peasant who is subjected to the most horrible exploitation. In the person of Carlos, one of the main characters, Ciro Espinosa has portrayed a representative of the young generation that knows its worth, can defend its interests and strives for education.

"The characters, the peasants, speak the genuine language of the people; the author has retained all the peculiarities of colloquial speech of the Cuban peasantry, and this lends the book unusual vividness and originality."

THREE BOOKS ABOUT A CUBAN POET

Three books dedicated to the life and activity of Jose Maria Heredia, great Cuban poet, have just been published in Cuba. The centenary of Heredia's birth was recently marked throughout Latin America (incidentally, the Cuban poet was a third cousin of the French poet bearing the same name).

Jose Maria Heredia was a revolutionary poet, with the struggle for Cuba's independence forming the main subject of his verses. He was persecuted by the reactionary government and spent the last years of his life in exile.

One of the books, by Maria Laciste de Arufe, opens with a detailed biography of the poet and includes selected verse and prose as well as articles, speeches, travel notes and letters of Heredia.

The author of the second book, Chacon y Calvo, long known as a student of Heredia, had made a special trip to Mexico, where the poet lived in exile, and brought back many valuable documents which he used in his book. Chacon y Calvo gave his book the title *A New Life of Heredia* and he indeed presented in a new light the life of the rebel poet who rose against tyranny and fought for the liberty of his people.

The third book, *In Memory of Heredia*, written by Alfonso E. Paez, is a detailed biography of the poet.

MEXICO

SPANISH EMIGRANT WRITERS PUBLISH MAGAZINE

A new magazine, *Romance*, has commenced publication in Mexico; it is issued by a group of Spanish writers, who were forced to leave their country. Prominent Latin-American writers, scientists, artists and critics are among the contributors.

"The magazine has made its appearance at a time when the conditions for cultural activities are extremely difficult," Juan Rejan, Spanish journalist, writes. "That is why it is faced with very important tasks: to consolidate and extend the culture of the Latin-American peoples. The magazine will publish the best that is produced in the sphere of literature, art and science of Latin America."

BOLIVIA

NEW BOOKS

A new book, *Scapas*, has been completed by the well-known Bolivian poet, Franc Tamayo, who is renowned for his works on themes of ancient Greece (the famed tragedy *Oceanides*). Tamayo is also the author of a collection of verses *Scerzo* and *Nuevo Rubaijat*.

Tiuhanacu, a volume of selections of the best works of Bolivian writers, has been recently published by the Bolivia Library, which is headed by the writer Gustavo Adolfo Otero.

INDIA

INDIA'S CINEMA WORKERS TAKE STAND AGAINST WAR

The workers of the film industry in India have joined the movement of the Indian people against the imperialist war. According to a report in *Film India*, the Bombay Association of Cinema workers came out with a declaration voicing its opposition to the imperialist war waged by Great Britain. Shandulal Shah, chairman of the association, stated that the cinema industry of India must set itself the task of producing films exposing the brutality of British imperialism in India and reflecting the new stage of the national liberation movement in the country.

Until now the cinema industry of India has produced primarily "colonial" films designed to foster British "patriotism" among the local population. So far the 100 studios have not produced any outstanding films. British capitalists have invested up to twenty million pounds in this industry. But this sum has actually been paid to the British in the last two years in the form of taxes imposed on the industry and an exorbitant interest on loans.

Typical of the new trend is the latest film, *The Mill*, which depicts the hard conditions of work on the cotton plantations and the horrible poverty of the Hindu peasants.

About Our Contributors

HANS RODENBERG. A German writer, now living in the Soviet Union, author of a number of short stories and essays. His main interest is in the peoples of the East. Rodenberg is at present working on a novel about India.

YURI LUKIN. Soviet critic who devotes a major part of his time to the study of Sholokhov's creative work.

CICIO MAR. Chinese writer and critic. Secretary of the Federation of Chinese writers and editor-in-chief of the magazine *Chinese Writers.* Most of his work has been accomplished during the war years. His analysis of the development of contemporary Chinese literature, *Two Decades of China's New Literature,* was first published in 1939 in *Chinese Writers.*

The stories by *WOO YEH* and *LIU CHIN* in this issue are part of a collection of Chinese short stories prepared for publication by the Anti-Japanese Literary Association of China. The manuscript of these stories we obtained through the courtesy of Cicio Mar. The stories are translated from the Chinese.

FYODOR KELYIN. A prominent Soviet scholar who specializes in Spanish literature. Kelyin has done a great deal of research in this field, and has translated into Russian the verse of many Spanish poets. In 1937, the Madrid University conferred upon Kelyin the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters.

Associate Editor TIMOFEI ROKOTOV