Workers of all countries, unite!

International Literature

8—9

1940

THE STATE LITERARY PUBLISHING HOUSE
Printed in the Soviet Union

CONTENTS

No. 8-9 August-September 1940

Address: "International Literature," P. O. Box 527, Moscow
Cable address: Interlit, Moscow

WANDA WASILEWSKA

Lights in the Marshes

The events described in the latest novel of the famous Polish authoress, Wanda Wasilewska, which we are printing in an abridged form, take place in the eastern regions of former Poland, in Polesie and Volhynia, among West-Ukrainian and West-Byelorussian peasants. In this novel, Wasilewska realized her old ambition of portraying the national and class oppression of national minorities in former Poland.

The plot of the novel is as follows: on a farmstead, near the poverty-stricken village of Olszyny in Polesie, where the population has been bled white by taxes and imports, there settled a young *osadnik*[1] Chorzyniak, formerly a member of Pilsudski's legion and participant in the war against the U.S.S.R. Chorzyniak is one of those tens of thousands of former legionnaires, "deserving" officers and officials whom the Polish government granted farmsteads in Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia on land taken away from the poor peasants of those regions. Placed in the midst of millions of Ukrainian and Byelorussian peasants, the *osadniks* put into effect the imperialist policy of the Polish bourgeoisie and their farmsteads were nests of spying activities among the population, the military and police foreposts of Polish imperialism. It is, therefore, not surprising that the *osadniks* were hated by the population and were living on their farms as if in besieged fortresses.

Chorzyniak was, to all intents and purposes, an agent and emissary of the imperialist Polish bourgeoisie, just as were the rest of the *osadniks*. He claimed he had settled down on his farmstead in order "to explain to those dark Russian peasants the greatness of Poland, and to defend the Polish cause." Their unerring class instinct told the peasants that Chorzyniak was a dangerous enemy, a wolf. "In their eyes he was not Chorzyniak, he was not a man, he was only an *osadnik*."

A spontaneous boycott was the peasants' first reaction. A silent, fierce struggle ensues. A stray bullet of an unseen hunter misses Chorzyniak by a hair's breadth.

[1] *Osadniks* were Polish settlers, chosen from among "politically sound" officials and ex-army men, and presented by the Polish government with land at the expense of the local peasants. Agents of the Polish government, their duty was to uphold the imperialistic policy of the Polish bourgeoisie. The estates of the *kulak-osadniks* were outposts of the Polish military and police authorities among the population of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia.

His faithful dog is poisoned. In broad daylight, soon after Chorzyniak has cut the grass in the communal pasture his house burns to the ground. In the early fall, when he is carting home his wheat from the field, an unknown hand sends a burning arrow straight into the sheaves, which catch fire and go up in flames.

Chorzyniak undertakes single-handed to get the man he thinks responsible for the misfortunes befalling him, the peasant Iwan Piskor. But the latter succeeds, with the help of the villagers, in proving his innocence of the charges laid against him. Chorzyniak, however, continues his search for proof, until one day he sees Piskor near the lake, and tries to arrest him. But before he has time to draw his revolver, a terrible blow with an oar knocks him down. This, of course, does not end the search for Iwan. It is further intensified with the arrival of the young police-sergeant Ludzik. Ludzik's hunt for Iwan is masterly and dramatically described by Wasilewska.

Iwan Piskor, as depicted by Wasilewska, is a true representative of the oppressed masses, a fighter, an avenger of the insults, persecution and pain inflicted on his people; he lives with their hopes and most cherished dreams. Iwan Piskor is close to the illegal revolutionary peasant organization formed by the Communist Petro Iwanczuk. The latter had been condemned to ten years imprisonment prior to the events described in this novel.

The single combat between Iwan and Ludzik becomes fiercer, especially after Iwan, handcuffed and wounded, succeeds in escaping from the cart on which the triumphant Ludzik is taking him to the police headquarters. This struggle ends in Ludzik's death. After killing Ludzik with his ax, Iwan makes his way eastward, to the frontier of that country "where a peasant was a human creature and not a hunted beast." Not far from the frontier, however, Iwan falls into an impassable bog and perishes.

The struggle of the villagers in Olszyny did not cease with the death of Iwan, because it was not a struggle of individuals but of the people against arrogant invaders. It is probable that—when, during the hours of Iwan's agony in the bog, "under the black sky, over the black earth, the two pillars of flame rose like a cry of protest and indignation" — that was the fire which consumed the new mansion of the *osadnik* Chorzyniak and the office of Engineer Karwowski, the government agent.

This is the central plot of the novel. The book, however, contains several parallel plots. One of the most important of them is the story of Jadwiga Plonska, a young girl living with her mother, a widow, and her brother, not far from the village. The Plonski family owned an estate in Russia, but lost it after the October Socialist Revolution.

Jadwiga is endowed with charm by the author, but her life and personality are complex, tragic. Jadwiga's tragedy is rooted in the duality of her position in the village: she is in love with the Communist Petro who trusts her, but socially and economically the Plonski family is alien to the poor peasants of the region. Finally, after Petro's arrest, Jadwiga's mother succeeds in forcing the depressed, heart-broken girl into a marriage with the *osadnik* Chorzyniak.

Wasilewska sees in Jadwiga a victim of the circumstances created by the chauvinist policies of the Polish bourgeoisie. Her pity for the young girl is profound, but simultaneously she shows that Jadwiga, who played false to Petro and his cause, cannot but remain in terrible isolation.

There are other parallel themes which describe the many aspects of the life in the Polesian countryside, and depict the processes of political awakening of the oppressed peasant masses of the eastern border regions of the former Poland. There is a description of the splendidly organized strike of the raftsmen; the heart-rending tale of the sick peasant woman Pietrukowa, who refuses the doctor's aid because it is a burden on her poverty-stricken family to pay him for it. The hopeless misery of the Polesian peasants, their disfranchisement and the ruthless methods by which the authorities usurp from the peasants their ancient communal lands and lakes, are forcefully described by Wasilewska in many episodes.

The action in the novel develops against the background of nature, which is masterfully described by Wasilewska. She endows this land of swamps and bogs with a weird beauty all its own. Her descriptions of nature invest the novel with a peculiar charm and poetry and form a vital, intregral part of the story. The gamut of colors, the rhythm of the slow rivers, the pensive stillness of the lakes, the deceptive immobility of the swamps and bogs, everything about the nature of Polesie so powerfully described by Wasilewska, harmonizes with the dreary, dull life under the surface of which there was going on the process of awakening and protest.

One of the most fascinating peculiarities of Wasilewska's novel is this organic blending of the Polesian nature and the tale of human suffering and tragedy.

The novel was written in 1938-1939, when the censorship in imperialist Poland was in full force, with the result that much had to be told indirectly. This, however, does not diminish the importance of the novel: on the contrary, it endows it with a peculiar value as a remarkable document of an eye-witness describing the life of the Ukrainians and Byelorussians during the last years and months of the rule of the imperialist Polish bourgeoisie.

Blue as forget-me-nots were the waters in the sunlight; spring was fast approaching. Fallow field and last year's stubble were dry now and ready for the plough. And ploughs were soon afield, and widow Parukowa, not being able to afford one, sallied out with the old-fashioned implement her grandfather and great grandfather had used, and turned up the clods with a wooden ploughshare. Long, even furrows darkened the narrow strips of fields. The first primroses, heralds of spring, bloomed in sheltered hollows, the yellow of wild clary brightened the shadows of the alders, and violets spread their fragrance in the fresh green grass. When the day of the patron saint of pastures, Yury, came round in April, the cattle were driven out to the meadow still wet and chilly after the recent flood. Alders and birches hastened to unfurl shining young leaves, pines showed a powdering of bright green against the somber background of last year's needles, blackthorn foamed with white blossoms. Day by day the sun shone warmer, the wind was young and invigorating. So spring advanced till at length the air was filled with the scent of birdcherry in flower, scratchweed glowed pink, meadows were golden with buttercups, marshes—with dandelions, grass grew tall and rich and thick, and the light breeze tossed white petals from pear trees and pink ones from apple trees in the orchards of the big estate at Olszyny and the Plonski's place. Nights set in warm and starry, spring sped on to meet summer—scattering bloom and fragrance and color, filling all things with gladness and vigor, sending the swift sap coursing through the tree-trunks, multiplying the leaves, opening flowers, driving men out to work betimes, keeping them at it till late in the evening, shortening the nights.

When they were done with the sowing and the planting—those of them who had anything to plant or sow—there was not much work left. They scoured the waters—the river, the old creeks they knew, the waters falling into the lake and the broad stream flowing out of it, swamps, the brooks, the rapids and the bogs. It was just before nightfall, they had to be quick about it. The women took the children and went out to gather sweet-flag, and strip the dry, last year's bark from the oak; this they could

scrape and mix with rye and potato-flour and bake cakes of it. They searched for edible grasses in the meadows, picked sour, juicy sorrel-leaves whenever they could find them. Sorrel could be eaten raw or made into soup or used to flavor the broth made from the last of the blackened potatoes that were only fit for seed. But they devoted most of their energies to fishing. Drag-nets darkened the flags and rushes and the watery channels between the bogs, hung drying on stakes outside the houses or by the river's edge; but it was for the most part cage-nets that were heard gurgling in the water.

Pilniuk used to go to the bends and rapids and flooded parts of the river that flowed into the lake. Here were thickets of reeds nearly twice the height of a man. Flags as thick as a man's finger grew here and in the inlets the flood had made in the mossgrown meadows and tangles of willows, bloomed yellow and white waterlilies. Under the green shade of their spreading leaves the pike lay in wait for its prey.

In his "old oak" hollowed out of a whole tree-trunk, Pilniuk rowed towards the flat leaves. Noiselessly he raised his net, lowered it cautiously into the water, and with a quick, dexterous movement pressed down the lower circle of curving whites. To steady it, he kept his foot on the upper circle, out of which stuck the clusters of ribs, gleaming with the silvery whiteness of unstripped birch. After that he beat the water with his oar, gazing intently into the green depths where water-pepper and hawk-weed flourished, velvety as moss. The pike, surrounded on every side by the rings of the cage-net, and, startled by the sudden gurgling of the water, flipped away. Seeing nothing but large mesh of the net before him and certain of escape through those enormous holes, he made for them. But between the open net stretched over the birch-rods was a third, with a fine, close mesh. As he struck it in his headlong flight, the pike dragged the close net in around him and was lost. Pilniuk tilted the cage to pull it aboard and get the fish.

Pike vary a great deal. Some are long and narrow and thin, some are short, plump and have a golden gleam and are very heavy. The pike slid into the box in the boat, the net was lowered once more, the oar beat the water, the quarry shot into the meshes—those treacherous triple meshes that promised liberty and robbed him of it forever.

But pike was not always to be caught so easily. Sometimes one had to beat the water for a long while before there was any sign of life in the grasses, and sometimes the net had to be lowered as many as five or ten times. Pilniuk rowed on slowly, followed at a distance of a few paces by a stork with long red legs. Its pace was leisurely, and it struck out right and left with its bill. The small fry of the waters darted away in alarm and then the long white neck shot out; the stork aimed at its prey like a snake, seized it, tossed it into the air and—down it went, straight into the bird's throat. Then—splosh, splosh, the measured stride was resumed; the legs, red and frozen, looked as if the trousers were rolled up; the long bill struck out, like Pilniuk's oar, among the leaves, and a silver dace or a pike no bigger than a finger, would flash in the air and vanish.

Pilniuk rowed slowly up-stream till he reached Sowiuk's boat.

"How are you getting on?"

"Not too badly. They do get caught . . . But you wouldn't call these things pike. Pike aren't what they used to be."

"You're right . . . They're nothing like what they used to be . . ." Pilniuk hastened to agree.

The catch must never be praised till it's all over, or the fish would clear out at once, vanish into the depths, escape into the marsh, hide in inaccessible waters where no net could be cast. Praise could easily bring bad luck to fishermen.

"Would there be a *pood*[1] in it?" he asked, glancing into Sowiuk's boat.

"There might be . . . even a trifle over," Wasyl Sowiuk reckoned at a glance.

"Kuzma got about three *poods* this morning with the casting-net on the far side of the lake."

"That's exactly a *pood* for the buyer and two for sale," said Wasyl.

"Oh, as soon as they start counting their kilos—or whatever they call them—you can't make head or tail of anything."

"The devil himself only knows how they weigh them," remarked the younger Sowiuk, plugging a tiny leak in the boat with tow.

"It's easy enough to guess. They won't lose by it, you may be sure," Pilniuk spat into the water and thrust back a clump of green flags with his oar. "Semyon brought in some good fish yesterday, they priced them at twenty *groszy* apiece—small fry, they called them. And it was no more small fry than I am. It was real fish."

"I've heard that in Brest and Pinsk people pay a *zlot* and twenty *groszy* for a pike," said Iwan, raising his head from the tow he was working on.

"Silly nonsense! Who'd pay as much as that for a fish?" his elder brother scoffed.

"People who went there to the court told us."

"Maybe it is true, but . . ."

"But our buyer prices them at forty *groszy*," Pilniuk said bitterly.

"He has the right to . . . It says in the contract that he can fix the price."

"We shouldn't have agreed to that kind of contract, eh? What do you think, Sasha?"

Pilniuk frowned and scratched his head under the cap of curly sheepskin.

"Who can tell? After all, it's somebody to sell it to, otherwise—what would you do with your fish?"

"That's true, of course. It's a terrible long way to the town . . ." Wasyl sighed as he lowered the net.

There was a gentle splash.

"And how could you take it there? It'd go bad before you got to the town," Iwan added, with a quick glance down into the white birch circles gleaming on the riverbed.

"The buyer takes it in a boat."

"See? . . . The gentry do think of everything. What chance have we?"

The oar beat the water. But the pike darted aside and hid in the green tangle of water-lilies.

"He won't stand any loss. He's sharp—he's thought it all out: a *pood* for himself out of every three, and the rest to sell at his own price . . . Come on, Iwan, here's a pike . . ."

"The only good thing is that our fields won't be divided from each other any more by other people's—they said they were going to do away with all that," Pilniuk consoled himself. "They were going to start straight away on it, but I don't see them doing any measuring yet."

"They're going to start in the autumn, I heard. Now that the fields have been sown and planted they can't very well go tramping over them and measuring them, can they?"

[1] *Pood*—36.11 lbs.

"That's right, they can't."

Danilo Sowiuk was busy with the net, it had got entangled.

"Are you remaining here?"

"What's the use? All the fish are frightened now. And up above Siorbácz has his cage-net out. Maybe we'd do better to row down to the lake?"

"We might as well."

They pulled in their nets, turned their boats down-stream and drifted slowly with the lazy current. The water was still fairly high and lapped the meadows, but by the tide-mark of ooze on the wall of reeds it was evidently giving way, the sparkling surface was much lower than it had been, and it was flowing away to some unknown bourne beyond the mist-veiled distances, beyond the farthest horizon, to the waves of the Dnieper and the Black Sea.

"Yesterday they caught a sheat-fish round the bend by the meadow. About four *poods* in it—they say there was," Iwan informed them.

"Did the buyer take it?" they were all interested to know.

"No. He said it wasn't good meat. They're cooking it themselves and eating it."

"He was lying—it is good meat. Although I must say the smaller sheat-fish, say half-a-pood ones, are tastier. The bigger they are—the tougher."

A wild duck flew noiselessly out of the thicket of rushes, soared high and sailed through the clear sky like a dark, moving cross. Little birds clung to the swaying stems of the reeds, their breathless twittering betraying they were excited over something.

The wall of rushes became lower now, the flags were not so thick, the current was swifter and swept the boats out into the open. Here the river broadened until it grew, almost unnoticeably, into a lake. They turned at an angle and, skirting the shore, crossed to the other side where the river flowed with a stronger current out of the lake, ruffling it with the echo of its waves. From here the village, sloping down in a narrow wedge towards the water, was barely visible. By the shore on the far side a number of little brown ducks were diving and swimming noisily, just as their sisters of the wild.

The cage-nets were lowered into the water again; there was a plash of oars.

"It's a funny sort of business, anyhow: you fish and fish, and when you've caught three *poods*, you give one away to a town fellow. You get soaking wet, you work till your back is ready to break, you wear yourself out and what's it all to him? He lives in the town and sends a hanger-on of his here to get all he can out of the muzhik," said Danilo, pressing down the upper hoop of the net with his foot.

"Still, they're going to do away with this cutting up of our land into strips all over the place," Wasyl said to cheer them.

"They haven't got round to doing anything about it yet and how much fish has got away to Pinsk in the meantime? And it'll continue like that for fourteen long years."

"Yes, fourteen years."

"Looks as though you put your foot in it with that contract, Sasha."

"Why, am I the only one? We did it by common agreement. Did anyone say, when we were at the village elder's, that we shouldn't sign it? Not one of you said a word against it. You were all for it. I'm no more to blame than the rest. I only signed my name like the others, I didn't even have time to read it properly . . ."

"Chmielanczuk kept buzzing in our ears."

Drawing by E. Burgunker

"He had his own ax to grind, you bet . . ."

"Not a man opened his mouth against it . . ."

"Everything looked different when we were at the elder's. I'll catch a whole lot of fish, you think to yourself, and there'll always be some left, and we'll get the land divided up again for nothing, as you might say . . ."

"For nothing? And who gets the third *pood* of fish? Just reckon up how many *poods* he gets for himself. . . ."

"Yes, talking and signing contracts at the elder's is one thing, but when you get out on the water it's another thing. Besides, there's a lot of fish now, but supposing it moves off with the water, what then? Think of the trouble you'll have getting even one *pood.*"

"That's as clear as daylight . . ."

"Then it turns out that nobody but Iwanczuk was telling the truth."

"Who? Petro?"

"Who else?"

There was silence for a while. Pilniuk stood idle, his foot on the upper circle of the cage-net.

"Well, true though it may be, what's to be done about it? Folks here are fools, anybody can twist a muzhik round his little finger."

"But let me tell you, whatever that buyer wanted he'd get one way or another."

"Was there any chance of refusing to sign it?"

"That's not the point. It wouldn't matter whether we signed or not, he'd have thought of some way to get round us. Look what he did with Petro . . . How can a muzhik fight a *pan*? Petro Iwanczuk talked boldly, thinking he would do good for all of us. And what came

of it? Got himself into prison. All that the buyer, Karwowski, had to do was to inform on him—and they gave him ten years. For Communism, they said . . . But what sort of Communism was that? As soon as he opened his mouth against this Karwowski he was accused of being a Communist. Maybe that was why the people were afraid to say anything at the elder's that time . . ."

"Maybe that was it," Danilo agreed. But Pilniuk shook his head.

"To tell you the truth, Danilo, maybe we weren't afraid, but I think it was simply this: they'd started to spin us a yarn about how grand it would be—first Karwowski, then Chmielanczuk—and took us all in nicely. Before the buyer came in Chmielanczuk kept telling us: 'Fourteen years is a long time, who knows what may happen in that time? Papers get lost, you know, and still, in the meanwhile, the land would have been divided up properly instead of the way it is in strips—here, there and yonder.' And then, too, he told us that strict instructions had come from the head bailiff's office to do away with the strip-system altogether. Had they come and done it, we'd have to pay them afterwards, cash down . . . How could we let it come to that?"

"Where would we get the money to pay them?" Wasyl sighed.

"Ah, there you are, you see! Perhaps the contract wasn't such a bad idea after all, then?"

Sowiuk shook his head.

"We could have sold our fish and got the money. Any fish-dealer would have come himself for it from Pinsk or somewhere if he'd known there was a stock of fish here, and would have paid more than forty *groszy* too."

"Might have given even a *zloty* for a pike . . ."

"Last year they paid eighty *groszy* apiece for sheatfish, fifty for small fish."

"What's the use of talking? The contract's signed and that's all there is to it."

"Of course, now it's down in black and white, no sense in kicking against the pricks."

The water sparkled in the sunlight. Iwan threw a pike into the boat.

"It's a pity about Petro . . ."

"Yes, it's too bad. I'm sorry for him, but—there's many a one put out of the way these days. Look how it was at Kamien . . ."

"Oh, that was a terrible business. The police outdid themselves that time, they seemed as if they didn't know how to get rid of the people quick enough . . ."

"They left neither houses nor goods nor anyone to work in the fields. . . . They set fire to the grain, and bayonetted the cattle, and threw the people into prison."

"I heard at the fair that . . ."

Pilniuk looked around nervously.

"There you go again, hammer and tongs . . . bringing new trouble down on our heads . . ."

Danilo Sowiuk deftly extricated a pike from the net.

"Look what a fine one! Yes, he's right, we whine and grumble, but what's the use of it? Will talking change anything in our lives?"

"Of course it won't . . ."

"The *osadnik* went to town again yesterday . . ."

"What for, I wonder? To complain, perhaps."

"What has he got to complain of now?"

"They say somebody shot at him three days ago."

"You don't say?"

"I don't rightly know how it was, but the women were all full of it."

"Oh, those women—the tales they get hold of! . . . He would have

gone to the police-station in that case, why should he go to town?"

"He sent someone to the police-station as well."

"The two policemen aren't enough for him, then?"

"Looks like it. Now there'll be three."

They moved on a little way behind a clump of willows that grew far out into the water. A duck arose out of the flags.

"That fellow from the town told Karwowski that they would be giving us nets to catch the fish with—casting-nets and drag-nets—whichever anybody liked."

"My drag-net's worn out, I ought to be getting a new one. There wasn't any hemp and my wife didn't spin any. I'll have to buy some from him. If he won't sell it for money, maybe he will for fish."

"It seems that all we must do is to fish for him alone. And where do we come in?"

The men's spirits fell. From over the meadows came the cries of the gulls, their smooth wings flashing like green metal in the sun. A crane, gray as twilight in the radiance of the spring day, moved like a shadow over the long grass. A heron sailed through the heights with a sweep of powerful wings.

"Grand weather for the crops these days, isn't it."

"Yes, if we had a day like this for the mowing, now . . ."

"It'll keep up, very likely."

"The grass hasn't come up as it should this year, you know . . ."

"How was it to come up? All dried out."

"It's only good at Odcinek."

"Yes, it's good down there, that's right . . ."

The sun was climbing higher. There was a rustling in the willows.

"Kucharczuk is barking lime-trees for bast shoes."

"We ought to be doing the same. All our shoes are worn out, although I barked over a hundred bunches of it in the autumn."

"That's not surprising—there are four of you."

The water was a dazzling gold now. Fewer pike fell into the nets. The oars had to beat the water for much longer periods.

"It's too hot for pike. He's gone down deeper."

"Time for us to be going home, too," Pilniuk remarked.

"Yes, it's just about time. Can't be far off midday now."

They turned and rowed homewards across the lake. From the long oars fell trembling drops that caught the sunbeams, broke into sparkling diamonds and scattered in fiery rain on the blue water. Along the very middle of the lake came a big boat with a gray canvas sail. The sail hung limp, the light, easterly breeze could not fill it. A mere breath of wind, it promised a long spell of fine weather, sunny days, starry nights.

And now, one after another, the boats glided out from the reeds, from the willows, and round bends in the river.

"There are no end of people out fishing today . . ."

"What else is there to do now except fish?"

"They're fishing at the back of the village there, and in the river and the bogs and everywhere . . ."

"At any rate they're doing it for themselves over there . . ."

"But it makes less fish . . ."

"Of course it does. Where's it to come from?"

A song floated out on the bright air as a boat glided swiftly across the lake.

I carry water but the wind
Blows hard and spills it in the
glade . . .

A young bride wept bitter woman's tears,
And cursed her bitter fate . . .

"Somebody's got the heart to sing . . ."

"It's the Kalczuk girls . . ."

"Do they go out fishing now as well?"

"Yes. Kalczuk can't manage it himself, he's been sick since the winter."

"What's the matter with him?"

"His cough chokes him. As soon as he starts coughing, a clot of blood as big as your fist comes up."

"Really?"

"True as I'm sitting here. The only work he can do is look after his grandchild. His daughter-in-law manages the house and everything, and the girls go out fishing."

"It must be hard for them without a man to do a hand's turn . . ."

"You may be sure it is . . . Bringing up a son, and then have the father arrested . . ."

"Like Petro Iwanczuk."

"Something like that, but not quite. Young Kalczuk was sentenced to three years for theft, as they called it. But what sort of theft could there take place in the woods? Who planted the woods, anyhow?"

"You're right. The woods are there for everybody."

"Same as the fish in the water."

"Only there's the forester watching the woods. And the fish-buyer watching the water."

"Life's just one long misery."

"Still, they didn't give Kalczuk a heavy sentence. Three years—it's nothing . . ."

"It isn't so long when you come to think of it."

"People say Stefek from Olszyny is coming after that youngest daughter of Kalczuk's."

"It's all women's gossip . . ." Wasyl said angrily, but Iwan demanded:

"And why not, I'd like to know? They're fine good-looking girls . . ."

"Yes, and he'll come after them for a while and then stop."

"Well, that's always the way things go."

The boat bumped against the flint-strewn shore. Pilniuk took his oar and climbed the hill home. The Sowiuks went by a path running at a right angle from his.

Little barefoot children in shirts of coarse homespun linen were playing outside the Pietrukows' house. Their curly, dark or flaxen locks fell over their eyes, and they did not pause in the engrossing occupation of making mud pies when Jadwiga came up to them. Only for a moment the eyes were raised—gray, brown, clear blue, and the dark-blue, almost violet eyes of little Dunya, Pietrukowa's granddaughter.

"Is your granny home?"

"Where else would she be? Of course she's home," the little girl replied with dignity, slapping a mud cake against her foot.

Jadwiga bent her head as she entered the low passage. A stuffy stale smell greeted her. Pietrukowa was sitting at her spinning-wheel opposite the door. There was a bunch of silvery flax on the comb.

"Stefek told me your foot was bad."

"Yes, that's true, it's very painful. I got a splinter in it in the winter, and it's still festering. But it's no great misfortune—it'll pass off sometime. Sit down, *pani*."[1]

Jadwiga seated herself on the bench and watched the rhythmic movement of the bony fingers drawing and twisting the fibers into a long, even thread. It emerged as though by magic from the tangle of silvery flax and was immediately wound up on the winder. From

[1] *Pani*—lady.—*Ed.*

time to time, Pietrukowa raised her fingers to her lips to moisten them; they seemed hardly to move as they twisted the fibers. She did not even glance at her work.

"Anything new, *pani*?"

"Nothing . . . What could there be new for me? Where are all your folks?"

"They've all gone out somewhere or other, it's spring—they don't want to sit at home. Jozek's gone to town to sign a contract with the engineer Karwowski."

"So they've come to an agreement?"

"It looks like it. Yesterday they were sitting at the elder's, talking till midnight. This week they're going to start measuring, if the weather keeps up."

"Will it be a good thing for you, do you think?"

"How can I tell? It's beyond a woman's understanding. Still, I think—it may turn out well and, again, it may not. 'This *komassatsia*'[1]—as it's called—will concern our land and all the pieces it's cut up into. Here, in the back of the village, if my memory doesn't fail me, there'll be nearly eight pieces, and three on the other side of the lake. And the piece by the cemetery across the river is ours, too. And a bit by your alders. And, then, there's the piece over behind Odcinek, and near the meadow. No less than twenty pieces, there must be altogether, and what do we get out of it? One part from the allotment. How much does that come to? Four morgs in all. And we aren't so badly off as some; Filimon's land is in forty different places. What sort of work can you put into land like that? It looks at first as though it ought to be alright, but when you come to work on it—it's no good at all. I can't figure up how they're going to manage about the fish. Karwowski says we'll make a profit out of it . . . But what do I know? If the muzhiks have made up their minds to it then it must be right, I suppose. It's not my business."

The thread was twisted quickly and evenly, although there was not a sign of haste in the woman's movements.

"The men say that the *komassatsia* was to be done in any case. If Karwowski hadn't taken it up, someone else from the revenue-office would have come. It seems to me it's better as it is. When they do anything from the office you have to pay straight away, and where would we get the money? But this way, we don't have to pay and we'll sell our fish as well. It seems as if it should be better."

"But the revenue-office would take the payment by instalments."

"By instalments? Yes, it might, but where would we get the money to pay even by instalments? Last week, for instance, someone came with a paper. 'Pay up,' he says . . . 'We're all paid up,' we told him. And of course we were, we don't owe anything. We'd even sold the pig. But here he comes with his paper. I don't know what's on it. And Olesia can't read Polish, either. So I suppose we'll have to pay, but we don't know what for. There's a paper and that's all there is to it."

Goslings were swarming about the puddle on the mud floor.

"I'd better light the stove, they'll be coming home at midday, time's getting on."

She stood up from the spinning-wheel and limped to the stove. She was a thin, wizened, little

---

[1] *Komassatsia*—the liquidation of the strip-system. Under the guise of *komassatsia*, the Polish government expropriated the land of the peasants for the benefit of landlords and *kulaks*, and in Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia also for the benefit of the *osadniks*.—*Ed.*

woman with a big belly that stuck out and made her look ungainly.

"I can see your foot hurts badly."

"Yes, it does but that's no great misfortune. It'll stop aching some day, I suppose, and get well. I put some melilot leaves on it and wrapped it up warm. That'll take the inflammation out of it. When I was younger, everything used to heal up in no time, but now—well, I suppose I'm getting old."

"How old are you?"

"I must be about forty, or maybe forty-five . . . Or even forty-six. I don't rightly know. When we were walking to Germany, our ages were written down, but it's so long ago, I can't remember . . ."

"So, you went to Germany, too."

"Of course I did. They all went, and so I had to. At first Makar didn't want to take me—I was having a baby, Olesia it was—and my time was nearly come. We'd made up our minds we'd sit in the cellar just outside the vegetable patch and wait. And all of a sudden the order came to be ready to march. 'Let me wait here, your honor,' I said, 'till it's over.' But he shouted at us that the firing had started. 'All right,' I said to him, 'let them shoot, but we were born here and we're going to die here. Why should we go wandering up and down the world?' He didn't even understand what I was saying. They rounded up all the people that were left and drove them away. First we went in a train, then we lived in some barracks. Olesia was born in the barracks. It was a long way off, on the other side of Berlin—that's their main town. . . . And we had to go to work straight away. . . . My father died there, far away from home, outside Berlin."

She was busy laying a fire of chips, strips of birch-bark and twigs in the stove. She set them alight with the embers that had been kept alive, covered with ashes, in an iron pot. A lively flame shot up from the dry twigs. Pietrukowa moved a pot-bellied earthen ware crock towards it and filled another with water.

"Well, and what happened afterwards? Didn't you have to build the house all over again when you came back?"

Jadwiga knew the story well, she had heard it dozens of times; it was a story that everyone in the village had lived through and remembered. Yet it always sounded new and amazing.

"That goes without saying. As soon as we were told we could go home, we all started straight away. No one stayed a day longer. But oh, that journey—I'll never forget it if I live to be a hundred. And still we got home at last, somehow. It was in the early morning. I remember it as though it happened only yesterday. We looked about us and we wondered if we'd come to the wrong place. But there was the lake and there was the river—all as it used to be in the old days. Only the place itself—you'd think someone had taken a broom and swept it all clean away. Not a board or a beam was there to be seen. And down by the river at Odcinek there were trenches dug and barbed wire everywhere—you could hardly walk a foot—and nothing else to be seen: Makar cut down some bulrushes and made a sort of roof of them over a trench and we lived there, like wild beasts in a den. Jozek was only a little thing then, he'd been born in Germany. How old is he now? Yes, he was born exactly a year after Olesia . . . We cleared away the barbed wire, and filled in the trenches, and got the iron out of the ground—there was so much of it, I couldn't tell you all. My brother was blown to bits that time,

and he was not the only one . . . I used to go down to the river and gather sweet-flag and rushes, and sorrel in the meadow while the summer lasted. Oh, what a summer that was! You'd see sights that would turn you sick to death, while you were gathering the rushes . . . The things that were in that water. A terrible lot of people had been killed hereabouts, and the cemetery wouldn't hold them all. So they rotted there in the reeds and the bogs, long after the war was over. What a life we led! It was bad enough in the summer, yet we could manage, but where were we to live in winter with those two small children? How were we to live in a den like that when the frost and snow came? Makar made up his mind to build us a house somehow."

She sat down again at her work. Jadwiga's eyes followed the scarcely perceptible movements of her deft fingers.

"Then I took the two children—Olesia was walking already, but Jozek was still in arms—and we tramped into Poland. There we lived for a year on an estate called Brzeznica—belonging to one of the gentry. I was milkmaid—fourteen cows I had to milk . . . and not like we do, but twice or three times a day.When I think of it now, I can't believe that these hands ever milked fourteen cows three times a day . . ."

She raised her small hand with its narrow fingers, dark as the bark of a tree. Involuntarily Jadwiga's glance shifted to that withered but well-shaped hand.

"So that's how I lived. When I came home, the house was ready—this same house we're sitting in. Makar built it on the same spot where the old one had stood, and in exactly the same way. When I think of it now, I wonder if it isn't all a dream: how a woman like me could go away from her own home and the land she was born, to a far country, to Berlin itself. And to think that at one time there was nothing here but the bare ground. The gentry's estates had to be all rebuilt, too, yours was the only one left whole and sound, and that was because it stands a bit outside Olszyny. The country was all bare around us. But the people built homes for themselves. And though some had died in Germany and never came back, their fathers and sons and grandsons—whoever was left of the family—built on the old land again. . . . And the village looks exactly the same now as when I was a young girl going to get married. You can't tell where the trenches were, there's only some wire left. The elder says there's an order out to take down the wire and put up wooden fences. But how are we going to do it? Where are we to get the wood from, if there isn't any? He says it's a strict order. Whoever doesn't take down the wire will be severely punished . . . And that's a wrong order, too. Where are the cows to graze? Are they to be allowed to wander off to the bogs, and get sucked in, or are they to trample all the neighbors' crops? And whoever thought of such a thing? It's just another trick to get money out of people, that's all . . . "

"Well, but if the wire rusts and the barbs fall off, the cows may swallow them . . ."

"That's true, of course, it's old wire, there's no saying it isn't. It's been standing since wartime, after all. A lot of it we dragged out of the water a year or two after the war. You daren't go into the water, hardly, it was so dangerous. But still—have you ever heard of a cow dying of eating barbed wire, *pani*? A cow isn't as silly as all that, you know, she won't go eating

wire, much. But she can very easily get sucked down in the bog—even if it's fenced off there's a risk, and if it's not? What then? Strict orders, the elder said . . . Well, let those who give the order give us the wood and we'll put up the fences. We're squeezed out of our lives as it is—it's beyond bearing . . ."

She gave a little gasp of pain as she stubbed her sore foot against something.

"Let me have a look at your foot, perhaps I can bring you something for it."

"Oh, no, *pani*, what would the like of you want with looking at old women's dirty feet? It'll heal up of itself . . . If there's nothing in the woods or fields that'll heal it, then neither doctor nor chemist will invent anything. If it were very bad I'd go to the wise woman and she'd put a spell on it for me. There's a very good wise woman living in Zeleniszcze. But the pain isn't much. It'll pass off—of itself. Only old flesh heals slowly, and it's dragging on a long time."

Something was heard boiling in the stove. She caught up the tongs, seized the iron pot by its sooty middle and pushed it further towards the dark cavity, then set the crock of water nearer to the blazing fire.

"It's different at your place, I suppose? You have a range."

"Yes, it's better on the range."

"Not a scrap. Look what a lot of wood you've got to burn before everything gets cooked, while here it's ready in no time at all. Anyhow, we find this kind of stove better, a range would be no good for us. That's only for gentry."

Jadwiga frowned.

"You didn't happen to see our Dunya anywhere about, *pani*, when you were on your way here? I'm afraid she may have run off somewhere—down to the water . . ."

"She's playing outside the house with the other children."

"That's alright then. I must say Olesia's little girl is very good and quiet. Not a bit of trouble . . . not like my Jozek was when he was little—Lord! I never had a minute's peace with him. But this child doesn't bother me, she runs about and plays and when she comes home, she sits still, and never fidgets."

"It's time for me to be going. If your foot doesn't get any better, let me know, perhaps I can help."

"Oh, never mind . . . Common flesh soon heals. Thank you very much, *pani*, for coming in to see an old woman. I shouldn't wonder if my Jozek hasn't let something out to *Pan* Stefek."

"Yes, Stefek told me."

"Oh, well, *Pan* Stefek is a good-hearted fellow, no one could say a bad word of him. But he ought to take care, and not get into any trouble . . ."

"What trouble?"

"Why, any kind, there's plenty of trouble about, do you mean to say you don't know? Take the Iwanczuks, for instance. The old woman was always bragging about her Petro, she thought the sun shone through him. And she died in the winter without ever seeing him again . . . But perhaps there's nothing in what I say, for, after all, we're only muzhiks and Stefek is a gentleman. Everything will be different for a gentleman."

"What makes you think so?"

"Why, of course, it's different. A gentleman isn't a common peasant, and a common peasant isn't a gentleman. The gentry made the laws for themselves, and not for the peasants."

"There's only one law for everybody."

Pietrukowa glanced at her in astonishment. The red glow from

the flames fell full on her small, dark face.

"How can you say such a thing, *pani*! There's no law for the muzhik. Because he is a muzhik."

There was a noise in the passage. Pietrukowa opened the door. Little Dunya was struggling over the threshold, bravely lifting her rickety bow-legs. Through a tangle of chestnut hair the lovely eyes, shaded by dark curling lashes, looked at Jadwiga mistrustfully.

"What is it you want now, child?"

"I want something to eat, grandma."

"All right, you'll get it. Wait a minute, I'll give you something just now."

Pietrukowa put a few potatoes on an earthenware saucer, sprinkled a pinch of dark, coarse salt over them and moistened them with some greenish potato broth.

"Here you are, child, eat it up."

The little girl sat down on the threshold with the saucer on her knees and ate the food greedily, never once removing her mistrustful gaze from Jadwiga. Her delicate brows were hidden under the tangled curls, her lips stuck out in a comical little grimace, as she ate the hot potatoes. Jadwiga felt a thrill of admiration. Then she caught sight of the thin, ugly bow legs sticking out from under the short chemise the child was wearing.

She went away, followed by the gaze of a pair of wonderful eyes, blue as early violets in a moss-grown glade.

Meadows were ripening in the sunshine, and haymaking time was near. In the drier spots the heads of the flowers had darkened, and the wind swept like a golden shadow through the bowed grass. There were still some stretches of bright green in the bogs, the swamps and quagmires, and the outlying meadow known as Odcinek still kept its spring freshness, but the ring of scythes could be heard on the hills, and dewy mornings awoke with silvery voices.

The pilgrimage in quest of fodder began again. Boats came in from distant villages. Strangers spent the night at the village elder's, questioned passers-by. But all the meadows had been rented already. With faces darkened with fatigue, the bast shoes worn to shreds on the rough roads, the strangers tramped on.

The villagers stared after them for a long time. Sometimes they asked questions.

"Have you tried Zakrzewski's?"

"There's nothing there."

"Been to Karczewski's?"

"Yes, there's nothing left."

"You've not been to Chojary yet, though, have you?"

"Yes, we have. Everything's rented out already. You don't happen to know if there's anything at Zaluczi, do you?"

"There's nothing there, either. You've come too late."

"This is the second time we've been around . . . Maybe we'll find something somewhere, if there's anything left."

But evidently there was nothing; soon the travelers returned, worn out with hunger and fatigue, glowering at the meadows warming in the sun.

And those who came in boats unfailingly lingered at Odcinek, in wistful admiration of the luxuriant, juicy green grass, with its deep shadow under the rich crown of flowers.

"This is what you might call a meadow! Whom does it belong to?"

Iwan Piskor, who often went round by Odcinek now to cast a loving eye over the great fragrant field, would say:

"A gentleman, that goes without saying. But it won't belong to him for so very much longer."

"Who mows it? The muzhiks?"

"Yes, of course. Half for themselves, half for the owner." The weary men from Kurzawa sighed heavily.

"A meadow like that would suit us down to the ground. . . ."

"Haven't you any?"

"No, we had once, but we lost it . . ."

"How's that?" Iwan asked in astonishment.

"Well, it had been ours from the time of the *servituti*,[1] of course. It ought to have been divided up . . . The delegates went to the estate to ask for it and in the end the *pan* got everything and we nothing at all."

Iwan spat on the ground.

"What kind of delegates were they?"

"Just the usual kind . . . Now they've chosen others, from among the poor folks."

"Well, and what are they like?"

"Oh, they're alright. They say we're too late, though. The papers have been signed. The delegates are allowed to mow the landowners meadow. And he's given one of them, Stawruk, a cow."

They pushed off from the bank. The boat glided slowly upstream. Iwan watched them for a long time, then looked again at the meadow, the coveted green Odcinek meadow, that would soon be ripe for mowing.

He looked at it with different eyes now that the rumor had been confirmed that the revenue-office was going to confiscate the meadow for non-payment of the taxes. The Jews from Sinicy had told the truth. The men had sent Olga to Jadwiga who had written out an application. And they had taken their little stores of hard-earned money out of the hiding-places, out of the rags stuffed into trunks, or hidden behind ikons, and got together two *zloty*, and bought a proper stamp and done everything in the proper way. The village elder himself had taken the petition to the town: it said, seeing that things are as they are, we request you to sell us the outlying meadow called Odcinek and allow us to pay for it by instalments. Then they waited. Odcinek could wait too: the thicket of wayfaring-trees and the big spreading oaks protected it from the scorching rays of the sun. There was really no need to hurry.

Meanwhile, haymaking was in full swing. The scents and sounds of it were in the air and the ring of scythes and their silvery flash could be caught far and wide. Old Semyon the boatman never closed his eyes all night. Hardly had he reached the bank when people would be calling for him and crowding into the boat, and as soon as he was in the middle of the river again, he would hear the voices, carrying far over the water: "Hey, Semyon!"

The brief summer nights brought no quiet to the village. Until morning, lights twinkled in the marshes, on the river and in the distant shanties scattered over the boundless plain. Nights sparkled with lights, smelt of new-mown hay dried in the sun, rang with human voices.

From distant villages men came in boats for a week or ten days. On the damp ground above the flood-meadow, they made themselves shelters of green boughs of willow, and carpeted them with hay, and at the entrances they made bonfires, feeding the smoke with damp leaves and grass, to keep

[1] *Servituti* or servitude-grants—since feudal times the peasant community had enjoyed the right of mowing meadows, gathering sticks in the woods, and so on. These ancient grants were systematically done away with by the Polish government, which gave the community lands over to the landowners and rich farmers.

away the gnats that swarmed over the meadows in the evening. White smoke curled, spread low over the ground and a moment later shot up in a blue plume. When the sun had sunk and the light was fading, men would gather at the water's edge and fish. With a bunch of wriggling pink rainworms for bait on a huge hook, they would throw their lines to the sheatfish that watched in the boggy pools under the bank. Haymowers fed on fish and sour sorrel soup in early summer.

The village was deserted, the houses were silent as the grave. All living creatures had migrated from the bogs to the endless marshes, the damp meadows, overgrown with high, prickly grass. And the dark windows of the houses looked out like blind eyes on the night; no songs were heard in the streets, no laughter of girls behind the garden fences. Silent now and dead the village seemed after it had sent all its life to the meadow across the river.

The east was reddening. When the first beams of the sun lit the earth, the gray fogs rising from river and marsh were touched with a tender radiance of gilded rose and seemed as light and delicately tinted as the down from a flower. The fog dropped and vanished into the earth or drifted away into shadowy groves or melted in the conquering rays of the sun. And another day dawned, crisp with the grass falling under the scythe, wet with the sweat of the haymakers, a day still hotter than the last, with the heavy scent of mown grass that had withered in the night.

In the flags by the marsh the haymakers startled a water-hen, and it ran out into the bare lower part of the meadow. It was only a chick—a ball of soft black fluff on long frail legs. Olga ran after it and picked it up. It nestled trembling in the hollow of her hand, its tiny heart fluttering, its frightened eyes like bright, black seeds. The girl took it to the willows and, with a glance up to where a pale yellow hawk hung motionless as a cross in the deep blue sky, let it go. Without disturbing a leaf or a blade of grass, the black chick ran into the green and was swallowed up in the willows that hid it from the eye of the robber hovering in the blue.

About midday, when the haymakers were preparing to leave off for a rest, there was a cheeping and fluttering of wings by Pavel's scythe, and a covey of partridges scuttled out from almost under the edge. There must have been two dozen nestlings besides the parent-birds. The mother bridled threateningly, ruffled her feathers, and went hissing to attack the mower. Olga laughed. The old bird was a grayish yellow and the little ones—no bigger than three-day chicks—had streaks of yellow on their gray wings. They clustered round the mother, who was evidently beside herself with rage and terror. Meantime the alarmed father defended his brood from the flank. Pavel stood leaning on his scythe, bits of grass sticking to its shining blade.

"Are you going for me, then? Want to scratch my eyes out?"

The partridge seemed to understand him, for her ruffled feathers settled again, her wings drooped. Glancing about suspiciously, she darted towards the nearest shelter, then returned, calling softly to her chicks. They followed her in single file, winding into the high swaying grass, till it closed again and hid them from view.

The mower swung his scythe and, cutting swathe after swathe, moved on down the aisle. Breathless, Semka caught up the fallen grass and

tossed it on his pitchfork, spreading it to face the scorching sun. Step by step the meadow was leveled, the bright flowers robbed of their color, the broad spaces laid low and bare. Now the field where but a little while ago no one could be seen for the high green grass, was dotted with people. Ever more piercing came the cries of the gulls overhead, ever more agitated the beating of wings among the snipe. The grass lost its intense greenness and faded, giving off a still heavier, more intoxicating fragrance.

And the night was lit by bonfires, and lads sang lustily in the rough shanties. The stars looked down with golden eyes on marshes alive with people. The marsh-sprite hid in the tangle of willows, away from noisy, unwelcome neighbors. Lads crept stealthily up to the nearest shanty, to the frail walls of the green shelters, and whistled their signals to the girls. The brief warm summer night bore whispers and laughter into the green distance. Old Semyon's oar never ceased its splashing; the eyes of the boatman were red-rimmed with sleeplessness.

Far, far away—to the rim of the world, it seemed—they mowed the grass. On sandy hillock, on bogs that sank beneath the foot, and even in running water, where grass was mingled with sweet-flag and rushes.

Wherever the hay had dried, they made it into solid ricks on floors of cleverly-woven withes. Here it would stay till the frost hardened the bog and flung a bridge of ice across the river for the sledges.

The muzhiks counted the growing number of hayricks. Soon the agent from the big estate would come and share them out: one for the owner of the meadow, one for the mower. He would do everything himself, and he would never by any chance permit the muzhik to have the best. So they strove to make them all equally good, as far as that was possible. And times without number they counted the ricks that belonged to the gentry and the *zloty* that they would have to spend for their share in the meadow, for the permission to mow, and also the days they would have to spend carting the hay to the landowner's barns, for most of them had agreed to cart as well as mow.

The young men from Gaje carried great hods of hay on stretchers down to the river, loaded their boats and took them home. They happened to have hit on a field by the water; their village, too, was right at the river-side, so they could take their hay home without waiting for the winter.

Others went back home for a week or ten days, and set up the hayricks when they returned.

. . . Storks and starlings had the meadows to themselves now. People rarely appeared in them, work here was over until wintertime. A second mowing could not be counted on, particularly during a hot, dry summer. Only from the Odcinek meadow could one expect two mowings.

But the grass at Odcinek stood high and had lost its freshness. Sorrel turned brown, feathery red cockscombs rustled with seeds, the meadow was fading, its time was nearly over. And still no answer had come to the application. Every time the village elder went to town, there was an eager crowd awaiting his return; the children raised an unearthly yell as soon as the boat came in sight around the bend.

"He's coming! He's here!"

But the elder brought them no reply. And then one day Semka ran up breathless from the river.

"The *osadnik's* mowing Odcinek!"

They could not believe it. The boy swore by all the saints that it was true. Then they rushed helter-skelter down to the meadow; women picked up their skirts and

Drawing by E. Burgunker

ran, elderly men set off headlong, even Pietrukowa limped along on her bad foot behind the rest.

The meadow lay in the full glare of the sun. Chorzyniak, his sleeves rolled up, wearing high boots, was mowing. Beside him, on a heap of grass, lay his rifle, the sun shining on its newly-cleaned barrel. The brown butt was hidden in the grass like a crouching beast.

"So they've given the meadow over to you, after all?" Iwan Piskor asked in a hoarse voice, while they all waited, holding their breath.

The *osadnik* hesitated a moment before speaking.

"And what if they have?"

"We sent in an application . . ." Iwan went on gloomily.

"And paid two *zloty* for a stamp," Pietrukowa added in a quivering voice.

Chorzyniak gave the pile of cut grass a little kick.

"I didn't send in any application."

"How did you get it, then, if you didn't send in an application?" someone asked mistrustfully.

"I was informed the meadow was to be taken away for non-payment of taxes, and attached to the *osadnik's* land. I have no grass—only the bit by the house."

He was silent a moment, staring at the muzhiks' faces; they all looked alike to him. No one said anything. Chorzyniak wiped some grass from the scythe; it fell to the ground. The glances followed it mechanically.

"The grass is withering, it's time to mow it," he added.

Still no one said anything. Rage boiled up in him. There he was, standing before them like a criminal,

justifying himself—and why, he did not know. He planted his bandy-legs more firmly on the ground and cut a swathe. Swish, swish—the grass fell. Chorzyniak swung again, glowering at the people, who were watching him as though they had never seen a man mowing before. They looked at his white shirt of bought linen, at the sturdy legs in the high boots, at the strong, sinewy hands, wielding the scythe so surely. The scythe swept on evenly, cutting not too close nor too far. He mowed well. And the peasants watched him as though they were seeing him for the first time.

He tried to pay no heed to them. But the heavy, half-dazed look in their eyes was intolerable, like a tangible, oppressive burden that would not be shaken off. The point of the scythe caught in a clod and the shock went through his whole body. His next stroke was more precise. A bunch of late pink scratch-weed remained on the mown spot. He swung the scythe again, furiously. The flowers fell. Chorzyniak took a step forward, feeling that he was mowing unevenly, that the scythe was cutting now too high, and leaving a tangled stubble, now too low, exposing the bare brown earth. He glanced round angrily at the dense crowd following in his tracks. He stopped, and took out his whet-stone. The rythmic thrum of metal on stone rang over the meadow, the echo replied from across the river, the clear air was filled with a liquid, silvery cadence that did not die down for a long time.

Then, to everyone's astonishment, the widow Parukowa, mother of eight children, broke out into loud lamentations and hysterical laughter. She had a cow and could never get enough fodder for her in the winter, because the estate-agent was forever settling old scores with her, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that she could obtain even the worst corner of the landowner's meadow for grazing.

Olga caught her by the hand. The men roused themselves and went slowly back to the village. There was not a word spoken as they trailed through the alders and along the spongy river-bank that even summer's heat was powerless to dry.

But until the Odcinek meadow was hidden by a wall of alders, they kept glancing back every now and again.

It lay there in the glare of the sunlight, sparkling with starry ox-eye, daisies, yellowish leaves of sorrel, tall, rich, green grass—the familiar, the desirable meadow, mown how many scores of times?

And now Chorzyniak the *osadnik* was mowing it. . . .

When Chorzyniak's house had burned down, and the dew was heavy on the blackened earth where it had stood, the inspector from the Palenczicy police-station arrived and a prolonged investigation began.

The inspector sat at the table in the elder's best room from morning till night and beside him sat Chorzyniak, scowling. He too had been provided with a temporary lodging at the elder's. The villagers—men, women and young people—passed before him in turn. The elder was running up and down the village, summoning the people to come and testify. They came—why shouldn't they?—and gave their evidence, answering the questions in a thoughtful, sober manner. And once again Chorzyniak observed the striking resemblance in all the faces, different though they might seem. They were all lean, dark, grim and sad. And everyone said practically the same thing in the same voice.

"We were just having our dinner when we heard somebody shouting 'Fire!' We ran out to see where it was. 'It must be *pani* Plonski's over at Olszyny,' my wife says.

'But it isn't at Olszyny at all,' I say to her, 'the flame's blowing to the right, nearer to the village.' We wanted to run out and help, but just at that minute my father started a row in the coop—you know, sir, he's not quite right in his head. I ran to the coop to stop him, for fear of anything happening like it did the time he tore off the latch and got loose. I was busy with him a while and by the time I'd got the old fellow quietened down, and went out of the door to look, there was no fire to be seen, only smoke. And people were saying that it was the *osadnik's* that had gone on fire." Makar gave his evidence with much detail, his wife supporting him and nodding her untidy head from time to time.

"The children came running to tell us the *osadnik* was mowing at Odcinek and I went with all the others to have a look. And he was. We stood there watching him for a bit and then I went back to the river to fish. When I came in the evening everybody was saying the *osadnik's* was on fire. I went there, and sure enough it was, there wasn't a single board left. It's not surprising, of course; wood gets so dry in hot weather like we've been having, that's why it all burned down . . ." Such was Pavel's testimony.

The inspector drummed on the papers lying before him on the table.

"Were you by yourself when you were fishing?"

"No, my son Semka was with me. And down at the fisheries we met the Sowiuks—they were out fishing as well."

No, nobody had been alone that day. They had all been with their wives or children or neighbors. And they remembered everything perfectly clearly—naturally, they would, since it had all happened only the day before yesterday; they had had no time to forget yet. They had all been mowing, fishing or sitting at home in the bosom of their families; the whole village had faultless alibis.

"Looks as though the wind must have blown a spark from the embers in the stove. And then, of course, the mischief was done," Pilniuk ventured to suggest, but the inspector stopped him with an impatient movement.

So it went on until the evening. The inspector was pale with fatigue, the village elder was fussing about the room, putting in a word here and there obligingly. Chorzyniak looked as black as thunder. He knew well that it was all because of the meadow, that no accidental, forgotten spark—and indeed, where was such a thing to come from?—had started that fire, but that they wanted to smoke him out of the village like a fox from his lair. He clenched his teeth. He thought of the long, hard uphill road he had come to this farm of his—this little plot of ground in the waste bogs. He remembered a more distant time when the shells were bursting overhead. He could still feel a dull ache in the leg that had been wounded. He had done these people no harm. He had come with the best intentions, lived on good terms with his neighbors, had never wanted to offend anyone. From under his brows he glowered at the wasted peasant faces behind which lay stubborn, secret thoughts about something none but themselves knew. They were Ukrainians. Enemies. He looked at each in turn, and the certainty grew that they all knew how the fire had started. Naturally they would: it had happened in broad daylight, at noon of a fine summer's day . . . And that elder who was cringing now to the inspector knew, too. They all knew, and behind the faces that masked their real feel-

ings lurked insolent mockery of the whole investigation, of the futile efforts of the police, of the questions that were powerless to penetrate through the solid wall of agreement, the unspoken understanding, the united action of the village against him alone.

The inspector called in the witnesses one by one; and each time, the elder would mince to the door, would open it and call out the name or surname of the person whose turn it was. The close little room stank of the marsh-rotted bast sandals of the men, for though the tiny window was open, it did not admit sufficient fresh air. And as though on purpose, the inspector was smoking the coarsest of home-grown tobaccos, rolling himself cigarettes like a muzhik's with fingers that trembled from nervous strain. The smoke hung in a thick gray cloud under the ceiling and made the eyes smart.

The crowd in the passage was gradually thinning out. The last few witnesses were passing before the table, always with the same irrefutable testimony. The inspector hemmed and once more took to checking the lists. He made little ticks with a red pencil against the names; then the red pencil stopped in mid-air.

"Iwan Piskor?"

At this the elder began to fidget and blurted out:

"He's gone out with the timber-barge."

The inspector's dark brows went up.

"With the barge? Hm . . . and who else has gone?"

"Who else? Iwan usually goes by himself, with the men from Sinicy. He's gone by himself now, too."

"When did he go?"

The elder hesitated a moment. Then he opened a door into the pantry.

"Come here a minute, wife . . . The inspector wants to know when Iwan went out with the boat . . . He'd just been here, do you remember when it was?"

The woman scratched her head reflectively under the red kerchief.

"Iwan . . . Let's see now, yes, he did drop in on us . . ."

"What day was it?"

Chorzyniak fancied the two exchanged a meaning glance. He fidgeted nervously on the chair and it creaked.

"About four days ago it must be . . . Today's Thursday . . . The fire was on Tuesday . . . It was on Monday that Iwan dropped in on us, so it must have been Monday he went out with the boat . . . At least, that's how it seems to me. Can't you remember, old one?"

"I can't say for certain . . ." the woman replied, evidently finding the effort of recollection very difficult. "It might have been Monday. Or it might have been Sunday . . ."

"No, it couldn't have been Sunday," the elder corrected at once, giving her a quick glance. "I wasn't here on Sunday. I went to Palenczicy, and besides . . ."

Chorzyniak shrank. The elder was plainly in no hurry. No one was ever in a hurry here. The words trickled on with painful slowness, as though they had to be squeezed out through their lips; sticky and slow, like pitch, meaningless, hypocritical, treacherous words.

"You say it was on Monday?"

The inspector's muffled, weary voice wavered in the cloud of a gray smoke.

"It seems to me it was Monday . . . Now, let's see, how did it all come about? If my memory doesn't fail me . . . It's so easy to forget things . . . Yes, it was on Monday, of course. I was planning to go to town that day, and my old woman says to me: 'There's nothing for

you to go to town for, you'd do better to fetch in the hay from the far side of the river . . .' we have a bit of meadow down at the edge of the water . . ."

"That's right, I did mention the hay to him, I remember," his wife put in, delighted for some reason or other.

Chorzyniak was no longer listening. The thought of Chmielanczuk came back to him again. The man had already been here, answering the questions as to where he had been and what he had been doing at the time of the fire. And with his foxy smirk under the red beard and mustache he had told them a very plain tale. The inspector had not asked him about anything else. Yet Chmielanczuk might have known something. He should have been examined alone. When there was no one about.

The inspector stood up and stretched himself till his joints cracked and his leather belt and straps creaked.

"Well, that's all we can do at present, *Pan* Chorzyniak."

"Oughtn't we to question that man who took the barge out?"

"But where are we to find him? Who's going floundering about in the marshes after him?"

The elder hastened to say obligingly:

"When he comes back in a week or ten days' time I'll tell him to call at the police-station."

"There's no hurry, if he went out on Monday."

"Yes, if he did!" Chorzyniak flung out venomously, but the inspector took no notice of him. He gathered up his papers, put them into his leather case, and straightened his belt.

"A whole day wasted. It's not so easy in these parts to do anything . . . And who knows, perhaps it was really a spark blown by the wind started the fire?"

This was too much for Chorzyniak.

"There wasn't a breath of wind that day. And there wasn't a spark of fire in the stove before I left the house."

"Really? Well, these things will happen. I'll come over another time and look into things and question people. Will you be given timber to build yourself a new house?"

"Yes," Chorzyniak muttered sulkily.

He was wishing that the inspector would take himself off now. He went with him in the dark to where the police-boat was tied to a stake. The inspector got into it and vanished into the darkness.

"Will you be sleeping in the barn again tonight? Perhaps my old woman should make up a bed for you in the house?" the elder suggested ingratiatingly as they walked home together.

"No, I'll be bitten by fleas if I sleep in the house. I'd better sleep in the barn."

The elder was offended.

"Fleas, are there? Well, what if there are? Where will you find a place without them? You know the saying: wherever there's a woman, there are sure to be fleas."

Chorzyniak only shrugged his shoulders, and went towards the barn. When he was hidden from the elder's eyes by the corner of the house, he turned into a lane, leading to Chmielanczuk's house.

The sky was golden with stars and the air heavy with the scent of hay from the distant meadow. Yet the *osadnik* fancied he could still smell burning wood, though the site of the fire had been soaked through twice with heavy morning dew.

He could hear voices in the street; he did not care to be seen going to Chmielanczuk's. He moved the barbed wire cautiously aside

and stepped into the garden, straight into a thicket wet with dew and almost up to his shoulder.

It was hemp, judging by the smell. He remembered that there were some patches of vegetables here, and some gooseberry-bushes, and, picking his way through the soft, crumbly mold, he reached the back of the house. There was a dim light in the window on the left. He stole up to it and looked in. Chmielanczuk was sitting on the bench opposite the window, mending his nets. The *osadnik* tapped on the pane. The man raised his head and peered into the darkness. Then he stood up, took the lamp from the table and went unhurriedly to the door. He fumbled noisily with the bolt for a long time, but at last a beam of light came through a crack in the door, picking out of the darkness a smooth green plant in the garden.

"Who is there?"

"It's I, *Pan* Chmielanczuk, I won't keep you more than a minute."

The door opened wider and the *osadnik* entered. The master of the house hastily drew the white curtain across the window and placed the lamp on the shelf in the corner. They sat down in the dimly-lighted room.

"What brings you here so late? Has the inspector gone?"

"Yes, he's gone home."

"Well, what's up?"

"Nothing."

The peasant gave a low, mocking laugh.

"It's as plain as a pikestaff. Our folks aren't such fools as they look, are they? They aren't going to say a word too many."

"I'm thinking, *Pan* Chmielanczuk, that if you don't help me we'll never get anywhere."

"If I don't help?"

"Yes, exactly. You're the one to help me. You must know something, I'm sure."

The man said nothing but thrust his hand into his pocket and began to shake out some shreds of tobacco. The *osadnik* hastily offered him a cigarette.

"We'll have a smoke, might as well. Only your tobacco's too mild for me, I'll mix it with my own and it'll be a bit stronger. Did he question everybody?"

"Yes, except Iwan Piskor, who's gone out with a barge."

"Ah . . . with a barge, has he?"

Chmielanczuk slowly and carefully rolled himself a cigarette, and licked down the paper for a long time. The *osadnik* leaned towards him.

"What do you think, *Pan* Chmielanczuk, it might be Iwan, mightn't it?"

The other looked about the room. He cast a glance at the window, but the curtain hung straight and white and motionless.

"How should I know a thing like that? Whoever did it, if anybody did it, must have thought it all out beforehand. It isn't likely they'd talk to anyone about it, much less to me," and he tittered.

"So you don't really know anything about it?"

"How should I know? I don't go about the village, pumping folks? I'm not such a fool as to go round waiting for someone to hit me over the head with a stone from round the corner. You know yourself the kind they are hereabouts, you don't need me to tell you. If they didn't tell the inspector who did it, they won't tell me. After all, the inspector means authority, and what do I stand for?"

Chorzyniak stood up to go.

"Are you running away already? Stay a while longer. It's a long time yet to midnight. Are you going to get timber for a new house?"

"Yes, that'll be something else for them to burn."

"And they will. They'll keep at it. They burnt my house down,

first, another time they took away my fish, then they fed something to the cows in the pasture, and they fell sick and one died. Every time they think of something different."

"That's a consolation for me."

"It's all I can offer you. I told you when you came to see me the first time of the sort of things they did hereabouts. It's not an easy life . . ."

"Well, so long."

"God-speed."

He fumbled with the bolt again for a long time. Then suddenly he raised his face and looked straight at the *osadnik*.

"You know what I would advise you to do . . ."

For a moment he seemed to be weighing his words.

"You've cut the hay already, you can't have much to do. In my opinion, it would be a good thing if you went to Sinicy, to the timber-merchant's—Wolski, he's called, anybody will show where he lives."

"But why should I go to him? They're going to give me timber."

"It's not for timber. I was thinking you might go and see this Wolski and ask him when Iwan went out with the timberbarge. He must have it written down."

"You think he'd know?"

"Of course he would. And he'll tell you, what is it to him? It's a day's journey—no more—to Sinicy."

"You do know something, *Pan* Chmielanczuk."

The man hunched his shoulders.

"What could I know about it? I'm not telling you anything, am I? It wouldn't do any harm to ask Wolski, that's all the advice I can give you. At least you'll know for certain."

"It seems to me, *Pan* Chmielanczuk, that there would be no need for me to go to Sinicy if you would speak out. . . ."

"Oh, no, that'll do. What do I know about it? All I ever bother about is my house and garden. You might let a word drop, and then they'll take and burn my house down again. And the years I toiled before I built this little house! The money I put into it!"

Chorzyniak did not insist. He went out into the depths of the garden, stumbling over the high vegetable-patches. When he came out on the path, it was growing lighter. Away in the east a dull, crimson-rusty glow spread over the sky; the moon would be up soon. Chorzyniak stole around to the elder's barn by back ways, to avoid meeting anyone. A shadow flitted between the fences and for a moment he fancied it might be Stefek Plonski, but it was gone in an instant. He thought of Jadwiga: how queerly things had turned out; he had not been there for three days. And only now he realized that even if she decided to marry him, he had no home now for a wife. He swore, and made up his mind that he would go to Sinicy, even if nothing came of it. If only Chmielanczuk had wanted to say more! Chorzyniak was sure that the man knew everything and could lay his hand on the culprits. But he was just like all the other muzhiks, although the village hated him.

The door of the barn gave a piercing screech as he opened it. The sound carried in the clear, still air. A dog barked, another answered; then one after another they all awoke and filled the night with their throaty music. Chorzyniak bolted the door and examined the bolt to see if it could be shot back by any means from the outside. He looked around for the rakes, and for greater safety thrust them up against the door. Who knew what notions these people might take into their curly heads now?

He woke early, when the morning was hoary with blue and white

mists and dew. The elder did not even ask him why he needed the boat, but went himself to get it out. It was a good one, quite new. The *osadnik* took the heavy oar and rowed away into the milky fog that hung in a dense cloud over the river. A chill came up from the water and the vapor laid dank clinging fingers on his face.

At last a bridge came in sight and soon after that the boat drew in to a black shore trodden by hundreds of feet and hooves. Up on the high wall nestled black, untidy hovels that seemed to be made of tarred tow, bits of broken earthenware and rags. Dirty, ragged Jewish children were swarming everywhere. At the sight of a stranger they retreated cautiously, but a moment later they were all running after him, shouting, frowning, their great dark eyes watching him suspiciously through the tangle of tousled curls, their thin frail legs hardly able to carry the weight of their blown-out bellies.

Chorzyniak shrank as he entered a narrow, filthy lane. Here the gold and blue of the summer's day never penetrated, the tumbledown houses frowned like sinister deformed creatures, dreadful smells issued from the low, dark doorways. Piercing, monotonous shrieks and loud weeping came from one of the windows. Outside a miserable saloon stood two carts; the horses, up to the knees in mud and manure, stared dejectedly before them. An old Jewess leading a tiny, sickly child by the hand, was coming down the middle of the street. She eyed the newcomer with fright. Chorzyniak asked where he could find Wolski. An unearthly uproar rose in the crowd of children. They began to explain all at once, interrupting and pushing and scolding each other. Chorzyniak waved them away and went into the saloon, where they told him he ought to have rowed past this place, the timber-yard was higher up the river.

The crowd of children pursued him to the water-side and stood watching till the boat disappeared round the bend in the river.

Wolski was measuring timber when Chorzyniak found him. There was a smell of fresh-sawn wood and the dirt was thickly carpeted with golden shavings.

Yes, Iwan had been there. He had come with the men from Sinicy, and taken out the barge. When was that? Yesterday . . . No, the day before, Wednesday, probably. Yes, it was Wednesday.

Chorzyniak's lips curled in a revengeful, triumphant smile. So Iwan must have left Olszyny on Tuesday.

He did not even wait to thank the man, he was in such a hurry to start home. He made good speed, for he was rowing with the current now. As he passed Sinicy—black and dismal, like the ruins of a fire—the sun was setting in rose and flame behind him, and fog was rising above the water. It drifted wraith-like over the ripples and among the rushes gilded by the warmth of sky. Chorzyniak looked about for a place to spend the night. The prospect of asking for a lodging in the houses he saw in the distance did not appeal to him. He dragged the boat up on the bank and went to look for hay in the meadow. Leaning against a hayrick, he munched the bread he had brought from home and watched the last brightness of the sunset disappear in the rapidly-darkening water.

Voices sounded from somewhere round the bend and he could make out figures in the dusk. Harnessed in broad homespun linen reins, they trudged along almost doubled up. They could hardly drag their feet out of the clinging mud of the swampy ground at the water's-edge.

A barge, piled high with timber, was moving slowly down-stream. In comparison with the monster they were towing along the men looked like puppets. The silvery bark of the birch-trunks on the barge shone in the dusk. The men did not notice the *osadnik*. They passed within a few feet of him, breathing heavily through their strained lungs, uttering moans like beasts in agony.

"They're coming from Holuby," the *osadnik* thought, with a touch of contempt. "There they go, towing that huge thing along like beasts under a burden too heavy for them." And then he remembered that Iwan, too, must be trudging and towing from dawn till dark, doubled up, stinking with sweat and misery, Iwan who had set fire to his house. . . .

He slept that night in the hay, and, when the stars were fading in the paling heavens, and a narrow bar of light had appeared in the east, he resumed his journey. His aching hands could rest now, the current bore the boat onward: all he had to do was to steer, rowing was easy. About midday he passed Olszyny and, pretending not to notice the surprised, attentive glances of the fishermen on the bank, rowed on to Palenczicy.

He found the inspector at home, but was rather coldly received. He briefly stated the reasons for his unexpected visit. The inspector made a grimace.

"But we know nothing definite, nothing whatever."

"But the elder said . . ."

"The elder said—but Iwan didn't. Why do you imagine that Iwan will admit it? I'll warrant he has an alibi you couldn't find a crack in anywhere. It's not likely he would allow himself to be trapped on a trifle like that. You don't know these people, they're terribly sly—oh, yes, sly isn't the word for it . . ."

Chorzyniak shrugged his shoulders.

"What are we to do?"

"Wait and see. I'll talk to him when he comes back."

"And what if he doesn't?"

"He's certain to. Where is he to go? And why? Of course, as I've told you already, I don't expect anything will come of it."

"I don't understand you. I'm convinced it was he who did it."

"You may be as convinced as you like, but what's the use of that? You've got to have proof, I'm telling you, evidence . . . Otherwise there'll be such a hullaballoo, we'll be accused of exceeding our authority, and this, that and the other and god knows what. It's not as easy as you think. And then, even supposing the evidence is forthcoming, and we arrest someone and punish him, what'll come of it? We'll only make a laughing-stock of ourselves. You don't suppose he'd think himself badly-off in prison, do you? He'd have a quieter time and be a lot better fed than he would here. He could die only of consumption; it would be interesting, by the way, to know how many of them die of consumption. But if he doesn't die, he'll stay in prison awhile and his prison mates will teach him some sense, and when he comes out he'll be the slyest bird ever . . . I don't know what they're thinking about in Warsaw, but this place is almost more than we can stand. Some prefer, of course, to come to terms in a friendly way, without a trial. Only, if it comes out afterwards, there's a hell of a row, exposures and investigations and god knows what. One is lucky if he only get transferred, sometimes worse things happen. And you can't get at the people in the ordinary way, they're so stubborn, and so terribly embittered. Of course, it's quite clear who they've been listening to. It needn't surprise you that I'm not

particularly anxious to have much to do with them. They've scotched more than one of us. Oh, I can tell you, *Pan* Chorzyniak, this is a beastly part of the world and a rotten life."

His complaints left the *osadnik* unmoved. . . . He looked down from the porch at the inspector's little garden, at the white sanded path, and a fresh wave of fury came over him as he thought there was no knowing how long he would have to accept the dubious hospitality of the village elder until his new house was ready.

"What an idea to go to Sinicy! It's a confounded hole of a place! Like all the places round about, as a matter of fact. But Wolski has a daughter—oh, a first class creature! Did you happen to see her?"

"No."

"That's a pity. That's a great pity. A regular peach, as they say. But that Wolski is a rogue, too."

Chorzyniak did not want this kind of talk. He felt insulted. He had come here on important business, and done what was really the business of the police to do and this was all the thanks he got.

His countenance cleared a little when the inspector's wife, a pretty, plump fair woman, set a bottle of vodka on the table, and added some sausage and mushrooms of her own pickling. The vodka sent a pleasant warmth through his tired body. He had not tasted vodka in this godforsaken hole for ages. *Pani* Plonska used to offer him black currant cordial, but it was like syrup, he could hardly swallow it.

"What put it into your head to settle here, I wonder?" the inspector went on chattily. "Surely, it would have been better to stay where you were, even if you had less land. These people hang on to their land tooth and nail, and it's only natural; there isn't much of it, and everyone wants all he can get. You can see yourself the sort of life it is here . . . This is a country cursed by both god and man. I do believe . . . You have to sleep with your gun beside you and all the shutters closed, in case anything should happen. My nerves get too much for me at times . . ."

The inspector's wife had gone to bed, but they still sat on talking for some time. Chorzyniak, who was not used to strong drink nowadays, was soon tipsy and poured out all his sorrows, dragging in Jadwiga's name. At last he broke down completely and melted into tears. The inspector, who was none too sober himself, escorted his visitor to bed with some difficulty and took off his boots. The *osadnik* slept like a log. He awoke late, with a splitting headache and an unpleasant taste in his mouth. The inspector had already gone out on his rounds.

Chorzyniak got into the boat and set out for home. He felt completely exhausted, the oar weighed down his arm. He could hardly last out till he reached Olszyny. His host eyed him suspiciously.

"Wherever have you been? I was beginning to think something must have happened to you. You went away without saying where you were going. I was just saying to my old woman . . ."

"Something may very easily happen, only not to me," the *osadnik* interrupted drily.

He would have liked to have struck his host in the face. How the man had lied when he was questioned as to the time of Iwan's departure, saying that he had gone on the Monday, pretending that he was trying to remember the right day, and calling his wife as a witness . . . He was just like all the rest of them. It was on the tip of Chorzyniak's tongue to say that he knew when Iwan had reached Sinicy, but he remembered the inspector's advice; it had penetrated

even the fumes of the vodka, and he held his tongue. Let the old fellow twist and turn and lie as much as he liked. Chorzyniak knew what he was about. Iwan should remain in ignorance as long as possible. Everything would come out in time, if he could only pin down this inspector and make him do what was necessary . . .

He was dying to sleep. There was no work to be done. His horse and cow were in the elder's shed, he could not leave them at his own burned down place without anyone to look after them. He went into the barn, flung himself down in the hay that had just been brought in, and fell asleep immediately. Through the mists of sleep he fancied he saw the elder moving about in the threshing-yard, talking, but he shook off the vision like an annoying fly.

When he awoke, it was late evening. It appeared that the elder had gone to Holuby about buying some horses. His wife informed Chorzyniak of this as she was getting the supper. Chorzyniak merely shrugged his shoulders; what did it matter to him. He was trying to figure out when the timber for his house should arrive and when Iwan might be expected home—as though some connection existed between these two circumstances. He was thinking that once he had rendered Iwan harmless, he might start building the new house with his mind at rest.

Yet, when he went out into the yard and looked at the dark, silent village, it came like a stab in the heart that getting rid of Iwan would not help matters. The village crouched in the darkness like a sullen, angry beast, alert, ready to spring. And in the houses shrouded by the night the villagers lay asleep; and the faces of the villagers were all alike—impenetrable, implacable, hiding an unexpressed threat.

Chorzyniak's rye, grown as it was in soil treated with some kind of special nitrogenous fertilizer, was tall and luxuriant, with heavy ears that gladdened the eye. But the muzhiks' frowning eyes held some secret knowledge of their own as they roved over it. The *osadnik* was not thinking now of the muzhiks' looks; he was thinking of this first crop of his and its reaping.

He took his scythe and went out into the field. The muzhiks looked at it with a sneer. They all used reaping-hooks, long, thin, narrow sickles forged in the Palenczicy smithy. From times immemorial rye had been reaped in these parts with the sickle. Everybody knew that a scythe shook half the grain out of the ears and chopped the straw. With a sickle it was different. Handful by handful it laid the rye low, while the sensitive hand placed the straw evenly. A factory-made sickle, although it was cheap, would not do here. The smith at Holuby had learned after long years to bend the blade as it should be bent, to make the right notches, and the handle that would fit into the hand as though it had grown there. The edge of a factory-made sickle was soon turned and jagged like a saw, it cut awkwardly into the rye and was much too light.

But the *osadnik* had come out with his scythe. A new-fangled way of reaping the rich crop of rye that waved tantalizingly above the meager crops of the villagers.

And again there was a ringing down the fields right to the riverside, a ringing through the golden sunlit air. The blue of the sky was paler now, as though faded in the sun, and the steaming, sweating heat of midday was nigh. Again the village was deserted, everyone was out in the fields. The reaping had taken them all from their homes.

The shocks were growing, and the sheaves set up neatly, with the largest sheaf on top, as a protection against rain, although there was no sign of a cloud. And the shocks grew higher and thicker in the *osadnik's* field than on the villagers'. Chorzyniak found it hard to manage alone. The first day he got the village idiot, Eva, to help. She followed him, snuffling all the time, binding the sheaves. But evidently the villagers did not approve of this. Next day she did not turn up, and when the *osadnik* went to the house to ask why, he could get no reply but a shrug of the shoulders and the stubborn, unvarying: "We don't know, *pan.*"

It made him mad and he resolved to both reap and bind by himself. *Pani* Plonska heard of this and sent Stefek to help him. Then the work went on better. Young Plonski entered into no conversation with him, but he bound the sheaves and set them up as neatly and regularly as a machine.

When in the evening he looked at the long line of shocks, as straight as though strung on a string, he had a queer presentiment, like a warning voice from somewhere. He did not go home that night, but kept watch in the fields with his faithful rifle slung over the shoulder. Nothing happened; the sky was thick with stars, voices carried faintly from the village side and an occasional plash of an oar from the river, but all around him was deserted and silent. He lay on a shock of rye, staring up into the immensity strewn with stars. One fell, leaving a streak of fire, a flaming path in space. A big star shed a frosty blue light over the black belt of woods. A whip-poor-will flew past on soft wings, a bat flitted through the dark air. Night lulled him, soothed him with its deceptive quiet, its fragrance, the serenity of its stars.

Only when the sky was paling did sleep overcome him. Wet with dew and vexed with himself for having stayed the night in the fields without reason, he got up, stretched himself and went home. When he had tidied up his few belongings, he made up his mind to bring in the rye as soon as the dew was dry on it. It could be kept in the yard, where he could watch it.

Chorzyniak heaped the cart high. The horse set off. The muscles strained under its smooth coat, the crupper rose and fell rhythmically, the flesh quivered every now and again under the sting of the horse-flies that hovered in swarms. Big gadflies, gray as ashes, settled on the horse's belly and got in its eyes. The *osadnik* drove them off with his whip, but in spite of him one of them succeeded in biting the horse, and a thin trickle of blood oozed out on the shining bay coat and soaked into it, attracting fresh swarms.

Chorzyniak drove carefully across the gullies, and skirted the sodden, swampy hollows. The sheaves rustled as the boughs of the alders brushed them; the *osadnik* stooped to avoid a twig.

It was just at that moment that he began to be haunted by a vague, unpleasant smell. Almost like the smell of burning. "It must be a bonfire over at Olszyny," he thought to himself, and looked about automatically for any sign of smoke over the woods. But there was none. Yet the smell hung in the air. It seemed closer now, and stronger. Suddenly the horse snorted and started. At the same moment Chorzyniak's ear detected a suspicious rustling behind him. He turned.

The sheaves on the cart were afire. He jumped down as if he had been stung, and hastily unharnessed the horse, now almost mad with fright. Before he had finished

with the traces, a column of flame shot up. He rushed to the cart to fling off the tightly-packed pile of sheaves. They would not give way at once. He tugged at their heads, pushed and drove, feeling the hot breath of fire on his face. With an effort he dragged off the tie and a pile of sheaves tumbled to the ground. They smoked, but the smothered flame expired in soot and was sucked into the ground. Those on the cart were still burning. Chorzyniak flung himself on them, scattered them, crushed out the darting flames with his hands. Black burnt straw flew about in the air, rusty colored soot settled on his face, the sharp stalks pricked his scorched hands. Then his fingers struck something hard, and pulled it out. It was a little wooden dart with a goose-feather bound to it. The point was black with tow that smelt of kerosene. This arrow had gone out, but the others had done their work.

The horse was now grazing quietly some way off. The ruined black, mutilated sheaves lay in a heap. Part of them were burnt completely. The *osadnik* kicked a black sheaf that had kept its form, it fell into rich ashes. He looked about him. As far as the eye could reach there was not a soul in sight. The green branches of the alders spread motionless in the heated air. Somewhere in the depths of the grove a bird was singing its carefree song. Only now did Chorzyniak feel the blisters on his hands, and see the scorched locks of hair that had fallen from his head. He swore viciously and harnessed the horse again. He knew it was no use looking in the alder-grove. He would find no one there now. The evil-doer or evil-doers could see everything that was going on but he would never be able to catch them. They could vanish into thin air, sink into the ground, dissolve into the water like the fog. They were everywhere and could do everything. Likely enough they never lit the lamp in the evening for want of kerosene, but they found it easily enough when it was his sheaves that had to be set fire to, and they had cunning enough to think of an infernal trick with a bow that shot fiery arrows so unerringly from afar. No one ever came out into the open to fight; the only way they knew was to get at you from round the corner, fighting in an underhand way so that you could never catch them at it. And they were so clever at getting out of everything and finding excuses, like this Iwan Piskor.

He picked out a few more or less untouched sheaves and strode, frowning, homewards alongside an almost empty cart. Again his rage boiled up in him against the inspector, the elder and Chmielanczuk. He had been a fool to go to Sinicy: Iwan had never intended to deny anything. He admitted that he had been at Sinicy on the Wednesday, but before that he had gone to see his brother, who lived in a village a long way beyond Sinicy, and persuaded him to come and tow a barge with him. The brother confirmed this, others confirmed it, the alibi was perfect, though no one, it seemed, had had time to come to any agreement with Iwan. All the evidence given by different witnesses, even the elder's explanations fitted perfectly. So Iwan was walking about the village as usual. Sometimes, faced by such clear proof of innocence, even Chorzyniak himself wavered and had his doubts. He felt he was caught in a net, fighting an invisible web. There was actually something inhuman, invincible and inevitable in its strength.

He did not meet anyone until he reached the turning. It was Rafaniuka carrying an earthenware crock

of food to the reapers. Her green eyes slid indifferently over Chorzyniak and his burnt sheaves, her expression did not alter in the slightest. She did not ask any questions, or look surprised, but went on her way as though nothing had happened. He had an impulse to strike her in the face with his whip, but restrained himself at the last moment.

Near home he met Chmielanczuk, who stopped in astonishment.

"O-oh . . . What's happened?"

"Nothing. I threw a cigarette-stump down without thinking and it set fire to the straw."

Chmielanczuk wagged his head regretfully.

"A cigarette-stump? What a thing to happen! But how could a cigarette-stump do so much damage? And look how you've burnt your hands? You ought to smear some grease on them. Well, to think of what a little cigarette-stump can do!"

The *osadnik* whipped his horse. He could feel savage fury grow within him.

"It serves me right . . . It's just what I deserve . . ." he told himself, and as he led the horse to the stable he could distinctly feel the old pain in his wounded leg.

He went into the house and sat there for about two hours, staring at the floor-boards. But early in the afternoon he roused himself and drove out to the field again. All the way home he walked beside the cart, keeping a sharp look-out for the flaming arrows that meant ruin.

"No, you shan't drive me out of the place, you swine. I'll see that you don't," he raged as he emptied the cartload of sheaves in the yard. "Even if I have to die like a dog, I won't give in!" he said threateningly to an invisible enemy, while the horse looked round with astonishment in its soft eyes.

He informed no one of his misfortune. He could not get rid of the impression that the elder was delighted to hear of it, though he contrived to preserve his usual expression of official gravity. But there was a gleam of triumph in his gray eyes. After all, Chorzyniak was becoming ridiculous even in his own eyes with his endless complaints of wilful damage that he was powerless to deal with himself. Today it was his grain, and tomorrow—who knew what else they would think of? His house was ready: it was trim and snug and solid like a little fortified castle. It had been built in next to no time. Carpenters had been sent from the town, axes had rung, golden shavings had flown, nails shone like silver; the new house has risen as though on yeast. The village children used to run up to look at it. Tousled heads would emerge cautiously from behind the bushes; every movement of the *osadnik's* was followed closely. The grown-ups hardly ever came this way, but sometimes Chorzyniak fancied that when they did, they cast calculating glances at the rapidly-rising walls, as much as to ask: how long would it take them to burn it down?

The authorities in the town had been surprisingly obliging, ready to meet him half-way and help, but this very readiness of theirs betrayed a desire to get rid of him as soon as possible. It was obvious that here, too, they were tired of the endless trouble the Polish settlers gave them. "What, are you still at Olszyny?" they asked him when he appeared. The mere recollection of the words sent the blood to his head. It was they who had sent him to this Olszyny, and not as a temporary resident but as a permanent settler. Yet, they had the effrontery to ask him in astonishment if he were still there. Chorzyniak saw plainly that the officials

did not grasp the situation, and that, although they were kept much better informed than he was, by the settlers round about, they gave no serious consideration to what was going on. Here, lifeless paper was substituted for flesh and blood. Sometimes the *osadnik* felt defenceless, thrown on the mercy of fate, left to his own resources, though by right he should have meant something more than merely himself. Of all the responsibilities and tasks laid upon him when he had set out, only one remained: to stand firm in case of any disturbance. But, god in heaven, what could one man do surrounded by enemies on every hand?

. . . Chorzyniak rowed upstream until he reached the alders, gilded now by the sinking sun. Then he turned back. Suddenly he noticed that he was leaving all light and color and brightness behind, and that the clouds were banked up in the sky ahead of him. He laid down his oar. There was no hurry, the current would carry the boat downstream.

Dusk was thickening on the riverbanks, the contours of the willows were blurred. A chill mist crept up from the water, the warm color was dying out of the sky; a few flecks of crimson and gold still lingered in the ripples like the reflection of a distant fire. The dark clouds hung low and silence came down over the river. Far away on the horizon lightning lit the edge of a black-bellied cloud and flickered out. The silence of the river was the silence of the grave, and it struck terror into Chorzyniak's heart. It was a dark, threatening evening. The shadows of the night gathered thicker about him, the water gleamed with the color and glitter of tin. No human voice could be heard, the river flowed on through what seemed to be a desert, an uninhabited land, a remote country of the dead. This, he thought to himself suddenly, was the real face of the countryside. Deceptive were the sunny days, deceptive the beauty of the flowering meadows, deceptive the azure, green and gold scattered so generously, deceptive the scent of the wayfaring-tree in bloom, and the twittering of the birds in the reeds by lake and creek. A smiling land of gaiety and plenty in fine weather in mornings white with mist, in blazing noonday heat and radiant rich sunsets, it was in reality a waste of fens and swamps, a land of misery and dire poverty, peopled by a silent, sullen folk. And this evening, crouching, vigilant though crushed to earth, dark and soundless, pregnant with an unknown but real menace, was the true face of the life here.

There was a splash just by the shore and he gave a start. It was enough to drive anyone crazy—this intolerable strain, this state of intense watchfulness, and it was, as a matter of fact, quite useless. Danger dogged his footsteps night and day, lurked in the green alders, in the blue bay of the river, round the corner of his own house—danger stole after him everywhere.

The boat was gradually carried in to the shore. The black silhouettes of the fish-tanks could be made out on the metallic surface of the water. Chorzyniak glanced towards the spot where the new tank he had made of good boards should have been, and started again; just by his tank he saw the dark shape of a boat and a man standing in it.

Chorzyniak held his breath, cautiously dipped the oar into the water and steered towards the tank. The boat glided noiselessly up to the shore. The shadow of the unbidden guest assumed monstrous proportions in the mist. It was evident that he was doing something to the tank. The *osadnik* strained his eyes

to make out what it was. He recognized Iwan. The man was standing with his back to him, and did not hear the boat. Now the *osadnik* was alongwise and he could make out the figure of a second man in the boat. This man was sitting idle, an oar in his hands. The *osadnik* felt for the revolver in his pocket.

"Hey, what are you doing here?"

The monstrous shadow stirred. The boats bumped against one another, with a loud splash.

"We're just crossing to the other bank."

"Crossing to the other bank, are you? Yes, I can see that alright." Chorzyniak was choking with rage. He could see the hole in his tank. There was probably nothing left of the two-day catch. The swine had not even taken the fish—but simply let it go.

"Put down your oar and come out on the bank!"

"That's as we please," Iwan retorted calmly, making a sign to the other man.

The man in the boat plunged the oar into the water. The *osadnik* barred their way.

"Out on the bank with you!"

"Why should we go out on the bank, *pan*? What have we got to do there?" the second man asked in a quiet, guarded tone.

"You'll see, you son-of-a-bitch! You're going to the police-station, do you hear?"

"Oh, that's a long way to go on a dark night like this," there was a hint of mockery in Iwan's unruffled tone.

The *osadnik* was almost blind with fury.

"Out on the bank or I'll shoot!"

"Shoot if you like, who's stopping you?"

Chorzyniak's hand went to his breeches' pocket. But before he could pull out his revolver, Iwan had sprung on to the bows, seized the oar from his companion's hand and swung it. It descended on Chorzyniak's head. Without even uttering a cry, he tumbled over into the water with a resounding splash. The empty boat rocked smoothly on the dark river.

"And now what?"

"Clear out of here and go straight home, that's all. He didn't know you, he couldn't have."

"And what about you?"

"I'll manage somehow."

"Is he drowned, do you think?"

"It's shallow here. And what is it to you whether he's drowned or not. Run back to the village. I'll have a look round in the morning to see. Tell my wife."

A black shadow fled up the bank. Iwan dipped his oar. Another moment, and the boat was lost in the night and the endless waters.

Ludzik was convinced that his chance had come: all he had to do now was to move with caution and his future career was assured. He had no doubt whatever that sooner or later the inspector, Sikora, would be transferred. He felt a contemptuous pity for the inspector's faint-heartedness—for it could be nothing but faint-heartedness that made him act the way he did: carrying on conversations with that village elder who eyed them all so wolfishly, indulging in idle chatter with peasants who told outrageous impudent lies which the inspector never troubled to expose; and then—the way the village was allowed to do exactly what it thought fit, in spite of an outward show of submissiveness. Ah, that was not how police sergeant Ludzik looked at his duties. In his opinion, the police had many advantages over the peasants: for one thing, law and authority were on the side of the former, and then—they were armed and they were cunning. The peasants could have been dealt with quite differently. Meantime they had been allowed to

burn down the house of an *osadnik* and hold secret meetings in their houses. Quite recently a store of illegal literature, obviously smuggled in from abroad, had been discovered in the cemetery. And, generally speaking, it was perfectly clear the kind of characters that were at large hereabouts. Yet the inspector winked at it all. Two suspicions that time only strengthened were born in the mind of his subordinate. The first was that the inspector was scared stiff, and the second—that he was not quite normal. Instead of sleeping quietly in his bed at night, he wandered about his rooms talking to himself, and whenever he got drunk—which was more and more frequently now—gave way to maudlin tears and talked fantastic nonsense. Then, he was most frightfully jealous of his wife, Zosia, and suspected every man. She was very pretty, it must be admitted, but not the woman he, Ludzik, would ever have chosen for himself. Marriage was another rung on the ladder of his career. Besides, a flirtation with the wife of his superior officer could lead to no good; of this Ludzik had seen ample proof—not, it is true, in his own experience—but in the case of one of his colleagues. The inspector's suspicions of him were totally unfounded. Ludzik was devoted heart and soul to his profession. Now the case of this Iwan seemed to have cropped up, specially in order to give Ludzik the long-looked for opportunity of showing the stuff he was made of and proving that headquarters had been wrong in sending him here. He would be promoted, Later, after that brainless Sikora had been sent to the lunatic asylum at Tworki or retired on pension, it would be time enough to think of making peace with these Palenczicy folks. He would first bring order into the place and show what a young, capable, energetic man could do, even in a dismal hole such as this . . .

The inspector proved easy enough to convince; it suited him. He laughed condescendingly at the hot-headedness of his subordinate, who evidently knew so little as yet of the local conditions. It was excusable in a newcomer to get so excited over things, but he himself knew only too well the real state of affairs. Iwan would never be found, and even if he were, he would produce witnesses, perfect alibis, proof as clear as daylight, that he had never been anywhere near the river that evening; Chorzyniak must have made a mistake, which would not be surprising on a pitch dark night like that. Chorzyniak himself admitted that it had been terribly dark and hard to see anything that night. All things considered, Sikora was only too glad to hand over the case to Ludzik. Let him see what he could do with it, let him do all the running about, let him see for himself how things stood! A young, inexperienced fellow like this fancied he could do something here, did he?—well, let him have a taste of it, experience would take him down a peg.

Another thing: the inspector nursed the secret hope that, should the devils run away with Ludzik, his heart would be at rest once more concerning Zosia. Sikora had seen from the beginning that Ludzik was trying to cut the ground from under his feet with a view to usurping his place, but this disturbed him not a whit. Nothing could possibly be worse than working in Volhynia, so let come what come might!

Ludzik threw himself into this first independent case of his with furious energy. Flinging caution and sane judgment to the winds, he went everywhere alone. He would share his future triumph with none.

For days on end he studied the locality, the paths leading from the river to the village, the tracks through the undergrowth on the fringe of the woods, the narrow footpaths across the massy treacherous green of the bogs, the tree-trunks thrown over the streams that flowed into the river. The field of his investigation narrowed as it neared Iwan's home. Not far away was a miniature cove where the reeds and flags grew high. He found himself a convenient spot in the reeds, a dry, well-hidden island, from where he had a good view of the door of Iwan's house. Here he would sit for hours, till his feet were numb, and he had almost got lockjaw from yawning. At night he would choose for himself a different observation-post—right beside Iwan's house. It was fortunate for him that Iwan kept no dog; in among the tangled growth of wild lilac, barberry and sallow-thorn, the hiding place was safe and reliable.

Here he studied to the last detail the life of the whole family. At day-break, while the village was still asleep under the almost white sky, Iwan's wife would come out of the house and go slowly into the backyard. A little later the children would run out one after the other. There were three boys and one girl—he knew them all. After a while a thin curl of blue smoke would creep through the crack in the roof; this meant that Iwan's wife had already gathered enough twigs for a fire. Then the cows would be driven out to pasture, Iwan's wife would cut a sackful of grass, the children would run down to the river with their fishing-rods and the woman sit down on the doorstep to peel potatoes the size of walnuts, overgrown with white fibers. Ludzik watched through it all. He knew dawns wet with dew and veiled with gray marsh-mists, evenings flushed and transparent, nights starlit and silent, nights rent by lightning, swept by sudden thunderstorms that shook the earth as if about to tear it asunder, and passed, and left no trace. Resolute and implacable, Ludzik sat through it all.

But Iwan never came home, or if he did, it must have been by some occult and incomprehensible means. Sometimes of a night the policeman crept with cat-like tread to the wall of the house and listened. But there was no man in the house, no sound save the snoring of the children and an occasional sigh from the woman in her sleep. The search would have to be made in some other place.

And now began the endless scourings of the bogs, the waste lands, the wild, well-nigh impassable woods. Soon he became sick to death of it. He loathed the wild duck that rose with startled cries out of the reed-thickets, he cursed the snipe that took to flight with a piercing moan, and the silent heron that vanished with a loud flapping of its powerful wings. Everything in nature had, it seemed, conspired to betray his presence. After a few days he learnt to creep up so stealthily, and sit in the reeds so still that the birds no longer heeded his intrusion.

But birds did not interest Ludzik. What he was searching for in the sand and the bog was the prints of human feet, he was trying to distinguish the one he needed among the outlines of all the bast sandals that had passed this way. No clue was too trifling, nothing too small to be neglected; nothing must be allowed to stand in his way. Once he noticed smoke rising from the alders on the opposite bank, several kilometers from the village, but thought little of it at the time. Afterwards, while he was keeping guard at Iwan's house, the whole picture suddenly rose before his

eyes as though imprinted on a sensitive negative; the faint, almost imperceptible wisp of smoke rising into the crystal-clear air out of the dark alder-grove. And only then it occured to him to wonder who could have lit a fire there? Surely no human dwelling existed in those parts, where the marshes were often flooded? Even cows did not graze near treacherous quagmires. Where could the mysterious smoke have come from?

Absent-minded and unobservant, he found it difficult to sit out his watch till morning. And as time passed, the conviction grew that he had been on the wrong track. The inner voice, the hunter's instinct that had developed in the course of his police work, told him that his quarry was hiding there and nowhere else. Chilled and wet with dew though he was, he did not even go back to the police-station for his breakfast. He got into his boat and crossed to the other side. Here the dark, brownish waters of a little stream mingled with the clear full river. He turned the boat and plunged at once into a cold, green twilight. Alder-boughs were closely interlaced in a vaulted ceiling high above his head; their ashen trunks were straight as columns in a chapel. And the stillness was like that of a chapel. The shorter, younger trees spread their branches over the water and he had to stoop to avoid their striking him in the face. Dew was shaken from the leaves, big drops that splashed heavily into the boat, on to his shoulders and his cap. A chill gloom still clung about the mossy roots. At one spot the trees retreated and left a sandy clearing. The traces of yesterday's fire ought to be somewhere here.

It was growing lighter. At last the tree-tops glowed with the bright gold of the young sun, and stirred. The alders came to life. A bird started to sing, then another, and another. The stream narrowed to a shallow rivulet, fringed with blood-wort and broad plate—like dock leaves. Rowing, Ludzik strove to make as little noise as he could, but sometimes the oar stuck in the clinging ooze of the bottom. Then a tangle of bushes replaced the alders, and with the alders the stream disappeared. Further on lay the bog with its tall flags and a wall of reeds as high as a man.

He stepped out cautiously on to the bank. One by one herons rose out of the reeds and sailed majestically towards the river. They had evidently spent the night somewhere here, far from the nests that were empty at this time of year in the untrodden woods. Crouching low, Ludzik made his way slowly into the thicket of shrubs. Right and left stretched the bog, a rust-colored treacherous swamp, blooming in patches of fresh green. A narrow passage between two bogs led him at last to a little island—a tussock. He stood still. Here, a few paces away lay a gray patch, a quenched fire, dark with dew. Beside it he saw a heap of reeds and dry grass; it was obvious that someone had slept here. But there was no one in sight. Ludzik looked attentively about him and went nearer. It was a recent fire. As he raked the little heap of ashes, Ludzik could feel a faint warmth in them, elusive as a breath. The dew showed a trail, the dark prints of a human foot on the hoary, blue-tinged grass. Ludzik's heart beat fast. Keeping his finger on the trigger of his revolver, he crept like a cat along the trail. But soon it became confused, broken and at last he lost it in the reeds. He swore under his breath, and took to examining the reeds, stem by stem, inch by inch. Yes, it was clear that someone had passed by—perhaps only a few minutes ago. He turned involuntarily, feeling—

or it might have been only his fancy—observant eyes on him somewhere in the adjoining thicket of reeds. He held his breath but there was nothing to be heard save the whirr of bird-wings. There was evidently a little lake behind the reeds and into it flowed the streams that joined the river. He ventured further, but soon felt the ground giving under his feet. He turned in his tracks and went back to the clearing. Nothing had altered here except that the footprints in the dewy grass were now mixed up with his and much less clear. The sun was beginning to penetrate through the network of boughs.

Thoroughly discouraged, he made up his mind to go home, but an unerring instinct told him that he had lit on the right track. He even selected an observation-point, a hollow overgrown with hop-vines and shrubs between three alders growing from one root. He would have to come here directly after midday and wait patiently till evening; beasts always return to their lairs; there would be no difficulty then about catching his man.

But he had retreated no more than twenty paces, when, just as he reached the stream where he had left his boat—was he dreaming?—the boat was gone!

This time he swore at the top of his voice. To make quite sure, he searched further, but the boat was nowhere to be seen even round the tongue of land that jutted out into the river. Unable to believe his eyes, he told himself that it must have been carried down-stream and would come in sight round the next bend. He would simply have to keep along by the water's-edge till he found it.

After a few steps, however, he understood that to go further was out of the question. The ground under the alders was all swampy, here and there were pools, black, fathomless pits, covered with a thick layer of green vegetation. He hesitated a few moments and then decided that the river was safer. The water gurgled threateningly, as he stepped in, air-bubbles rose from the boggy bed, to burst with a soft little plop on the surface. The water was not up to his ankles, but his heavy boots sank deep in the sticky, slippery ooze. Sometimes he felt something firmer than the surrounding slime underfoot and it set him all of a tremble to think he might be stepping on the body of a drowned man. After all, devil knew what eerie things this bog and the streams draining into it might hide in their depths!

To crown all, he could not shake off the feeling of being watched—by a pair of hostile, attentive, almost tangible eyes that missed no single movement. He took a tighter grip on his revolver, and waded on further, but there was nothing but the bog all round him. At last he came to a drier spot, and stepped out on to the land. He was muddy almost to the waist. He followed the river-bank down-stream, glancing about—more for form's sake than anything else—to see if it was stranded round any of the bends. But it was not, nor was it to be seen where the green twilight of the alders ended and the level blue of the river sparkled in the sunlight. He walked by the water's-edge to confuse the tracks and at last reached Palenczicy by a circuitous route. He had to shout and call for a long time before it was borne in upon the loutish ferryman that a boat was wanted. When at last he came he cast sidelong glances at the police uniform abundantly splashed with mud, at the boots covered with a thick crust of the rapidly-drying river slime. Ludzik assumed an air of indifference to cover his chagrin. He had carefully studied before a mirror the expres-

sion suitable to a man in his position—the slight frown, the cold, impassive glance, the firm, compressed lips. It discouraged unwelcome curiosity, though, to tell the truth, it was seldom that anyone hereabouts asked any questions.

The inspector, however, had no scruples about asking questions, and took care to be particularly attentive to Ludzik. He went into the room at the time Ludzik was changing his clothes.

"I was beginning to think they must have bumped you off . . . Neither sight nor light of you since yesterday noon . . . But what's up? You're all covered with mud.... Did you fall into the bog or what?"

Ludzik was struggling into a clean shirt that would not come over his head no matter what he did. At last, when he had the shirt on, he gave his chief a murderous look. Yes, he would have been in a different state if that rotten boat had not disappeared. . . . But no matter what happened, he would hunt down that cut-throat, he would, if it cost him his life . . .

"You ought to take it easy for a while, you're wearing yourself to a shadow, really, you look like nothing on earth these days," the inspector went on, noticing with some satisfaction that the formerly youthful, smooth cheeks of his subordinate looked hollow and worn, dark circles had appeared under his eyes, and his unshaven chin gave the impression of being unwashed.

"There'll be plenty of time to take it easy after I've arrested Iwan Piskor," Ludzik replied coldly, pulling on his spare pair of boots.

"Oh, it's like looking for a needle in a bundle of hay now . . . It's easy enough to say—when I've arrested him—but try and do it! . . . These people know every hole and corner, every track in the place. They walk the bogs like a high road. One helps the other—they all stand up for one another. Come on, we'd do better to go and have dinner."

That reminded the policeman that he had not tasted food for nearly twenty-four hours. As he hastily bolted his dinner, he thought out a plan of ambush. But in all his calculations he invariably came up against the disappearance of the boat, and was baffled. It could not have been accidental. Had Iwan seen him? And was it Iwan?

He declined the invitation to play cards and, after a careful inspection of his revolver, set out once more on his hunt. This time he decided to explore the opposite bank. If it had been Iwan who had noticed him, he would seek another refuge now in a safer spot, say, the middle of the bog that stretched along the river. It had become an obsession now with Ludzik to wander about, and peer into places and search for clues. He could think of nothing else, he was possessed by one idea. He had already scoured the neighboring villages, poked into every nook and corner—without result. The clue he had found today spurred him on to new efforts and added new strength. His quarry must wear out sometimes and make a slip that would ruin him. Iwan could not simply go home like Ludzik and change his wet clothes and have a good sleep and a proper night's rest; he must eat whatever he could find, and wander from place to place all the time.

In the course of the next few days Ludzik often felt that he was on the verge of madness. Once he found on the bank the traces of a fire and the remains of some baked fish. Another time he came upon a broken fishing-rod. He was certain he was on the right track now and that Iwan was practically in his hands. He found a lair Iwan had made for himself on an island where wayfaring-trees grew thick. It was quite near the village and had been

deserted for some time. Ludzik swore at himself: it was clear that the fugitive had spent here the first few days after his disappearance. Now the tracks were confused. For three days he followed close in Iwan's footsteps,never catching sight of him, but finding constant proof that he was somewhere near. Iwan had bought some bread in a little shop. Where had he obtained the money for it? Iwan had spent the night at a farm on the other side of the meadows: the policeman was almost beside himself with rage, but he could do nothing with the people living at the farm. "A vagabond dropped in,"—that was all he could get out of them. It was goading him to fury, this trail that he followed, while it was still fresh, with the ferocity of a bloodhound.

Iwan was always aware of his pursuer's nearness. He had often seen Ludzik only a few paces from him, or even, like the day by the stream in the bog, near enough to touch. He had been tempted that day to seize the oar, spring out at the policeman, and finish him off with a blow over the head—a powerful blow, not like the one he had given Chorzyniak. But something within him revolted at the idea. He peered through the swaying screen of reeds at the policeman bending over the traces of the fire, saw the network of veins bulging on his forehead, at the finger on the trigger of the revolver. Oh, to fling himself on the policeman now... and hang the consequences. And if he proved the quicker of the two, who would trouble to search for a policeman in the bog? The bottomless, quaking mass would silently open, the green crust heal over it once more, the heron stand guard again, and who would ever guess . . . Who would ever venture here? Who would care to stir the boggy dregs that, it was said, went down to the very heart of the earth?

He stood there, thinking. The policeman was examining the ashes of the fire, then, crouching low, attentive and alert, he followed Iwan's tracks towards the reeds. Iwan, frowning, watched his movements—the awkward footsteps of a man accustomed to wearing leather boots and feeling solid ground beneath his feet. Then he made his way noiselessly out of the thicket reedy jungle, got into the boat and pushed off from the bank. It was a stout little craft and would come in handy; his own old boat had started to leak long since. The policeman could get back any way he liked—cross the bog or wade the stream.

Iwan sailed out into the river, making for a spot that was known to him alone—a broad bay hidden from the eye of an outsider. Yesterday he had left a fishing-rod there, stuck into the ground. He thought over what he ought to do. He felt now that the enemy was hot on his track, hunting him down now with increasing fury. At times he thought of clearing out for good. But these were vague, shadowy, unreal thoughts. Here he was born, here he had grown up, here he had returned from Berlin in those far-off post-war days when you had to sweat blood to get a living from the land ploughed by shells, to disentangle it from the network of barbed wire, to restore to it the old familiar look it had worn in childhood—its own green, pleasant look. Long since forgotten was the journey to a strange land; all his roots, all his sinews, had gone down into this earth, this river-bank, these little river-bays, this one and only village. . . .

Very seldom now did he venture home. His wife had always been able to warn him, signal to him, and he himself preferred not to overdo this business of visiting his home. Wherever he went he came upon

Ludzik's trail. Soon he discovered the policeman's observation points under the dark lilacs and in the reeds. It was not this that scared him. He felt much worse when he found the print of the policeman's boot on the sands of a little bay known to him alone. Then a sudden terror seized him. He found himself face to face with something quite unexpected, and felt a touch of something approaching admiration for his opponent.

By now Ludzik was in a frenzy. He could neither eat nor sleep, but kept, like one possessed, on the elusive trail. He questioned people, bullied them, swore at them, all without receiving anything that remotely resembled information. He visited Iwan's wife oftener. But a shrug of the shoulders was all he could get from her. During his hunt he came upon other trails, too, but he had neither the time nor the chance to divide his energies. It was not, therefore, with any hope of success, but simply from a sense of duty that he drew the inspector's attention to Semyon the ferryman. At a point where the stream flowed into the river, he found the traces of people who had halted there on their way eastward—evidently to the Soviet border. It made him all the more eager to track down Iwan. Once he had got the better of this opponent, it would mean the beginning of the end for the rest; a breach would have been made in the wall of implacability, and impunity, with which the village had surrounded itself.

And the hour of triumph struck at last. It was very stupid—the way Iwan allowed himself to be caught. He spent the night in a hut he had avoided for a long time. But he had hurt his foot, the wound had festered horribly, and fever exhausted him. He fell into a heavy, feverish sleep on a corner of the bench, and it was then that Ludzik swooped down upon him. The master of the house, a doddering feeble old fellow from Lopuchy, could only mumble something unintelligible as he stared transfixed at the muzzle of the revolver. Iwan made no attempt to resist—it would have been useless. The handcuffs clicked over his wrists—and then Ludzik felt a curious sense of gratitude to this man. Ever so often he had cursed him and adjured him in his own mind while, tired to death, he had dragged himself over miry wastes and untrodden paths.

"Show up, now, and let me catch you . . . What's the use of tormenting me like this? In any case you can't escape. You're bound to fall into my hands in the end. Better give in now, it's high time . . ."

Yes, it was gratitude he felt. Gratitude that Iwan had been careless enough to come to the same house the second time. It was, as a matter of fact, pure accident. But of late Ludzik had come to place his faith in accident, in an instinct that told him what to do and where to go, often in direct contradiction to logic and common sense. And now he had got his reward.

The prisoner limped ahead of him. Ludzik would trust him to no one. He walked behind, never removing his finger from the trigger of his revolver. And so eventually they came to Zieliszcze.

People came out of their houses, and hurried back almost instantly. Children hid round the corners. Men and women peeped out of the tiny windows but vanished at once as soon as the policeman's glance lighted on them.

"Turn to the right—to the elder's."

Iwan turned obediently to the right. He walked with his shoulders hunched up to his ears, his shaggy cap pulled well down over his eyes; the chain of the handcuffs clinked

faintly. His bare toes stuck out of the torn and rotting sandals.

The argument over the cart was a lengthy one. Ludzik did not fancy the prospect of tramping the ten kilometers to Palenczicy with his prisoner—it would be too much of a strain. What was going on now under that shaggy cap? What was behind that deathly-pale, expressionless face? Why had he given in so quietly after four weeks of wandering and hiding? Perhaps because he was tired to death and ill.

Iwan clambered awkwardly on to the cart, drawing up his bad leg painfully after him. The village elder wanted to send a young fellow with them as driver, but Ludzik shouted at him with such anger that the elder scratched the back of his head, and climbed, grunting, onto the box. He picked up the reins, and the cart set off. The policeman seated himself beside the prisoner. Only now did he became conscious of the sickening smell that hung about the man—a compound of rotting footwear, unwashed body and festering wounds. He shrank away. The cart bumped over the ruts, sank in puddles that never dried. They drove in silence. Ludzik cast furtive looks at his prisoner, but he could read nothing in that immobile face. Iwan sat with his eyes fixed in a dull, indifferent stare straight before him.

The road ran by a broad bog, turned down towards the river, climbed sandy knolls, and again ran steeply downhill. Ludzik was rapt in dreams of his own, on his favorite subject. He would show the inspector how things should be done. He himself, and no one else, would write the report, he himself would take the prisoner into Luck. Promotion was near, it was practically in his hands. Now the man would be forced to confess his former crimes—incendiarism, the poisoning of the dog and—and then, who knew?—perhaps it was through these very hands that the illegal literature found in the cemetery had passed! And even if it had not, it was still likely that he knew all about it and would give away his accomplices.

His imagination took wings. He fingered the smooth barrel of his revolver. It was over—the four weeks of weary search, it had ended in victory in spite of the inspector's gloomy prognostications, in spite of everything. Oh, now he would have his sleep out, now he would eat his fill and make up for lost time. . . .

With a lightning-swift movement Iwan pushed away the policeman and, leaping off the cart, vanished into the green density of the reeds and bushes on the riverbank. Ludzik fired his revolver, once, twice, at the spot where the branches still stirred. The village elder gave a wild cry of terror, the horse started, reared, and in another instant would have torn away at a gallop.

"Whoa!"

With a great effort the elder reined in his Sivka. Ludzik leapt down and dashed into the thicket. The branches lashed him in the face, but he kept on at full speed, firing all the time. He only came to a standstill when he felt the bog squelching underfoot. Right and left, before and behind him lay the thicket—wild currant bushes, wayfaring-trees, and bird-cherry, that thrust luxuriant branches laden with foamy blossom out of the reeds. The swamp stretched for miles on every side. Ludzik realized that he could do nothing here. Guided by the voice of the village elder soothing his horse, he came out at last on the road.

"Where does this swamp lead?"

"Who knows? It's like every other swamp . . . leads down to the river and beyond the river—

on both sides. It's all bog and swamp starting right from this road here."

Ludzik did not get into the cart again. The village elder looked at him in fright, when, muttering something through clenched teeth, he strode rapidly away along the bog-track. The swampy ground squelched and splashed under his tread. These accursed, everlasting, impassable bogs of theirs! So his triumph had been short-lived. The prisoner had escaped. He had an injured foot and still he had managed to give him the slip . . . Then suddenly before Ludzik's inward eye rose a clear picture of Iwan's handcuffed wrists, and the injured leg he dragged painfully behind him; he could not get very far, he would be bound to be caught again—this time for good.

When he reached Palenczicy that evening, the inspector knew everything. Ludzik felt he was going crazy; he could not understand how the inspector could have got to know. But he knew. The policeman caught a note of triumph in the inspector's commisserating voice, the triumph of a fool who was himself incapable of doing anything, and gloated over a better man's failure.

"I told you so. I warned you how it would be . . . . It's not so easy. Even with those handcuffs he'll show you where the flies go in wintertime, you see if he doesn't. . . . Oh, I know these people . . ."

Ludzik vouchsafed no reply to all the inspector's nasty remarks. What did he know about it—this Sikora? . . . Just let him try to chase this fugitive for a month through the fens, up to the eyes in swamps and tramp all the meadows and fields in the neighborhood. . . . If he did that, he could then talk about being in the right. Otherwise, all he could do was to gab—he was good for nothing else. He had not even had the sense to train a police-dog, saying there had been no necessity for it. And how handy a dog would have been just now . . . Ludzik squared his shoulders. He would get on without one. But he would not forgive Iwan this escape, he would not let him go unpunished.

He had a dim notion that it was not only he who had been humiliated and insulted, but something higher and more important than himself. Here, in these wild bogs away out in this savage country, he represented the forces of authority, law and order. His brows drew together sternly. He felt strong once more. If the worst came to the worst, it would at any rate be known that he, Sergeant Ludzik, had done his duty to the last. With a feeling of infinite superiority he listened scornfully to the inspector arguing the point with his wife as to whether the roast duck was sufficiently salted, or not. Oh, this Sikora . . . He would get drunk that night and begin to whine and complain like a woman.

"Are you going out again?"

"Yes."

"A report has to be sent in. I thought you'd stay and help me write it."

"You better write it yourself."

"Well, as you like. I'll give you just one more week to hang around after this Iwan, and no more. It's a waste of time and strength. I've been telling you so from the beginning, but I thought I'd let you see for yourself . . ."

Ludzik was not listening to him. He ran down the wooden steps into the road and set off in the direction of the river. There he stepped into a boat. This was a shorter cut to the bogs where the manacled fugitive was hiding. The man would be sure to make his way now to some village, he could not get on without the help of a

smith. Ludzik ran over in his own mind all the local smithies; there were not so many of them. The simplest thing to do would be to arrange an ambush in each, but in that case he would have to resort to the help of the inspectors in local police-stations. And they were never very anxious to help. They had enough to do in their own districts. Besides, Ludzik wanted to bring this case to a successful conclusion alone, alone, alone!

A big bird flew up out of the wood and sailed slowly over the river. The policeman raised his head. It was a huge dark-brown creature, larger than a heron. As it passed over his head like some dark portent from the skies, Ludzik had a feeling that things would not end well for him. He looked up again and could distinguish the red legs stretching backwards and the red gleam of the beak. It was a black stork—a rare visitor in these parts, especially at this time of year. But at all events, it was just an ordinary bird; Ludzik laughed at his own presentiments.

He hid in the marsh as evening was coming on. Iwan had no boat, and he would hardly be likely to venture out of his lair in the daytime. Now he would slink up to some village, to a smithy. Ludzik's heart beat faster with pleasurable anticipation. The affair would be over soon. Iwan would creep out of the bushes with his wrists manacled and his bad foot dragging after him; how could he escape in a state like that?

Twilight was falling slowly. The round red globe of the sun slid down below the horizon. The mist wreathing up from the marshes caught the last gold of the fading sunset. A late heron sailed through the dusky air. Night with its myriad sounds and mysterious stirrings came down at last.

But through all the orchestra of sounds Ludzik failed to distinguish human footsteps. It seemed as though the earth had opened and swallowed Iwan, he might as well have been sucked into the bog, or vanished into thin air.

In vain Ludzik, chilled to the bone and soaked with dew, waited for him till morning. In vain he roamed for days on end about the bogs, measuring them from end to end, wherever the soft surface would beat his weight. At times he was inclined to agree with the inspector, and assume that Iwan had either got drowned in the bog or made his way by some infernal, supernatural means to distant parts.

Morning came and with it the news that a commissar was expected. Knots of people stood about outside the houses, talking excitedly.

"Something else is going to happen now, I suppose."

"As like as not it won't be anything good."

"They say new taxes are going to be levied . . ."

"You don't say!"

"I don't know the rights of it, but there are all sorts of rumors going about . . ."

"There must be some truth in it, else why should a commissar come here?"

"Then it must be the commissar who has to do with the taxes?"

"What other commissar could it be?"

"What are they going to tax now, I wonder?"

"Devil only knows . . ."

"It's all pay, pay, pay, your hand's never out of your pocket. And what is there to see for it?"

"We paid the taxes not so long ago . . ."

"And more than once . . ."

"That little fellow came round again. 'You haven't paid up,' he

says. 'Yes, I have, every penny,' I tell him. 'Then where's the receipt?' he says. I'm sure I don't know where the receipt is. The children must have stuck it away somewhere . . . Why should I keep a receipt? If I've paid up everything honestly, what more is there to say about it?"

"I paid the other week. . . ."

"What for?"

"How do you suppose I know what it was for? He showed me that it was all written down. But I've got no schooling, couldn't tell what was written there. It was in Polish, I couldn't understand anything . . ."

"It's nothing but pay, pay, pay all the time, you'd think we had plenty to pay with . . ."

"Even if we were minting money ourselves there would never be enough of it . . ."

"That's true, that's as true as you're standing here . . ."

"And so now there's someone else coming, is there?"

"More trouble coming . . ."

Multyniuk's wife moved away from the crowd and signed to her husband to follow her. He moved reluctantly after her round the corner of the house.

"What do you want?"

"Listen, if it's like that, oughtn't we to take the boar out of the sty?"

"And what will you do with him then?"

"We might hide him in the pit behind the sty . . . No one'll go there to look for him . . ."

"Well, maybe it would be better."

He went back to join the crowd but it was gradually thinning out. Every now and again someone would drift away from it and go to his own backyards, where all was bustle and confusion. People were hiding pigs, leading lean, little sheep out of the pens. Parukowa extracted from its hiding-place in the willow-thicket a bunch of dressed flax wrapped in a horse-cloth. Pavel was worrying about the cows.

"Olga, couldn't you send someone to tell them not to drive the cows back to the village?"

"I'll run and tell them!" Wladek offered.

"Do, there's a good boy. Tell Semka and the others to stay in the field till we let them know."

"And what about the horses?"

"They should wait with the horses, too. Only you won't have time to run to both places."

"Wasylko will go."

"Alright. Tell them to stay where they are, even if it's all night. It's warm, they won't freeze."

About midday a *brichka* clattered down the village street and drew up in front of the elder's house, where the village delegates and ancients were waiting as they had been instructed.

The commissar, a tall, fair-haired, rather imposing man, strode into the room, almost bumping his head on the lintel of the low doorway. His assistant minced after him.

The village elder bowed, but his gaze flitted nervously from one thing to another, particularly when a brown briefcase stuffed with papers appeared on the table. The delegates exchanged glances. The commissar took out some papers and arranged them on the table. The assistant got a fountain-pen out of his pocket.

"Look, look . . ." someone whispered in the crowd, "it writes without ink."

"It doesn't! What are you talking about? The ink's inside of it."

"How can there be ink inside of a little thing like that? You're talking nonsense."

"But it writes. Look at it!"

"The things these gentry think of for themselves!"

The commissar raised his head. There was silence.

"The servitude-law regarding land is still in force here, isn't it?"

The peasants hesitated and looked embarrassed. The elder cast a side-long glance at the papers, but could not understand anything of them.

"He's starting with the servitude-grants . . . ." came a whisper at the door.

"There's a sly trick for you."

The commissar waited a little.

"Well, how does it work, this privilege?"

The elder opened his mouth to speak, but Pilniuk was before him.

"There are servitude-grants, of course . . . bound to be . . ."

"Naturally . . ." the others rallied to his support.

"How much land comes under the servitude-law?" This question was greeted with profound and prolonged silence.

"How much land?" Semeniuk asked in surprise at last.

"Why, no land at all," the elder declared.

The commissar gave an impatient little shrug.

"But you say yourselves that the privilege is still in force here!"

"Yes, it is, of course, why shouldn't it be? What's to prevent it?"

"Well, then?"

"But it doesn't apply to the land. It only has to do with the pasture . . ."

"Yes, that's understood. But how much comes under this law?"

The peasants exchanged perplexed glances. There might be a trap just here. Land that came under the ancient servitude-law was probably taxed by the hectare.

"Speak up, Pavel, and tell him!"

"No, you tell him about it, Kuzma."

"The elder had better explain."

"What's the elder got to do with it? You go out and explain, Sasha."

Several hands urged Pilniuk forward.

"Well, we might say . . . there's the pasture across the river . . . there's not much of it . . . Then the horse-grazing, just a bit . . ."

"Oh, alright, I've got a map, but they're not marked on it. How much is there altogether?"

Pilniuk did some mysterious calculations in his head, cast up something and then divided it. He was in no hurry to answer.

"So altogether . . . there'll be . . . under the servitude-law, that's to say . . . two hundred hectares. . . ."

The waiting crowd heaved a sigh of relief.

"That's right, two hundred, there'll be two hundred . . ." the elder hastened to confirm Pavel's assertion.

"Put it down," said the commissar to his assistant.

All eyes were turned on the astonishing spectacle of the fountain pen that moved so swiftly across the paper, leaving a straight line of characters behind it.

"So it's two hundred hectares . . ."

The assistant wrote rapidly, biting his nether lip mechanically.

"Now I'll read it out and then you can sign it."

The commissar read slowly and distinctly, but the men were not listening. That was clever of Pilniuk—to reckon up no more than two hundred. . . .

"I think you'll be satisfied that the business is over and done with," the commissar said pleasantly.

The peasants lowered their eyes to hide the sparkle of triumph in them. Of course they were satisfied. Oh, but that Pilniuk was a sharp one! He had a head on his shoulders. And the commissar had believed him, fancy!—the man seemed to have some schooling and he believed that straight away!

The first to sign was the elder. The others followed his example, as well as they knew how. Some wrote in Polish letters, some in their own language, others simply made a mark.

The commissar folded up the paper and asked them the nearest way to the local landowner's estate.

"I always prefer to talk things over with the village first," he said to the elder, "and the big estate-owner afterwards. I know which side to stand by."

The elder looked at him attentively.

"Yes . . . I'm from the village myself," the commissar continued, stroking the tousled head of the elder's grandchild who was loitering by the *brichka*.

"From the village—it's likely!" Semeniuk grunted, when the horses had set off in the direction of the estate.

"He's got schooling and still he believed us. . . . straight off."

"Yes, you can trust Pilniuk to take anyone in—no flies on him."

"It's funny, though, he never said a word about the taxes . . ."

"He's not such a fool as to give the whole show away at once! He'll go to town and they'll write it down in a book and send us a paper saying—pay up . . ."

"It was clever—the way Pilniuk reckoned it all up . . ."

"I declare my breath stopped when I heard it!"

"I said from the first that we ought to let Pilniuk speak up for us . . ."

"How knowing he was—the way he worked it all out in his head! Supposing one of these simple chaps had gone and blabbed. There's no knowing what might have happened."

"Yes, we've been lucky."

Highly delighted with themselves, they returned to their homes. The women dragged the pigs and sheep back to the pens again. Wladek ran to the pastures to tell the cow-herds they could come home at the proper time.

That evening the elder's house was packed with people. There were more than in the morning. Chmielanczuk was sitting at the table with a malicious grin on his face.

"Yes, you made a nice job of it—the way you reckoned the land up."

"We thought so. Don't you?"

"That's just what I'm saying. I happened to be at the estate-agent's—I went to ask about the threshing—when the commissar drove up. The agent went as white as a sheet. Well, I thought it might be worth while listening to what he had to say. That commissar is a clever fellow, oh, very! He started to business right away. 'The villagers have signed the report already,' says he. I wait to hear what comes next. And the estate-agent's hands were shaking like this. And then the commissar says—mind you, I heard it with my own ears, I wouldn't have believed it if anyone had told me—he says: 'The muzhiks have admitted, and they're all agreed on it, that two hundred hectares come under the servitude-privileges' law. Therefore I must ask you not to make any difficulties. I won't stand any shilly-shallying.' And the agent stood there, as if he were turned to stone and said: 'I don't want to do any shilly-shallying, I'm sure. Two hundred, that's exactly what it is.'"

The others looked at one another.

"So the agent said the same thing?"

"He didn't contradict it? Just agreed like that?"

"Had he gone off his head or what?"

"He's not really a bad sort of fellow, though they do run him down so . . ."

"Well, that's first-rate! If the agent has confirmed it they wont be coming to measure up . . ."

"Are you all crazy?" Chmielanczuk demanded crossly, and his foxy face was suddenly covered with a network of wrinkles.

"What right have you to call us fools?" Pavel flared out at him. "We're only going to pay taxes on two hundred hectares, surely that's not so bad, is it?"

"What taxes?"

"It looks as though you're crazy, not us. What are you so surprised at? It was for the taxes the commissar came to find out about the servitude-land, wasn't it?"

"Maybe you think he just came here for fun . . ."

"Wanted something to do and thought he'd have a ride out to Olszyny . . ."

Chmielanczuk shook his red head sadly; a wry smile appeared on his lips. . . .

"Is that so? Well, well . . ."

The elder sat huddled up in the corner; he seemed to have grown smaller. He did not utter a word. But now the muzhiks turned to him.

"Have you nothing to say?"

He shrugged his shoulders.

"Chmielanczuk seems to have something different to say . . . What do I know about it?"

"What has Chmielanczuk got to say that's different?"

"This . . ." said Chmielanczuk. "Haven't you heard that the old servitude grants are to be done away with?"

"Yes, they've been talking about it for a long time . . . But it doesn't look as though . . . maybe in some places it's like that, but not here. . ."

"Those folk from Kurzawa said something about it when they came here looking for a meadow to mow . . ."

"Yes, they did say something."

"That there wasn't going to be any more land under servitude law? Wasn't that it?"

"But how can that be?"

"Because it's going to be done away with. And whatever land came under it is to be divided in two—half to go to the village and half to the local landowner."

"So that's how it is!"

"I know for certain. It's been done already in some places, but not everywhere. That's what the commissar came about."

Pilniuk turned the color of the whitewashed wall.

"So this was . . . This must have been . . ."

"The same thing!"

"So that means we'll only get half of two hundred?"

"How's that? There are six hundred hectares altogether, so we ought to get the half of the six hundred . . . How much is that?"

"Three hundred."

"You won't get any three hundred now. A hundred and no more!" Chmielanczuk said curtly.

"Why only a hundred?"

"Because the report is made out and you've all signed it, and it says only two hundred hectares come under the servitude-grant. The agent up at the big estate has confirmed it, and nobody's going to go to law about it."

"But how can that be?"

"That's how. You'll be given a hundred hectares across the river."

"Out of the pasture-land?"

"The pasture-land and the meadow."

"And where does the rest go?"

"It goes to the landowner for good."

"Where are we going to graze the cattle?"

Chmielanczuk shrugged his shoulders. The muzhiks looked at each other anxiously.

"I don't believe it! They couldn't do a thing like that!"

"Ask anybody you like. You

ought to have talked things over and asked advice before you started doing everything yourselves."

"And what are you so pleased about, I'd like to know? You'll suffer by it the same as we will, won't you?" Pavel demanded suspiciously.

Chmielanczuk hunched his shoulders up to the ears and glanced towards the door.

"It's not a question of what I'll suffer. I mostly graze my beasts in the garden, and across the river."

This was true. Everybody knew it. Chmielanczuk had no need to be worried about the innovation that would put the village in such a hopeless fix.

But Pilniuk would not give in yet.

"I don't believe they can do that! Everybody knows we have six hundred hectares. We'll send in an application."

"And get us all into trouble—as if we hadn't enough as it is! They'll say! 'Why did you deceive the commissar?' You'll get into prison, that's what you'll do."

"Let's go and see the commissar!"

"He's gone away long since. Where will you find him now? And, besides, do you think he'll let you make a fool of him like that? The report has been drawn up and signed and he'll take it to the head office, and you can't do anything about it now."

The village elder got heavily to his feet and lit a wooden spill. The linen window-curtain swayed; a reddish soot was drawn up from the smoky torch through the hole in the ceiling. Shadows leapt across the walls.

"What sort of a village elder are you anyway? An elder ought to know something."

"Was I the only one here?" he growled, frowning. "Ever since morning you were all saying that the commissar was coming about the taxes. How was I to guess that he hadn't anything to do with them? Besides, you never gave me a chance to speak, you kept shoving Pavel forward . . ."

"He's right . . ." Semeniuk said with a sigh. "After all, they always do come about the taxes. Who was to know that it would be different this time?"

"Whether good or bad comes, the muzhik always gets the worst of it."

"And to think we might have had three hundred hectares of our own!"

"It isn't much of a pasture but still it would have been our own."

"Well, it's turned out badly for us . . ."

"And the commissar wanted to be on our side. Looks like it, doesn't it?"

"How was he to know which was our side?—he's from the town."

"He said he was from the country."

"And you believed him?"

"It's nothing but trouble—one trouble after another."

The elder still sat huddled up, crushed by the remarks that pelted down on his curly head like a storm of censure.

Chmielanczuk got up to go. As he buttoned his *caftan*, he glanced with ill-disguised satisfaction at the frowning, dejected faces.

"Yes, you were so sharp, all of you, that you cut yourselves at last."

"That's the only kind of sharpness we've got . . ."

They drifted out slowly, their bast sandals shuffling heavily, wearily along the road.

"That Chmielanczuk is a swine, too . . . He could have told us beforehand if he knew so much about it . . ."

"You remember how he advised

us about the *komassatsia*—and what came of it?"

"A regular Judas, that's all he is . . ."

"He's just as glad as he can be when any trouble comes on the village . . ."

"Yet he belongs to the place, he's one of our muzhiks."

"He's no muzhik . . . Look at the garden he's got, and the land and those cows of his, fattened up—there aren't any like them round here."

"That's the truth," the others agreed.

Soon the women added their voices to the gossip and jeered at the men's stupidity. Of course, the women might have known how it would be if they left anything to the muzhiks; they had no sense, they were good for nothing but to talk a lot of rubbish. Now, if only the women had been there, they would have shown the stuff they were made of . . .

The wayfaring-tree flamed with scarlet berries and a deep carmine flooded the cranberries in the marshes and the bilberries in the pine woods. Leaves were reddening on the trees, birches glowed with living gold, the world was a changing maze of mellow hues, from the russet leaves in the ditch by the wayside to the molten copper of the lofty beeches.

Somewhere on the upper reaches of the river, rain had fallen and the waters were swollen and swept in a broad wave over the plain. Ducks splashed happily in the floods, settled in the reeds in the lake, luxuriated all day long in the sun-warmed water. And although that hazy spell of Indian summer known in these parts as "woman's last summer" had not yet come round, there was a smell of autumn in the air already.

Now was the time for floating timber donwnstream. The felled trees lay in piles on the river-bank at Sinicy; sturdy pines with their pinkish scaly crust, silver birches with bark as thin as tissue-paper, powerful oaken trunks. This was the time to launch them into the water, now when there was no risk of their running aground in the shallows, or sticking fast in the tangle of water-plants growing at the surface, or dragging their great rounded bellies along the sandy river-bed. The water stood high and the current was swift enough to bear the mighty trees through the autumn-marshes, through the gold and crimson of the woods, out to the distant spaces.

The weather had been hot and all summer the rafts had been delayed, incautiously kept out of the water till too late, when the blazing sun of June and July was at its height and the dark water-line on reeds and flags was sinking lower and lower. Some of the rafts had been dragged onto the bank, some plunged into the river to keep them from rotting. They lay just under the ripples, stuck on the sand, overgrown with hoary colt's-foot, like the skeletons of sunken vessels.

Now it was time for them to start out on their voyage, time to get the felled giants ready for their travels. They had a long way to go along the River Styr, and the waters of the Pina, through the Royal Canal to Brest and out by the blue Wisla to the sea, and even further—to countries that no one hereabouts knew the names of. For the grand pines and sturdy oaks were destined for the shipyards of England and the docks of the Baltic.

Everybody knew that if you wanted the chance to earn a bit—and chances were few and far between—you had to go at once to Wlucki, Ruda, or Sinicy and offer your

services to the timber-merchants who had offices there.

But the days were going by, and though Abram Rozen often went out on the steps of his house at Wlucki to look anxiously down the road, not a soul appeared on it. In Sinicy Ignati Wolski, who had gone into partnership with a man from Warsaw, eyed dejectedly the close barricades of unstripped timber stretching from house to water's edge and whistled dubiously through his teeth. Lean Mojrzesz Okrecik of Ruda made inquiries wherever he could, but no muzhiks turned up.

What had been whispered of and hinted at in the spring had now begun in good earnest. Even Ludzik was sufficiently alarmed to take an interest again in what was going on in the village and forget for a while the case of Iwan. He made several attempts to get into conversation with the muzhiks but nothing came of that.

One golden autumn day he dropped in at the Sowiuks', ostensibly for a drink of water. They drew their water from the lake and it was better than that drawn from the river, at the other end of the village. Ludzik made a grimace of distaste as he drank the lukewarm liquid from the tin dipper. But at any rate it did not smell of fish and rotting grass.

"It's about time they were going out with the rafts, isn't it?"

"Yes, it is just about time," Wasyl agreed lazily as he sat mending a badly-torn net, one of those Karwowski had given out to the fishers who had signed the contract.

"I don't see anyone going, though . . ."

"No, I don't either . . ."

The policemen fidgeted a while.

"This time last year the river was crowded with them."

"That's right . . . it was."

"The weather's keeping up fine, too."

"Yes, can't complain of the weather . . ."

"Aren't you thinking of going out with the rafts?"

"Who? . . . You mean me?"

"Yes, you . . ."

"Why, how do I know what I'm going to do? There's more work at home than I can properly do. . . Here's the net all torn, I have to mend it every time I come back from fishing."

"But you don't mean to say the whole family's busy mending one net?"

"No, not the whole family, of course. It wouldn't take the four of us, why should it? But we're thinking of making a new roof, you see, the old one's starting to leak. The rushes have to be cut, and we've got to go a long way for them—these hereabouts are no good. The kind we want grow beyond the meadow."

"But what are all the others doing?"

"The others? Oh, well, if their roofs are leaking, I expect they're going to mend them too. Winter will be coming soon."

"You're talking nonsense!" the policeman burst out indignantly. Then, with a gesture of disgust, he turned and went away.

Sowiuk glanced out of the passage.

"Ha, coming poking his nose in again!"

Ludzik turned into the village elder's yard, and the man came out to meet him.

"Well, anything doing?"

"No, nothing. What could there be doing, here, anyhow, in a place like Olszyny? We live the way we've always lived . . . You ought to know more than we do of what's going on in the world. We don't see much of you nowadays, you must be kept very busy in other places."

Ludzik gave him a sharp look. Was this a hint at his untiring but fruitless pursuit of Iwan? He could read nothing in the gray eyes half-hidden under the bushy eyebrows.

"I suppose they'll be floating the timber soon, and it'll be a bit livelier in the village . . ."

"That's right . . ."

"I don't seem to see any of them about though?"

"No, there aren't many to be seen about, that's true . . ."

"Are they waiting for the frosts or something?"

"How do I know? Why should they wait for the frosts? I suppose it's because the weather's keeping up so well, and the sun's so warm, they think there's no great hurry."

"Were there a lot of people out last year with the rafts?"

"A good many, I think. If there's money to earn, there's no reason why they shouldn't go? Everyone is glad of the chance to earn a bit."

"And how much do they pay?"

"It varies. Depends on the man your're working for, and the journey. If it's a long way they pay more, of course. If it's to some place nearer, they pay less."

"But still, they earn a good bit, don't they?"

"Sometimes it's a good bit. I haven't been out with the rafts for a long time, not since I was young. I don't know how things are nowadays . . ."

Ludzik dropped in at Chmielanczuk's as well, but the man flatly refused to talk to him.

"What do you keep coming round here for? As though I hadn't enough worries without that. If there's a bust-up here I'll run to Palenczicy without you reminding me . . . But if you hang around here any more, it'll end in your getting my house set on fire."

"I wanted to find out something about the rafts."

"Well, what about them? As soon as I hear anything I'll let you know, as I've told you already. . ."

"Who is it that's stirring them up, *Pan* Chmielanczuk?"

The man shrugged his shoulders.

"Nobody is stirring them up . . . They just want to stand out till the timber-merchants raise the rates of pay. The closer the winter, the greater the hurry of the traders. And it's more profitable for the men to wait. Nobody and nothing is stirring them but want—want is the biggest rebel of all."

"But it's always been like that and yet they've never waited before."

"That's the way things go. Every year something new crops up, don't you know that? You'd better be going! No use asking for trouble—it'll come quick enough of itself!"

Ludzik went away, looking very black. At suppertime he made a determined attack on Sikora.

"You know, this is a regular conspiracy, a strike!"

The inspector was helping himself to steaming potatoes. Zosia was munching a piece of bread with an indifferent air, staring with doll-like, expressionless eyes at the dark strip of road outside the window.

"You do get so worked up about things."

"And you take them a great deal too easily, in my opinion! If it should come to a strike, they'll lose their heads altogether!"

The inspector sliced up some sausage for himself.

"Put some vodka on the table, Zosia. Ten times I've told you to put it on when you set the table, and I always have to remind you... You say I take things too easily? So will you when you've been here six years. We're not supposed to tear ourselves to pieces, are we? What do you think you'll gain by

it? Exactly nothing, let me tell you!"

"If I thought the same as you do, I'd chuck everything up and resign!"

Shortly after this, Ludzik went out. It seemed to him that this and the neighboring villages were in the toils of a conspiracy, that spies lurked behind every fence, that a tacit understanding existed among the muzhiks, and that for the first time since he had come here something would happen that would stir up not only this village but the whole district, up and down the river, every peasant settlement in the bogs encircled by the loop of waters. Rage welled up in him when he thought of Sikora. What could a policeman do in conditions like these? To think of the things that might happen if there were any more of these Sikoras here!

He could learn nothing in the village. No one knew anything, no one had instigated anyone to anything. He was baffled at every step by the muzhiks' unbending will, the impregnable wall of which had arisen in all the villages simultaneously. And he realized that it would be better to follow the beaten path and continue his pursuit of Iwan than to try to kill two birds with one stone.

Meantime, the three timber-merchants—Abram Rosen at Wlucki, Ignati Wolski at Sinicy and Mojrzesz Okrecik at Ruda—had put their heads together and found a way out of the difficulty. If the men did not want to float the timber, they needn't. It could be done without them. Formerly the timber-merchants had quarreled and competed and been ready to fly at each other's throats: but on this occasion they arrived at a mutual understanding without the slightest difficulty.

Early one morning a cart set out from Sinicy and returned, loaded with men.

"The worst of it is they've never been out with the rafts before. But after all it's not such a terribly hard job to learn . . ."

The trader looked at the lean, exhausted faces: muzhiks from Zielonki. Their shirts—pink check on a greenish-black ground—sat loosely on their wasted bodies, the coarse linen wrapped about their feet and legs like puttees was rotten with perspiration and gave off a rank odor.

"They're not up to much . . . No strength in them . . ."

"Never mind, there are a lot of them. They'll manage," Rozen's swarthy, young nephew said reassuringly.

"How many are there?"

"I brought eight and the rest will be here by morning. I told them to go from house to house and let people know. There'll be crowds here in the morning . . ."

The trader called the lad aside.

"How much did you offer to pay?"

"Twenty."

"And they agreed?"

"You bet they did. They'd have come for ten. They're from Zielonki, where people are starving."

"See that they all set out together. And keep a still tongue in your head, we don't want it to get around before time."

Yet, in spite of all precautions, those who needed to know found out. About midnight the big doors of Wolski's barn, where the eight men were asleep in the hay, creaked on their hinges.

"Hey there, are you asleep?"

Three shadows danced on the barn wall in the feeble light of the lamp. The men from Zielonki sat up and rubbed their eyes.

"Get up and clear out of here!"

"Where to?"

"Home. There mustn't be even the smell of you here by morning!"

A tall young fellow as thin as a rake stood up and shook the wisps of hay off his ragged garments.

"What do you mean?"

"You've agreed to float timber?"

"That's right."

"You're not going anywhere, see!"

"How's that?"

"Because you're not, that's all! Where've you come from?"

"Zielonki."

"O-oh, from Zielonki, are you?" One of the three visitors said in dismay. "Then it was your crops that were spoiled by hail-stones last summer?"

"Yes, all spoilt."

The three men exchanged glances.

"It's damned hard on you, we know . . . But this is a nasty kind of business, you ought to try and see our side of it . . ."

Eight wan and wasted faces leaned closer; the men listened attentively.

"They offered us thirty *zloty* for two. But what's that? It takes a fortnight to go and a fortnight to come back. That works out at less than a *zloty* a day."

"Still, it seems a lot . . ." someone sighed.

"And how much do you suppose he'll get for the timber? Did you see the house he's built for himself? We asked for forty. Forty—or not a man will go. That's why he went and brought you here. Are there more of you coming?"

"Yes, there are. They've been on the road since midday, they'll be here by morning."

"No one is going out of here with rafts!"

"How's that?"

"Either you go about your business in peace or . . ."

"Forty *zloty* . . . Good god!"

"You've never floated rafts before, have you?"

"Never. We live so far from the river, who would have us? They always take folks who live nearby. But there was nothing else for it—they had to take us, and we had to take whatever they offered."

"The hail-storms did for us. Not that there was much to spoil . . . Our village is built on sandy soil, and there's nothing but marsh all round. You can't grow much of anything there. And what there was—the hail beat down. We had nothing to sow this spring."

"So what are you going to do, then?"

"The folks have gone out begging, to see if they can hang on for a while. You can see our shirts are hanging loose on our backs. And it's worse at home. The children are lying on the stove, they're too weak to move and their bellies all swelled out with hunger. All the old folks have died . . ."

There was silence in the barn for a space.

"What could we do? The young fellow came and said we're to get twenty *zloty* for two. And who of us has ever even seen twenty *zloty?* We jumped at it . . ."

"Aye, it's a bad state of things with you, there's no doubt about it. But still you'll have to go."

The tall, lean fellow nodded.

"Well, if we have to, we have to, and there's no more about it. Come on, boys, let's be getting home while the trader's asleep. It's a good thing they gave us something to eat in the evening, anyway."

Grunting and groaning, the men got up out of the hay.

"Sh, don't make so much noise, else someone will hear . . ."

"There's nobody to hear, they're all fast asleep. We'll take you by a short cut, there's no need for you to go through the town."

"Alright."

"The others are coming through the woods, very likely."

"Turn them back. We won't let them float the rafts anyhow. It's

our job; we've always done it and so have our fathers and grandfathers before us."

"Oh, alright, we aren't going to spoil it for you."

By the flickering light of the smoky kerosene lamp, they stole out of the barn and melted into the gloom of the starry voiceless autumn night that had descended with the scent of dying leaves over the quiet earth.

It was hardly light when the timber-merchant roused his nephew.

"I don't see the other men anywhere."

"They'll come, never fear. It's a long way, they can't walk as quickly as all that."

The man went out into the yard. The open door of the barn swung on its hinges, exposing to his astonished eyes the unoccupied hay.

"They've cleared out! What the devil happened?"

"They must have gone in the night . . ."

"We should have locked the barn and kept an eye on them."

"It's not so easy to keep an eye on that sort. Somebody must have got at them, and turned them of it, that's plain . . . "

The swarthy lad wagged his head in perplexity.

"I can't understand it. They were so glad to come, they didn't even ask any questions as to the why and wherefore of it all . . ."

"Well, somebody's evidently been explaining to them the why and wherefore of it all. Either talked them into clearing out or given them a knock over the head . . . . The others aren't likely to turn up now."

Wolski went down past the felled oaks, the smooth pines and white birches to the river. He looked into the water that flecked with blue and gold, flowed smoothly between the alders. Bare of the string of rafts that usually enlivened it at this time of the year, it kept steadily, soundlessly on its way. Only here and there a few children were playing in the boats and the fishers were sailing in with their dripping nets.

"We'll do things a different way this time," Wolski decided, and ordered the horses to be harnessed at once.

The three merchants held a conference in Ruda. Then the swarthy youth went away—for a longer period this time.

The peasants from the neighboring villages camped out among the alders on the river-bank at Sinicy, Ruda and Wlucki. They crouched in the reeds, hid where the flags were thickest, made themselves lairs of dry leaves—and waited.

One morning there was a commotion in Wolski's yard. The children who had been on the lookout ran down to the river without delay.

"They've come! A lot of unemployed from the town!"

The peasants looked at one another.

"We'd better go and talk to them."

"Talk? We'd better knock' em down, if you ask me!"

"We can do that, too. But we ought to talk to them first. They're folks, aren't they, same as us."

"The idea of them coming from the town to take the bread out of our mouths . . . After all, it's easier to make a living in the town . . ."

"Of course it is . . ."

"And they took it into their heads to come here . . ."

"We've got to talk to them."

"What, to the whole lot?"

"No . . . We'll have to find one who's got a bit more sense than the others and talk to him . . ."

A little later a man in town clothes slipped quietly out of Wol-

ski's yard and strolled, whistling, down to the river.

Semyon the boatman was waiting for him in the alders.

"What do you want with me, grandad?"

"It's like this, you see . ... You've hired yourselves out to float the rafts, haven't you?"

The worker looked mistrustfully at Semyon, and hesitated, as if wondering what to say to this.

"What's it got to do with you? Better not poke your nose into other people's business. It's no concern of yours, is it?"

"It looks as if it is, since I'm asking."

"And I don't want to answer."

"Well, just as you like, of course. I thought we'd maybe settle it peacefully and quietly, but if you don't want to, we'll do it the other way."

They stood there, taking each other's measure, for a moment or two. The worker shrugged his shoulders and made a movement as if to go. Semyon stopped him.

"Have it your own way. Only you'll be sorry afterwards . . ."

"Sorry for what?"

"Sorry . . because we're out on strike . . ."

The worker swung round.

"What are you striking for?"

"We won't agree to float the rafts for thirty *zloty* for every two men. We want forty."

"Forty?" the worker looked astonished. "They're going to give us forty-five."

"Well, so we're out on strike. Nobody wants to go. And the men have sent me to ask if you'll go away without a fight or not?"

The other dug at the soft ground with the toe of his boot.

"We didn't know anything about it."

"Well, you can't say you don't know now," Semyon said firmly.

"I'll go and tell the others."

"And then what?"

"I suppose we'll go home, that's all."

Semyon drew a deep breath. He was surprised that things had gone so smoothly straight away. With a stranger, too, from the town. Perhaps the fellow was afraid.

"That trader—look what he did! Hired you for forty-five, so as to get us for thirty afterwards."

"They all do the same. But I didn't think there were strikes out here as well."

"Want drove us to it . . . We've got to live. Things have got to such a pass in the village that we can't make any money out of fishing, and we need money badly. The timber-trader wouldn't be ruined if he gave us a few more *zloty*."

"You bet he wouldn't. Well, I'll go and talk to the boys. So long . . ."

"Good luck. It's fine we settled things so easily."

"Tell me, where could we find you if you were wanted?" the worker asked unexpectedly.

Semyon hesitated awhile before answering.

"Don't be afraid. I've had my troubles as well as you . . ."

"What do you folks in the town know of trouble?"

"A lot more than you do in the country. Whatever happens, you've got a roof over your head and you can feed yourself with the fish you catch, but what have we got?"

"It's all talk about what we've got—we haven't anything . . ."

"I've been out of work a year now. If you ever come to town you can easily find me, anybody will show you where I live. Jan Traczyk is my name. There's a little house just by the town bridge, you can ask for me there."

"And I'm from Olszyny. Semyon Starczytok."

"You're from Olszyny? Is that far from here?"

"No. You follow the river downstream."

"I knew a fellow from Olszyny..."

"Where did you happen to meet him?" asked Semyon curiously.

"Oh, there are places where people meet . . . He was called Sasha."

"Sasha?" Semyon exclaimed eagerly, but Traczyk waved his hand and moved off, calling:

"Goodbye. Perhaps we'll meet again some day in better circumstances."

Semyon stood for a long time, watching him go back along the path leading to the house.

Soon Wolski's yard was in an uproar. One voice rose above the rest. Others answered it, and a heated argument followed. The noise lasted for some time and then the crowd moved towards the steps of the house. The terrified timber-merchant darted out.

"We're going! You brought us here as strike-breakers!"

"You never said a word about why you needed townsfolk!"

"You've got to take us back!"

The trader stood there as pale as death. He could not understand it.

"But you agreed to come, nobody forced you into it . . ."

"We didn't know you wanted to make blacklegs out of us!"

"I offered you a good wage . . ."

"So as to beggar the muzhiks!"

"We're not the sort you took us for!"

The merchant looked at the angry faces in terror. For a moment he even thought of sending for the police. But he thought better of it, and ordered the carts to be harnessed. Let them go back to where they came from, then.

By midday the big yard was empty. The strangers had disappeared around the bend of the road.

But things were not settled so easily everywhere. At Ruda the talk ended in nothing. The workers went down in a body to the river and started to push off the rafts. Then there was a rustling in the alders.

"What are we to do now?"

"Beat 'em up!"

"Let them count their bruises for a fortnight afterwards."

But these workers were evidently ready for a fight. It was fought on the sawdust-strewn, timber-scented bank. Word was sent at once to the police-station. Soon blue uniforms were swarming on the battle-ground. Rubber batons whistled through the air, handcuffs clanked.

The news reached Palenczicy next day. It was Ludzik's chance to gloat.

"I was right, you see. There was a conspiracy, there was a strike. I was sure it wasn't going to blow over—and I was right. They organized fighting-squads. You could have exposed the whole thing from the very first and now the Ruda station has taken all the credit of it and we're left out in the cold. They'll all get promotion . . ."

"Let them. I won't get anything in any case."

The other gave a despairing shrug.

"All you can do is swill vodka. You'll drink yourself to death one of these days . . ."

"Yes, of course, I drink. Vodka's the only salvation in a life like this. You don't care for drinking so there's no point in our talking about it. . . . But why should you fly out about things so and upset yourself? Nobody but Sowiuk's been arrested in Olszyny. Zosia, isn't there another bottle left?"

"Oh, in Olszyny, yes. But look how many in the other villages! You could find a good few here, if you looked!"

"Well, you go and look, then. If you find them—it'll mean a

bump on the head. Zosia, where's that other bottle?"

"I'm bringing it as quick as I can. Don't be so impatient. You'll have plenty of time yet to swill it down . . ."

Sikora sat on the verandah, filling glass after glass. His dazed eyes were fixed on the river. From here he could see the long dark string of rafts, and the men straining, pushing them off with poles from the bank. As the evening closed in more and more rafts appeared. The men were to be paid twenty-five *zloty* for two. The timber-merchants had lowered the price to revenge themselves for the losses they had sustained through the delay.

And men went to work for twenty-five *zloty* a couple.

The clatter of the carts bearing the arrested muzhiks into town grew fainter in the distance and at last died down. The clanking of the fetters on their wrists could no longer be heard. The wind covered their tracks with shifting sand, covered them for a long, long while.

Iwan Piskor was making his way eastward. Since the day in the woods when he and Ludzik had come face to face, Iwan had known there was no hope for him. It was no longer the fiercely stubborn Ludzik alone who was after him, but the arm of the all-powerful law; his doom had been sealed. There was no doubt now as to whose ax had written those bloody characters in the snow. They had been easy enough to read and Iwan entertained no false hopes that anyone could have doubted their meaning. Now the road back was closed to him, he had burned his bridges behind. His face was known and a detailed description of his distinguishing marks had reached every police-station, every district administrative office, and every local post office. Now it was not the lone arm of Ludzik that was reaching out after him; but hundreds of arms. Now not one pair of eyes but hundreds were watching him. Now it was not merely an isolated pursuer who was after him, but the law itself—a relentless, stern, unswerving force, that cared nothing for the days spent in torment, the nights without one gleam of relief, and that looked upon a man not as a living person, but as one number among thousands of others.

Where was he to go; east, west, north, south—danger lurked everywhere. His garments were hanging in tatters on his wasted body, his wound still festered and would not heal, he dragged it after him like a useless log attached to his body. While the snow had lain deep, it had been possible to hide in a ruined, godforsaken farm where no one ever came. But now the river was in spate and no out-of-the-way corner was safe; he might encounter someone anywhere and then, as Iwan knew, his game would be up. As a last refuge—the only way out of the narrowing circle, came the thought of the frontier. The frontier of a country of which Petro Iwanczuk had told him before the police had put him in prison; a happy country where a peasant was a human creature and not a harassed hunted beast.

So Iwan crept cautiously eastwards, stifling his moans whenever he struck his injured foot against something in the dark. He spent the nights shivering with fever and racked with pain in the bog, but every day he was farther and farther from Olszyny. And he could not seem to grasp how it had come about that he should have to leave Olszyny, the river, the lake, all that he had been in such a hurry to get back to—how many years ago was it now?—from captivity in Germany, from the great

city of Berlin, where he had been brought by force to work.

Lying in the willows at night, unable to sleep, he would gaze up at the star-sown sky.

"Torn away from everything . . . What's to become of me?" he asked himself.

It worked on him—this enforced departure from the places he belonged to, the fact that every step took him farther and farther from his own earth and its rivers; it seemed to him as though he must be under some evil spell, some terrible nightmare that visited a man and tormented and stifled him. He thought that if he could only fall asleep, his bad dreams would vanish with the morning. And once again he would hear the lake lapping the stony shore, once again he would lower the net into the clear, grass-grown waters and there would be a smell of mint and flags in the water-courses where the nets were set, and he would go down to Odcinek to mow the high, fragrant grass. . . .

But here the shadowy vision would end, his thoughts would go no further. It was from there, from the meadow at Odcinek, that all his misfortunes had come, there they had been born, there the all-devouring nightmare had grown up. How often, while he was still in Germany, he had dreamed of that meadow, the richest of all meadows, at Odcinek. . . . How many times had he imagined himself mowing great swathes sparkling with dew, bright with flowers. . . . And what had it all come to? Of what avail all his labor and his efforts—if that *osadnik* was to mow the juicy grass, if his cows were to yield him rich milk, while Iwan would never again see either the meadow at Odcinek or even the sparse grass that grew in the bog beyond the river?

No, he could not understand it. his mind refused to grasp it. How much labor he had put into filling the yawning wounds left in the earth by the war, healing them so that the fields might be sown again and he might reap what meager crop they yielded. And the days he had spent clearing with torn, bleeding hands the bristling barbed wire from fields and streams, so that it might not injure the cattle—what cattle? Ah, yes, the *osadnik*'s cattle, to be sure . . .

He could not arrange it all properly in his head, befogged as he was with fever. Like one blind or deaf or pursued by one harassing thought, he knew only this: he had to escape, escape, escape. Faster, faster, drag the wounded foot, fight down the growing weakness that brought on hot and cold fits by turns; faster, faster—till some blessed spot was reached where one could throw one's self down and rest, without listening for the echo of footsteps coming nearer. . . .

His progress was slow, painfully slow. Yet the distance gradually lengthened between him and Olszyny. He was divided from it by new bogs, new waters, new woods and groves. Far, far away lay Olszyny now. And there was no way back.

From time to time, when he felt weak with hunger and his stomach refused any more sorrel and rushes, he ventured to beg from people, selecting lonely houses where apparently no danger threatened. He would be given a lump of bread, a bit of a cake, some boiled fish. Here and there he was offered a night's lodging but he was afraid to spend the night under a roof. They might be tempted to betray him. The people asked no questions and he went on his way. Perhaps they were scared by the wild, unshaven face, perhaps they were moved to pity, or perhaps

they guessed why he was going in that direction, for it was now perfectly clear that he was making for the border.

At last he approached the frontier of his own country. Ahead lay dense forests, impassable wastes, a land of swamps, alders, leafy groves. Here he was fortunate enough to find himself a guide.

The trees whispered faintly. The track brought him at last to a limitless space open to the heavens, to a bog that stretched as far as the eye could reach. Iwan looked about him. Beyond, the belt of woods formed a solid barrier, a high wall, a strong border to the region of fens and quagmires. Here another world began. Far and wide rolled the immeasurable plain, overgrown with grey moss, sedge, and huckleberry leaves. Here and there shimmered the delicate green of a stunted birch timidly rearing its silvery-white trunk out of the low vegetation. From the bog came a strong dank breath, the sharp smell of peat, sodden under rusty pools, that gleamed with oily, iridescent patches. And the still, sun-warmed waters bloomed with strange motionless flowers—purple, blue, green and mauve.

"This way . . ." growled the guide, and Iwan stepped on to a narrow footpath of tree-trunks laid on the quaking bog; and across this unstable, trembling bridge, over a bottomless abyss hidden by the deceptive carpet of green—the luxuriant small vegetation that drew strength for its ephemeral earthly existence from the swamp—Iwan had to go. To the right and the left, ahead of him and behind him, lay the limitless bog, like a country that was dead. No birds perched on the boughs of the stunted birches; only high above in the cloudless sky a hawk, marauder of the woods, soared on broad dark wings.

The stick sank in the bog. Iwan staggered and with an effort pulled it out again. The rusty, oily liquid gurgled treacherously, the green surface quivered and softly, slyly, sank. The guide glanced round anxiously, but Iwan had already regained his balance. He moved on cautiously, setting his feet evenly on the damp, decaying logs. They were overgrown with moss, eaten away in places with nests of rusty rot darkened with damp, and ready to fall to pieces.

Far away on the horizon a hoary fog hung over the bog; low over the ground itself blue vapor wreathed and floated away into a distance that looked like the end of the world. For a moment his head swam; here was the even log path, laid by none knew whom, leading none knew whither, while all around lay a boundless waste, tranquil as a lake on a summer's day, and as awesome in its unfathomed depths. And it seemed that if a wind should rise, the level green must be ruffled, and the widening circles of the miniature waves be edged with foam and the bog roar like a full river swept by a sudden storm.

The sun was burning hot and the smell of the bog grew more pungent. The hawk still hung motionless like an omen in the skies. And the feet sank oftener into the rotting places in the wood; every now and then it became necessary to hop from one log to another, and between them shone the green carpet of moss and leaves, treacherous, inviting, hiding the waiting black chasm.

Thirst tormented Iwan, but when he bent to scoop some water from a spot sparkling among the stiff moss, his hand plunged into an oily, almost hot liquid, the iridescent surface quivered and he found himself looking into the dark eye of an abyss that reached down to the heart of the earth. Yellow and reddish liquid, warmed by the sun,

dripped from his fingers. No, this was not water fit for drinking, it was not even ordinary water from an ordinary bog . . .

There was no place to sit down or stand still, even for a moment. Iwan pulled himself together and strove to keep up with the guide. The man walked lightly, effortlessly, as though borne on winged feet. His worn-out bast sandals hardly touched the logs, but seemed to glide above them, and his stick never touched the surface of the bog.

. . . It was long after midday and the gray mist had grown denser and darker. The weary eyes rested on a green grove, a solid belt of woodland cutting like a wedge into the marshy plain. Iwan mended his pace.

Here the grass was dry and firm and plentiful, the huckleberry leaves were larger, and there were fewer rainbow-eyed pools. The low land was coming to an end, tall green bushes arose out of the bog, there was a keen, refreshing, bitter smell of alders, and the boughs of big trees rustled.

The guide slackened his pace.

"Now you go straight on till you come to the river. You cross it and you are there. Wait till the evening, the going is easier then. The frontier's on that bank, and there are very few people about. Here to this side there's a bog nobody ever crosses. Well, so you've got to keep straight on. Go slow . . ." He gave Iwan an attentive look. "Good luck, comrade . . ."

Iwan did not reply. He sat down under a tree and watched the guide until he was out of sight. Lightly and easily the man trod the bridge of logs, went steadily on, dwindled till he merged with the distance and vanished into the graygreen wastes, the sea of bog.

On the other side a gray belt like a cloud hung low above the earth; it was the wood by the river they had crossed at daybreak. Here, too, were woods that sighed and rustled and whispered overhead with a thousand voices. A jay uttered its strident call, small, noisy, nimble birds hopped about in the thicket. There was a smell of damp leaves, rotting from generation to generation in deep drifts never trodden by the foot of man. And who knew—perhaps no man had ever been here. His thirst tormented him. Iwan plucked a leaf of marsh-rosemary and rubbed it between his hands. It gave off a strong, pungent fragrance, but did not quench his thirst. To crown all, big gray flies appeared and buzzed hungrily before his eyes. One of them stung him on the cheek. A thin trickle of blood came. Iwan swore and got to his feet. He went ahead cautiously and slowly, as the guide had told him, following his nose.

The branches of the trees were tangled in the woods, the hopvine interlaced with the shrubs, and the tender convolvulus twined and clung about them all. Brambles caught at his clothing, and he could hardly push his way through the dense undergrowth. But from a distance came a familiar sound, the purl of running water, the mysterious song of wavelets. Tall, straight reeds pushed their way through the sallow-thorns, spindle-trees and wayfaring-trees, growing ever thicker and bolder. A wild duck rose with a startled cry somewhere not far away. The sky was hidden by a green canopy of branches, and all was bathed in a mysterious humid green twilight.

Iwan stood still, listening. But there was only the carefree twittering of the birds, the rhythmic sough of the swaying tree-tops and the soft babbling of the stream somewhere near at hand. Iwan moved on warily. Then the ground squelched underfoot, a little bay opened among the reeds, and clear water lapped softly on the bank.

He lay down on his stomach, and plunged his hot perspiring face in the caressing waves. The water was red and transparent. Queer black creatures were squirming in the red sand, but the water was clean and cold. Iwan drank greedily, closing his eyes, and taking great gulps that hurt his chest. The water trickled down his neck, ran in a thin stream on to his shirt, soaked the locks of hair that hung over his face. He drank till his thirst was quenched, feeling an indescribable relief, an almost animal joy.

At length he raised his head and took in whatever could be glimpsed through the trees.

The river was a narrow, shining strip. The opposite bank was so near that it seemed within arm's reach. There, too, was a covert of tall, swaying reeds, a graceful, singing grove. Little brown ducks dived in and out of the reeds; Iwan could see their heads, and the gleam of the round eyes as they shot watchful, unerring glances at the water. They went on with their carefree hunting so fearlessly that Iwan was reassured and breathed more freely. At that moment everything looked simple and within reach. The goal lay but a few steps away. The long journey was over. He suddenly felt an urge to go now, without waiting for the night. Who could be about now? Who could be lying in wait for him in this green wilderness, guarded by an impenetrable wall of reeds and virgin woods, encircled by a limitless bog? But he resisted the temptation. He would do as the guide had advised him. Iwan moved away from the water. He drew a lump of bread from his bosom and bit a piece off, chewing it slowly and thoroughly so that it would last the longer.

The water darkened. Evening came down slowly and, lulled by the gentle murmur of trees and water, Iwan fell into a doze.

But soon he was roused by the chill air rising from the river and the earth. It was almost dark now. The water gleamed like tin here and there in the light shed by the stars that could not be seen for the dark trees. A light breeze, hardly more than a breath, a mysterious whisper that set one a-tremble, passed through the forest. The high reeds sighed and whispered, hastening to impart to one another the secrets known to them alone. A dry twig crackled somewhere. There was a stir in the bushes, a sound like a sniff. The grove had come to life at eventide, it called with a thousand voices, sighed with a thousand breaths, rang with the echoes of a thousand footsteps. Iwan set up and peered into the darkness. There was nothing to be seen, only the water and the woods, living a life of their own. Something splashed and gurgled fussily at the very edge of the river; some tiny creature glided with a faint plop from the shore to the waves; a bird awoke on a bough and, blinded by the darkness, flapped its wings. An owl hooted in the distance, and the mournful piercing notes echoed in ever-widening circles of sound, filling earth and sky with a monotonous, melodious complaint. It was as though the woods and water and the earth itself were moaning, sighing, sobbing in the darkness of the night. The hoot of the owl was eerie and unnatural and struck awe to the heart. For the first time the thought of the frontier brought terror. Moving the reeds soundlessly aside, he stole out on to the shore. The water had the dull sheen of tin and the blackness of pitch. He tried the depth, it was shallow enough. Then he rolled his trousers up above his knees, and setting his teeth, which were chattering with sudden terror, he stepped into the water.

The cold went through him. The current was swift, the waves lapped

themselves about his bare calves like living things, like chilly slippery snakes. Suddenly the sandy bed fell from under his feet, and, with a loud splash, he was up to the knees, floundering to find a footing. He stood stock still, his heart thumping hard.

But there was no cause for alarm. The owl hooted as before, filling the whole world from earth to sky with its hopeless plaint, and the reeds murmured softly. Iwan went on ahead, feeling his way. Now he was up to the waist in water. At last the bed of the stream rose gradually, and he could distinguish the dark reeds of the opposite shore. Iwan reached out and pulled himself up by his hands. The river was crossed. Somewhere hereabouts ran the border, he must have reached the place he sought . . .

Then the song of the night was riven by a new sound that died almost as soon as it was born. With a creak and a groan a tree crashed down in the darkness; Iwan could hear the crack of the trunk, the swish of the down-sweeping branches, and at last, the thunderous echo of the fall. He could not tell whereabouts it had happened. He stood there, stiff with icy terror.

But silence came down once more and the woods sang their quiet song. Something stirred and rustled over the water, a bough creaked, and again a wakened bird flapped its wings. A fitchew scuttled along a branch of oak, or a marten crept stealthily up to a nest.

Iwan tried to determine the direction to take. He had been told to go straight ahead, but what could really be called "straight ahead?" The river curved in a loop and after a few paces, Iwan was completely bewildered. Scarcely daring to breathe, he stood for a long time before deciding to go farther. When he did, the reeds swept his face, his feet sank in a clinging mass of ground plants. Groping for a path, his foot slithered on liquid mud. He bent down and pawed the ground, and his fingers made out deep tracks made by hooves. It was evident that the beasts of the forest had come here to drink. He followed the track beaten by the wild boar and the elk in the matted vegetation of the thicket.

The path climbed, then sloped gradually downwards. A twig snapped and brought him to an involuntary standstill.

At that moment a shot rang out a little way off. It burst like a thunder-clap into the night, woke a hundred echoes, spread through the trees in a widening circle and died away at last in a low rumbling.

Iwan sat down on the ground. Beads of perspiration stood out on his forehead. He huddled down on the woodland path, feeling under his limp fingers the tracks, now set and hard as metal, of the wild beasts.

The birds stirred and fluttered their wings. From right overhead came a piercing cry and through the darkness of the interlacing boughs wings beat helplessly. Footsteps sounded in the reeds. Iwan shrank back, and some ponderous creature thudded past him. Scenting a man, a huge wild boar rushed into the grove with grunts of alarm. Then hundreds of feet stamped in confusion. A second report was followed by a wild shriek close at hand. Iwan sprang to his feet. Now he paid no heed to the noise he made or to anything. He ran headlong. The twigs and brushwood crackled under his feet, branches slashed his face, invisible briers caught like clutching fingers at his clothing. He tore on like a madman, while the shots pursued him and the wood resounded with an inhuman agonized moan.

The bushes were thinning out. The dense wall of trees opened.

Far and wide stretched a level plain, in the light of the rising moon a dim, mysterious blue, broken by brief black shadows, wreathed with white mist that the night-breeze tore. The plain slumbered like some great shoreless sea.

But in the depths of the woods the wild panic-stricken clamor went on and howls of terror ended abruptly in echoing reports. A confusion of voices, shrieks and calls filled the gloom beyond the barrier of trees.

Iwan looked round. Here the woods formed a kind of island, right and left of which lay bare wastes. Out in these open spaces silvered by the moon he felt he must be plainly visible from there. An eye he could not see might be watching from the shadow of the trees, the barrel of a revolver he could not see might take aim at him. But the plain stretched away to tranquil distances, while the woods at his back rang with shots and cries of mortal agony. There was no choice.

So he went on, hunching his shoulders up to his ears and listening attentively. He was walking quickly, when the ground suddenly quaked under his feet and he noticed the dwarf birches and the glossy leaves of the huckleberry. A sickening, clinging horror came over him, but he kept steadily on. The quaking became more noticeable, water gurgled nearby; a ghostly blue moon was reflected in the yawning depths of a pool, a bog-hole. Another step and his foot sank. He hastily pulled it out, and tried to turn back. But he could not find the way by which he had come. On every hand the moving bog sucked and gurgled, and the sinister squelching could be heard. He stood there afraid to stir, but the gurgling did not cease and the level surface quivered more and more perceptibly. Little fountains of liquid, evil-smelling mud spurted in his face. He tore himself from the spot, made to jump on to a tussock overgrown with sedge, and sank to his knees.

He clenched his fists, feeling it cling to him, lull his senses, clutch him with powerful fingers, drag him down—this fathomless quagmire, this limitless swamp, this everlasting abyss. He had no longer the strength to stir his injured foot. Every instant he sank deeper, and his fate became more evident.

He stretched out his arms on either side of him; it would delay his sinking for a short time. But he felt at once the chill of the bog on the palms of his hands. Now he could get a close look at the surface, white in the moonlight. Tiny leaves and stiff blades of sour grass stood up before his eyes. A phantom moon shone in the pools and the crevices between the vegetation, and drops of dew trembled like glass globes on the stalks.

Iwan felt no fear, only a dull, aching exhaustion, the accumulated weariness of the past few weeks. His body rested and relaxed in the humidity of the swamp. A cold band bound his chest and pressed upon his heart, it was hard to breathe. The breadth of the plain and the cold moonlight, the pungent smell of the peat drugged him and enchained him. He stared before him with wide, dilated eyes. Here was the moonlight—white and chill and dreary, over all this immensity. The bog spread on every side, melting into a vaporous gloom that even the icy rays of the moon had no power to disperse. Heaviness and cold were all he felt; he was in a daze, as if after a terrible fit of drinking. He began to think of Sivka, his mare, and wonder if his wife had sold her after he had left. He remembered how he had first bought Sivka, and what a nice little mare she had been, and the way she had pranced along when he

rode her to water. He tried to imagine what she was doing now, where she was and in whose hands. And it shamed him to realize that he was thinking of neither his wife nor his children, but of his horse, at a moment like this. Yet his thoughts would keep returning to trifles, to insignificant little things. The wattle fence had fallen down after the first snow, would Marfa be able to mend it herself? The net had torn. . . . Oh, well, let it, there was no one left to go out fishing now . . .

The water whispered. Iwan tried to move his arms but they had stuck fast in the bog, in the clinging pitch of the quagmire stretching north and south. He strained his eyes into the distance, lost in the gloom, and noticed that the sky was paling in the east. The stars melted into the moonlight and though the bald planet still sailed on its broad, unbroken course, far away on the horizon a bar of light appeared. Iwan asked himself if he would live to see the sun rise—and again came the thoughts of Sivka, and home and the village, thoughts that were calm and even drowsy.

The sky was perceptibly lighter, the moon dimmer. The marshy plain was a dead and ghastly waste in the vague light of dawn. From below, from the surface of the bog, Iwan looked up at the slender trunks of the dwarf birches. They were gray in the cold air and the mists of early morning clung to their branches. There was no wind, so the mist dropped and trailed over the bog. Now he could make out the dew that hung thick on the grasses and covered the bog with a silvery veil. The drops trembled, the sedge dropped low under the burden of dew. The huckleberry leaves held tiny sparkling lakes in their green hollows.

The plain spread far, far away and the lighter it grew, the further it spread, further than the eye could reach, dismal beyond words. On every hand lay a bog no man could cross, a bog without beginning or end. Yet somewhere quite near ran the frontier of the country of which Petro Iwanczuk had once told him, a country where a peasant was a human creature and not a hunted beast. . . . But the bog would not let him pass it, held him fast now in a relentless grip.

Iwan's weary lids closed. Water was close, he felt the first touch of moisture on his chin. He was overcome by drowsiness, oppressed by a waking dream, a strange vision that terrified with its weird, unnatural images. Days near and distant came back to him, confused and interchanging in time and space. Human faces passed before him and left him unmoved. Not one quickened the beat of the heart weighed down by its intolerable burden. He took in the air feebly through his lips, in short whistling breaths. In that feverish drowsiness he forgot where he was and what was happening to him. The moments glided by, life glided by, and he did not know whose life it really was, a strange life belonging to some other man, or his own. And what was it—this life? How had it passed, what paths had it taken?

Suddenly he felt the cold band around his neck. He started, and opened his eyes. The heavy lids moved with an effort. The bog was up to his face, stretching out sticky feelers to it, seizing him by the throat, holding him in an icy grip.

The plain grew lighter now, the green of the birches shimmered and the dew sparkled like living silver. A rosy light flooded the skies, the moon hid. Rose-colored were the reflections in the water, the iridescent patches warmed in tone.

And suddenly Iwan was shaken

from head to foot. Before his mind's eye floated the lean, sunburnt face of Sergeant Ludzik, his fingers outspread on the snow—fingers that clutched convulsively at the snow in his death-agony; the wound on his head, the horrible crunch of the skull under the axe. He saw it all, sharply outlined, definite in form. Then the faces of Marfa and the children, and the house by the roadside, and everything—that day. The meadow, and Chorzyniak's round face; but most vivid was the crunch of the ax—he could hear it still. Iwan came to himself. He seemed to be seeing for the first time the boundless waste of bog and smelling the moldy peat. He gave a tremendous heave. He realized at last, with wild terror, that he was drowning.

He gave another heave. But his body was paralyzed and immobile. Despair choked him. In the woods there were people, surely they were still there! It did not matter who they were. At that moment they were simply people. He gathered all his strenghth and shouted.

A long-drawn-out groan, an animal howl, rose over the quagmire and died down, smothered by the clinging mud. Then a last hoarse croak. He was choking.

The limitless plain, the vast, level peat-bog lay steeped in a rosy radiance. The first low, slanting rays of the sun shed a soft gold through the mist. The tops of the dwarf birches caught fire and burst into flame, and the dew glittered like diamonds, scintillating in round rainbow drops.

Jadwiga went to the window and leaned out. It was a warm, dark, moonless night. The trees stood motionless, clearly outlined against the sky. The waxen flowers of the jasmine gave off their heavy fragrance just as they did at home. The night-mists wreathed low in the meadow, the river, and the alders on the banks. On the right lay the dark mass of the slumbering village, on the left her old home. And suddenly the tears welled up and overflowed. She did not sob nor moan, but the tears streamed silently down her face and the loose hair that hung over her nightgown. With the salty tears on her lips she whispered the words of an old, familiar song.

Where hast thou led me that I repine
This dreadful loneliness of mine . . .

The fresh loud voices of the girls singing on the bridge carried through the gloom, the song floated through the fog over the water, through the twilight of the alders, and the jasmine in the garden. Oh, if only she could jump out of the window, and run across the grass pearly with dew and cool to the feet, run down through the yard and the sweet-smelling meadow to the water, to the bridge, and take her place beside them, as she had done more than once before when she was young, in the old days before the *osadnik* had come to the village. If she could only stand beside Olena once again and see the thin face with its regular features, and trace in them a resemblance, a reminiscence of Petro's dear features; the grey eyes under the dark arching brows . . .

Sitting alone and forlorn,
Dying of longing and pain,
My heart will be bleeding and torn,
Recalling lost friends again.

"Recalling lost friends again . . ." came the echo from the night, a night of songs and music. The song ascended with a sound as clear as crystal, and vibrated, high and thin, in the sky.

"Recalling lost friends again . . ." whispered the lips wet with salt tears. Jadwiga fell on her knees

before the open window and leaned her face against the fresh-smelling newness of the frame. She wrung her weak hands helplessly. What have you done? Where are you, Jadwiga? And why are you here?

She thought of herself as another person, someone whom she knew quite well and who ought to be pitied, oh, deeply pitied . . . The smell of the jasmine, the golden glitter of the stars, the song of the night, flowed in at the open window and into her heart. And what from very shame had been kept hidden till now, lay exposed, the outward show was broken down, and the true face of disaster—with nothing to cover its brazen, cruel effrontery—was plain to her. Where was she to hide from it, where could she fly from herself?

All was quiet on the bridge now, the song had ceased. And in any case that road was closed to her forever. She had raised an impassable barrier, an invisible wall, between herself and the girls by the river. Yesterday's wedding in Wlucki had done it all. It meant the end of friendship.

Now it was she, Jadwiga, who set the big wolf-hound loose at night to run about the yard. It was she who helped to fasten cowsheds and barns with great padlocks. The end had come of the orchard with her affectionate dog Ubei, and the easy way of living with the doors left on the latch at night, so that even a child could open them. Now it was all different: there had to be a wolf-hound and a great heavy lock between Jadwiga and the village.

The silence outside the window was broken again by the clear ringing voices. Now it was a mournful melody, distant yet close and familiar, piercing the heart.

I'm used to my lonely cell,
I'm used to the lock on the door.

An irresistible force moved the quivering lips to repeat the words and join in the distant song.

I'm used to the bars of my prison,
I'm used to the prison fare. . . .

Of whom were they thinking—the girls on the bridge? Of whom was Olena Iwanczuk thinking? Of Petro, or of Sasha, who are languishing behind prison bars?

She stared vacantly into the night. Here and there the grasses shimmered and the starry jasmine gleamed white through the darkness. An owl hooted complainingly as it circled over the knoll, and the sound made Jadwiga start. The air was so still that the eerie mournful note hung in it awhile before it died away where the distant alders were wrapped in the river-mists. The song of the girls was heard no more over the river. It was late. They must have gone home to the village. Though the night was warm, Jadwiga suddenly shuddered with biting cold. Her feet were numb, her knees were stiff and aching. But she did not think of getting up. At that moment she had not even sufficient strength of will to creep into bed and cover herself with the bedclothes. Still, she would have to do it in the end . . . in the end . . .

She strained her ears. Perhaps they would sing something else, perhaps she would hear again the melody that tore at her heart-strings. A passionate yearning came over her to hear the voices from the water once more, to feel the night alive with song. It would be a good omen, she told herself, if they would sing just once more. "A good omen," her lips twisted in a bitter little smile. What good could it promise her? What could await her in the future? She listened again. Only the piercing cry of the owl broke the stillness.

"Woe, woe! Go, go!"

But where was she to go? All roads were closed to her—the road to the village and the road to the river, and as for the road home, there was no use going there; she had to stay here for the rest of her life.

Far away in the darkness a feeble light flickered. It was somewhere in the marshes—a fire burning before a fisherman's shelter of boughs and reeds. It glimmered low, above the ground. The fishers were usually up and about at this time of night; it was all as it had always been, and would always be.

Jadwiga knew that if she had gone in that direction, she would have met old friends, seen red firelight falling on brown faces weathered by sun and wind, withered by hunger—the hunger of summer before the meager harvest was gathered in and the hunger of winter after this was exhausted. Quiet, unchanging faces they were—these muzhik faces. There was Kuzma, who had come back from beyond Berlin to his bit of land, and fought tooth and nail to rescue it from the barbed wire and the scales of the shells. There was Makar, the owner of the fishing net which was forever tearing—it had been given him by Karwowski, the engineer who had contracted for the fish. And there were all of them, all the people who had been born on that soil, who had redeemed it with hunger, sweat, tears and death, people who were bound to it forever, whose faces had taken on the very color of it, and whose eyes held the quietness of it. But now between them and her lay an invisible but insuperable barrier—her marriage to Chorzyniak in the Catholic chapel at Wlucki, between them and her stood Chorzyniak the Polish settler, and as Stefek had said, these peasants could be either friends or enemies, but there could be no middle course. She had ceased to be their friend. She had chosen another road, another destiny. She was not like they were, trees growing firmly in the ground, sending far down into the barren soil roots so strong and tenacious that no power on earth could tear them or burn them out. Even if the branches were lopped off, the trunks wounded and hacked, the leaves plucked, the sunlight kept away from them, the trees would still live, because they grew out of the solid earth, they were kin to the earth and belonged to it, and drew from it their mysterious and inexhaustible strength. But she was like a forlorn leaf in the wind, a fallen leaf fading in the chill autumn air and sick with longing for its own tree and its own place in the free air.

Chorzyniak turned in the bed, gave a much louder snore, and woke up.

"Jadwiga," he murmured, half asleep.

She jumped up as though she had been caught red-handed in some dreadful crime. Her heart beat fast. She slipped cautiously under the rough blanket, but her husband was already fast asleep again. She stretched herself out stiff at the very edge, afraid to move. She could feel the pleasant warmth of the bed. Her weary legs ached. How he snored—this man who was lying beside her! "How could anybody ever get used to this?" she thought to herself.

Then a slight sound outside caught her ear. It came again and broke off as though swept to the ground. Then timidly, cautiously, trying its strength, it began once more. And at length the song—first the throaty warble, then the silvery chime, the cascade of trills, the crystal-clear melody threaded with sighs. It was the nightingale.

Jadwiga lay still as death. The jasmine-scented gloom vibrated

with the nightingale's song. And once again everything was shattered—this time beyond redemption, and she was plunged into the abyss again. "Petro! Petro! Petro!" the quivering lips murmured, and the nightingale echoed:

"Petro! Petro! Petro!"

It was mocking her unhappiness, her treachery, herself—Jadwiga bought and sold, doomed to humiliation and ruin of her own free will, with her own knowledge and by her own thoughtlessness. How joyously and triumphantly the nightingale sang: "Petro! Petro! Petro!"

And Paraska's stern greenish eyes seemed to be looking at her out of the gloom with dislike and contempt—above all things, contempt.

But why should it be so? How had it come about?—Jadwiga shrank at the thought of her own faintheartedness, her pitiful cowardice; her heart was weighed down by the consciousness of her own immeasurable unhappiness and disgrace brought on by herself.

"Petro! Petro! Petro!" warbled the bird in the jasmine. The nightingale's song floated out triumphantly over the mist-veiled marshes, over the alders drowning in white vapor, over the eternal waters in the distance.

It ceased abruptly, broke off in the middle of a note, concluded with a high trill in a half-sung line. The night fell silent and the silence struck Jadwiga like a sudden startled cry. She came to. The shadow of the black cross of the frame of the second window, which was closed, was cast on the floor. It astonished her, for the moon had not yet risen and it was a long time till daybreak. She sat up in bed and looked down at the floor more attentively. Yes, it was a black cross on the boards. And—she opened her mouth to scream—the boards were a glowing pink.

Chorzyniak awoke. He came to himself in a moment and jumped out of bed. A sinister flickering dawn reddened the windows. With shaking hands he reached for his rifle. Jadwiga ran out after him; her teeth were chattering loud enough to be heard.

In the yard it was as light as day. The barn was blazing like a rick of dry straw. The flame rose in a tall, straight column, showering sparks. A second column rose at the right over the lake; there were no buildings there except Karwowski's office.

Jadwiga stood there turned to stone, her mouth open, trembling from head to foot. The night was black as pitch, the glare and heat of the flames dazzled the eyes.

Away on the hill where the sleeping village lay, people came out and stood on the threshold of their houses or barns or gathered in groups in the street. No one hurried to ring the church-bell and give the alarm. The bell was silent, the church was silent and the people standing in the darkness were silent. They stood staring moodily at the two pillars of flame ascending to the sky.

There was a dusky glitter in the waters of the lake, and wavelets rusty with the reflection of the flames were picked out here and there from the surrounding gloom. The black secret eyes of the bogholes smoldered, the swamps, the fathomless pools overgrown with tall reeds turned blood-red. Birds awoke in the tops of the alders and, dazzled and frightened by the gloom and glare, flapped helpless wings.

Under the black sky, over the black earth, the two pillars of flame rose like a cry of protest and indignation.

Translated by Antony Wixley

LEONID SOBOLEV

All's Well...

It was a fierce storm in January when the waters, forcibly roused from their early winter slumber, raged furiously.

Dense and heavy, shackled by frost, the water, set in motion by wind, was terrifying. It no longer resembled itself. Lively and flowing in the summer, it now moved in heavy rollers, interwoven, leaden-colored, like mercury. Bursting at the crests, the water did not foam white with the air it carried with it, but fell in solid masses like some strange metal bending under its own weight. And the blows of these heavy, tenacious masses contained tremendous power of destruction.

But there was nothing for them to destroy. The storm had been raging more than a day; and even at its inception, vessels had not dared leave their ports, while those caught at sea made for the nearest haven. That morning the storm reached its peak. And when, far off land, a submarine suddenly emerged on the surface, it was the only craft on the Baltic, from the ice-bound Gulf of Bothnia to the southern shores.

It was a small submarine, fondly called "baby" by Red sailors. It seemed infinitely small amidst the mountains of water, so small indeed that when she rose to the surface she was completely hidden in the crest of a wave. The crest broke tumbling away, and the vessel emerged like a chick from its shell. But the next instant, losing the support of the breaker at its side, it lurched sharply to starboard, slipping sideways into the yawning gulf between two rollers where it was swallowed up again at once by another. This last wave, having struck her at the beam, increasing the list, must have capsized her; she was gone a long time.

But soon the strong, stout metal shone again among the leaden, mercury-like waters. Now, with her trim prow, the little craft cut through the crest of the waves, and the furious might of the water could only spend itself along the narrow streamlined form of bow and conning tower. Now the seas

could only hamper the speed of the ship, flooding her with the cold, dense water, submerging both deck and conning tower. Scarcely had the tower emerged again, when the cover of the hatch was thrown open and a man climbed, or rather crawled out on deck. He hastily slammed the cover, rose to his feet, and found himself alone against the frenzied Baltic.

First he looked for the horizon. There was no horizon, merely a jagged line of water hills precluding the possibility of sighting any vessel. Then he removed the cork from the speaking tube and uttered several words. The submarine responded with a slight turn, cutting an oncoming wave. The water slipped along the deck, burst on the gun at the bow, spraying to the roof of the conning tower, drenching the man. He shivered, drew the top of his fur-lined hat over his neck. Again he bent over the speaking tube. At once there was a muffled roar of engines; a whisp of blue smoke appeared behind the conning tower and was instantly snatched away by the wind. This meant that within the vessel the diesel engines now replaced the exhausted electric motors. It also meant life-giving current for the batteries deplenished of their energy in the course of the long underwater voyage. Electric energy was being accumulated, the energy that gives the submarine its fighting strength, and without which it becomes a cumbersome and useless surface vessel. This energy spelled victory over sea and storm.

And perhaps, that was why the man made his way to the tiny mast and hoisted the flag. The flag was small, wet, and the red star on it had faded, like its hammer and sickle. But this, the battle standard of the country which had sent the submarine on its difficult and dangerous mission, was the only flag on the vast stretches of the Baltic; it fluttered bravely in the fierce January storm which drove the big ships to cover. No one but the commander himself could see the flag. But perhaps, in those long hours he will have to spend on the bridge guarding the ship from the raging storm and possible enemies, it was essential for him, more than anything else, to see the flag fly overhead. He kept close to the conning tower, seeking the driest and most comfortable spot, and once again he changed the course, heading North as much as the direction of the waves allowed.

At first he felt rather warm. This was not due to the clothes he had piled on to meet the forty-degrees frost nor to his prolonged stay in the submarine after the unsuccessful attempt to rise to the surface. Within the submarine it was rather cool. For a long time the vessel had been evading the storm in the calm depths, and her thin metal sides had absorbed their steady cold. The vessel was then heading North, and the storm was her best ally. For it had most likely driven to harbor all anti-submarine vessels and destroyers, leaving the passageway free. Besides, the enemy, hidden deep in his lair, would never think it feasible for a submarine to cross the sea in this storm; her appearance would be totally unexpected . . . And as long as the batteries could furnish power, the submarine headed North, deep below the waves, rolled by her ally, the storm. But no sooner did she rise to the surface than the ally turned enemy.

A submarine rising to the surface in a storm is like a blindfolded man attempting to mount a bucking horse; an instant before rising, the craft loses stability and any wave may capsize her. To avoid this she must meet the waves when rising. But it is impossible to guess

the direction of the swell when under water.

And so it was when the ship made her first attempt to come to the surface. Only after righting the boat from her deadly list, did the commander realize that he felt uncomfortably hot, but there was no reason to discard the extra clothing. The list of the ship indicated the direction of the swell, and she now had to put about for a second try. That is why, during the first minutes on deck, the commander was oblivious of the chilling wind and icy spray. The little craft tossed about the waves, dancing on their crests; water flooded the deck and rolled off again reluctantly, thickening like glue in the cold air. A thin, at first imperceptible, coat of ice soon covered the metal, the woodwork, as well as the man in his leather coat.

The commander did not notice it at first. His attention was riveted on the rollers rising in front of the bow. Rushing together, these rollers would break the rhythm of the waves, changing their course. At times a mountainous wave—the so-called "big roller"—would menace the vessel with its overhanging crest. Then the commander would save both ship and himself; the ship—by reducing speed, himself—by ducking for shelter behind the tower. The crest would burst on the deck, tumble over the tower, and for a second or two, the commander would find himself in a water grotto. Next, the water would recede to the stern and an icy shower would pour down his back from the top of the tower.

At times the wave proved shorter than he figured. The submarine would then be shaken by a mighty blow, and at times through the roar of the waters came the crash of broken railing and twisted platings. But the waters would recede again and the steady rumble of the diesels assured him that "all's well."

All this was monotonous, so unlike the sharp tenseness of battle. But this was the battle, the beginning of it; the storm would enable the craft to slip through the passage easier. Yet one had to come there in full fighting trim, with batteries fully charged.

Now the cold became more and more telling. His feet suffered most; his felt boots and socks were soaked wet. He tried to jig. The felt boots splashed about, water oozing out of them, his body warmed a bit, but there was no relief to his feet. Once again through the speaking tube he inquired about the charging batteries. Down below, the commissar told him he would have to stay on deck as long as he did already and offered to take his place or send up the mate. To this the commander retorted that it was a mean wave he was fighting and that he had no intention of leaving. The commissar then inquired about the cold. The reply was brief but strongly worded. The commissar fell silent for a moment, and asked: "How're your ears?" The commander ran his hand down his hat and noticing with surprise that hat and collar had frozen together forming an ice hood, answered "alright." At this point a wave suddenly struck the vessel on the beam. The commander just managed to bark "starboard your wheel!" then plugged the speaking tube to prevent the water from dowsing the commissar.

When the roller passed, the commander noticed that the waves had changed their direction. By compass he established that they were now heading East. He stubbornly turned the ship to its course, North. But the waves began to pound and toss the ship about, and finally he had to give in and put about to meet the swell. This spoiled his

mood and his feet began to freeze badly.

The storm was carrying the ship away from its course, and one could evade this only deep below water. For this, however, there was not enough current as yet. The commander blew into the speaking tube, wishing to relate his troubles to the commissar, but the mate replied reporting that the commissar was busy; was in fact cutting his blanket into strips. The commander asked in surprise, whether he was alright and the mate assured him that the commissar was well and cheerful in fact. By this time the commander was getting ready to swear but the commissar himself came over to the speaking tube. He asked the commander to pick a moment when the deck would be clear of water, open the hatch and thrust one of his feet in.

The odor of hot oil came from the open hatch. The commander felt his boot and sock being pulled off. Now someone's strong hands were massaging his numb toes with something burning hot. The foot was then hurriedly wrapped in dry and rough fabric and a tight felt boot pulled over it. Then he was asked for the other foot.

In dry felt boots the storm no longer seemed so dreadful. Turning about, the commander peered from his ice hood at the sea and ship. The waves were driving her more and more eastward, the boat was assuming a strange shape before his very eyes. The gun at the bow still retained its general form, but seemed to grow in size, as though another polished cover had been placed over it. The twisted railing, bent into odd shapes by the waves, grew into huge ice mushrooms. Tremendous icicles hung from the tower and the periscopes were twice their size. Even the flag no longer fluttered over the commander's head; it hung suspended, an oddly shaped piece of ice, but the red star still glittered in its corner.

It seemed as though water and cold had conspired to prevent the submarine from charging her batteries, were bent on driving her under. Only there, where the temperature was forty degrees warmer, would the ice gradually melt, freeing the vessel from the dangerous load. But this would mean that the charging of the batteries essential for the attack would have to be discontinued, and the commander could not agree to this.

He continued to head the ship into the oncoming swell, bitterly noting how far he was being driven off his course. Were it not for this, all would be well, as the main problem had been solved; every ten or fifteen minutes, the speaking tube whistled and a cheerful voice would call from below: "Comrade commander, open the hatch, here they come, hot and toasted!" And then his feet would be enveloped in the pleasant heat. This was the commissar's warm blanket or, rather, strips of it. They were being dried over an electric stove which had to be skilfully balanced in the heavy pitch to avoid a fire. The time was too short for the boots to dry. They felt like wet hot compresses which grew cold just about the time the cheerful voice below would again call: "Comrade commander, here they come, hot ones!"

Some hours later the commander asked for alcohol, lots of it. The mate sent up a wine glass. But the commander asked for a full tea glass. "Right'o" was the mate's surprised reply.

When the batteries had been fully charged, the commissar was due for a surprise. He reported "all's well" and suggested that it was possible to submerge. The commander's astonishing reply was that he was not going to submerge

the vessel but would head due North, directly for the passageway. The commissar promptly inquired if the commander was all right. The commander assured him that he was well and cheerful in fact, warm, and heating the boots had been a grand idea though what a pity to cut up such a fine blanket, and . . . could he have another glass of alcohol?

The commissar angrily replied: that was enough, he was coming on deck himself right away . . . He stuffed the whistle back into the speaking tube, and made for the ladder though the whistle was shrilly calling for him.

Here he had to wait for quite a while before the commander opened the hatch for him. Then, through streams of water rolling off the bridge, upon which a wave had just broken, he came on deck, took stock of the sea, the storm and his commander. The latter's red face peered from his ice hood as he smilingly pointed to the waves and the compass.

Somewhere in the middle of the continent the center of low pressure had shifted and the cold masses of air tearing across the Baltic had changed their direction, driving the waves before them. Should the craft now head north the swell would be directly behind her, and the wind would be sure to add two or three knots to her speed.

All but one thing was clear and the commissar wanted to ask about it, but noticing the periscope he held his tongue. The periscope's precious glass eye was free of ice, while the wind wafted a faint smell of alcohol from it.

"All's well with you, I see," the commissar said, lifting the hatch cover, "you better come down for a bite."

"Baby" was forging ahead, her icebound keel pitching heavily and the gun at her bow now resembled a small elephant with its trunk stuck to the deck; the ship dived into the waves rising to their crest. The ship resembled an iceberg, but it was heading North, due North!

Translated by Leo Lempert

The submarine — *Painting by G. Nisski*

CESAR ARCONADA

Rio Tajo

EXCERPTS

The author of *Rio Tajo* (Tagus River), Cesar Muñoz Arconada, was born in 1900, and is one of the leading representatives of the literature of Republican Spain. A member of the Spanish Communist Party since 1930, Arconada was one of the organizers of the first Association of Spanish Revolutionary Writers and Artists, and has contributed a great deal to the organization and leadership of the progressive literary movement in Republican Spain.

No less important is Arconada's revolutionary activity. During the second war for the liberty and independence of Spain (1936-1939), Arconada was active first in Asturias, then in Valencia and Barcelona.

Rio Tajo was written in 1937, and was awarded a prize during a nation-wide literary contest. The novel was first conceived as a long story, but later developed and grew into a heroic epic of the Spanish people. In theme *Rio Tajo* is a continuation of Arconada's preceding novels, *Turbines* (1930), *The Poor Against the Rich* (1933), and *Distribution of Land* (1935). In the first of these novels Arconada depicts the cruel life in a pre-revolutionary Spanish village, in which the reactionary elements are doing their utmost to resist progress. In the following two novels he describes the first, unsuccessful attempts of that village to do away with the enemies of the revolutionay Spanish peasantry (the landlord, the rich peasant, the priest and the gendarme). The hero of *Rio Tajo*, however, is the armed Spanish people that have already found its revolutionary path. In the story of Chaparrejo, an illiterate shepherd who becomes a commander of the people's republican army, and in the story of his sweetheart Flora, the writer shows the great educational force of the revolution.

Arconada is at present working on the second part of *Rio Tajo*, which describes the days of the "tragic exodus," then life in a concentration camp in France, and concludes with the return of the heroes to Spain in order to continue the struggle for emancipation there. The tentative title of this book is *Pyrenees*.

Arconada has also written several plays, poems, and a number of literary essays. His most recent plays are *The Little Gypsy of Madrid*, based on a story by Cervantes, and a one-acter, *The First of May in Spain*. His latest poems are about the Soviet Union and Stalin.

The evacuation took place on the following day. The enemy was concentrating his forces, and could at any moment be expected to advance on the town in order to recover the territory he had lost. One could not expose the people to the hazards of an attack, and still less leave them where barbarism would again work its fury upon them. And so, the evacuation was effected . . .

Very few people remained in the village, though no one was forced to leave. The families that chose to stay, stayed, the others left of their own free will. Almost everyone had decided to leave. Rather than fall again under the domination of the soldiery and barbarism, they preferred to leave behind everything, their homes, their lands, the village, and to march on to some other place, not knowing whither, nor for how long. For war is the most tragic of all hazards to which a people may be subjected. The terrible pain of the exodus stung everyone's heart, but no one hesitated.

No longer were there the countless choices life offers men. There were but two alternatives: republican Spain or the territory occupied by the rebels. In the one—liberty, and rights. In the other—tyranny, outrage, assassination, barbarism. There could be no doubt, come whatever may, no matter how fearful the final outcome of the march nor whatever the hazards, they had to leave for that part of Spain which was free, for that territory where human life retained its dignity.

Shortly after dawn the people began preparing to leave. Rumors spread that the enemy was pressing hard upon republican lines of defense. Panic ensued, born of the fear of once again falling into the fearsome night of terror. People knocked loudly at their neighbors' doors.

"Hermogenes, Hermogenes! Get up!"

A man's scared face, the eyes still bleary with sleep, would appear at the small transom. "What's happened, comrade, what's happened?"

"Don't you know what's going on. They say that within a few hours the rebels will again be in possession of the town. We'll have to get out of here."

The door would open hastily, and Hermogenes, the father, the children, half-dressed, and their granddad would appear in the doorway, all downcast and nervous.

"Well, there's nothing we can do about it," the wife would say to the husband. "Get the donkeys ready so that the kiddies can ride, and off we go wherever the road takes us. We're not going to remain here."

The husband would hurriedly cinch the pack saddles on the two small donkeys. They were old and worn out. Immediately a host of problems would come up, for the two old donkeys could not possibly carry an entire household away.

"We ought to take at least a

mattress," the husband would say. "We don't know where we may have to sleep."

To the wife one matress seemed insufficient.

"If we could only take the other mattress as well—it's a pity to leave it to those rebels; the kiddies could sleep on it."

"We'll see whether it can't be done. You go ahead and tie them up with a rope."

"And what about clothes? Yes, we shall have to take some clothes . . . and some pots and pans from the kitchen; and the bread—isn't there room for it in the saddle bags? Who knows whether we shall find something to eat out there."

Hermogenes wanted to take along everything. There was not a thing but that was useful, that might be required, for they did not know what the morrow had in store for them.

"And what about the rabbits? Do you think we are going to leave the rabbits to be eaten by the rebels? Just fetch them a blow behind the ears, and we shall also take them along."

"I'll wring the chickens' necks."

And thus—in all houses, all homes, all streets. Those that had a cart, yoked up the oxen and loaded it with all sorts of things, put the little ones among the bedding and started out. Those that had neither cart nor donkey, set out on foot, the husband carrying the bedding roll on his back, the wife with a bundle of clothes, the little ones crying, clinging to their mother's skirt.

"These kiddies could climb up there on your cart, Uncle Quico. The poor things are tired."

"Alright, let them climb up here," the owner of the cart would say. "And if there is room for it, put the bedding there as well. We've got to help one another now."

That is the way it was. The petty animosities, the hard feelings between neighbors had disappeared. All fraternized under the stress of a calamity that befell them all, of a common fate brought about by the war which had united them, driving them like nomads along roads. Gone was their petty selfishness, their individualism, their reticence. Each was the comrade of all, and all helped one another and drew closer, as a flock of sheep sensing danger.

Some women carried roosters and chickens in their hands. Others were followed by bleating goats. Some men drove along three or four pigs that persisted in stopping at every mud-hole along the way.

The town druggist had escaped death once before, but he did not want to repeat the experience again. Clothes and bedding were being loaded in an old automobile that had been requisitioned. Flora was helping them. She was not worried. She retained her usual optimism and good humor.

"There's nothing to worry about, silly," she said to her sister. "This is war. What if you do have to go elsewhere? You just go, and that's all there's to it. We'll win the war, and then you'll return."

But for her sister this was a terrible ordeal, for she was a typical bourgeois dame. Workers are burdened with children, but with nothing else. As regards the rest their things are worth only a trifle. Moreover, adversity is not something new for the workers, something that suddenly looms upon them like a cyclone. Pain and adversity have molded their lives, and their spirit is as hard as their muscles. But not so the placid druggist's wife, who had led an easy-going, pleasurefull life. For her the world was crumbling to bits before her eyes.

Ah, to leave behind these little niceties and comforts of the home, the security, the mode of life she was used to. So many things, so many . .

Flora was persuading her brother-in-law to take along the most important drugs in his stock.

"You must take along everything that could be used in the war," she said, and then added laughing: "Leave them the poisons that they may die foaming at the mouth."

When practically everything had been loaded, and they were about to set out, Flora came out of the house with a linnet in a cage.

"And were you really going to leave my bird behind, to be turned a rebel? What a shame!"

"What ideas you do have, Flora," retorted her sister ill-humoredly. "Where are we going to put him, look at the way the car is loaded. And, besides, we don't even know where we're going, nor what's to become of us. . . . What a time you found to worry about a bird! We've got enough to do worrying about ourselves. I am leaving my cat behind."

"Come on, Fernando. Don't you object. Take the bird for me. I'll come and fetch him just as soon as I can, that is when I'll have found out your whereabouts. He's a keepsake, and one should hold on to keepsakes."

"Alright, then," agreed the brother-in-law. "Let's see if we can place it here . . ." and he placed the cage between a tub and a bundle of clothes.

Gregorio, the tanner, was also helping his wife get ready to take to the road. She and their ten-year-old boy were going to ride their mule. They were going to Navalucillos where they had relatives. They were taking along only their blankets and the saddle-bags full of clothes.

"Where did you put those pamphlets of mine?" asked Gregorio.

"I put them in one of the drawers."

Gregorio went in to get them. They were Communist pamphlets, newspaper clippings, a biography of Lenin, a portrait of Stalin. He came back with all of this and put them all in his knapsack. "Nowadays, you know, everyone from Chaparrejo down the line has taken to study. And I don't want to be the least of the lot. I want to see if I can educate myself in order to better serve the cause."

His wife and child started off.

It was a cold morning. The mountains were covered with mist. It must have been snowing up on the mountain tops, for lower down a persistent drizzle came out of a lowering autumn sky. The people, with blankets over their heads, to shield them from the rain, trekked along in their carts, on donkey back, or on foot. It was a long, sorrowful caravan. It was the war.

Nobody sang. Everyone looked dejected. They were leaving the town with an ache in their hearts. The caravan wended its way in silence to the bottom land, leaving behind them their beloved mountains. From out of the blankets peeped the smudged faces of the children, the tangled locks of the women, the wrinkles of the old, the downcast eyes of the men. The carts clattered and swayed along the ruts. The oxen, indifferent to everything, plodded along at their slow pace. The dogs trotted about along the edge of the road. The goats bleated plaintively for the freedom of the upland pastures. Those who had brought their pigs along, had to walk behind them, prodding them with a long pole to keep them from straying. Grunting, with ears drooping, the porkers ambled along, stopping here and there to root the soil with their snouts.

Spanish refugees

On and on marched the people in silence under the cold rain. Ahead was the leaden narrow horizon. Behind them—the war that trod on their heels. Behind them—barbarism. Not a step backward. Forward, towards the free land. It was an ordeal, but no one lost courage, for no one had lost his faith.

Children would run out of poor houses scattered along the road, and watch the caravan go by. Raising their fists, they would cry:

"Salud!"

And then their elders would follow:

"Salud!"

The refugees would smile in reply, and answer in similar fashion. It was the faith in victory which was transmitted from one to another. The word which caused the people raise their fists aloft throughout the route, was not the simple greeting of normal times. This one word of two syllables expressed everything. It symbolized the fraternal unity of people who held the same ideals. It was a pledge to sustain the faith, and a readiness to march on in closed ranks.

The children would lift their heads up from under the blankets and smile, raising their fists:

"Salud!"

Everywhere, in all the places, here and yonder, the same syllables on the lips:

"Salud, camaradas! Salud!"

This greeting, which sounded all along the roads in all the towns and villages, reflected a great optimism and an undying faith in victory. It mirrored the solidarity which united all these fists in one single threat, and the hearts in one single surge:

"Salud!"

"Salud!"

Still lame, with the wound in his leg unhealed yet, Chaparrejo kept on fighting day after day at the head of his battalion. His superiors knew that his was the bravest battalion, and always sent

it to the most dangerous places. Many fell on the dry lands of the plain between the olive trees that stood with their fruit ungathered. But that stopped no one. The ideal was worth more than one life, more than a hundred lives, more than any number of lives. The best fighters of the people died because they loved life!

The Battalion of the Mountain Summits took part in many battles. The leadership relied upon it, as it was known that if the men of this battalion were in retreat it was either by order of their superiors or because they had run out of ammunition: under no circumstances did they lose courage; even in the most critical moments they retained their spirit and would come through with flying colors. Lieutenant Puga had taught the militiamen the main essentials of military technique and this was an advantage. The militiamen did not hold him in any great favor, they called him *El Señorito*. And it must be said that he loved to show off with his cuffs, his insignia and his riding crop. At every step he would shout at them, as if they were in the barracks of the old army. "You're a pack of brutes. It's impossible to make anything of you. It can't be done. I am accustomed to be obeyed, and not to have everyone do as he pleases. This is an army of madmen who will make us lose the war! There is plenty of 'comrade-this' and 'comrade-that,' but nobody obeys, one does not know who is in command, who is supposed to give orders, and who is to carry them out. What a mess, 'gentlemen-comrades!' Christ himself couldn't make head or tail of it."

The militiamen were disgusted with this lieutenant, who, being an old service man, found everything amiss. But inasmuch as Chaparrejo and Gregorio trusted him they did not dare to dispute with him. For all this he had taught them many things they had not known before. The artillery men had learned to handle their guns. All had learned to operate a machine-gun. When they captured a trench mortar from the enemy, he taught them how to fire it. They now knew how to advance, how to attack a trench, how to deploy in line of skirmishers and how best to effect a retreat. The old service man was a "repulsive *señorito*" who could not cast off the old service routine habits and adapt himself to the actual situation, and yet he taught them many useful things which Chaparrejo was the first to learn.

One day the lieutenant appeared before Chaparrejo.

"I've orders here from the command that we advance immediately on the right flank of the highway. Here's the written order. We must remain on the highway, despite all enemy attacks."

Chaparrejo took the order, read it and put it away.

"All right, let's get ready for the march."

Tollin had learned to blow the bugle. The order was given to Tollin, and soon the assembly call resounded on the barrack square. Shortly afterwards the men left for the front. Along the way the lieutenant explained to Chaparrejo and Gregorio, to the captains and the lieutenants how the operation was to be executed.

"Other battalions are advancing along the road. Our mission is to protect them from the right flank. The forces that advance along the highway will endeavor to reach the bridge at Alberche, to destroy it and form there a line of defense. We have to place ourselves between the railroad and the highway and quarry among cliffs."

Shortly afterwards they arrived at the point where the highway and railroad met. There, a little to the left, could be seen the quarry and a small string of derailed dump cars. They entrenched themselves in the pits. Scarcely a noise was heard. The mist which had hung low was lifting like a curtain from the nearby streams and the rays of the sun now broke through tree branches. In the distance, up in the mountain facing Rio Tajo, one could hear shots and continuous discharges. The men took cover in the few uneven places. Chaparrejo, Gregorio and several others went out on a reconnoitering patrol up to the Alberche River, to the railroad bridge, without encountering the enemy.

"If we had only brought along dynamite, I would go there alone and blow up the bridge," said Chaparrejo.

They then returned to the quarry. They waited and waited for the forces that were supposed to advance along the highway but nobody came. The lieutenant kept on looking at his watch and seemed impatient. The tar on the highway shone in the sun, there wasn't the least sound to be heard. The underbrush was still moist with dew; the oak trees threw their shadow on the hard unplowed soil. They kept on waiting. The hours passed in interminable succession. It appeared that the war was not real, but only a figment of the imagination. Or nature is always so imposing that it seems impossible that there could be anything capable of destroying it.

Suddenly, when the long wait had relaxed vigilance, some mortars exploded near by. It was no doubt the enemy who was establishing contact. It was the duty of Chaparrejo's force to stop the enemy should he attempt to advance, and to keep the highway clear for the forces that were expected to arrive. The rifles carried on their dialogues. For a while the firing became general. The objective was still unknown. The men kept out of sight clinging to the ground like lizzards. The bullets whistled overhead. It was like a silly conversation at long range, for the two forces were out of sight of each other. They fired, we fired. Where, at whom? Shots were fired at shots. Very often the war is a duel between bullets and not men.

Suddenly the men were fired upon from the direction of the river. No one paid attention to it because very often an intense frontal fire spreads like a lighted fuse towards the flanks. Still, necessary precautions were taken. The guns over there were soon answered by other guns. The militiamen lying prone among the oaks and the brush replied to the enemy fire which came from the river. In the quarry Chaparrejo and Gregorio had set up a machine-gun among the dump cars and were waiting for the enemy to advance, just as soon as our forces should make their appearance on the highway. But these forces would not arrive, for all the impatient looks that the lieutenant cast at his wrist watch, as pistol in hand he crouched among the reeds.

After an interval of comparative mobility the circumstances allowed, the short trenchant note of a bugle call was heard above the firing, and immediately shouts were heard. The firing had become deafening and of a terrific concentration. It smelled of powder, and smoke could be seen rising everywhere. The enemy was advancing towards the highway. Chaparrejo fired his machine-gun shouting:

"Here, here! Don't let them advance this way."

The moors and the regulars could be seen dodging behind the young trees and throwing themselves prone

in their ample shadow. The firing became as concentrated as the trees from all directions. Chaparrejo, continuing to discharge his machine-gun, said to Gregorio:

"Go and have a look, Gregorio, it appears to me these bandits have surrounded us and that we are caught in a trap."

Gregorio wormed his way from the quarry to the Oak grove. The lieutenant from his station in the brush proposed that the battalion advance.

"But, comrade," remonstrated Gregorio, "how can one advance? Don't you see that it looks as if they have us surrounded?"

Gregorio had covered some two hundred yards within the circle of fire marked by exploding mortars and bullets falling thick. There wasn't the least doubt they were surrounded. Gregorio returned to report to Chaparrejo.

"Yes, Chaparrejo, the rebels have surrounded us."

"We must prevent a panic," replied Chaparrejo, continuing to discharge the machine-gun. "All of you will gradually retreat, while I stay behind with this machine-gun to cover your retreat. Transmit my orders to the men. Break through the enemy circle along the railway and make for the river. There are orchards and gardens there and you will be able to escape. I will catch up with you later."

Chaparrejo remained alone, blazing away with his machine-gun. The militiamen who were situated near the bank of the Alberche deployed immediately. Chaparrejo saw them run crouching to the left. Further in the distance sounded the explosion of hand grenades. They were forcing a breach in the circle. Chaparrejo looked around out of the corner of his eye, without losing sight of the oak groves where the enemy swarmed anxious to advance. He was calm. He had just emptied a clip and while he was replacing another his gun remained silent; an enemy group was advancing and he hadn't time to reload. He picked up his rifle and began to shoot. He shot one of the legionnaires closest to him who had taken shelter behind a rock. Three more were boldly approaching and then more and more. He held them back with hand grenades, and four or five of them fell to the ground. Cowed, the others threw themselves prone on the ground. Then Chaparrejo, having thrown several hand grenades in succession, shouldered the machine-gun and taking advantage of the smoke screen slipped away between the derailed dump cars until he'd cleared the other side of the quarry. Carrying a hand grenade in his hand, ready to launch it at the slightest attempt to block his way, he dodged from oak to oak.

Further down, the noise of the hand grenades had abated. He passed close to a group of Moors. Chaparrejo hid in the brush and then moved along limping, his unhealed wounds aching. He would alternately change from one side of the road to the other. There were a good many corpses on the ground. Some of the wounded writhed in pain, their hands soaked with blood covering their wounds. The enemy circle had been broken through here—that was clear. He went on among the corpses, trying to keep out of sight. He had no time to stop to look at them, to see who they were. There were quite a few men of his battalion stretched out upon the ground. Suddenly, he recognized one of them who lay there motionless, his head caught in the underbrush. It was Tremoente. He couldn't stop, to share with him memories of the Sierra; he put his hand on Tremoente's chest. The heart was

still. Hard luck, shepherd, hard luck, he thought, and went on rapidly, hiding among the trees.

He had already neared the bank of the Rio Tajo, where the vegetation was thicker and where it would be easier to hide until he could reach the first line. The machine gun pressed horribly against his shoulders, and his wounded leg pained. Suddenly he stopped behind some bushes. He heard low whispering. He drew near, crouching. With one hand he thrust aside a blackberry hedge and saw behind it three of the enemy. The soldiers had their guns on their shoulders. Everyone of their gestures, the expression of their faces betrayed anxiety. Chaparrejo jumped across the hedge, his hand grenade ready.

"Halt!" he shouted. "Throw these rifles to the ground if you don't want me to let loose this pineapple!"

The soldiers, dumfounded, trembling with fear, threw down their guns and, their arms raised, cried out:

"Comrade! Comrade! Don't throw it. We were just talking about escaping from the rebel camp!"

When Chaparrejo had come over to them, they embraced him, kissed him and pranced around like children for joy.

"At last we've met a comrade! At last!"

"You don't know what it's like. You can't imagine what it's like!" cried one of them beside himself with joy.

The soldiers wept. They relieved Chaparrejo of the machine-gun. Chaparrejo took charge of their rifles and they set out cautiously. One of them said:

"There is nothing to fear. They are no longer here. They left contented because they thought they had you encircled."

"This is one time they've been balked, those bastards. But I am sorry for the comrades; we have lost quite a number of them."

Along the road, the soldiers told Chaparrejo about themselves. Two of them came from La Mancha. They were peasants, members of the Socialist youth organization. They were in the military service in Seville and were forced to fight against their class brothers. The third, shorter in stature than the other two, was from Estremadura. He had been a mail carrier. He also had been mobilized. The three related horrors they had witnessed. Everything about them was expressive of the terror, of the nightmare they had been through. Now they were at peace. Theirs was a typical story. The sons of the people were mobilized forcibly and as soon as they had the chance, and luck was with them, they would leave the traitors and join the people. Just for that reason, because the people could not be relied on, the rebels first brought the Moors and the legion

comprised of criminals from all over the world, and these later cleared the way for the foreign forces.

Further down to the left of the advance posts, they came across detachments of the battalion that had taken part in today's battle. All were glad to see Chaparrejo come back again. They had thought escape was impossible for him. Gregorio, a little downcast, remarked:

"I still can't account for what happened. No matter how hard I try, I just don't understand."

"Quite a few have been killed, isn't that so? I have seen Tremoente. He was dead."

"Yes, some have fallen. We were completely encircled, and had to fight our way with our bayonets and knives. I've a small wound in the arm. I got it while I was carrying Tollin across my shoulders. If I hadn't grabbed him, the kid would have remained out there. I'll have my wound attended to just as soon as we are at our posts in the lines. And these?" he queried, pointing to the soldiers.

"These are three comrades who have left the enemy camp to join us."

"*Salud*, boys! Here you'll be with people and not among beasts."

Later on, Chaparrejo asked for Lieutenant Puga.

"I don't know, I saw him running like a madman. Didn't the queer egg want us to advance when we were already surrounded? This fellow knows as much about combat as I do of holding high mass."

"I suppose he didn't realize the situation," said Chaparrejo.

The battalion returned to its base, and Gregorio accompanied Chaparrejo and the three he had brought over to the manor house where headquarters was situated. While Gregorio was having his arm attended to, Chaparrejo asked one of the headquarters' staff angrily:

"But this morning's operation, just what would you call it? Is it right to send men to be slaughtered. Well, it lacked only a wolf's hair for the whole battalion to have remained there."

"Yes, but we countermanded the order," shouted another of the staff, seated near the telephone. "This is madness! I am positive that the countermand was given and that it was brought to me signed by . . . . I don't know whom. And now I've been searching again and again around here and cannot find it. I've inquired about the liaison man who took it, and he is not here, and I don't know where he may have gone. It is madness, madness! And that is why I say if the enemy does not reach Barcelona in one jump it is only because it does not suit his royal purpose. It just cannot go on that way. It just can't! It seems that there are traitors even under the table."

"Well," said Chaparrejo earnestly, "What I want is to have this cleared up and nothing else."

"Rest assured, Chaparrejo, this matter will be cleared up and very soon at that. I am interested in it myself. . . . But where can this signed countermand possibly be? I know I've seen it. I've had it here," he continued pounding and turning over the papers before him.

"*Salud*," said Chaparrejo, taking leave.

He went to the first-aid station to look for Gregorio. The wound in the latter's arm turned out to be a deep one. It had been wrapped in a strip of cloth ripped from his shirt. Now it was being tended to properly. A gauze bandage was applied and he was ready. The bone was not affected.

"Pshaw," said Gregorio, "that's nothing. What does hurt is that

our comrades have been lost out there so foolishly."

"Just think, if Flora had managed to come along with us. Lucky the order was issued so suddenly she hadn't time to find out."

"I still cannot get to the bottom of it, for all I think and think I just can't get to understand it."

Taking Gregorio by the arm, Chaparrejo whispered in his ear:

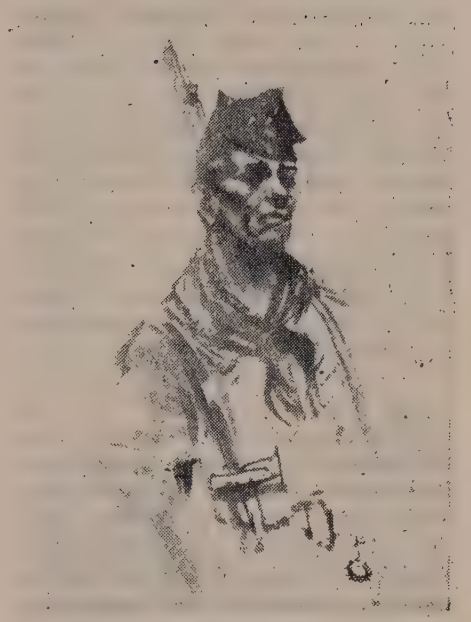
"I've just been told that the order had been countermanded and that the signed countermand can't be found. There is something queer about it!"

"Very much so," assented Gregorio.

After they had eaten, Gregorio and Chaparrejo returned to the battalion base, walking contentedly along the quiet banks of the Rio Tajo.

Rio Tajo! Rio Tajo!

You bring with you the rosemary and honey from the sylvan hills of Alcarria. And further down you appear on the Mancha, marking the boundary to a limitless grain field; then, as if frightened by the south and the blazing sun of the vineyards and wheat fields you turn tail and become a green lizzard among the gardens of Aranjuez. Further down your clear waters temper steel where they skirt the noble heights of Toledo. Flowing through the verdant plain and the pleasure gardens of Tirso you sing the romance of our classic literature. You meander among castles and vineyards along the Carpio and Monte Aragon. In Talavera level, luxuriant with groves and orchards, you widen your course before the beautiful Gredos barrier that separates old Castile from the new. Hugging the cliffs of lime you course by Calera and further down by the Puente del Arzobispo you hide among the evergreen oaks and beneath the cliffs of Estremadura to disappear in Portugal.



Rio Tajo! Rio Tajo!

Traitors are advancing upstream, seeking to get to the heart of Spain. You are loyal. For it is not in vain that you are the river of our tradition. And they who are insensible to any tradition, they who are the dregs, the slime of stagnant water are coming, oh, river, to defile, to profane, to rob you, to fashion of your course the deadly poniard with which to pierce the heart of Spain, our well-beloved land.

If you only could, loyal waters of the Tajo, you would rise turbulently in the mountains and form a barrier against the invaders. "Back!" you would say. "Who may you be that come razing everything to the ground, flooding the roads with blood, hanging the poor hungry people on the limbs of the evergreen oaks, violating women, assassinating children innocent as lambs. Who may you be, who make a sport of driving people into the bull-rings to be shot down in packs.

"Who may you be that cause children to abandon their mothers,

cause families to separate in terrified flight and abandon their homes and their towns? Who are you that cause the people to flee at your approach as they used to flee the plague in olden times? Who are you that strike such fear and horror that no one wants to fall under your sway of terror? Who are you that destroys even the most inoffensive lives that have taken root in the fold of the mountains?

"Who may you be?"

Rio Tajo! Rio Tajo!

Why cannot thy waters become mountainous, impassable, like a fury come out of the blue sky, barring the way, asking the violators: who may you be? Spaniards? Then little are you grieved by the ruin, by the sorrow of Spain, when thus you devastate it and cause it sorrow. Scant is the love you have for Spain when you destroy it. For never have I seen love that was barren like desert land or that ravaged the beloved land like a cyclone.

If it were love it would create instead of destroying.

You prate a great deal about Spain but little do you feel, for in order to feel one has to live united with the land as are the people from the day they are born until they die, and not like you who are ravens come to batten upon its body.

"Arise Spain!" you shout. But can ruins ever rise again? Can a destroyed city restore its former life? Can an ancient palace razed by bombing planes become a palace again? Can the ashes of books consumed in the libraries you have set on fire turn into books again? Or, perhaps, a beautiful canvas by Velasquez, Greco or Goya that you have destroyed turn again into a Velasquez, a Greco, a Goya? Can the lives, the thousands and thousands of young lives lost, can they come to life again? "Arise Spain!" No, for never has death been anything but death, nor ruins else but ruins. But what is certain, I think, is that you will manage to erect other walls on what was formerly the site of a library—the walls of a prison. On the ruin-strewn square you will manage to erect gallows. Above the ruins of an old palace of the Renaissance you will place blocks of stone and build barracks.

Capable only of besmearing canvas, your slip-slop painters will stretch their atrocities over the frames that once contained a Velasquez, a Greco, or a Goya, just as one may cover a pier glass with a kitchen cloth. All that you are apt to do, but to make Spain rise, to bring the dead to life again, to rebuild that which has been demolished, to restore what has been destroyed, to bring life to the buried corpses—all that you will never achieve nor will anybody else, for it is with ruins that unhappy Spain pays tribute to the terrible adversities of war.

Rio Tajo! Rio Tajo!

"Who may you be," reiterate its waters—I see Moors coming, five centuries since I last saw them. I see legions of adventurers recruited in the prisons throughout the world. I see the famished battalions of Portugal. Foreign planes piloted by aliens, carrying bombs, cross over my waters daily. Upon my banks I see cannon, tanks, and arms without number, all of them from abroad.

What else can you represent but ruin and invasion, what else but the forces that are killing Spain. What else do you from within and the others from abroad represent but aliens that have come to rob us of the riches we possess, of our common tongue, of our tradition and our age-old culture.

Back! Back! Invaders and trai-

tors! Let the famished go back to their own countries to possess themselves of the wealth that is hoarded by the rich. Let the slaves go back to their countries to wage the only just war, to dethrone the tyrants. Let the adventurers return to their countries and try to recover their conscience by the sweat of their brow. And the deluded Moors, let them awake and turn against their deceivers. Let them go back across the straits and turn their arms against those who duped them with the lure of riches.

Rio Tajo! Rio Tajo!

The holy river would thus conclude: I shall not be your river, a river of blood and betrayal, the river of aliens. I desire only to flow along my channel peaceably through the free Spanish land, to understand the speech spoken along my banks and to know what the people are working for. I want to belong to those that gather the olives, to be the river of the peasants who cultivate the vineyards, of the shepherds who drive their flocks down to my waters, of those who gather the acorns in the oak groves, of the millers' men, of the men who delve in the truck gardens. I want to be the river of those who work and not of those who only hunt and amuse themselves. I want to be of the people, to be with the people, and as hitherto, share their destiny.

Turn me free, invaders, you already seized part of my great length and I feel unbearable pain throughout my entire course for my body cannot suffer the division. I will not have my waters stained with the blood shed by your crimes. I will not have my waters mirror alien faces, I will not have the savages of Spain use my channel to work their destruction. I don't want to see as in the past the peasants eating herbs for sustenance, again the slaves of the gentry. I do not want to see the laborers exhausted with unceasing toil, the children naked, eating acorns for want of bread. I do not want to see again the beastly guards beat the people, the priests denouncing them. I do not want to see again the drones of landowners returning from the chase, and those who rose against oppression on their way to prison where they could not disturb the peace of the powerful.

Rio Tajo! Rio Tajo!

I desire the liberty of Spain, the happiness of Spain.

Rio Tajo! Rio Tajo!

Shaped like a bull-hide is Spain, the ancient land of shepherds. And when a shepherd drops his staff, and it stretches from West to East in the middle of the hide, its crook pointing to the source of the Rio Tajo, it marks the course of our glorious river sung by the greatest poets of the ages.

Translated from the Spanish by Victor Aronson

JOHANNES R. BECHER

Ballad of the Great Reckoning

The masters of the world were gathered in a ring
In silence tense—it was the day of reckoning.

And as they sat, day passed to night, and night to day,
While on the fields of battle slaughter held its sway.

Here charts and diagrams stared boldly from each wall,
And figures hastened to their masters' beck and call.

These figures spoke of steel, of petrol they did reek;
They spoke of ships and freights. The first of all to speak

Were figures eloquent of nickel and of tin:
Long-ciphered figures came a-marching in.

And grain, in all its golden glory, said its say.
Then power plants, and mines unlit by light of day.

And timber next spoke out and named its price,
Then wool, and cotton, maize and rye and rice.

Coal spoke at length—a weighty speech it was.
And so the hours from dawn to dawn did pass.

The powers of nature and of man did meet
That day their masters at the judgment seat.

* * *

Here charts and diagrams stared boldly from each wall.
But "holy fatherland" they did not quote at all.

Here war as "sacred duty" no one paused to stress.
Forgotten were "democracy" and "nations in distress."

Here, no advocate was found to name
Such things as honor, dignity or shame.

No "noble cause" here raised its stirring call—
Here price was named and paid—and that was all.

Here, heroism was not the subject of discourse—
Cold figures—cash and carry—was the course.

The masters of the world were gathered here—
The words they spoke were plain and frank and clear.

* * *

And as they sat, day passed to night and night to day
While on the field of battle slaughter held its sway.

And only arguments o'er copper, zinc and tin
From time to time would drown the battle din.

They argued over rubber soft, and metals hard and bright—
So towns and cities burst in flames and perished overnight.

Hot metal howled and whined, as through the air it dashed,
And steel met steel, as waves of tanks in mortal combat clashed.

And liquid flames of fire the trenches swept,
And sweeping on, to other trenches leapt.

Shells hailed on dugouts reenforced with hard cement,
As its last fight fought the surviving regiment.

The earth, blown to the skies, in its black leap
Let loose destruction, death—then settled in a heap.

Like snakes, the poison gases crawled amid the noise
Where ruined forts and crippled guns were broken toys.

On land and sea and under sea they fought.
Seas swallowed ships with human cargo fraught.

New armies rose and, led by frenzied bands,
Marched to meet their death in No-Man's land.

The masters of the world displayed their might that day—
And so the battle raged, and slaughter held its sway.

The masters of the world were gathered in a ring
In silence tense. It was the day of reckoning.

Their far-flung agents hastened to their side,
To see them once again the world divide.

The graves gave up their dead—from each and all
Four-ciphered numbers marched into the hall.

The seas gave up their dead, as did the ground—
Each corpse was booked as dollar, mark and pound.

Dead bodies hugged the barbed-wire fences, while at ease
The masters figured out the rates of agonies.

They counted on, indifferent to the slain,
As bursting bombs increased their gory gain.

Each anti-aircraft shot brought profits—more and more
Torpedoed ships went down, and profits rained galore.

The heavy guns their dreadful might displayed,
Each direct hit increased the profit rate.

Each corpse paid dividends upon that self-same day.
The glorious rays of profits bathed it as it lay.

Just watch the curve of profits rise—oh, see
Them pouring in—our reckonings agree!

* * *

And thus they sat, and day passed into night.
The masters of the world displayed their might.

No love nor pity could they feel—
Their skulls were lined with stainless steel.

They did not shudder at their fearfu sins—
Steel-plated were their mind and skin.

They had no nerves to lose, nor hearts,
For these were armor-plated parts.

And even though to death it millions sent,
The iron hand relentless signed the document.

* * *

The masters of the world were gathered in a ring
In silence tense—it was the day of reckoning.

One broke the silence tense the reckoning to read—
It seemed to him a ghostly choir his figures did repeat.

"The reckoning is true!" the choir unbidden cried—
And voices suddenly rang out on every side.

"And yet your reckoning is wrong! Make way!
We take the floor! We, mankind, speak to-day!"

The council gave command; a steel-lined skull
Thought of a number 'mong the numbers all.

Steel hands this number took and dealt a blow,
But weak was in these hands this number now.

"Make way!" a sea of ciphers said in voices loud.
"We are those numbers you in reckonings left out."

And from the ciphers which the iron hands had penned,
That number disappeared, the rest stayed to the end.

* * *

"And now make way! Speak up, you ciphers, one and all!"
And many-ciphered figures marched into the hall.

The leader of these figures took his stand:
"Thou, skull of steel, and thou, oh, iron hands;

You, hearts of steel, and thou, oh armor-plated skin!"
The figures' murmur rose to an indignant din.

"To soulless ciphers you our souls have squeezed.
Now we at last will celebrate release.

Your profits are our agony and gore,
The blood of many millions crying at your door.

Now watch the curve a-climbing high—oh, see,
World's masters—our reckonings agree."

And thus they spoke. To night gave way the day,
And on the battle-field—died down the fray.

Shame, dignity and honor took the floor,
And truth spoke as she never spoke before.

Man's law then spoke. The law its duty stressed.
Then spoke democracy and nations in distress.

And heroes sung by bards and poets spoke.
Free sacred fatherland its silence broke.

Thus spoke they all. The chorus swelled and grew,
Their every word harmonious and true.

Then night gave way to dawn. The world saw day at last.
"The reckoning is true!" rang out the trumpet blast.

Translated from the German by Louis Zellikoff

BARBUSSE DIED FIVE YEARS AGO

POWER, TALENT, TRUTH

In Memory of Henri Barbusse

Five years have elapsed since the death of Henri Barbusse, France's great son and one of the best friends of the Soviet Union. The last farewell paid by the working folk of Paris to Barbusse was one of the most moving popular demonstrations Paris had ever witnessed. It was, as it were, the culmination of the wave of mourning processions that had accompanied his ashes from Moscow to the borders of the U.S.S.R. Barbusse's death was a heavy blow to the Soviet people.

Henri Barbusse was one of that group of French writers who began their conscious life in the last decade of the nineteenth century, and whose art grew and developed in the struggle for truth. Each followed his own path, but owing to their common passion for truth, the whole truth, all of them—practically from the outset of their careers—stood out distinctly from the society that had reared them. We have only to follow Barbusse's career to see how this gulf between him and bourgeois society widened, and how from the first vague but courageous attempts to tear the mask from bourgeois morals he passed to an integral exposure of bourgeois society. In one of his letters to his wife he says that all through his life he had never ceased to think of the fate of man, the fate of the people. Today, when thanks to his friends and the testimony of his comrades at the front and his relatives we know what a model of courage, honesty and genuine human loves this artist was, there can be no doubt that the chief thing that induced him to go to war was the urge characteristic of every great artist and thinker to be with and among the people in the tragic hour of its history. He may have cherished some illusions at the moment he joined the colors, but he never deceived himself as to the aims pursued in that war by the ruling classes. He bluntly declared (in a letter dated June 20, 1915) that these aims were "contrary to our human destiny." If the claims and the real aims of the war had not seemed to him suspicious he would not have begun to seek the truth about it almost from the first day of his arrival at the front. He knew that this truth would be revealed to him in the hearts of the common soldiers, of those with whom he shared the burdens of military life. And practically from the first day he began to record the thoughts and words of the soldiers, to record them as formidable and indelible evidence against the men responsible for the senseless slaughter of millions of lives. It was from this evidence that he produced that brilliant epic of the war which in the judgment of so exacting and truthful an artist as Anatole France was one of the greatest creations of French literature. And as a public exploit *Under Fire* has no equal in the history of French social thought. Zola, difficult and magnificent as was his exploit in the Dreyfus days, entered into single-handed combat with French bourgeois society in times of peace. But Barbusse declared war on the French bourgeoisie while he was himself a common soldier at the front. These same sinister forces which in our day have tried to calumniate the French Communists—the true champions of peace and of the dignity of the nation—did their utmost to stifle the voice of Barbusse. But they did not succeed. Barbusse had every justification to claim that the flames of *Under Fire* were beginning to spread widely in all directions. That was a truly sacred fire guarded by the people, by tens of millions of French workers and peasants, who recognized themselves in Barbusse's characters.

In the days of rampant chauvinism, Barbusse—that "true heir of the revolutionary Jacobines," as the Pravda called him—remained true to the finest traditions of the French people. His book was genuinely French and at the same time genuinely international. The name of Liebknecht resounded in its pages as a battle call for international solidarity of the "proletarians of the war." Barbusse realized that the only escape from war was Socialism. And from that moment the truth which Barbusse never ceased to seek acquired flesh and blood: it became the truth of Socialism. "*La verité est revolutionnaire*,"—truth is revolutionary. While *Under Fire* was still appearing serially in the *Oeuvre*, Barbusse, in conjunction with Raymond Lefebre and Vaillant-Couturier, who had come to visit him at the front, drew up his first

appeal to the intellectuals. This was a remarkable document in the biography of Barbusse as a public man and fighter for a new society.

While *Under Fire* has secured universal recognition, West-European critics unfortunately have still not appreciated as fully as it deserves another work of Barbusse's, *Light*, which Lenin classed side by side with *Under Fire*.

After Gorky, no other writer has told such a majestic story of the awakening of human feeling in man, an awakening amidst the most frightful and inhuman conditions. The book is, in fact, a historical novel, telling of the birth of the new man in the midst of the blood and filth of imperialist society. The hero of *Light* was an anticipation of those intellectuals who fought side by side with their brother revolutionaries, the workers, in the ranks of the Popular Front in France, in the mountains of Spain and in the ranks of the national army of China. Much of what the present-day revolutionary humanist should know and bear in mind is already told in the pages of Barbusse's book. He taught the intellectuals to distinguish beween militant humanism and the hypocritical humanism of those whom Jules Renard has so aptly called "*des traîtres qui s'amusent*," traitors who amuse themselves.

Henri Barbusse in Moscow, 1935

Barbusse did not rest content with an appeal for revolutionary truth. Shortly after the completion of *Light*, he formed an organization of revolutionary intellectuals which he named after his book. This world-wide society of progressive writers and artists naturally became the first organization in Western Europe of friends of the Soviet Union, the land of victorious Socialism.

Barbusse, who could see no fatherland for the working folk in the capitalist world, found a second fatherland in the Soviet Union. With each of his visits to the U.S.S.R. and with each of his new books on the new Russia, the truth about the Bolsheviks and about the construction of Socialism was brought nearer to the West-European public. Barbusse saw the work of Lenin and Stalin with his own eyes. As an artist who had always striven to give an all-embracing picture of the world—hence his grand historical fresco, *Chains*—he discerned in the Soviet Union an integral world which embodied the finest aspirations of mankind and was converting them into real mundane values. His great gift of perceiving the essential, of singling out the highroad of history, enabled him to grasp the epoch-making significance of the October Socialist Revolution. Following on the books in which he depicted life and affairs in the Soviet Union—*One Looks at Russia* and *Georgia as She Is Today*—he writes books generalizing the type of the Socialist country. This type he finds embodied in two of the greatest personalities of modern times—Lenin and Stalin. He writes a preface to *Lenin's Letters to His Family*, in which he gives what is essentially a developed historical description of Lenin and his activities. He writes a book on Stalin, the man "through whom a new world is seen." Lenin and Stalin are the highest embodiment of the Soviet man, or as Barbusse calls him, the "authentic superman." Barbusse as an artist contrasts this authentic superman with the "supermen" of bourgeois society, be they the omnipotent masters of the imperialist world operating the banks and the general staffs or the wretched "supermen" conceived by decadent literature.

Even when he was still a soldier at the front Barbusse foresaw that he would have to come out in opposition to the "falsified literature" which was disseminated with impunity under the protec-

tion of a government of renegades and reactionaries.

After the war, the progressive writers of Western Europe united around Barbusse and his friends. Barbusse was recognized, side by side with Gorky and Romain Rolland, as the leader of a writers' movement that had thrown in its destiny with the revolutionary struggle of the masses. He had a high opinion of Soviet literature and was a personal friend of its great founder, Gorky.

Barbusse ruthlessly exposed the sinister forces—whatever name they called themselves by—which tried time and again to stifle the new world that had arisen on the broad expanses of Russia. His speeches, such as "We Accuse"—an exposure of the intervention against Soviet Russia—or "The Russian Revolution and the Duty of the Workers," (which are published in this issue) will remain a permanent heritage. Thousands of men and women will study them and learn to defend and uphold the new detachments of the Socialist army of mankind.

Barbusse was an indefatigable champion of peace. He traveled from country to country, rallying the forces of the anti-imperialist camp. He was inspired by one thought, to extend the front of peace until it embraced all countries, all nations, all sections of society that had no interest in war. The 1932 Amsterdam Congress, the fruit of his efforts, was a signal victory of the peace movement over the warmongers. Barbusse waged the struggle for peace as a struggle against capitalism, the system that inevitably engenders wars. The methods of anti-war work devised by Barbusse have consequently not lost their importance to this day.

In one of his letters to his wife from the trenches during the first imperialist war, Barbusse wrote: "Let me add that sooner or later—within ten years or twenty—it will be followed by another war which will complete the destruction of men and wealth of the old world, if the people that are being led to the shambles do not at last adopt the simple and logical decision to take each other by the hand, notwithstanding the prejudices of tradition and race, notwithstanding the will of governments, and notwithstanding all the follies of bellicose pride, of military glory and the dishonest commercial calculations of nations to prosper themselves by preventing the expansion of their neighbours by force and brigandage."

Today, when the second imperialist war foreseen by Barbusse is already raging, these prophetic words acquire full weight and significance. Tens of millions of people are suffering the bitter consequences of the criminal policy of the warmongers.

But, in distinction from the time of the first imperialist war—and this also Barbusse knew—there now exists, side by side with what he called the "European inferno," a country which is the home of the new man. Its might, so clearly depicted in Barbusse's books on the U.S.S.R., is continuously growing. Barbusse's "authentic superman" was, as it were, an anticipation of the Stakhanovites, of the Soviet soldiers and airmen, the men who have come to the fore in the U.S.S.R.

The sixth part of the world has now grown . . . How Barbusse would have rejoiced had he lived to see the liberation of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia; how he would have rejoiced with the entire Soviet people over the victories of the Red forces over the warmongers and all others eager for someone else's property.

The joyous news of the liberation of Bessarabia from foreign yoke and its unification with the Soviet lands, would probably gladden Barbusse more than anything else. For it was the fate of Bessarabia, torn away from its motherland, that inspired the most wrathful, the most flaming passages in Barbusse's *Les Bourreaux:* "Bessarabia, broken away from Russia, has been given to Rumania by" the Entente. This annexation of a Russian province without the consent of Russia—not an enemy of Rumania—was never sanctioned by bilateral agreement—this is an arbitrary act which is perhaps unique in contemporary history."

The Soviet Union is today the only country where Barbusse's books are read by the millions.

And as time goes on it will become ever clearer to the intellectuals of Western Europe that only in the path chosen by Barbusse lies salvation from the world of capitalist barbarity, which threatens to trample in the dust all that still remains of culture in the capitalist world. It will come ever clearer to the intellectuals in those countries that the new world which Barbusse loved so ardently is the only one worthy of mankind.

Barbusse is no longer with us. In these days of trial, let the name of the great son of the French people resound in the ears of all who are still enslaved as a vow of unshakeable fidelity to the ideals for which he fought.

BORIS PESIS

HENRI BARBUSSE

A FIGHTER SPEAKS

TO THE LIVING SOLDIERS

The only thing I can say as a preface to the new edition of this book is to express my heartfelt thanks to the officers and soldiers who, after having read it, have held out the hand of fellowship to me.

Comrades, those with whom I have shared my life and my thoughts, and whom I hope to see again one day, you have liked my book because it tells the truth. In it you have seen your own misery and suffering; in it you have seen the great war just as you have experienced it. In crying out to me in your fraternal multitude: "You have told the truth!" for a year now you have been offering me continual testimony of an affection which will remain the honor and joy of my life.

I who knew you, also knew that you were worthy of the truth. You are worthy of not having any of your sufferings concealed from the world. Let the prevaricating journalists say that you have to be deceived and lied to in order to make it easier to lead you; let readers in the rear prudishly hide their faces and stuff their ears when they are shown what man is capable of putting up with to save the idea of justice; let the sophists adapt, falsify, juggle and debase the truth of which the men in the war are the sole repositories and the sole judges. What does it matter? Truth, truth! For the rest, no more brilliant eulogy could be paid to you than to say: This is what they are like! I who know you, also know that only the truth is worthy of you.

Truly, I can teach you nothing, my brothers—you who have taught me so much. At least—you have told me so, and I believe you. I can help you to recall what you have been. I can help you to preserve the memory of the inferno you have been through: those sinister circles where the war has dug itself in; the fields of battle, where, side by side with ever fresh dead, you buried your lives and shed your blood, and which themselves seem to be sodden and disfigured corpses of fields. I will prevent you from forgetting that ray of moral beauty and supreme self-sacrifice with which over there you shed a light on the monstrous and disgusting horror of war.

With the image of these days piously enshrined in your hearts, you will forever preserve, comrades, as I do ever since I have had the honor of knowing you, a high idea of moral law and an irresistible need of the truth. It is in the name of truth that we fraternize today. It is in its name that our fraternity will later fight for justice and

remake the world after the deluge. Soldiers of the war, soldiers of audacious and immortal progress, soldiers of truth, we shall always be together, and nothing can separate us.

Preface to a special edition of *Under Fire*, September 1917.

GREAT DUTIES

To the Youth.

Dear Friends,

Your noble and fraternal appeal reached me here in this solitary corner where I am finishing a book, and it is impossible for the moment to lay this work aside. But I want to tell you how deeply your voice stirs my heart and how deeply I feel honored that the youth, the generous and courageous militants of *Les Ecrits du Midi*, think fit to regard me as one of their own.

It is true that we are serving the same ideal: the liberation of the masses by their own hand, the universal substitution of the great law of reason for the parasitic regimes which all over the earth have led the old world to disaster, and which will lead it to its final destruction if humanity does not take action. We are serving the same ideal, and by the same means: by telling the truth, by carrying this torch to those who are not yet enlightened, showing them the right road and the real enemies: and by showing up the face of those who lie. We are alike, except that you have a great and mighty advantage over me: your youth.

But even all that young force is not enough to accomplish a task that is as dramatic as the events of life. Every attempt will be made to circumvent the magnificent effort in which you are united—you, your friends and those that resemble you. Innumerable traps have been set in the way of progress by those who do not want it. And the most inextricable of all is the concessions they are sometimes obliged to consent to under the pressure of the powerful action of truth, the half-measures they resort to in order to preserve everything else, the semblance of progress which leaves the virus of the autocracy in the wound and enables it little by little to recapture men—body and soul.

Your role of liberators should bind you before all and above all to be irreconcilable, and should fill you with the conviction that until you have everything, you have nothing. I think with anguish of this danger when I hear great words of justice falling from lying lips, and parties which have never ceased to hate and combat the cause of all paying lip service to a future too thoroughly democratic for them to desire or even to understand. There can be no doubt that these people will find the means of frustrating all hope of the rights of man, and of rendering the deaths of the martyrs useless, if you are not there, all you young people of frank and audacious spirit, the soldier writers, to preserve civic duty in all its purity and amplitude.

Never cease to turn to each other, to recognize each other, and to institute a discipline and order among you that will inevitably prevail over everything. We do not know what peace will bring; we only know what the future will bring us one day. Now that we see this, we must never turn our eyes away again.

I call upon you to work in common. I grasp you fraternally by the hand, you who have accepted me as one of your own and whom I know—for I have not waited to hear from you to applaud your

work—and I greet my old friends among you who are with me.

Les Ecrits du Midi,
October 10, 1918.

TOWARDS THE NEW TIMES

My dear friends, the company gathered here is too diverse, too sumptuous, too free for me to take the liberty of speaking in your name. But I shall not be exceeding rightful bounds if I mention one belief that unites us all.

We believe in the duty that is incumbent on all thinking men in these grave times when destiny has thrown us together in the midst of the great events that are surrounding us and driving us into the abyss. *It is the duty of working for the truth and of championing it, for it is the only solid boon, the only salvation.*

It has always been the function of writers and artists to seek for the grace, the charm, or the brilliance of truth. But where does truth stop? Who would limit the effort to fight for it as one fights for life? All of us here today know that it is the function of the brain worker to seek for it way back in the origins of a long chain of events, in the conditions of the communal life of man, and in the story of his destiny. That is called social action. But whatever the right word may be, that today is our mission!

This is no longer the hour of that old fashion which bade creative and cultivated minds hold aloof from vital interests; of that morbid indifference of public opinion, which, from frivolity or weakness, lowers its eyes and haughtily turns away from what is tottering and from what is being constructed anew. Owing to an infantile horror of that from which we are emerging, they refuse to see that into which we are entering. They cultivate the fault and vice of forgetfulness. Too large a section of the public demand that men of talent supply them with fantastic distractions and anodynes, and look upon works of art as a sort of plaything which they claim as their due. And there are artists who consent to be accomplices in this divorcement. This dark and brutal inertia is a crushing load on the march of events, and passive though it may be, it is an opinion, and it is a weapon.

Above the comedies and dramas of life, above the echoes and reflections of passers-by, and of passing moments, there is the great drama of ideas, from which all others proceed. Invisible and all-powerful, there are the conflicts of causes and the fatal chain of effects, the sûblime laws of animate forces, the force of beliefs. That is the height to which many of us have tried to raise the art of depiction, and to which all should raise their attention.

That spiritual and moral struggle, that superhuman struggle, is really so moving and so profound that one may say that tangible life is abstract by the side of it, for it carries us away, dominates and sacrifices everything.

Today we feel it taking possession of us. All the holy multitudes of the oppressed are awakening and stirring. The comprehensive events that proceed from ideas are pushing us on and shaking us up. We perceive their presence everywhere. They seem to rise up before us in the street and to knock at our doors. In these troublous times, the inevitable consequences of doctrines appear to us, as those letters of fire appeared at the biblical feast, on the wall of ages. The signs of Balthazar were terrifying because they were mysterious. But these are terrible because we know

what they are. We no longer need magicians to decipher enigmas and to interpret dreams. Today all that is needed to be a prophet is to sincerely open one's eyes, and a man of the most simple heart and mind can rise to the full height of an apostle and vibrate like the strings of a lyre!

Moral and social truth appeals to each of us as though calling us by name. The collective life violently invades each of our own.

Individual wisdom is a sham if the whole is a folly. While the artist who is afraid of life shuts himself up in his own theatrical and illusory environment, while groping blindly, millions of human beings, prominent or obscure, do their best to be a little happier on this earth, reasons of state, deliberately evoked storms and ancient fatalities burst forth, devastating, crushing and destroying. They extinguish genius, or happiness, which is a humble manifestation of genius, they disperse hearths and homes like clouds, turn countries into wastes where the sun and the spring grow sterile, and strew battlefields with the monstrous remains of human beings. Each is tied to all by peace, by ruin, iniquity and slaughter.

Nevertheless, the victory and the defeat of all-powerful ideas depend on the will of men. It is for the educators and the guides, after having reconstructed their own scattered ranks, to show them what will endure in this chaos to which thousands of years of civilization have led us, stage by stage, from calamity to calamity, and in which it seems that the earth is palpitating beneath this immense trampling force.

Human thought is splitting into two. The bearers of ideas are dividing into two camps: those who desire a change in the social order and those who desire or consent to the maintenance of the old order of things. None of the tendencies that lie between these two extremes count at all, for in the long run they end in one or the other, *and nothing that has to be done can any longer be done by half*. The soldiers of thought must resolutely enter this supreme battle of ideals in order to show by the great methods of art how much the duty of sincerity and the power of being in the right can achieve.

To be in the right! Can one ever be sure of being in the right? . . .

Do we not experience doubt and anxiety when we march onward and draw our near ones with us into this struggle of life for life? . . .

But we clearly see what the past has made of the present. We see all the errors and all the sophistries with which sanguinary history is saturated; and we see the work of those consecrated ideas that crumble under the clear questioning of honest men . . . We no longer believe in the cabalistic formulas of authority, in the magical power of transmitted maxims, which have hitherto sufficed . . .

We all have our recourse in reason and conscience, which speaks in human language more adorably than faith. Truth lies in men's minds. We believe in a social certitude.

That evidence is simple and illuminating. It tells us that truth and good are the very opposite of the doctrines that have prevailed hitherto, of all the formulas of contemporary civilization, of militarist anarchy and nationalist utopianism, of the organization of the exploitation of man by man according to the chance of privilege, of despotism of every kind, which have made the past one long martyrdom of justice, legitimized the frightful treatment of the humble, and which, nevertheless, we see once more rising from their ruins.

Love and pity accord with logic

because there is but one truth. The cause of progress definitely merges with the cause of all. The cult of justice is explicit: justice is a word that signifies at one and the same time moral law, rational law and the living masses—it is a living word, palpitating and exacting, which commands and appeals.

We do not want to be plunged back into the past. Writers, artists that is, dreamers and workers in one, we aspire to carry on our work, whatever it may be, in harmony with the universal work of liberation, and with joy and confidence, observe how, after so many squandered centuries, the might of the weak and the riches of the poor are unfolding.

Our fellows—in those days when France represented the idea of equity—prophesied and prepared the way of the transformation of the old world, the revolt against the monstrous absurdity of the old order, of that which has led us all, all, whoever we may be, through useless slaughter, to a hopeless dilemma. We wish to take part in that renewal of humanity of which the signs are to be seen and heard everywhere. We wish always to bring to the world-wide struggle of justice against injustice the great and wise vision of free spirits; to do everything possible so that magnificent theories may descend from the clouds; good intentions acquire the force of will, and dreams be incarnated in labor.

We, whom they dare not call empty dreamers any longer, because we represent the incendiary power of truth, but whom they still dare to accuse of preaching hatred, because we are out to abolish slavery, the cause of all the evil, wish to add to the passive meditations of Epictetus the virtue of action, and, as far as possible in these days, to obey the noble behest of Spartacus!

We wish to take part in every genuine change, however immense it may be!

We are the party of truth. When men know the truth, they will be saved—and, after having been blasphemed so much by the powers that be, right will become might. Our action, to be effective, need be nothing more than loyal and clear instruction. What do we want? That which is everything—to multiply our numbers. The day we become innumerable and, here and everywhere—for to us there are no foreigners—stretch out our hands to each other and say: "We have the same respect for the vast laws of nature and the same respect for life," on that day we shall have triumphed, we shall have vanquished the great misfortunes which are ever with us. Many of us will accomplish this sacred mission together, with words which have already spread far and wide, honored with the same gratitude and with the same insults, sustained by the powerful internal forces of emotion and fervor.

My dear friends, in this great epoch when we have the opportunity of fraternizing, after the deluge, as it were, everything cried out, urging on us the necessity of uniting still more closely and permanently, provided it is for the great cause of humanity and for the liberty of a broad ideal. Let us be united by what is the most precious in us, and even if we have nothing but our faith and hope, let us bring those to each other.

All our groups, in this chilling light, are growing in numbers and strength. They are gathering together, and they love each other.

And, as we must put an end to the times when art took pride in a sacred egoism and thought it glorius to seclude itself in voluntary imprisonment; as we must

put an end to that foolish apathy of the elite, who committed an evil in tolerating evil, let us learn to replace by common effort the rule of evil by the rule of the mind on the threshold of these new times, of which we must all be worthy.

Speech delivered at a banquet held in honor of Henri Barbusse in the *Salle des Sociétés Savantes,* June 1919.

WE ACCUSE

J'accuse! . . . That was the cry with which, in 1898, an honest man attacked formidable social forces that were endeavoring to traduce an innocent man in order to assassinate him.

And it is with this cry that honest men today are rising, stirred to the depths of their consciences, against international reaction, which, for monstrous reasons of class interests and on behalf of ancient and barbarous privileges, is attempting to dishonor and assassinate by famine and force of arms the great Russian Republic, which is guilty of having realized its dream of liberation.

We accuse the rulers of France, Great Britain and America of having—in order to accomplish with impunity, with the blood and money of still enslaved peoples, this supreme anti-socialist and anti-human effort—started an abominable campaign of calumny against Bolshevism, of having, by the vilest and most arbitrary methods, prevented the spread of the truth, of having mutilated and falsified the facts (as in the case of Dreyfus and Caillaux), of having poisoned public opinion in order to get the masses to go against their own interests, of having lied to the peoples in order to betray them.

We accuse the international consortium of imperialists, militarists and merchants of having shamefully, through the corrupt voice of the big newspapers, painted a genuinely Socialist constitution as a regime of disorder. In spite of everything, the organic law of the Soviet Republic exists, and everyone can now read it. It is based on equality and the law of labor; it establishes the solidarity of the Russian workers and guarantees their direct power. It proclaims the internationalism of the proletariat. Whatever may be our private preferences, we must all admit that not only are these fundamental principles not contradictory to reason and justice, but in the eyes of sane and loyal men they alone are capable of definitely abolishing the two scourges which insensate theories have hitherto imposed on the human race: the exploitation of the masses, and war. The Russians offered a completely democratic peace, without any reservations. The Allies refused to associate themselves with the offer; to do so, they would have had to disclose their war aims, their annexationist designs, which they could not afford to disclose. It was therefore not the Russians, but the dictators of France and England who, on this as on other occasions, betrayed the cause of the people and of peace, prolonged the war and decimated the national armies; just as it was they who have drenched the Russian revolution in blood by their ferocious and selfish opposition and by the hypocritical aid they are ceaselessly giving to the counter-revolutionaries; and just as it was they who, by the systematic organization of massacres, destruction and famine, started an era of disaster in Russia, which they immediately denounced as the consequence of the Soviet regime.

We accuse the bourgeois governments of the Entente of having dared to fling the last resources and the last forces of the peoples

they are leading into a cause that is frankly and cynically reactionary, which one cannot without disloyalty qualify otherwise: the causes of those butchers and bandits, of those monarchists of the type of Kolchak and Denikin.

We accuse them of having left arms, officers and innumerable soldiers at the disposal of Germany, of having made themselves accomplices in this military reorganization that is so fraught with the menace of a war of revenge in order the more effectively to crush the demands of the people of Russia, Germany and other countries, and of thus having once more sacrificed the security of the country and future peace to class hatred.

At a moment when the economic situation of our country is practically irremediable, when the debt of the French has reached or even exceeds the figure of their total resources, when the cost of living and taxation is becoming more than they can bear, when no prophesy is gloomy enough to depict the gulf towards which we are heading, we accuse these unworthy representatives, not of nations but of castes, of having undertaken, with the object of saving their infamous social formula and of stifling a too searching and too luminous example, a war and a blockade which are costing billions, which are interfering with world trade, are causing millions of victims and are bound to be followed by new wars. We accuse them of hastening the ruin of France and of dishonoring her.

We place our hope and faith in the truth, determined to have no part in the greatest crime in history, and to do everything in our power to expose it. We cannot believe that a single conscience can remain indifferent to such cynicism and duplicity. We shall take full civic responsibility upon ourselves. We shall proclaim the truth: let the people at least know against whom they are being led, and they will end by realizing that it is against themselves. In order to remain the masters of things and of men, the eternal exploiters are employing against those who are accomplishing, on an even larger scale, the work of the French of 1793, the only force capable of checking those rebel slaves become judges—the force of their own brothers, the masses.

Comrades, men, young and old, women, the mothers of future martyrs, former soldiers, who carry the curse of the war in your hearts, workers by hand and brain, all of you who—do you not see it?—have a common interest, Frenchmen who are still attached to the noble French traditions of liberty which are being trampled on and bespattered: in Russia, soldiers, children and women are dying wholesale! Do not in face of these facts remain in gross ignorance, in the terrible blindness of selfishness, in passivity and shame. Refuse to range yourselves on the side of despotism and savagery.

Save the truth of humanity by saving the truth of Russia. Rest assured that future generations will judge the honest men of ours by the measure to which they rose up at this moment and cried: No, it shall not be!

L'Humanité, October 12, 1919.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION AND THE DUTY OF THE WORKERS

Comrades, I gladly accepted the invitation extended to me on behalf of your splendid union.

I am happy to be here, among enlightened workers, whom I regard as part of my great family.

I am a worker like you; although we may differ professionally, we resemble each other intellectually. We resemble each other in what is most important and most profound in men: their conscience, their ideas and their hopes. We are of the same species. When I say that I greet you fraternally, I mean this word in its broadest and most human sense: it signifies absolute solidarity and complete confidence.

I am also happy and proud to have come here to talk to you about the Russian revolution, and to join you in that indignant protest that must be voiced by every honest man against the gigantic crime that is being committed against the Soviet Socialist Republic.

It is two years since the Russian people gained their liberty.

And for two years they have been tortured by the great nations—which, alas! also means by the great peoples—of the rest of the world. For two years, all Russia, pitilessly encircled by war and blockade, is fighting and agonizing. You know it. You know that from the very first this intervention has assumed the hideous shape of hypocrisy and fraud. It has never been frankly proclaimed. The mask has never been completely lifted. There has been no declaration of war; the motives have never been publicly discussed.

In parliament and in official declarations, it has been admitted in part, in bits; then denied, then again admitted when, under the pressure of facts and figures, they could not do otherwise! That is not the manner of just causes!

As a matter of fact, the war against revolutionary Russia has never ceased. It has been conducted by the rulers of the Entente—and never has this word Entente been more justified than in this business—with a bitterness, persistence, calculation and skill that they would have done well to have exercised in other circumstances, when the war was in our country.

Every means has been employed. Not only have soldiers been recruited by force, called up officially, and with supreme irony—dubbed volunteers. From its very inception the counter-revolution has been supported, fomented, organized—before it was even officially recognized—by the representatives of free Britain and of France of the Revolution.

How much has this intervention cost us? Cachin, as was his duty, put that question bluntly to Monsieur Pichon. The latter, as was likewise his function, evaded an answer; he did not know, calculations would have to be made, the totals verified, certain documents would have to be looked up. We shall never know how much money we have spent on this anti-Russian enterprise, just as we shall never know how many of our young people have been sent over there. But one fine day we shall learn that more of our men have "disappeared" than we thought, and we shall have to pay taxes that are beyond our means.

And lastly, over and above this war which they are waging or getting others to wage, we have the blockade, which prevents those whom they have not killed from living. The blockade, which is bringing with it famine and epidemics, the devastating arrest of national life, commerce, industry and the transport service, which is decomposing like a corpse over a vast territory. The blockade means the slow massacre of a population of one hundred and eighty millions. And all the Russians' overtures of peace are scornfully repulsed by our masters. . .

The truth is something quite different from the legend that is being fabricated about Bolshevism: all

the accusations leveled against the regime and the attitude of the Bolsheviks fall to the ground one after the other.

And what emerges from all this web of lies is the nobility and grandeur of the conceptions that the present masters of Russia have succeeded in realizing for the first time on earth. . . .

My personal opinion is that humanity will one day have to adopt great laws like these if it wishes to establish a system of peace and justice.

And it is my personal opinion that the conscience of the world is moving inevitably towards this ideal. . . .

Well, what then is the significance of this coalition launched against men who are in the right?

One involuntarily asks whether the human race has not gone mad.

No, it is not madness. The truth, comrades, is very simple.

In wanting to destroy the Russian revolution and Russia with it, they want to destroy Socialism. In deciding on this war, the reactionary governments are defending their reactionary privileges. That is all.

This is the first time a truly Socialist regime is taking root in the world. It is not the German Republic, that camouflaged monarchy that oozes militarism at every pore, which worries the capitalist rulers!

An experiment like the one in Russia is a very serious business. It cannot but exert influence, in one sense or another. The reactionary governments know that well; they do not want it at any price, and they are preparing to inflict a terrible punishment on it. They want to prove that liberty is impracticable by killing it.

The war against Russia is a social and political war, and nothing else. It is an acute and momentous phase of the class war. Either Socialism is annihilated by force, or it will conquer all by the force of reason.

Event follows event in rapid succession; situations are taking definite shape. In reality there are only two powers in the world today: the conservators of the past and the men who aspire to a new order. Two contradictory and mutually inimical formulas: preserve or renew. They are at death grips.

But what is intolerable is that the people should bow in obedience to the supreme effort of international capital. It may be said that the aspirations of the people are being crushed by the hand of the people themselves.

Something has to be done. I ask you, what can be done? Well, there is one force, and only one force, that can counteract the great and sinister forces that are out to perpetuate slavery—you!

You, the free, organized and united people. You, the trade unions, the *Confédération Générale du Travail*.

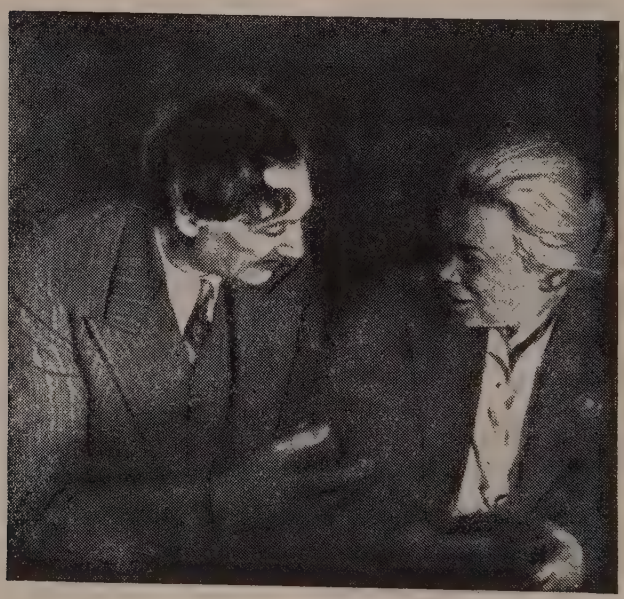
I beg and implore you: do not remain indifferent to the greatest crime ever recorded in history. The words we utter must not be allowed to evaporate, and just thoughts remain nothing but thoughts. An efficacious, positive and formidable means must be found of refusing to martyr and assassinate a great people and a great hope, which is also your hope!

When you return home, think of the innumerable homes devastated over there by the avaricious rage of those who are still the masters of human destinies. Not only that! Think of your own homes, and realize that all the laborers, all the exploited of the earth are bound together by inseparable ties.

Comrades, the flag of the Socialist

Soviet Republic, which your indifference is helping to destroy, is the red flag of the liberation of man. It bears, embroidered in gold, an emblem and an inscription. The emblem is a crossed hammer and sickle. The insciption is not like those to be found on our old flags of barbarism and militarism, the name of some great collective slaughter, but the cry of reason that long ago Karl Marx launched into the world: "Workers of all countries, unite!"

Speech delivered at a meeting organized by the Navvies Trade Union, October 19, 1919.



Henri Barbusse and Lenin's sister, M. I. Ulyanova, in Moscow, 1935

Wanda Wasilewska

Yesterday the pale blue election posters and portraits of Wanda Wasilewska, deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., still adorned the streets of Lwow; tomorrow her new novel *Lights in the Marshes*, the first of a cycle, will appear in the window displays of Soviet book shops; today it would be well to explain why it is that this authoress has come to occupy such a prominent place in the cultural life of the U.S.S.R.

Wasilewska not only reached out beyond Polish literature from which she sprang—her work was to a certain degree a negation of what had been accomplished by her own literary generation, a denial of that cultured bourgeois environment into which she was born.

Wasilewska is a member of the Polish intelligentsia, which was a constant prey to doubts and inner strife. The fate of the petty Polish bourgeoisie, which had not escaped the fetters of the Polish *szlachta*, was reflected, as in a distorted mirror, in the consciousness of this intelligentsia. A few Polish radical writers did strive to rise above their environment but soon found that their wings had been clipped by the gentry's shears and that their progressiveness led directly to mysticism (Boleslaw Prus, Stefan Zeromski). The radicalism of the writers of Versailles-created Poland was even more pallid than the culture of the philistine Polish gentry; few had the courage to lift their voices in protest against social injustice, against the oppression of the people. How can one make the Soviet reader understand these people with their complex, shattered souls, finding solace in things diseased, unhealthy?

I recall the occasion on which we were collecting books for Polish soldiers who had fought for Spain's independence and whom Daladier's "democratic" France had thrown into concentration camps. Some writers gave us books, but begged, entreated us not to disclose their names. Others refused on the grounds that "to send Polish books to France meant imperialism" (?!). In this atmosphere of hypocrisy and humbug, writers like Wanda Wasilewska were few and far between. Wasilewska was the antithesis of her environment, the harbinger of a new type of intellectual, the humanist intellectual.

Just as the literature of the nobility in the period of its decline evolved a sentimental, anemic, fatalistic type, so has the dying culture of capitalism glorified the Andr Gide type of degenerate intellectual with Freudian complexes. Wanda Wasilewska was a stranger to such complexes. Her heroes were clear-minded, pure, healthy toilers who manage to retain their faith in the future even in times of greatest distress. None of life's ordeals have disturbed the harmony of Wasilewska's inner world. She has always found the way to action—whether during strike campaigns in Krakow, in Lwow and Warsaw, during Jewish pogroms, prison massacres or the Brzoza Kartuska Slaughter.

2.

Wanda Wasilewska's first book *The Face of Day* is journalism rather than literature. Polish prose has digressed from the path presumably mapped out for it by the progressive writers of the end of the nineteenth century. The florid baroque style combined with pitiable attemps to idealize the supporters of the Pilsudski dictatorship dominated the prose of Juliusz Kaden-Bandrowski, one of the most distinguished of Polish writers. The literature of Versailles Poland presented the most incredible mixture of styles from reactionary naturalism, empty psychologism down to out-and-out mysticism. In such an atmosphere the reportage style was a justified and healthy reaction. Polish Leftist literature retaliated to the followers of naturalism, psychologism and mysticism in literature by adopting reportage, a style that ruthlessly tears away masks, denying all psychological probing, all established judgments. This was the

Wanda Wasilewska

style in which Wasilewska wrote her first book *The Face of Day*.

Characteristic of the style is the absence of long-winded sentences and even of dependent clauses. When dependent clauses do occur, the authoress uses them as independent sentences for the sole purpose of simplifying the syntax.

For example:

"And so it was mallow brew. Shifting the wardrobe all over the room. Scalding one's feet in boiling water in a rusty pail. A knitting needle. The husband's mad blows. Can survive that. Or else iodine. The bath-house. The bitter acrid taste of cleander brew. The obliging friend. The whispering old crones next door. Advice of gossiping neighbors."

A simple choice of words, as though each sharp, clear-cut word was intended to put the florid rhetoric of the baroque writers to shame. Hence the superfluous naturalism—the harsh, clipped, everyday words. And at the same time the avoidance of any attempt at psychological analysis. In *The Face of Day* we see a desire to generalize, to typify, as though the author sought to stress that the depicted phenomenon was typical, universal, that the frightful picture of human suffering presented was universal.

"The days drag by in dreary monotony like raindrops pattering against a filthy window-pane. Felt-boots, leatherboots, shoes, wooden clogs beat out their rhythm along the same road. Small feet, large feet and tiny feet tramp down the same pathway every day, skirting the large pool beside the fence. They wander through the squelchy mud of the alley. They click against the stone slabs of the pavement. They stub their toes against the hard, round cobble - stones. They scrunch over the gravel path to the doorways."

The same style is used for dialogue and character portrayal. And all in order to generalize, to typify phenomena, to stress their universalism. But the fact that the style of *The Face of Day* is far from realism, does not concern us here; the important thing is that against the background of Polish literature of that period this blunt, resolute revelation of the truth was a consistent protest against reactionary art.

3.

Wasilewska's second book, *Fatherland*, marks a new phase in her work. It deals with a different theme, the suppression of women's rights and class struggle. This book echoes the poetry of Marja Konopnicka, whom Adam Charzewski, the well-known critic, has called the Nekrasov of Polish poetry. Exploitation by the landed gentry was the theme of more than one novel by Eliza Orzeszko, as well. But in Konopnicka's poetry the sentimental element overshadowed the class struggle. In the case of Orzeszko the truth about peasant life was frequently distorted. Wasilewska, on the other hand, approached the problem of the class struggle in the village with a courage that knows no hesitation. The book is not without its touch of sentimentality, that breaks through here and there. Side by side with amazing force and courage, there is a certain softness and sentimentality remi-

niscent of Konopnicka in *Fatherland*, and even in *Earth in Bondage* (published in our magazine, No 1, 1940—*Ed.*).

"The people rejoiced, although, to say the truth, the farm laborers had little cause for rejoicing. Spring blossomed for them neither in forget-me-nots beside the pond, nor in marjoram on the vegetable patch. The snow-white pear blossom or the pale rose apple blooms did not smile in their gardens. The fresh young green of new spring shoots did not cover their fields."

Does this not remind one of Konopnicka's lines:

Why, oh pearly dew
Does your fall
When I am naked and barefoot
And hunger stalks my home?
Are there not human tears enough
On earth,
That night should come and
weep these tears
of silver?

But, we repeat, while Konopnicka's sentimentality robbed her poetry of some of its significance as poetry of class struggle, Wasilewska's lyricism merely enriches her writing and emphasizes the blunt naked truth of the class struggle in Poland.

The landscape of *Fatherland* begins to acquire a definite coloring, its tones are changed and the plot is supplemented by psychological conflict.

4.

Earth in Bondage, Wasilewska's first realistic novel, has undoubtedly been influenced by Soviet literature. The authoress no longer strives for abstract typification, she rejects all chance elements and finds contours of the general in the concrete.

Her characters are more expressively drawn. Wincenty, the school-teacher, undergoes a painful transformation: alien to the peasant masses at first, his sympathies are gradually awakened and finally he joins the revolutionary movement. The concluding scene sums up this process:

"Wincenty started as at a sudden command. It was stronger than the dictates of reason, stronger than the pain of his heart; it was an irresistible whirlwind, sweeping him along, independent of his will, giving him no chance to think, breaking down all barriers.

"His feet sank in the sand, his hair stood on end with the icy dread that crept over him. For the space of an instant he saw them all before him; for that instant hundreds of eyes were fixed on him. And he took his place among them, stood shoulder to shoulder with them in their close ranks."

Realism, Chekhov has said, enables one to establish a diagnosis and to make a prognosis as well. In the fate of Wincenty, the hero of *Earth in Bondage*, Wasilewska has foreseen the general development of events in old Poland. This book was published at the time we had locked ourselves for five weeks in the editorial offices of the school-teachers' magazine, replying by a sit-down strike to the repressive measures taken by the authorities against the teachers' union. The government of Slawoj-Sladkowski had suddenly decided that the schoolteacher was its greatest enemy. Her realistic foresight enabled Wasilewska to perceive what was important in the Volhyn events, and to describe them in the first volume of the *Lights in the Marshes*.

The sentimentality under which Wasilewska labored at one time, turned to romanticism in *Earth in Bondage*. The character of Anna is undoubtedly given in a romantic light. In Wasilewska's writing with its definite class trend we find a realistic analysis of facts side by side with the romantic touches in style and description. This reflects the influence of Zeromski, the cultural heritage.

The mood of *Earth in Bondage* is akin to Zeromski's *On the Eve of Spring*. Hence the resemblance between the fate of Wincenty, Wasilewska's hero, and Cesar, Zeromski's leading character.

Wasilewska's talent, we repeat, is growing mature on the same soil compounded of realism and romanticism upon which Zeromski's great gift flourished. And while Zeromski took fright after his *On the Eve of Spring* and turned backward, while his book sounded the warning to bourgeois Poland that Revolution was imminent, for Wasilewska *Earth in Bondage* was a conscious, deliberate welcome of the Revolution. The *Lights in the Marshes*, which the reader will find in this issue of *International · Literature*, marks a step forward in Wasilewska's creative work.

Wasilewska's spring has been followed for her and for us by the first Soviet Spring on the streets of Lwow.

JERZY BOREJSZA

Historic Foresight

Within a few weeks, the world will mark the end of the first year of the second imperialist war. Millions of people in the West, including large sections of the intelligentsia, have been bewildered, confused by the events which took place in the course of this year and, particularly, of the last few months. In the decades following the first imperialist war, public opinion in the so-called democratic countries was largely under the influence of the propaganda of the ruling circles in the victorious countries. Through their propaganda machine these circles spread the fables that the first imperialist war was the last war, and that the Versailles Treaty laid the foundations of a just peace for all time.

Still fresh in everyone's memory are the boastful speeches by the heroes of non-intervention and Munich—Chamberlain and Daladier—who selfconfidently counted on achieving their imperialist aims by setting Germany against the U.S.S.R. The results of this unclever policy are now known to all. Nor is there anything unexpected in them from the standpoint of the scientific theory of the development of society. The recent events on the fronts and the complete collapse of the French army have once again confirmed the correctness of the Marxist-Leninist analysis, for the protagonists of Marxism-Leninism foresaw long before 1940 and pointed out both the direction of the development of affairs in Europe and the inevitable failure of the ill-starred policies of the ruling classes of England and France.

"Miraculous prophecy is a fairy tale, but scientific prophecy is a fact," Lenin wrote in 1918, recalling the well-known forecast made by Engels in 1887 about the impending world war. Speaking of Engels' penetrating insight into international affairs and his correct analysis of the future course of events, Lenin said:

"What a brilliant prophecy! And what a vast wealth of thought in each sentence of this precise, clear and brief scientific class analysis!" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol XXII, p. 106, Russ. ed.)

Lenin and Stalin have given the world numerous examples of no less profound insight into the immediate future of mankind.

At the very outset of the first imperialist war, Lenin said that "if this war does not end in a series of successful revolutions, other wars will follow—the fairy-tale about this being the 'last war' is an absurd and pernicious fable, is philistine 'mythology' . . ." (Vol. XVIII, p. 71, Russ. ed.)

Both Lenin and Stalin were resolutely and implacably opposed to the Versailles Treaty. Lenin characterised it as "more brutal and foul" than the treaty of Brest-Litovsk which Wilhelm II imposed on Soviet Russia in 1918. In the fall of that year Lenin said of the terms of the future Versailles Treaty, which the governments of Great Britain and France were then working out: "We see that they are preparing for Germany a peace that strangles, a peace more rapacious than that of Brest-Litovsk . . . They are digging their own grave by imposing these peace terms." (Vol. XXIII, p. 268, Russ. ed.)

In 1924, in one of his reports on the international situation, Stalin, analyzing the results of the London conference of the Entente, pointed out that in substance they amounted to the conversion of Germany into a colony of the Entente. "One can, of course, 'plan' to reduce Germany to the status of a permanent colony," Stalin said further, "but actually

to attempt to convert a country like Germany into a colony at the present time, when even backward colonies are held in leash with difficulty is tantamount to laying a mine under Europe."

In his report to the Fourteenth Congress of the Communist Party in 1925, Stalin characterized the decisions of the Locarno conference as a continuation of the Versailles policy. These decisions, Stalin pointed out, actually meant that "Germany's new frontiers are preserved for the benefit of Poland, preserved for the benefit of France; that Germany loses her colonies, and that on top of this, tied as she is hand and foot and thrust into a Procrustes' bed, Germany is to exert every effort to pump out 130 billion gold marks. To think that Germany, growing and advancing, will put up with these conditions is to hope for a miracle." Stalin therefore arrived at the logical conclusion that "Locarno bears the seed of a new war in Europe."

Analyzing the international situation, in 1934, Stalin stated in January of that year that "things are heading toward a new imperialist war as a way out of the present situation. Of course, there are no grounds for assuming that war can provide a real way out. On the contrary, it will confuse the situation still more. More then that, it is sure to unleash revolution and jeopardize the very existence of capitalism in a number of countries, as was the case in the course of the first imperialist war. And if, notwithstanding the experience of the first imperialist war, the bourgeois politicians clutch at war, as a drowning man clutches at a straw, it shows that they have gotten into a hopeless mess, have reached an impasse and are ready to rush headlong over the precipice." (*Problems of Leninism*, p. 478)

When, nearly a year ago, England and France declared war on Germany, millions of people throughout the capitalist world again fell prey to the lying Anglo-French propaganda which attempted to present this new war as a "war for freedom and democracy." Even many confirmed foes of imperialism and war were deceived by this lying and shameless demagogy. There were quite a number of writers who were carried along by the stream. On the other hand, there were many who refused to be fooled. Thus, Theodore Dreiser, for instance, justly stated that he does not want to be the dupe of Anglo-American war propaganda. Those writers, however, who have until now failed to understand the simple fact that the present war is a struggle of the imperialist powers for a redivision of the world, have fallen prey to the deceptive imperialist propaganda.

In *War and Revolution*, a lecture delivered in 1917, Lenin dwelt at length on the point one must remember first and foremost in order to appraise correctly the nature of this or that war. Because of the tremendous theoretical significance of this lecture, we print it in full in this issue of our magazine. We also reprint an article Lenin wrote in August 1915 on the United States of Europe Slogan, [1] then popular in certain circles. In both of these works we can see most clearly the application of one of the fundamental principles of Leninism, which teaches us to evaluate facts on the basis of history and concrete facts. These works by Lenin deserve the readers' special attention also because they deal with problems with which we are concerned today, and they demonstrate Lenin's method in action. They present a vivid example of Lenin's dialectics as applied to the evaluation of social-historical phenomena. It is this approach that permitted Lenin at the very outset of the first imperialist war, literally on the day following his release from an Austrian prison, to give the following exhaustive scientific definition of the character of that war.

"The world war in Europe has the unmistakable characteristics of a bourgeois, imperialist, dynastic war. A struggle for markets and for the plunder of foreign countries, a striving to put an end to the revolutionary movement of the proleta-

[1] A similar slogan was advanced by the ruling classes of England and France during the first months of the second imperialist war, and is current in certain circles until this day.

riat and the democratic sections at home, a striving to fool, disunite and decimate the ranks of the proletarians of all countries by inciting the wage slaves of one nation against the wage slaves of another nation for the benefit of the bourgeoisie—that is the only real content and meaning of the war." (Vol. XVIII, p. 44, Russ. ed.)

With every day that passes the large masses are perceiving ever more clearly the real character of the present war which is nothing but a fight among imperialist powers for a redivision of the world. And with every day that passes the number of people deceived by the imperialist propaganda grows smaller. For months have the ruling classes of England and France represented this war as a war waged allegedly for freedom and democracy against Hitlerism. The arrest and conviction of the French Communist deputies, the violent suppression of the working class movement in France—such is the real picture of the internal policies of theFrench ruling classes which ended up in such an ignominious debacle.

Andre Marty, veteran of the French working-class movement, enumerated in one of his recent articles the "achievements" of the Daladier-Reynaud governments on the front of "struggle for freedom": "They disolved 675 various public organizations, 620 trade unions; they unseated 500 city mayors and annulled more than ten thousand mandates of deputies elected by the people, and also of trade union leaders, *etc., etc.*" Even on the very day the military tribunal in Paris, sitting behind closed doors, sentenced a group of Communist members of the French parliament to terms of hard labor, Paul Reynaud had the insolence to tell the citizens of the United States over the radio that "in France everyone is free to express his thoughts without fear."

The full scope of the onslaught of reaction in France, the restrictions imposed by the censorship, and the suppression of civil liberties can be grasped best by comparing the regime set up by Daladier and Reynaud in their time, with the situation in England where the freedom of the press and the rights of the people are much less curtailed than in France after the beginning of the war. However, the situation in England is such that one of the editorials in *Life and Letters Today* stated: "We fight 'for freedom' in chains such as never before have we worn." Several months have passed since these words were written. The reactionary policies of the French ruling classes have brought the country an unheard-of defeat; the home policies of the British Empire seem to be following the vicious path which France has already traversed.

By ferocious persecution of the Communists in France, and the suppression of any and all criticism, the French bourgeoisie tried to conceal from the people the real state of affairs. Now, in the light of the break-down of the entire governing apparatus, and the unprecedented defeat suffered by the French army, truth can no longer be concealed. France is undergoing a crisis of the gravest nature.

Lenin once said that one of the characteristic features of any crisis is "the collapse of everything that is *rotten.*" (Vol. XXX, p. 224, Russ. ed.)

The defeat suffered by France was prepared for by the entire policy of the French ruling classes during the last several years. On the 10th of March, 1939, Stalin prophetically stated in his report at the Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party that "the big and dangerous political game started by the supporters of the policy of non-intervention may end in a serious fiasco for them." And in the twelfth chapter of the *History of the C.P.S.U.(B)*, we read the following truly prophetic words: "It may be presumed that history will exact retribution also from the ruling circles of Britain, and of their friends in France and the U.S.A."

The lesson of the collapse of the internal policies of the French government, which brought the country to defeat, has apparently been lost on the British ruling class. At least, the English papers report the tightening of the censorship,

cases of persecution of men active in the labor movement; British workers distributing anti-war leaflets are being thrown into jail; in Canada and Australia the Communist Party has been outlawed. These repressions, however, cannot prevent the truth from spreading nor can they uproot the ever growing opposition in England to the imperialist war.

In the works of the founders of Marxism and in the works of Lenin and Stalin, the masses are searching for an answer to the problems that agitate them. It is highly indicative that in the last few months, the size of the editions of the works of Lenin and Stalin have grown in England by leaps and bounds. During the first six months after the beginning of the war, more than twice as many Marxist books were sold than during the two preceeding years taken together. By studying these works, the finest representatives of the people learn to grasp the laws that determine the development of society, learn not only to understand the world, but also to change it. The number of honest people in England who raise their voice against the reactionary policies of the British ruling classes, is growing from day to day.

In his article "British Pacifism and British Dislike of Theory" written in 1915, Lenin, in speaking of E. D. Morel, one of the leaders of the Union of Democratic Control, who came out against the first imperialist war, said: "We cannot fail to admit that we are dealing here with an exceptionally honest and courageous bourgeois who is not afraid to break with his own party." (*Lenin on Britain*. International Publishers. New York, p. 153.)

In the England of today, and not only in England, but throughout the world, the number of men like Morel is incomparably greater than it was at the time of the first imperialist war. The number of men who are breaking with the reactionary policies of the bourgeoisie, and are linking their ranks with those of the militant revolutionary working class is rapidly growing. The events in France have been a further lesson to many. The defeat of France ruled by traitors is not the defeat of the French people. The French people did not want the war into which it was plunged by its criminal leaders who placed their class interests above the interests of the country and the people. France was the country where the anti-war movement was born and, under the leadership of Barbusse, spread throughout the world. At the beginning of the second imperialist war, the best daughters and sons of the French people were fighting together with the Communist Party against chauvinism and war.

Lenin held in great esteem the revolutionary traditions of the French workers and peasants. Replying to those who slandered the French people and doubted its revolutionary firmness, Lenin wrote in 1916:

"It is untrue to say that 'the French are incapable' of carrying on systematic illegal work. Untrue! The French quickly learned to conceal themselves in the trenches; they will quickly learn the new conditions of illegal work and systematically to prepare for a *revolutionary mass* movement. I believe in the French revolutionary proletariat." (Vol. XIX, p. 24, Russ. ed.)

Some three years later, during the memorable days of 1919, the French working class and the revolutionary French sailors fully confirmed Lenin's words. "The landing of French troops in the south of Russia ended in a series of uprisings of French sailors," Lenin said in one of his reports in the winter of the same year (Vol. XXIV, p. 559, Russ. ed.). The French workers stood shoulder to shoulder with the British proletariat in the struggle against the intervention of the Allies in the land of the Soviets. When the English government threatened to send its navy against Petrograd, the British workers declared: "We shall not permit war on Russia!" Citing these words, Lenin pointed out hat " 'Councils of Action' were formed all over Britain, and the war of the British Imperialists was frustrated." (Vol. XXV, p. 419, Russ. ed.)

Such are the facts of history

which come to mind when we read the recently published documents referring to the diplomatic negotiations and plans for another war of intervention against the U.S.S.R. These documents show for instance that the Anglo-French militarists were preparing to bomb Baku and Batumi, and negotiations to this effect were conducted in March of this year by the French ambassador in Turkey. This subject is also dealt with in Weygand's telegram to Gamelin now made public.

The Soviet people remember well the history of the first war of intervention against the Land of Socialism and do not for a moment doubt that any new attempt at intervention will be doomed to an even sadder fate than that which befell the first. At the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party Stalin sounded the warning to those who were planning a new war against the U.S.S.R. that "such a war would be the most dangerous war for the bourgeoisie. It would be the most dangerous war, not only because the peoples of the U.S.S.R. would fight to the very death to preserve the gains of the revolution; it would be the most dangerous war for the bourgeoisie for the added reason that it would be waged not only at the fronts but also behind the enemy's lines. The bourgeoisie need have no doubt that the numerous friends of the working class of the U.S.S.R. in Europe and in Asia will do their best to strike a blow in the rear at their oppressors who start a criminal war against the fatherland of the working class of all countries. And let not Messieurs the bourgeoisie blame us if some of the governments so near and dear to them which today rule happily 'by the grace of god,' are missing on the morrow after the outbreak of such a war." (*Problems of Leninism*, p. 480)

There is every indication that this forecast will be fulfilled just as all the other forecasts of the science of Marxism-Leninism have been fulfilled.

TIMOFEI ROKOTOV

VLADIMIR LENIN

WAR AND REVOLUTION

Lecture delivered May 27 (14) 1917

The question of war and revolution has been so often raised lately in the whole press and at every public meeting that in all probability many of you are not only quite familiar with many sides of this question, but are already bored with it. I have not had an opportunity of speaking, or even of being present, at any Party or public meeting in this district, and so I might by chance repeat or possibly not deal in sufficient detail with those sides of the question that greatly interest you.

It seems to me that the main thing in the question of the war, which usually remains forgotten, which receives inadequate attention, the main reason why there is so much controversy—and, indeed, I would say, empty, hopeless, aimless controversy—is that people forget the fundamental question of the class character of the war; why the war broke out; the classes that are waging it; the historical and historico-economic conditions that give rise to it. From what I have observed of the manner in which the question of the war is presented at public and Party meetings, I am convinced that the numerous misunderstandings which have arisen in connection with it are due to the fact that in discussing the war we

very often speak in totally different languages.

From the point of view of Marxism, that is, of modern scientific Socialism, the fundamental question for Socialists in discussing how this war should be appraised, and what our attitude towards it should be, is the objects of the war and the classes which prepared and directed it. We, Marxists, are not among those who are absolutely opposed to all wars. We say: our object is to achieve the Socialist system of society, which, by abolishing the division of mankind into classes, by abolishing all exploitation of man by man, and of one nation by other nations, will inevitably abolish all possibility of war in general. In the war for this Socialist system of society, however, we will unavoidably meet a situation in which the class struggle in each nation might collide with a war, caused by this very class struggle, between different nations. For this reason we cannot deny the possibility of revolutionary wars, that is, of wars arising out of the class struggle, conducted by revolutionary classes, and having direct, immediate, revolutionary significance. We cannot deny this, particularly because the history of European revolutions during the past century, the past 125-135 years, shows that in addition to the majority of wars, which were reactionary, there have been revolutionary wars; for example, the war waged by the revolutionary masses of the people of France against united monarchist, backward, feudal and semi-feudal Europe. Even at the present time there is no more widespread deception of the masses in Western Europe, and lately, here in Russia, than deception by reference to revolutionary wars. There are wars and wars. We must examine the historical conditions which gave rise to each particular war, the classes which conduct it, and for what object. Unless we do this, all our arguments about war will be reduced to futility, to a wordy and barren controversy. That is why I will take the liberty, since you have taken the question of the relation between war and revolution for your subject, of dealing with this side of the question in detail.

We know of the aphorism by one of the most celebrated writers on the philosophy and history of war—Clausewitz—which reads as follows: "War is a continuation of politics by other means." This was stated by a writer who reviewed the history of war and drew philosophical lessons from it soon after the era of Napoleonic wars. This writer, whose fundamental ideas have now become an undoubted acquisition for all thinking people, combated some eighty years ago the philistine and ignorant prejudice that war can be separated from the politics of the respective governments, the respective classes; that war can at any time be regarded simply as aggression which disturbs peace, and then restoration of this disturbed peace. As much as to say: People quarreled, and then made up! This is a crude and ignorant opinion, refuted scores of years ago, and refuted now by a more or less careful analysis of any historical epoch of war.

War is a continuation of politics by other means. Every war is inseparably connected with the political system which gave rise to it. The politics which a certain power, a certain class in that state, pursued for a long period before the war, are inevitably and unavoidably pursued by that very same class during the war; it merely changes its form of action.

War is a continuation of politics by other means. When the French revolutionary citizens and revolutionary peasants, at the end of the

eighteenth century, after overthrowing the monarchy by revolutionary means, established a democratic republic, and having settled accounts with their monarch, also settled accounts in a revolutionary manner with their landlords—these revolutionary class politics could not but shake the rest of autocratic, tsarist, monarchist, semi-feudal Europe to its foundation. And the inevitable continuation of these politics of the victorious revolutionary class in France were wars, in which, pitted against the revolutionary France were all the monarchist countries of Europe, which formed their notorious coalition, and waged a counter-revolutionary war against France. Just as within the country the French revolutionary people displayed a revolutionary energy such as had not been seen for centuries, so in this war at the end of the eighteenth century they displayed a similar colossal revolutionary genius; they remolded the whole system of strategy, they broke all the old laws and customs of war; and in the place of the old army they created a new revolutionary people's army and introduced new methods of warfare. I think that this example is particularly worthy of attention, because it demonstrates what bourgeois newspaper writers now constantly forget when playing on the prejudices and philistine ignorance of totally uneducated masses, who do not see this inseparable economic and historical connection between every war and the preceding politics of every country, of every class which ruled before the war and achieved its objects by so-called "peaceful" means. So-called—because the methods employed for ensuring "peaceful" rule over the colonies can hardly be described as peaceful.

Peace reigned in Europe, but this peace was maintained because the rule of the European nations over hundreds of millions of inhabitants of colonies was exercised only by constant, uninterrupted and ceaseless wars which we Europeans do not regard as wars, because so often they resembled, not wars, but brutal massacre, extermination, of unarmed people. And the whole point is that to understand modern war we must, first of all, cast a glance at the politics of the European powers as a whole. We must not take individual examples, individual cases which can be easily torn from the general context of social phenomena, and which are valueless, because it is just as easy to quote opposite examples. No, we must take the whole of the politics of the whole system of European states in their economic and political concatenation, so as to understand how the present war steadily and inevitably arose out of this system.

We constantly see attempts being made, particularly by capitalist newspapers—monarchist or republican, it makes no difference—to ascribe a false historical content to the present war. For example, nothing is more common in the French Republic than attempts to depict the war which France is now waging, as a continuation and a repetition of the wars of the Great French Revolution of 1792. There is no more widespread method of deceiving the French masses, the French workers, and the workers of all countries, than that of introducing into our epoch the "jargon" and some of the slogans of that epoch, and trying to make it appear that even today republican France is defending its freedom against monarchy. They forget the "slight" circumstance that at that time, in 1792, the war in France was waged by a revolutionary class which had made an unprecedented revolution, had destroyed the French monarchy to its foundations with incredible heroism of the masses,

and had risen against united, monarchist Europe for no other object than that of continuing its revolutionary struggle.

The war in France was a continuation of the politics of the revolutionary class which had made a revolution, gained a republic, settled accounts with the French capitalists and landlords with hitherto unprecedented energy, and for the sake of these politics, in continuation of them, started a revolutionary war against united, monarchist Europe.

Today, however, we are confronted, first of all, by two groups of capitalist powers. We have before us all the great world capitalist powers—England, France, America, Germany—the politics of which for a number of decades consisted of unceasing economic rivalry for world supremacy, to strangle small nationalities, to secure threefold and tenfold profits for bank capital, which has enmeshed the whole world in the chains of its influence. These are the real politics of England and of Germany. I emphasize this. We must never tire of emphasizing this, because if we forget it we shall never understand anything about modern war, and we shall find ourselves helpless in the power of any bourgeois writer who palms off fraudulent phrases.

The real politics of both groups of great capitalist giants—England and Germany, who with their allies are fighting each other—the politics pursued for decades before the war must be studied and understood as a whole. If we fail to do that we shall not only be forgetting the fundamental demand of scientific Socialism, and of social science in general—but we shall be preventing ourselves from understanding anything about modern war. We would place ourselves in the power of that fraud Milyukov, who is inciting chauvinism and hatred of one nation for another by methods that are employed everywhere without exception, and which Clauzewitz, whom I mentioned in the beginning, described eighty years ago, when, already at that time, he ridiculed the opinion that people were, so to speak, living peacefully, and suddenly they quarreled! As if that were true! Can war be explained if it is not connected with the preceding politics of the given state, the given system of states, the given classes? I repeat once more: this is the fundamental question which is constantly forgotten; and the failure to understand it transforms nine-tenths of the arguments about war into useless wrangling and the bandying of words. We say: if you have not studied the politics both groups of belligerent powers have pursued for decades—not taking facts at random, not picking out individual examples—if you cannot show the connection between this war and the politics preceding it, then you understand nothing about this war!

And these politics show us only one thing; ceaseless economic rivalry between two world giants, two capitalist economies. On the one hand there is England, a state which owns a bigger part of the globe; the wealthiest state in the world, which created this wealth not so much by the labor of its workers as by the exploitation of vast number of colonies, by the vast power of the English banks which, constituting a numerically insignificant group of three, four or five giant banks, stand at the head of all the other banks controlling hundreds of billions of rubles, and controlling in such a way that we can say without exaggeration: there is not a spot on the whole globe this capital has not laid its heavy hand on; there is no patch of land not enmeshed by a

thousand threads in the net of British capital. By the end of the nineeteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries this capital had grown to such enormous proportions that its activities extended far beyond the frontiers of a single state and created a group of giant banks possessing incredible wealth. Pushing this insignificant number of banks to the front, it enmeshed the whole world in this net of hundreds of billions of rubles. This is the main thing in the economic policy of England and the economic policy of France, concerning which the French writers themselves, for example, the contributors to *L'Humanité*, the newspaper now directed by ex-Socialists (for instance, none other than the well-known writer on financial questions, Lysis), wrote several years before the war: "France is a financial monarchy, France is a financial oligarchy; France is the usurer of the whole world."

On the other hand, opposed to this group, mainly Anglo-French, stands another group of capitalists, even more predatory and more piratical—a group which came to the capitalist feasting board when all the places had been taken, but which introduced into the struggle new methods of developing capitalist production, better technique, incomparable organization, which transformed the old capitalism, the capitalism of the epoch of free competition, into the capitalism of gigantic trusts, syndicates, cartels. This group introduced the principle of state capitalist production, uniting the gigantic forces of capitalism with the gigantic forces of the states into one mechanism, and amalgamating tens of millions of people in a single organization of state capitalism. This is the economic history, this is the diplomatic history of a number of past decades which no one can get away from. It alone provides you with a path to the correct solution of the problem of war and leads to the conclusion that the present war is also the product of the politics of the classes which are now at grips in this war; the politics of the two great giants who, long before the war, had enmeshed the whole world, all countries, in their nets of financial exploitation, and who before the war had economically divided the world among themselves. They had to come into collision because, from the point of view of capitalism, the redivision of this rule became inevitable.

The old division was based on the fact that in the course of several centuries England had ruined her former competitors. Her one-time competitor was Holland, which had ruled over the whole world; her one-time competitor was France, who had waged wars for supremacy for about a hundred years. By means of prolonged wars England, on the basis of her economic power, of her merchant capital, established her unchallenged rule over the world. A new robber appeared. In 1871 a new capitalist power arose, which developed ever so much faster than England. This is a fundamental fact. You will not find a single book on economic history that does not admit this indisputable fact—Germany's more rapid development. This rapid development of German capitalism was the development of a young and strong robber who came before the league of European powers and said: "You ruined Holland, you defeated France, you have gotten hold of half the world—please give us our share." What is "our share?" How can it be determined in the capitalist world, in the world of banks? In that world strength is determined by the number of banks;

there, strength is determined in the way it was defined in an organ of the American billionaires with purely American frankness and purely American cynicism. It was put this way: "In Europe a war is going on for world supremacy. Two things are needed in order to achieve world supremacy: dollars and banks. We have the dollars; we will create the banks and rule the world." This is what a leading newspaper of the American billionaires stated. I must say that this cynical American assertion by a swelled-headed and arrogant billionaire, contains a thousand times more truth than the thousands of articles written by bourgeois liars who claim that this war is a war for some sort of national interests, national problems, and other obvious lies of the same sort, which throw all history overboard and take a single example, for instance, the fact that the German robber attacked Belgium. The latter is undoubtedly true. Yes, that group of predatory powers, indeed, did attack Belgium with incredible ferocity; but it did only that which the other group of robbers did yesterday by other means, and is doing today, against other nations.

When we argue about annexations—and this is part of the question I have tried briefly to explain to you as the history of the economic and diplomatic relations which gave rise to the present war—when we argue about annexations, we always forget that this is precisely what the war is being waged for: the division of conquests; or, to put it more simply, the sharing of the loot between two gangs of robbers. And when we argue about annexations we constantly see tricks employed which from the scientific standpoint are beneath criticism and from the social-publicist standpoint are such as cannot be otherwise described than crude deception. Ask a Russian chauvinist or social-chauvinist and he will thoroughly explain what annexation by Germany means—he understands that excellently. But he will never give you a general definition of annexations that will apply to Germany, to England and to Russia. He will never do that! When the newspaper *Rech* (to pass from theory to practice), jeering at our newspaper *Pravda*, said: "These *Pravda*-ites regard Courland as an annexation! What is the use of arguing with such people?"—our reply was: "Please give us a definition of annexations that will apply to the Germans, to the English and to the Russians. We say that you will either decline to do this, or we will immediately expose you." *Rech* remained silent. We assert that not a single newspaper—neither that of the ordinary chauvinists who simply say that we must defend the country, nor that of the social-chauvinists, has ever given a definition of annexations that would apply to Germany and to Russia; that could be applied to either side. And it cannot give such definition, because this war is the continuation of the politics of annexations, that is, seizure, capitalist robbery, on both sides, on the part of both groups engaged in the war. Hence, it is clear that the question as to which of these two robbers first drew the knife has no significance for us whatever. Take the history of the naval and military expenditure of both sides for the past few decades; take the history of the little wars they waged before this big one—"little" because few Europeans were killed in them; but of the people who belonged to the nations that were being crushed, hundreds of thousands were killed. They were not even regarded as nations (some Asians, Africans—can you call them nations?). Against

these nations war was carried on in this way: they were unarmed, and they were mowed down with machine-guns. Can you call that war? Properly speaking, these were not wars, and one may forget about them. That is their attitude towards this wholesale deception of the masses of the people.

This war is a continuation of the politics of seizure, of shooting down whole nationalities, of incredible atrocities perpetrated by the Germans and the English in Africa, by the English and Russians in Persia—I don't know who outdid whom—for which the German capitalists regarded them as enemies. They said in effect: You are strong because you are rich, are you? But we are stronger than you, therefore we have the same 'sacred' right to rob as you have. This is what the real history of British and German finance capital for decades preceding the war amounts to. This is what the history of Russo-German, Russo-English and Anglo-German relations amount to. This provides the key to an understanding of what the war is about. This is why the story that is being circulated about the causes of the war is fraud and deception. Forgetting the history of finance capital, the history of how this war for redivision matured, they try to make it appear as if two nations had lived in peace, and suddenly one attacked and the other defended itself. All science is forgotten, the banks are forgotten, the nations were called to arms, the peasants who know nothing about politics are called to arms. You must defend—that is all there is to it! If we were going to argue in this way it would have been more logical to suppress all newspapers, burn all books, and prohibit all press discussion on annexations—in this manner justification of such an attitude towards annexations could be obtained. They cannot tell the truth about annexations because the whole history of Russia, of England and of Germany is an unbroken record of ruthless, bloody war for annexations. In Persia and in Africa war was waged by the Liberals, who flogged political offenders in India for advancing demands for which a struggle was going on in Russia. French colonial troops have also oppressed nations. Such is preceding history. Such is the real history of unprecedented plunder! Such are the politics these classes are continuing in the present war. That is why they cannot give the same reply to the question of annexations as we do when we say: every nation that is joined to another nation, not by the free choice of the majority of the population, but by decision of the tsar, or government, is an annexed nation, a usurped nation. The repudiation of annexations means granting every nation the right to form a separate state, or to live in alliance with any other nation it pleases. Such a reply is quite clear to every worker who is at all class-conscious.

In every resolution—and scores of them are being passed and published in, say, the newspaper *Zemlya i Volya*—you will find the poorly formulated reply: we do not want war for the purpose of gaining supremacy over other nations; we are fighting for our freedom—this is what all the workers and peasants say, and by this they express the workers' opinion, the working man's understanding of the war. Thus, they say in effect: if the war were in the interests of the working people and against the exploiters, we would be in favor of it. We, too, would be in favor of it; and no revolutionary party could oppose such a war. But the authors of these numerous resolutions are not right,

because they imagine that they are conducting the war. "We, soldiers, we workers, we peasants, are fighting for our freedom." I will never forget the question that one of them put up to me after a meeting: "Why do you talk against capitalists all the time? Am I a capitalist? We, workers, are defending our freedom." It is not true—you are fighting because you are obeying your capitalist government; the war is not being conducted by the people, but by the governments. I am not surprised when a worker, or a peasant who has not studied politics, who has not had the good fortune, or misfortune, to study secret diplomacy, to see this picture of financial plunder (this oppression of Persia by Russia and England for example)—forgets this history and naively asks: what have capitalists got to do with it? I am doing the fighting. He does not see the connection between the war and the government; he does not see that the government is conducting the war, and that he is a tool in the hands of the government. He can call himself a revolutionary people, write eloquent resolutions—this is a lot for a Russian because this has only recently come into vogue here. Recently, for example, the Provisional Government published a "revolutionary" declaration. But this makes no difference; other nations, more experienced in the capitalist art of deceiving the masses and in writing "revolutionary" manifestoes, have beaten all records in this field. If you take the parliamentary history of the French Republic since it became a Republic supporting tsarism, you will find scores of examples, in the course of decades of its parliamentary history, of manifestoes written in the most eloquent language, serving to cover up the policy of most sordid colonial and financial plunder. The whole history of the Third French Republic is the history of this plunder. This is the source of the present war. It is not the product of the evil designs of the capitalists, nor the result of the mistaken policy of monarchs. It would be wrong to look at it that way. No, this war was inevitably called forth by the development of gigantic, large-scale capitalism, particularly bank capitalism, which led to a matter of four banks in Berlin, and five or six in London, ruling the whole world, cornering all wealth and backing their financial policies with all the armed forces. Finally, they clashed, and came to grips in an unprecedentedly fierce struggle, because the old method of non-interfered-with seizure of territory could no longer be pursued; one or the other side must give up its colonial possessions. In the capitalist world such questions are not settled voluntarily. They can be settled only by war. That is why it is ridiculous to blame this or that crowned robber. They are all alike, these crowned robbers. That is why it is also absurd to blame the capitalists of this or that country. They are only to blame for introducing such a system. It is done, however, in accordance with all the laws which are protected by all the forces of civilized states. "I am acting fully within my rights; I buy shares. All the courts, the whole police force, the whole standing army and all the navies in the world protect this sacred right of mine to shares." If banks are established which manipulate hundreds of millions of rubles, if they have enmeshed the whole world in this net of bank robbery, if these banks have come to grips in a life and death struggle—who is to blame? Where will you find the culprit? The whole development of capitalism during the past half century is to blame; and there is no way out except by overthrowing the rule of

the capitalists and by a workers' revolution. This is the reply our Party arrived at after analyzing the war; that is why we say: this simple question of annexations has been so confused, the representatives of the bourgeois parties have lied to such an extent, that they make it appear as if Courland does not represent annexation by Russia. These three crowned robbers divided up Courland and Poland between them. They shared them for a hundred years, tore the living flesh from them; and the Russian robber tore off most, because at that time he was the strongest. And when the young robber who participated in the loot at that time grew up and became a strong capitalist power—Germany—he said: Let us have a redivision! You want to stick to what you've got? You think you are stronger? Let us match our strength!

This is what this war amounts to. Of course, this challenge—"let us match our strength!" is only the expression of decades of the politics of plunder, the politics of the big banks. That is why nobody can tell the plain truth about annexations, so that every worker and peasant can understand, as we do. That is why the question of treaties, such a simple one, is so shamelessly confused by the whole press. You say that we have a revolutionary government, that in this revolutionary government there are Ministers who are nearly Socialists—Narodniks and Mensheviks. But when they talk about peace without annexations on the condition that peace without annexations is not defined (which means: we will take the German annexations and keep our own)—we say: what is the good of your "revolutionary" Ministry, your declarations, your statements that you do not want a war of conquest—when at the same time you are calling upon the army to launch an offensive? Do you not know that you have treaties which were concluded by Nikolai the Bloody in the most piratical manner? You do not know that? One can forgive workers or peasants, who have never robbed, nor read wise books, for not knowing this, but when educated Cadets preach this, they know perfectly well what these treaties contain. These treaties are "secret," but the whole diplomatic press of all countries is talking about them: "You will get the Straits; you—Armenia; you—Galicia; you—Alsace-Lorraine; you—Trieste, and we will definitely divide up Persia." And the German capitalist says: "And I will seize Egypt; I will crush the European nations if you do not return my colonies, and with interest." Shares are the sort of thing, you know, that cannot exist without interest. This is why the question of the treaties, such a simple and clear question, has given rise to the mass of outrageous, incredible, insolent lies that pour from the pages of all capitalist newspapers.

Take today's *Dyen*. In it Vodovozov, a man who in no sense is guilty of being a Bolshevik, but who is an honest democrat, says: I am opposed to secret treaties, permit me to say something about the treaty with Rumania. We have a secret treaty with Rumania and it provides that Rumania shall receive power over a number of foreign nations if she fights on the side of the Allies. All the treaties of the other Allies are exactly like this one. They would not have started out to throttle everyone without having concluded treaties. There is no need to delve into special magazines to find out what these treaties contain. It is sufficient to recall the main facts of economic and diplomatic history. Yes, for decades Austria fought in the Balkans to strangle nations there. . . . And if they have come

to grips in war, it is because they could not help it. This is why, in reply to the demand of the masses of the people to publish the treaties, demands which are becoming more and more persistent, the Cabinet Ministers, ex-Minister Milyukov and the present Minister Tereshchenko (one in the government without Socialist Ministers and the other in the government with a number of near-Socialist Ministers), have declared that the publication of the treaties means a rupture with the Allies.

That is so: the treaties must not be published because all of you belong to the same gang of robbers. We agree with Milyukov and Tereshchenko that the treaties cannot be published. From this, two different conclusions may be drawn. What follows from the fact that we agree with Milyukov and Tereshchenko that the treaties must not be published? If the treaties must not be published, then we must help the capitalist Ministers to continue the war. The other conclusion is: as the capitalists dare not publish the treaties, we must overthrow the capitalists. I will leave it to you to decide which of these conclusions is the correct one; but I strongly urge you to consider the consequences. If we were to argue as the Narodnik and Menshevik Ministers do, it would work out like this: since the government says that the treaties must not be published, then we must issue another manifesto. Paper has not become so expensive that new manifestoes cannot be written. Let us write a new manifesto and launch an offensive. What for? With what object? Who will determine the object? The soldiers are being called upon to enforce the predatory treaties with Rumania and France. Send Vodovozov's article, which I mentioned, to the soldiers at the front and then complain: it's all the fault of the Bolsheviks, no doubt the Bolsheviks invented this treaty with Rumania. But then you will not only have to suppress *Pravda*, but also deport Vodovozov for having studied history; you will have to burn all Milyukov's books, extremely dangerous books. Open any one of the books of the leader of the "people's freedom" party, the ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs. They are good books. What do they say? They say that Russia has "rights" to the Straits, to Armenia, to Galicia and to East Prussia. He shared out everything, and even appended a map. It will not only be necessary to exile the Bolsheviks and Vodovozov to Siberia for writing such revolutionary articles, but also to burn Milyukov's books, because if we were now to collect simple excerpts from these books, and sent them to the soldiers at the front, they would have the same inflammatory effect as the most inflammatory leaflets.

It remains for me now, in accordance with the brief plan I drew up for today's lecture, to touch on the question of "revolutionary defense." I think that after what I have had the honor of relating to you I can be concise in dealing with this question.

"Revolutionary defense" is the name given to the justification of the war by means of arguments such as: we have made a revolution, we are a revolutionary people, we are a revolutionary democracy. What is our reply to this? What sort of a revolution have we made? We have overthrown Nikolai. This revolution was not so difficult, if we compare it with a revolution that would completely overthrow the landlord and capitalist classes. Who came into power after our revolution? The landlords and the capitalists—the very classes that have long been in power in Europe. There, revolutions such as this took place a hundred years ago; there,

the Tereshchenkos, Milyukovs and Konovalovs have long been in power; and whether they have a Civil List for their kings, or do without this article of luxury, makes no difference. A bank remains a bank, whether capital is invested in concessions, profits remain profits, whether in a republic or in a monarchy. If any savage country dares to disobey our civilized capital which establishes such fine banks in the colonies, in Africa and Persia; if any savage nation disobeys our civilized bank, we send troops there and they introduce culture, order and civilization, as Lyakhov did in Persia and as the French "republican" troops, with equal savagery, exterminated the peoples of Africa. What difference does it make: it is also "revolutionary" defense, only it is displayed by broad unconscious masses of the people who do not see the connection between the war and the government, who do not know that this policy is backed by treaties. The treaties have remained, the banks have remained, the concessions have remained. In Russia the best men of their class are at the head of the administration; but this has not changed the character of the world war in the least. The new "revolutionary" defense is merely the use of the lofty concept of revolution to cover up the sordid and bloody war for the sordid and disgusting treaties.

The Russian revolution has not changed the character of the war, but it has created organizations the like of which exist in no other country, and did not exist during the majority of revolutions in the West. In the majority of revolutions a new government came forward consisting of men of the type of our Tereshchenkos and Konovalovs, while the country remained in a state of passivity and disorganization. The Russian revolution went further. This fact contains the embryo of the possibility that it will conquer the war. The fact is that in addition to the government of "near-Socialist" Ministers, the government of imperialist war, the government of offensive, which is connected with Anglo-French capital, that in addition to this government, and independently of it, we have all over Russia a network of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. This is the revolution which has not yet said its last word. This is the revolution that Western Europe has not had under similar conditions. These are the organizations of the classes who really need no annexations, who have no millions deposited in the banks, and who, perhaps, are not interested in whether the Russian Colonel Lyakhov and the British Liberal Ambassador divided up Persia properly. This is the guarantee that this revolution can go still further. It lies in the fact that the classes who are really not interested in annexation, notwithstanding their extreme faith in the capitalist government, notwithstanding the terrible confusion, the terrible deception that is contained in the very term "revolutionary" defense, notwithstanding the fact that they are supporting the loan, supporting the imperialist war government—notwithstanding all this, they have succeeded in creating organizations in which the masses of the oppressed classes are represented. These are the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, which in many places in Russia went much further than the Petrograd Soviet in their revolutionary work. This is quite natural, because in Petrograd we have the central organ of the capitalists.

Yesterday Skobelev said in his speech: we will take all the profits, we will take a hundred per cent. But here he outreached himself in a true ministerial fashion. If you

take today's *Rech* you will see what their opinion is about this passage in Skobelev's speech. That paper writes: "Why, this means starvation, death; a hundred per cent—why, this means everything!" Minister Skobelev goes further than the most extreme Bolshevik. To say that the Bolsheviks are on the extreme left is slander. Minister Skobelev is much more to the "Left." They hurled most awful abuse at me because, they alleged, I proposed to take the clothes off the backs of the capitalists. At all events, Shulgin said: "Let them take the clothes off our backs!" Picture a Bolshevik going up to citizen Shulgin to take his clothes away. He would have more reason to accuse Minister Skobelev of this. We have never gone so far. We have never proposed that profits be taken one hundred per cent. The promise, however, is valuable. If you take our Party's resolution, you will find that in it we propose exactly what I proposed, except that the grounds for the proposal are more fully formulated: control of the banks, and a fair income tax. That is all! Skobelev proposes to take a hundred kopeks out of each ruble. We have not proposed and do not propose anything of the kind. And even Skobelev only made a gesture. He does not seriously intend to carry it out; and if he does intend to do so, he will not be able for the simple reason that to promise all this after having made friends with Tereshchenko and Konovalov is somewhat ridiculous. It is possible to take eighty or ninety percent of the millionaires' incomes; but not by walking arm in arm with such ministers. If the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies were in power, they would really take it; but even then they would not take all, because they do not need it. They would take a large part of the incomes. No other form of government can do this. Minister Skobelev may be prompted by the best intentions in the world. I have seen these parties in the course of several decades; I belong to the revolutionary movement for thirty years. That is why I am least of all inclined to doubt their good intentions. But that is not the point; it is not a matter of good intentions. The road to hell is paved with good intentions. All the chancelleries are filled with documents signed by the Citizens ministers, but this has altered nothing. Start introducing control if you like, just start! Our program is such that reading Skobelev's speech we can say: we do not demand more. We are far more moderate than Minister Skobelev. He proposed both control and one hundred per cent. We do not want to take one hundred per cent; we say: "we will not believe you until you have begun to do something." This is the difference between us: we do not believe words and promises, and do not advise others to believe them. The experience of parliamentary republics teaches us that we must not believe in declarations on paper. If you want control, then start introducing it. One day is sufficient to pass a law on control. The Employees' Council in every bank, the Workers' Council in every factory, every Party must receive the right to control. We will be told that this is impossible, that there are commercial secrets, the sacred right of private property. Well, do as you like, but choose! If you want to save all these books, accounts and the deals of the trusts, then do not chatter about control; do not say that the country is on the verge of ruin.

In Germany the situation is still worse. In Russia we can obtain bread; in Germany they cannot. In Russia much can be done with organization. In Germany nothing more can be done. There is no bread,

and all the people will inevitably perish. People are now writing that Russia is on the verge of doom. If that is the case, then it is a crime to protect "sacred" private property. What does the word control mean? Have you forgotten that Nikolai Romanov also wrote a great deal about control. He repeated a thousand times the words: state control, public control, appointment of senators. During the two months that have elapsed since the revolution, the manufacturers have plundered the whole of Russia. Capital has made hundreds per cent profit; every report reveals this. And when the workers had the "impudence" to say in the course of the two months of the revolution that they want to live like human beings, the whole capitalist press of the country raised a howl. In every issue *Rech* raises a savage howl about the workers robbing the country. But we promise only control over the capitalists. Cannot we have fewer promises and more deeds? If you want control by officials, control by bodies such as existed in the past, then our Party expresses the profound conviction that you must not receive any assistance in this, even if you had in the government, not half a dozen, but a dozen Narodnik and Menshevik Ministers. Control can be exercised only by the people themselves. You must organize control by the Bank Employees' Councils, Engineers' Councils and Workers' Councils, and to begin this control tomorrow. Every official must be held responsible and liable to criminal prosecution if he gives false information in any of these institutions. The fate of the country is at stake. We want to know how much grain, how much raw material, and how many workers are available, and how they should be employed.

Now I come to the last question. This is the question of how to end the war. We are credited with the absurd idea that we want a separate peace. The German capitalist robbers are taking steps towards peace and are saying: we will give you a piece of Turkey and Armenia if you give us ore-bearing territory. This is what the diplomats are talking about in every neutral city! Everybody knows it. It is only covered up by conventional diplomatic phrases. They would not be diplomats if they did not speak in diplomatic language. What nonsense it is to say that we want to end the war by a separate peace! The idea that a war which is being waged by the capitalists of all the richest countries, a war called forth by decades of economic development can be brought to an end by one side ceasing hostilities, is so stupid that we think it is ridiculous to repudiate it. The reason why we repudiated it in a special resolution is that we are dealing with broad masses in whose ranks slander is being spread about us; but this idea is not worth talking about seriously. The war now being waged by the capitalists of all countries cannot be brought to an end without a workers' revolution against these capitalists. Until control has passed from the sphere of phrases to the sphere of action, until a government of the revolutionary proletariat has taken the place of the capitalist government, the government will be condemned to do nothing more than moan: we are doomed, doomed, doomed. Today, in "free" England, Socialists are being imprisoned for saying what I am saying. In Germany, Liebknecht is in jail for saying what I am saying; and in Austria, Friedrich Adler is in jail for saying the same thing with the aid of a revolver (perhaps he has been executed by now). The sympathy of the masses of the workers in all countries is on the side of these Socialists, and not on the side of

those who have deserted to join their capitalists. The workers' revolution is growing all over the world. In other countries, of course, it is more difficult. There they have no half-wits like Nikolai and Rasputin. There, the best people of their class are at the head of the administration. There, the conditions are not ripe for a revolution against autocracy; there they already have a capitalist class government. The most gifted representatives of this class have been administering the country for a long time. That is why, although it has not come yet, the revolution is inevitable there, no matter how many revolutionaries may perish, as Friedrich Adler and Karl Liebknecht are perishing. The future is with them, and the workers of all countries are with them. And the workers of all countries must be victorious.

As regards America's entry into the war I will say the following. It is argued that in America there is democracy, that there is a "White House" there. I say: slavery was abolished half a century ago. The war over slavery ended in 1865. Since then billionaires have sprung up. They hold the whole of America in their financial grip, are preparing to strangle Mexico, and will inevitably go to war with Japan over the partition of the Pacific. Preparations for this war have been going on for several decades already. A heap of books has been written on the subject. And America's real object in entering this war is to prepare for war against Japan. The American people enjoy considerable freedom, and it is difficult to believe that they will tolerate conscription, the creation of an army for aims of conquest, for a struggle against Japan, for example. The Americans can see from the example of Europe what this leads to. And so the American capitalists were obliged to intervene in this war in order to find a pretext to create a powerful standing army under cover of the lofty ideal of fighting for the rights of the small nationalities.

The peasants are refusing to sell their grain for money, and are demanding implements, boots and clothes. This decision contains a large share of extremely profound truth. Indeed, the country has been reduced to such a state of ruin that we see here, although in a smaller degree, what has existed in other countries for a long time: money has lost its power. The rule of capitalism is being so thoroughly undermined by the progress of events that the peasants, for example, refuse to accept money. They say: "of what use is the money to us?" And they are right. The rule of capitalism is not being undermined because somebody wants to usurp power. It would be absurd to "usurp" power. The rule of capitalism could not be brought to an end if the whole economic development of capitalist countries were not leading to this. The war has accelerated this process, and this has made capitalism impossible. No power on earth could destroy capitalism if it were not being washed away and undermined by history.

Here is a striking example. The peasant says what everybody sees: the power of money has been undermined. Here is only one way out: the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies must agree to the peasants' being given implements, boots and clothes in exchange for their grain. This is what things are coming to; this is the reply that life is suggesting. If this is not granted, tens of millions of people will go hungry, unshod and without clothes. Tens of millions of people are faced with destruction, and we have no time to bother about protecting the interests of the capitalists. The only way out is to transfer all power

to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, which represent the majority of the people. Perhaps mistakes will be made in the course of this. Nobody argues that this difficult task can be accomplished at one stroke. We do not say anything of the kind. We are told: "we want the Soviets to take power, but they do not want to take it." We say that experience will suggest to them, and the whole people will see, that there is no other way out. We do not want to "usurp" power, for the whole experience of revolutions teaches that only a power that is backed by the majority of the people can be durable. Consequently, the "usurpation" of power would be merely an adventure; and our Party would not agree to anything of the kind. The government that will be a government of the majority might pursue a policy which might prove to be a mistaken one at first, but there is no other way out. If that happens, there will be a peaceful change of policy inside these organizations. No other organizations can be devised. That is why we say that we cannot imagine any other solution of the problem.

How can the war be brought to an end? What would we do if the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies took power and the Germans continued the war? Those who are interested in our Party's views may have read in our newspaper *Pravda* the other day an exact quotation from what we said abroad as far back as 1915: if the revolutionary class of Russia, the working class, comes into power, it must offer to conclude peace. And if our terms are rejected by the German capitalists, or by the capitalists of any other country, the working class will be entirely in favor of war. We do not propose to end the war at one stroke. We do not promise this. We do not advocate such an impossible task as ending the war by the desire of only one side. It is easy to make promises of this kind, but it is impossible to carry them out. There is no easy way out of this terrible war. Fighting has been going on for three years. You will either go on fighting for ten years or agree to make a difficult and stern revolution. There is no other way out. We say: the war which was started by the capitalist government can be brought to an end only by a workers' revolution. Let those who are interested in the Socialist movement read the Basle Manifesto of 1912, which was adopted unanimously by the Socialist Parties all over the world; a manifesto which we published in our *Pravda*, a manifesto which cannot be published now in any other belligerent country, neither in "free" England, nor in Republican France, because it told the truth about the war even before the war broke out. It stated: war would break out between England and Germany because of capitalist rivalry. It stated: so much powder has been accumulated that the guns will go off of themselves. It stated what the objects of the war would be and said that it would lead to proletarian revolution. That is why we tell the Socialists who signed this manifesto and then deserted to the side of their capitalist governments that they have betrayed Socialism. All over the world a split has occurred in the Socialist ranks. Some are Cabinet Ministers; others are in jail. All over the world, one section of the Socialists advocated preparation for war, while another section, like the American Bebel—Eugene Debs—who is tremendously respected by the American workers, says: "I would rather be shot than give a single cent for this war. I am prepared to fight only in a proletarian war against the capitalists in all coun-

tries." This is how the ranks of the Socialists are split all over the world. The social-patriots in all countries think that they are defending their country. They are mistaken; they are defending the interests of one capitalist clique against another. We advocate proletarian revolution—the only true cause for which scores have gone to the scaffold, and hundreds and thousands are in jail. These Socialists in jail are a minority; but behind them is the working class, behind them is economic development. All this tells us that there is no other way out. This war can be brought to an end only by means of a workers' revolution in several countries. Meanwhile, we must prepare for this revolution, help it along. As long as the tsar conducted the war, the Russian people, in spite of their hatred of war and their determination to secure peace, could do nothing against it except prepare for the revolution against the tsar, and overthrow the tsar. And it was so. History confirmed this for you yesterday, and it will confirm it for you to-morrow. Long ago we said: we must help the growing Russian revolution. We said it at the end of 1914. For saying this our deputies in the Duma were exiled to Siberia. We were told: "You do not answer. You talk about revolution when strikes have ceased, when the deputies are in exile and when not a single newspaper is published!" We were accused of declining to answer. Comrades, we had been hearing this accusation for a number of years. We replied: you may be as angry as you like, but nothing can be done against the war until the tsar is overthrown. Our forecast proved to be correct. It is not yet fully confirmed, but it is beginning to be confirmed. The revolution is beginning to change the war from the Russian side. The capitalists are still continuing the war, and we say: the war cannot stop until the advent of a workers' revolution in several countries, because the people who want this war remain in power. We are told: "Things seem to be slumbering in a number of countries. In Germany all the Socialists are unanimously in favor of the war; only Liebknecht is opposed to it." To this I reply: "This one Liebknecht represents the working class; in him alone, in his adherents, in the German proletariat, lie the hopes of all. You do not believe it? Continue the war! There is no other road. If you do not believe in Liebknecht, if you do not believe in the workers' revolution, in the revolution that is ripening, if you do not believe this, then believe the capitalists!"

Nobody will be victorious in this war except the workers' revolution in several countries. War is not a game; war is a monstrous thing; war entails millions of victims, and it cannot be brought to an end so easily.

The soldiers at the front cannot separate the front from the state and decide things in their own way. The soldiers at the front are part of the country. As long as the state is fighting, the front will suffer. There is nothing to be done about it. The war was brought about by the ruling classes; it can be brought to an end only by a working class revolution. The question as to whether you will get a speedy peace will be determined solely by the process of development of the revolution. No matter what sentimental things might be said, no matter how much you might be told: let us put an end to the war immediately—it cannot be done without the development of the revolution. When power passes to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, the capitalists will oppose us; and Japan—

will, France—will, England—will; the governments of all countries will oppose us. The capitalists will oppose us, but the workers will support us. Then—the war which the capitalists started, will come to an end. This is the reply to the question of how to end the war.

First published in *Pravda* No. 93 (4,227), April 23, 1929.

THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE SLOGAN

In No. 40 of *Sotsial-Demokrat* we reported that the conference of the sections of our party abroad had decided to postpone the question of the "United States of Europe" slogan pending a discussion in the press on the *economic* side of the question.

At our conference the debate on the question assumed a one-sidedly political character. Perhaps this was partly due to the fact that the Manifesto of the Central Committee directly formulated this slogan as a political one ("the immediate *political* slogan..." it says), and not only did it advance the slogan for a republican United States of Europe, but especially emphasized that this slogan is false and senseless "without the revolutionary overthrow of the German, Austrian and Russian monarchies."

To argue against such an approach to the question within the *limits* of a political estimation of the given slogan, for instance, to argue that this slogan obscures or weakens, etc., the slogan of the Socialist revolution, is absolutely incorrect. Political changes of a truly democratic nature, and more so political revolutions, can never, under any circumstances, obscure or weaken the slogan of the Socialist revolution. On the contrary, they always bring it nearer, widen the basis for it, draw ever new strata of the petty bourgeoisie and the semi-proletarian masses into the Socialist struggle. On the other hand, political revolutions are inevitable in the course of the Socialist revolution, which must not be regarded as being a single act, but must be regarded as an epoch of turbulent political and economic upheavals, of the most acute class struggle, civil war, revolutions, and counter-revolutions.

But while the United States of Europe slogan, raised in connection with the revolutionary overthrow of the three most reactionary monarchies of Europe, headed by Russia, is quite invulnerable as a political slogan, the important question of its economic content and meaning still remains. From the point of view of the economic conditions of imperialism, *i. e.*, capital exports and the partition of the world among the "progressive" and "civilized" colonial powers, the United States of Europe is either impossible or reactionary under capitalism.

Capital has become international and monopolistic. The world has been divided among a handful of great powers, *i. e.*, powers successful in the great plunder and oppression of nations. The four Great Powers of Europe, England, France, Russia and Germany, with a population ranging from 250,000,000 to 300,000,000, with an area of about 7,000,000 square kilometers, possess colonies with a population of *almost half a billion* (494,500,000), with an area of 64,600,000 square kilometers, *i. e.*,

almost half the surface of the globe (133,000,000 square kilometers, not including the Polar region). Add to this the three Asiatic states, China, Turkey and Persia, which are now being torn to pieces by the plunderers who are waging a war of "liberation," namely, Japan, Russia, England and France. In those three Asiatic states, which may be called semi-colonies (in reality they are now nine-tenths colonies), there are 360,000,000 inhabitants and their area is 14,500,000 square kilometers (*i.e.*, almost one and one-half time the area of the whole of Europe).

Further, England, France and Germany have invested capital abroad to the amount of no less than 70,000,000,000 rubles. The function of securing a "legitimate" profit from this tidy sum, a profit exceeding 3,000,000,000 rubles annually, is performed by the national committees of millionnaires called governments, which are equipped with armies and navies and which "place" the sons and brothers of "Mr. Billion" in the colonies and semi-colonies in the capacity of viceroys, consuls, ambassadors, officials of all kinds, priests and other leeches.

This is how, in the epoch of the highest development of capitalism, the plunder of about a billion of the earth's population by a handful of great powers is organized. No other organization is possible under capitalism. Give up colonies, "spheres of influence," export of capital? To think this is possible means sinking to the level of a little minister who preaches to the rich every Sunday about the greatness of Christianity and advises them to give to the poor . . . if not several billions, at least several hundred rubles yearly.

United States of Europe under capitalism is equivalent to an agreement to divide up the colonies. Under capitalism, however, no other basis, no other principle of division is possible except force. A billionaire cannot share the "national income" of a capitalist country with anyone except in proportion "to the capital" invested (with an extra bonus thrown in, so that the largest capital may receive more than its due). Capitalism is private property in the means of production, and anarchy of production. To preach a "just" division of income on such a basis is Proudhonism, is the stupidity of a petty-bourgeois and philistine. Division cannot take place except in "proportion to strength." And strength changes in the course of economic development. After 1871 Germany grew strong three or four times faster than England and France; Japan, about ten times faster than Russia. There is and there can be no other way of testing the real strength of a capitalist state than that of war. War does not contradict the principles of private property—it is a direct and inevitable development of those principles. Under capitalism the even economic growth of individual enterprises, or individual states, is impossible. Under capitalism, no other means are possible to restore from time to time the disturbed equilibrium than crises in industry and wars in politics.

Of course, *temporary* agreements between capitalists and between the powers are possible. In this sense the United States of Europe is possible as an agreement between the *European* capitalists . . . but what for? Only for the purpose of jointly suppressing socialism in Europe, of jointly protecting colonial booty *against* Japan and America, which felt offended at being left out by the present division of colonies, and which, for the last half century, have grown infinitely faster than backward, monarchist

Europe, which is beginning to decay with age. In comparison with the United States of America, Europe as a whole implies economic stagnation. On the present economic basis, *i. e.*, under capitalism, the United States of Europe would mean the organization of reaction to retard the more rapid development of America. The times when the cause of democracy and the cause of Socialism was associated with Europe alone have gone forever.

The United States of the world (not of Europe alone) is a state form of national federation and national freedom which we connect with Socialism—until the complete victory of Communism brings about the total disappearance of any state, including the democratic one. As a separate slogan, however, the slogan of United States of the World would hardly be a correct one, first, because it merges with Socialism, second, because it may be wrongly interpreted to mean that the victory of Socialism in a single country is impossible; it may also create misconceptions as to the attitude of such a country to the others.

Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of Socialism is possible, first in a few or even in one, individual capitalist country. The victorious proletariat of that country, having expropriated the capitalists and organized its own Socialist production, would *confront* the rest of the capitalist world, attract to itself the oppressed classes of other countries, raise revolts among them against the capitalists, and, in the event of necessity, come out even with armed force against the exploiting classes and their states. The political form of society in which the proletariat is victorious, in which it has overthrown the bourgeoisie, will be a democratic republic, which will more and more centralize the forces of the proletariat of the given nation, or given nations, in the struggle against the states that have not yet gone over to Socialism. The abolition of classes is impossible without the dictatorship of the oppressed class, the proletariat. The free federation of nations in Socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle of the Socialist republics against the backward states.

It is for these reasons and after repeated debates on the question at the conference of the sections of the R.S.D.L.P. abroad, and after the conference, that the editors of the central organ have come to the conclusion that the United States of Europe slogan is incorrect.

August 23, 1915, *Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 44.

VICTOR SHKLOVSKY

Stories of Western Ukraine

ON THE WAY TO TARNOPOL

In Berdichev we learned that our troops had crossed the border during the night.

We were in a hurry. The train in which the newspaper office had been set up was waiting at Proskurov, in the big orchard of the brewery.

At night there was a thunderstorm in the distance. Its flashes darted westward. I thought it was the artillery blazing the way.

The orchard was big and dark.

The next day I drove toward Poland along with two staff-members of the Army newspaper at the Front.

We spent the night in Volochisk.

For many years here the road ended. One neither rode nor walked beyond this point.

A deserted Polish road. A statue of St. Francis of Assissi holding an infant Christ in his arms. This stone infant resembles a guitar.

The highway is good. It is lined with well-built houses with tin-plated roofs. There is something official about these houses; here lived the *osadniks*.

There were thirty thousand *osadniks* in the frontier districts. They were all from the western part of Poland. Here they were given land that had been taken away from the Ukrainians.

The road is smooth. Along it stand short-legged Christs with stone lambs on their shoulders—the good shepherd; and then Madonnas, and more statues of St. Francis of Assissi.

There were tanks, tractors, trucks carrying four machine-guns apiece, passenger cars of Soviet make, and then these were joined by "foreigners"—prize automobiles.

The sky was ours. The Polish air force did not count. The automobiles rolled on as if it were a procession.

Near Tarnopol we had to make a detour. The road was cluttered with motor cars.

The city was crowded with tanks. I was several hours late. The main force of the Army had already passed through the city. Men of the tank-crews told me that outside the villages the Soviet tanks had been greeted by Ukrainians with scythes and pitchforks: the population had come out to guard the bridges for the Red Army.

Their relations with the population were informal. For one who had seen a different war it was strange to see armed civilians in the streets. Foreigners in hats, rifles slung over their shoulders, patrolled the city and the villages. They were the militia which the Red Army had set up.

TARNOPOL

Because of its self-confidence and its confidence in the justice of its cause, the Red Army has been sometimes unduly trusting. We entered Tarnopol as we would enter Moscow. We were met with flowers, and the supply caravan was confidently moving through the city, creating jams here and there.

Our car stopped amid a crowd of people who were somewhat dismayed. A physician came over and said:

"We have just been shot at."

In front of us was a bridge over a railway. On the left—a concrete fence, and behind it a tall house standing all by itself; on the other side, a wooden fence, with a new four-story building behind it.

The column stood still. Several horses lay dead in their traces.

We had come upon this column from a side street, and we could not make out at once what had happened. The physician started to tell us how he had given first aid to the wounded, when suddenly a machine-gun was heard firing on the column; at the same time somebody began

to shoot from the house behind the wooden fence.

In the case of such street firing, the usual mistake made by the attackers is that they fire at too close a range; they fire from a machine-gun the way they would fire a pistol. That was the mistake the policemen made in Petersburg in 1917.

The men accompanying the field train were at a loss as to what to do. People began to run in different directions. Some began to wheel an anti-tank gun into position.

Now the bullets were flying along the street too, obviously fired from the church farther ahead.

Men fussed around the guns and the cars, agitated and somewhat disconcerted. It resembled the beginning of civil war, each setting out to fight on his own.

The lieutenant ordered the men to aim the gun at the church. Just as the shell exploded, flames shot up from the other church, the one to the right.

It was not we who set fire to this church, and there was too much inspiration in the way it was burning.

The game of the Polish officers was to set us at odds with the population. The man in the ranks resents being shot at from behind; he might become embittered. And the burning of the church was meant to impress the population.

I climbed over the wooden fence, followed by several Red Army men. The trees in the garden were still green. We raced through the garden, forced the door, and rushed up the stairs.

All the doors opening on the staircase were shut; clean doors with brass plates. We forced one of the doors. Behind it, we found women standing on their knees, weeping and screaming. They were escorted into the street. A Red Army man said calmly and politely:

"You better go to friends, you may be hit by a bullet."

Second floor, third floor. Just then somebody fired into the house, perforating the second story.

On one of the windows in an apartment on the third floor we found rockets and a Mauser revolver.

The house was searched. On the roof we saw foot-prints.

We were called downstairs. Two men in shorts and overcoats had been found in the basement.

One of them was hurt—not very badly though—in the leg. Scowling, he was dressing the wound with a bandage handed him by a Red Army man.

"Who are you, citizen?" I asked the wounded man in Russian . . . "What have you been doing here?"

The man replied, also in Russian:

"I am an engineer. I was taking a bath."

"Citizen," I said, "there is no water in the pipes, and your hair is dry. It seems more likely that you have just cast off your officer's uniform."

"No," the wounded man insisted. "I am an engineer—a bridge builder."

A Red Army man came over and said: "An engineer might be an officer too. But, to make sure—if you are really an engineer—write out the formula for the bent of a beam, one end of which has been fastened."

The wounded man was silent. His companion frowned and said:

"Don't ask him, he is not an engineer, he is a technician. Our technicians are not versed in theory."

"In that case," the Red Army man said, "draw a Dutch bond for the junction of two trusses in a bridge." He handed the prisoner a pencil.

The prisoner took the pencil and asked:

"Are you an engineer?"

"No," the Red Army man answered, "I am a sapper, but I passed the technical minimum test not long ago. You make the drawing—I'll know whether it is right."

"Take me to the commandant," the man in the shorts said.

The shooting stopped. I left the car and walked across the bridge.

The street was littered with broken glass. An old man was calmly sweeping the pavement.

The commandant's office was crowded with people. There was the Mayor, polite and nonplussed; there were liberated political prisoners in canvas jackets, Ukrainians, lawyers, representatives of various parties. The church was still ablaze. The street was filled with refugees.

They walked, or rode bicycles, or came in automobiles. They had all fled from the West, from Poznan. Their dress was conspiciously European. They were rich people for the most part. The poor had a harder time finding means of getting away.

The city was teeming with prisoners of war. They were being brought in automobiles.

A Provisional Administration has been set up. Here one sees an endless stream of people. No passes are required . . . Unemployed come—they ask for work. Workers from a quarry have come; they want to know: will stones be needed, and should they go on quarrying? The owner of a local mill came in with a worker. They asked: What are we to do with the flour?

Some men come in saying there were two carloads of glass and boots in a shop on Russka street. The shop belongs to an officers' cooperative society; it ought to be guarded.

Some Ukrainians, with whips, have come from neighboring villages. They have brought a letter addressed to Molotov. They are grateful for their liberation from Polish oppression. Later we attended a meeting with them. The hall was overcrowded. Brigade Commissar Goncharenko presided. He spoke in Ukrainian. The meeting lasted for hours.

Artisans, shop-clerks come—many of them. They ask about everything they can think of. Often the conversation turns on the Jews, or the Poles.

An old man, a peasant, is brought to see us. Apparently, he is to serve as evidence that these people—representatives of a host of parties—had a following in the countryside.

The old man begins to speak. At first he speaks calmly, then he begins to enumerate the parties to which he belonged at one time or another, and finally bursts out in exasperation:

"What would you expect? With a life like ours you would change more than sixteen parties if the right one was not there!"

The next day martial law was lifted. The bakeries were opened.

The very first thing they began to sell in the city was flowers. Flowers wither, they must be sold without delay.

Penetrating into a barber shop does not mean penetrating deeply into life. Still, here too one meets people—people who languished in Poland, people who know something about our country.

Very soon our actors began to arrive. They performed in halls with broken windows. We began to publish a Ukrainian newspaper. The air was still thick with rumors. Poles spread stories to the effect that the French had landed in Gdynia, had captured Danzig and were going to restore Poland from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

Our orders were printed in four languages: Ukrainian, Polish, Russian and Yiddish.

Valuables had been removed from the banks. Still, something remained. The banks were guarded by watchmen carrying axes. They were afraid to carry firearms, lest they be mistaken for soldiers.

The fire brigade was at work. Its chief had been injured while trying to put out the fire in the burning church. He was unconscious when we found him on the roof. Now the fire brigade was headed by a chauffeur who had had experience as a fireman.

Soviet moving pictures arrived. Lebedev-Kumach came. He wrote poems. More about poems later.

The shops opened their doors. The ruble was on a par with the zloty.

Ukrainians came to the city. Many of them. They came in holiday dress and arranged a carnival. The city has a population of fifty thousand. Many Jews, and many Poles—office clerks. The city is asphalted, and looks well. There are no industries.

On September 23, a meeting was held at the monument to Mickiewicz. The monument stands on a square. Two days ago it had been a scene of shooting. The building of a high school overlooks the square. A fine building. The student body consisted of six hundred Poles and ten Ukrainians. Yet the villages in the neighborhood are all Ukrainian, and a considerable part of the population in the city itself is Urkainian.

In this so intricately divided country a meeting was held at a monument to Mickiewicz. Many meetings had been held before. In fact, every Red Army man was the potential center of a meeting. People gathered around Red Army men all the time. And the men never missed an occasion to speak. In speaking they displayed a patience and insistence such as is probably unknown to representatives of any religion.

The meeting at the monument was the climax of many small meetings. At the end the people sang the *International*. They sang it in Ukrainian, in Yiddish, in Russian, in Polish—all at the same time. Besides, not all those assembled knew all the words. Some stanzas were sung by all, but here and there a stanza would be sung only in Russian, or, suddenly, a line or two would be heard only in Yiddish. But it was one and the same song.

The windows in Tarnopol were pasted over with blue paper. There had been German air-raids. Now the windows were open. Behind them stood people who knew that their life had changed; but they were not aware to what extent it had changed.

There was a long row of *droshkies* near the boulevard. Their drivers listened to the hymn bareheaded.

ON THE WAY TO LWOW

The road from Tarnopol was crowded with our cars. They moved in a long stream in the middle, leaving the right side to the supply trains. In the ditches and in the field off the road lay Polish automobiles of a variety of colors.

These fugitive auton.obiles, with different backgrounds behind their uniform destiny, lay all around us—purple, yellow, black, covered with clay; some of them had run short of gasoline, others had been deserted for other reasons and could be easily started.

These were added to our column and moved along with us. The cars that had been deserted on the road could not have been completely broken down. They had obviously got there in working order. But they had been stripped by chauffeurs. Here a tire was missing, there a spark plug had been removed, farther along we came across the frame of a wheelless car, still farther a car lay on its side, showing its dirty belly.

The road is lined with willows, slightly bent backwards, and rhymed with statues. It runs past large villages, poorer than those near the frontier, past towns whose names one remembers from Russian history—places where Bogdan Khmelnitsky once fought the Poles.

It is growing dark. On the right the wagons of the supply trains are lumbering along with a clatter of wheels. Although it is against the rules, the cars light up the road with their headlights.

We drive past a caravan of long Polish carts coming the other way. Refugees sit in the carts.

Prisoners of war were moving past in an endless stream. Their Polish caps were splendidly fashioned. The gendarmes' caps were even trimmed with brass facings—the way Don Quixote trimmed his cardboard helmet. The caps were splendid—triangular, quadrangular, green, blue. The generals' caps were so fine that they seemed capable of fighting all by themselves. The greatcoats were not bad; they were creased, but not as a result of having been in campaigns—the creases were those with which they had left the warehouses. Nor were the boots bad—their leather was still tan, they had seen little mud and just as little shoecleaning. The Polish army had not worn its boots; it still smelt of fresh cloth and leather, it still smelt of British help. Men walked barefoot in the chilly autumn morning—the boots rub against the skin of the feet. Some were going home on bicycles. Some wore black berets—those were fliers, the air force.

The Polish army was dispersing. At night men found shelter in the cottages of Ukrainian peasants.

We stop at an estate. The owners are gone. We enter a small clean cottage next to the castle. The cottage is furnished like a city apartment. Here lives the manager of the estate. There are big ledgers on the table. The entries show how much this or that farm laborer earned, the amount of food he consumed, how much he was paid, and how much the peasants owed the landlord.

The Polish landlord ruled the village through his manager.

We proceed towards Lwow. In the night the army makes a halt. Columns of trucks and tanks stretch as far as the eye can see. The morning warms up the ground slowly.

The autumn leaves crackle on the trees. We drive amid striped hills.

Near Lwow we heard the desultory rumbling of artillery fire. A mountain separated us from Lwow. Headquarters were situated in an orchard. Men studied a marked map. Some newspapers had just been received from Lwow. They had been brought by a refugee.

The paper consisted of two headlines. It said that Lwow was going to offer resistance. German troops had been encamped between us and the city. Now they were withdrawing. We drove on in the commander's car. The back window was covered with a coat of chalk. Inside, the car was tightly packed with people, a machine-gun, a black sheepskin coat and a loaf of bread.

We got out of the car and walked on through the fields. There was no enemy in evidence.

One of our cavalry regiments was stationed in the forest.

We returned. I spent the night in a truck.

In the morning I drove towards the city with a newspaper photographer.

Heavy tanks stood in endless rows, waiting for the battle to start.

We climbed up a familiar road, and passed a mounted patrol.

We drove on. Some boys met us and told us that we must return. There was a Polish ambush farther ahead.

The country had collapsed in the space of a few days. The communication unifying its army had broken down.

People had expected the Germans. But Soviet troops came instead. The destiny of people changed in a trice.

Prisoners of war trudged in large groups. It was raining.

IN LWOW

Lwow is riddled with deep holes. Pavement stones were used to build fortifications. It is a fine city. It has seen a good deal of fighting.

Everywhere one sees tram workers in semi-military uniforms busy at work. In one place they are dismantling a barricade. The population is helping them. The city surrendered yesterday. Today the trams are already running. The waterworks system is still out of order, and one sees long queues of people waiting for their turn at the pumps.

Crowds gather around our Red Army men.

Lwow is a fine city. Dominating the view is the burnt framework of the pointed steeple of the Catholic church on Grode-

TWO PAINTINGS BY SOVIET CHILDREN DEPICTING THE ENTRANCE OF THE RED ARMY INTO WESTERN UKRAINE

Drawing by Arnold Ziablitsky, 15 years

Drawing by Alexei Aksenov, 10 years

kowska Street. Lwow is a city of gray stone. The trees are still green. Near the citadel the Russian church lies in a heap of masonry after it was hit by a bomb dropped from an airplane.

The hotel is crowded with perplexed men wearing red armbands, students in velvet caps the color of raspberry, refugees who overflow the city, like foam overflows a beer glass; and in the large hotel rooms the wind, blowing through broken windows, swells the heavy curtains.

Few Soviet troops enter the city. The regiments halt in the surrounding villages. In the city itself one sees the squads attached to the commandant's headquarters, piles of shells in front of the palace of the quondam *Voyevoda*[1], piles of arms and munitions everywhere, machine-guns, canvas belts, shells of all calibers, bullets, revolvers.

The thick walls of deserted tank depots are pierced by German shells the way a piece of paper is pierced by a finger.

There are barrels filled with a bluish liquid—alcohol mixed with gasoline. This was used for fuel. There was not much gasoline, or, rather, not much of this mixture, left in Lwow. If the French and British had decided to repay Poland for the days she held out in order to enable them to mobilize, if they had come to her aid with all their airplanes, or even with a hundred airplanes, they could not have done anything to help her—there was no fuel.

The Polish army was doomed the day the war started.

The Polish government had no idea of the situation. At first it apparently thought that the fighting would be confined to the Corridor and it dispatched its forces to that region. The best Polish regiments were cut off there.

Polish regiments tried to invade Eastern Prussia in pursuit of momentary success. And in the meantime the Germans cut into the Polish troops like a knife cuts into cheese. They severed the Polish army into isolated sections and destroyed its communications.

Never has a nation been so vilely betrayed as the Polish people was betrayed by its government.

The Polish government led its people into war half-prepared and half-provided. It gave the soldier a greatcoat, but failed to give him underwear; it gave him a tunic, but no belt, and stuffed his pockets with bullets; it provided guns of different calibers, and jumbled the shells in the ammunition boxes.

It squandered its forces in its efforts to destroy the busts of Shevchenko in the Ukrainian villages; it tried to Polonize the Ukrainian city of Lwow by filling it with Polish officials; it wasted resources on maintaining its regime of occupation, on keeping up the strife between one nation and another, on measures that were to compel people to write their names differently, to believe differently; it converted Uniats into Catholics, and called itself a government of a democratic republic.

We came to free the people from a government that was alien to them; and they understood that it was not just Russians, Ukrainians, Tatars who had come, but the Soviet power.

The next day the electric lights were on again. Men in military uniform sat in the *Voyevoda's* palace, amid silk hangings, in well appointed rooms furnished with taste.

A sentry stood watch over a small painting by a second-rate Italian.

"This painting," he said, "I looked at it for a long time—it's a fine piece of art, of the seventeenth century, I believe. It should be taken good care of."

And he left, stepping heavily with his tired feet.

The office of the Provisional Administration was crowded with people demanding passes to go to various towns, although no passes were required anywhere.

A gray-haired professor, a veterinary surgeon, came with information about the spread of animal diseases in the Lwow district, and with a plan on how to combat the diseases. He wanted an appointment.

Workers came from a little factory producing gas appliances. Others came from the brewery. The name of Karamzin, a Ukrainian truck-driver from the brewery, appeared in the news. He directed the work of restoring the tram service in Lwow. He is forty-eight years old. It turned out that he could do anything.

A teacher, a Communist, came. He had been unemployed for twenty years. Now he was chairman of a peasant committee in a village near Lwow. He was learning from the young lieutenant what to do with the landlord's land, how to supply the population with wood from the government's forest, what to do with the treasury of the foresters' office, how to guard it, and how to distribute the cattle among the peasants.

He was writing it all down in a notebook, calm and self-possessed.

Another teacher, an older man, looked at him and said:

"I am fifty, and somehow I don't feel happy. I have been out of work for twenty

---

[1] *Voyevoda*—Polish for governor—*Ed.*

years; I feel at peace now, but I can't feel happy. My life is gone, comrade."

The sidewalks of Lwow are thronged with people. They talk many languages, but mostly Polish. Farther away, behind the theater, the city changes its aspect: cheerless houses and markets; they resemble a Kharkov suburb of the old days.

Lwow looks like a city in Southern Germany.

But the cities of Southern Germany remind one of Italy. Lwow has an international aspect, many baroque buildings, statues of saints dressed in flowing garments. The architecture of Lwow makes one think of the flame of a candle fanned by the wind.

The Polish government decorated these statues of saints with oval auras made of electric lamps; it modernized the city and changed it. There are the colored lights of moving picture houses, American movies, American and British motor cars of all makes, shops with a variety of haberdashery, women in short skirts and pointed hats that remind one of the hats of the dwarfs in Disney's "Snow-White and the Seven Dwarfs."

In the center of the city is the City Hall with an eighty-meter tower, the Cathedral, a Dominican monastery and a black stone building housing a museum. The buildings dating back to the sixteenth century are worthy of a capital.

The market square is lined with buildings which for three hundred years served as models for European architects. People live in these buildings, although they have to be heavily buttressed. One of these buildings housed a Ukrainian nationalist newspaper. In the editor's office hung a large portrait of Mazeppa.

Out of all the names in Ukrainian history, that was the name they selected.

But the interiors of the houses are dirty; their iron balconies overlook the courtyards, and their windows look out into the street. It is a poverty-stricken city.

As a rule the Polish landed aristocracy, the *szlachta*, regarded cities as booty; they were incapable even of properly exploiting them. They exacted tribute, and a city lived its life, with several ghettoes in its confines.

The gentry used to come to the city to sell what they plundered in the countryside. The urban bourgeoisie and the gentry represented a symbiosis of plunderers.

After the World War, the Ukraine had a brief spell of independence, but the local nationalists could not come to terms with the Petlyura-ites, and so there were two nationalist Ukraines. The nationalists could not muster enough intelligence needed for unity. The country was handed over to the Polish gentry as a pledge of hatred for the Soviet Union. It seemed that all the evil forces of the world had conspired to prevent the reunion of the Ukrainian people.

We have liberated the Ukraine and obtained a muddled city, a Ukrainian-Polish-Jewish city, practically without any industries, a city living by trade.

A city with a Polish-Italian opera which the majority of the population never visited. A city with a Polish university—Ukrainians were discriminated against. With moving picture houses which it was wiser for Jews not to attend in the evening; with streets on which the habitual November pogroms marked the end of autumn.

We have obtained a city in which a Ukrainian woman who ventured into the streets of a Sunday, wearing a blouse with Ukrainian embroidery, was attacked by Polish students who, with Gillette blades, slashed her arms together with the embroidered sleeves.

The gentry were afraid of embroidery.

Near Tarnopol a gendarme beat up a Ukrainian boy who rode a bicycle and wore an embroidered shirt. The gendarme cut out the embroidery with a knife, performing the operation right on the boy's person. This happened a few days before our arrival.

This is the kind of city to which the Red Army has now come.

Outside of Lwow we saw some more deserted automobiles, and the roofs of houses destroyed by flame-throwers lay on the ground.

Stone chimneys pierce the tinned roofs of the *osadniks'* houses.

Near the road stands a house with a red cross on the roof. Next to the house is a deep crater. Shells did not work very great havoc.

In Lwow only two or three streets were entirely destroyed. On Pilsudski Street one house was split in two. Half the house remained standing, and the vine enlacing its walls was not even torn. The shell hit the kitchens. Six stories of kitchen have been ripped open. One can see the inside walls with the pots hanging on them and on one wall, on the top floor, a portrait of Pilsudski.

There are streets in Lwow that have been turned into blind alleys by buildings that fell face down.

THE RED ARMY FIGHTER

The barracks in Poland were not bad, although in many of them the bunks were arranged in several tiers and covered with straw mattresses. Look at the barracks of a tank regiment in Stryi. There is a good drying room for the laundry, and the baths are not bad. But the garages have

no facilities for repairs, and no arrangements for the removal of exhaust gases. Nor is there any evidence of classrooms for the soldiers. The officers' library has on its shelves an encyclopedia and a tattered volume of Dumas' *The Three Musketeers.*

That was how the Polish army was educated and how it was organized. It had fine offices and poor management, fine cavalry and very few tanks.

It is here that the Red Army has come, its men all armed with rifles of one type, provided with guns all made in the Soviet Union, with shells fitting the guns, and with tanks of one make.

An army of many nationalities, but it consists entirely of working people. Men and commanders hold the same views and have the same philosophy. This army is backed up by a vast country, with roads, mines, factories, mills, collective farm fields—a country organized by a single will, the will of the people.

What does the man of the Red Army represent in Western Ukraine?

The Red Army man, be he Ukrainian, Russian, Jew, or Kalmyk, loves his people and the brother peoples of his country. He will not enter a hut, so as not to embarrass the host; he will not ask for bread, not even offered to buy for money, so that people will not think that in the Soviet Army the men are not well fed. He will not push anybody in the street. He knows how to talk to a woman so as not to offend the men, and he knows how to talk to an old man.

The Soviet soldier is a man of great political tact, he lives up to his great responsibility.

He is modest and very proud of his country.

He is proud, because he has earned the right to direct history.

ONCE MORE ON THE WAY TO LWOW

We were going back to Lwow via Borislav. Oil flows from the foothills of the Carpathians, and old derricks mark the wells. Natural gas issues from the earth and is conveyed in wide, tar-covered pipes. But only a small portion of the gas is caught in the pipes. The oil is conveyed through a pipe-line to Drohobych, antiquate to refineries lying in ruins.

The oil and gas run past empty fields.

Not a single light pierces the darkness.

In a village near Drohobych there is a post with an inscription which says that the great Ukrainian writer Ivan Franko was born there, and that the people want to build a school on that place. But how could they build the school?

Night, rain. Many young men and girls are out in the streets of the nocturnal village.

In Western Ukraine a Ukrainian could not get work in a factory; he even had no right to cut stones on the highways. These things were government affairs—the Poles needed the work for their own unemployed.

Neither could the Ukrainian get a job as a house-porter. That too was a government affair. Nor was he permitted to leave the countryside.

The boys and girls were prisoners in their own villages.

The Polish worker, however, with his privileged position, was not much better off. There were workers who waited for their wages a year or two.

. . . We are in the village of Naguyevichi. A young man comes over and says:

"This is where Zakhar lives, Zakhar Franko, Ivan's brother."

We knocked at the door of a dark hut. The door opened.

The people inside asked:

"Have you got matches?"

They had some kerosene left. A small lamp was lighted.

The hut is quite small. There are some pictures on the wall: the portraits of Franko and Shevchenko and a lithograph showing a boat with Zaporozhye Cossacks. The stove was cold. On the berth above it lay the eighty two-year old brother of the great writer. The room was full of barefoot people.

Still, there was in this hut a lamp, and a bottle of kerosene—a rare thing in those parts.

There was no tobacco.

. . . The hut is crowded with people. They complain: Recently, soldiers came to the village. In one cottage they found portraits of Shevchenko and Franko decorated with red towels. A similar towel hung over the image of Christ.

"So to you the Lord Jesus is also a Communist? Who did this?" And they went to search through the village. They grabbed seven boys, beat them up with hornbeam sticks and left them in the woods. But they didn't search Zakhar Franko's hut. He has relatives in Lwow. They might complain. But they met Zakhar in the street, and he returned their greeting in Ukrainian.

"Old dog!" the officer swore. "For twenty years you have been eating Polish bread, and yet you haven't changed your language."

And they beat up the old man.

We proceeded on our way—through the darkness—past signposts indicating the road with short fingers. In the town of Stryi we sat in a lawyer's reception room and warmed up near the fireplace.

The fireplace was fed with natural gas. We pleaded with the host to put out the precious flame. But he insisted on treating us to warmth.

It had snowed heavily earlier in the evening. Now the snow was melting.

Caught in dark pipes, the natural gas was flowing past dark villages, past cold cottages.

"What does the town live on?" I asked.

"Before we signed a treaty with Sweden and obtained a loan from her, there was a match factory in the town."

"And what do you live on now?"

"Some sew, some shave. There is a courthouse in the town. People come to the court. We also have a market. Incidentally, how do the courts work in your country? The cases I handle are mostly land disputes. Land is scarce, and people wrangle over their field boundaries. What cases are tried in your courts? Heard there are many alimony cases."

I wondered what this lawyer was going to do now. There are many lawyers in the town. Alimony cases certainly won't keep them all busy.

We put out the fire.

It is cold in the lawyer's room. There are hardly any books. A cheap print essays to conceal the fact that the wall is bare. The furniture pretends to be mahogany. The windows in the outside hall are broken.

Over at the railway we find queues of people amid the ruins of the bombed station. Here and there smashed cars stand on end on twisted rails.

The trains are crowded. The passengers talk about the price of butter, about the Red Army men, about the fact that now everybody will have a chance to study. An old capmaker who graduated high school years ago wants to become a veterinary surgeon.

I am awakened by a man who asks me whether one can become a surveyor.

"Who wants to become a surveyor? You?"

"No, I have a son fifteen years of age. The big estates are going to be divided up."

"Of course he can become a surveyor, if he wants to. Only the big estates are already being divided."

"And will the monastery lands be divided up?"

There is a delirious young man in the compartment. He has a boil on his cheek. His relations stuck leeches on his head, many leeches. Now he evidently suffers from cerebritis. He vomits. They are taking him to Lwow where they have heard medical aid is now free.

SOMETHING ABOUT CULTURE

There was little fighting in Western Ukraine. But there were cases when Red Army units were confronted with a numerically superior enemy. Such cases proved that the main feature of the Red Army is of course, not its eloquence, but its splendid fighting ability.

But, on the whole, we have found out things about ourselves in Western Ukraine of which we were not always aware.

On us rests a responsibility before history, and we live not for ourselves alone, not for our bellies, like the wealthy muzhiks in the old days.

Poland has had a rich culture of her own. Copernicus helped us understand the structure of the universe. Marie Curie-Skladowska helped us understand the structure of the atom.

Poland has a great literature. And eminent physicists and chemists teach in Polish universities to this day.

But, then, I happened to visit the university library in Lwow.

A quiet, academic street uphill. The library is all done up in oak. Everything is nice and orderly. The librarian wears a starched collar. He greeted me politely. I asked him for Pushkin's works in Russian. The librarian began to cogitate.

I wanted to help him and offered to look for the card in the catalog myself. I shall not go into details, but it turned out that among the library's 500,000 volumes there was no Pushkin in Russian. There was one book on Pushkin, which probably got there by chance.

The following day there was a demonstration in the city. All marched bareheaded. Waving above the marching columns were red banners with strange decorations on their staffs, such as a screw nut, or a pair of scissors . . .

These were the trade union banners. And the trade unions here were small, organized on the craft principle, so that stokers, for instance, had a union of their own, separate from the engine drivers' union.

The people marched through wide streets lined with plane trees.

Here and there buildings lay in ruins, crumpled like a curtain torn from a cornice.

They marched for hours.

They marched past a beautiful cemetery.

That great Ukrainian, Ivan Franko, poet, novelist and Marxist critic, died rather recently, in 1916.

Over his tomb stands a stone wall with a man wielding a hammer in front of it.

The Poles planted trees round the tomb, so as to make it difficult for people, to assemble there. A piece of cunning rather on Oriental lines.

It was a golden autumn. The sky above his tomb, above Franko, was wide, like his posthumous fame.

The crowd stood still. One could hear the leaves falling on the shoulders of people weeping silently.

Old Professor Studinsky, a man of Franko's generation, spoke in his low voice of the past and future of the Ukraine.

The stone wall of the tomb was covered with wreaths.

It was very quiet. We could hear the whirring of the moving picture cameras and the falling of the leaves. There were ten thousand people at the cemetery.

From there the crowd proceeded to the Mickiewicz monument.

Ukrainians, Jews, Poles thronged around the monument.

The Soviet Ukrainian poet Mikola Bazhan spoke. He began with Pushkin's verses about Mickiewicz.

The progress of history is not a simple forward movement. Bitter words, grief, battles mark its course.

Years flow past like water.

Tradition, the word that was spoken, survives in the ages; it survives like the limestone beds of ancient seas, like the sun that shone millions of years ago survives in coal.

The friendship of peoples, friendship in the name of the world's culture, for the sake of the universal freedom of mankind, survives.

The meeting did not flag. Speaker after speaker came forward to say something new. At the end there was music.

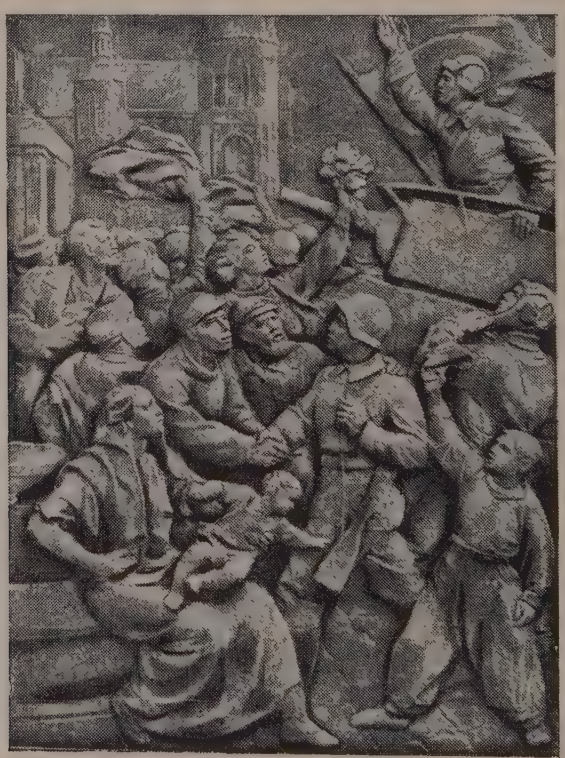
A military band played. A Red Army unit was passing through Lwow. The men, well armed, plainly dressed, with steel helmets on their heads, marched and sang:

O country mine, O Moscow mine,
You are the most beloved mine....

In military formation, the even quadrangles of the companies marched past the monument to the strains of the band.

A little while ago Pushkin's verses had been read here, and people had spoken of Adam Mickiewicz. Tens of thousands of people stood round the monument.

There was silence for a brief moment. Then the people began to applaud our Red Army men.



In Liberated Byelorussia *By N. Bembel*

Culture in Spain Under Franco

SPANISH CULTURE DESTROYED

During the three years of its existence the Spanish People's Government devoted great attention to the promotion of education. The Ministry of Education, which was headed by Communists (Jesus Hernandez and Venceslao Roces, Professor of Law) during the first two years of the war, took upon itself the task of wiping out illiteracy and launched an extensive program of activity. It established schools and organized courses of study, libraries, clubs, theaters and other cultural institutions. In all this activity the Ministry enjoyed the constant support of the valiant Fifth Regiment, the Commissariat of Propaganda, and other military institutions and units, as well as the support of the Anti-Fascist Alliance of the Intelligentsia and the Militia of Culture.

On their accession to power the Franquistas and the clergy immediately began to destroy everything that had been built up by the government of the People's Republic. Schools, courses, libraries, clubs, and theaters were shut down. All diplomas and certificates issued from 1936 to 1939 were declared null and void. These measures particularly affected the pedagogical institutes which have a four-year course (three years of theoretical training and one year of practice). In other words, the students of the republican schools reverted to the status they had on July 18, 1936 (the day the generals launched their revolt).

The curriculum introduced by the Franco regime includes theological subjects. Every day the students must attend classes in theology and ecclesiastical history and they must pass an examination in "these religious subjects" at the end of the term.

After closing down schools established by the People's Government, the Franco obscurantists set out to exterminate progressive Spanish teachers. Many were the Spanish teachers who perished during the war. At the Madrid front there was a special battalion composed of teachers and students, who fought heroically for the cause of the Republic. Of the surviving teachers some succeeded in emigrating abroad. The majority, however, remained in Franco Spain. Now most of them, about 75 percent, have been confined in concentration camps, thrown in prison or put in disciplinary battalions; many of them have committed suicide because they could not stand the horrors of Franco's inquisitions; and many others have been shot.

For the purpose of ascertaining the "reliability" of teachers, special "purge commissions" (Juntas de Depuracion or Juntas Depuradoras) have been set up in all schools. To occupy a vacancy or retain their post, professors and teachers in all schools must fill out a special questionnaire, the nature of which may be gauged from the following questions included in it:

"Did you go from the Franco zone to the Red zone?

"Who of your friends did it?

"Name prominent left wingers whom you know or with whom you were connected.

"Relate everything you know about the behavior of your friends during the revolutionary period."

The answers to this questionnaire very frequently lead not only to dismissal but even to arrest. The activity of the "purge commissions" has left the schools almost without teachers. Here are some of the results of the work of these commissions. In the Leon Province, 600 teachers, or more than 50 per cent of the entire school personnel of the province, were dismissed in the summer of 1939. It is claimed in the official report that this purge is final, at least for primary schools. But it is very likely that a second purge will follow. The position of schools is particularly precarious in Madrid. Even the Franco press had to admit that in the current school year (1939-1940) 75 per cent of the Madrid schools did not reopen owing to the fact that 1,500 out of the 2,000 teachers could not resume teaching due to "circumstances beyond their control."

The first part of this article was published in the previous issue.

The dismissed teachers are replaced by priests and monks. Franco's Minister of Education, Dominguez Arevalo de Conde de Rodezno, issued a special circular ordering that clergymen are to be considered especially fit for educational activity "in view of their mental discipline and the extensive experience they have gained during long years of life and study in seminaries."

Simultaneously with the purge of teachers, a purge of students was carried out by priests, monks and those teachers who "proved their loyalty to the Franco regime." Here is a sample of a "notice about a purge" published in the Madrid newspapers in the summer of 1939:

"Purge of Students of the Agricultural Engineering School. All persons interested in submitting factual material should do so not later than August 10th." This is the title of the notice.

And here is the full text:

"The students of the Agricultural Engineering School are now undergoing a purge. The purge applies to new applicants as well. All persons who can report something about the social and political past of the students involved should come before the commission. Passing the purge is a necessary requisite for enrollment of students and permission to take the forthcoming examinations."

The Franquistas have instituted "preferential admission" *(turno de preferencia)* for applicants to the universities, which is designed to keep most of the children of the Spanish people out of the universities and colleges.

As a result of the activity of the Franco regime and the church, the Spanish school has been thrown back to the conditions that prevailed in the eighties of the last century, *i. e.*, prior to the reform in public education accomplished by Francisco Hiner de Los Rios, who established the Institute of Free Education *(Institución libre de enseñanza)* and a number of other educational institutions to combat the dominating influence of the Spanish clergy in the schools. The greatest scientists, educators and writers of contemporary Spain received their education at the Institute of Free Education, the Union for the Spread of Knowledge (*Junta de ampliacion de estudios)*, the Center of Historic Studies *(Centro de estudios historicos)*, the Cajall Institute, the House of Students *(Residencia de estudiantes)* and other institutes and schools established by Hiner de Los Rios, Bartolome Cossio and their followers.

It is but natural that the Franco obscurantists have no use whatever for these scientists, educators and men of letters. It may be stated without fear of exaggeration that the Spain of Franco has remained without scientists. Most of the Spanish universities have been closed down. There is no one to replace the professors who are gone. But even in the universities that still function most of the chairs are unoccupied. To Franco, however, who proclaimed himself an enemy of natural sciences, particularly biology, the fate of universities and of science is, of course, a matter of the least concern.

Even those professors who originally were adherents of the People's Front but emigrated during the war and joined the so-called Neutralists, as, for example, the outstanding linguist Ramon Menendez Pidal, Blas Cabrera, Hernando and others, do not wish to express their solidarity with the reaction of Spain.

All outstanding Spanish scientists are in emigration. Among those who have remained loyal to the republican cause are such prominent authorities in medicine and natural sciences as Pio del Rio Ortega, continuer of the work of the famous Ramon y Cajall in the sphere of biology and geology, the psychiatrists Sacristan and Lafora, the mathematician Rey Pastor, Professor of Law Venceslao Roces, the linguist Navarro Tomas, the critic Montesinos, famed for his studies of the Golden Age of the Spanish Theater (Lope de Vega and his school), the poet and critic Pedro Salinas, and others. Practically all outstanding medical specialists are either in concentration camps or prisons in Spain, or in exile.

Work in the field of history and literary research is practically at a standstill in Franco Spain. The efforts of the historian Diaz Plaja are tendencious and superficial, though the official critics shower praise on him. Not a trace of critical thought is to be found in the works of Artigas on the history of literature (Lope de Vega and Gongora) which are mere compilations. Of still less value are the pseudo-scientific works of Entrambasaguas, Secretary of "special courses for foreigners." All these representatives of historical science in Franco Spain are at best mediocrities, mere unprincipled compilers. In the absence of real scientists these people are proclaimed in Franco Spain as "stars of the first magnitude."

THE POSITION OF REPUBLICAN WRITERS IN FRANCO SPAIN.—FRANQUISTAS IN LITERATURE

The Spanish People's Republic has succeeded in saving its main cadres of writers, poets, playwrights, artists, sculptors, musicians and architects, who remained loyal to the Spanish people in their trying

days. Among those now in emigration are the poets Rafael Alberti, Pedro Garfias, Emilio Prados, Manuel Altolaguirre, Arturo Serrano Plaja, Damaso Alonso; the prose writers Isidoro Acevedo, Cesar M. Arconada, Ramon J. Sender, Manuel Dominguez Benavides, Margarita Nelken, Jose Herrera Petere, Benjamin Jarnes, Maria Teresa Leon, Maria Zambrano, Jose Maria Quiroga Pla, Vicente Salas Viu, Antonio Sanchez Barbudo, Lorenzo Varela; the architects Luis Lacaza, Manuel Sanchez Arcas; the artists Luis Quitanilla, Castelao, Souto, Jose Bardazano, Ramon Gaya, Miguel Prieto, Jose Renau, Jose Maria Sancha; the sculptor Alberto, Victorio Macho; the musicians Salvador Bacarisse, Casal Chapi.

We have mentioned here only the more prominent names. The list could be greatly extended, of course.

The vile treachery of the Spanish generals, however, gave the Franco regime the chance of capturing a number of Spanish writers and scientists. While the Barcelona group, the most numerous of the Spanish progressive intelligentsia, was able to cross the border, the Madrid and Valencia groups found themselves in a very difficult position. Some representatives of these groups were able to escape only by a lucky chance. Rafael Alberti and Maria Teresa Leon, for example, happened to be in Alicante on the day of the betrayal and were able to make their way to Oran.

Part of the Madrid writers and members of the Anti-Fascist Alliance of the Intelligentsia found shelter in the Peruvian and Chile missions; others fell into the hands of the enemy. The same happened in Valencia. At present a number of prominent Spanish progressive intellectuals languish in the concentration camps and prisons of Franco Spain. Jacinto Benavente, famous playwright, one of the leading men of the "1898 generation" has been kept for a long time at the concentration camp in Alicante. At one time persistent rumors were circulated to the effect that, notwithstanding his venerable age (73 years), Benavente would be tried by a military tribunal.Franco's henchmen, however, decided not to repeat the mistake they committed in the case of Garcia Lorca. They took cognizance of the world fame enjoyed by Benavente whowas awarded the Nobel Prize in 1922. Benavente himself reminded the Franquistas about it by sending his Nobel Prize Gold Medal abroad. (Recently, it has been rumored that Benavente was permitted to emigrate to Mexico.)

But, thwarted by world public opinion in the case of Benavente, the Franco butchers are all the more vicious in wreaking their vengeance on less prominent intellectuals who supported the People's Front. To the names of the victims of Franquistas' terror—Garcia Lorca, Antonio Espina, Leopoldo Alas Arguelles, Juan Piqueras, Jose Antonio Cabezas, Izquierdo Ortega and other writers, artists and scientists who were shot during the war or died in Franco prisons, have now been added the names of the young gifted poet Miguel Hernandez, the authoress Rosario del Olmo, the journalist Manuel Navarro Ballesteros, former editor of the Socialist magazine *Avance*, Javier Bueno, hero of the Asturia revolution of 1934 (who took shelter in the Panama mission in Madrid, but was seized by the police who broke into the premises of the mission), and many others. Among those shot in Catalonia is the 65-year-old Catalonian historian Carlos de Rahola, a Catholic Socialist. He was accused of "collaboration with the Reds," which was expressed in a protest voiced by Carlos de Rahola, shortly before the fall of the Republic, in the Catalonian press against the barbaric bombardment of the civilian population of Catalonia. In addition to Rahola, who was shot in Jerona (in Catalonia), the Franco butchers killed the Catholic poet Josep Leonard and the scientist Jordi Rubio. The well-known conductor Ricardo Lamote-Grignon is confined in a Barcelona prison. The poet Pla y Beltran, and the artists Puyol and Miciano have been sentenced to hard labor and are kept in the Alicante concentration camp. The young linguist Rodriguez Monino, greatest Spanish authority on Russian literature and the history of Russo-Spanish relations, and the critic Angel Gaos are imprisoned in the Valencia concentration camp. All the prisoners expect death sentences.

What can the Franquistas counterpose to the culture of the people that they are destroying so ruthlessly?

Just as in the sphere of science, mediocrity and stupidity reign supreme in the literature of Franco's Spain.

Franco, however, has his own "philosophers," of whom the best known are Eugenio d'Ors, Gay, and Pujol.

Gay is a lawyer, a professor more known for his slander-mongering "pamphlets" than for his works on the philosophy of law. Pujol, formerly a journalist, is also a rather dubious quantity as a philosopher. His main "exploits" relate to the first World War, when he was suspected of espionage. Now, in Franco Spain, Pujol has come forth as an authority on questions of morals. Eugenio d'Ors is the only outstanding figure of the lot. A Catalonian writer, he at one time fought for the independence of Catalonia. But later he betrayed his people and deserted to the

camp of extreme Spanish chauvinists. In his books and articles d'Ors now holds forth as a vicious enemy of the "national minorities."

Eugenio Montes is one of the most prominent Franquista "philosophers" of the younger generation. His literary background consists altogether of three-four poems (written in Galician and Spanish between 1920 and 1924), several feeble essays on Hegel published in the newspaper *El Sol* and a small pamphlet *Estetica de la Muñeria* (The Esthetics of la Muneira). But, to compensate for his literary failings, Eugenio Montes has a checkered political past. In his young years he was a Galician separatist, then a Socialist, and in the 1931 elections he ran as candidate on the ticket of the social-republican bloc. At present Montes is one of the most rabid reactionaries in Spain.

In the field of literature and journalism the Franco regime has also nothing to boast of. Besides two or three poets and writers of the older generation (Manuel Machado, Eduardo Marquina, the late Jose Maria Salaverria, Venceslao Fernandez Florez) who joined the Franquistas in the very first days of the mutiny or came over to their side after Franco's victory, the reactionary literature cannot claim a single prominent name. Neither Pio Baroja (who, incidentally, recently wrote a despicable book about the Civil War in Spain, calling for the establishment of the dictatorship of a "strong man"), nor Jose Ortega y Gasset, nor Ramon Perez de Ayala, nor Azorin, nor Gregorio Marañon dare to express solidarity with Spain's reaction, though they have broken with the People's Front or have even betrayed the cause of their people.

The literature of the Franco regime can boast only of such nonentities as Jose Maria Peman, a dull imitator of Garcia Lorca, who has become the official poet of the Burges government, or the third-rate critic and poet Alfonso Marquerie, who has gained notoriety by his slanderous poem about the Asturia miners. He also penned a wretched treatise, on Quevedo, which was rejected at a literary contest. The other leading lights in the literature of Franco's Spain are in the same category. Among them are: Jose Maria Alfaro, "Councillor of State of the Phalanx" author of verses written in imitation of Garcia Lorca and author of several articles in support of the monarchy; Samuel Ros, a very mediocre short-story writer of the school of Gomez de la Serna; and Gonzalez Ruano, critic and essayist, who was a Carlist, a republican and a monarchist, and worked at one time on the Liberal *Heraldo de Madrid* and then in the reactionary *ABC*. Gonzalez Ruano was the man who coined the following "smart" phrase about Cervantes: "Cervantes, gentlemen, was a writer without talent. When you read his works you feel that he was short a hand, since he obviously wrote with his foot." (!)

Of the younger generation of writers among the Franquistas, the ones that are being boosted most are Rafael Sanchez Mazas and Ernesto Jimenez Caballero. But their literary worth is very questionable. A native of Bilbao, Sanchez Mazas began his literary career by penning refined verses. Then he visited Italy where he established contact with the Vatican circles and conceived the idea of "the great historic mission of the future Spanish Empire." On returning to Spain, he wrote a number of articles on this subject in the florid style of the seventeenth century Spanish treatises.

The articles of Ernesto Jimenez Caballero are in a somewhat different vein. A professor of philosophy at the Madrid University, former editor of *Literary Newspaper*, which played a certain part in the development of Spanish literature in the twenties of our century, and author of the so-called "Gospel of the Spanish Phalanx"—*The Genius of Spain*, Jimenez Caballero, is very closely connected with the Vatican. The books of Sanchez Mazas and Jimenez Caballero are a good illustration of the work of the Vatican and the Jesuits in Spain.

Madrid has an "Association of Writers and Artists." The atmosphere which prevailed at the first meeting of this Association is so characteristic that we consider it worth while to cite in abridged form the report, describing this festive event, published in the Madrid newspaper *Arriba* of November 10, 1939:

"In the premises of the Association" so runs the account, "situated in a quiet spot on the Calle del Rollo, which calls up so many memories in the mind of the Madridian, under the portrait of the Caudillo (meaning Franco — *F. K.*), poets, writers, artists and journalists were assembled for the first time after the victory to listen to the valiant General Millan Astray.

"The meeting was opened by Mariano Benlliure, who delivered a brief speech. Then several touching extracts from the works of Fernando Jose de Larra were read. This was followed by a report delivered by Araujo Costa about Armando Palacio Valdes, and then by recitations of the brilliant verses of Manuel Machado and Manuel de Gongora.

"The meeting ended with a speech by General Millan Astray, which was greeted with prolonged cheers and which ended in an ovation.

"The valiant general opened his speech with the words that 'he is a poor authority on literary matters, since it is the business of poets to sing of glory and love.' He next spoke about 'the good fortune of those who lived through the days of war in the national zone.'

"The general called on the assembled to honor the memory of Jose Antonio (Primo de Rivera) and Calvo Sotelo. 'They are always with us,' the audience replied.

" 'Together with us,' the famous hero of the war continued, 'must always be my two officers, the brothers Bermudes de Castro. Their father, the valorous general, is now with us here.' "

The general concluded his oration by proposing that a priest be invited to "read the *Pater Noster* and *Ave Maria* for those who have fallen in battle."

Only one thing must be added to this report, eloquent as it is. General Millan Astray, military governor of Salamanca, is the very same one-eyed and one-handed general to whom Miguel Unamuno, who perished so tragically, linked the Spanish reaction. It was Millan Astray who in reply to a speech delivered by Unamuno in Salamanca University in November 1936 shouted "Death to the intellectuals!" And it was of Millan Astray that Jesus Hernandez said at the Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Spanish Communist Party that "It is doubtful whether the one-handed general did not have his only hand in the death of Unamuno."

However, no efforts of the reactionary Spanish authorities can destroy the great culture of Spain, root out everything that was gained by the heroic people in the struggle against their oppressors.

Cultural activity is continued now beyond the bounds of Spain.

Heroic sons of the Spanish people continue this work even in Spain that is groaning under the heel of the Franco regime, and the results of this activity will be felt, of course.

FYODOR KELYIN

ERNEST KRENKEL

FOUR COMRADES

EXCERPTS FROM THE DIARY

THE POLE IN SEPTEMBER

September 8.

For an hour and a half during the night watch transmitted a long radiogram on the results of our scientific observations. After every two or three hundred words the radio operator on Rudolf Island asked me to stop for a minute or two, so he could stir the fire in the stove.

A stove! A simple contraption as old as the hills that no one pays any attention to on the mainland, just as one does not notice the air or fresh baked bread. And here one imagines with tenderness and longing a whole picture: the fire winks playfully through the cracks in the stove door, while the wood crackles. The very word "stove" seems to exude warmth.

Here the temperature is below zero. I have to work the key with gloves on. Have grown cold and decided to do some work to warm up. Went to built an igloo for my radio storage room. Took a sheet of veneer and placed it over the walls, supporting it with crow bars; an impromptu future roof. Next began to pile carefully wet snow on it. A hour later a thin ice crust had formed on the top. On the bottom the snow was still wet and the veneer wouldn't stick to it. Things hung in the balance as I gradually removed the plywood. Expected the whole works to cave in. But everything went well. The result was a fine igloo. Every minute the snow froze harder and several hours later the roof rang when one banged on it.

Excellent weather at noon. Though the sun shines, the temperature is 15 below. It is rather cool in our tent. It's no use, we have to make provisions for the winter and place both eiderdown coverings over our tent. The walls are ready in our new ice kitchen. The only thing missing is the roof which will also extend to our tent.

In any case, told Rudolf Island not to worry if at six in the evening I will not be on the air, since we will probably be busy with the moving.

Work proceeded with good speed. At first we carried everything out on the ice, a whole pile of it. Carefully transferred the radio. Removed the upper canvas covering, leaving only a light cover on the tent. All four of us lent a hand in drawing-on the eiderdown coverings. The quilted blue silk looked splendid in the sunshine against the snow, as though ours was the tent of some eastern potentate. Drew on top canvas and laced everything

---

For the beginning see No. 7.

Publication rights in all foreign languages, including English, belong to the Press and Publisher Literary Service of Mezhdunarodnaya Kniga.

from the inside. Placed a rubber covering, veneer and reindeer hides on the floor. The edges of the tent on the outside were covered with snow.

I laced my cot with silk from underneath since the original ropes had torn, and I had been sleeping as though in a tub. The last thing to be brought in was the radio table and at 5.30 p. m. everything was finished.

Had dinner after six. Then brought the *primus* into our room and had tea. I drank mine in the sleeping bag. Have to catch some sleep before the night trick.

COMING OF ARCTIC NIGHT

September 21.

Today is a triple holiday—a half a year since we took off from Moscow, four months of our drift on the ice and the autumn equinox.

We drift at a fast pace and have informed all our friends that we expect to reach the 85th parallel soon.

The jubilees called for a sumptuous feast but we were so busy that dinner was forgotten. Finally had to be contented with rice and tomato soup. But we poured much too much tomatoes into it and by evening all had a heartburn. Drank soda and followed it up with cooked bacon and herring. The entire brine in which the herring was kept had evaporated. I attempted to resuscitate them in a new brine but the herrings wouldn't have it, fell apart with only bones and skin remaining. Will have to throw them away.

Spirin told me by radiophone from Rudolf Island that on August 23, at a banquet in the Kremlin, a strange woman approached him, asked for a scrap of paper and on it she wrote: "To Krenkel from a mysterious lady." She gave Spirin a red flower for me. He has the flower now on Rudolf Island. She had asked him not to tell who she was. Thanks, dear Natasha!

September 22.

Yesterday was an unusual day. The jubilee was to be felt in everything. Clean linen, everyone shaven, and conversations in harmony with our mood. All this taken together knocked us somewhat out of our routine.

Today one looks with different eyes at familiar things around us.

Read several pages from Nansen's book about his unsuccessful trek to the North Pole.

How simple and courageous a man he was. His book *Farthest North* should by right be called "Trial." A great trial of human courage. You read the book and in your mind arises a picture of the icy wastes with two men plodding over them. The men keep on ever forward, exhausted, but unyielding. At times they are so overcome with fatigue in the evening that their eyes shut of themselves. People slept on the march and awakened only when they fell in their tracks on their skis. Then they would halt. Only after supper did these two permit themselves to indulge in a little luxury; they prepared a delicious drink, hot water, as hot as they could swallow it, in which the powder had been dissolved. It tasted something like boiled milk and they thought it wonderfully comforting; it seemed to warm them to the very end of their toes.

For 25 days they carried on their trek to the North. Amidst ice, in sleeping bags, they dreamed of Christmas dinner with fine roast goose. Then the two heroes—Nansen and Johansen—turned back. Both were real scientists and explorers. With the temperature at 30 below, while hiding in a frozen bag, warming with their bodies the frozen clothes and footwear, they engaged in scientific calcula-

tions, working out observations, looking up logarithms and making entries with frost-bitten fingers. When the wind grew stronger, they sought cover in their miserable tent. When their way was barred by fissures (there seemed to be no end to them on all sides, the explorers saw black patches of open water, as though all the ice had cracked up) they harnessed themselves with the dogs and pulled the sleds. Patience, grit and patience again—these are the requisite virtues for work in the Arctic.

At the 86th parallel Nansen and Johansen turned south to Franz Joseph Land. May and June passed. The arctic summer was drawing near but no land was in sight. The dogs were hungry. Every other day they had to kill one dog, cut it up, and feed it to the others. The men also pinched on their rations, saving their supplies.

I kept reading and rereading the pages of this remarkable diary. Trips on Kayaks. Bear hunts. And at last the great miracle, when the explorers had almost reached the point of desperation, "land in sight." For many months they traveled over this land. Those were days of anguish in the snow burrow (can there be any comparison between it and our splendid dwelling!). Spring. New exhausting travels and at last a fantastic finale: the unexpected meeting with the Englishman Jackson at Cape Flora amidst the chaos of ice.

These wanderings were no ordinary exploit. But what is of utmost importance is that Nansen was able to describe them. Many are the brave, no less brave exploits, undertaken by our Soviet people. But who knows of them? It is a pity that our people in the Arctic are so reticent about themselves. Many are afraid to be thought immodest. Their fears are groundless.

Soviet people have dispelled many legends about the Arctic. They have as a matter of fact abolished the very conception of wintering in the Arctic. Even at the North Pole life is fine—our people can say it with justifiable pride.

Now over the radio come thanks from children of collective farmers in the village of Paveltsovo, Dmitrov District, for articles about the North Pole written for a pioneer newspaper. (They read our radiogram aloud.) They asked us to write about interesting incidents. The children also wanted to know many things. Wouldn't the ice floes melt when it rained? And if they didn't melt wouldn't they crack? Can we float in our rubber boats? How is our dog Vesyoly getting on? Did bears come to see us, what kind, and what did we do about it?

The North Pole had lost its halo of mystery. It had become an inhabited point on the globe.

It's five in the morning now. Everyone is asleep. I love these early morning hours. You rest and revel in thoughts and dreams. I am always taking the night watch. Dmitrich argues that I am tired and someone else should take my trick, but I will do my best to remain on the night watch. There is no one to talk to, but I manage to do a lot and sleep in the daytime.

While I slept today, Shirshov and Fyodorov took a 15 km. walk on skis in a south-westerly direction. The ice floes in that section are just like ours. Found two level places suitable for landing-fields for heavy planes.

Was busy rigging up a telephone to each cot.

At 2.30 p. m. heard Rudolf Island. Three times asked them to switch to a different wavelength, but Rudolf stubbornly refused to understand and almost the entire conversation was wasted.

POLAR DAYS

October 11.

Read Gorky at night. I am rereading the little volume again and again but find new fascination in it every time.

For some unknown reason the early stories of Gorky are not well known. These are swift fleeting notes on his adventures during the days of his wanderings throughout the country. What remarkable, irresistible people came along his way! Many of our present-day writers have forgotten how to seek and find such people, though their number must be much greater today. Pale shadows stalk the pages of novels and stories. I reread over and over again the familiar tales of the great land explorer.

I jotted this note down and fell to thinking. Explorers are people who discover new lands. And Gorky has also discovered a new land—he discovered the Russian, the simple man of the people.

. . . I like my nights, my solitary watches. This is my rest. I read and think, and sometimes write. My diary is proceeding slowly. The same events recur inevitably. I am tired of describing them. In the final analysis, similar work is done in dozens of Arctic stations. True, there the ground is more firm. But at times even we forget that we are walking on a three meter layer of ice, and that right below it are three and a half thousand meters of cold water, salty to boot. The very thought sends a chill down my spine. Brrrr.

Zhenya made known yesterday our latest bearings—84 deg. 56 min. N. lat. and 6 deg. 30 min. E. long.

And so we had passed the 85th degree. The meridians on the map hanging from our ceiling run into a circle formed by the 85th parallel. Until May 1937 very few people were interested in these spots. By now every schoolboy or girl has learned all about the drift, knows all about latitudes and longitudes.

We figure that our drift should last ten months and consider the 85th parallel half of our route. This also tallies with the time. Within ten days we will mark the fifth month of our drift. Our average speed is one degree of latitude per month.

Of late the speed of the drift has become accelerated. The second and more difficult part of our drift is beginning now. Frosts complicate our work: the darkness gets on one's nerves and we are drifting closer to the huge "meat grinder" formed by the shores of Greenland and Spitzbergen. Daylight was not wasted by us, however. We have gained much experience, have grown accustomed to life on the drifting ice floe. All this enables us to carry on scientific work on schedule. Soviet Arctic explorers will solve the enigma of the North Pole for world science.

A long night has descended: in the north it is called "polyarka." The nights have grown clear. We have to step out every half hour, since in addition to a weather diary, we must keep a detailed record on Northern Lights.

October 25.

Gave the boys a chance to sleep to half past ten instead of nine. Then quickly set the wind engine going, and the four of us took a walk to the eastern crack. Visited a neighboring ice floe, climbed ice ridges and walked across a crevice not fully frozen. Fired our pistols. At noon, the twilight rays of the sun are still strong but the moon is also shining for all it is worth. Strange illumination, a blending of daylight and moonlight.

After dinner Zhenya and Shir-

shov felt a jolt. Again the ice is jamming somewhere. Interesting is the fact that these jolts are felt only in calm weather. The ice is breaking nearby but all is quiet around us.

Our days are as alike as two peas. But one has to walk but several steps away from our dwelling to feel how unusual our surroundings are.

During the summer the propeller of the wind engine could be seen for kilometers. Now in the long Arctic night, a little red lamp on top of the wind engine serves as our sole beacon.

The twinkling light of the moon roams over the pale white snow drifts. A cloud of vapors rises from the dark cracks in the ice. One has to walk but a hundred meters and the entire camp is lost; gone is the wind engine. Nor can one find the sleds which stand up on end, in the faint illumination provided by the moon. Among the coal-black shadows cast by each snowdrift it is hard to find the black speck of our tent. Even the masts of the radio cannot be discerned.

When the wind dies down the movement of the ice ceases completely. Silence. Once I happened to read about "thunderous silence" and laughed at this expression. But here I found this very silence. Every rustle here resounds like a big rumble. An old ice floe broke somewhere in the distance, caving in under the pressure of the drifting fields. Young ice is cracking, the curtain of our tent covered with hoar frost crackles, and each sound is carried far into the vast stillness.

It is hard to believe that people live and work amidst this profound silence. It seems as though no living thing could be found in these white, dead-calm plains.

But there is life here, and the people do not feel isolated from their distant native land. They call this distant land the Main Land.

In our free time we listen to radio broadcasts. Audibility of the Comintern station is excellent. We regularly follow all the broadcasts of the latest news bulletins.

Our reliable set is an inexhaustible source of joy and cheer to us. Words from distant Moscow after shooting through the Arctic night across the cold and treacherous icy wastes do not loose their warmth. Two miniature masts and a wind-battered bronze wire stretched across them, call a halt to the flight of these words: "Stop, Moscow, welcome. Here are the northernmost people of the Soviet Union."

Words obediently run along the wire. The figures of my comrades are submerged in the semi-darkness of the tent. We all listen attentively and then a discussion starts. By now we know all the announcers by heart. Golovina, announcer of the Radio Center, is a favorite with all of us. We figure out in advance when her turn next comes and wait for that hour. We wonder if it is possible to tell whether the announcer is a blonde or a brunnete by her voice.

The radio day begins at 5.35 a. m. My friends are asleep. The vapor of their breath rises over their sleeping bags. I listen to the entire program. The first morning set-up exercises, first news bulletin and again morning exercises. A trembling hoarse voice from the Sternberg Astronomical Observatory announces that it will be six o'clock sharp Moscow Time at the short stroke of the gong.

The early broadcast for children is also of interest to me. I fully concur children should not put things on the streetcar line tracks. This is very, very bad. Next come advertisements of sales and other organizations. The possibility of repairing or exchanging pianos can

hardly arouse my enthusiasm, but the sales talk of a bakery enumerating the various kinds of bread calls forth a big flow of saliva. Never had I suspected that there were so many different kinds and varieties of bread. I must try them all when we get back. Am I sick and tired of the biscuits, and what a heartburn they give me!

Breakfast time. Zhenya shoves all five fingers into his mouth, trying to replace a filling. The others smoke in silence, watching Zhenya's usual morning exercise, and from time to time offer one and the same advice.

Judging by the time, morning has come to the Main Land. In the course of the day audibility of Moscow radio stations grows poorer but it improves by six in the evening. Attentively, very attentively we follow a lecture on history.

And next come concerts to suit all tastes. We get a clear reception on most of the programs even from some of the weakest European stations.

On the one hand, a third-rate orchestra of a tiny state floods the ether with the immortal waves of the "Blue Danube," and on the other, someone is trying to convince you of something in an unknown tongue.

From ten to twelve is the hour of discussions, story telling and exchange of jokes. Supper is very lively, with many arguments all around. Bets are backed by our usual unit of measure—a bar of chocolate. The argument today concerns our bearings. While Zhenya is busy figuring out our latest coordinates, a bet is concluded as we sit by the boiling tea kettle and the brightly lit lamps.

"In this wind we should have lost seven or eight minutes," Dmitrich declares with a tone of authority.

He refers, of course, to latitude. I join the argument,

"Are you ready to back your words. Let's see your bar of chocolate!"

The unit of exchange is placed on the map.

Zhenya soon told us the new "address" of our floe. We did cover eight miles . . . but not southward. Say goodbye to your chocolate, Dmitrich.

We always try to finish evening tea by 11.30, so as to catch the last news bulletin. We never miss it.

Are especially impatient these days. Ardent speeches of election meetings are brought to us from the Main Land; we hear about the great enthusiasm of the Soviet people, of love for the country, for the Party, for the great Stalin. The country is electing its Supreme Soviet.

Next come the usual reports. News of the temperature in Sochi, the fine health resort on the Black Sea Coast, evokes sighs of envy. How nice it is there!—one could dry one's fur socks, trousers and shirts, so soaking wet.

Chimes of the clock in the Moscow Kremlin Tower end our day. Three of us climb into sleeping bags. At fifteen minutes past midnight, first radio communications are established with Rudolf Island. Reception impossible today—Budapest and Khabarovsk interfere.

Next comes the hour of popular dance music. All stations seem to have conspired in emphasizing our loneliness; they sing in different languages of moonlight, charming smiles, caresses and love. These voices from the distant land are not always pleasant to listen to. When you climb out of the tent, frost and wind soon sober you up.

The Luxemburg radio station broadcasts a tango; one of the

latest dance hits. In the intermission listeners are urged to use Princess Margaret's face cream, an invention of her own. The use of it is very simple: you apply the cream at night before you go to bed . . . and by morning you become so beautiful, no one will know you. A princess . . . Tango . . . Face creams . . . "Indeed, life dictates its own inexorable laws," as Ostap Bender in the *Little Golden Calf* was fond of saying.

Four in the morning. A station in Normandy broadcasts an international program. A fervent voice concludes it with the following words: "To all men sailing the seven seas, a happy voyage and speedy return: to all light-house keepers, a good clear night, to the sick, alleviation of their sufferings; good night and happy dreams to all." A beautiful melody fades out. Europe is asleep.

A new day begins in the East. The last strains of a lullaby in Europe mingle with a morning march from Novosibirsk.

At times our wives and children speak before the microphone in Moscow. Informed in advance, we always worry whether audibility will be good, whether a snow blizzard might interfere with the broadcast. Usually we hear them clearly. During such broadcasts we avoid looking at one another, so as to enable each fully to enjoy these moments, so joyous and yet tinged with sadness.

Once, due to poor reception, we couldn't hear the children. Nevertheless radioed that audibility was excellent. We were badly disappointed, but didn't wish to distress the children.

In the voices of our friends and comrades, in the voices of people unknown, but close to us, in the voices of our wives and children we could feel our country talking to us. The ardent love and touching care help us in our difficult daily work.

October 30.

Newspapermen should be taught meteorology. Then they would have an idea of what dead calm at the Pole means. As it is, they besiege us with orders on all sides! Some seem to regard us as a species of "social lions" without whom no ceremony would be complete. Why, for example, must some newspaper in Kursk have a "few exclusive words" from us? We don't really begrudge them this, but there is no wind—and no wind means no current.

The wind engine has long been mounted and set up. We've been waiting for a decent Northeasterner for the past five days. At last we lost our tempers, hauled out the hand dynamo and were going to charge the batteries that way. But at this point Boreas, the god of winds, had mercy on us. A steady and strong wind began to blow.

The wind engine at first, however, turned with great difficulty. The temperature is 32 below. Obviously the lubricating oil has thickened. Climbed to the top and poured some kerosene over it. It's all very well to jot that down: "climbed up," but all this had to be done in 32 below, with a stiff wind blowing. The cold penetrates the fur trousers and shirts, and grips the body in its icy embrace. For three hours worked with a stick trying to help the engine get started. Dropped it many times. But the wind was good and strong. My hands, feet and stomach muscles ached from the exertion.

At last the wind engine started twirling, and the batteries were on charge.

In the kitchen Petya was busy all morning producing distilled water. He needs it for his chemical

laboratory. But it is difficult to stay there long because of the bitter cold. Petya tried to stick it out, but at last gave it up, went into the tent and got down to his English studies. A good remedy against cold, indeed.

Zhenya is still freezing in his ice observatory, despite his heavy fur greatcoat. In this hut the temperature is equal to that out of doors. No wonder this host evinces no special hospitality at the arrival of guests.

Today, there was a loud and ringing noise every half hour, one could feel the jolts especially in the tent. The canvas resonates to the sound. Outside the din is less distinct but still one has the impression that three-inch guns are being fired some two kilometers away. A tense moment. Walked with Papanin towards the eastern crack. A dead calm prevailed here. This meant that the jamming was taking place some distance away, sowewhere to the northeast.

After I had radioed some of the newspaper material, went to sleep at four in the afternoon till midnight. Had no dinner. Temperature outside dropped to 36 below in the evening.

November 2.

Received a message that the first convention of our Northern Sea Route Workers' Trade Union had elected Papanin and myself to the Executive Committee.

At the same time we were informed that an election precinct for elections to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. had been formed on Rudolf Island. The precinct includes our group, the winterers on Rudolf Island, Tikhaya Bay and the crews of the planes.

Many congratulations for the holidays. Received a fine message from Maria Kruglova on Dickson Island. "I recall an evening some time ago," she wrote, "when seated on a divan in our house you spoke of what at that time seemed to us an idle dream of traveling on a drifting ice floe, about life in a tent with a *primus* and a smoky makeshift lamp. I listened to it all, and was frightened at the prospect. The arctic seemed an impenetrable mystery to me, and I could not believe your daring dream would be realized. But, like a fairy tale your dream has come true several years later. Now all this is reality. You are drifting on an ice floe. Tell me, are you happy? Of course, you must be. It is so pleasant when one's dreams come true. Greetings. May the Northern Lights shine brighter than ever for the four of you."

This greeting stirred me deeply. Recalled the long-forgotten conversation. At that time we ate some excellent crackers and drank tea from clean glasses. Neither is to be had here now—yet there is that feeling of satisfaction and joy of a dream accomplished. Maria Kruglova is herself a winterer now in the Arctic, and she understands how one can love the Arctic. Heartily congratulated her on the forthcoming great holiday.

Boiled tea in the morning. What can be finer than this hot fragrant drink! Drank it and praised our forefathers who took over this splendid plant from the Chinese.

During the day Zhenya made a meteorological observation and himself transmitted the bulletin to Rudolf Island. I was catching up on my sleep. In the evening I was given a full report on the events of the day. 1) Vesyoly was trying to make his way to a 25-kg. chunk of butter but was caught red handed. The petty thief received his due. 2) Petya began an article for *Leningradskaya Pravda* but ran short of wind and does not know how to end it. 3) Nature presented us with

Northern Lights but they were not impressive. Looked rather faded and dim.

WE ARE PART OF THE SOVIET COUNTRY

November 7

The snow blizzard which raged for three days began to subside last night, on the eve of the holiday. Clear frosty weather, temperature minus 32. There is no wind. That's why it's very cold in the tent; the lamps hardly burn. Very unpleasant, and the fingers freeze while writing.

Hoar frost studs the ceiling in spots but in the air there is still a faint odor of eau-de-cologne, a reminder of yesterday's shave. Each of us had courageously used up his hot rations—a kettle of boiling water. Though the *primus* stoves work on almost pure benzine, the heating of water takes a long time; 32 degrees of frost must be overcome. That is why hot water is a great delicacy, and we try to use it to the utmost advantage.

In the middle of the tent are leftovers of yesterday's holiday supper. The table consists of two empty boxes—all the dishes are piled onto one of them. The lamps burn poorly and the temperature is below zero. The corners of the tent vanish in the darkness. I pull down my fur cap as far as I can.

By nine in the morning every one was up and around. Made the regular meteorological observations. Hastily gulped down our tea so as to be in time for Comrade Voroshilov's speech. Switched on Red Square. The distant hum of festive Moscow came over the air clearly. Distinctly heard the broadcast of the parade, the grim rumble of the tanks and artillery. At times reception grew poorer but the speech of Voroshilov, our beloved People's Commissar of Defense, came over nicely. Kliment Efremovich spoke about the successes of our country and mentioned us. This indeed was a great honor.

Later when distant—and yet not so distant, Moscow quieted down, we came out to hold our own demonstration. With two flags the four of us marched among the grim ridges of ice towards the crevice. Somewhere, very far away, glowed the crimson of the setting sun but it could not vie with the bright glitter of the stars. The silken banners were barely ruffled by the wind. We approached a high ridge. Dmitrich climbed to the top and delivered a brief but greatly inspired speech. We greeted the glorious holiday with a triple volley of rifle fire. Lighted a magnesium rocket. It produced a colossal effect. The dazzling flare of the rocket drove back the cold darkness of the Arctic night. The white facets of the ridges seemed to burst aflame at the light, and the snow sparkled. Covered with hoar frost, we stood in silence, motionless, trying to retain in our memory this solemn, unforgettable moment.

There we were, four of us. For a thousand miles around us stretched vast ice fields, the sea and the night. The huge ice fields moved in an irresistible stream, clashing with and piling on one another. The lanes of dark water wedged among the ice grew narrower or wider. When the wind shifts, neighboring floes pile high onto our field with a terrific clatter and din. The waves of the ridges mount higher. Our ice floe has already covered more than seven hundred kilometers as the crow flies. It is more than a month since the sun has disappeared beyond the horizon. But we are not alone. We live and think as one with the Soviet people, together with them we feel the care and attention of the Party and of the great Stalin. Should

enemy squadrons attempt to infringe on our borders, we will work just as confidently and calmly at any post our country may intrust us with.

The rocket went out. For a long time our eyes could not grow accustomed to the darkness. It seemed as though the echo of our rifle volleys which broke the age-old silence of the Arctic resounded somewhere far away.

Listened to a broadcast from the Comintern Station during the day. Our greetings were first given in Morse and then read by the writer Vishnevsky.

At six p. m. received a radiogram from communication workers in the city of Okha on Sakhalin Island. Here is the text: "In conformity with decision of general meeting of communication workers in Okha on Sakhalin Island, we address you, splendid communication worker of our country, with the request to stand for nomination as deputy to the Soviet of the Union from the Maritime Election District. Presidium of the Meeting."

What more is there to be said? This is the finest present and highest honor for the holiday.

Late in the evening listened to a concert for workers in the Arctic. Then Papanin told of his experiences during the grim years of the Civil War, about Sevastopol, the battles of the Red Partisan Army in the rear of Wrangel, the last white-guard baron. He told us how on a dark autumn night, he, hidden in a flour sack, had crossed the Black Sea in a smugglers' felucca, and then, disguised as a beggar, made his way from Turkey to bring Comrade Frunze a report on the activities of Red Partisans in Crimea.

At night while keeping watch various thoughts about our group crossed my mind. O. Henry at one time wrote that if the profession of man-killing was to be fostered, all that was necessary was to confine two people to a hut of 18 by 20 ft., for a month. Human nature could not endure that. I recall that Mirabeau describes a similar torture in his story of the horrors of a Chinese garden. Another author wrote a short story *The Fly*. The plot is rather simple. Four men live up North. There is not a living thing around them. Suddenly a fly flew into their hut. The men confined it in a can. The fly, an ordinary fly, became the object of everyone's attention, it seemed to lend purpose to the life of four adults. The men were jealous of each other, currying favor with the fly. One of them happened to open the jar by accident, and the fly escaped. Whereupon the others murdered him.

Well, the history of the Arctic knows many such "tragedies." They are not so unreal as may seem. But here we are, four men, and our hut is no larger than 18 by 20. Yet not only a fly but even a live elephant, it seems, would not be able to cause friction among us.

We are linked by ties of close friendship. And there is nothing surprising about that. Other Soviet people would live on ice floe as cheerfully and friendly. We are not alone, the entire country, our Fatherland is behind us!

Fatherland! What a meaningful and great word. Fatherland means myself, my friends, our families and children, the road to life along which we walk like true masters. Fatherland means our fields and gardens, the birds that sing in these gardens for us, gardens where flowers bloom and fields where grain grows. Fatherland is my entire country. And each of us is ready to give his life, his blood to the last drop, for the glory of our Fatherland, its might and progress, so that our children may grow like flowers in the beautiful garden

of Socialism. Fatherland! Party! Stalin! these words are synonymous in the mind of the Soviet people. Our Fatherland is a flourishing garden and Stalin is its great gardener. He rears people and watches over them, he inspires them to heroic deeds for the sake of mankind, of the future generations. That's why one wishes so much to live on and on; to live for the struggle, to struggle for victory.

I wintered on Severnaya Zemlya with only one companion, the mechanic Kolya Mekhrengin. This, probably, was the smallest wintering party in the history of the Arctic. What a pity O. Henry could not have visited us. The writer would have been obliged to issue a posthumous refutation of his own work. We did not go catching flies but worked energetically, and it could not be otherwise. Such is the habit of Soviet people. Stalin, the Party penetrate in the people persistence, clarity of aim and courage. It is all this that makes our people master builders, victors. We four are a part, a tiny collective of our people. And there are no reasons for separating our deeds and thoughts from the thoughts, aspirations and the struggle of our people. . . .

Now I am about to transmit our regular weather report. We are drawing close to the 84th parallel. All's well. Are heading south.

November 19.

On November 21 we will celebrate the half year of our drift. Have received congratulatory radiograms from employees of the Lenin library. In our reply we invited them to visit us. To make it easier to find us, gave our exact address and warned them that when coming to the Pole one is expected to bring the latest newspapers.

And here is our address. Walk along the eastern coast of Greenland, turn off onto the ice from one of the northeastern capes and walk about two hundred kilometers, and there you might find us. Our latest bearings—83 deg. 38 minutes—are such that we can no longer claim the title of the most northerly people on the globe. North Greenland is left behind us, and it is quite possible that some lone Eskimo hunter is even now roaming its grim shores.

The last strong wind formed new broad cracks and piled up new tiers of ice, but now a full moon makes walking along the ice edges much easier. These edges change with every wind, and one comes to know them by falling and stumbling over them.

Our camp is visible only for ten or fifteen meters. Fyodorov's ice observatory sparkles like a gem; this is caused by the light of his pocket flashlight—Zhenya is busy inside. There is a broad passage around the tent, a rather uncomfortable spot during a snow blizzard. The snow is whipped up in these trenches and it penetrates the thickest clothes. A bit farther is a snow drift and beyond that lies an even layer of snow. Footsteps along the packed snow and our complimentary remarks about the ice can be heard quite a distance.

Our tent resembles a cake with ample icing on top of it. Planted in the midst of the cake is a solitary current, the dark insulation of the antenna. The entrance is tightly laced with the triple flap door. When you get inside you must lace the door behind you, otherwise it will keep flapping about. The entire corridor to our dwelling is occupied by four pairs of so-called *tapochki*, "house-slippers." One could safely bathe a two-month infant in any one of them. When entering, make sure to bend low, otherwise you will

get a good doze of snow down your back. To the left is the kitchen. We'll visit it some other time.

Take off your shoes and brush the snow away with a broom. This is done on the ice step, covered with a hide. Here our dog Vesyoly made a nuisance of himself for a long time but his inordinate attention to a case of butter kept here led to his banishment from this spot forever.

The rubber door with a fur lining opens not without difficulty. It is kept in place by a stout piece of rubber fastened in the stays of the tent. A half year's training taught us to make our way skilfully through this door even when carrying a hot kettle or pots. Incidentally, it's high time, once and for all, to stop defining our house as a tent: it's a real solid house only the top of which is made of fabric.

In the summer we keep few things in our house, but winter conditions necessitate many more articles. Gradually we grew used to them and now our place looks spacious and roomy to us.

Each of us has learned his "catechism" for dressing. Mine is as follows: when sitting up in the bag be careful not to bang your head against the edge of the table; when putting on your sweater, don't upset the ash trays or Shirshov's bottles; when rising to your feet, beware of the sharp screw in the ceiling; when putting on your trousers don't upset the lamp with your right foot and don't kick Shirshov's "writing desk," a sheet of veneer, with your left.

Amidst the boundless stretches of the Arctic we stamp about on three square meters of space. This is all that remained for us after we had distributed all our things. We no longer mind the smell of kerosene and damp reindeer hide. Have long grown used to reindeer hair. Our medico assured us that a single hair when swallowed might cause appendicitis. Whereupon we began to fish entire balls of it out of our soup, disregarding smaller bunches.

To the right of the entrance in our "house" stands a table with the radio set. Beneath it are batteries and tools. To the left, a box bearing the proud title of buffet is suspended on the wall. Shirshov's boxes with samples of sea water stand on the floor. On top of them are several sooty pots containing our simple dinner. Along the walls run two tiers of cots. A worn portfolio hangs from a rope at Shirshov's feet. You had better regard in with reverence, for here the secrets of the North Pole are kept. Here we have the dream of mankind realized. To us this portfolio represents a half year of intense activity, many hours of hard physical labor. Better to lose one's head than this battered portfolio.

Between the cots stands a rather shaky table bearing a laboratory. Over the table there hangs a tin sheet which protects the roof from the heat of the lamps. It is my job to keep an ample stock of frozen sausage on top of this tin. We have outdone the best Moscow food stores, the *Gastronom*, and have a supply of hot sausage at any hour of the day. Hot sausage brings certain memories to Fyodorov, and before long the sign: "No beer" appears over Shirshov's laboratory which greatly resembles a Moscow hot-dog stand.

Each has his own corner to keep all sorts of odds and ends. Papanin, particularly, has many of them. He sleeps on strings, pieces of wire, notebooks, matches and books. He insists on having all these things handy.

In the daytime the lamps stand in the middle of the tent, and we, like fire worshippers, crowd around them. But no one is allowed to

the lamp glasses. This is the prerogative of the "high priest," Papanin.

The bit of free space along the wall is occupied by guns, flashlights, books. Our drug store, in a little box, hangs sideways suspended on a rope. Shirshov is bravely trying to protect from us the last remains of bandages which we like to use for household needs.

Recently Fyodorov caught a cold and he was cupped. There was a smell of scorched sleeping bag. The spectators, appreciative of the free show, were lavish with advice. A good time was had by all during the entire procedure, and the patient was cured mainly by laughter.

Hoary frost silvers the walls of the tent, the lamps burn dimly, and yet our stout group is all aglow with enthusiasm; cheerful and gay. We have paraphrased one of our favorite songs and now hum to ourselves:

To drift in distant seas
Our country has sent us.

PAST NORTH-EASTERN CAPE

December 3.

My heart played pranks again yesterday. Had to climb into the sleeping bag. Shirshov examined me and gave me drops for the heart and for soothing the nerves. He thinks my trouble is due to overwork; my years are also beginning to tell. Too bad this had to happen here where, to be candid, conditions are not exactly favorable. But never mind, it won't take long before the end of our drift.

Today the Central Election Commission informed Zhenya that his candidacy to the Soviet of Nationalities was advanced by the Naukat District in Kirghizia. My candidacy was proposed in the Ufa City Election District. They asked for our consent.

Both messages were received at night. Woke the boys and we chatted for a long time. It's remarkable that all four are nominated. This in itself shows how attentively the entire country follows our drift and how highly our work is appraised.

The management of the forthcoming agricultural exhibition in Moscow informed us of their intention to exhibit our tent on the grounds and that they hoped to see us as their guests. We certainly are willing. . . .

December 15.

The moon is known as the sun of lovers. We assent to it readily and wish the lovers every success. To our regret, we have to make use of moonlight for more prosaic purposes. Instead of holding the tender hand of the beloved, we frequently clench the cold and hard handle of a spade; we often have to dig out our tent, sleds and various household goods, snowed under by furious blizzards.

The moon provides free and rather good illumination; it gives us better light than our flashlights. Incidentally, these flash lights are so poor in quality that we resolved to bring one of them back to the Main Land in order to shame the director of the factory producing such wretched articles.

It is nice to be out here on a moonlit night, the sky ablaze with stars. Overhead we have a rather successful reproduction of the Moscow Planetarium. The "sun" however, happens to be temporarily out of order and will be shown only at the end of February. The "director" of our "planetarium" is Zhenya Fyodorov. Notwithstanding his high post he must handle the theodolite with his bare hands. The management of the "Arctic Planetarium" does not spare ex-

On the North Pole *Cartoon by Briskin and Fomichov*

penses, and provides us lavishly with blizzard and frosts.

Every day, at the least opportunity, Fyodorov tries to ascertain the location of our floe. The new coordinates are awaited with great interest. We are in no hurry to get to the south and hence big leaps are no cause for rejoicing to us. At times, however, we become capricious and ask the floe to move a bit faster. Now for example, we would like to pass the next 30 miles as soon as possible and leave behind the northeastern cape of Greenland toward which we are being carried.

Are dissapointed when bad weather hides the moon. The sky is overcast with clouds, we cannot take our bearings, and live without knowing exactly where we are. On such days an impenetrable darkness prevails and only familiar objects nearby can be discerned. When walking toward the crack to observe the jamming of the ice, one has to take his bearings by the wind or follow our lifeline, a stretched rope which we call the "Arctic trolleybus."

Our life in the darkness is just as measured and exact as on sunny days. But the one thing we cannot get used to is the drift. Theoretically we visualize the drift of our floe to the south, but cannot notice its movement. The ice floe seems to be standing still all the time and we just have to take Fyodorov's word for it when he tells us all about the latest coordinates. True, in the past month our floe had become playful and all parts of the globe seem to rotate around us. Still, this is not convincing enough. All the more so, since Rudolf Island, unfailingly, continues to relay radiograms addressed to the "North Pole."

When we return I expect we most certainly will be drawn aside and asked in mysterious whispers. "Tell us the truth, weren't you much afraid out there." All will expect our answer to be in the negative. I must dissappoint such comrades in advance and by way of illustration remind them of one historic incident. During an attack a detachment marched by Napoleon. The young officer at its head was

weeping bitterly. Napoleon stopped him, asking why he was weeping. The young officer replied that he was terribly frightened. "Well, wish you victory," Napoleon said. The officer dashed ahead to overtake his unit and led it bravely into battle.

It was an easy matter for him to weep in warm weather. Though we are also frightened at times, we mustn't weep: our tears would freeze at once. We, however, ask all our well-wishers not to run to the Northern Sea Route Administration and, on the basis of this sensational information, demand that planes be dispatched at once for us. Until we complete our plan of work, we are receiving no guests.

Now the four of us are making plans for future expeditions. We report no details. Firstly, this is our secret. Secondly, we fear our wives will divorce us by radio.

All of us keep diaries regularly. If you don't make entries at once, two days later it is hard to recall what really happened. True, at times the entree may be merely: "Nothing happened." This is untrue. There were weather reports, radio bulletins. Papanin had a hard battle with frozen cereal and spilled some kerosene. Fyodorov and Shirshov put their notes in order.

Time flies and not without advantage. Another leaf is torn from the calendar which we all know by heart. Keep repeating to one another: "And what if Comrade Stalin were to ask us what we had been doing." We strive to work so as to be able to answer such a question without blushing.

All four of us have been informed that we were elected deputies to the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R. Where else the world over can you find a community the entire population of which consists of members of the first Socialist Parliament in the world.

December 16.

Papanin hurt his right hand with a file. His hand aches badly. Made a warm compress for him.

NEAR THE SHORES OF GREENLAND

December 24.

And so, today is my birthday. I am 34. Soon after midnight my comrades congratulated me. After that Petya went to work on the hydrological station, and Dmitrich and Zhenya returned to their sleeping bags.

Taking advantage of the calm and cloudy weather, I didn't climb out of my sleeping bag till four o'clock. In the morning not a single message for us, can hardly believe it. Rattled off Zhenya's epistle to the *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, and walked over to the hole in the ice to help Shirshov raise the cable from a depth of 1,000 meters.

A fog all around, overhead, on the ground, on all sides—absolutely impenetrable. Groped my way along the rope, using my flashlight only at intervals. Came over just in time—the raising of the cable was about completed.

For breakfast warmed up meat powder left over from yesterday's dinner. Then climbed to top of the wind engine. This is my daily dozen now. A wind began to blow but the brushes were again clogged.

Turned in as usual about one in the afternoon. At seven in the evening supped without climbing out of the bag. Pea soup, one sausage, milk, rice porridge and for the occasion of my birthday, a tiny metal cup of cognac. After this there was nothing to do but turn on my other side and sleep till the night watch. It would have been wonderful to have had even one-tenth of the good things Natasha prepared today. What couldn't I do to po-

tatoes, herring or some honest-to-goodness meat, or a slice of soft fresh bread. I'm just fed up with the biscuits, *borshch*, *shchi*, omelet, porridge and meat powder.

To be exact, my dreams are centered around potatoes, fresh rolls and sausage. Why is it that one pays no attention to these little things in Moscow. Just wait till I get back, will eat five rolls a day. Will always carry a roll, sausage or a cold hamburger in my pocket.

A north wind began to blow in the evening. Papanin and Shirshov went to remove the tent and the winch which happened to be near the crevice. Due to the snow storm, couldn't hear Moscow. Sadly noted that my birthday passed uneventfully. Congratulated Petya, whose birthday will be tomorrow. The wind grew stronger and in the evening reached a velocity of 25 meters. It means that the night watch will be pretty tough.

At times I fall to thinking about my friends, my comrades in this expedition.

Papanin. At the navy yards in Sevastopol where he spent his youth they had a traditional way of testing newcomers. Once a foreman called to the young apprentice. "Hey, Vanka, bring a few rivets over from the corner." Papanin took them. The rivets were thrown to the corner directly from the furnace. They were still burning hot. The boy picked them up, didn't drop them and with teeth clenched in pain, brought them to the foreman. Later, during the Civil War, Papanin rode out on a cutter against a destroyer. To scare the enemy he burned oil cake on board. The dense smoke produced made the enemy think he was facing at least a torpedo boat, and turned tail. These very same traits can be discerned in our ever-busy chief even today! Never to yield under any circumstances; never to give up the battle.

His working day begins at ten and ends at midnight, when we drink tea and listen to the news bulletin. Dmitrich makes a tour of all the bases in the morning. They have to be cleared of snow regularly. Should the ice begin to pile, we will have to transfer the bases. We are always ready for emergencies. Next comes the tending of the lamps. The lamp glasses are very precious and rare articles here. Papanin himself wipes them carefully. Usually one of the *primuses* gets capricious. The welding lamp then goes into action. Its ominous roar can be heard from afar. All in soot, his teeth flashing, Ivan Dmitrievich is fixing one of the *primus* burners. Behind him two *primuses* roar in unison with the welding lamp. The dinner is cooked on them. Flames leap upward and tears of melting snow stream down the walls. At times, true enough, flaming benzine gushes forth from the *primus* burners which have been ground time and again. Without being disturbed in the least, Papanin in such cases merely casts them out of the kitchen onto the snow. A cold bath quickly cools the heated *primuses*. So far, none of our *primuses* exploded.

Papanin is scarcely through with the *primuses* when he must help Fyodorov or Shirshov. Reverting to his old trade of mechanic, he takes to fixing something or other, to soldering a kerosene can. To top it all there is his work as correspondent. We have no writing tables or fancy desk lamps. We try to have our articles written in final shape at once without any rough copy; the supply of paper is limited. To write we have to snatch time from our sleeping hours or from our afternoon rest period. Entrees into the radio log book

have to be made legibly and clearly, or else I complain. But we are all friends and come to an understanding readily.

Shirshov. "I was born three years too late," he complained at times. During the Civil War he loved to hang around the Red troops. Broke hand grenades with bricks. The city of Yekaterinoslav. Passed from hand to hand many times. Shirshov, the son of a printer, had gone through an excellent school of class struggle in those years. He well remembers the bitter December frosts when the bodies of Communists hung in the squares frozen stiff, how these bodies swayed in the wind, knocking one against another. This sinister sound is indelibly impressed in the mind of Shirshov; it has instilled in his heart a hatred for the enemies of the Revolution.

On graduating the university, the young hydrobiologist studied algae in his native Dnieper River and then sailed on a small boat, along the rocks of Novaya Zemlya, studying the food supplies of the fishing grounds there. His abilities rapidly developed in the Arctic. He had to be handy at the lines, as well as guide a little boat in a storm; he became the kind of man who can be relied upon in moment of distress. And Shirshov liked work in the Arctic. In the Chelyuskin camp he was the first crew leader and managed the building of the landing field.

When our expedition was being fitted out he, after running about the factories all day, would go to a clinic to learn how to operate, experimenting with corpses, then he would buy meat and practice some more. And at night he had to catch up with his work on scientific data of his previous expedition. He could not leave the mainland his work incompleted. Recently three of us—Papanin, Fyodorov and myself—wrote about Shirshov to Dniepropetrovsk[1] newspapers. Here he was running for deputy to the Supreme Soviet.

"We are all in good health," we wrote. "But should one of us happen to break an arm or leg, be burned by an exploding *primus* or overcome by frost, we will, without hesitation, submit to an operation by Shirshov: 'Go ahead, Petya, do the best you can. We trust you!' We are proud that one of our comrades has been nominated by his townsmen as Deputy to the Supreme Soviet and are convinced that he will justify this trust with honor."

Fyodorov. Zhenya said at one time that "The Soviet state had put him in charge of the stars." That's not a bad job. One clever writer said: "The amazing thing is not the immensity of the starry sky but the fact that man was able to measure it." The writer evidently didn't really mean astronomic observations at a temperature of minus 35 deg., accompanied by a biting northerner, when merely to touch the tiny screws of the instruments is sufficient to drive one's horrified soul from its transitory body. But Zhenya manages to do it. More, he is learning English and together with Petya maintains that this is one of the best means for keeping warm.

A blizzard frequently hides the strange structure where Fyodorov works. Shirshov assures us that in the tropics it would be taken for a thermite nest. This sugary cone bears the proud name of "magnetic observatory." An electric light penetrates through its thin walls. Sitting in solemn silence Zhenya Fyodorov performs strange rites with the theodolite, or indulges in black magic over the mysteries of ter-

[1] Formerly Yekaterinoslav, Shirshov's home town—*Ed.*

restial magnetism. We frequently joke and tease him about his "intangible" science.

"Take my hydrology which has to be drawn by hand from big ocean depths," Shirshov grumbles. "There at least you can feel in every muscle of your body that you are advancing world science."

December 31.

Received a long message from children today. These kids are taking part in a New Year's fir-tree party at the House of the Trade Unions in Moscow. They wrote about the holidays, the entertainments, about the model of our tent and invited us to come to their next New Year's party. Replied at once.

While we were writing, a southern blizzard began. The last day of the old year was marked by an unusual rise in temperature—it was only four below. Retired after 12 and left word I was not to be awakened for dinner or the concert.

Papanin woke me at eleven in the evening. Petya and Zhenya were not in the tent. With the southern wind growing strong, they left to fasten the tent at the crack. Hated to crawl out of the bag but had to hurry and shave before the arrival of the new year. Stood on all fours while Papanin cut my braids at the neck. Then shaved quickly, washed my head, neck and face, more or less, of course. Soon after, Dmitrich got busy cleaning up. Shirshov and Zhenya returned. The time for the new year weather report was drawing close. Though we switched the receiver on rather late, we heard the chimes of the Kremlin. Heard a toast to Comrade Stalin.

We met the New Year with a strong southern wind and blizzard.

At 12.15, as usual, transmitted the weather report to Rudolf Island and exchanged New Year's greetings. Then took my place at the New Year's banquet table or rather banquet box. Baked for the occasion our well-known biscuits, as heavy as lead. We serve them with caviar. Not so bad—edible, anyway. The second course was mashed potatoes with sausage, and coffee with what was left of a cake.

Called Vesyoly into the tent. The dog went wild with joy.

The weather is beastly but our mood is topping. No matter how you look at it, the past year was not wasted for us.

January 9.

Morning news bulletin from Moscow—learned that the *Murmanets* was ordered to force her way into the Greenland Sea to establish communication with us, and watch conditions at the edge of the ice. Date of departure January 10-11. Could hardly believe my ears. Why, at first it had been planned that the *Murmanets* sail at the end of February. Evidently the speed of our drift is causing justified anxiety in Moscow.

A lengthy interview with an official in Murmansk was broadcast. He thought the *Murmanets* would reach the shores of Greenland in about seven or eight days. What a hurry this comrade evidently is in! Recall the Bible saying: never be hasty with words and advice, be sparing with them for just as dreams are caused by many cares, so does multiplicity of words betray the voice of the unwise.

All four took part in composing a radiogram of greetings to the Presidium of the First session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. Several times re-arranged the text, polishing it, and whipping it into shape.

We cannot be present at this great holiday for all the Soviet peoples. Fulfilling the task the Government and the Party have entrusted to us, we will continue

with increased firmness our work amidst the drifting ice. But together with the entire Soviet people our thoughts and feelings will be in Moscow, in the Red capital.

From the remote Greenland Sea, we have sent our ardent and hearty greetings to the envoys of the free and happy people, to the First Deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., to our own Stalin.

As hitherto, we drift swiftly, our pace does not slacken.

Yasha Libin hasn't given up the idea of landing a small expedition in the region of the "pole of inaccessibility." Should his idea be realized, it will be possible to conduct full hydrologic observations there. Today Yasha let the cat out of the bag when he told us that he wanted to ask us many questions, but knowing how busy we were, decided to refrain. Answered at once: "Please note that information bureau on drifting ice floe is open to the public 24 hours a day."

January 11.

Read the entries for the last several days and noticed that there was nothing in them about our "workdays." So engrossed was I in news from the outside that I had forgotten all about the blizzard, hydrology and all other events of our drift.

A full moon, at times overcast by clouds, is shining at present. It is dead calm. Are resting up from Northern winds. Taking advantage of the calm weather, thoroughly cleaned the contacts of the wind engine. This will help me avoid climbing it in chilling winds.

Sick and tired of the blizzard the past few days. Before getting to work must heat all our laboratories. The long awaited airing had chilled them completely.

From time to time Petya is worried lest the wind drive our floe too far—we might miss the spot where we are supposed to set up the next hydrological station. But the wind drives us on inexorably. To walk to the crevice in such weather, to check our hydrological household is as bad as flying blind, minus instruments, finding your bearings as best you can. Zhenya was blue all over when we dragged him out of his mansion. But the moment he warmed up he went back to continue his sorcery over the theodolite.

At times we feel the jolts of the ice floe. Our hearts beat faster. We keep our ear to the ground. No, this jamming took place on some neighboring ice floes. Can't get used to it.

Our topics of conversation; *Murmanets*, wind, chess. Chess passions run highest now.

Today, as usual, listened in on the early broadcast for schoolchildren. Fully concur with the opinion voiced by Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya that all Pioneers and schoolchildren should take part in social work, share their knowledge with others and draw other children into interesting activity.

Was highly gratified by the report that a Moscow Pioneer, Zhenya Zimakov, organized a circle of juvenile radio amateurs. The youngsters named the circle after me. When I get back, I shall help the kids with their work.

Northern winds drive our floe swiftly southward. We have long passed the latitude of the Arctic radio stations on Rudolf Island and on Tixie Bay. We are further south than any part of the Franz Joseph Land archipelago.

Moshkovsky from Rudolf Island maliciously inquired:

"How are things with you down south?"

January 18.

Moscow reported that short waves fail to come through all over the Arctic; communications disrupted everywhere, even between Archangel and Dickson Island. No news from the *Murmanets* for two days. So that's what the trouble—. . . .

No communication could be established with Rudolf Island at night. Van-Maigen called me but couldn't hear my answer. From the conversation with Myug Bay, learned that calm weather prevails at Van-Maigen with temperature at 16 below. Clear and calm weather at Myug Bay but temperature 48 degrees below zero. We are not far behind. The day is cloudless, with a frost of 42.6, the lowest temperature registered so far.

The temperature in our tent ranges from minus 4 to minus 6. Kept warm by going out from time to time to dig the sleds and the reserve radio and benzine motor out of the snow. I'd dig for a while, get somewhat warm and then add to my diary. After sitting in the tent for a while, would grow cold again and get out once more. Vesyoly barks at every cracking and rumbling of the ice. The crashing of ice resounds loudly and frequently. I don't know whether this is due to jamming or to the frost.

At six in the morning Rudolf Island couldn't hear me. On the chance that I might hear them, they relayed a message from Schmidt. "*Taimyr* will be ready to sail in the latter part of January. However, the expedition will proceed under more favorable conditions, if we wait for end of the Polar night, end of February or March. Report your opinion. Greetings."

And we never figured on leaving before the middle or even the end of March.

Mended my fur trousers at night; they are in tatters.

The crashing of the ice continued throughout the day. As the cannonade has kept up for more than 24 hours, we've grown used to it. The frost is more severe. Dead calm. The temperature at its lowest was 44.5. Pretty tough. . . . It's minus 5-6 degrees in the tent but the sleeping bags are warm. Crawling out of them is what hurts . . .

At noon, again no communication. Only in the evening did I succeed getting off meteo and our reply to Moscow that all's well, all are in good health and expect to be removed from the floe in March.

Our landing field is littered with huge blocks of ice. Some of them—meters thick. It's going to be hard work to clear them away.

Shirshov worked again today on a hydrological station. Dressed warmly, but his hands became swollen just the same. Depth of the ocean 272 meters. Zhenya took our bearings. Covered six miles in one day. We are 77 deg. 11 min. N. lat. Some cold! I'm frozen to the bone.

The moon turned blood-red and is slowly crawling along the horizon. Dawn is near.

January 23.

Watched the Northern Lights at night. Much has been written about the Arctic's entrancing display of fireworks. But I don't think words can really do justice to this wonderful spectacle. A curtain seems to be drawn far in the background and the blue depths of the sky are turned into a stage where a fairy tale comes to life. It flares up and dies down, at times it seems to recede into the folds of the darkness, as heavy as velvet drapes, then once more flares up in millions of needle lights piercing the entire sky.

Dmitrich adopted various emergency measures. He cut a hatch

through the roof of the tent. Skis and sticks were placed near the entrance.

Surrounded by a dead calm we drifted four kilometers in one day. Again a clear sky, very light (relatively, of course, since we have grown used to the darkness). A low fog is creeping up from the horizon, a sure sign that we are nearing big fissures.

Gave up trying to establish communication with Barentsburg. They can't take our messages. Can hear me very poorly and then endlessly ask for repetitions. Merely a waste of battery.

Had rice and mushroom soup for dinner. Our last mushrooms. Wouldn't mind an omelet made of fresh eggs.

FAREWELL ICE FLOE

February 5.

Only several days ago, as I lay in our old tent, I thought: man can get used to anything, even to an incessant storm raging for days. True, it was a bit uncomfortable but bearable. As usual, froze all night and looked longingly at the watch; how much longer I would have to wait for the morning tea kettle. It was my job to put the kettle on the fire, but my presence at the drinking was not obligatory. I figured on drinking tea in the sleeping bag. Most likely there would be no communication with Rudolf Island. The whirling of the snow makes it impossible to hear anything in the air.

Five days passed since then. Made no entries in the diary all that time, no chance to think of it. Zhenya was the only one who made some "notches" for reference, next to rows of figures of astronomical calculations. So today everyone grabbed their diaries. The latest events are worth recording, they are fresh in our minds and we will propabably remember them for the rest of our lives.

Evening of January 31, the fifth day of the storm, Dmitrich and Petya approached the crevice to check our hydrological equipment. In case of emergency, tied ropes to one another. Midway to the crevice Petya noticed a tiny winding crack in the snow. Dmitrich tried to measure it with his spade. The spade sank which meant that the crack ran deep, and the ice might be split. Water was coming up from the crack and spreading over the surface of the ice. The way to the hydrological "homestead" was cut off. To walk in a storm across the crack and the water would be incautious, to say the least. Went home. Our trousers became coated with ice and looked like the buckskin trousers of officers of Empress Catherine.

A tea kettle was boiling in our tent, in our dear old home. A board with a map was laid on a tin can. Supper was being prepared. Suddenly at the height of these pleasant preparations, there was a sharp jolt and a squeaking rustle. It sounded as though someone were tearing silk or some other fabric. Zhenya and Petya jumped into the "kitchen," examined the entrance. No, there was nothing suspicious there. The wind continued to shake our canvas roof.

My watch was not yet completed and I remained awake. Petya and Zhenya climbed into their bags. Dmitrich couldn't sleep. He kept on smoking (the first sign of agitation) and puttered about the place. From time to time looked longingly at the loud speaker. During jolts the loud speaker shook lightly, emiting a jarring noise.

Toward early morning Dmitrich suggested a chess game. Played thoughtfully, calmly, with full realization of the import of the game, but suddenly through the rumble

of the wind came an unusual clatter. The ice shook convulsively. We decided, however, not to stop the game. But Dmitrich was losing and therefore finally became interested in the suspicious racket.

Fulfilling my duty as watchman, climbed out of the tent. Stamped about in the darkness and found no cracks. Retired to our bags without undressing.

Dmitrich was first to hear a strange squeaking in our tent. He hastened to waken everybody. Zhenya tried to sleep on.

"Just the snow is sinking, Dmitrich. You must have been frightened in your sleep."

"Never mind the snow," Dmitrich growled. "The kitchen is moving as though on wheels. Come on. Get out of your bags and see for yourselves."

Shirshov was first to get dressed, pulled on his fur greatcoat, crawled out of the tent on all fours. The distant rustle ceased at times but then again grew closer, becoming more ominous.

Petya proved to have good eyesight. He spotted a dark patch some ten meters from the tent. He could hardly believe his eyes. A crack? Was it possible? But there could be no doubt about it. The crack was growing wider, then narrowed down to a ribbon. Covering his face from the furious blinding whirlwind, Petya bent low, and lighting his way with a flashlight, walked along this ominous dark ribbon. It ran far ahead toward our supply base. Petya related all this to us when he returned to the tent.

Cracks. Cracks right around our tent. Here was the thing we had been expecting and preparing for months.

"It seems, brothers, we are finally getting it in the neck. Someone with an evil eye must have spoiled it for us . . ."

I addressed my remark to those of my comrades who but yesterday had showered praises on our ice floe.

It was good and well to joke about it, but something had to be done. All four climbed out of the tent. Crawled over the snow with flashlights in all directions looking for cracks. Darkness, wind and the snow blizzard combined to knock one down. This made us cautious. I stayed near the tent holding a lamp, acting as a beacon. Soon all assembled and we decided to while away the hour until dawn drinking tea.

During this hour, time hung heavily on our hands. Petya again went out to reconnoiter. This time the news was very disconcerting. The crack had widened in parts to four and five meters. Black patches of water loomed in places where there were but narrow ribbons an hour ago. The nearest canal was formed right behind the meteorological hut and passed at an angle to our supply base. One wall of the base was suspended over the water.

Now there was no time for contemplation. Had to salvage our supplies. Fought our way to the supply base through the blizzard. The door was blocked by snow. Papanin hit the roof with an ax several times, and it caved in with a bang. There was water inside. It was seeping through the lower layers of the snow. Jumping down through the hole in the roof Papanin landed in water to his ankles.

Felt boots, cartridges, lamps, spades, dishes and canvas flew out in a cascade. Ivan Dmitrich proved himself not a bad juggler, while the three of us outside quickly loaded all the supplies on sleds. The storeroom was emptied in a few minutes. Straining ourselves to the utmost, pulling as hard as

we could, crawling on all fours, we hauled the sleds to the center of our ice floe. Somehow covered our spoils, we returned with the sleds.

Our labors exhausted us completely. And still dawn hadn't broken. We wanted to stay up and wait for it, better to examine our floe. It's the early bird that gets the worm.

Decided to sleep, after all. Fyodorov is on watch.

But had no chance to sleep. As usual, the snowfall ceased suddenly, torn clouds raced overhead. Stars could be discerned among them. Zhenya hastened to take our bearings. For six days we had no idea of our location. The results were astonishing. Zhenya checked them twice before handing me the report. And even then I couldn't make myself transmit it. 74 deg. 16 min. N. lat. 16 deg. 24 min. W. long.! One hundred and twenty miles to the southwest in six days. Twenty miles a day. . . .

At 11.30 Zhenya again awakened all of us. The new dark crack wound its way from the weather observation hut directly to the walls of our kitchen, and vanished under our tent. It appeared again on the other side of the tent, making its way to the wind engine. No wonder our tent was squeaking. The ice floe was cracking up right beneath our feet.

We were sorry to part with our home to which we had grown so attached during the long months of the drift. But there was no time to be lost. We decided, at once to remove the radio station and all valuable equipment and supplies, to build an igloo and to settle in the silk tents left us by the flyers.

Before evacuating, Ivan Dmitrich hurriedly transmitted a brief report to the Main Land.

"As a result of six-day storm at 8 a. m. February 1, ice floes in region of station split up by cracks, half to five kilometers long. Are on fragment of ice floe 300 meters long 200 meters wide. Are cut off from two bases and also technical supply storeroom with secondary property. Salvaged everything valuable from fuel and household bases. Crack appeared under tent. Will move to igloo. Will have additional report on bearings today: Don't worry in case communications are interrupted."

First, of course, came the transfer of the radio station. Tent for it was pitched near the mast of the antenna. For some reason we thought this fragment would not crack any more.

The crack under our old quarters caused no trouble for the time being. But the hides on the floor were already covered with water. The wet wool froze rapidly. The ice crunched under our feet

Nevertheless spent the evening of February first in the old house. It still seemed to provide safe enough shelter, though we were prepared to clear out of it at a moment's notice.

For a long time discussed what was to be done with our scientific equipment.

"Load it on sleds," Papanin suggested.

Now our entire science is on a nomad footing. The weather observation hut hangs suspended over the very edge of a fissure. Our weather vane is on a neighboring floe; it keeps coming closer and then drifting away from us.

Hardly had a chance to establish communication before it grew dark. The ice fields continued their onslaught. New cracks appeared. Around us as far as the eye could reach there were ice floes separated by patches of water. Papanin, Shirshov and Fyodorov were busy all

day hauling our supplies to the center of what was left of our floe. Visited neighboring floes. It was just like walking across the ice of a river when it breaks up in the spring. But nothing could be done about it. This experience might come in handy.

By morning February second, our floe was reduced in size to 30 by 50 meters. Examined the territory carefully, as clear and calm weather set in. A survey of the neighborhood brought us no cheer. Small fragments of cracked ice are all about us. New cracks have appeared on our tiny fragment. One of them had cut off the distant antenna and the tents which we had set up only yesterday.

And so again we must move. This time clung to our wind engine. It pours life into our batteries. Without them we would have had no communications, and our tiny ice floe would be as lost as a drop in the ocean.

Petya and Zhenya went reconnoitering. They were looking for a big ice floe in the neighborhood. Their search was fruitless. The entire field was broken into tiny fragments, milling about. A kilometer from the tent our scouts found remnants of our hydrological "homestead." Bamboo sticks protruded from the tattered canvas. They wanted to take the winch with them but found it much too heavy to be carried across crevices. In any case removed the sticks; they might be handy in our new household. The main thing was to dig the sleds out of the snow. Two sleds would solve the transport problem. In addition, sleds would facilitate our movements; they could be used as bridges across small fissures.

At times the ice floes were pressed one against the other. Petya and Zhenya made their way to one of the food bases, drifting on one of the ice fragments. Removed from there sacks of fur clothing, a clipper boat; loaded everything on sleds and hauled it all to the camp.

From a high ridge discerned two more supply bases with provisions and fuel. Impossible to reach them; they are cut off by wide fissures.

While my comrades were busy gathering our supplies I was occupied with the antenna. Impossible to set it up on our fragment, not enough room. The antenna requires over 60 meters, whereas our fragment at its longest point is no greater than 50 meters. Had to sink long bamboo sticks in the ice and stretch the antenna in the shape of the letter "T".

Transmitted a short report to the *Murmanets*. This was the only message dispatched on February 2. Pondered over every word in order not to cause unnecessary anxiety on the mainland. Finally composed the following message.

"Ice fragments no bigger than seventy meters continue to break up in region of station. Cracks one to five meters, fissure up to fifty meters. Ice shifting. Nine point ice all the way to the horizon, landing of planes impossible on any spot. Living in silk tent on ice, 30 by 50 meters. During communication, place second antenna mast on neighboring floe. We have a three-month supply, apparatus, and results of our work. Greetings from everybody."

We listened gratefully to our wind engine booming in a business basso, charging our batteries. Now radio communication is assured.

In the evening learned that the *Taimyr* had encountered severe storm and is lying in drift; workers of the Baltic shipyards, at the call of Zhdanov[1], are enthusiastically over-

[1] Member of Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and secretary of the Leningrad District Party Committee.—*Ed.*

hauling the ice breaker *Yermak*; with dogged persistence the tiny *Murmanets* is valiantly fighting its way through the ice to get to us.

Keep an uninterrupted watch. We must keep a sharp lookout for cracks and ridges all the time. The North Star suddenly seemed to appear to the south of us, which meant that our floe was revolving.

On the night of February third Zhenya had additional proof that our flow was rotating. In the gaps among the clouds he caught glimpses of the North Star, Capella, Vega, Arcturus. The stars, however, seemed to move not from left to right, as usual, but in the opposite direction. Zhenya, of course, discarded the hypothesis that the earth had begun rotating in a new direction. The conclusion could only be that it was our floes which was rotating.

Spent the entire day transferring equipment from other bases. Zhenya broke through the roof of his observatory extricating everything of value that had remained after our original hasty evacuation.

Only after these trials did the Arctic somewhat reward us for our labors. During the day, on February 3, the red-blood disk of the sun appeared from beyond a wall of fog at the very edge of the horizon. The scarlet rays spread over the ice, were caught by the ridges which took on bright colors.

Then came calmer days. Live quietly, no jolting. Batteries are charged. With great pleasure listened to music. Rubbed our faces with a wet rag yesterday, and that braced us a bit.

February 14.

Early in the morning the sky was sullen. Somewhat later, about nine in the morning, a sudden southwest squall nearly tore the roof off my radio hut. Luckily succeeded in piling some snow on it, and also flung my boots and bags on it.

Stars appeared. Had to wake Zhenya, who took our bearings; 71 deg. 22 min. N. lat. and 20 deg. W. long.

The strong wind scattered the clouds. Bright sunny day. In the morning the temperature was only minus 0.5 deg. All this is due to the southern wind. A strong wind prevailed in the region of the icebreaker *Taimyr* and they were afraid to let the planes take off, though they have been lowered onto the ice and stand ready. Three of us left to clear an airdrome. I remained in camp alone and, as agreed, was to light a fire for the *Taimyr*. When everyone had left, I piled rags into a tin box, poured some liquid over them from a can I thought contained kerosene, and then started the fire. The fire burned poorly so I added more of the liquid from the can. There was a sudden explosion. The can flew out of my hand. Luckily the wind carried the bundle of flame aside, extinguishing it. Later, when Papanin returned, I found that the can contained benzine. I was lucky. It wouldn't have been exactly funny to catch fire out in the open with a strong wind blowing and not a soul about.

In the evening the *Taimyr* reported that fissures had appeared and that their landing field had been broken up. The planes were raised aboard the vessel. The ship was now trying to force its way to us. At one in the morning will exchange light signals.

Yermak finally emerged from the ice of the Gulf of Finland and is steaming across the Baltic at eleven miles an hour. In addition to the *Taimyr* the icebreaker *Murman* is also approaching us.

February 18.

The vessels are drawing closer and closer. Their searchlights are growing brighter.

At night, clambering into our icy cots, wrote a report addressed to Stalin and Molotov. Argued and discussed every phrase, every word. For the past 274 days of our drift, we had worked persistently for the right to make this report. Desired to tell of everything we had thought and lived through as we were fulfilling our tasks. How can one choose the proper words for this. The last moments of our camp life had arrived and we must manage to say everything.

The day passed in great tension. Even our chess tournament lagged.

A huge fissure appeared about one and a half kilometers from our camp during the day. It would be nice if the boats could make their way there. Petya is still busy erecting his igloo. He wants to learn Eskimo architecture, which produces snow houses resembling overturned cups. We argue as to whether the job will be finished before the boats arrived.

"Here, boys, the boats are coming," Papanin shouted suddenly. Dmitrich stood on a high ridge, waving a flag. First we could see the smoke and then the masts of the vessels.

Rays of searchlights roamed across the ice. Vesyoly went wild. Everyone was in a "farewell" mood. Arranging our notebooks, packing our things.

There is a pot of soup cooked with bear's meat. For some reason it is being boycotted today. Yet I can't make up my mind to spill it out; what if the vessels don't come closer tomorrow.

In any case, Zhenya and Petya shaved. Papanin and myself postponed this operation till tomorrow. It's one in the morning and Petya has assumed his watch. Papanin, claiming that he doesn't want Petya to be lonesome, started a game of chess with him. While I transmitted a night report to the *Taimyr*, the match ended with the score 4:0 in favor of Shirshov.

For some reason, recalled the fate of our predecessor at the North Pole, Robert Peary. He gave 23 years of his life to spend but a few hours at the North Pole. At last he did attain his life's goal. On returning to the United States, Peary declared that he wished to present his country with the North Pole won through many years of persistent struggle.

President Taft's reply was that he would return the gift since he didn't know what to do with it. Then, turning his back on Peary, the president gave him to understand that the visit was over.

Could anything like this happen in our country where a heroic deed for Fatherland is appreciated more than any gift?

Walked to a hillock. The searchlights of the *Taimyr* and the *Murman* pierce the sky. The numerous lights from the portholes of the vessels make it seem as though two huge buildings had sprung up on the ice.

Patches of clouds float overhead. The 274th night of North Pole drifting station is drawing to a close.

ABOARD THE *MURMAN*

February 19.

The vessels set out on their return journey. After his bath Ivan Dmitrich retired for a rest. I, too, cannot get over the remarkable sensation of taking a bath. How many times had I dreamed of a bath and shower after listening to the sports instructor over the radio in the morning. We are surrounded by people, our own Soviet people, our countrymen! We became acquainted with almost the entire crew while still on the ice floe. Petya and Zhenya stay aboard the *Taimyr*. Thus, we were divided by drawing lots.

Read newspapers. Attentive sail-

ors told us that evening tea would soon be served. At night the vessels will draw alongside each other, and a banquet will be given in the *Taimyr*'s companion way.

In my mind I reconstructed the events of the day, the last day of our expedition.

Usually morning tea and breakfast were a sort of rite with us, a regular function of our club, as it were. First came the preparations, then the waiting—we loved these hours. Relished our breakfast, telling our dreams; I would give an account of news I had heard in the course of my night watch. Today things were somewhat different. All were on edge, and from time to time one of us would jump up, run out in the hope of seeing the boats on their way to our camp. Ivan Dmitrich was the lucky one. He was the first to notice the violet silhouettes of the ships as they entered our fissure. From that moment the high ridge on the neighboring floe became our Mecca. We were grieved when high ridges hid the vessels from view for a while.

Dinner was not cooked. Ate some leftovers from yesterday, and couldn't finish even that. Dmitrich was beautifying himself, shaving. The results were rather interesting. The lower shaven part became clean while the upper part of his face seemed to remain in a mask. I hadn't the chance to shave. Such is the lot of all radio operators. At the tensest and most interesting moments in life one is chained to the radio and batteries of which one has grown so tired.

By noon the vessel could be seen well even without binoculars. A thick smoke poured from the funnels. The stokers were working at top speed. A silent contest was taking place; which would reach the camp first, the *Murman* or the *Taimyr?*

At two o'clock two groups of people from both vessels embarked on the ice. The sailors walked at first but then broke into a run. It seemed as though an avalanche was about to descend on us. But this was a joyful attack. Banners fluttered in the wind, at the head of the groups. We could see the shouting, cheerful, happy men. Greetings, our good, dear comrades.

Last to arrive on the scene were the cameramen, all out of breath. They dragged their heavy apparatus along and soon were filming the camp as well as themselves doing the filming.

Our old friend, the very same old ridge, served as the platform for a brief meeting. Ostaltsev, head of the *Taimyr* expedition, delivered a brief speech. The cameramen were running amuck. Lots of news, questions from all sides.

We feel as though today were our birthday. No matter what we try to do, a dozen friendly hands offer to help. Dozens instantly do a job that would take us hours.

A lamp was still burning in our snow hut, in an aluminum plate there were leftovers of yesterday's soup. Cups and plates of composition material were strewn about. Ivan Dmitrich ran over to tidy things up there as well. Extinguished the lamp and gathered up the cups. People asked for them as momentoes. Distributed them. Next the books went into circulation. Jotted down some cordial words and the date "19/2/1938" on each. Papanin rolled a cognac cask out of some hidden corner, knocked the cork out and served everyone to good cognac.

It's time to move the radio station. Removed the canvas cover. This is the end to my solitary conversations with the Main Land. I am surrounded on all sides by guests who admire my dirty and frozen appearance. . . . From under my shoulder peers the camera of a photographer who seeks an "original" shot.

Transmitted the last message of the Upol station, a report to the Party and the Government. One kick and—the snow-wall caved in. The radio set of North Pole Station is speeded to the vessels on sleds.

Can now remove the masts and antenna.

A big crater marks the spot where our tent had been. It is hard to believe that our tent at one time stood on a snow eminence. Even the tent top is covered with snow now. The excavations were continued and the canvas, skins and trusses were dragged out. Even the remains of an old silk parachute which had once served as our towel were not forgotten.

"Time to go, pals, evening is drawing near," Papanin said. A line of sleds decorated with flags moved over the ridges and cracks, heading toward the vessels. We have to go.

We were on this ice floe only nine months, but devil take it, we certainly went through a lot in that time.

Petya and Zhenya are the first to leave. Under some pretext I returned to the camp. Nothing here but scraps of some cloth and deer hides. A box of provisions lay near the ridge. We decided to leave it for Greenland Eskimos should the floe be driven to the shore. Most likely the white bears will get it first.

Night is drawing near and as usual the wind is growing stronger. The temperature is dropping. Looked for my mittens, couldn't recall where I had put them. It doesn't really matter, I don't need them any more.

Good bye, ice floe.

Papanin fastened a red flag to the ridge. Drift on, old floe, under our red flag!

ON MAIN LAND

March 15. Night and Morning.

Moscow is near. The train covers the last stretch. At every station and junction our countrymen accorded us an enthusiastic welcome. In the darkness of the night people stood with banners unfurled. Lights everywhere. Wanted to greet warmly everyone who came to welcome us. But the train rushed on and only stopped at large stations. Ivan Dmitrich didn't sleep all night. He went out at every station, greeted the assembled throngs, making brief speeches.

At Bologoye Dmitrich said:

"We are considered heroes. Look at yourselves. There is heroism in every Soviet man, the ability to fulfill any task for the good of the country, for the happiness of the people."

At dawn he came into the compartment and woke me.

"Get up for your watch. Time to transmit the meteo to Rudolf Island."

I jumped up. Was surprised to find no sleeping bags, the place nice and warm, and no smell of the kerosene stove. It was almost a month since we had left the ice floe, but the habits of our "drifting" life were hard to forget.

"What are our coordinates?" was my question.

"Coming to Vyshny Volochek . . ."

Remembered well a conversation with an elderly railwayman.

"How's life, pop?" I asked.

"Fine. I have sons like you, one is a pilot and the other a tanker."

We are soon due in Moscow. Almost a month now since we boarded the vessels sent us by our country, the Party, Stalin. There certainly were many memorable days in this month. The unforgettable meeting of the three Soviet vessels amidst the Greenland Sea ice, when the darkness of the night was shattered by searchlights. The first days on the *Yermak*. The tranquil fjords in Iceland. Meeting the heroic *Murmanets*. Storms on the Atlantic.

The Heroic Four *Painting by A. Laktionov*

Norway. Greetings of Norwegian sailors. Swarms of foreign correspondents. Only when visiting the radio shack could one realize what a mass of stuff the correspondents were putting out. A squall of congratulatory messages flooded the ether. Stop at Tallinn, a city of medieval architecture and the air of the old Russian province. Arrival in Soviet waters. Red winged planes. Pennant on the ice; greetings of the men of the Red Banner Baltic Fleet. Arrival of the *Truvor*. Meeting our wives. And, at last, Leningrad.

Greetings, Fatherland!

We felt the warmth of your embrace, your voice at meetings in Leningrad factories and mills, when talking to Leningrad's workers.

Crossed the Moscow Volga Canal. Peered through the windows, anxious to see how Moscow suburbs had changed during our absence.

Moscow is near.

March 18.

Moscovites filled Komsomolskaya Square[1] from end to end. Had the impulse to say briefly and simply:

"Greetings, dear countrymen."

The vaporous breath of many thousands hung overhead like a cloud. Cold dreary weather. And yet how joyous it all is!

In forceful, moving terms Ivan Dmitrich reported about our work to the citizens of the capital.

Touring cars decorated with flowers were waiting for us. Ivan Dmitrich took his place in the first car. At his side fluttered a banner with the portrait of Comrade Stalin. A shower of tape from the housetops. The Moscovites shout our names. Here is the familiar barber shop on Kirov Street. I wave to the barbers. It seems, they recog-

[1] Location of Leningrad Railway Station—*Ed.*

nized me. Will soon visit that shop again. . . .

We drive through the center. Here are the Borovitsky gates. We ride into the Kremlin. Many co-workers had been invited to the reception. Time passed quickly in lively conversation. Then we were invited upstairs, to the hall.

With excitement and trepidation we mount the broad marble staircase leading to the Georgievsky Hall. We have with us the banner of our North Pole Station, the banner with the silhouette of Comrade Stalin. On February 19th Ivan Dmitrich had carefully removed it from the ice floe. And now he, the head of the first Soviet expedition to the North Pole, had brought it with him to the Kremlin, bore it aloft, and with words, resounding throughout the world, greeted the great Stalin who had inspired us in our daily tasks on the distant ice floe.

The assembled throng greeted us with applause which in a few seconds swelled into a tremendous ovation. It seemed the marble, gilded walls of the Georgievsky Hall could not hold the enthusiastic clamor: Comrade Stalin appeared, accompanied by the leaders of the Party and the Government, Comrades Molotov, Voroshilov, Kalinin, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, Zhdanov and Dimitrov.

Comrade Molotov invited us to the table of the presidium. We came up. Comrade Stalin heartily embraced Papanin, kissed him and then each of us.

A splendid festival began. It could be said that our close-knit foursome had attained the acme of happiness. We had completed not a bad expedition, gained the right to report personally to Comrade Stalin, and here we were sitting next to him, next to our teacher and friend. I recall Barbusse: "The man with a scholar's mind, a workman's face, and the dress of a private soldier." How true these words are. Leader, worker and soldier.

It would seem we could desire no more. But there was still another joy reserved for us. Only one man thought of how to present it to us, and that man was Comrade Stalin.

Our wives were seated some distance away. Suddenly Comrade Stalin rose and walked into the hall; he approached our wives, invited them to our table, seated them with us. Never, during our stay on the ice floe had I felt like crying, but here a lump came to my throat. How simple and humane is this man. overburdened as he is with affairs of state.

In vain did Vyacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov try to quiet the assembly. Incessant shouts of "hurrah," greetings and applause. But at last Molotov was able to make himself heard. He toasted our four and the courageous crews of the Soviet vessels, who so heroically fulfilled the assignment of the Government.

Ivan Dmitrich spoke. He said there could be no greater satisfaction for a citizen of the Soviet Union than to fulfill the tasks set by our Party, our Fatherland, by our own great and beloved Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin. It was no accident that we landed at the Pole. You can't get there so easily. Our aviation built up by the Stalinist Central Committee and Comrade Stalin had proved that Soviet people can land wherever required, if need be at the very North Pole. Dmitrich said no one had prepared landing fields for us there, no one had appeared with flags to indicate the direction of the wind. But the planes had landed nevertheless. And the white spot in the heart of the Arctic was removed. He said that Soviet people could not help but be victorious at the Pole. Neither crevices nor the cannonade in days of jamming could daunt us, for we daily

felt the affection of the people, Stalin's concern for us.

"Hurrah for Stalin. . . ."

Again endless applause resounds through the hall. But Ivan Dmitrich has not finished. He has so much to say today. He continues, saying that we were not afraid of the floe's melting.

"True, at times we feared that our floe might melt from the numberless ardent messages, the people's warm affection."

With emotion Papanin related that Comrade Stalin had just told him how anxious for our fate he had been when our ice-floe had split.

Papanin thanked him on our behalf for his concern. We could yet have stayed on the floe for quite a while, we had not been in a hurry and had not asked that vessels hasten to our camp.

When *Yermak* had run short of coal, we were forced to stop at Tallinn. At a reception tendered at the Soviet embassy there, one of the diplomatic guests put a tricky question to me.

"Tell me, Mr. Krenkel, to whom does the Pole belong? The Arctic is divided into sectors—part of it is Soviet, part Danish, part Norwegian, part American. Is the same to be true of the North Pole?"

"The North Pole belongs to those who most frequently visit that zone and most frequently fly over it," I replied.

The audience laughed heartily, as Papanin recounted this "diplomatic" incident.

In concluding his speech, Papanin turned to Joseph Vissarionovich and said:

"We are happy that today we can report to you personally that the Stalinist plan for the study and the mastery of the North Pole has been completed!"

We were anxious to learn whether Comrade Stalin would speak. And suddenly Joseph Vissarionovich drew the microphone over. He began by saying that no heroes of the type our country has, are known in the West or America, for there every undertaking is always figured in terms of profit. There is no criterion for estimating the courage of a man, his heroism. Man is priceless, you can't put his value in rubles. That is why the Government had decided to spare no expense or icebreakers, and to save Soviet people regardless of what the cost may be.

In European and American countries the value of a man is measured in terms of money, of gold. Americans will say that a hero is worth a hundred thousand dollars. But as compared with man the dollar is worth nothing. (The dollar itself is worth just so many kopeks.). Comrade Stalin proposed a toast that the Soviet people learn to love and value courage, talent and ability of people, for people are priceless; that we, Soviet people, adopt a new standard for appraising men, not in rubles or dollars; that we learn to value people by their exploits, their talent, energy, fearlessness which are worth billions upon billions of dollars, pounds or francs.

We listened with bated breath to Stalin's words. He spoke about the true value of exploits at the face of death. Anyone can give his life. To die, of course, is hard, but there is no difficulty in finding death, after all. Stalin proposed a toast to people who desire to live, to live as long as possible and not to die, to the health of heroes, old, middle-aged and young, to the vigor of the youth.

These words were imbued with great wisdom. Stalin spoke about the great meaning of our life, about the happiness of life and struggle, struggle in all spheres. Not to die but to live, live and defeat the enemies, to live for victory.

And again a toast. To those who never forget to march forward, to our great truth, to talent and bravery, to the youth, for in youth there is power.

Dawn was almost breaking when the cool Moscow night received us in its friendly embrace. For the first time in many months members of our foursome took leave of one another, and rode away to different sections of the city. Each one of us cherishes the impressions of that unforgettable night at the Kremlin Palace.

The Stalinist watch is ended!
Till we meet again, Arctic!

Translated by Leo Lempert

Joseph Stalin and Ivan Papanin

Leningrad Theaters in Moscow

The artistic rivalry between the theaters of Moscow and Leningrad is of long standing, but only this year has it received "official recognition" as it were. At the initiative of the Government the troupes of several Moscow theaters went to Leningrad, while the troupes of the best Leningrad theaters came to Moscow, where they played to extremely interested audiences. The visiting groups included the Kirov Opera and Ballet, Maly Opera, Pushkin Drama, Gorky Drama, Comedy and the New Young Spectators' theaters as well as the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra and the celebrated Academic Capella.

In the present review we shall deal primarily with the performances of two of the Leningrad theaters: the Kirov Opera and Ballet and New Young Spectators' Theater. The reason why we single out these two theaters is that Leningrad enjoys definite superiority over Moscow in the classical ballet and in the children's theater, while as regards drama and opera Moscow is "in the lead." And besides, it is generally recognized that the Russian classical ballet is the best in the world, while the children's theater traces its very origin to revolutionary Leningrad.

The Kirov Opera and Ballet Theater (formerly the Mariinsky) has always been and still is the foremost home of Russian choreographic art.

When, in 1912-1913, the performances of the Diaghilev ballet in Paris commanded the attention of the entire theatrical world, the St. Petersburg wits used to say that Russia had captured Western Europe with the legs of its ballerinas. In those years the boards of the Mariinsky theater were graced by Anna Pavlova, Kshesinskaya, Karsavina, Spesivtseva, Fokin—remarkable dancers, who unfortunately linked their personal lives with the destinies of the tsarist regime. (To this day some of them are teaching their beautiful and intricate art in America and in European capitals.)

It might have been expected that the accession to power of the working class would spell the end of this conventional and refined form of art which was cultivated only in the imperial theaters of St. Petersburg and Moscow and in the ballet school, where the prevailing atmosphere resembled that of a harem.

Actually, however, this art has further developed under the rule of the working class. Today the Kirov Theater possesses

Performance by students of the Leningrad School of Choreography

a ballet troupe such as the world has never seen before, while the Soviet Union as a whole has a wide network of choreographic schools, and the number of permanent professional companies of the classical ballet and character dancing has grown to ten.

There is no doubt that even from the standpoint of "pure" technique such Leningrad ballerinas as Dudinskaya and Balabina are superior to the stars of the past. This apart from the fine acting of the Soviet dancers.

The Soviet Union is indebted to the Leningrad Choreographic School (which in 1938 celebrated its bicentenary) for the preservation and the development of the art of the dance and of the classic system of training which has evolved in the course of centuries. Much credit is due to its fine staff of instructors, outstanding among whom are People's Artist Agrippina Vaganova, the director of the school, Fyodor Lopukhov and his brother Andrei Lopukhov, who is today one of the world's greatest character dancers; both of them belong to the famous Lopukhov "dynasty" in the realm of the ballet[1].

In Moscow the Leningrad Choreographic School demonstrated its system of training and presented numerous "excerpts," performed by its pupils. Almost all the famed Soviet dancers have graduated from this school during the last twenty years. In addition to professional training, they were given by the school a grounding in music, history of the arts and social sciences.

In addition to the old ballets, chief among which are the great works of Chaikovsky — *Swan Lake, The Nutcracker Suite* and *Sleeping Beauty*—numerous ballets written by B. Asafyev and other younger Soviet composers have been staged. In Moscow the Kirov Theater presented three new ballets: *Laurencia* by the composer Krein, *The Heart of the Mountains* by the Georgian composer Balanchivadze and *Romeo and Juliet* by Serge Prokofieff. All the three productions are essentially choreographic dramas with continuous action and complex characters—in a word, a performance charged with ideas and emotions no less than an opera.

The plot of *Laurencia* is adapted from Lope de Vega's *Fuente Ovejuna*. A picture of feudal Spain unfolds before the

N. Dudinskaya as Laurencia and V. Chabukiani as Frondos, in "Laurencia"

spectator, not in the pseudo-opera style as is customary on West European stages, but a Spain radiant with light and sunshine, fervent and seething with passion. From the moment the curtain rises to the very end, the production of *Laurencia* is a riot of color, music and movement. Here the irresistible temperament of the young Leningrad producer, the Georgian Vakhtang Chabukiani, has found full expression. A fine portrayal of the feudal lord who ravaged the peasant girl, thus causing the uprising, is given by M. Dudko, who in recent years gained fame for his performance in the role of Ghirei, the Tatar Khan, in Asafyev's ballet *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*, based on Pushkin's poem of the same title. The main female parts in *Laurencia* were played by Dudinskaya, Iordan and Vecheslova—ballerinas of different style and temperament, but all almost equally gifted.

Still greater success was scored by the ballet *The Heart of the Mountains*, the libretto for which was written by the Georgian poet G. Leonidze. Moscow critics have rightly noted that Chabukiani, both as producer and dancer, is more at home in the Caucasian theme of *The Heart of the Mountains* than in the Spanish theme of *Laurencia*. In his whirlwind dance he creates a convincing representation of

[1] Incidentally, one representative of this "dynasty," Lydia Lopukhova, wife of the British economist John Meynard Keynes, appeared quite recently on the British stage and despite her advanced age, gained the reputation of "the prima ballerina of England."

the character of Jarji, the young folk hero, who takes revenge for his beloved. Chabukiani has been called a "proud eagle" and critics often refer to his "eagle flight." And indeed his leaps, his remarkable pirouette which continues for 64 beats, his double turns in mid-air, the change of pose in flight—all seem to be done with ease, as if the dancer were defying the laws of gravity.

Particularly well-liked by Moscow audiences was the Georgian martial dance "*Khorumi*" rendered by male dancers.

The other two ballets were Chaikovsky's *Swan Lake* and the latest creation of the theater—Prokofieff's *Romeo and Juliet*, staged first in the heat of the Soviet-Finnish war when every night the blackout in Leningrad was complete.

There is no need to dwell at length on *Swan Lake*; this ballet is very well known.

Swan Lake was a triumph of Galina Ulanova, Leningrad's best ballerina. Ulanova is the embodiment of lofty romanticism and fantasy of the Soviet stage. She is music incarnate. Her charm, grace, sense of the musical, her ability to convey through pantomime the finest nuances of emotions, her gestures and movement beggar description. She must be seen and not read about.

All we can add is that this great dancer, who is thirty years of age, is in her prime, and that she combines artistic talent with constant study in many fields and with public activity (she is a member of the Leningrad Soviet).

G. Ulanova as Juliet

Romeo and Juliet is undoubtedly an important landmark in the development of the Soviet ballet. An art which has rather meager means for scenic expression has dared to tackle Shakespeare, to present one of his greatest works . . . This was a bold venture, it required exceptional daring and it was crowned with success.

The *Romeo and Juliet* ballet was created by men of talent and taste. The sets and costumes by the artist Williams can be reproached but for one thing; they are perhaps too sumptuous, too lavish and fine. A lasting impression is left by the hall in the Montague castle where the feast in honor of the betrothal of Juliet and Paris is held. The action takes place against the background of a gigantic canvas reminiscent of the famous painting of the Rennaissance, only magnified a hundredfold.

The dancing and acting in *Romeo and Juliet* was superb. This applies not only to Ulanova (Juliet) and Sergeyev, whose interpretation of Romeo is unforgettable, particularly in the famous balcony scene ("I am not glad of this contact to-night"), but to the minor roles as well. The young dancer Gerbek was very fine in the part of the "fiery Tybalt." A. Lopukhov played the part of Mercutio with a penetrating humor that reminds one of Chaplin.

The Kirov Theater presented in Moscow its best opera productions—*The Queen of Spades, The Tale of Tsar Saltan* and *Ivan Susanin*. The orchestra under the brilliant conductor Pazovsky was flawless. The sets in these productions were marvellous and evoked general admiration, particularly those painted for Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Tale of Tsar Saltan* by the artists Bilibin and Shchekotikhina.

The acting and the mass scenes represented a principle that is definitely novel to opera. It is obvious that the Kirov Theater has adapted to the opera the most vital features of the Stanislavsky school, which maintains that a crowd on the stage is not an inert mass, but living people each endowed with his own individual character. As regards vocal artistry, however, the Moscow opera is definitely superior to the Kirov Theater, though the latter has a number of outstanding singers, such as Preobrazhenskaya, Pechkovsky, Nelepp and others.

The Leningrad Maly (Little) Opera Theater is in a class by itself. It was founded in 1918 and occupied the premises of the former Theatre Michel where until the Revolution dramatic plays in French were staged.

It became known as the "laboratory of the Soviet opera." Its company, composed

of rather young artists, was not fettered by opera traditions and proved especially suitable for interpreting the works of Soviet composers—operas new in form as well as in content.

In the last ten years the Maly Opera Theater produced the operas *Namesday Party*, *Kamarinsky Muzhik* and *Mother* by the young Leningrad composer V. Zhelobinsky; *The Nose* and *Lady Macbeth* by D. Shostakovich; *And Quiet Flows the Don* and *Soil Upturned* by I.Dzerzhinsky and a number of other operas of Leningrad composers. It was also the first to produce the operas of some Moscow composers, as for example, *Colas Breugnon* (based on Romain Rolland's book of the same title) by Kabalevsky.

In Moscow the Maly Opera Theater presented its latest productions: Chaikovskys *Cherevichki*, and *Colas Breugnon*. The ballet group of the theater, which was formed but recently, presented — with youthful zest, humor and talent—the lively ballet *Balda*, written by Gulak on the theme of Pushkin's tale. All the three productions enjoyed deserved success.

"Romeo and Juliet," act III. Ulanova as Juliet and K. Sergeyev as Romeo

Of the other Leningrad theaters, the Comedy Theater is one of the most interesting. Directed by N. Akimov, this theater has its own distinct personality. Productions of the Comedy Theater are distinguished by ensemble playing, well delineated characters and interesting novelties and stage settings. The Moscow audiences liked the originality and good taste displayed in the staging of Lope de Vega's *Widow From Valencia* (this was the first production of this play on the Russian stage) and of *Shadow* by the Leningrad playwright Eugene Schwartz. *Shadow*— a witty, brilliant and original play—is based on one of Andersen's well-known tales.

In the productions shown in Moscow by the Pushkin Theater (formerly the Alexandrinsky), which is the oldest Russian state theater, Moscovites had the opportunity of watching the splendid acting of the "old" masters such as Michurina-Samoilova, Korchagina-Alexandrovskaya, Teeme, Gorin-Goryanov and Yuryev, supported by representatives of the younger generation of actors trained in Soviet times, such as Cherkassov, Karyakin, Skorobogatov.

The Pushkin Theater presented Ostrovsky's *The Forest* and the best production of its old repertory, Lermontov's *Masquerade* with music by Glazunov and sets by Golovin. It also presented its latest productions, *Fatherland*, by Sardou, and *Lenin in 1918* by Kapler and Zlatogorova, authors of the scenario for the film of the same title.

The New Young Spectators' Theater was formed four years ago by a group of actors who were connected with the Leningrad Young Spectators' Theater. The young theater soon attracted general notice and has since established its reputation as one of the best Leningrad theaters. Leningrad patriots even claim that the new theater holds the same position in Leningrad as the Moscow Art Theater in the capital. This claim is supported by the fact that B. Zon, the founder and director of this theater, who is a former pupil of Stanislavsky, is successfully applying his teacher's method of perfect ensemble playing.

Another achievement of B. Zon is that he has succeeded in enlisting the cooperation of a number of playwrights. The New Young Spectators' Theater has quite a large modern repertory, including such first rate plays as A. Brustein's *Blue and Pink* and Schwartz's *Snow Queen* (based on Andersen's tale) which were presented in Moscow. The theater also staged a number of Pushkin's tales.

It seems, however, that the very success of the New Young Spectators' Theater harbored a peculiar danger: its productions, lively and masterfully presented and

A. Modestov as Colas Breugnon

N. Velter as Pelette in "Colas Breugnon"

theatrical throughout, have gained such fame that the box office is being besieged . . . by adults, whose broad backs often prevent the younger spectators from seeing what is going on on the stage. The theater had to draw the line in order to live up to its name, and the management recently issued an order that not more than fifty adults are to be admitted to one performance.

The educational and cultural influence of this theater is very great. Moscow theaters for children certainly have a great deal to work before they attain the standard of the Leningrad theater.

Another thing that should be noted in connection with this Leningrad theater is its artistic atmosphere, which has proved a fertile soil for the development of fine actors. Among the actors who started their career in the Leningrad New Young Spectators' Theater are the now famous moving-picture actors N. K. Cherkassov (who played leading parts in the films *Baltic Deputy*, *Peter the Great*, etc.) and B. Chirkov (the Bolshevik *Maxim* in the well-known film trilogy *The Youth of Maxim*, *The Return of Maxim*, and *New Horizons*).

During the review of Leningrad art, Moscow audiences also had the opportunity of getting acquainted with the achievements of Leningrad in the field of music. The concerts of the symphony orchestra of the Leningrad Philharmonic, directed by Eugene Mravinsky, one of the prizewinners in the All-Union Contest of Conductors held in Moscow in 1938, enjoyed great success. They showed the exceptionally high level attained by Leningrad in the field of symphony music, the musicianship of its well-knit orchestra.

The concerts of the Academic Capella, which recently celebrated its 225th anniversary, were no less successful. The repertory included songs of different nations and epochs, ranging from classic choirs of the sixteenth century to the *Song of Leningrad*, written by the Soviet composer Solovyov-Sedoi. Each song was rendered in the inimitable style of the Capella, reproducing in each case the spirit of the particular epoch.

The visit of the Leningrad theaters to Moscow is at an end. The artistic rivalry between the two greatest art centers in the U.S.S.R continues with greater force than ever.

The government fully appreciated the achievements of the Leningrad Theaters, actors and musicians, and conferred on many of them the title of Honored Artist and orders of merit.

EVGUENI KANTOROVICH

NEWS AND VIEWS

U.S.S.R.

AGRICULTURAL EXHIBITION REOPENS

The reopening of the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition was one of the high lights of the summer season in Moscow. The exhibition, which is often described as a "university of collective farming," demonstrates graphically the progress achieved by the Soviet Union in all branches of agriculture.

Trains from every part of the country bring thousands of people daily to the capital to learn about the latest farming practices, how to obtain high yields, how to raise better stock, etc. Last season 167,699 leading agriculturists gained the right to participate in the exhibition; this year the number of entrants has increased to more than 265,000.

A number of pavilions have been reconstructed. New frescoes depict the latest achievements. A new pavilion has been added—that of the young Karelo-Finnish Republic. The pavilions on Collective Farm Square take the visitor through panoramas, tea plantations and lemon, tangerine and orange groves in Georgia, the rose-gardens of the Crimea, the rich pastures and fields of the Ukraine, Russia, Byelorussia, the cotton fields of Central Asia, the severe landscapes of the North where human labor has built up a thriving agriculture and industry.

The agricultural exhibition is not only a review of achievements in agriculture, but, in a way, is also a review of Soviet pictorial art. New works of many artists, sculptors and handicraftsmen are on view in the pavilions and on the exhibition grounds. Some of them are dedicated to the outstanding events of last year.

The Uzbek Pavilion has the largest panorama at the exhibition. Measuring 15 by 17 meters, it depicts the Ferghana Canal, which was built last year by 160,000 collective farmers who undertook this huge irrigation project on their own initiative.

The Pavilion of the Karelo-Finnish Republic at the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition

Model of the Great Ferghana Canal by A. Labas. Uzbek Pavilion

Looking at the panorama one feels for a moment as if he were transported from the mild Moscow climate to torrid Central Asia.

Another fresco depicts the new Soviet city of Vyborg. Endless forests loom on the horizon through a blue mist. And against this background stand a hydro-electric station and paper mills.

Liberation is a panel by the well-known artist E. Sokolov-Skala, dedicated to the liberation of Western Byelorussia. Against the background of a gothic cathedral and castle, amidst landscape typical of Byelorussia, a joyous meeting of peasants and Red Army men takes place.

One of the most interesting new works at the exhibition is the canvas *A Jubilee of a Village Schoolteacher*, the work of Kugach and Nechitailo, young students of the Moscow Art School, who were recently awarded Stalin scholarships. Following the best traditions of the Russian school of painting, they produced a well-balanced canvas, finished to the minutest detail, which portrays a whole gallery of new Soviet people. From different cities and parts of the country they have come to their native village to celebrate the fiftieth jubilee of their old teacher. The canvas vividly portrays the teacher approaching the garden that she herself had planted. Pride and happiness lend a youthful air to her features. The canvas breathes with warm, human emotions. This painting, which is the first big work of the young artists, has attracted considerable attention.

Kolya Yevdokimenko is another young artist of great originality, who is represented at the exhibition. His lyrical landscapes, which bear the stamp of fine talent, are exhibited in the school building in the New Village section. The young artist is himself a pupil of just such a school in Moscow Region. Kolya is not only a gifted painter; he has also displayed considerable ability as a student of history. He was awarded first prize by the Moscow State University for a historical treatise written by him after a study of local data.

The various picturesque still-lifes vie in color with the numerous original exhibits.

The best examples of folk and handicraft arts—rugs, embroidery, filigree work, hand painted vases, lace, articles of amazing beauty carved from stone and wood—are on display at the pavilions of different republics.

The Agricultural Exhibition has become a favorite place for rest and recreation, having a moving picture house, a concert stage, a circus, and an open-air "Green Theater" seating 5,000. The best actors of the capital, as well as amateur talents from various republics, perform here.

LIBRARY WHERE LENIN WORKED WHILE IN EXILE

The history of the library where Lenin worked in 1897 while in exile in Siberia was recently made public in the Soviet press.

In Krasnoyarsk, Lenin made the acquaintance of G. Yudin, a book collector, who was the owner of a rare and remarkable library.

"Yesterday I got at last into the famous local library of Yudin, who received me very cordially and showed me around his book collections," Lenin wrote to his sister Maria Ulyanova. "He gave me permission to study there, and I think I will be able to avail myself of the opportunity. There are two obstacles: firstly, his library is outside the town, but the distance is not great, about two versts, so that it's a pleasant walk. Secondly, the books in the library are not arranged properly, and I may incommode the host by having to ask for books too often. We'll see how it will work out. I think that the second obstacle can also be eliminated. My acquaintance with his library is far from complete, but, in any case, it is a remarkable collection of books. There are, for example, full sets of magazines (the main ones) from the end of the eighteenth century up to date. I hope I'll have a chance to use them for references which are so important for my work."

At that time Lenin was completing his book *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*. During the short time he had access to Yudin's library, Lenin, evidently, succeeded in making many notes for a number of other works which he wrote while in exile.

The library had many books in Latin, Greek, German, French and Italian. The Russian section included numerous valuable editions of the eighteenth century and an extremely valuable collection of manuscripts and autographs. There were also the best economic and philosophical works of that time.

The library was housed in a two-story wooden building standing in a birch grove not far from the house of its owner. The two buildings have been preserved to this day.

In a letter to his mother Lenin wrote: "I spend my time here in two occupations: firstly, visiting Yudin's library. . . . I go to the library every day, and since it is . . . two versts from the outskirt of the city, I have to cover five versts in all, about an hour's walk." In another letter he wrote: "There is nothing new I can tell you about myself: everything is the same, I walk regularly to the library outside the city."

By 1903 the Yudin library had about 80,000 volumes of great historical and literary value.

In 1907 it was sold to the Congressional Library in Washington, where it was set up as a special Slavonic section.

The large collection of manuscripts, however, was not sold at the time, and it is now kept at the Krasnoyarsk Archives. Among the manuscripts are a number of original documents, data on Pushkin, correspondence of the Decembrists, and documents of the Russo-American Company, which the Washington Congressional Library was most anxious to obtain at the time.

CHAIKOVSKY CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

Centenary celebrations in honor of Chaikovsky, great Russian composer, were held throughout the Soviet Union. During the month prior to the date of the centenary, Chaikovsky concerts were arranged in all the large cities; special cycles of the composer's works were given by 60 philharmonic societies and other music organizations.

Contests for the best rendition of Chaikovsky's compositions were held in many cities. Hundreds of exhibitions on the life and work of the composer were arranged at clubs in factories and mills, collective farms and Red Army units.

Two large exhibitions were held in Moscow, one in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, and the other in the Moscow Conservatory. The first, consisting of several thousand exhibits, photos, letters, unpublished manuscripts, music, etc., presented the life of the composer chronologically.

Professor Goldenweiser opening the Chaikovsky Exhibition at the Moscow State Conservatory

Most of the exhibits at the Moscow Conservatory dealt with the popularity of Chaikovsky's works in the Soviet Union.

A meeting and concert in celebration of the anniversary was held on May 7th at the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow. Stalin and other leaders of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government were present. The best singers and musicians of the capital took part in the concert.

On the same day a session of the Union of Soviet Composers was held in the city of Klin, in the house where the composer spent the last years of his life, and which was later turned into a museum. Prominent Soviet composers paid tribute to the great master and spoke of his influence on their work.

A Chaikovsky museum was opened at Kamenka, the Ukraine, where Chaikovsky stayed for a long time in his sister's home. It has a collection of 700 exhibits which show Chaikovsky's influence on the development of Ukrainian music.

The Moscow Film Studio produced a special film dedicated to the composer.

A complete, 60-volume edition of Chaikovsky's works is to be issued by the State Music Publishing House. It will include all the compositions by Chaikovsky, folk melodies and the works of other composers arranged by him, as well as his articles, notes and correspondence.

The Latvian newspaper *Atputa* pointed out that Chaikovsky is one of the favorite composers in that country. "The Chaikovsky jubilee will be celebrated all over the world," another Latvian paper, *Rits*, stated, "for Chaikovsky is one of the great men who enjoy fame and respect beyond the bounds of their native land. Chaikovsky's music is close and dear to the Latvian people."

In Estonia, members of the government, prominent public men, musicians and writers attended a special Chaikovsky concert. The ballet *Swan Lake* was staged, and Estonian newspapers and magazines featured articles on the composer.

The Chaikovsky centenary was observed in many foreign countries as well.

German newspapers devoted full pages to the jubilee, emphasizing the popularity of the composer in Germany.

"Among the great musicians whose works are included in the repertory of theaters throughout the world, the Russian composer Chaikovsky holds a prominent place," wrote the *Danziger Vorposten*. "He enjoys great popularity in Germany and his symphonic works are particularly well liked."

One of the Berlin Philharmonic societies held a Chaikovsky concert, which was well attended. The Fifth and the Sixth symphonies were performed at the Berlin Conservatory. The operas *Eugene Onegin, Queen of Spades, Mazeppa*, and *Silver Slippers* were presented in many German cities. The Berlin Opera is preparing to stage *The Enchantress*.

Great interest in the Chaikovsky centenary was manifested in Bulgaria. A special page in the newspaper *Zarya*, was dedicated to Chaikovsky. The theatrical newspaper published a special Chaikovsky issue.

A concert of the composer's works which drew an audience of 1,500 was held at the Sofia Concert Hall.

A special concert was held at the Concert Palace in Stockholm on May 7th, the day of the jubilee. The Swedish composer Atterberg published an article in which he pointed out that "Chaikovsky was a master of melody and instrumentation. His popularity is indisputable."

In an article dealing with the Chaikovsky celebrations in England *Pravda* cites the position taken by London *Times*. That newspaper, according to *Pravda*, dedicated a special article to the composer, an article which contains so much genuine venom and hatred, as though Chaikovsky was a contemporary figure, not a composer but a politician. "Indeed the reactionary British newspaper heaps its fury, aroused by the reverses of British policy, on the author of the Russian symphonies, operas and ballets. These reverses undoubtedly are great, but what has Chaikovsky to do with them!"

"The source of the *Times*' bitterness is not hard to trace," *Pravda* observes. "It lies in the heightened interest of the British public for Russian music and Chaikovsky. Even the *Times* is compelled to acknowledge this fact. In raising a hue and cry and in giving vent to its anger the newspaper has divulged some interesting facts.

"The city of Hastings has a symphony orchestra, which languished due to the apathy of the audience," *Pravda* relates. "It was faced with the prospect of closing down, but Chaikovsky saved the day for it. A series of concerts of the works of the brilliant Russian composer was arranged. The public jammed the hall to capacity, with the result that the orchestra has settled its debts and has even built up some reserves.

"It turned out further that this was the case not only at Hastings," *Pravda* points out. "Everywhere the British public manifests a lively interest in Russian music. The *Times* speaks with indignation of the fact that the Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R. contemplated to arrange a Chaikovsky evening. . . The old British hound, which

is a past master at anti-Soviet slander suspects that behind the interest for Russian music there lurks a friendly attitude to Soviet culture in general, and how in face of this, can the old faithful dog of British reaction keep from barking and tearing at his leash. Phantoms of dangerous 'propaganda' loom up even in the music of *Swan Lake*, and the fight against rats in *The Nutcracker Suite* is taken to mean an encroachment on the mainstays of the state and the church."

FESTIVAL OF AZERBAIJAN LITERATURE

Last May a ten-day festival of Azerbaijan literature was held in Moscow. Poets, prose-writers, ashugs (folk bards) and actors of Azerbaijan took part in special meetings and concerts devoted to the classical and contemporary literature of their people.

Classic and modern works were read in the Azerbaijan language and in Russian translation, while actors and singers performed in excerpts from operas and plays.

The history of Azerbaijan literature dates back more than a thousand years. It has passed through hard trials, having developed under foreign oppression, frequent invasions by enemy hordes who reduced the country to ashes, turning it into a hotbed of national hatred and discord. But in spite of this, the Azerbaijan people produced great poets who embodied in their works the age-long striving of their people for freedom, their constant and irreconcilable struggle against their oppressors.

The immortal classics of Azerbaijan literature—Nizami, Nasimi, Fizuli, Shirvani, Vagif and Sabira—founded a literature which will live in the ages, a literature devoted to the great ideals of liberty and independence. These great poets drew their inspiration from the people, from the inexhaustible spring of their dreams and aspirations, their sufferings and struggles.

Their work is now continued by the young writers and poets of Soviet Azerbaijan, whose culture, national in form and Socialist in content, has developed as never before.

The works of the Azerbaijan poets present a great variety of forms and subject-matter. The works of Samed Vurgun are distinguished by the profundity of his poetical penetration and great artistic power of generalization. He is a poet of the epic style, who has also written a number of plays. Suleiman Rustam is predominantly a lyrical poet, but many of his poems are devoted to the heroic

Illustration to "Haissa" by Nizami. Tavriz, 1316

victories of Socialism. The lyrical verses of Mamed Ragim are a fine blending of intimate emotions and social motifs; he sings of the beauty and joy of life of a liberated people.

Some of the best verses of the Azerbaijan poets are dedicated to the men who brought emancipation to their people, to Lenin and Stalin. The happiness of a people which attained its age-old dream of liberation from slavery and oppression resounds in the verses of these poets.

Prose writing was very little developed in Azerbaijan prior to the Revolution. The main genre was the short story, and there were but few novels.

Of late the novel has become a favorite medium employed by Azerbaijan writers. The struggle of the people for Socialism is the main theme of the novels, many of which deal with the Civil War. Outstanding among these are the works of the older writers, M. Ordubady, Mekhti and Mir Jalal.

A number of novels and stories deal with the Socialist reconstruction of the village and the class struggle in the coun-

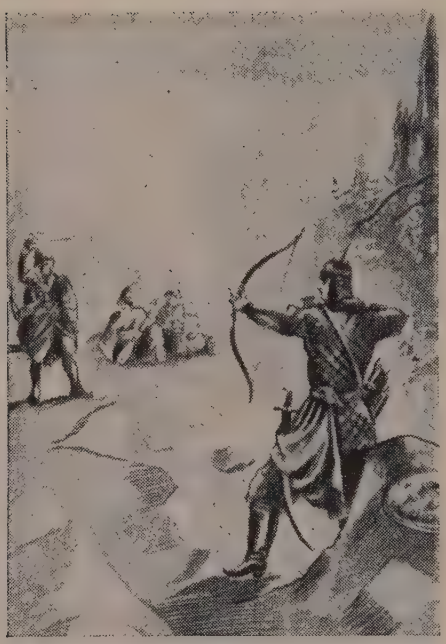


Illustration by E. Khalykov to "Kech Polat" by Abdul Shaid. 1940

tryside during the early years of collectivization.

Azerbaijan playwrights have also many achievements to their credit. The most outstanding is Jafar Jabarly. His play *1905* deals with the struggle against oppression. The theme of *Bride of Fire* is the friendship of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. His other works deal with the collective farm system, the change of heart among intellectuals and their part in Socialist construction, and the transformation of the woman, yesterday's slave, into a free citizen.

The historical plays by the poet Samed Vurgun hold a special interest. The play *Vagif*, based on the life and work of Vagif, the great Azerbaijan poet of the eighteenth century, depicts the struggle of the Azerbaijan people against a Persian invasion. The play is written in fine verse, its aphorisms are at times profoundly philosophical and the action develops with unflagging dramatic tensity, heightened by the fact that in the events of the past one discerns an echo of contemporary reality.

Vurgun's other play, *Khanlar*, deals with Stalin's great role as the organizer and leader of the Bolshevik movement in Baku during the years of tsarist reaction.

An exhibition of Azerbaijan books was arranged at the Writer's Club in Moscow. The six hundred books on view traced the development of Azerbaijan literature from the twelfth century to the present. The collection included many unique volumes of Nizami, Fizuli, as well as the writings of Soviet authors and poets. Translations of the works of Russian classics were also on view.

FIRST AZERBAIJAN BALLET PRODUCED

The first Azerbaijan ballet, *Gyz Calassy* (Maiden's Tower), was produced by the Akhundov State Opera and Ballet Theater in Baku. The music for the ballet was written by the young Azerbaijan composer Afrasiyab Badal Beili, and it has for its theme a popular folk tale about a maiden's tower.

The prologue introduces the plot. The despotic *khan* on learning that his wife gave birth to a daughter regards this as an evil omen and chases her out from his palace. The next scene is predominated by the spirit of happiness; the daughter, the beautiful Gyulyanak, has found shelter in a village under the *khan's* rule. Her life is gay and carefree. But soon her happiness gives way to sorrow. Her father, the despotic *khan*, blinded by her beauty, takes her into his harem. Gyulyanak's outburst of indignation and wrath gives way to despair. In the finale, the girl, seeing no way out, jumps from the tower into the turbulent waves of the Caspian Sea.

The music is outstanding for its fine orchestration and skilful adaptation of folk melodies.

Pravda notes that the ballet *Maiden's Tower* is a valuable contribution to the art of Soviet Azerbaijan.

"Among the strong points of the ballet," *Pravda* writes, "are the clear musical delineation of the characters and the reserved but profound lyricism of many scenes."

Pravda speaks highly of the performance of the gifted ballerina Almas Zade in the principal role. She successfully combined fine choreographic technique with folk dancing. The character she created is true to life and complete. It stirs one as the symbol of the tragedy of the Azerbaijan woman in the past.

ANCIENT ARMENIAN MANUSCRIPTS TO BE STUDIED

A special scientific institute has been established in Yerevan, capital of the Armenian S.S.R., for the study of ancient manuscripts kept at the Matenadaran, a book depository which has a collection of about 10,000 Armenian manuscripts

and about 400 manuscripts in various languages: Greek, Latin, Assyrian, Hebrew, Arabic, Iranian, Turkish, Georgian and Mongolian.

The Matenadaran collection was founded in 1441, but it includes a number of manuscripts of more ancient origin, some of which date back to the ninth century.

Among the literary works now discovered is a collection of novellettes of the twelfth-thirteenth century, the existence of which was not known. The institute's staff is also making a study of 200 *Takharans*, almanachs of verses of poets of the Middle Ages.

Other manuscripts include works on philosophy, medicine, alchemy, astrology and history. Of special interest are some ancient Armenian translations of Aristotle and Zeno.

Among its scientific works are a treatise by the famed Doctor Amir Dovlat, *The Science of Medicine*, and a *Cosmography* by Ananii Shirakatsi, scientist of the seventh century, who advanced the theory that the earth is egg shaped. The history section contains documents on the history of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, Turkey, Syria, India and Mongolia.

Among the translations, there is one from the famed Hindy book—*The Story of Seven Wise Men*.

THIRD DIMENSION BROUGHT TO THE CINEMA

Production of the first three-dimension film, *Land of Youth*, has been started in Yalta, Crimea, by the Children's Film, after a scenario by A. N. Andrievsky.

The film is produced in color and, judging from the first experiments, the impression it will produce will be entirely new. It will seem to the spectator that the blue waves of the sea roll over the screen, that the wind scatters the petals of the apple blossoms right among the audience, or that the small table on which a dancer performs stands in the center of the aisle.

A special cinema for three-dimension films is being set up in Moscow.

Scene from "Maiden's Tower"

David Bergelson

DAVID BERGELSON: 30 YEARS OF LITERARY ACTIVITY

Literary circles and the reading public joined in marking the jubilee of David Bergelson, well-known Jewish writer, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of his literary activity. The author was feted at a number of meetings arranged by various organizations in many parts of the country. The meeting arranged by the Union of Soviet Writers was held in the hall of the Polytechnical Museum in Moscow.

The chairman of the evening, the writer Vsevolod Ivanov, congratulated Bergelson on behalf of the Union of Soviet Writers. Ivanov acclaimed him as a great artist, whose works reveal a profound love for the people and for art.

Bergelson began his literary activity in 1909, when his first book, *At a Railway Station*, was published. This book was the first of a series of novels united by one main theme—the fate of the refined intellectual dreamer who feels "superfluous" in the environment of petty traders and philistines. *Deaf*, another early work, belongs to the series that deals with the hard life of the people under capitalism.

In the first years of the Great Socialist Revolution Bergelson wrote several volumes of short stories (*Stormy Days* and others) on topics of the Civil War, showing the changes in the life and psychology of the people in the small towns.

The novel *Severity* is a broad canvas of the class struggle during the Civil War. The underlying idea of this work is the ethics of the Revolution—grim but just and therefore profoundly humane. Bergelson does not attempt to evade sharp problems, and this enabled him to write one of the best Soviet books about the Civil War.

Just before the celebration of his jubilee, Bergelson completed the second volume of his novel *On the Dnieper*, the first of which met with wide acclaim.

The second volume of this epic work is an important landmark in the writer's development. While hitherto the heroes of his books were people who merely saw the negative sides of the capitalist world, in the new book he portrays those who destroyed the old and built the new world of Socialism.

The action of the novel is laid on the eve of the first Revolution in 1905 when the proletariat was mastering its forces for attack. With great artistic insight Bergelson penetrates to the very core of the social contradictions at the time and brings out the role of the different political parties in the class struggle. The part of the Jewish workers in the revolutionary movement is shown with great understanding and fidelity to the truth.

BIOGRAPHY OF NEXÖ PUBLISHED

The Red Viking, a biography of the Danish revolutionary writer, Martin Andersen Nexö, by Bela Illes has been issued by the *Molodaya Gvardia* Publishing House.

In addition to extensive biographical data, the reader will find in this book folk tales which speak of the great affection of the people for their fearless writer and friend, whom they call "the Red Viking."

An interesting document cited in the book is the telegram Nexö despatched to Russia during the first days of the Revolution in 1917; addressing it to Lenin, the author offered "his services to the Great Revolution."

The book describes how Nexö made his way in secret to Russia, his meetings with Lenin, with Dzerzhinsky, who advised him to view Russia with his own eyes. On returning to his country Nexö honestly and courageously related to the entire world what he had seen and heard in the land of Socialism.

The Red Viking gives a clear picture of the great and courageous writer who champions the interests of the toilers.

LATVIAN, ESTONIAN BOOKS EXHIBITED IN MOSCOW

An exhibition of Latvian and Estonian books has been opened at the Museum of Modern Western Art in Moscow. More than 2,000 volumes are on view, including fiction, poetry, books on art, history, philosophy and science.

Estonian exhibits illustrate the development of Estonian literature from the sixteenth century on. The first books to be published were on religious subjects. Next came eighteenth century grammars of the Estonian language, and calendars, which played a part in spreading education. It was only in the second half of the nineteenth century that lay books written in a sentimental vein appeared. The publication of the national epic poem *Kalevipoeg* by R. Kreizwald (1857-1862) was of paramount importance in the development of modern Estonian literature.

Most outstanding among the works of contemporary Estonian literature is the five-volume epic *Truth and Justice* by the late A. Tammsaare (the exhibits also include the German, Lettish and Finnish translations of this book), and the verses, *Flame of Life*, by Gustav Suits.

Among the other Estonian books are a popular edition of *The History of the Estonian People, Atlas of Dialects, Book of the Centuries*, a series of researches by the Estonian Scientific Society published in 1938.

Latvian book publishing dates back to the year 1644, when the first grammar was published. Latvian literature began to develop in the eighteenth century; it was influenced by the ideas of Voltaire and Rousseau.

The literature of Latvia is closely bound with folklore which is represented at the exhibition by a collection of songs, tales, sayings and proverbs.

On view are the collection *Three Hundred Tales*, published in 1853, the work of the gifted publicist Valdemars; the poems and plays of Rainis, classic of Latvian literature, etc.

"The Young Lets," one of the literary schools, are represented by the works of the poets Auseklis, Pumpurs and Alunans.

Children's section at the Moscow Exhibition of Estonian and Latvian Books

Stradivari in His Workshop. Woodcut by A. Kravchenko

KRAVCHENKO, NOTED ARTIST, DIED

A heart ailment cut short the life of A. I. Kravchenko, well known Soviet painter and engraver, at the age of 51.

Kravchenko was a master of several forms of art, but he gained renown for his black-and-white drawings and book illustrations. Hundreds of Russian and foreign classics were illustrated by him. His woodcuts for the works of Pushkin, Gogol, Sholokhov, Byron, Dickens, Anatole France and others, were distinguished by their expressiveness and excellent finish. His illustrations frequently served to emphasize the essence of the book.

His wood-cuts *Dnieprostroi, Harvest, Moscow, New York, Rome* and *Venice* gained fame in the Soviet Union and abroad.

Kravchenko's works were invariably included at Soviet and international art exhibitions. The artist visited the United States, Germany, France and Greece. Last year, Kravchenko scored a great triumph at the exhibition of Soviet graphic arts and books in the Baltic countries.

Notwithstanding his heart ailment, Kravchenko continued to work intensively. In 1939 he finished two portraits of Stalin. He also drew illustrations for Victor Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and Pushkin's *The Queen of Spade*. He made several sketches for illustrations for the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)*, but this work remained unfinished.

The artist was also active as a teacher of the arts of engraving and xylography, in which he was unsurpassed.

The works of Kravchenko were frequently reproduced in our pages. At our request the artist did a woodcut of M. Gorky for our March issue of 1938 and of Sholom Aleichem for our February issue of 1939.

LANDSCAPE BY COURBET DISCOVERED.

A new previously unknown landscape by Gustave Courbet, great French artist, has been discovered in the private collection of the actor I. L. Vergini.

"*Landscape* is one of the canvases painted by Courbet in the last years of his life," Igor Grabar, Honored Worker of Art, stated in discussing the new find. He pointed out that the authenticity of the painting is beyond doubt, since it bears the artist's typical signature and the date, "*Janvier*, 1874." This landscape presents a view of nature at the seacoast and was probably done by the artist after sketches made in Normandy, which he took along with him to his exile in Switzerland.

New York Skyscrapers. Woodcut by A. Kravchenko

Landscape *By G. Courbet*

As a member of the Paris Commune in 1871 the artist had to flee from his native country and died in exile in Switzerland in 1878. Living in poverty, he was forced to sell his works to profiteering art dealers, and many of his canvases have been lost. Even the exhibition held several years ago, for which the works of the artist were gathered from many countries, was far from complete.

In addition to the new picture, the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts has three other paintings by Courbet.

MONGOLIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CINEMA

That the Mongolian People's Republic has its own small but growing cinema industry was brought to light by a recent visit of Mongolian cinema workers to Moscow.

The Mongolian moving picture industry was launched in 1933 when the Mongolkino, an organization that at first trained movie operators and handled the distribution of Soviet films, was set up. Only in 1936 were the first two Mongolian documentary films produced.

The Republic has now its own producers, actors and cameramen. Last year fifteen sound cinema newsreels were released. The first full-length film was completed recently in time for the opening of the Congress of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party. Named *The First Lesson*, it deals with the heroism of the People's Army of Mongolia and its leader Hongor. Actors of the Mongolian State Theater played the leading parts in the film.

At present thirteen districts of the republic have sound and silent cinemas. Last year attendance at sound cinema performances reached 500,000. A large movie house is being built at Ulan-Bator, capital of the republic, this year.

CHINA

RADIO CONCERTS FOR THE SOVIET UNION

The Chinese-Soviet Society of Culture organized for the Soviet Union three radio concerts which were broadcast from Chungking, capital of the Chinese Republic.

Folk songs and the works of modern composers were included in the program. Especially fine was the folk song, *Longing for My Country*, rendered on a Chinese viola. A number of songs dedicated to the heroic struggle of the Chinese

people for their liberty and national independence were broadcast.

The Chungking chorus and orchestra rendered the Chinese national anthem and the *International* in the Russian language.

The concerts were preceded by a brief introductory speech on the history of Chinese music.

CHINESE WOMEN IN THE WAR FOR LIBERATION

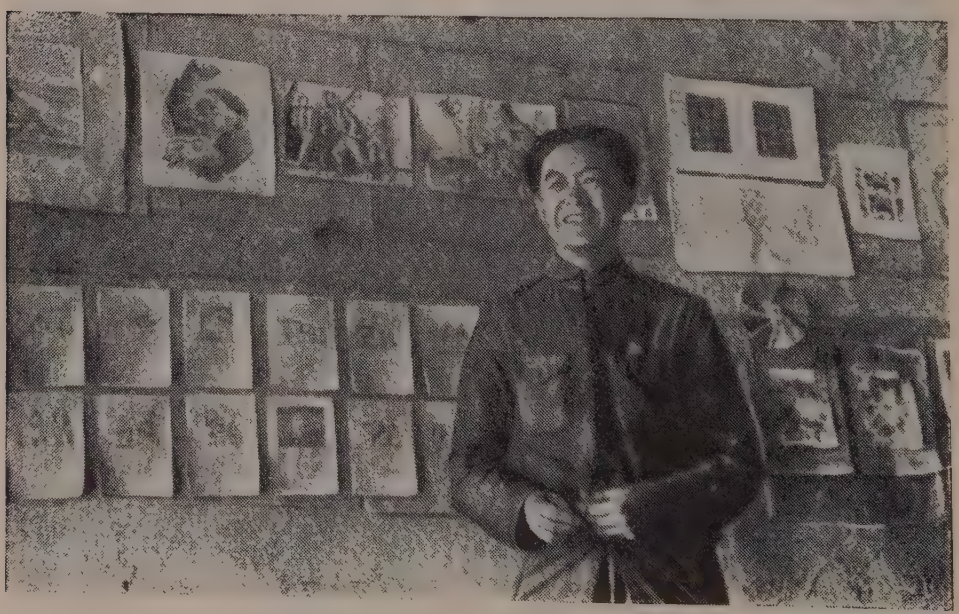
How Chinese women living in the territory occupied by the Japanese or in border zones take part in the anti-Japanese struggle is related by Ching Por, well-known Chinese cinema actress who is one of the organizers of the "Youth Inspection Brigade." This brigade, which consists of 20 girls, undertook to conduct activities in the districts occupied by the Japanese, and also to establish contact between these districts and the Chinese army.

"We started out on our mission at the end of 1938 and returned to Chungking in April 1940. During this period members of our brigade traveled through the Northern districts of Shansi, Southern Chahar, Western Hupeh and Northern Hunan. In all we covered about 15,000 *li* and crossed the front lines six times. In the villages of the districts bordering on Shansi, Chahar and Hupeh, organizations based on the three principles of Sun Yat-sen have been organized. New people have been appointed to lead the movement, and new methods of struggle have been adopted to fight the Japanese.

"Women are carrying on active work in the anti-Japanese struggle in the zones bordering on the front, and help the partisan detachments. On the territory still occupied by the Japanese they have organized "Save the Country" societies, conduct recruiting campaigns for the partisan detachments, obtain subscriptions for the "Save the Country" bonds, conceal arms and uniforms, help in transferring the population from the occupied districts to the territory of the national government, guide the youth movement, and obtain information valuable for the partisans and the regular army."

Ching Por emphasizes the importance of educational work that has to be carried on among the women. Many of them have gained considerable experience in the struggle, but education still remains one of the major tasks. Various schools and courses, as well as special courses for teaching illiterates, have been set up. Due to the energetic work of these institutions, much has been done to overcome the cultural backwardness of the women, to broaden their outlook, and develop their abilities.

There are also numerous courses which have organized the reading of newspapers



The Chinese poet Emi Siao, a frequent contributor to "International Literature" now lecturing at the Lu Hsun Academy of Arts (Yenan)

for their members and talks on the military and political situation in China. The leaders of these circles acquaint the women with the significance and aims of the united front, and help the listeners to understand the political machinations of the enemy.

The material collected by members of the brigade will be used for a film on life in the occupied districts.

GERMANY

COMMENT ON SOVIET PLAY

A review of the Soviet play *Field-Marshal Kutuzov*, staged by the Vakhtangov Theater in Moscow, was published by the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. "The main event of Moscow's theatrical season this year is the production of *Field-Marshal Kutuzov*," the newspaper writes. "The success of the play is due in great measure to the able work of the producer and the harmonious playing of the actors. The mass scenes are very impressive. Okhlopkov, the producer of the play, succeeded in showing the development of the War of 1812. The battle scenes are particularly well staged and evoke admiration. The engaging personality of Field-Marshal Kutuzov makes the play a success. In the person of General Bagration the audience sees a great Russian patriot."

GOGOL'S "MARRIAGE" STAGED

Marriage, a play by the great Russian writer Gogol, has been staged by the Apollo Theater in Cologne. The play is presented in a new translation, made by the Viennese actor Rudolph Blumner. According to the German press, "Gogol's comedy presented by the Cologne theater is one of the most interesting productions of the contemporary German theater."

The *Kölnische Zeitung* featured a whole article on Gogol's works. The newspaper points out that the novel *Dead Souls* and the comedies *Inspector-General* and *Marriage* gained for Gogol a niche in world literature. Gogol is described "as one of the tragic personalities of Russian literature. To the banality and hypocrisy of the world, Gogol replied with laughter."

A new edition of Gogol's *Dead Souls* has been issued by the Rowohltverlag in Berlin. The book is provided with the illustrations of the well-known Russian artist Alexander Agin, which were engraved on wood by Yefstafy Bernadsky, one of Russia's best xylographers of the first half of the XIX century.

SOVIET SATIRE IN GERMAN

Die Literatur reports the publication of a collection of satirical stories by Soviet authors in German translations. The collection includes stories by M. Zoshchenko, P. Romanov, V. Shishkov and V. Katayev.

"Russian literature has enriched the world with such immortal works as the novels of Tolstoi, Dostoyevsky and Goncharov and the satirical works of Gogol and Chekhov," the magazine writes.

"Russian satire is not dead. The new young Russian literature continues the traditions of its great predecessors. The stories included in the present collection are taken from the Soviet press. They are well-known to a large circle of Soviet readers and have gained renown for their authors. The German reader for the first time again partakes of the spiritual life of new Russia and becomes acquainted with her satirical literature."

LITHUANIA[1]

"PHILISTINES" STAGED IN LITHUANIA

Gorky's play, *Philistines*, has been produced by the Lithuanian State Theater. "By staging *Philistines* our theater has taken a big stride forward," the magazine *Kultura* writes, "if only because such a great work has been brought to our stage."

---

[1] As this issue went to print, the peoples of the Baltic states have established Soviet power and applied to the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R. with a request to accept them into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

For the first time in history, the peoples of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania have received the opportunity of freely developing their national cultures. The mood and feelings of the freed Baltic peoples are vividly expressed by the prominent Estonian writer E. Tammelaan: "Now the people can breathe freely. The regime which stifled everything that was alive in the Estonian people, which sought to destroy the spirit of freedom that penetrated into Estonian literature, theater and painting, has been overthrown. Now we are free, we now can feel the true joy of labor."

"Boy" By the Lithuanian sculptor I. Mikenas

"EARLY LOVE" IN LATVIAN TRANSLATION

The Latvian Magazine *Atputa* published a translation of R. Frayerman's novel *Early Love*., which appeared in our issues No. 2 and 3 of this year.

BULGARIA

SOVIET CINEMA, LITERATURE POPULAR IN BULGARIA.

Great interest in Soviet culture and art, and in the life of the people of the U.S.S.R., is displayed in Bulgaria. Soviet films and literature play a big part in strengthening the cultural ties between the peoples of the Soviet Union and Bulgaria.

Since last autumn the Gloria Movie House in Sofia have been demonstrating exclusively Soviet films.

A veritable triumph was scored by the Soviet cinema at the Soviet Pavilion at the International Fair in Plovdiv. As many as 17,000 visitors were present at cinema performances daily.

Similar acclaim is accorded to Soviet literature by the Bulgarian public. The sign *Russkaya Kniga* (The Russian Book) is featured prominently by one of the largest bookshops of Sofia. A large selection of fiction, scientific books and children's literature is available at the bookshop, which has a big clientele in Sofia and the province.

On the initiative of the Bulgarian-Soviet Society, a group of the capital's actors presented in Sofia the play *Glory* by the Soviet poet Victor Gusev. The play was translated by the Bulgarian writer Marko Marchevsky. An audience of about 1,000 filled to capacity the cooperative theater where the play was staged. Many prominent intellectuals were present at the performance, which enjoyed great success.

ARGENTINE

NEW BOOKS

History of Tierra del Fuego by Armando Braun Menendez has been published in Buenos Aires. According to the review of the magazine *Nosotros*, this book is of great interest, presenting, as it does, the history of an expedition to the southern part of the Atlantic conducted in 1884, and which resulted in the capture of Tierra del Fuego. The volume describes the difficulties the expedition had to overcome and the heroic deeds of its participants.

The Losada Publishers have issued a number of Racine's tragedies in their series of One Hundred Best Works of World Literature. The collection includes *Phèdre, Andromache, Brittanicus* and *Esther* in translation by Nidia Lamarque, Argentine poetess. Until now the only tragedies of Racine rendered into Spanish were *Bérénice* and *Phèdre*.

"The publication of Racine's tragedies is a great achievement for the publishers," the magazine *Nosotros* wrote. "It is to be regretted, however, that the intelligent and meticulous translation by Nidia Lamarque is in prose."

A volume of selected verse by Rafael Alberti, famed Spanish poet, has been issued by the Vertice Publishers in Bue-

nos-Aires in connection with the visit of the poet to Argentina. "The volume," according to the publishers, "enjoys deserved success among readers."

CUBA

"HOY" ISSUES ALMANACH

The Cuban newspaper *Hoy* has issued a large *Almanach*.

The *Almanach* carries a literary section which includes the poem *To My Mother* by the Cuban poetess Emma Perez, *Spain,* by the Spanish poet Manuel Altolaguizre, and excerpts from the unpublished novel by Luis Felipe Rodriguez, *The Negro Who Drank Up the Moon.*

In an article about the activity of the Federation of Negro Societies in the Havana Province, the author, Nilo Suasnabar Suarez, writes: "The Federation is the moving spirit of the Negro societies in our province. At present there are in Havana and the Havana Province about fifty societies which conduct considerable cultural activity. Almost every society maintains handicraft, art and general educational schools, where not only members of the society and their families are admitted, but anyone who wishes to study.

"Negro societies, these progressive organizations of our people, are very popular with the Negro population of our province," Suarez notes. They carry on great cultural and educational work, conduct vocational training courses, unite the Negro people and preserve their traditions."

The *Almanach* further includes an article on the anti-war activity of Cuban women, several pages on the activity of the Tobacco Workers' Union, the largest trade union in Cuba, a sports section and a children's page.

Several pages of the *Almanach* are devoted to the Soviet Union (articles on the Soviet cinema, music in the Soviet cinema, the life and work of Mayakovsky and other material on the U.S.S.R.)

A special page discusses the struggle of the Chinese people against the Japanese invaders.

The Almanach devotes considerable attention to Spanish refugees, featuring an article on the work of the Cuban House of Culture in rendering aid to refugees, on the treatment accorded the Spaniards in France, etc.

RADIO HOUR OF THE MAGAZINE "ULTRA"

A daily literary and musical broadcast known as the "Ultra Radio Hour"

Newly-opened store in Sofia, specializing in Russian books

has been arranged by the Spanish-Cuban Institute of Culture and the magazine *Ultra*.

"The Institute has been in existence for thirteen years," Fernando Ortiz relates. "Its aim and task is to introduce and disseminate modern European and American culture in Cuba. Reports, lectures, the press, the cinema, theater, contests and prizes—these are the means we employ in our cultural and educational activities. In 1936 our Institute undertook the publication of the magazine *Ultra*, which acquaints the Cuban reader with the latest achievements of culture abroad.

"But we are not limiting ourselves to that: we decided to resort to the radio, as one of the most powerful means for disseminating enlightenment."

In the course of the "Ultra Radio Hour," Cuban and foreign writers and scientists come before the microphone and read their works; classical music and Cuban folk songs are also featured on the program.

MEXICO

NEW BOOK

A book on Goya, his historical and artistic philosophy, by the well known Spanish scholar Juan de la Encina has been published by the Spanish House of Culture in Mexico.

"In all his canvases, drawings and woodcuts Goya depicted life in Spain, the customs and traditions of the Spanish people, episodes from their history. He took his themes and characters from life around him. He gave his splendid talent of critic and artist to the Spanish people," the author writes, calling Goya the "mirror of his times."

By Chilian artist Carlos Hermosilla Alvarez
From "Itinerario de América"

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTORS

LEONID SOBOLEV

Soviet writer whose books describe life in the fleet. Author of the popular novel *Storm Warning*.

VICTOR SHKLOVSKY

Soviet man of letters. Author of numerous novels and scenarios depicting life in the Soviet Union as well as in Russia of olden times, including the scenario for the historical film *Minin and Pozharsky*. Shklovsky has also written a number of essays on Soviet literature and cinema.

JOHANNES R. BECHER

Noted German poet, at present residing in Moscow; editor of the German edition of *International Literature*.

JERZY BOREJSZA

Polish critic and essayist, at present residing in Lwow. Author of a number of works on literature.

EVGUENI KANTOROVICH

Leningrad journalist.

ERNEST KRENKEL

Hero of the Soviet Union. Doctor of Geographic Sciences, is one of the most outstanding Soviet polar workers. Took part in the North Pole Expedition of 1937-1938 as wireless operator. Krenkel is now the Assistant Head of the Northern Sea Route Administration.

Associate Editor TIMOFEI ROKOTOV