Workers of all countries, unite!

International Literature

3-4

1942

THE STATE LITERARY PUBLISHING HOUSE
Printed in the Soviet Union

CONTENTS

No. 3—4 March—April 1942

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

STALIN-PRIZE WINNERS

In connection with the struggle which the countries of the anti-Hitler coalition are waging against the common enemy, every important political event within any of the allied countries assumes international importance.

Just such an event is the recently published decision of the Soviet government on the award of Stalin prizes.

The Stalin prize is the highest award given in the Soviet Union to people who have distinguished themselves by their achievements in the spheres of science, the arts, and literature. These prizes were instituted in honour of Stalin's sixtieth birthday in 1939 and bear the name of the leader of the Soviet people.

The prize-winners for the year 1941 represent a brilliant constellation of gifted Soviet men and women: scientists, inventors, designers, workers who have won fame for the new methods they introduced, composers, artists, workers in the theatrical and motion-picture field, writers, poets. Among them are some whose names are known on both hemispheres. Others have until recently lived in relative obscurity. Now their fame has reached all the corners of our vast land and spread beyond it to other countries.

The fact in itself is significant enough. While the bloody heel of the fascist hangmen tramples all the achievements of human culture and civilization,—the sciences are attaining new brilliant heights in the U.S.S.R., and the Soviet nation, standing, as it does, under arms, crowns the devotees of the arts with new laurels.

This year the Stalin prizes were awarded for outstanding works accomplished in 1941. That was a year of great upheavals. The hurricane of war, following the treacherous nazi attack, swept the Soviet country in the midst of its peaceful creative labours and work of construction. The Soviet nation reacted by exerting all its efforts in the great war for the fatherland. It sent its sons to defend their homes, their native country. Everything for the front, everything for victory!—that is the watchword. That is the slogan which became the militant aim of scientific laboratories, designers' offices, factory shops, artists' studios. The poet's rhyme, the sculptor's chisel, the writer's pen—all the weapons of the mind as a whole were mobilized. These weapons operate against the German invaders with as much force and zest as the Red Army man's bayonet. The enthusiasm displayed by the Red Army in driving the German hordes to the West, will be liberating one district after another from them, is manifested by the entire Soviet nation in its everyday work. All its thoughts and efforts are bent toward the same goal.

Among the recipients of Stalin prizes are prominent members of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S S.R. and young scientists whose works have become landmarks in the

march of progress and knowledge, helping to enhance the defensive might of the Soviet Union. One of the prize-winners is the grey-haired President of the Academy of Sciences, Vladimir Komarov. Working with a group of other members of the Academy and scholars, he made a distinct contribution to the study of the natural resources of the Urals with a view to their further development. It is hardly necessary to stress the great national and scientific importance of the service he has rendered, at a time when the war lends such decisive significance to the Urals with their vast natural wealth.

One of the prizes for scientific achievements deservedly went to the noted physicist Abraham Yoffe for his investigation of semi-conductors and elaboration of the theoretical principles of the corresponding industry. The physicists Leonid Mandelstam and Nikolai Papaleksi received prizes for their contribution in the research of the nature of the propagation of radio waves close to the surface of the earth. The Soviet mathematician Sergei Bernstein, author of numerous works dealing with the theory of probability and the theory of approximate methods of calculation, has been awarded the prize for three works of great interest to physicists and technicians. The mathematician Sergei Khristianovich received the Stalin prize for his elaboration of the theory of aerodynamics at speeds approaching those of sound, which furnishes a scientific basis for calculations in the designing of speed airplanes. The Stalin prize was bestowed on to Nikolai Zelinsky, Member of the Academy of Sciences, for his works on organic chemistry which are of great importance for the technology of engine fuels.

Among the prize-winners are Sergei Ilyushin, designer of remarkable fighter-planes, and Alexander Yakovlev, designer of attack-planes; Alexander Morozov, Mikhail Koshkin and Nikolai Kucherenko for designing a new type of tank; Andrei Kostikov for inventing a new powerful weapon, which has on numerous occasions already sown consternation among the hitlerites; Boris Shpitalny, designer of aircraft-guns, anti-tank guns and mine-throwers; Krupchatnikov, who has introduced important innovations in artillery.

The same aspirations and the same selfless patriotism inspired a number of workers and engineers to introduce remarkable new methods of work in industry. In the land of Soviets scientists and innovators among workers both contribute to the advance of knowledge. Practice fecundates creative thought.

Thus there are among the Stalin-prize winners the miners Semivolos and Yankin, and the engine-driver Lunin. The former two carefully studied the mechanisms they operated and proved the "impossible,"—namely, that it was possible to achieve a manifold increase in the productivity of their labour, that it was possible to extract much more iron ore than was provided by the former rates of output. Lunin, by applying new methods of work, achieved a considerably higher average daily mileage covered by his locomotive.

The Stalin prize for achievements in the medical field was awarded to Members of the Academy of Sciences Abrikossov and Anichkov and to the well-known surgeons Professors Sergei Spassokukotsky, Sergei Yudin and Nikolai Petrov. Their work and inventions have saved the lives and eased the sufferings of scores of wounded Red Army men.

The defense of the Soviet Union and of world freedom has been the inspiration of Soviet art and Soviet literature as well. It was in besieged Leningrad, amid the thundering of war, that Nikolai Tikhonov created his inspired and stirring poem *Kirov Is with Us*. It was there that Dmitri Shostakovich's Seventh Sym-

phony took shape—the symphony born of the composer's firm confidence in victory. *In the Steppes of Ukraine*, the play by Alexander Korneichuk, another Stalin-prize recipient, portrays the cheerful and freedom-loving collective farmers of Ukraine, who will never submit to the insolent and greedy German invaders. Among those awarded prizes are authors of historical novels reflecting the great past of the U.S.S.R., as well as producers of remarkable patriotic films, such as *The Defense of Tsaritsyn*, which reconstructs the epic events in which Stalin's iron will and military genius played such a decisive part.

Ilya Ehrenburg received the Stalin prize for his novel *The Fall of Paris*. His profound knowledge of France, where he lived for many years, and his personal observations during those fatefull days which preceded and followed the capitulation, enabled the author, who is imbued with a profound affection for the French people, to produce a broad and brilliant picture of the historic events. One feels the masterful hand of the artist in the portrayal of the wretched "heroes" of the surrender, in the presentation of the causes of the defeat and in the depiction of the representatives of the immortal French people which will never accept the yoke of the German invaders.

The efflorescence of learning and art, the soaring of creative thought in the Soviet Union, is additional proof of the immense moral superiority of the Soviet Union as compared with the intellectual poverty of fascist Germany.

The German Huns with the swastika are wrecking and stealing the historical and cultural treasures of the nations who have become their victims.

In Germany herself they have tortured many scientists and artists to death, thrown a number of them into prisons and concentration camps and forced others to flee from their own country as from the plague. For science they have substituted *Ersatz*-science, for art the concoctions of the fascist savages from Goebbels' department.

The nazi Vandals have announced a campaign against progress and civilization. Bombs dropped by Göring's *Luftwaffe* wrecked many historical and artistic treasures in England, they hit the ancient building of Parliament, threw down into the dust the monument to the great Milton. In France one of the greatest scientists, Fernand Hollebeque, was tortured to death in a Gestapo-prison. Who knows whether George Rodin, the immortal sculptor who gave mankind *The Thinker*, would not have landed in a concentration camp were he alive today? Who knows whether among those shot as hostages there would not have been Anatole France, whose subtle sarcasm and brilliant thought infuriate the German fascists, the descendants of those Prussian nincompoops whom Heine lashed so scathingly in his time? In any event the graves of Molière and Balzac, Alfred de Musset and Michelet, Béranger and Rachel have been defiled by the very presence of German fascist sentries.

The German Huns have closed and wrecked the ancient university of Prague, they looted and defiled the universities of Warsaw and Lwow. They desecrated the grave of Leo Tolstoy in Yasnaya Polyana, and looted the Tchaikovsky Museum. Drunken nazi drill-sergeants are defiling shrines sacred to every cultured man such as the village Mikhailovskoye, where Pushkin created his *Eugene Onegin* and where this greatest of Russian poets found his last place of rest.

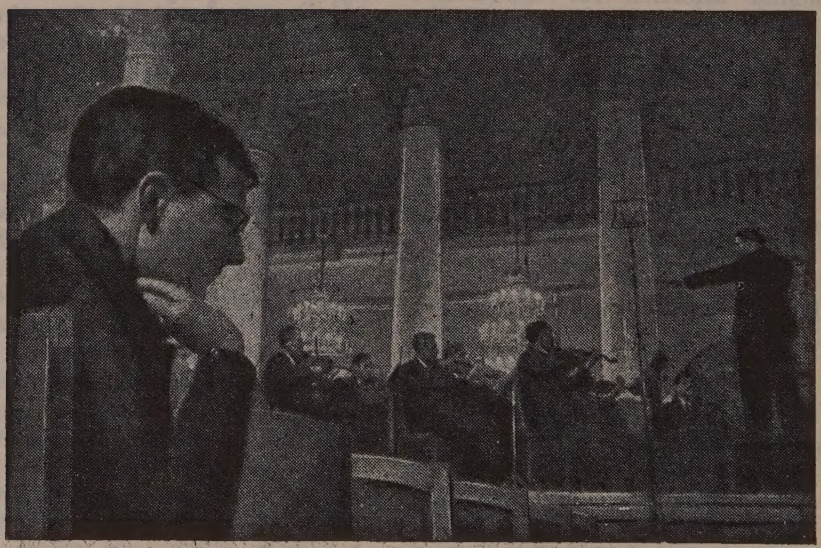
Blood and filth, the trampling of the cultural achievements of the ages beneath their jackboots—that is all the gorillas with the swastika emblem are capable of. In their language this is called "the new order."

The whole civilized world, shuddering with horror and indignation, has risen to the struggle against them. All anti-axis powers struggle for their very existence. For them to lose the war would mean not only a diminution of territory but the complete loss of political and economic independence, enslavement of their populations, surrender to alien repulsive ideology, renounciation of all historical traditions, faith, morals, all political and social ideals, all that is dear to every nation, to every human being brought up in the spirit of modern civilization.

The defense of those rights and ideals, the defense of honour, freedom and independence is what inspires the Soviet people in its struggle against the nazi invaders. Its watchword is: "Everything in the service of the war for liberation!"

The achievements of the Stalin-prize winners provide additional striking proof of the selflessness and unity of the Soviet people, which has mobilized all its material and moral forces for the cause of victory. That is why the award of the Stalin prizes is an important and encouraging event in the general struggle against hitlerism, a struggle which is waged on all the seas and all the continents.

L. VOLYNSKY



D. Shostakovich at a rehearsal of the VIIth Symphony

HEROINES OF OUR TIMES

Women of Moscow—large-hearted and courageous! In these troublous times, in these days of sore trial, you are with us in this city.

War brings its piercing pain to every heart, but it wounds most the hearts of mothers, wives and sweethearts. And because we know that, our gratitude to you, our comrades and fellow-warriors in this titanic struggle, is unlimited.

In times of peace we shared our joys and happiness with you in this city, the most beautiful one in the world. You recall what Mayakovsky wrote from France: "I would have liked to live and die in Paris, had there not been another metropolis—Moscow!" And indeed, who can help being enchanted with our city, our capital!

Many were the happy days we spent in its shady parks, in its concert halls, in the gay and festively noisy squares, and in the cozy homes of our friends. With what joyful anticipation we hastened, after a labourious day fruitfully spent, to the brightly lit vestibules of the theatres, to the quiet halls of the libraries, to the merry gatherings of friends, to evening lectures, to the parks and gardens! Many were the happy hours which Moscow showered upon us.

Each one of us has here his own cozy corner, his warm and comfortable home, favourite walks, familiar streets he has traversed year after year, where every building seems to beam upon him as on a dear friend.

In this city we were accustomed

"Fascism is women's worst enemy! All out to fight fascism!"
Poster by N. Batolina

every day to meeting happy, cheerful women. Beneath the dense foliage of the trees along the boulevards, in the sunlight or in the shade, a young mother would watch with tender protective eyes over the pink-cheeked infant dozing in his gaily-coloured perambulator. A school-girl would hurry past to her classes, smiling inwardly at some pleasing thought. A grey-haired old woman, surrounded by boisterous grandchildren, would emerge into the courtyard, her wrinkled face beaming with kindliness and contentment. A sun-tanned outdoor girl in a white sweater and shorts would swing her oars

gracefully over the blue water of the Moskva River, while the merry wind caressed her curls. Splashes of sunlight would glean from the drops that fell from her oars, and life would be filled to overflowing with colour, sound and joyous activity.

In the seclusion of her study, she, the Moscow woman, would pore over retorts and test-tubes, or over mathematical calculations; in the humming, whirring weaving shed she would initiate a movement for the tending of many looms; at the flying club she would be seen taking her place at the joystick, setting out on a flight; at the stadium she would be applauded for some record sprint.

Women of Moscow, you were always, everywhere our equals, our worthy comrades, each one of you—the mistress of your fate, your country and your city. And now that the days of trial and tribulation have come, when each one of us has been put to the stern test, boldly and without hesitation you have risen to the occasion and taken your place in the fighting ranks.

The whole world re-echoes to the fame of the women of Moscow who conducted themselves so bravely amid the perils of air-raids and bombings. The deeds of the female staff of the Morozov Children's Hospital will go down in history as a noble example of self-sacrifice, fearlessness and loftiness of spirit. Amidst the bursting of high explosives and the hail of incendiary bombs they heroically saved the sick children, with never a thought for themselves. Some day sculptors will immortalize in marble the image of a simple Russian woman, a hospital nurse, clutching a child to her breast and with her robe, her arms, her whole body protecting it from a black airplane with the sinister sign of the swastika on its wings.

The women of Moscow, when they participate in the building of fortifications, in the production of hand-grenades, etc., are protecting their future, their children, their very existence which is being menaced by the hordes of man-hating savages.

In these days we meet again on the streets of Moscow and in its environs this woman of the capital, this splendid heroine of our times. Her merry laughter that used to gladden our hearts is stilled for a time; her gentle face has become stern and hard, sharp lines of care have furrowed her brow and her lips, and only her eyes burn with a dry flame. It is the flame of a hatred which will reduce the enemy to ashes.

Once I saw a party of women. They were digging deep trenches which were to serve as tank barriers. They toiled in silence, broken only by the scrape of gravel as it fell from their spades. The wind tore at the naked branches of the birches that hung over their heads, a drizzling autumn rain fell, but the women were oblivious to the weather. Only one of them said:

"I wonder what's happening to our boys at the front today."

"I sent them a parcel of warm things," said another.

"I have a warm woolen shawl, do you think I could send it?" inquired a third.

They were concerned and troubled about the men at the front, these kind and simple Russian women. They were not worried about the rain, the wind, or the autumn mud. Forgetful of themselves, their women's hearts were concerned for those who beneath the sullen October sky were battling with a cruel enemy. Later I learned that only one of them had a husband at the front. Their thoughts were with the Red Army, with the men who had donned the military greatcoats and from that moment had become nearer and dearer to them than ever.

Then the women were silent. The spades struck dully, and the earth

squelched underfoot. The trench grew wider, and its floor sank deeper and deeper. The woman who had inquired about the shawl threw up a spadeful of earth and said angrily and impatiently:

"May he perish soon, curse him!"

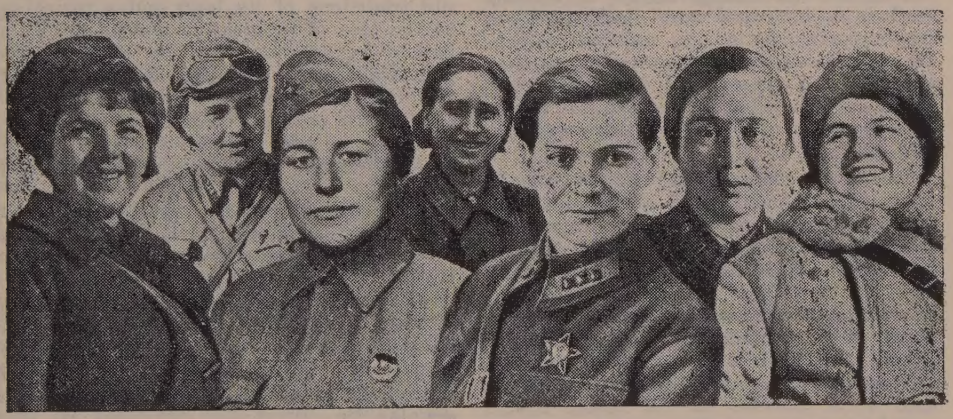
Who "he" was needed no explanation. I asked the woman what her name was, saying that I wanted to write about her for the newspapers and quote her words. She looked embarrassed and then said:

"Why, that is the wish of all of us. She thinks the same, and so does she, and so does she. . . Ask anyone. But if you want to know my name, it is Petrova, Elisaveta Maximovna. Let Hitler know how we Russian women hate him. And I am doing my best to see that he perishes soon."

And she set to work more fiercely than ever, plying her spade. Her lips were compressed in silent fury, and her eyes smouldered with the dry flames of hatred.

But I know, I am confident that the day will come when she will smile joyfully again, this woman of Moscow, and her eyes will sparkle as of old with the soft light of happiness.

B. GALICH



ILYA EHRENBURG

THE FALL OF PARIS

EXCERPTS

The Russians never considered the French climate moderate, differing in this respect from the canonical observers, who judged the climate of France sitting indoors. The Russians found it easy to breathe in a country where the air was purified by thunderstorms from generation to generation.

There is something significant in the fact that at a time most fateful for France, when the enemy had forced the majority of the best representatives of French literature into silence or exile, it was the free voice of the Russian Soviet writer Ehrenburg which rose to tell the world of the great disasters and splendid hopes of France.

The most difficult variety of literary work is an historical novel dealing with a contemporary period; it requires a profound understanding of actuality, so that the sentence pronounced by the writer sometimes immediately, on the hot tracks of events, should not be disavowed by history.

It is still more difficult to make such work supple and free of abstractions; to generalize the images of both events and individuals without waiting for a breathing spell which time gives to the artist. It is not merely a matter of substituting the names of some acting persons by fictitious, it is the independent recreation of people and events by the artist, that is — strictly according to the laws of art.

Tolstoy wrote of Natasha, the heroine of *War and Peace*: "I mixed Sonya with Tanya [1], and the result was Natasha."

How many authentic images of double-dealers Ehrenburg must have "mixed," to create the type of the minister Tessat, the false hero of the Third Republic! How many remarkable French intellectuals and workers must he have known, to mould such noble images of revolutionaries as foreman Michaud of the "Seine" factory and his friend, engineer Pierre!

What a depth of love for the real France had to be blended with a hatred for its enemies to animate this picture taken from everyday life, to let the reader feel the joy of the spring time of the people's movement of 1936, which faded only too soon; the bitterness and gloom of the Munich days in 1938; the scorn for the traitors, who for decades had claimed a monopoly on patriotism, although they had sided long ago with the enemy for the sake of saving the privileges of their caste. The French nation combines a faithfulness for the age-old traditions of its land and a devotion to the idea of progressive movement. This people never permitted the face of its beautiful fatherland to age, and it renewed its blood, absorbing the best that the spirit of each new era contributed.

It is with the eyes of the new epoch that Ehrenburg sees heroic and crushed France.

The selected episodes represent the fundamental lines of the novel, which follows up the development of the above mentioned historical processes and events.

The social-political and spiritual dramas of France during the last few pre-war and war years are embodied in a number of persons and groups of heroes, whose brief characteristic is the main purpose of this article.

Tessat, an active member of the radical party, penetrates into the ranks of the People's Front, and there he carries on a policy calculated to undermine the unity of the people, in accordance with orders received from rightists and fascists of the type of Breteuil, Grandel, Montigny and others. Tessat's activity consists in manoeuvring between the policy of the People's Front and the utilization of its authority to build up his personal career and for the benefit of reaction. There is no unity of views in the Tessat family:

---

[1] Sonya — Sofia Tolstaya, the writer's wife; Tanya Kuzminskaya—her sister.

his son Lucien, opposes himself to "the old world," and, among other things, that dirty atmosphere of political intrigues in which his father lives. Yet Lucien himself has a certain duplicity, although not in the same sense as applied to his father. Lucien is an intellectual proud of his complexity which, in his opinion, lifts him up high above the masses. He is of the opinion that the masses do not understand the peculiarities of his, Lucien's, revolutionism. In reality, however, Lucien's revolutionary emotions are limited to an aesthetic anti-bourgeois revolt, which is so shallow that in one of his days of test Lucien easily crosses into the camp of the "elegant" killers of the Spanish Republic. By accident he becomes Breteuil's agent and, without realizing it, he helps Breteuil to mask the intrigues of that same German fascist spy Grandel whom his father, Tessat, saves intentionally. The war and the trials of life at the front open Lucien's eyes, and he sees the emptiness and futility of his existence. Lucien dies a tragic death, but with a new awareness in his conciousness, as a soldier of the army which could have stood up and defended free France, but for the treason of his father and others of his kind. The fact that Lucien could have become a cagulard in Breteuil's hands even for a short while only, shows how deeply and actively the French fascists have been introducing the nazi poison in the blood of France.

The break between Denise, Lucien's sister, and her father is truly beneficial. Her meeting and friendship with Michaud decides her fate: she joins the active friends of the people, and in this struggle she reveals her spiritual strength and firmness, which formerly were lost in the foul atmosphere of her father's home; a faith in the people's victory grows in her soul, as fiery as that of Michaud. It is difficult to resist the charming influence of this man. Michaud is a character who embodies a combination of the true revolutionist and the genuine artist, something which is quite beyond Lucien. In his enjoyment of art, in his struggle and profession he manifests such talent, energy and faith as are peculiar only to people who have come from very healthy and pure strata of the nation. The strike at the "Seine" factory puts Michaud in the ranks of the leaders of the people's movement. With the same courage with which he stood up for the rights of the French people Michaud fights for the cause of the Spanish Republic. In the Soviet Union he sees the embodiment of mankind's loftiest ideals. During the Finnish provocation directed against the U.S.S.R., Michaud heads the movement of the French soldiers who rose

Ilya Ehrenburg

against the senseless and criminal attempt to support the Finnish adventurers.

Next to Michaud we see the figure of Pierre Dubois, the engineer of the "Seine" factory. Starting from an unconscious anarchical protest against the rotten regime of Tessat and others, Pierre, before whose eyes the manly struggle of the workers of the "Seine" factory takes place, can be said to have passed a course in the school of the masses; gradually he is drawn into the movement until he becomes part of it. Pierre breaks with Dessère, the owner of the factory, despite all the attempts of the latter to demoralize Pierre and to convince him that the old world is solid and that all attempts to improve it are in vain. During the war Pierre finds a heroic death on the field of battle.

Agnès throws in her lot with that of Pierre. Hers is an amazingly vivid image of an aspirer after the truth. But only slowly and gradually she abandons her pure but barren search for an abstract truth and becomes a valiant fighter against the worst enemies of the French people—the German armies of occupation. Like Pierre she becomes convinced from experience of the rightness of the people's cause. Agnès is arrested by the Germans for giving refuge to some de Gaulle supporters, and she prefers death to submission to the German invaders. She dies convinced that the sacrifice of her life, just like the sacrifices of the lives of thousands of liberty-loving Frenchmen, will in the end bring happiness to the real France.

Then come André the painter and Jeannette the actress.

The eternally-young beauty of Paris, the turbulent life of its people and the multi-coloured and noble panorama of Paris life are conceived by André as a work of art. The festive days of July 14th and the stupendous demonstration of the People's Front enthuse André by their grim picturesqueness. The war leads him to a deeper understanding of beauty. For the first time he begins to realize the charm of a patriotic heroic deed, and from an observer he turns into a hero. André defends a lone hill and road planted with maple trees against a German attack not because they represent a picturesque French landscape, but because this hill, this road and these maples are his fatherland, he defends the soil that has been copiously drenched with the sweat and blood of the people.

Jeannette, with whom the lyric, love motives of the novel are connected, remains to the very end a tragic figure. In her we see the whole weakness and fragility of the artistic milieu which has been hopelessly crippled by the reserve and masked oppression which the "velvety" dictatorship of philistine tastes exercises over the artist. This society, which is inimical to art by its nature, turns the artist Jeannette into a tool for commercial advertising. Jeannette broadcasts at the microphone, mixing hymns to the latest perfumes with recitals of French tragedians. Jeannette represents the touching but incurable impotence of a soul striving for the loftiest ideals, but already hardly able to experience genuine feelings. Jeannette brings no happiness to Dessère, whose activity is reduced to the enjoyment of the uncrowned power yielded by money. In Jeannette Dessère looks for his last joy in life, which would take him away from the business-life which sickens him, and from his contact with the filthy surroundings of a Tessat and Breteuil.

Dessère opens a gallery of peculiar persons in Ehrenburg's novel. Ehrenburg is an ardent friend of France, of its glorius past and promising future, and as such, while depicting the best heroic traditions of the French people, he does not want to ignore the elements of nobility and moral purity which have remained in "old France" and which also hark back to the time when this nobility really was the nobility of the rising bourgeoisie. These old and healthy qualities manifest themselves differently in different personnages in the days which are so fateful and tragic for France.

Dessère pines for the ideals of old French life. To him old France means the chats in the Café du Commerce, the lazy existence of the French provinces and thousands of small joys, based in reality on an extreme self-limitation. Dessère's tragedy lies in the fact that neither he nor anybody else is able to separate these dear old times from their foundation—from economic slavery, intellectual stagnation and endless narrow-mindedness. For these old, seemingly ultra kind foundations simultaneously serve as the support of what Dessère himself rejects—the ultra-new tricks of blackmail, exploitation and cruel mockery of men of toil. Dessère understands that the ideals of a patriarchal property owner, no matter how humane they may appear to be, have outlived their times, and so has Dessère himself outlived his day. Dessère admits that while trying to preserve the "old house" of France, he actually is saving the parasites who gnaw at the walls of this house, so dear to him. Dessère's tragic death is quite logical. He commits suicide, crushed by the sight of the military catastrophe, the meanness of the advocates of capitulation, who have sullied his beloved France.

But that old ferment which leads to Dessère's death, may be beneficial in people who, despite all their old-fashionedness, and just because they love old France, find their way to the people. Such, for instance, is the conservative deputy Ducamp. Ducamp breaks with the fascists who try to play on his old-fashioned naiveté. Moved by a love for his fatherland, he is carried over into the ranks of the people, the genuine patriots. It makes no difference to him who these people are—democrats or communists, young or old, as long as they are ready, like Ducamp himself, to die for the honour and independence of France, which is being betrayed by pseudo-patriots of the type of the fascist Breteuil.

The majority of Ehrenburg's heroes die. But they die in different ways.

Pierre, Agnès, Ducamp and the young worker of the "Seine" factory, whom the fascists murder, die as heroes.

Dessère dies a tragic death; the death of Jeannette is senseless, and purifying is the death of Lucien.

The "socialist" Viard, who betrays everything that can be betrayed by a man who some time ago styled himself as a friend of the people, remains, alive, leading a miserable existence of degradation. Viard is a friend of loud words and foul deeds carried out quietly. The others remaining alive are Tessat and the fascist Breteuil, who becomes a lackey and stool-pigeon of the German generals.

Real life and regenerated France of the future are embodied in those who conquer

death by their fearlessness and faith in the purity and justice of the people's cause. The story of Michaud and Denise is not closed, just as the story of France cannot finish with the crimes of the men of Vichy and their German allies.

Such are the main acting persons of the novel.

Reading Ehrenburg's book, we enter into a circle of most acute and complicated problems, which constitute the essence of the latest history of France and which explain its present stage. Of these problems the most important is that of patriotism and of love for France. Ducamp finds it difficult to understand what may be termed the "re-valuation" of patriotic values, but this genius of patriotism has left the men belonging to his caste and has now joined the men of the people, those in whom Ducamp used to see just advocates of sedition. Breteuil, however, that canonic representative of patriotism, lands up in the camp of the advocates of capitulation and the bootlickers of the enemy. Ehrenburg gives a clear answer to this question asked by Ducamp indirectly. Patriotism has not "shifted" to the people. Patriotism has always lived and flourished in the people. In France's tragic days, the people have proved it by their readiness to defend Paris, which Breteuil and his agents in the French army had delivered to the victor's mercy beforehand.

A powerful drama of true patriotism runs through the whole book, like a mountain chain. It is brilliantly shown in Ehrenburg's book and explains the importance of the novel not only to Soviet literature, but to the progressive literature of the whole world as well.

This book is first of all a victory for the great artistic skill of the famous Soviet writer. Ehrenburg has come near perfection in the most difficult combination of the ideological and psychological characteristics of the modern man, of the modern Frenchman. Ehrenburg's craftsmanship in drawing a politico-psychological portrait reminds us of La Bruyère. Collected together, these portraits of artists, politicians, industrialists, military men, aristocrats and men of the people recreate the character of twentieth century France.

The Fall of Paris is a brilliant achievement. The author created a magnificent panorama of French ideas, French feelings and French tastes, the most national among them.

Ehrenburg's novel is a tribute of the friendship of the Soviet writer to the French people.

This book has been awarded the Stalin first-class prize, which goes to works appreciated by the Soviet people for loftiness of thought and depth of artistic skill. This award also serves as the expression of the feelings of the Soviet people for the fraternal people of France and for their valiant struggle with their brown jailers.

We hope yet to hear from the author of *The Fall of Paris* the story of how Paris rose and how the liberty-loving French people have risen to the struggle and won.

B. PESSIS

On learning that Reynaud had supplanted Daladier, Méjeu remarked to Grandel:

"I ought to have turned out a hundred and eighty bombers by the first of May. But now the situation has changed. . . You may tell the minister that additional tests were found necessary. . ."

Grandel smiled.

"I understand you perfectly. . . Reynaud is an adventurer. It is quite possible that he'll drag us into a real war. Why did he send the Alpine riflemen to Narvik? I hope, though, that he'll soon fall. One good defeat will be enough, I should think. The Germans are doing their best. . . They say Dessère congratulated him. That in itself is an excellent sign: friendship with Dessère can lead to no good. . ."

Dessère—all-powerful until quite recently—had become a laughing stock, a source of livelihood for cartoonists.

"Make the most of Dessère," Breteuil counselled Joliot, "he's an international business-man, a plutocrat,

a gun-contractor. It's only natural that he would advocate war to the victorious end. You can brand and defame him as much as you like; Tessat promised me that the censor won't interfere."

Montigny ordered Joliot to launch a campaign against Dessère. The fat one demurred:

"One may alter the political trend, that is in the usual order of things. But Dessère supported me at the most difficult time. You understand what it means—to betray an old friend? And then—Dessère is very honest. He's not a Marseilles man but he loves Marseilles. I've heard him talking to the fishermen at Cassis. . . He's a true Frenchman. And I am to write about him and call him an Austrian Jew in the pay of the Americans?"

Dessère occupied a far too exalted position formerly. At the first sign of instability, it was decided that he was falling, and people spoke of him as "poor Dessère," although he still owned plants and shares. No one asked how his business was going on. The engineers of the "Seine" prophesied: "He'll hardly hang on till the next annual meeting." Even his old gardener was attacked by doubts of his master's solvency and asked for his wages in advance.

Dessère took more and more to drinking, avoided people and concealed his attacks of angina pectoris from Jeannette. He would make a joke of things whenever he met any of his friends: "Permit me to introduce myself—an Austrian plutocrat whose gardener demands his wages in advance." The acquaintance would turn away: Dessère was horrible to look at,—sickness and failure had wasted his face, it was puffy and formless.

Jeannette felt an acute and at times well-nigh intolerable pity for him. It was a feeling that could not but be humiliating for both; and she tried at times to work herself up to anger, said impertinent things to him in the hope that he would retort in the same fashion. But Dessère merely hunched up his shoulders and looked at her with the kind, dimmed eyes of an old dog. Then she would embrace him, and say touching things that had nothing to do with the matter. "Jeannette!" he would whisper, as though the name were a charm and Jeannette alone could save him. He knew that she was the only link that bound him to life, and he feared death more than ever, not the pain of it, but the emptiness; there would be nothing, neither good nor bad, and one wanted to howl when one thought of it.

He often told himself that he was ruining Jeannette's life; he resolved to break with her, kept his resolve for a few weeks, and then suddenly rushed to her in a frenzy at night and woke her, asking: "May I come in?" She stroked his harsh grey hair, and tears rolled down from her big frightened eyes.

On the first of May he happened to bump into Méjeu. It was in the Café Carlton.

"I was told you were sick," said Méjeu.

"No, I feel splendid."

"Well, health's the most important thing, particularly these times. . . Do you know what day it is today? The first of May. And nobody seems to be thinking about it. Remember how worried we were this time last year, expecting strikes and demonstrations? And now this is just like any ordinary weekday. Well, it's an ill wind that blows nobody any good. You don't agree with me, I see."

So often had Méjeu called Dessère a "Red" that he had come to believe in the myth he had created. But Dessère only replied casually:

"Yes, it's quiet. . . Too quiet, perhaps. . ."

A young flower-seller stopped him as he was going along the street.

"Buy my lilies-of-the-valley. Only twenty sous. They'll bring you good luck. . ."

She had the teeth of a rodent, and hunted eyes. He took the bunch of still green lilies-of-the-valley buds from her. "They'll bring good luck. . ." No, they wouldn't. Méjeu's smile, the flower-seller's eyes, Jeannette. . . and no way out. They would be killed. Who? Jeannette, he himself, all of them. . . As he gulped down his brandy greedily at the bar, the wireless was blaring:

It's happiness to stand by the river,
Happiness in nothing, nothing at all. . .

A week later Dessère saw Jeannette. She passed him by without noticing him. She was smiling as she walked along. He realized what that meant: she was brightening up without him. It was time to make an end of it all.

Dessère had often tried to persuade Jeannette to move from the place where she was living. She had always refused. She was still living in the old hotel by the Rue Bonaparte. He knew the place well—the ample landlady, bestrewed with bluish face-powder, the dark winding staircase. Every step of the stairs meant breathlessness and doubt. The corridors reeked of lavatories, stale scent and kitchen odours. Jeannette's room was narrow and long. Over the mantlepiece Daphnis had been kissing a bronze Chloe for upwards of half-a-century. Who had been the former tenants of this room? An artist dreaming of fame? Or some book-keeper perhaps, a horror beplastered with brilliantine, addicted to vivid neckties, and in love with one of the beauties from the Folies Bergères? Or a German, precise, bewildered and without the right to reside in France? At night he would take out a picture postcard of Mannheim and pace up and down the room in his stocking-feet. . . Loneliness accumulated, thickened, in this ill-ventilated room.

"We ought not to meet any more," Dessère said quietly.

He had prepared this sentence, afraid that she would ask why or look at him; he would not be proof against that. But Jeannette only turned away and said: "Yes." Nothing was left now, not even deception, she thought. It was better so. . . And he wondered at his own calm; this was death, after all, yet it did not terrify him. . .

It was a warm night in May. Over the darkened town the stars came out and multiplied. The chestnuts were in bloom. The chimes in the neighbouring church struck the quarter-hour.

"A night for lovers," Dessère said with a short laugh. He was at the window.

"There are no lovers. There are stars, trees, verses. And so we've grown old, Dessère!"

"You haven't begun to live yet. I hindered you. And now no more will I either hinder you or live. . ."

The last words escaped him against his will; he was angry with himself—here he was, actually complaining. She would think he was pleading with her. He had always known that love could not be bought with money; neither could it be bought with tears. But, without observing his agitation, Jeannette replied:

"I don't want to live. Once I did. . . But it didn't turn out well. . . And you?"

"I'm afraid of death. . . that is to say, I can't understand how one dies."

He was about to go when the anti-aircraft guns started an uproar like a pack of dogs broken loose, and barked and bayed. . . Search-lights clung to the soft velvet of the night sky. The sirens went raving mad; there was something alive and brutal in their frantic bellowing.

"What's this?" Jeannette asked.

"The war, most likely. It's spring-time. . . I told you this is a night

for lovers. They thought the Germans would simply sit and wait."

"How quiet it is," Dessère said, delighted. Pitiful creatures. Traitors, all of them. . . Well, what difference did it make, anyway?. . "Jeannette, aren't you afraid of death at all?"

"No," she said firmly, even coldly.

And the barking of the anti-aircraft guns went on.

At last the air-alert was over. Dessère sat in an armchair by the window. He had asked if he could stay there till morning. The birds began to twitter—simple, childish, everyday sounds. Slanting rays of sunlight, long shadows. Coolness. Cartloads of vegetables went by on their way to the market. A milkwoman passed by. And to Dessère it seemed that nothing had happened, neither the alarms nor the explanation of the night before. He glanced at Jeannette; she was asleep, her face serene, indifferent. He thought to himself how ordinary she looked when her eyes were shut. . . And as though she divined his thoughts at that moment, Jeannette awoke and looked at him. He turned away.

"Good morning, Dessère," she called out cheerfully.

Perhaps she, too, had forgotten everything. The laughter of schoolchildren floated in at the open window.

". . . If the 'Hippopotamus' questions me today there'll be an awful row. . ."

"I had a problem to do with reservoirs in it. And we went to see that film—*The Kiss of Death*."

Then the wireless whined out: "At the third stroke it will be precisely one minute past seven. . . We are bringing you the morning's news. . . Last night German troops invaded Holland and Belgium. . ."

Jeannette gave a startled cry and ran to the window. A woman with a basket was standing in the street, listening.

"Detachments of parachutists have been landed on Dutch territory. . "

The woman let her basket fall, and big pale-pink wild strawberries spilled out in the roadway.

Dessère turned to Jeannette.

"I told you this was the war. . ."

People were crowding around the newspaper kiosk under the window; workers, trades-people, women—they were all discussing the news.

"It's like 1914 all over again. . . They may come here."

"No, they'll get stuck there. And supposing they even take Holland? What then? It's all the better for us."

"It says in the paper that the Dutch will flood the country. . ."

"They'd write anything in the papers. They're paid for writing. The Germans can land down on us on parachutes. . . Straight down on the Champ de Mars. . ."

Dessère closed the window.

"How many of these people have been deceived!" He sat down in his armchair again, breathing heavily. His shoulders and his arm ached. "Jeannette, look at me. I am afraid of your eyes. . . Listen to me attentively. . . I deceived them, too. . . More than others, perhaps. I want to preserve something. . . What is there to preserve? Tessat? And now the day of reckoning has come. I don't know what will happen to us. . . Hitler will come. . . And that will be the end of France. . . Pierre was right. He said: 'Give it all up.' I am dead. But they did not kill me, they killed Pierre. . . Jeannette, if only they would not murder you. . . Farewell. . . You see how the break between us has coincided with the war? Very effective, quite like at the theatre. . . And as a matter of fact, it is all very simple. . . And terrible.

He talked in a muffled tone, incoherently. Then he put on his hat, and already standing at the door, bent sharply and kissed Jeannette's hand; the kiss, the bowed back and

the trembling of his hands told of strength of feeling, pain and despair.

"Jeannette, listen, I'll get you a passport, a visa. Go away. Go as far as you can from here—to America."

She shook her head. No. She was too tired. . . But just now she felt an overpowering pity for everyone: for the Dutch, and the people who were still shouting under her window, and Dessère. Above all for Dessère. People thought he could do everything. And he was unhappier even than she was—a slave, a puppet, a shadow. And now for the first time she used the familiar "thou" to him.

"Don't worry. Everything comes to an end, and so will this. I don't know how, but it will. My dear Dessère, good-bye!"

* * *

"There has been treachery. . . Death is too mild a punishment for the mistakes that have been made. Remember: our soldiers are dying on the battle-field. . . We shall destroy all cowards and traitors! . . . If nothing but a miracle can save France, then I believe in that miracle!"

The senators applauded politely when Reynaud had finished speaking. These were old experienced politicians; they knew that the downfall of the Cabinet was imminent. But Fouget wept in the Deputies' box. He knew that Reynaud was simply a clever business-man and a cynic; he remembered the Munich days—Reynaud had censured Daladier, but had not ventured to speak out boldly against him. And still Fouget yielded to the magic of words. The journalists laughed at the bearded dreamer drying his tears with a Turkish foulard handkerchief.

Tessat was just getting into his car when Fouget seized him by the arm.

"I want to talk to you. It was good—the way Reynaud said: 'There has been treachery!' It was bold and frank. The lash of a whip. . . Now it is time to act."

For the last few days Tessat had lived as though in a fever, with sudden transitions from unconcern to profound despair. Reports were contradictory: some spoke of successful counter-attacks, others prophesied the fall of Paris. Pétain asserted that the army was no more; all that remained were detachments unconnected with each other. Mandel brought evidence to show that it was possible to resist. The ministers decided,—first, that they ought to leave Paris, then declared that the capital was in no danger. Tessat could not sleep or eat. He felt as though he were going to be ill. He looked at Fouget with horror—this was the last straw! But Fouget got into the car and started to screech:

"A people's guard ought to be raised!"

"It's too late." Tessat blew his nose dejectedly. "I am no mystic—I have no faith in miracles. The Germans occupied Arras and Amiens yesterday, they've broken through to the coast today. The army is surrounded."

"Forty divisions there. We can break through the encirclement. . ."

"Who will do it? Don't count on the Belgians. King Leopold is a germanophile, everybody knows that. Two British divisions have retired today from Bapaume to Dunkirk. Weygand naturally did not want to meet General Gorth. In one short, the affair is over and done with."

"How can you talk like this? Reynaud has only just said: 'The punishment of cowardice is death.' You ought to be the first shot!"

Fouget was shouting now, spurting his saliva over Tessat; his beard bobbed up and down. . .

"Shouting won't help," Tessat replied in a conciliatory tone. "Reynaud was talking for the public ear. You ought to hear him at home in

private. You are an honest man, but a visionary. I know you hate me. You needn't. I was sincerely upset and indignant when you were attacked in Marseilles."

"What are you thinking of now? I beg you to forget all petty politics. France is dying. Try to rise above squabbles and parties!"

"You see—I said you were a visionary! And moreover—you belong to a bygone day. Seventy-ton tanks. And what have we got to oppose them, Citizen Fouget? Perhaps you will destroy General Kleist with the Declaration of the Rights of Man?"

"This is no time for jokes!"

"I'm not joking either. I seldom speak as seriously as this. We've outlived our day, don't you understand? Perhaps Breteuil will survive. But he is old, he goes to church and prays. Grandel and Méjeu will survive. You regard me as a scoundrel, though we are both radicals. But you respect Ducamp. And Cachin. Well, let me tell you, these are heroes of the last century. In other countries the nineteenth century died at the proper time, with the last war. But here it has outstayed its welcome. Generally speaking, our old people are never in any hurry to die. Pétain is getting on for ninety, and you just listen to him—with his plans and ambitions. . . So we may take it that the old century is finished. Like your Dessère. He came to see me, by the way. And do you know what he suggested? That we should defend Paris."

"And he's quite right. They said Madrid wouldn't hold out two days, and it held out two years. Arm the workers, and you will see wonders. . ."

Tessat shrugged his shoulders.

"How can one talk to you? You live in the world of the past. Do you really imagine that seventy divisions and three thousand tanks will be stopped by barricades?. . . And then, one would have to be quite crazy to put guns into the hands of the Communists. You would be delighted, of course, but then you are an exception. All the Radicals would start an outcry. Not to mention the Socialists. And what about the Right Wing people? . . . Picard once remarked to me that if the workers attempted to seize power he would open the front to the enemy."

"You ought to arrest him. And Breteuil as well. Reynaud spoke of treachery—or didn't he?. . . I want you to do your duty as a citizen. These people hate you, you must understand. If Breteuil comes to power, he won't stand on ceremony with you. To him you're a Radical, a Mason, the protégé of the People's Front. Just look what they write about you."

Fouget held out a leaflet to him, and Tessat caught sight of his own name; his hands shook. "It's difficult to read," he said, "it shakes so." But he managed to read the words: "We'll hang them from the lamp-posts." It was signed by "The Headquarters of the Loyal."

They were driving up to the ministry. In a faint voice Tessat said:

"Forgive me if I offended you. But I am very depressed. Very. . ."

At home he read the leaflet attentively. He realized suddenly that Fouget had been right, that Breteuil's friends would not forgive him either the raised fist or the friendship with Viard, nor the intercession for Denise.

He dozed for half-an-hour, dreaming of refugees, tanks and gallows. When he awoke, he sat down on the couch, hugging his knees, and said aloud: "It's not a question of myself! One must think of France. . ." A week ago he had given way to panic; he had wanted to leave; now he could go out calmly to face death. At the same time, responsibility lay upon his shoulders, he was a minister who had to try to save his country. It was all very well for Ducamp! That madman thought of no one but him-

self, wanted to advertise himself—so he had gone in the army. A sorry picture—a deputy with the rank of lieutenant. And what could such as Ducamp do? As though there weren't enough lieutenants without him?

No, what was needed here was some sleight-of-hand, invention, or some extraordinary manoeuvre. Mandel thought that we should become reconciled with Moscow. The Germans had long since grasped the fact that Russia was a force. And that fool Daladier had set us at loggerheads with the Russians. (Tessat was now convinced that he had spoken against helping Mannerheim.) De Visset said we had very few airplanes. And we could get a thousand bombers from the Russians, either buy or exchange them. . .

Tessat became absorbed in the thought that his was a high mission, around him were weak-willed fools: that strutting peacock Reynaud and the dull-witted Daladier. He, Tessat, would start a daring game, negotiating with Moscow. Then Italy would not risk coming out. And the Germans would take fright and draw in their horns. The tide would turn in France and the people would believe at once in victory. And it would be generally acknowledged that Tessat had saved his country as Clémenceau saved it in 1917. . .

He sent for Fouget.

"Thanks, old man, for coming round. My talk with you opened my eyes to a great many things. . . What we are doing now is really stewing in our own juice. But you take a broader view of things. . . Now I'll tell you my plan. . . We'll send either you or Cot to Moscow."

"To Moscow? What for?"

"They have a respect for you. But if you don't care to go, then we can sent Cot."

"I'm asking you—for what purpose?"

"Why, what do you mean 'for what purpose?' It will produce a tremendous impression and influence Italy's behaviour. It will brighten things up here. And, if it comes to that, the Russians can supply us with munitions. Airplanes in the first place. . ."

Fouget got really angry.

"Are you crazy? Why on earth should the Russians supply you with airplanes? Only two months ago you were bawling that Baku should be destroyed. . ."

"Nothing of the kind. Personally I was against it. That was all Daladier's obstinacy. To nickname him a Camargue bull was wrong, he is simply an ass. . . But why go over all this old stuff again?—it is past and gone. What we want now is to establish friendly relations with Moscow. You can help me with this."

"The Russians will send you to the devil, and they'll be perfectly right. The first question they'll ask is: whom do you represent? There is only empty space behind you. The workers are still being arrested. In today's papers you can read the latest trial—eight Communists. Your 'Camargue ass' is the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The French people may come to some agreement with Moscow, but not you. . . There is only one thing I can advise you to do, and that is to write to the President and say you are resigning from the Government. What we need is a Committee of Public Deliverance!"

And then he went away, banging the door behind him. Tessat began to consider what he should do next? It would be a good thing to appeal to the Communists. . . What a misfortune that Denise had quarrelled with him!

He made up his mind to speak first to Ferronez, the barrister who had taken up the defense of the Communists more than once.

"I believe you know many of the Communists. . . Perhaps you won't refuse to pass on this letter."

"To whom?"

Tessat reddened; he could hardly get out the words:

"To my daughter. It's very important that it should reach her as soon as possible—it's a question of life and death for someone very near to us. . ."

"Very well," said Ferronez, adding with a little laugh: "If your police don't dog my footsteps, I'll hand over the letter this very evening."

Tessat had written: "Denise! I must talk things over with you. It's not a private matter, but a public affair of the utmost importance. I am asking you to come and see me at nine tomorrow morning. I repeat, it does not concern me or any private interests. I promise that no one will know of your visit. Your unhappy father, Paul Tessat."

That evening he had to attend a Cabinet meeting. He listened absently while Reynaud was reporting: "Weygand has returned. . . Of course, the situation is critical, but we are still preparing a counter-attack. The British have already begun their attack, and the 5th Division is approaching Arras. . ." Tessat was preoccupied with his own thoughts. When the meeting was over, he led Reynaud aside.

"What do you think of a rapprochement with Moscow?"

"Well, you see, the situation has become so acute these days that I've been kept busy with military affairs, to the exclusion of everything else. Diplomacy I leave to Baudouin now. . . ."

Tessat took a sleeping-draught and slept till eight next morning. He was still breakfasting when it was announced that a lady was asking for him or private business. "Show her in here!" he shouted.

Absorbed as he was in the game he was playing, he so far forgot his parental feelings as to neglect to observe how Denise looked. It was as though he were receiving an ambassador.

"If this is a trap," Denise said coldly, "it will fall through. I have come here with the knowledge of the party."

He paid no need to the insult, but said, smiling:

"With the knowledge of the party, eh? Very good. You know, Denise, that the situation looks very threatening. We are on the eve of collapse. All questions of self-interest must be set aside. This is a question of saving France. And you cannot save a country without enthusiasm. I am the first to stretch out my hand to the Communists. We shall stop the reprisals. And they must stop their propaganda. You understand? Their duty as citizens is to exert pressure on Moscow. . . I think we shall send Cot there. I had intended to send Fouget, but he is old and a pedant into the bargain. Of course, I'm telling you this in confidence. . . You have to convey my offer to Thorez or Duclos or Cachin—your chiefs, in short. And I will meet them, if it should be thought necessary; I am prepared to go to any lengths. . ."

"I don't think for a moment that anybody will take your suggestion seriously. Thirty-four thousand Communists are in prison. Release the prisoners first of all. And then go. Hand over the power to the people."

"Power isn't a letter—to be handed over like that!" Tessat flared up, but took himself in hand at once. "We must obey the Constitution and we cannot go until Parliament refuses to place confidence in us. As regards the release of the arrested people, personally I have no objection to it. I am only afraid that it is not feasible: the Socialists will be against it. Serroll told me yesterday that he refused to place the Communists on the regime for political prisoners. And when I hinted that a national unity was necessary now, he replied: 'Let the Communists disarm first.' Now you see how very complicated it all is. And the Right

Wing people are only waiting for a chance to attack. . . If we release the Communists, the Government will fall at the first vote. . ."

Denise was worn out. The last few days she had been talking to the soldiers, listening to terrible stories of treachery and cowardice. The tide of human sorrow swept over Paris with the flood of refugees. And the police went on arresting Communists. Only yesterday cheerful, laughing Lucie had been arrested. Denise had worked at the plant with her formerly. Lucie had been arrested in the street. Her suckling child was left at home; she shouted at the police, demanding that they should go and bring her baby, but they said: "That's not our business." Michaud was in the North, with the army that was surrounded. His last letters had reached Denise in May, before the battles. And now her nerves gave way, and she broke down and wept.

Tessat was moved; he forgot Fouget and his own plans. He only saw Denise, his daughter, before him. How thin she had grown! Evidently she was having a hard time of it. Hiding every night, probably, expecting to be arrested. . .

"Poor little girl!" he said kindly. That brought her to herself. She looked at him in astonishment.

"You can never understand what makes me cry. It's terrible that you should be my father, that we both speak French, that we may both be killed by the same bomb! . . . You don't understand? It's intolerable to feel connected with you. . ."

"But I never cease to feel that you are my daughter. . ." He paced about the room; remembered that she had to be persuaded. "Denise, let's forget these party squabbles. You must help me. . . I want to save France, and so for the sake of France. . ."

"Hold your tongue! You always used to say: 'for your mother's sake.' And now it's France, France ..."

Remembering the refugees and the soldiers, she could not go on with what she was saying; her throat contracted with tears. Afraid that Tessat would see her weakness again, she ran out of the room.

"A saint!" Tessat thought with exasperation. "Lucien might be a scoundrel, but he was at least more human. While this girl neither lived herself nor wanted anyone else to live. Hysterical, that was all!"

He went to Baudouin to talk over Cot's mission. Baudouin gave evasive replies; turned the conversation on Italy—it was time, after all, for them to make some concessions, give up Djibouti, and perhaps a part of Tunis, use pressure on the British and make them cede something, too; Malta, for instance. Mussolini was ready to talk things over, but a suitable person—Laval or Breteuil—would have to be sent to Rome. . .

Tessat rang up Fouget:

"I'm afraid you didn't understand me properly. We can send either you or Cot on some vague errand such as compensation for the Galician industries. . . Or the purchase of timber. . . And you will be able to sound how things are going on. The effect abroad will be the same. . . And yet we assume no obligations. To the Right Wing we can say: 'We haven't even an ambassador in Moscow.' Breteuil cannot find fault with anything. Particularly since we're opening serious negotiations with Mussolini. The British have promised to release Italian vessels from control. This in itself is already a victory! Can you hear me?"

There was no reply: Fouget had flung down the telephone-receiver in fury.

The plan did not succeed. By way of consoling himself, Tessat went into the country. It was a lovely day. Lilac, jasmine, wistaria were in bloom. The air was perfume-laden. Tessat softened: spring in spite of everything.

On his way home he encountered some soldiers digging anti-tank ditches in the woods of Vincennes. He greeted them and said cheeringly:

"Ah, they'll never see Paris! Paris will defend itself like a lion!"

* * *

The guarding of all the munition works was entrusted to the Alsatian Weiss, a protégé of Grandel's. He began energetically, by requesting the Prefect to send detectives: attempts at sabotage were to be dealt with by plainclothes-men. These men, who knew nothing whatever about the processes of production, irritated the workers with their inept reprimands, threats and shouts.

Particularly challenging was the behaviour of the police at Méjeu's aircraft works. There they arrested a workwoman who, provoked beyond bearing, exclaimed: "Young men like you would do better to go and fight! . . The Germans are in Beauvais. Can't you see you're in the way here, hindering our work?. . ." The accusation brought against her was that she attempted to damage a machine.

It was a sultry day with a threat of thunder in the air. The white glare was blinding; everyone felt stifled. At the Méjeu plant there was great excitement: "The Germans are close to Paris! The soldiers say there are no airplanes. All the rich folks are clearing out. . . And who will be left to clear up?"

In the dinner-hour the workers gathered on the waste-ground behind the buildings. Chickweed flourished among the slag. The talk was all of Hitler, the detectives, the plainclothes-men, and the end that could not be far off now.

The soul of the secret communist organization was a young fitter, Claude. He had only been working there since January, but he had been one of themselves from the first.

He was not called up as he was suffering from an acute form of tuberculosis. The glitter of his eyes might have been taken for spiritual intensity—Claude was all on fire, but the loud uneven breathing betrayed his disease.

This was a dreamer who devoured books of a night: Tolstoy and Flaubert, Sholokhov and Malraux. Five years before he had been a frequent visitor at the House of Culture, where he had become acquainted with Lucien. Once they had got into conversation. Lucien had kept talking about the "eternal storm." Claude had replied rather shyly: "I have a great respect for you. You know everything. But that is not enough. . . A poet, in my opinion, ought to be honest. Don't you think so?"—"What a petty-bourgeois!" Lucien thought. . . Vaillant grew very fond of Claude; once he asked him: "You write verses, don't you? I feel certain that you do." Claude said nothing. It was true: he did write verses, but he was ashamed to own it: his verses turned out very queer; he could not understand himself why he wrote like that. He started out with a description of a strike, and then suddenly a sun-warmed fern in a damp wood, or the wind whistling in the rigging of a ship, would make its way into the verse. "Just trifling!" he told himself.

Two years before that he had tried to make his way to Spain; he had been arrested at the frontier and sent back to Paris. That was while he was working at the "Seine." "You are our best agitator here," Legré had told him. Yes, though he seemed so irresolute, was so infinitely modest, he could convince people. He never insisted upon anything, but gave the impression that he was asking his vis-à-vis what he should do. There was something childish, profoundly sincere, in his manner of speaking, his unexpected pauses, his painful search for words. And people believed him.

He was arrested soon after the outbreak of the war, and was kept in

prison for four months. Only after the medical examination was he released. He knew that he would have no chance of getting a job. But unexpectedly luck was on his side: they were taking on turners at the Méjeu works. After a glance at the papers of "Claude Duval" in the office, they signed him on; Duval was a common enough name. . . He collected a group of secret political workers very rapidly.

Today they crowded round to hear what Claude had to say.

"Reynaud is not better than Daladier," he began. "Fascists both of them! . . . And they'll betray us. . ."

He was seized with a fit of coughing.

"They write in the papers that they want to put up a defense, and that the soldiers shouldn't retreat any further," a worker remarked. "And I've seen them myself, digging trenches just outside Paris. . ."

"Well, if they do want to put up a defense, we'll work. . . work like the very devil. Isn't that right? It's all the same to Méjeu, of course, he and Reynaud will make their profits even under Hitler. But these airplanes mean something different to me. They can save a city from bombs. They can save France. . . I've been talking to the soldiers. They asked me: 'Where is our aviation?' The Germans shoot down the refugees, but we haven't got any fighter-planes. We ought to help the soldiers. But they must first send away the police-spies. We can't work with these scoundrels hanging about. That's so, isn't it?"

It was decided to send a delegation to say that the workers declared their readiness to raise the output, but insisted on the removal of the police from the workshops. Weiss glanced at Claude and smiled politely:

"Thank you. I am well aware of the patriotism of the Paris workers. Every extra airplane brings the hour of victory nearer. As for those you are pleased to call 'disguised police,' they have been sent to the workshops for the sole purpose of detecting the disguised Communists. I hope you have understood me?"

Weiss's blue eyes and Claude's clashed for an instant. Then Claude turned away.

After the delegates of the Méjeu works had gone, others came; all the big armament plants announced their readiness to increase the working-day, and demanded that an end should be put to the annoyance they had to stand from the police.

Weiss went to see Méjeu and warn him that a hundred and fourteen workers had been paid off. Méjeu gave the list a casual glance and remarked:

"Highly-skilled men. . . That, by the way, is not of importance now. Tell me, while we are on the subject, how do you intend to carry out the evacuation?"

"The workers will have to be dispensed with. The fewer they are the better, during the interregnum."

"Yes, of course. But I don't think I want you to evacuate the equipment. That's a lot of trouble and, when all's said and done, quite useless."

Weiss smiled.

"Well, it's very pleasant to see that you don't give way to panic, M. Méjeu. I am always meeting people now who have completely lost their heads. Don't worry, we won't touch the equipment."

Claude had been warned in time. The gates were closed, but his comrades helped him over the high fence. He heard the whistles blow but had time to run to the shanties where the rag-pickers lived. An old woman was sitting amid a heap of rags. "A parachutist!" she screamed when she saw him. "Hush!" Claude said softly, "I'm French, a worker." And she hid him. The thunderstorm had not broken out yet. He was almost suffocated among the rags and dust in

that tiny close room. He ought to warn his comrades, too. He glanced out. No one was in sight. . . . He made for "Papa Eugène's," the café where they all were in the habit of meeting.

There were two rooms in this café: the outer one had a zinc bar at which casual customers gathered, drank beer and talked to the owner, "Papa Eugène," a stout and genial fellow who sported a waistcoat, shirt-sleeves and a thick black moustache. He adored two people: his wife—a fat woman with a moustache, and Maurice Thorez. "In 1937," he would say with pride, "I went up to Maurice in the Velodrome after a meeting, and he shook hands with me." Papa Eugène knew that the Communists gathered in his back-room, so he allowed no one else in: "The billiard-table's engaged," he would say. Around this billiard-table the district representatives discussed party instructions, emphasizing points with the billiard cues.

When Claude went in this time, he found Jules from the Gnome works sitting there already. Others drifted in by-and-by. They were all talking of the arrests—seven hundred workers had been grabbed by the police.

Denise came in, and told them about the trial of four Communists.

"Sentenced to death for sabotage. The youngest is eighteen. . . Ferronez acted as attorney. I have just seen him. He says it was a clear case of a frame-up. The explosion was prearranged. Ferronez suspects Weiss."

"That's a dreadful fellow," said Claude. "When we went to talk to him, he looked at me—once. And guessed what I was. And I guessed what he was. . . To think of what is going on, Denise! Hitler's spies are at the head of affairs."

She wanted to cheer him up and support him; but she did not know how. She could only whisper:

"But the people. . ."

He did not understand what she wanted to say, but he did not ask her to explain.

Denise left him, then ran back to say:

"Claude, I've found you a room. Nobody will bother you there."

The stillness and the heat stole into the dim little café. Silence fell upon them all. They took the distant rumble of the anti-aircraft guns for thunder, and were relieved and glad. Then the sirens shrieked and moaned. No one moved; worn out, they sat still on the narrow American-leather covered couch and wondered what the end of it all would be. Could the Germans really be coming again?

Half-an-hour later, the downpour started; the swish of the rain was deafening. Claude went to the window to get a breath of air. It was as though the woods of Meudon and Saint-Cloud had come to Paris; brilliant once more was the foliage of the plane-trees; country smells were in the air. Denise came up to him.

"Claude, when will France. . ."

She could not finish. Eugène brought them beer.

"What does Michaud say in his letters?"

"I haven't had a letter for a long time. He's in the North. . ."

Eugène sighed. Then burst out indignantly:

"Hell! They're fighting and dying up there. And what's going on here! Good people are being arrested. . . And by whom?. . . By German spies! If Maurice was in his rightful place, the Germans would never see Paris! . . ."

Late that evening Weiss contrived to see Grandel and gave him an account of the events of the day.

"Everything ended satisfactorily, on the whole. I think we've pretty well purged the works of their most unruly elements. Of course, the sooner we start evacuation the better. It's a good thing—the trial passed

off smoothly. That'll act like a cold douche on them."

"If they don't manage to get the sentence commuted. . . Ferronez saw Lebrun today. Lebrun listened to what he had to say and shed tears, of course. As Breteuil says, this is the most tearful President the Third Republic has ever had. But on the whole he behaves quite decently."

"Meaning?"

"I mean that Lebrun does just what he ought to—that is to say absolutely nothing, unless you count his shedding tears as something."

They both laughed.

Left alone at last, Grandel undid his tie and stretched himself. He was tired. But things were going on well—couldn't be better. Could he ever have thought that such things awaited him? He had fallen in with Kielman quite by accident—as a result of gambling-losses and the thought of suicide. He had thought it all a mistake, his downfall, a stain on him. But it had turned out to be the beginning of his success. Of course, he had not hit on the right track all at once. He had had to go through a great deal, endure wrongs and humiliation. Tessat, that petty corrupt Tessat who took bribes, regarded him as a respectable woman regards a street-girl. No matter, he would be even with them yet! When the Germans eventually took Paris, Grandel would be on the very top. . . Everyone would begin to kow-tow to him then. The chief thing in this game was to feel which number would come out. He had staked on the right number. All that remained now was to stick it out the last quarter of an hour. Then power, honour and acknowledgement would fall to his lot. He would be able to look everyone in the face. Kielman? German marks? Nonsense! Intrinsic motives concerned no one. Objectively, he would be saving France, striving for a modification of the conditions to be imposed, rendering feasible the peaceable existence of millions. That was true patriotism! None of Ducamp's hysterics!. . .

He wanted to humiliate someone and show his superiority. He went into the bedroom. Mouche was lying in the big wide bed. The old sickness had undermined her. He thought wonderingly: "Could I ever have embraced this?" She looked half dead to him. The smell of the medicines nauseated him.

"Three years ago you betrayed me. I did not say anything at the time. Why should I? You might have thought I was jealous of you. But now we can speak frankly. I hope you have stopped thinking about lovers at last. It is time for you to be thinking of the good kind God in heaven. . . So you preferred a petty scoundrel to me? He was worse than his father, by the way. You must have been fascinated by his curls and his noble gestures, my lady. But your Romeo turned out a thief and a pimp. You all thought then that I was a failure, a doubtful character, a spy. You reckoned without your lord that time, princess! I am the only man who can save France. . ."

Mouche lay motionless as before; her head hung down off the pillow. Then he shouted:

"Why does the princess say nothing? Speak, trash! . . ."

He noticed bubbles forming on the bloodless lips, bubbles like those on the lips of newborn babies, and with a grimace of disgust he turned and went out.

* * *

The neighbours whispered in amazement, unable to understand how Agnès could take things so calmly. Some exclaimed admiringly: "What character she shows!" Others slandered her: "She didn't care for her husband at all!" She corrected the piles of school-exercise-books, drew leaves and stamens, kept the rooms

swept and dusted, knitted little panties for Dudu—all as though nothing had been altered in her life since the day they brought her the yellow official letter. She received six hundred francs—the price paid when the bread-earner of a family was killed. "Sign here," she was told. The pen did not squeak; and Agnès' eyes remained dry. Dudu asked where his father was. "He'll be coming back soon," she replied. In the morning she took Dudu to old Mélanie, who looked after him all day. The old woman would sob when she looked at the child. "What are you crying for?" he demanded. "I've got a toothache," she would say. Agnès never cried. Formerly none but Pierre had any conception of the strength of mind in this woman: "She would face bullets," he said. Sorrow and loneliness had altered even her looks: her kindly short-sighted eyes had grown hard; once she had walked with a stoop, now she held herself very erect. "She's blooming!" the gossips whispered. "You'll see—she'll find herself another husband yet."

Agnès did not weep at night either. She lay wide-awake, longing for sleep, striving to understand what had happened, but failing. For what had Pierre died? The thought gave her no peace. She recalled the rare but very hot arguments they had had. Pierre had been interested in politics, believed in revolution, felt the fall of every Spanish town as a personal grief. She had not agreed with him, but she knew that he was glowingly alive, and she envied him. When he left for Barcelona, she had been half-frantic with anxiety, waiting for a ring at the door, telling herself that he might be killed. . . And now he had parted from her without a word, without any hope; tramped away like a doomed man. "This isn't our war," he had said at the station. And he had met his death in a war that was not his. Of what had he been thinking in his last moments? Of Agnès, of Dudu? Or of that other war—the "real" war? Fruitless for Agnès to want to conciliate him, to understand him, to hear wherein lay the truth. She got up of a night, and going over to Dudu's bed, stood for a long time listening to his breathing. What if they were to kill Dudu? . . . He was all that was left to her of that life—that springtime. . .

But she was as brisk as ever when she came into the class-room in the morning; and no one guessed how her nights were filled.

This firmness of character was native to her; she had inherited it from generations inured to the heaviest toil, to the struggle for a bit of bread, to the loss of their nearest, people who resembled the houses of the Paris suburbs that had absorbed the smoke of the street battles. Her father had once told her that he had worked on odd jobs all through the war—patching trousers, making cigarette-lighters, mending window-frames in the peasants' houses, or helping to get in the hay. "And so I lived through it," he would say with a little chuckle. That was how Agnès lived these days.

Refugees appeared in the streets now. The sight of a car with a bullet-ridden bonnet and children peeping out of it made Agnès shudder. She was not thinking either of Pierre's end, or the fate that might overtake Dudu; but still she was upset and alarmed: this battered car was, as it were, a continuation of her nights.

Once more they pasted thin strips of paper all over the window-panes. Agnès made up a complicated design,—like the roses, stars and palms that hoar-frost paints on glass. "What is it?" Dudu asked. "Airplanes," she told him, and then corrected herself: "No, it's a garden." Some verses Pierre had written when he was very young came into her mind, he had once read them to her:

Before dying a man dreams of a tambour-frame
Embroidered by winter's frolics.

The days went by and brought more and more refugees—people from Lille, weavers from Valenciennes, miners from Laon, peasants from Picardie. The school where Agnès taught was placed at the disposal of the refugees. She threw herself into her new work heart and soul. Taking Dudu with her, she went to live in the school, looked after the sick, obtained food and medicine, cooked for them. She had a big family on her hands now. And she had to comfort them, too, listen to the long incoherent tales of their experiences. A woman from Fourmi, a workers' settlement, kept repeating: "It was at seven o'clock in the morning. . . And I knew they would fly there." She would not part with her child's serviette, soaked in dark blood. "He was just having his porridge," she kept saying. "The beasts!" A Belgian woman, the wife of a miner, told Agnès that she had lost her five-year-old girl on the way. An old man from Roubaix was searching for his daughter-in-law and grandchildren. "Why did you leave home?" Agnès asked them. Some said: "We were terrified: they flew so low. People right beside us were killed." Others said: "What else could we do? Live under the Boches' rule? No, we know what that's like, we were under them for four years last war. People in Paris don't know what they're like, but we do. They shot then the hostages in Roubaix. They brought the Tressiand family by us: 'Dig your own grave.' And killed them. Curse the brutes, they did not even spare the children!" Some confessed: "We saw that everyone was running away, so we went too." A factory-woman swore: "Berget came. We all knew he was a fascist. 'Clear out as quick as you can!' he shouted. 'Or they'll kill you!' But he himself stayed behind to meet the Germans. Traitors!"

The contingents of refugees were always changing; some were sent to the South; new lots arrived. Only old Ricquet hung on: he had fallen ill and barely reached Paris.

"My old woman died years ago," he told Agnès. "And my son's called up. I was living alone. The neighbours came and told me: 'The Boches are coming. We're clearing out.' I kept rabbits, very good rabbits. I had to leave them to the Boches. But the dog came along with me, a splendid dog—that beast of mine, 'Folette' I called her. I had had her for twelve years, I was used to her. Well, when we got to Compiègne, we were made to get out of the train. We started to tramp it, and the Boches were chucking bombs right down on us all the time. I know their little ways—I remember them in the last war. . . We all ran helter-skelter. . . Then I looked round for Folette and couldn't find her."

Agnès often saw the old man smack his lips and whistle for the dog, forgetting that he had lost Folette forever.

It was a beautiful summer day when the German bombers raided Paris. The sky was full of the drone of the engines. The glass rattled in the window-frames. Dudu started to shout: "Boom-boom!" Agnès was standing, peeling potatoes at the time; she put down the knife for a moment, then took it up again. The neighbours rushed in: "Two thousand people have been killed!" Terrified, she snatched up Dudu—he might easily be killed, too! Then suddenly felt ashamed: "Why should I be afraid now?"

She was going along the embankment that evening. Around the ruins of a big house there was a crowd, peering, cursing, joking. Someone said gloomily: "So that's that! German work. . ." Life seemed to have broken up into its component parts: stones, iron, disks. . . Agnès trod on a book, and looking down, saw a leather binding and someone's initials. . . On a

remaining wall hung a portrait of a woman in a bridal gown. . . Then suddenly Agnès caught sight of a child's bed with a net over it; it was hanging to the railing of the balcony. She turned and ran home, half-crazy. Yet on the terraces of the cafés beside the ruins there were people talking and laughing, and the hundreds of siphons looked as blue as the sky.

That night Agnès saw Pierre again in her dreams; she understood that he was not thinking of anything: he was in pain, cold and emptiness. She wanted to warm him and could not; so she tossed and muttered all night. The anti-aircraft guns boomed till daybreak. And Dudu lisped simple, childish words in his sleep.

* * *

Agnès had been trying to buy a newspaper all the morning. In some of the kiosks still open there were a few old weeklies; then these kiosks closed down. There would be no more newspapers, people said; but as the evening was coming on, Agnès heard the newsboy calling and snatched a paper from him. On the front page she saw a picture of the embankment and a woman bathing a dog in the river. It was called: "Paris remains Paris." The boy must have palmed off an old paper on her, she thought angrily. No, the date was June 10th. She ran to the school, there was a radio there. Prayers were being broadcast. Mr. Bullit, the American ambassador, was placing red roses at the feet of the statue of Joan of Arc; with a harsh Anglo-Saxon accent he exclaimed: "Save them, Joan!" After that a tango came over the air: "Ohé, ye little gallants, do you really want pine-apples?" and at last the announcer, mouthing every word precisely: "Our gallant Alpine riflemen are advancing eastward from Narvik."

"What are they saying?" old Ricquet asked in alarm.

"Nothing. They are probably waiting for reports. They'll tell us tomorrow."

But next morning the radio was silent. Despair came over Agnès. Her first thought was to escape. To make for Dax where her father lived. The Germans would never reach Dax.

She went through the empty classrooms; there were rags and old tins lying about everywhere. The refugees had been living here till yesterday. Now only old Ricquet was left. "I can't move from the spot," he groaned. He refrained from asking Agnès what she intended to do: he understood that she would go away. But he followed every movement closely, greedily; maybe she would not go? He dreaded most of all to be left alone.

"They've all gone away," he said. "What's going on in the town?"

"People are leaving."

After a moment's silence, Agnès added:

"I won't be leaving."

The old man tried to smile, but his face was distorted by a convulsive twitching. She clasped Dudu to her and wondered why she had decided to stay. Perhaps it was pity for Ricquet that prompted her? But she had Dudu to think of. . . She must save the child. On the other hand, it was easy to lose him on the way. That Belgian woman had lost her little girl. Then, again—they would be bombing Paris; two thousand people killed. . . That was still more terrifying. Why did she not go away then? It was all a flash of pride. An hour ago, when she had heard only a monotonous noise instead of words over the radio, she had lost her head. This general exodus from the city had seemed somehow shameful to her. She had acquired willpower, something resembling competency; she would stay alone in Paris when all had deserted it.

Mélanie came running in, persuading her to go away with her.

"The workers will take us with

them. They've got four lorries. After all, we'll be with our own folks. . ."

Agnès told her that she had decided to stay. Mélanie was really angry at this: so it was true, what they all said, that Agnès had no proper feeling at all, that it made no difference to her who had killed her husband. She was actually going to stay here with the Germans!

"Well, it's your own business," she said and went away.

Agnès gave Ricquet a meal and then went out. People were still trudging by. How she wanted to go away with the others! "I mustn't," she repeated. A little notice was pasted on the walls of the town-hall. It was headed: "République Française. Liberty, equality, fraternity." "Paris is declared an open city," Agnès read. It was signed by Governor-General Dentz. An old man in a straw hat was standing beside her.

"What does an 'open city' mean?" she asked him.

He shrugged his shoulders.

"I'm sure I don't know. Perhaps it means that it isn't a fortress. Or perhaps it's the request of the pope. It's nothing very cheering anyway, madame. . ."

A worker strolled up, read it and exclaimed:

"They've made a bargain of it, the bastards!" And tears rolled down from out of one eye, while the other which was porcelain stared at Agnès with cool indifference.

A stout heavily-moustached policeman told them:

"We've been left here to keep order. Paris has been declared an open city so that we won't be killed. They'll be signing a peace treaty soon."

The people were leaving Paris. Agnès watched them enviously: when you were tramping, you needn't think.

In the evening she tried to comfort old Ricquet.

"There's a notice up there saying that Paris has been declared an open city, so they won't shoot at us or drop bombs."

"I don't mind the bombs. They dropped bombs on us all the while we were on our way. What I'm afraid of, is that they'll come here."

Agnès turned away; for the first time in all those terrible days she wept: she understood that, like Ricquet, she was afraid of one thing only—that they would come! . . . Up to that moment she had remained a looker-on at events. "What difference does it make?" she had told herself. "They are people like ourselves, only dressed differently. . ." And now suddenly her heart contracted: would they actually come here? . . . "Germans in Paris! . . ." She said the words over and over to herself, and the tears flowed and flowed down her cheeks.

She ran out into the street: she could not bear to sit indoors any longer. Down the steep street came soldiers, dirty and tired. They looked up wearily at the boarded windows of the houses; they could hardly drag their legs after them, but they had to hurry out of the town. Agnès gave one of them some bread and chocolate. He looked at her and said softly:

"Thank you. Good-bye."

She could not forget his eyes afterwards. And why had he said good-bye, just then?

On her return home, she rushed to the radio. Reynaud's speech was being broadcast from Toulouse. He said that he had appealed to Roosevelt for the last time; his voice hardly reached the ears of the listener. Then a bishop exhorted the people to repent: "This is a judgment from heaven." A hollow rattle and crackling followed this. Then from somewhere, close at hand, it might have been in the next room, came the voice of the "National Awakening Radio-Centre": "Surrender! We have organized secret detachments. In Arles the 16th detachment has shot all Masons and

Marxists. In Grenoble, the 47th detachment. . . ."

"Turn it off," old Ricquet begged. "I can't listen to them!"

Agnès did not go to bed, but sat the whole night long by the black window, listening to the drone of the planes, the booming of the guns; she hung yearning over Paris as over her dead. When morning came, she went out with Dudu to see if she could get some milk for the child and for old Ricquet. But all the shops were closed. And there were no people about. Only one woman pushing a perambulator with children in it. So people were still going away. . .

A soldier came running round the corner; something about him reminded her of Pierre: he had the same dark face and big whites of the eyes.

"Which is the way to the Porte d'Orleans? Quick!"

She pointed it out to him, and then asked:

"Where are they?"

The soldier only made a gesture of despair and was off. Agnès walked along the street. The shutters of the shops were all closed. There was not a soul to be seen. The hands of the clock in the square pointed to three—it had stopped. And all was still—deadly still.

Then the air was filled with the roar of the aircraft. They were flying very low; you could see the black cross on their wings. They'll drop bombs just now, this very minute, Agnès thought. Her own calm astonished her: they might kill Dudu, and the thought failed to rouse her. So she must have gone crazy, she couldn't grasp anything any more.

They were going along the boulevard when Agnès suddenly came to a standstill: Germans were coming towards them. Here was an open car full of soldiers armed with rifles. Agnès, without thinking, covered Dudu's eyes with her hand—that he should not see this thing! She could not collect herself: she did not want to look, yet she found herself staring eagerly into the strange faces. And one thought: "They've come! They've come!" kept going round and round in her head all the time.

The cavalry came by. The horses drew up, and the pavement glistened where they staled. Agnès made out the word "Lille" on a sack of flour. An officer rode past; he had a scar on his cheek, and his face wore a scornful smile. A monocle glittered in his eye. Another officer had a camera and was taking photographs. He took hers, she fancied. . . She ought to get away from here, but she could not move. . . Then more soldiers appeared. They were eating something. . . Young people. And why did so many of them wear glasses? They were shortsighted like she was. . . No, these were strangers. . . Ah, but it was terrible! They had come! They had come!

Agnès was standing in a gateway. An old woman in a black cap glanced out. Seeing the Germans, she burst into tears and darted back indoors again. Two prostitutes, highly rouged, passed by; they laughed and waved their handkerchiefs to the officer.

And all of a sudden Dudu cried out cheerfully:

"What a lot of soldiers, Mamma! Will papa be coming, too?"

"Hold your tongue! Those are Germans!" she shouted at him.

The sound of her own voice startled her. And Dudu began to cry. Gripping him tightly by the hand, she darted down a narrow street; she wanted to get home as soon as she could.

The noonday sun was intolerable. Rubbish was rotting in the sun. In front of each house stood a rubbish bin, brought out three days before, when people were still living in the town. At the gate of the school lay the carcass of an ox, and the sweetish odour of rotten meat enveloped the whole street. Stray dogs, with their tails between their legs, hovered about it. They sniffed the pavement mourn-

fully, then raised their muzzles to the sky and howled.

When Agnès reached the corridor, the first thing she saw was old Ricquet lying on the floor, his hands gripping the jamb of the half-open door; his mouth had fallen open and his tongue hung out.

"What's the matter with him?" Dudu wanted to know.

Agnès made no reply. And from the street came the strains of a lively march.

* * *

Parisians stayed at home those days: they could not get used to the sight of German soldiers in the streets. In the morning Agnès went out to the shops. The long line of waiting people was silent; everyone strove not to think of anything. The hunt for a few potatoes or a bottle of milk absorbed them. If they spoke at all, it was of those who were reported missing; one woman's husband had disappeared, another had lost her son.

Once an old man in the queue sighed:

"And what of France?"

No one answered, but the same thought was in the minds of all: France has gone, too. . .

Like the personal things that belonged to the dead and lie on his table after he is gone, the monuments of Paris moved one to tears. Poets clasping lyres that were dumb, marshals riding dead chargers, bronze orators addressing pigeons. Memories came back to them: "I used to wait for Madeleine there by the statue of Danton. . ."

They did not want to go on with that illusory life; and yet they went on living, waited in queues, cooked beans, wrote letters, addressing them to places that no longer existed. But there was no postal service. The solitary city heard only the incomprehensible songs of German soldiers, and the twittering of the birds in the shady squares.

There was a square with a garden and a few plane-trees not far from the school where Agnès lived. Under the spreading branches Dudu played, scooping up the warm golden sand with greedy little hands. Herein lay Agnès' salvation—in the olive-skinned child, impulsive and impatient like Pierre.

In the beginning, Agnès had wanted to escape from Paris; she had felt drawn to Dax, where her father lived. When she heard that it was occupied by the Germans, she became very downcast. Something quivered within her, the last loophole was closed: "So I shall have to live here and put up with them," she told herself.

She sold her clothes, books and trinkets to the old clothes' shops and lived on what she got for them. Her existence now—sleepy and stupefied as she was—resembled the hibernation-period of an animal. Not only Agnès lived like that. All Paris lived in the same way: Paris that was talked of everywhere those days, mocked at or pitied as the case might be. But of all this Paris felt nothing, like a patient who, lying on the operating-table, is incapable of throwing off his chloroform mask.

One close, still evening Agnès sat down by the window after putting Dudu to bed. Time drifted by. She was roused from her torpor by a tap at the door. Who could it be at this hour? Only they. . . She never thought of the Germans otherwise than "they." Why had they come? And then the thought, quite clear: "If it should be death, I am not prepared for it."

When she opened the door, she saw three young men—mere boys—on the threshold:

"They're after us. . ."

She led them into an empty, untidy room. The eldest explained:

"I'm a soldier—an artilleryman. And these are my brother and his comrade. . . We're from Beauvais. . . It was quiet enough coming here,

only we were stopped just near the subway. We ran for our lives. Now we've knocked and rung at several doors, but nobody opened them; I suppose everybody's gone away."

There came a persistent knocking at the door. Agnès turned this way and that, wondering what she should do with them? Suddenly she remembered the boxes in the lumber-room. Pushing the boys in there, she piled the rags left by the refugees over them. Then, for some reason or other, she took the sleeping child in her arms and ran to the door.

Two Germans and a Frenchman entered.

"Who lives here?"

"I and my little son. He's four."

"And no one else?"

"No. You can look. . ."

The Frenchman went into the first room, glanced into the big cupboard against the wall, and picked up a book lying on the table. Then one of the Germans said politely:

"Excuse us, madame. It's a mistake."

When they had gone, Agnès quietened Dudu, who, roused from his sleep, was troublesome, and put him to bed again. Then she went into the lumber-room. The youngest—he was called Jacques—was the first to creep out.

"I was terrified I might sneeze," he said, laughing. "The dust in there!"

"I must get you something to eat," Agnès said.

Fortunately there was some soup left, a little bread and lettuce.

"We haven't had anything to eat since yesterday evening," the soldier admitted.

"Now you can have a good sleep."

"Oh no, we'll wait an hour or so, till they settle down, and then we must be off. . . If we could only get to Chartres! . . . A man we know there will give us a lift. . ."

"But where will you go from Chartres? They're everywhere. . ."

The three exchanged glances, asking each other, it seemed, whether it was necessary to give a reply. Then the soldier said:

"It's not a thing that should be talked of. But you are a Frenchwoman, and you will understand. We're heading for London, to join our general. . . and fight."

"Fight?" she repeated naively. "But the peace has been signed. . ."

At that Jacques cried out indignantly:

"Signed by whom? By traitors!"

"Sh-sh!" the soldier warned. Turning to Agnès, he explained: "The war isn't over yet. I was at Dunkirk. . . My brother and Jacques haven't been called up yet. But now all honest men must fight. . . What have they done with France! In Beauvais. . . But no, I don't want to talk about it. . . No, the war is not over yet. General de Gaulle"—he uttered the name solemnly, tenderly—"is appealing to us all. We listened to the radio. . . From Chartres we have to make our way to Brittany. And from there it'll be easy—the fishermen will take us. The main thing is to get clear of Paris. . . I have an ordinary jacket and a mackintosh. . . but you see. . ."

He was wearing khaki army trousers.

"I'll try and find you some others," Agnès said, bustling about. Among the rubbish left by the refugees she found some trousers. The soldier measured them against himself; everybody laughed: they were much too short, but they would do.

Suddenly Agnès said:

"My husband was killed at the front. I don't believe in all this. . . Why victory?" (She fancied for a moment that she was arguing with Pierre, and she spoke passionately.) "The important thing is: what is in the soul? And people are thinking about frontiers and maps. . ."

"It is the soul that we are thinking about!" cried Jacques (and again the

soldier warned: "Sh-sh!"). "Yes, the soul! Is France something that can be drawn on a map? She is here. . . If France is no more, then I cannot live. . . And I'm eighteen, I want to live, I want very much to live. . . We shall die, you say? But someone will survive. You have a son. . . That is France. . . Isn't it so?"

She shook her head; words had no power to convince her. But when she said good-bye to the three boys, she kissed each one of them, and tears stood in her eyes.

Then she sat down by Dudu's bedside and wept, and wept. This fit of weeping lasted several minutes, but it seemed to her that ages passed. Suddenly she gave a startled cry and rushed to the window: two shots rang out close by, right under the window. . . Dudu woke up again and began to cry. The door was flung open, and German soldiers burst into the room.

Agnès recognized the French policeman who had come the first time.

"This is the woman!" he shouted.

A German officer said something, and two soldiers seized her.

"Why did you let them give you the slip?" the officer demanded of the Frenchman. Dudu cried. Agnès was dragged away to a waiting car. They twisted her arms and pinioned them; she felt neither fear nor pain. "What will become of Dudu?" flashed through her mind once. . . and she gave a faint scream.

"This is not a lover's embrace," the German said.

It was a particularly dark night. Agnès fancied she was in a wood and took the houses for trees. Then she was led down a long corridor that stank of leather, cabbage and urine. At last they pushed her into an empty room. "This isn't a prison," Agnès thought. "But what had been here before?" There were inkstains on the floor. Perhaps it had been a school? She saw Pierre's dark face again. He was bending over her shoulder, looking at the school-exercise-book and kissing and kissing her. . . What a bright light this was, the lamp was right up close to the ceiling! She sat down on the floor by the wall. Then she remembered: "Dudu's all by himself." Despair, silent and dense like a swoon, came down over her. Suddenly she started: she was reading some words scratched on the wall with a nail or a pin: "Good-bye, mother! Good-bye, France! Robert." Why did she want to write: "Good-bye, Dudu!" Why did she imagine it would be a relief to her? But she had no nail to scratch it with. She looked down at her own nails, they were too short; she burst into tears. Then she thought: "They said someone had given them the slip. So the boys must have got away. They would join their general. . . Jacques was very sweet. . ." That they had escaped was the most important of all events in her life just now.

She was led out for interrogation. The German officer sent away the interpreter: he spoke French quite well enough himself.

"I spent two years in Grenoble," he told Agnès for no apparent reason. "It's a beautiful town." He was very gracious and tried to comfort her by saying: "Your little boy is being taken care of." Then, persuasively: "Tell me who those people were, and we'll let you go." Her silence irritated him at last.

"I have no time to waste, madame. You refuse to speak? So you must be a British spy."

She nodded.

"Yes," she said, and her eyes grew soft and tender, as they used to be in Belleville, under the attic window, in the old days when Pierre stormed and grew confused. "Yes, I'm a spy," she went on quietly. "Why did you come here? Everybody is against you now. Even the children. I will not tell you who those men were. Thank God, you did not catch them. That's the chief thing. As for me,

you can kill me. I am of no use, I cannot even shoot. . ."

She felt prepared for death now. And the feeling uplifted and cheered her. Only a little while ago she had been arguing with the three young men. Now she wanted to repeat their words over and over again for this neat pink-faced officer to hear. What a parting in his hair! . . .

He shoved the inkstand away in irritation.

"Enough of this posing! You're not here to make declarations but to give evidence. Kindly answer my question. Do you know these people?"

"Yes."

"Who are they?"

"Frenchmen."

The officer lost all control of himself. Usually well-bred and restrained, with manners that only a year ago had charmed the ladies of Swinemünde, he darted over to Agnès and struck her full across the face. She made no sound; only put up her hand mechanically to her mouth and was vaguely surprised to see blood on it. . . She was beyond the ordinary reactions now. She felt no pain, no indignation at the behaviour of this smart and perfumed officer. It was as though they had made her drunk. It was self-abnegation, exaltation: "I love," she repeated to herself, "I love Dudu, and Pierre, and my father, and Jacques, and Robert, and those who, weary and unhappy, descended the steep street on the last day of Paris. One had said: 'Good-bye.' No, it isn't good-bye, my dear! . . . We are all together now. . . And Pierre too. . . And Paris. . ."

She was sitting on the bench in the corridor, telling herself all this. Then they took her to the colonel. He had a scar across his cheek, and his fish-eyes were fixed and staring. He invited her to sit down, and then he began:

"I want to save you. Tell me, who were those people? Aren't you even sorry for your little son? I am speaking to you as a father, I have two daughters. . ."

Agnès looked at him in amazement: he had aroused her, dragged her back out of that other world. In a muffled voice, as though still talking to herself, she replied:

"Sorry for my son? . . . No. . . I've come to understand everything today. If one dies, he is saving someone else, he is certain to be saving someone else. The people. . . My people. . ."—She recollected suddenly that she was being questioned. She stood up, straightened her usually stooped shoulders, and spoke in a voice not her own: "You are a father, you say? It's not true. Do you know what you are? A Boche! A Boche!"

The colonel called the sentry:

"Take her away."

To her he said:

"It's the end for you, madame."

And looking somewhere past him, she replied:

"But not for France. And this is not the end. . . There is no end."

A. POLIAKOV

FROM URALS TO STARAYA RUSSA

(The Story of Five KV)

1. The Kirovites

So vast are the precincts of our giant Kirov plant that, as the old saying in our legend goes, "no human eye could comprise them in a single glance, nor could the swiftest steed gallop round them in a single day." Black and white clouds of smoke sway over scores of funnels. The plant goes on working both day and night. It is never weary, it knows no off-days, no holidays. It does not merely work, it fights as our whole country does.

The Kirov plant, evacuated from Leningrad, has now developed its activities deep in the rear of our country. Several thousands of workers were brought there in airplanes. The Kirovites have come to the Urals to make tanks for our Red Army—powerful, armour-clad moving strongholds.

When the Kirovites came, everyone in the Urals spoke about them: "The Kirovites are here!"

The front must get as many tanks as it is in need of,—such was the slogan of the country plunged in fighting. The people of Leningrad and those of the Urals rallied under this slogan, and this was the starting point of a warm proletarian collaboration.

Orders from the Kirovites fly to every corner of the Urals. The Magnitogorsk plant has brought all its mighty forces to bear on the task. With greater energy than ever and with greater speed all our works and plants have now started melting pig-iron, moulding steel, forging armour plates.

"The Germans boasted the world over that they had destroyed our plant," says the director, Hero of Socialist Labour, Salzman. "Now they have experienced what an imposing thing the production of the 'destroyed' plant is."

The director smiles and lovingly pats the armour of a newly turned out vehicle. He is of short stature and wears a khaki shirt and trousers tucked into his high boots. His chest is adorned with decorations, he is the proud possessor of the Golden Star, and, but for the missing tab in his collar, he could be taken for a military man, a real general. He is the leader of a veritable army of workers, engineers and technicians. At his headquarters here, just like a strategist at the front, he plots and maps out plans of operations which later at

the plant are called the production process. Thus this general in the realm of industry leads his troops into action and is victorious.

And a new tank is at last born. Its nurse—the most powerful crane in the plant—lifts up the new-born babe and holds it for some time in the air, while the girl-whitewashers give it a coating of snow-white paint. Now the plant's youngest child is ready to come forth into the world. Tank experts ride on it to the tank-drome, and there they run the car at top speeds, make it spin around on one place like a whirligig, overcome obstacles and go down steep slopes. Its cannons and machine-guns are tested at the firing ground.

An old-timer of the Putilov plant[1], Alexei Semyonovich Volkov, works as chief manager of the delivery shop. He is a middle-sized, spare man with an oblong besmutted face and restless, clear grey eyes.

Eleven years running A. Volkov has been rearing Soviet tanks. He was the first to assemble and turn out the powerful Soviet tank KV—Klim Voroshilov.

Who does not remember this armoured stronghold, this flag officer of our tank troops? On photos and pictures you can always see it rushing along with its fluttering red banner—a symbol of victory on the battle-fields.

In the winter of 1939, the Kirov KV tanks set out to beat the White Finns. A. Volkov and his brigade left for the front, too. The workers of the brigade worked on the very line of fire like true fighting men. The mechanicians-drivers Ignatiev, Kovsh and Liashko led the tanks into action during attacks. The motorist Istratov and Volkov himself repaired the machines on the spot.

This team, these five chums who were at the Finnish front, continue working together in Volkov's shop: Ignatiev and Istratov as foremen, Liashko and Kovsh are brigadiers. They have all been awarded orders of the Soviet Union. Istratov has been awarded three times.

With great care and true workers' scrupulousness—as Volkov himself puts it—the people here carry on their work. All of them know that a poorly filed machine part may bring to naught the exertions of thousands of workers producing a tank. The machine may collapse in the midst of a battle-field, disrupt the whole operation and cause disaster among the men.

The Kirovites, who worked in Leningrad under fire, know well what the demand of the front for tanks means. It is a demand for victory. In the autumn that same Volkov and his chums of old standing who had taken part in the battles in Finland organized a repair-brigade, and every day they quitted the plant and went to the foremost front-lines round Leningrad to repair the disabled tanks.

In the grinding shop I noticed a little red flag fixed above one of the machine-tools, with the words "For Stakhanovite work" on it.

A round-faced curly-headed girl in a red kerchief was standing at the grinding machine.

"It's a great day for me today,"—Anya Martianova was eager to share her joy. "I had a letter from my husband yesterday. Hadn't heard from him for three months." Her husband is at the front, an artillery-man.

"Your work, I suppose, is getting on all the better for it, isn't it?"

"You bet it is," answers Anya merrily. "He needn't think he is the only one to fight. He boasts that they got the Guardsmen's banner. By the end of the month, we here at the shop also expect to get the Red Banner, we are guardsmen too!"

[1] Before the Revolution this plant bore the name of its owner Putilov.

All the workers are doing their best to raise the Red Banner over their shop. They work with might and main, both day and night, often several shifts running. They feel themselves to be fighters at the front, much the same as those who have to storm an important height on the battle-field and set up the Red Banner there.

Vera Kurdiuk is the girl who works at Anya's lathe in the other shift. She recently received information that her husband, a lieutenant, was killed. She is experiencing a great sorrow—her beloved, her dearest is no more. Yet she keeps on being valiant and plucky. Her work is none the worse for it. She is as good a Stakhanovite as ever. And her excellent work is in reality the most merciless vengeance on the Hitlerites for having killed her husband.

2. The Tank Instruction Centre

Five heavy KV tanks are going to the tankdrome. It is a bright and frosty morning. The glittering snow makes the drivers' eyes smart. The 45° frost scalds their skin. But the tankmen are not daunted by the Ural frosts.

The tank column is led by lieutenant Astakhov, a 23-year-old commander with a determined oval-shaped face and laughing blue eyes.

He has already been in action in the patriotic war, was wounded and now is again ready to go to the front with his men. His crew consisting of combine-drivers, tractorists and

A shock brigade of the N. plant assembling a tank

chauffeurs is trained at the tank-centre close by the plant.

The plant creates and turns out tanks, while the training centre instructs and turns out tankmen.

Ten days before the training of the crew is finished and they are sent to the front, the plant assigns to each of them a so-called box, the armoured frame of a future tank. From that moment on, the life of every tankman passes in this box. Together with the workers of the plant they take part in the assembling and mounting of their respective tanks, from the box to the last screw.

The great steel "mammoths" lumber along the main street of the plant, making all the buildings around shake and pressing down the snow.

"There go our beauties,"—and military engineer of the 2nd rank Novotortsev looks lovingly at the tanks from the window of the dining-hall. "Today we go shares, don't we, Fyodor Petrovich?" he asks his friend, major Shevasudsky.

Novotortsev is the driving instructor at the tank-centre. His friend Shevasudsky is the artillery instructor. "To go shares" in the language of the instructors and tankmen means joint training in driving and shooting.

Meanwhile the steel-clad strongholds KV, having passed all the plant's buildings without even grazing a single curb stone or house corner, have safely arrived at the tankdrome.

The tankdrome, a stretch of ground crossed by several gullies, a small river and some oakwood groves, lay deep under snow which made the row of concrete anti-tank obstacles seem like nothing but a thin dotted line. In the presence of the instructors the commander of the drill-battalion captain Glushkov set a problem in strategy before Astakhov, to make a frontal attack on the well-fortified defense line of the enemy.

The tanks, having come out at the starting point for attack, darted forward. The massive anti-tank obstacles were crunched under like bits of sugar bitten by strong teeth, nor did the tanks stop before the anti-tank trenches. But now they had to climb the snowcovered steep bank of the gully. Having passed the fairway of the gully, all the five tanks rushed to the opposite bank. . . but suddenly one after the other they began to slide backwards on the steep ice-covered slope. One, two more attempts, but no result. The tanks were helplessly skidding about on one and the same spot. The attack had not succeeded.

"Can you be called tankmen? And drivers of the powerful KV tanks too!" Novotortsev had lined up all of his men and was giving them a dressing down: "For shame!"

The drivers stood gloomy and silent, now and then looking askance at the cursed bank of the gully. They had disgraced themselves, they had thought the bank was just what it had been in summer, friable, accessible, but there!—it was as hard as granite.

"Now I'm going to drive the machine myself," declared Novotortsev and climbed into the trap-door of the nearest tank.

The motor started droning. Everybody was standing around, looking on. Once or twice the engineer drove the tank along the edge of the gully, then made a decided rush across it. On the opposite bank the tank at first looked like skidding, and, as if dismayed by the steepness of the ascent, it was already on the point of sliding backwards. But then of a sudden there was a sharp turn to the right, then to the left, and boldly the tank started clambering up in zigzags. There it was already at the top of the bank, and the engineer appeared at the trap-door. He was shouting something and excitedly

pointing at the way he had passed. He then returned to the vehicle and said that he would show another way of overcoming a steep ascent at a run.

"Do you see, you have obstacles there—those bushes and further up the bank there are trees. Well, you were afraid of running into them. You seem to have no notion what powerful machines your are."

Novotortsev drove his car up the opposite ascent which was all covered with brushwood and trees, right up the steep slope at the top of which there stood a tall tree. Then a rush so straight and so sudden that I scarcely had time to notice how the tank struck against the roots of the tree which came down with a crash right on top of the machine, tearing out a huge clod of earth. The excavation formed a kind of step for the tank, and over it Novotortsev rushed on to the very top of the slope.

"Eh, but that's great," said the tankmen.

An hour passed, and the tanks, one after another, all repeated the experiment made by Novotortsev.

Not far from us stood a round-faced girl in military uniform. She was enraptured by each successful manoeuvre of the tanks. It was Tatyana Frunze—the daughter of the famous Red Army leader. She works in the laboratory of the plant, and they are great friends, she and the tankmen. She always rejoices at their achievements. Her face, the expression of her eyes, the severe trim figure—all remind one of her father. The tankmen threw friendly glances at Tanya, and they all seemed very proud that she was witness of their ability and skill.

. . . Late at night the tankmen came back home to their battalion. The cook Kovtun was quite weary waiting for them with his hot dinner. The battalion commissar, senior political instructor Lukash, a tall man with a clever face and bushy eyebrows, came out to meet us. We went into the Lenin room. They had a board there all plastered up with newspaper clippings.

"We are trying to make everyone of our men like these here," he said pointing to one of the newspaper paragraphs. "All these are fellows from our battalion," the commissar stated with a pleased and happy smile.

3. At the Front

The KV tanks were inconspicuously creeping up to a little village half buried under snow, close by the front-line,—this was the assembling point before launching an attack.

Together with the KV a score of lighter tanks spun up and briskly slipped into the free spaces between the village huts and the hoar-covered willow-trees. One had to hurry up with the camouflaging of the cars—the coming dawn might bring with it the enemy's aircraft.

Lieutenant Astakhov was standing on the outskirts of the village.

"These aren't tanks, they're regular elevators, that's what they are. It's a pretty business—this trying to find a place for such huge things," he grumbled between orders to the tankmen.

On the slope down to the river, not far from the village, Astakhov noticed a ramshackle old bath-house. This was a very convenient spot for the military defense of the village. Pointing at the bath-house, he ordered lieutenant Chilikin:

"Settling beside it is, of course, out of question, as it has probably been checked from above. Get right into it with your tank."

In the day time, the entire neighbourhood was "combed" by the ene-

my's scouting-planes. In ones and twos they passed several times over our village. They, evidently, did not smell a rat. There was nothing obviously but the most ordinary houses with curls of white smoke above their roofs.

Two of our KV tanks which had taken up their position at the end of the village, were also puffing smoke just as the neighbour huts. They were covered with pieces of white tarpaulin resembling roofs, with the chimneys of the heating stoves sticking up through at the top.

And all around the new "huts," as well as all over the village, one could see snow-covered trees and even outhouses "erected" out of all kinds of wooden lumber.

The bath-house near the river was standing as it had stood before, it only seemed to have bulged out slightly. The tank had pulled down one of its walls, moving straight in, nose foremost, and a facing of logs had been made all round it.

On the following day, the battalion was visited by several lorryfuls of tankmen from a neighbouring unit, which had been in action from the beginning of the war. The guests were heartily welcomed and invited to the largest hut in the place, to make everybody's acquaintance.

To begin with, we found out that we had quite a lot of mutual friends at the Kirov plant. Why, major Segeda's tanks had had the same birthplace as lieutenant Astakhov's five KV's.

Major Segeda—the oldest among the guests—is commander of the tank battalion. He is a bright, talkative fellow, with a merry Ukrainian face and roguish eyes. His description of a most unusual tank attack was both vivid and picturesque.

"It was a rough brawl," Segeda told us. "The mechanician-driver was wounded in the arm, and I was obliged to take his place myself. Our ninth attack was in full swing when suddenly I hear the gun-commander's voice saying: 'Comrade Major, our shells are done.'—'Go at them with the machine-guns!'—'Comrade Major, we're out of cartridges.'—'Worse luck, damn it! . . . All right, you just observe as best you can from above, we'll crush them.' Again I stepped on the gas, and we leapt onto the breastwork of the largest trench.

'There's a Fritz with his grenades!' commander Kononov's voice sounds in my receivers.

I looked ahead. Popping out of the trench, the German was already swinging his bunch of grenades at us. I gave a stop and somewhat vacantly pressed on the signal. 'Toot-toot!' it boomed in the frosty air, and the terror-stricken German dived back into the trench.

At the moment when he reappeared I was quite at a loss, but all of a sudden bang went my cannon and a column of fire hit the fascist slap in his ugly mug. He fell on the edge of the trench, yelling at the top of his voice and poking his burnt map into the snow.

It so happened that the gun-commander decided to supplement my toot with a simple signal-rocket. He sighted the gun at the German, opened the lock and shot from the rocket holder straight through the bore of the gun. Some straight shooting, that! You see what things may happen when fighting—a signal toot and a rocket. Who could have thought it?!

The scared to death nazis remaining in the trench kept on shrieking by inertia:

'Russ, kaput!'

'Don't you yell kaput when it's we who toot!' shouted my gun-commander.

And following up words with deeds, I gave the Germans a good ironing with my caterpillars."

Only for the last few weeks major Segeda's unit has destroyed, chiefly by means of the KV tanks, 93 Ger-

man cannons, 50 machine-gun firing positions, 10 mine-throwers, 5 tanks, 20 strongholds; he has crushed under his trends and destroyed by fire two regiments of German infantry.

We listened to the major's tales and could see how deeply they impressed the tanksmen and what great fighting ardour they excited in them.

"Well, now for some practice," Segeda announced. He wanted to show the tankmen who had just arrived at the front several ways of exploiting their vehicles under local conditions. The mechanicians-drivers of Segeda's unit made the round of all the vehicles to have a talk with their fellow-drivers, and so did the radio-operators and artillerymen respectively.

In the battalion work went on like a house afire. The tankmen from the front helped setting up the heating apparatus in the tanks, they started the machines and drove them, they showed the best methods of doing prompt repair work, of feeding in the fuel under the enemy's fire and of rooming an infantry descent in a tank.

The men and commanders were delighted with these instructions.

There was one more interesting and very useful lesson at which the latest German instruction concerning methods of dealing with our tanks were read out. It had been obtained from one of the officers of an anti-tank battery.

"Fighting against Russian heavy tanks"—such was its heading. Its first item read as follows:

"The fact that our foe uses powerful tanks which cannot be destroyed by the German tanks compels us to seek a way out of this difficulty."

And so the Germans are seeking a way out. They have lost confidence in one of their most important land weapons—tanks.

"The German tanks,"—so runs the instruction,—"which under normal conditions are designed to destroy the enemy's tanks in offensive warfare, in the present war are unable with their former equipment to fulfil this; consequently the destroying of superheavy tanks is assigned to the infantry shock detachments."

Are these then Hitler's unconquerable panzer armies?

The methods of action of "the infantry shock detachments" created in the German army were, of course, of great interest to us, and we did our best to memorize them in order to be perfectly prepared to deal with them.

"Well, I believe the shock detachments will get a real good shock when they'll bump against our armour. We'll just see which is stronger," said mechanician-driver Dormidontov merrily.

4. The Ice March

From the South alone five rivers carry their waters into the Lake Ilmen. The mouths of these rivers—75 meters to half-a-kilometer wide—absorb scores of rivulets, affluents, tributaries.

The lake and the mouths of the rivers flowing into it are the best kind of natural protection that troops on the defensive could have. Since autumn this excellent boundary line of defense was in the hands of the Germans. Profiting by it, they could continue blockading Leningrad. During the winter months the nazis had time to erect here quite a number of artificial fortifications—strongholds, trenches, wire entanglements; they set up mine-fields and disposed their mine-throwing and artillery batteries. Hundreds of kilometers to the South of the lake the whole locality was turned by the Germans into a strong defense zone.

During the last twenty-four hours the tankmen-skiers, led by their commander, major Maximov, carried out a large scale reconnoitering march. For

ty kilometers had been covered by them. The scouters in their white camouflage overalls had penetrated not only into the hoar-covered forests around the lake, but into the lake itself. Noiselessly, so as not to attract the enemies' attention, they had bored into the ice to measure its thickness and fathom the depth of the lake.

Now they were having a day's rest. Other lighter tanks had taken up their quarters in the same wood that served as shelter to the KV tanks.

Enjoying his hours of leisure, a young tankman in a smart fur overall outfit was dipping a white splinter of wood into a preserve can with paint and painstakingly daubing some red letters on the turret of his tank. As a result of his endeavours there appeared the words: "Our Soviet girls will be avenged." Now and again the tankman stepped aside, scrutinized his slogan attentively, screwed up his eyes and briskly returned to his turret to repaint some letter which did not look as nice as the others.

Of a sudden the tankman grew pensive—something seemed to be missing. Then, walking up to the turret with a determined air, he gave his splinter a dip and at a stroke inserted one more word: "beloved." So now his war cry ran: "Our beloved Soviet girls will be avenged." The tankman smiled with satisfaction.

Just then the commander of the tank, junior lieutenant Daev came up to him. He read the slogan and remarked ironically:

"Doesn't look nice—quite a towerful of words. You might as well write your love declaration all over the thing!"

The Red Army man stood silent for a moment, then replied with ardour:

"I find it quite right, comrade commander. I thought of Zlochev. . ."

At the word Zlochev, the junior lieutenant's face changed startlingly and became gloomy and stern. Daev turned abruptly and walked away without another word.

Only later we learned that Daev's beloved, his girl-friend had remained in Zlochev. He himself told me:

"If I hadn't been wounded, I'd have taken her away from there. She even came to see me at the hospital and brought me some flowers. . . But then, you see, I myself was removed from the place so suddenly. . ."

"All the same, we'll find out where our girls are, and we'll save them from the Germans, we will avenge them to the full. The same thing has happened to all the four of us," uttered the young man, author of the slogan on the turret.

And now the marching orders so impatiently awaited by the tankmen had at last come.

The following task was set: at night the whole tank battalion was to advance in a rush over the Lake Ilmen and its affluent rivers, penetrate 30—40 kilometers deep into the defense zone of the enemy and take in the flank his basic forces in the district of Staraya Russa. We were to surround the 290th Rifle Division and the SS Deaths-Head Division which both belong to the 16th German Army.

With oncoming twilight our motors started roaring. Our battalion was leaving its temporary camp.

When the five KV's began to move, they seemed to make the very ground drone under them. One could hear the rattling of the window panes in the neighbouring village huts and the moans of the trees the tanks struck against in crawling by.

There was a snow-storm. It screened our movement towards the starting point for attack.

Now we are on the outskirts of a small village. Our last stop before the decisive onrush. Might only the rivers don't do us an ill-turn! We must not fail to cross these water barriers and to reach the battle-fields in good condition.

The tank column is to march with infantry landing units, the leading tanks taking several subdivisions of sappers aboard; these are to destroy the anti-tank mines.

"Landing units, to your places!" The words of command repeated from tank to tank were scarcely audible, muffled up as they were by the blizzard.

The white bodies of the heavy and light tanks seemed suddenly to swell, to bulge and to acquire new white angles; these were the men of the landing units in their snow-white overalls, who had taken their places on the tanks.

And now the column of tanks stretched out, and in the darkness of the night it was not difficult to discern the gigantic silhouettes of the KV's. With clanging and gnashing sounds the strongholds of steel started on their campaign.

A ten kilometer long rush—and we are on the Ilmen, that ancient Russian lake.

The heavy tank I was on together with the infantry men is now cautiously creeping onto the ice. We have jumped down and are walking on either of it. Old Ilmen seems displeased with such an unexpected infringement of his peace,—he is creaking and groaning like an age-old oak in a wind gale. Whoever heard of such a thing! Fancy having to bear such a burden on one's shoulders, why each one of these mammoths weights all its fifty tons. More than 150 kilograms bear down on each square centimeter of the ice crust. . .

At the places where the ice does not reach down to the very bottom, you may see it cave in, like a spring mattress, under the weight of the tank. The other heavy tanks are not allowed by the commanding officer to follow in the wake of the first one, they are to keep either more to the right or to the left.

Now the vast ice stretches of the Ilmen are left behind us. We are facing the problem of crossing the river which borders upon the enemy's fortification area. Due to the current, the ice here is much thinner than on the lake, and without a special reinforcement it could not be crossed by the machines. Just a short time before our coming, the tankmen of another unit had underestimated this circumstance and had dearly paid for it. In the very middle of the river, which in that place was a hundred meters wide, one of the tanks had sunk turret-deep into the water and has been sucked in under the ice. The crew hardly had time to escape through the upper trap-doors.

Quite unintentionally our sappers let us down. They had provided two thousand logs to strew over the areas of the river crossings; these logs were to be cemented with a fresh layer of ice. But we had slipped over Ilmen much ahead of schedule. The logs were still on their way.

What were we to do? There was not a moment to lose. It's midnight. In a few hours the day would break. The enemy aircraft would detect us. The most important thing was to force this very river which formed the boundary line of the nazi defense area. Just to push through this line—and then we could "promenade" battling all over their fortificated area.

The logs were not there yet. We had only the holes in the ice, through which to pump the water for the new ice layer. Nasty, black, silent things they were, the holes on the smooth surface of the ice, and they stirred up our most righteous indignation. What the deuce were they good for, when there was nothing to pour the water on? Maybe they were there just for some idiot of a wolf to dip his tail into and expect to catch a fish in such a way at the instigation of some rascally fox?

The danger of seeing our carefully prepared plan collapse was becoming more imminent with every instant. And then we came to a decision:

"Let us pull down all the fences and uninhabited houses in the nearest village and cover up the ice with them," major Maximov proposed to the sapper in chief.

"How shall we transport them?"

"We'll transport them on the tanks, but anyway we shall be through with the operation."

No sooner said than done. In an hour-and-a-half's time, the tanks were moving from the village quite a cargo of logs needed for the crossing.

The sappers, overjoyed at this unexpected solution, soon found themselves in their own element. Skilfully and eagerly they set to work at the laying of the wooden pavement. Carefully and solidly they fitted in log to log.

It was a pity to lay hands on the village fences, but there was nothing else one could do. With them only could we pave our way to victory. We would pull them down in one village,—well, we would pull out of the Germans' hands scores and hundreds of other villages instead.

The icy water sucked up boisterously with our pump was already cementing the rows of logs. Our pavement was ready.

5. Over Marshes and Ice

And so our road lies open before us. One after another the small and medium tanks pass over the new layer, then comes the turn of the huge KV's. Now we are on the other bank, and the Germans have not spotted us out. All is going on swimmingly. But there,—we must lend a helping hand to our neighbours' tank.

From the bank four powerful tanks take the submerged machine in tow. The general command is given with a wave of the hand: "march," and thousands of horse-power, all blended into one, drag out the 50-ton giant up from the bottom of the river.

A mountain of steel rises from under the water. On its way to the bank, it raises mountains of ice. The river seems to be wrenched in two by a gigantic battering-ram. When the tank at last crawled out onto the bank, it looked like some huge monster of the glacial epoch.

The tank was saved. It was covered all over with ice, but not completely out of commission. After two hours of heating, the motor began to snort and nearly all of the apparatus started working. The crew of the machine, who but a few hours before had nearly perished, were now stalking around it, triumphant and excited:

"Neither shall we drown in water, nor in fire shall we burn," the tank commander quoted joyously.

. . . Through forests and marshes our tank column was moving on further. It began to dawn and we were nearing the next river crossing still undiscovered. Our sappers worked excellently. Logs were brought and delivered at the crossing. After a short lapse of time, we were passing again over an ice-covered layer of wood. Daylight came. When the German soldiers and corporals opened their eyes in the morning, they were quite dumbfounded by the sight of our oncoming tank columns and infantry landing units in the river-valley which formed their line of defense.

One can easily imagine the enemies' confusion. The Germans were forced to turn their guns at an angle of 90 degrees and to open fire. The first enemy shells burst close to the very spot where we were crossing. It was evidently only their being scared out of their wits that made the Germans miss their aim, though in all the surrounding locality the range had been well found by shooting. Our sappers, who at first had scattered off in different directions, now gathered again at the crossing to help with the remaining tanks.

Astakhov and his tank were already on the opposite side. But presently

the enemy's mines and shells began to burst nearer and nearer to the wooden pavement. Some of the sappers were wounded. None of them left their post. Under fire they valiantly went on replacing the logs that had been shattered by the tanks and helping yet more and more tanks cross. By the explosions around one could see that the Germans had taken our crossing into "the narrow fork" of their cannonade. Peril and destruction are approaching faster, still faster, and whack!—two heavy shells have struck the very pavement and have scattered bits of it on all sides.

There were none killed, but in the large water pools among the ice clods we see two Red Army men—sappers—contused and swimming about. Their comrades rushed to their rescue, drew them out of their cold bath and carried them off to a safer place. A new explosion has just thundered, but it proved to be a gunshot from Astakhov's tank. The lieutenant had had time "to feel about" for the enemy's battery, and now, without moving his tank from its place, he had opened fire. The commander's example had been followed by two or three more tanks. The German battery was silenced.

Instructed by their commander Ivanov, the sappers rushed to repair the crossing. They were removing the logs and making the layer in a new place.

As soon as the two fighters were taken out of the water, the 40-degree frost covered them with an armour of ice. Their drenched clothes froze up together with the camouflage overalls that covered them. Now two white ice-sarcophagus, in which we could discern two human faces, were lying before us. The physician and several orderlies were bustling around.

Apparently Astakhov had lulled the German artillery so effectively with his fire that about half-an-hour's time had already passed and we were moving over a new marsh and even approaching the third crossing, and yet it was silent.

In the wood the well-known symphony of the front was being performed. We heard the familiar crackling of tommy-guns and machine-guns: our foremost infantry units had come into action, attacking the enemy both from the flanks and the rear.

Our third crossing was in itself quite simple but at the same time could serve as a model in the application of the art of stratagem. When we came up to the place which had been agreed upon, we found no wooden boarding. It was skilfully camouflaged. At that moment a fascist bomber appeared in the sky above. We were ordered to stand stock-still in the forest snow-drifts and to wait while the fascist airplane achieves his task. Our cunning sappers had prepared a neat little job for him—that of bombing a fictitious crossing, which with great forthought they had laid out with brush wood at a kilometer's distance from the genuine one.

When the ground has stopped droning from the explosions of the last air-bombs dropped on the brushwood crossing, and the serial Fritz was flying homeward quite pleased with his bit of work, our battalion, under cover of artillery fire, at one rush overcame the third water barrier, passing across the log-road which was artistically powdered with snow. Then, a seven—eight kilometer march over a quaggy marsh. On one side the marsh was gradually changing to an underwood. If we were to break a road there, all our vehicles, both heavy and light, could move on along it.

"Trample down the wood and open a way for our battalion—this would not be beyond your KV's, would it?" major Maximov addressed Astakhov.

Astakhov took upon himself to lead the column, together with his driver Tenditny. With their bodies and caterpillars, the KV's started trampling down the thicket of

aspen groves, osier beds, small pines 10—15 cm. in section, with as great an ease as they would have trampled a kitchen-garden paling. The way was open. We move on, but suddenly we see in front of us a new water barrier 300 meters wide, with steep banks 30 meters high. Here the Germans were not taken by surprise. On the opposite bank they were resisting the attacks of our foremost infantry detachments. We heard the deafening shooting of mine-throwers and tommy-guns. But the nazis were not yet aware of all our might, they would presently see under their very noses the cannon bores of our powerful tanks which had stolen up to them from the rear.

Major Maximov ordered his battalion to deploy their column for an attack on the enemy and to open fire across the river.

"Lieutenant Astakhov! You take my place on this bank. You keep up fire—you cover my manoeuvre."

The major himself rushed with the light tanks in extended order over the ice to the opposite bank, without even any artificial crossing.

The Germans were stunned by the sudden appearance of the Soviet tanks which seemed to have risen from under the ice. There was evidently great confusion in the very first riverside strongholds: the enemy's fire died away. At the same time Maximov, together with the subdivisions of the commanders Fetlikhin and Maslov, was already destroying the first lines of the enemies' firing positions. From this side of the river Astakhov splendidly backed up major Maximov's crossing and his invasion of the enemies' defense area.

The sappers were working at a new log-layer. A radio-order came from the battalion commander: "Heavy vehicles to cross!" It was in the twilight. Under the enemy's fire but without a single loss either in men or machines, we overcame one more, the fourth river barrier.

An ice march of tanks, unprecedented in history, had been carried out.

6. The Tank Attack

It was night. Some oil-tanks and ammunition-lorries had just arrived. Our men are used to doing their work by touch disregarding darkness. Now with deft, expert movements they were extending hoses, unscrewing stoppers, stuffing their magazines with heavy shells. Everything was done briskly, skilfully.

. . . The Germans had fled to the next village, but there they had apparently been stopped by our reserve units now and were preparing for defense. We had to break down their fortifications and pursue them.

During the first stage of the battle, Astakhov and his five KV's were to remain in the second echelon—later on, the development of the fight would show where they could best apply their strength and ability.

Just before daybreak the snow-white banks with their camouflaged infantrymen and tommy-gun men charged. A snow-covered field stretched in front of the village.

The German anti-tank artillery guns started fire.

One of our foremost light vehicles had its turret torn off by a shell. The Germans intensified their mine and tommy-gun fire against our infantry. Our men lay low, the tank columns were extended.

The enemy noticed our momentary confusion. The nazis impudence is growing with every moment. When our tanks make attempts to rush on forwards, urging the infantry to follow, they shower heaps of grenades and mines at them, thus cutting them off from the men. The German companies are starting a counter-attack.

Two green rockets hiss up into the sky. At last we see the long awaited signal for the KV tanks to join the attack. Both earth and air are shaken

by the thunder of the KV motors. From behind the underwood near the road, the mighty moving strongholds deploy their column and forge ahead. The Germans attempt to come down upon them with a gush of fire. But no go! These steel-clad land men-o'war move inexorably on, heedless of the sea of fire from the shell explosions which storm all around.

Our infantry felt quite cheered up. Protected by the steel breasts of the advancing tanks, it has already started onwards. The white disk of the trap-door on Astakhov's right-flank vehicle was thrust up. A small red flag was waved three times. Ah! This means: "Tank No. 3, rush into the village."

Through a strong field-glass we could see quite plainly the stupefied German artillerymen tearing about in different directions. Had they not fired? Had they not hit the KV? But the KV was an invulnerable monster—there it was, quite near, and any moment it may crush them with its weight. The tank bursts through the boundary of the village, took a turn to the right and started squashing down the nazi anti-tank guns together with their surviving crews.

The thundering of the enemies' mine and shell explosions had long since been drowned by the deafening cannonade of the tank guns shooting at an always increasing number of the enemy's firing positions.

The tanks forced their way right into the midst of the enemy's infantry, which had but recently tried to start a counter-attack, and were "ironing" them from flank to flank, ramming down into the snow those of the bandits who had missed their chance of fleeing.

In a quarter of an hour all five KV's were in the village itself, and, together with the infantry, they were destroying the Germans who had stuck to their shelters in the barns and garrets. Then the tanks forged ahead. In the next two villages no resistance was even attempted.

We covered 15 kilometers more. The tanks were coming up quite close to a large settlement, an important railway junction, where the Germans intended to defend with particular resistance. According to information brought in by our scouts, there was a strong belt of defensive anti-tank obstacles right at that place.

Astakhov was all ardour.

"This'll be something like," he said with the greatest satisfaction.

. . . On the way the KV's received a new order: to take the village in a pincer movement and, without being involved in the fight, to force their way five kilometers further and seize the railway junction and highway along which the German reinforcements were moving.

Major Maximov got into one of the KV's. With two vehicles he would round the village from the left-hand side, Astakhov with the other three would do the same from the right. They'd meet on the road beyond the village, in the German rear.

This idea of rounding the village, quite simple in itself, belonged both to Maximov and Astakhov. The thing was clear enough. Straddling the communications at a stroke was just like cutting the arteries of a living organism. The other machines in the battalion would take up the job of blockading the village but with the sole purpose of involving the foe in the battle and distracting his attention from the machines rounding his flanks.

From the outset the fight assumed a violent aspect. The terrible artillery duel of the guns firing from the tanks with those firing at them was in full swing when the KV machines penetrated into the rear of the Germans.

The first radio-signal report was given: "Have rounded village, are moving on."

But suddenly all the five KV machines were met by a sweeping gush of artillery fire from one of the villages to the right of the road. This was quite unexpected. To be involved in the battle meant failure in fulfilling a task of vital importance. Again major Maximov and Astakhov had to disunite: two tanks under the major's command go on moving ahead; the three others under Astakhov make a rush at the village impeding the advance.

A hot encounter with the nazi artillery ensued. The gun-commanders of all the three machines, turning their turrets to the right, aimed something like a battery volley of fire at the enemy's strongholds.

"Forward!" Astakhov commanded with his flag, and the three cars headed for the village. Now they were already quite close to the anti-tank guns. Under the steel paws of the white monsters everything around seemed to crunch like dry sticks in the wood. Having squashed three or four strongholds, each with scores of fascists left in them, the tanks started to catch up with the two other machines.

But major Maximov was already far off. Quite taken up by their advance, his tanks had overleapt the railway line and had already covered a seven kilometer distance, whirling away along the main-road. Along the same main-road, at that very same time, the Germans were swiftly transferring nearly a whole regiment of motor-infantry. Seeing the tanks moving towards them, the nazis never dreamt of stopping, taking them from afar for their own machines.

"Extension to the left!" commanded Maximov to the second machine, and both tanks barred the way on the main-road like barricades.

At the same time Astakhov with his tanks, having definitely straddled both the railway and highway road, had been fighting on them five hours running without halt. He did not let a single train through, nor a single car.

Thus the tankmen intercepted for the Germans two lines of communications, both by railway and the main-road. Soon our infantry units arrived.

How much joy, what merry jokes, what interesting talk there might have been among the tankmen! But none of them had the heart to enjoy their triumph,—the commander of the company, lieutenant Astakhov himself, did not return after the battle. And everyone had the same thought: "Could he really have perished?"

7. To the West!

No Astakhov yet... Battalion commissar Kharchenko will take his place in the battle today. This news cheered up all the crew who had felt quite down-hearted after the loss of their favourite commander.

The fighting biography of the commissar was well known to everybody. The tankmen said:

"He can do any kind of work on his tank. If he is asked to drive—well, then he'll drive the machine. If they want him to fire a gun, he'll do it."

"In Finland he was commander of a tank company."

"It's from there his Red Star order comes."

"He got nine splinter wounds in his head. Three splinters, people say, are not out yet."

Commissar Kharchenko, a former fitter in the Donetz basin, is only 35, but his hair is quite grey. Much has he seen, in many a battle has he taken part.

During the next encounter, a German shell hit Kharchenko's tank turret. It deafened and badly bruised the gun commander Kustov and the radio-operator Vedishchev. Then lest the tank gun should cease firing at its aim, a large blindage, the commissar went up to it himself and made

a dozen shots. The blindage was silenced.

On the left flank the tanks in cooperation with the infantry advanced to storm a strongly fortified German defense line. The commissar opened the top trap-door and addressing the men he shouted so as to be heard all over the field:

"Forward! Follow us, brave infantrymen!"

Nazi shells were bursting all around, and with a thundering crash one of them exploded near the commander's tank. The trap-door closed with a snap. At the same instant, the machine rushed into the attack, and the infantrymen, realizing that the commissar was leading them into action, darted after the tanks with loud "hurrahs!"

A twenty-minute grapple determined the outcome of the battle. The tanks could freely defile over the German blindages and trenches, the infantrymen knocked out the nazis with their bayonets. Then came a lull.

"What a commissar! A real hero!" said both the tank and infantrymen.

. . . . The tanks had quitted the battle-field and were now returning to the gathering place to take fuel and replenish their stock of ammunition. Their motors were throttled. The tankmen appeared in the trap-doors and began to take off their leather helmets. In the stillness of the twilight the words of one of the commanders sounded mournfully:

"Comrades, we have lost our commissar!"

Kharchenko was killed by a shell fragment when standing at the open trap-door and calling upon the infantry to follow the lead of the tanks. And even dead, the commissar had continued to be the leader of his men in the attack. The mechanician-driver Konstantinov sped onwards with the commissar's body. Like a whirlwind the commissar's snow-white machine tore into the very heart of the German defense zone, smashing down everything on its way. Kharchenko's lifeless body lay in the tank, but he lived again in the enthusiasm which was stimulating all his men into the thick of the battle. Konstantinov was aware that none of them knew yet about the commissar's death, they believed him alive and showing them with his example how they should fight. And clenching his teeth, the mechanician-driver hurled the machine with the lifeless commissar in it into the most dangerous places. The other tanks followed him, followed their commissar, and together all of them were such an indomitable force that in less than an hour only fragments were left of the German defense zone.

. . . In the morning the news spread: "The Astakhovites are alive!" Who was the first to say this, nobody knew. We ran to the commander's quarters. There we saw Pridannikov, wounded in the hand, and the driver of Astakhov's tank Tenditny. Their faces, poor fellows, looked quite black, their cheeks were hollow, their eyes sunken. They were sitting on a piece of tarpaulin right in front of the commander, with all the other tankmen clustering around them.

Tenditny was saying:

"So that's how it all happened. Our tank darted out far ahead to the flank of the German line of defense, and from there it kept up quite a successful flanking fire against all the front-line. But then a heavy German projectile smashed our driving wheel. The machine started, twirling on one place. Seeing this, the Germans sighted all their battery guns at us. Our motor stopped working. We were hidden from our troops by a grove, so that we could give no signal. At last the Germans stopped their artillery fire and quite a battalion of them rushed at our

tank with hand-grenades and fougasses. . .

'Shoot only at a hundred meter range!' Astakhov warned us several times.

All three of our machine-guns sighted at the Germans remained silent. The boys were reckoning meter after meter, second after second, just to mow down the more foes. The first hand-grenades flew at our tank and, as if the thing had been agreed upon beforehand, we went at the nazis with a three-bore machine-gun fire. The German attack stopped. They lay, low, but kept on creeping up to us.

We shot at them singly. Several hours passed. We tried to economize our cartridges. By the evening the Germans had rolled back about 200 meters. An hour later Astakhov ordered Kireev:

'Crawl over to our people and ask for help.'

Senior sergeant Kireev, seizing some five hand-grenades, opened the trap-door cautiously and looked all around. The coast was clear, all was still. He slipped onto the snow, turned the corner of the car and disappeared in the darkness of the night.

And an anxious night it was! Nobody slept in the besieged machine. It began to dawn. Kireev did not return. No help came. Again Astakhov ordered:

'Pridannikov and Tenditny, get ready to go to our people. Same task as Kireev.'

With hand-grenades as munitions we left the car noiselessly. We had to crawl something like 200 meters on our stomachs through the wood, but when we reached the grove, we started running towards our people, by the compass. And there we were at last."

A little expedition of three men (among those Tenditny) was organized to go to the aid of the disabled tank. They had to look out for the best ways of approaching it on the towing tanks. Besides this, the three were commissioned to penetrate into the tank itself with a sack of provisions for Astakhov and Makhalev.

Major Maximov wrote Astakhov the following note: "We are proud of your doings. We'll help you. In the night or tomorrow we will evacuate you. Hold on. Best wishes."

The three men scouted out the approaches, but they did not succeed in delivering the provisions to the besieged tank. All night long the Germans kept up a strong barrage fire. The tankmen also noticed that they were carrying on a strange kind of engineering work all around the tank. What could it mean?

With the coming of the morning there was not one soul left about the whole place.

Forty-eight hours had passed since the tank was surrounded by the enemy. . . An evacuation was decided upon. And now, when the towing tanks were getting ready to dash out of the wood where they had been hiding and hurry to the rescue, Astakhov in the flesh seemed to rise up from under the ground before them.

"Comrade commander, where do you come from?"

"From the tank."

"We're just hurrying there."

"Impossible!"

"How's that, impossible?"

"Impossible now, you'd perish. The tank is surrounded by mines."

And Astakhov told them everything. All night long the Germans had worked around the machine. They had dug boxes with fougasses into the ground close to it. Astakhov was not long in guessing what the idea was: it was not the disabled car the Germans wanted to blow up, it should be the sound ones, those which without fail would come along for towing it out. "Our people must be warned," Astakhov decided, and with this purpose he sent out the last member of the crew, Makhalev.

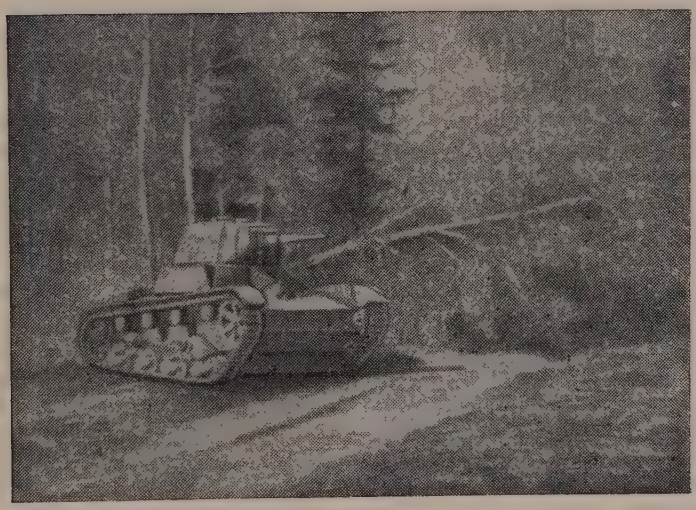
But would he come in time? Astakhov's final decision was to leave the tank. It's very hard upon one—this forsaking one's own machine. He would never have done it, but do it he must to rescue the other tanks and his comrades' lives. He crawled up to the towing tanks just in time and warned them of the threatening danger. Some time after Makhalev appeared. He had been wounded by a mine splinter.

Later on, with the help of the sappers, they succeeded in evacuating the disabled tank. In a few hours' time the last member of the crew—senior sergeant Kireev—also turned up. He had lost his way and had roamed about in the forest for two days.

Here they are, all together again, sitting in the large hut on some tarpaulin and lovingly, painstakingly cleaning the mechanisms of the tank arms.

* * *

The five KV have done a fighting a distance of fifty kilometers and are now again moving to the West. Five tank-crews with five members in each—just a small handful of men, but what a mighty, what a terrible force they are!



BELA BALAZS

A SERBIAN BALLAD

The guslitza and tambura are no longer heard in the Black Hills. The young players and singers lie quietly in the earth or stay silently concealed in the forests. The kolo is no longer danced in Serbia. And as to the mourning chants of the women, they are not sung to the accompaniment of the guslitza.

Only old Djordje at times took down his old instrument from its nail, although two of its sides were missing and a hole gaped in its vaulted belly. These injuries the old guslitza had suffered when a German punitive expedition was sent to the little village on account of a swastika flag which had been torn down, and the machine-gun bullets had gone cracking through the windows of the huts. Now Djordje's bullet-riddled instrument emitted a hoarse note.

"It is hoarse from anger and hatred," the white-haired, white-bearded ancient used to say. "It will yet sing a song of vengeance and of the victory of our heroes, like the old songs of Marko Kraljević [1]."

Now old Djordje, too, lies silent in the earth. But some day the bullet-riddled guslitza will sing the song of his heroic death.

Seen from the hut of grandfather Djordje, the sun stood directly over the bare summit of the Rumyanitza, indicating that it was eleven o'clock in the morning. It was a Saturday. Fourteen-year-old Mirko gazed up at the bare summit, which resembled a threatening fist, and watched the vultures which sailed in the air with outspread wings like airplanes.

"The vultures are calling," Mirko said, "do you hear, grandfather?"

"The vultures in the Black Hills do not call, for they are gorged and bloated," retorted grandfather Djordje, as he sat on the little bench before the hut and now also gazed up at the Rumyanitza which seemed to be threatening with its rocky fist.

"But I can hear the call of the birds, grandfather. . ."

"Then it doesn't come from the air," said the old man and got up from his bench. "The call is meant for us. Tell grandmother and your sister-in-law Zdenka to come as quickly as they can. Your brother Milosh is waiting for us at the cemetery."

Mirko ran to the hut and returned presently with his grandmother and his brother's wife. Zdenka led her two-year-old son by the hand.

They all hurried to the cemetery. It was not far away, for grandfather Djordje's hut was the last one in the village. From it the broad road could be seen that led to Dubitza and ran perfectly straight to the dark forests beyond, where, right under the fist of Rumyanitza, it swerved to the right.

The cemetery was a small one, for the village itself was small. But during the past month one of its fences had had to be pulled down to make

[1] Marko Kraljević — national hero of the Serbian people.

room for many new crosses. When the German command at Dubitza sent a punitive expedition to the village, because somebody had torn down a swastika flag, the cemetery had all at once become full, and the new crosses spread beyond the old graves into the field, like a swiftly growing weed. Thus the cemetery grew larger, while the village grew smaller. For not only were men and women struck down by rifle-bullet and bayonet, but many of the houses were burned to the ground.

When grandfather Djordje, the grandmother, the grandson, the grandson's wife and the great-grandchild arrived at the cemetery, women, as usual, were squatting among the fresh graves and chanting the old dirges. They were squatting in the cemetery instead of busying themselves in their kitchens, because there was nothing to cook anyway.

Grandfather Djordje led the way to the oldest part of the cemetery, where thick acacia bushes covered the sunken graves. It was from there that the call of the vulture came. A branch was pushed aside and the olive-skinned face and dark eyes of Milosh peered out from among the green leaves. They all glanced cautiously around once more and then crept swiftly into the concealment of the acacias. There one could sit unperceived and talk. Woe to them if a German happened to notice Milosh, if he were to be seen talking to his family! . . . However, the women chanting among the graves did not even glance in their direction, and if they did see anything, they held their peace. The very fact that people had come to the cemetery could surprise nobody, for there was not a family in the village that did not have its dead there. But why were the grandchildren with old Djordje? Where were his son and the wife of his son? The son had been killed at Kragujewatz, and his wife too had fallen, arms in hand, near Varda, where she had fought in a comitadji (partisan) detachment.

Now the whole family squatted down among the acacia bushes. Mirko climbed up on to the cemetery fence to keep watch. The women could be heard chanting their mourning dirges.

"Here, I have brought you some flour," said Milosh, and handed a little sack to the grandmother, "Our comrades in the Rumyanitza forest held up a German transport column. They were carrying this flour which had been robbed from us, to the station. We were able to get a little of it back."

Milosh was a handsome young man of twenty-four. He still wore a tattered Serbian uniform, and his head was bandaged, for he had been wounded in the forehead. He took his two-year-old boy on to his knee and inquired how they all were. He also asked about the goat, which so far they had managed to keep concealed from the Germans in a pit. He told them nothing about himself, for not even his relatives might know where the Serbian partisans were hiding and what they were doing.

"There is so much red moss growing among the rocks of the Rumyanitza," Milosh said, stroking his little son's head. "I have never seen such moss before."

"It is because so much blood has been shed this year," rejoined the grandmother, and she nodded her fine white, proud head. Stern and dignified was her face. "Our blood has dyed the roots of the moss."

Grandfather Djordje shook his head.

"The red moss is a sign," he said with a sombre look. "It predicts the blood that is still to flow."

"We have already shed so much of our Serbian blood," said the grandmother, "there is little of it left."

"Then the red moss does not point to Serbian blood," cried Milosh staunchly, "but to the blood of the

German robbers, that will flow even this year!"

He had scarcely said this, when Mirko called down from his fence:

"Look out! German motor-trucks are coming down the road from Dubitza!"

Milosh kissed his little son and handed him back to his mother. They all stood up.

"Bury the flour in a safe place," he said, "I will come again soon and bring you something else."

"Better don't come," pleaded his wife Zdenka. "It is too dangerous!"

"What will you eat, if I don't bring you anything?"

"It is more important for our people," said the grandfather, "if you and your comrades in the forest have enough to eat. We cannot fight any more, anyhow."

"We know that you will come when the hour of vengeance strikes," said the grandmother solemnly.

Mirko called from the fence:

"Hurry, Milosh! The German trucks have already reached the acacia grove. Three empty trucks, escorted by soldiers."

"They have come again to commandeer food," sighed Zdenka, and pressed her son to her bosom.

Milosh kissed her and his grandparents, then vaulted the fence, and in an instant was gone.

The chanting suddenly ceased. The women made for their homes, for they knew what the German trucks foreboded: they were coming to rob the last remnants of food which still kept the people from utter starvation.

Grandfather Djordje, too, hurried home with his family. His neighbour, who was nearly as old as he, had just dug a hole in his yard. His wife stood nearby, holding in her apron the things they were about to bury.

"Why such a big hole?" she asked. "Here is only half a loaf and three eggs. So! That is all we have to bury."

The neighbour took the half loaf and the three eggs without a word and buried them. Then he strewed dry sand over the spot.

The Germans scattered and began their search from three ends of the village simultaneously. Two sergeants had been assigned to each truck. They had a detailed plan. Their lists showed how many houses and which houses they were to search, and the names of the owners: the German district command in Dubitza was well acquainted with the village. Nevertheless, the work went slowly, for there was very little to plunder. A soldier brought to the truck that was standing outside grandfather Djordje's door a piece of cheese that had already been bitten into and three bags of maize.

"God damn it!" swore the sergeant-major, waving the list he held in his hand. "Is that all? I have to deliver a ton and a half of provisions!"

At that moment, another soldier came up carrying seven potatoes in a leaky basin.

"Are you trying to make a fool of me, you bloody idiot?" roared the sergeant-major. "What am I going to do with seven potatoes? At four o'clock prompt the food-train leaves for Germany!"

A sergeant with sunken cheeks came out and whispered to the sergeant-major:

"There is starvation in Germany already. I got a letter from my wife yesterday."

"Then the Serbian dogs peg out first!" shouted the sergeant-major and his bloated fleshy face turned purple with anger.

"There isn't even another potato peeling in the whole house," said the soldier.

"But the people are living, aren't they? They must be eating something? Well, then, they must have food hidden somewhere. What? Go back and search again!"

"Here they come with the idiot

Yank," said the sergeant with the sunken cheeks, turning to look down the street. "He'll help us to ferret out something."

Two soldiers were leading a Serbian lad along the street. He was filthy and incredibly ragged. He walked with sunken head, his idiotic glance shifting unsteadily from side to side.

Meanwhile, in old Djordje's hut the German soldiers had turned everything topsy-turvy. They had broken open the old chest with their rifle-butts. The table-drawer lay on the floor beside two broken pitchers. The old wardrobe had been smashed in and its wretched contents strewn over the floor.

Grandfather Djordje and the grandmother stood in a corner. Zdenka, carrying the child in her arms, was at their side, and fourteen-year-old Mirko stood near the table. Thus they stood in a row, gazing silently and immovably at the wreckage. Only their eyes gleamed. The grandmother held the grandfather's hand. Every now and again she pressed it, which meant: "You must remain calm and not say a word! Keep yourself under control!"

The German soldier who seemed to be in charge strode up to the grandmother and shouted:

"Fetch out the bread you have stowed away, or it will be the worse for you!"

"We have no more bread," answered the grandmother with calm dignity, as she looked the soldier firmly in the eyes. "We have given it all up already."

"That's a lie! You are not crying!"

"We have no more tears left," rejoined the grandmother softly, and lifted her head proudly. "We have cried our eyes dry."

At this moment Yank was led into the room. He was reluctant to enter. He clung to the doorpost, whimpering like an animal and trembling. But the sergeant that came up behind him gave him a violent kick, and he tumbled into the room and sprawled on the floor.

"Show us where the bread is hidden," the sergeant ordered the idiot. "You know your grandmother's house."

But Yank lay whimpering, his face buried in his arms, and would not get up. Two soldiers pulled him violently to his feet, and the sergeant howled at him:

"Didn't you tell us outside that they had a goat hidden away?"

Yank remained silent, trembling from head to foot. But the young woman turned pale, and even Mirko's face twitched. But the grandmother said calmly:

"Our goat was burned when the last punitive expedition set fire to our barn."

She firmly pressed the grandfather's hand, and he remained silent. But a tear fell from the eyes of the young woman.

"Aha!" cried the pale sergeant and grinned. "You still have some tears left, I see. That means you still have the goat. Now, Yank, get to it, boy. We will give you some bacon and brandy if you get us that goat. Bacon and brandy, Yank!"

The dull face of the idiot broadened into a grin. Then he raised his hollow palm to his mouth and bleated like a young kid.

The grandmother tightened her grasp over the grandfather's hand. The young woman pressed her child convulsively to her breast. Mirko suddenly began to scream:

"Oh, my foot, my foot! I have hurt my foot!"

"Stop that row!" the sergeant shouted at him.

"There's nothing wrong with his foot," said one of the soldiers. "He's only shouting so that we shouldn't hear the goat."

"I have run a nail into my foot!" howled Mirko at the top of his voice. "Oh, oh, how my foot hurts!"

He lifted his right foot, which did

indeed have a bloody gash in it. And the nail that protruded from the table leg was also covered with blood.

"Gag the little devil's mouth! And you, Yank, give us that maa-a again!" the sergeant ordered.

A soldier clapped his hand over Mirko's mouth, and Yank was again promised bacon and brandy. The idiot again bleated like a kid. And now, in the stillness, the answering call of the mother goat could be heard. Two soldiers dashed out into the yard.

"Well, we have got the goat, at least," exclaimed the sergeant. "That's fine. Let's proceed." He stood in front of the grandmother, and asked: "What do you feed the child on, if you have no flour?"

"Until now the child got a little goat's milk," answered the grandmother with quiet dignity. "Now it will starve."

"Well, we can examine the child's mouth to see whether there aren't any signs of food left. That will make it clear what he has been eating. Here, let me take a look at him!"

A soldier tore the child from its mother's grasp, while another held her tight. A third took up his stand in front of Mirko and the old people with levelled bayonet. The grandmother kept her hand tightly pressed over Djordje's.

"Open your mouth!" said the sergeant to the two-year-old child. But the infant held its lips tightly compressed. Thereupon a soldier forced open the child's mouth with his huge bony hand, while the sergeant inserted his forefinger into it in search of remnants of food. The child closed its teeth over the finger with all its might.

"Ouch!" cried the sergeant, and hastily withdrew his hand. There was blood on his forefinger. He was about to try again with another finger, when the sudden cracking of shots was heard from the street.

"What's wrong?" cried the startled sergeant and ran out of the house, the three German soldiers stamping heavily after him. When they reached the truck, it turned out that it was not the sound of shots they had heard, but just the backfiring of the motor.

"We have found nothing else," reported the sergeant, who was too embarrassed to explain why he and his men had dashed out of the house so precipitately.

The sergeant-major cursed. Then he noticed the sergeant's bloody finger.

"What's that?" he asked.

"A bite."

"A bite? Who? Where?"

"It was. . . it was. . ." The sergeant stammered, for he was ashamed to admit the truth. "It was a Serb," he said at last.

"What?" howled the sergeant-major, and his puffy face turned purple. "A German sergeant wounded by a Serb? Report it at once to the district command!"

This order was overheard by two women who were passing. They told it to others, for they knew that this would mean another punitive expedition.

As the German truck drove away, something stirred behind the stove in the hut. Only now was it observed that when the soldiers ran out of the house they forgot all about Yank, who, frightened by the shots, had crawled behind the stove. Now he wanted to make his escape. But the grandmother barred his way.

"Stay, Yank!" she cried sternly, but there was only grief and pity in her voice, not hatred.

Yank cowered trembling in a corner.

Grandfather Djordje and Mirko removed some bricks from the stove-wall and drew out a gun and four cartridges from the hole. It was a very ancient fire-arm, with a drop trigger.

"Yank is not to blame," pleaded

Zdenka. "He is not sound in his mind."

"Yank is not guilty, only unfortunate," answered the grandmother. "That is why no stranger must lay hands upon him. It must be done by his own kin."

"He is not guilty," uttered grandfather Djordje as he loaded the gun, "but he is dangerous to his people. That is why he must die."

"Come, Yank," said the grandmother, and she took him by the hand.

He allowed himself to be led like a child, and stood obediently where the grandmother put him, with his back to the wall.

"Kneel down, Yank," she said, and there was deep grief and pity in her voice. "Shut your eyes."

Yank fell on his knees and buried his face in his hands.

"Your hand will not tremble, grandfather?" asked the grandmother.

"No, it will not tremble."

And it did not.

The telephone operator at the military headquarters in Dubitza was very agitated.

"I understand!" he shouted, although he had not heard distinctly. "Several German soldiers have been attacked and wounded by Serbs. . ."

"Incredible!" exclaimed the captain when it was reported to him. "If we do not act with utter ruthlessness, we may have a revolt on our hands. Bring out the armoured cars!"

Meanwhile Milosh and his partisan detachment were lying in ambush at the spot where the road swerved to Dubitza, right under the rocky fist of the Rumyanitza.

"The trucks with the stolen food from the village must pass here. This is where we can fall upon them."

In fact, the trucks were already visible and were drawing nearer. On one of them old Djordje's goat was bleating pitifully. The partisans made ready for the attack. But at this juncture their outposts came running up.

"Stop! German armoured cars are approaching from the other direction!"

"Back!" commanded Milosh. "We will find a better opportunity later on."

The partisans withdrew into the forest, but Milosh remained by the roadside, concealed in the bushes. And it was precisely there that the trucks coming from the village and the armoured cars proceeding towards it met.

"Where are you making for?" called the pale sergeant to the driver of the first armoured car.

"To the village yonder on a punitive expedition," came the reply.

"What for?" inquired the sergeant in surprise: he had long ago forgotten the tiny bite in his finger.

"A detachment of German soldiers has been attacked by armed Serbs. There are many killed," the driver called back, and proceeded thundering on his way.

But Milosh had overheard everything, and he hurried to report it to his comrades.

Wild confusion again reigned in the little village at the foot of the Rumyanitza. "German armoured cars are coming!" And old men, women and children, all who were capable of taking to their feet, fled into the forest.

Only in the last hut on the edge of the village, from which the road to Dubitza could be seen, all seemed to be quiet. Grandfather Djordje had put on a clean shirt and his best clothes. Now he came out of the hut with his old gun. He kneeled down in the middle of the Dubitza road and laid his last three remaining cartridges on the ground beside him. He did this slowly, calmly and deliberately, for he still had plenty of time.

The grandmother stood in the doorway, bidding farewell to her grandson's wife.

"Come," pleaded Zdenka, with the child in her arms. "Run with us to the forest!"

"There is not enough food for us, old people," said the grandmother quietly, and she gently stroked the young woman's hair. "Whatever is left must be kept for those who can still fight. Go!" she added sternly, "and don't cry. It is a greater honour for us to die here from German bullets than from starvation."

Zdenka did not cry, but, with her child in her arms, followed the others into the forest.

"Let me stay with grandfather!" Mirko begged.

"No," answered the grandmother. "You have an important task to perform. Hurry to your brother and tell the comitadjis what has happened here. They will avenge us. Hurry, Mirko!" she concluded sternly.

Mirko ran into the forest to find his brother Milosh and the other partisans.

Beyond the acacia grove a cloud of dust arose.

"The German armoured cars are coming. We shall see them soon," said old Djordje to his old wife who had kneeled down beside him in the midst of the Dubitza road.

"Forty years we have lived together, Djordje," his wife replied.

"They were forty good years," remarked Djordje.

"Here come the German armoured cars," said the old woman, and handed Djordje the first cartridge.

Djordje cocked the trigger, inserted the cartridge and brushed his long white beard aside so that it might not interfere with his aim. . .

The German armoured cars were approaching at high speed along the arrow-straight road. There were three of them, armed with cannons and machine-guns.

Before them, in the road, quietly conversing, kneeled two old grey-haired people, with an old gun and three cartridges.

The armoured cars rose up like bastions. Their iron rattling could be heard, and the dust whirled like smoke from a fire.

In the middle of the road kneeled the little old man; he raised the gun to his shoulder and took aim. The old woman broke into an old chant for the dead.

The old man fired. The woman, without interrupting her singing, handed him a second cartridge. The armoured cars approached at high speed, like a roaring iron avalanche.

In the middle of the road knelt the old man, firing from an old gun. Singing, the old woman handed him the last cartridge.

The armoured cars approached at high speed. The spy-hole of the first of them could already be seen. The driver caught sight of the two comic figures kneeling in the middle of the road. He stepped on the gas and laughed.

At that moment, the old leaden bullet struck him between the eyes, and he collapsed lifeless. The armoured car swerved into the ditch. The second car swept on without noticing that it had crushed beneath it two old people, who had lived together for forty years.

Mirko clambered as fast as he could up the steep slope of the Rumyanitza. Suddenly, an armed comitadji emerged from a hollow tree and demanded:

"Where are you off to?"

"I must find my brother Milosh. I have something very important to tell him."

Mirko was led to the partisans' camp. It was perched high up beneath the rocky fist of the mountain. The comitadjis surrounded the boy and listened to his tale in ominous silence.

"Revenge!" The word was uttered softly, but by all in unison. "Revenge!"

"We shall destroy the armoured cars as they return to Dubitza," cried Milosh. "Our own earth will be our ally; the rocky fist of the Rumyanitza will smash them!"

The huge bare rock on the highest summit of the Rumyanitza, that looked like a menacing fist, overhung the steep precipice which sank straight down to the bend in the road. . . The rock was mined with dynamite.

Milosh sent down the greater part of his men to barricade the bend in the road with tree trunks. The armoured cars would have to be detained there for a few minutes.

"Who is willing to set fire to the charge?" he asked. For they had only a short fuse, and, what is more, they could not wait while the spark crept slowly forward. At a signal given from below, a lighted torch would have to be flung straight into the powder-dump. Whoever did it would have no chance of getting away.

Nevertheless, every man affirmed his willingness.

But at this moment Mirko stepped forward and said:

"I am still too young to bear arms against the fascist bandits. But I can die like a Serb. In that way I, too, can be useful. Let me throw the torch."

"Your brother Milosh shall decide," said the partisans.

Milosh kissed his brother and without a word handed him the torch.

On the mountain, beneath the rocky fist, Mirko remained alone, with the burning torch. Down below, the partisans took cover in a hollow at the edge of the road, where the falling rock could not reach them.

Mirko espied the approaching armoured cars when they were still far off, but he had to master his impatience and wait for the agreed signal. Now the armoured cars had disappeared from sight behind the trees, and it already seemed to him that the whole plan had gone away. But suddenly he heard two shots in quick succession, and flung the torch into the powder-dump.

A mighty burst of thunder shattered the air. And as the thick clouds of smoke rose and enveloped the Rumyanitza, the rocky fist could be seen to shake in menace. Yes, it shook and threatened, until with a frightful roar it tumbled down the steep precipice.

Of Mirko nothing was left. He had disappeared without a trace. But the German armoured cars, too, were smashed to such small atoms that the district military command did not think it worth while to gather up the fragments.

This occurred in the year 1941, in the Black Hills.

The guslitza and tambura are no longer heard in those Black Hills. The young players and singers lie quietly in the earth or stay silently concealed in the forests. The kolo is no longer danced in Serbia. And as to the mourning chants of the women, they are not sung to the accompaniment of the guslitza.

The old instrument of old Djordje, too, is riddled with bullets. "It is hoarse from anger and hatred," he used to say. "This guslitza will yet sing a song of vengeance and of the victory of our heroes, like the old songs of Marko Kraljević."

Now old Djordje, and his wife, and his grandson Mirko are silent, too. But some day the shot-riddled guslitza will sing their fame on the free soil of Serbia.

K. SIMONOV

WAIT FOR ME

Wait for me, and home I'll come.
But you must wait hard.
Wait, when dreary raindrops drum
On your very heart.
Wait, when blizzards whirl the snow,
And when summer's in;
When with waiting weary grow
All my kith and kin.
Wait, when from the far-off spot
Letters come no more.
Wait, when others are forgot
And not waited for.

Wait for me, and I'll return.
Don't at those you fret
Who the time are apt to learn
When one should forget.
Let my son and mother grieve
That I am no more.
Let my dearest friends believe
That all hope is o'er.
Let them to my memory drink,
Wrapped in silence pained.
Wait. And when their glasses clink
Yours you'll leave undrained.

Wait for me, and home I'll come
Just to spite my death.
"Wondrous luck!"—will every chum
Think with bated breath.
Not for those it is to see,—
Those who did not wait,—
'Twas your waiting so for me
Saved me from my fate.
Why unscathed I've passed through hells—
I shall know, and you;
Just because, like no one else,
How to wait you knew.

English translation by N. DVORETSKAYA

M. ISSAKOVSKY

MOTHER'S EXHORTATION

My dearest son, bend down to earth your brow
To get the blessing you shall there be given.
My dearest one, you must be told that now
Your mother has no bread, no home to live in.

Like plague they came; and like the plague, they killed.
Blood seems to make them drunk: they revel in it.
They set aflame homes that they did not build,
To strike a blow they're ready any minute.

Alone, a wandering waif—that's now my life
Amid the burnt out woods that once looked stately.
My dearest, do you know where's now your wife,
Where's she you were so happy with but lately?

They ran her down at sunset, on the lawn,
With filthy hands, still red with gore, they caught her.
They jeered at her—she was their prey till dawn,
And then they killed her whom I called my daughter.

She perished, swallowed by this bloody wave,
But nothing could her from our country sever.
It was myself who put her in her grave
That she might face you, face the East forever.

Stoop down to earth—and through the battle-din
You'll hear her love call out for you and languish.
Stoop down to earth—you'll hear her blood within,
Her guiltless blood, appeal to you in anguish.

Be spurred in fight by what from me you hear,
Scourge and destroy the insolent invader
For all of us, and for our country dear,
And for your wife's lone grave, in which I laid her.

Exterminate the brutes, stamp out their crew;
Our love has burnt to bitter ash of hatred;
In this your mother's blessing is with you,
A blessing that's inviolably sacred.

English translation by N. DVORETSKAYA

A. TVARDOVSKY

A TANKMAN'S TALE

'Twas something of a fight. I'm dazed a bit and giddy.
But there's a thing for which I am to blame:
I'm sure in any crowd I'd know that kiddy—
And yet I clean forgot to ask his name.

Ten, maybe twelve, he was. One of those faces
That show their owners must be full of pranks.
You know—the kids that in the by-front places
Are always eager to surround our tanks.

They welcome us; they love us—man and motor—
They bring us soap and tow'ls our hands to wipe,
Are proud to carry bucketfuls of water
And press on us fine plums—not yet quite ripe.

A street was fought for. And they meant to bar it.
We forced our way right forward to the square.
They shelled like hell. To peep from out the turret
Was death. And how the deuce to fix their lair?

A pleasant guess-work—in what hole or nooky
They lay so snug. When sudden-like we hear
A boyish voice call up to us: "Hey, look here,
Comrade Commander! Comrade! Listen here!

I have the place their gun is in. I've scouted. . .
I crawled; you'd want to learn of it, I knew.
In yonder yard you'll find them all!" he shouted.
"But where?"—"I'll show it. Let me come with you."

Well, dallying wouldn't do. "Climb up, old fellow."
The four of us speed through the fire-hail.
The lad's all right. Shells whistle, mewl and bellow. . .
His shirt's puffed out just like a tiny sail.

We turn, come from the rear into that garden
And then step on the gas for all we're worth.
That gun with all the crew into the bargain
We squashed into the black and mellow earth.

I wiped my sweat. The choking smoke was yellow.
From roof to roof a sweeping fire ran.
And I recall my saying: "Thanks, old fellow,"
And shaking hands as if he were a man.

'Twas something of a fight. I'm dazed a bit and giddy.
But there's a thing for which I am to blame:
I'm sure in any crowd I'd know that kiddy—
And yet I just forgot to ask his name.

English translation by N. DVORETSKAYA

S. MARSHAK

INSTEAD OF A SOPRANO

The singer's voice is thrilling
All hearts with pure delight.
When lo! It stops unwilling,—
The nazi grips it tight.

Instead of notes sweet-ringing
All Holland hears, amazed,
The nazi do the singing,
His voice to top-pitch raised.

The nightingale is silent,
But ever, night and day,
Sounds piercing, shrill and violent
The nazi odious bray.

The Dutch are quick in telling
A cuddy from a bird.
So they switch off the yelling
And leave the ass unheard.

English translation by N. DVORETSKAYA

Cartoon by Kukryniksy

Tanya

In the early days of December 1941, in Petrishchevo, near the city of Vereya, the Germans executed an eighteen-year-old Moscow girl, who called herself Tatyana[1].

This happened during the days when Moscow was in the gravest danger. The summer resorts beyond Golitsyno and Skhodnya had become battle-fields; Moscow selected volunteers from among the most daring and sent them across the front to assist the partisan detachments in their struggle in the rear of the enemy lines.

It was then that somebody cut all the wires of the German field telephone in Petrishchevo. Shortly after, a German unit's stable was destroyed, together with the seventeen horses that were in it. But the next evening the partisan was caught.

From stories told by soldiers, the Petrishchevo collective farmers learned the details of the partisan's capture. It appears that he was making his way towards an important object. He wore a fur cap, a fur jacket, quilted trousers and felt boots; a bag was slung across his shoulder. Approaching the object, the man thrust in his bosom a revolver which he had had in his hand, produced a bottle of benzine from his bag, poured out its contents and bent down to strike a match.

At this moment a sentry stole up from behind and threw his arms around the man. The partisan succeeded in wrenching himself free from the German and drawing his revolver, but he did not manage to fire. With a blow over the wrist the soldier knocked the gun from the man's hand and raised an alarm.

The partisan was taken to a peasants' house, in which some officers were billeted. And then only it came to light that the captive was a girl, very young and tall, with large dark eyes and dark bobbed hair combed back.

The peasant and his wife were told to go into the kitchen, but they

[1] Her real name was Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya. *(N. o. R.)*

heard the officer who questioned Tatyana and the latter's rapid unhesitating answers of "no", "I don't know," "I won't tell," "no"; they also heard the whistling of straps and their sickening sound with which they landed on the girl's body. A few minutes later a youngish officer burst from the room into the kitchen, buried his face in his hands and sat thus until the questioning was over, his eyes screwed up and his ears stopped.

Those in the kitchen counted two hundred blows, but Tatyana did not utter a single word. And afterwards she again answered: "no," "I won't tell," only her voice sounded fainter.

After the questioning Tatyana was taken to the house of Vassili Kulik. But her felt boots, fur cap and warm clothing were gone. She walked accompanied by a guard and wore a shirt and trousers only, her bare feet treading the snow.

She entered the house, and by the light of the lamp Vassili and his wife noticed on her forehead a large black-blue mark and abrasions on her legs and arms. The girl's arms were tied behind her back. Her lips were bitten so hard that they were bloody and swollen. She must have bitten them when they tried to beat her into making a confession.

She sat down on a bench, and the German sentry posted himself at the door. With him was another soldier.

Lying on the Russian stove, Vassili and Praskovya Kulik watched the prisoner. She sat quiet and motionless, then she asked for some water. Vassili Kulik stepped off the stove and was about to draw some water from the barrel when the sentry pushed him away.

"Want a beating, too?" he asked viciously.

The soldiers who were placed in the house surrounded the girl and shouted jeering comments. Some struck her with their fists, others held lighted matches up to her chin, while someone passed a saw over the girl's back.

Having had their fun, the soldiers went to sleep. Then the sentry levelled his rifle at Tatyana and ordered her to get up and follow him. In the street he walked behind her, holding the bayonet of his rifle close to her back. Then he shouted: "Zurück!" and led the girl back. Barefooted and only in her underwear, the girl walked back and forth over the snow until such time as her torturer felt cold and decided that it was time to return under the warm roof.

This sentry guarded Tatyana from ten in the evening until two in the morning, and every half-hour or so he would take the girl out into the street for 15—20 minutes. Finally this monster's watch came to an end and a different sentry took his place. The poor girl was permitted to lie down on the bench.

Seizing an opportune moment, Praskovya Kulik spoke to Tatyana.

"Who are you?" she asked.

"What do you want to know for?"

"Where are you from?"

"From Moscow."

"Are your parents alive?"

The girl made no reply. Until dawn she lay motionless, spoke no more and did not even moan, although her feet were completely frozen and must have been causing her anguish.

Nobody knows whether she slept at all that night or of what she was thinking, surrounded by bitter enemies.

In the morning the soldiers started to erect a gallows in the centre of the village.

Again Praskovya spoke to the girl:

"Was it you the night before last?"

"Yes. . . Did any Germans burn?"

"No."

"What a pity! And what did burn?"

Their horses. They say some arms were burned. . ."

At ten in the morning some officers appeared. Their senior asked Tatyana in Russian:

"Tell me, who are you?"

Tatyana made no reply.

"Tell me, where is Stalin?"

"Stalin is at his post," Tatyana replied.

Vassili and his wife could not hear how the cross-examination proceeded, for they were ordered to leave the room, and only when it was over were they allowed to return.

Some of Tatyana's things were then brought from the commandant's office: the vest, the trousers and the stockings. The fur cap, the fur jacket and the felt boots were gone—the petty officers had already divided them among themselves. There was also her camp bag, and in it bottles of benzine, matches, cartridges for her gun, and some sugar and salt.

Tatyana dressed, Praskovya assisting her to put the stockings on her feet, which had turned black by then. On Tatyana's chest the soldiers hung the bottles of benzine and a board with the inscription: "Partisan." Thus they led her into the square, where the gallows stood all ready.

The place of execution was surrounded by a dozen men on horseback with sabres drawn. More than a hundred German soldiers and several officers stood around. The local population had been ordered to gather and witness the execution, but only a few came; some came, stood around a while and silently slunk away, so as not to witness the gruesome sight.

Two noodles packing cases were placed one on top of the other under the noose which dangled from the crossbeam. Tatyana was lifted up, placed on the case, and the noose was fastened around her neck. One of the officers turned the lens of his Kodak on the gallows: the Germans like to photograph executions. The commandant motioned to the soldiers assigned to serve as executioners to wait.

Profiting by this moment, Tatyana turned to the men and women of the collective farm and shouted in a clear, steady voice:

"Hey, comrades! Why look so sad? Be braver, fight, kill the Germans, burn them!"

A German who stood nearby raised his arm — to strike her or to stop her mouth — but she pushed away his arm and continued:

"I am not afraid to die, comrades! To die for one's people is happiness. . ."

The photographer took a picture of the gallows from close and long range, and now he was preparing to take a side view. The executioners looked uneasily at the commandant, and the latter shouted to the photographer:

"Hurry up!"

Here Tatyana turned towards the commandant, and addressing him and the German soldiers, she continued:

"You will hang me in a little while, but I am not alone. There are two hundred million of us, and you can't hang us all. They will avenge me. Soldiers! Surrender before it is too late, for the victory will be ours. And they will take revenge for me. . ."

The Russians standing around started weeping. Some had turned their back on the scene so as not to see what was about to take place.

The executioner pulled the rope, and the noose tightened around Tanya's throat. But with both hands she pushed the noose apart, stood on tiptoe and shouted with all her might:

"Farewell, comrades! Fight on, have no fear! Stalin is with us! Stalin will come! . . ."

The executioner kicked the case with his heavy boot and it slid with a screech over the slippery trampled snow. The upper case fell down and

struck the frozen ground with a thud. The crowd reeled. Somebody's wail rose and died, its echo ringing out to the forest's edge.

She died in captivity, tortured on the fascist rack, but not a single sound betrayed her sufferings and neither did she betray her comrades. She died a martyr, died like a heroine, as befitted daughter of a great people whom none can break or bend! And her memory shall live through the ages!

. . . On New Year's eve the drunken fascists surrounded the gallows, pulled the clothes off the hanged girl and infamously defiled the body. So it hung another day in the centre of the village, cut up and stabbed all over with knives, and on the evening of January 1st the fascists ordered the gallows removed. The village elder called some people, and they dug a hole in the frozen ground, on the outskirts of the village.

Tanya was buried without any honour, beyond the village, under a weeping birch, and a storm soon heaped snow over her burial mound. And soon they came, those for whom Tanya gave her life to pave the way westward in the dark December nights.

Halting on their march our men will come here to stand with bowed heads at her graveside and to say a sincere "thank you." Also to salute her father and mother, who gave birth to and reared such a heroine; and to the teachers who nurtured her, and to her comrades who steeled her spirit.

Her undying glory will spread all over the Soviet land; millions of people will think affectionately of the distant snow-covered grave, and Stalin in thought will visit the epitaph of his faithful daughter.

P. LIDOV

Western front

Radio Broadcast by L. Kosmodemyanskaya—Mother of the Hero of the Soviet Union Z. Kosmodemyanskaya

(*A radio appeal to the youth*)

Dear comrades!

To you,—boys and girls, playmates and friends of my Zoya,—I wish to address a few words. I want to ask you, my dear ones, from the depth of a mother's heart: take revenge on the vile fascist beasts. Take vengeance on the German executioners for the death of my daughter!

Comrades! It breaks my heart to speak of Zoya. You will understand it yourselves. For I have lost the being that was closest and dearest to me, one whom I have nursed and brought up. . . Let none of you, when you grow up to become fathers and mothers, know such horrible grief.

And yet I must speak of Zoya. I must say to all of you, to all our youth: I am proud of my daughter! And to my Zoya I want to say right now, before you, although she will not hear me: I am proud of you, my dear daughter!

Comrades! Zoya had a clear mind and a warm, pure and brave heart. She had the heart of a fighter. We loved each other, we were not merely mother and daughter, we were friends as well. We shared happiness and sorrow. I knew Zoya's attitude towards life, towards her fatherland. I felt calm and comfortable in my daughter's presence: when I felt

depressed, she'd walk up, look into my face and say:

"Mother, what is it? Don't worry, it'll all pass."

She was remarkably cheery and whole-hearted. I am older and more experienced than she, but it was she who helped me to stand all troubles and hardships. . .

Zoya told me that she was going to leave for the front. "Mother," she said, "I am going to the front to join the partisans. To you I may reveal it. You must understand, mother, that I am unable to stand aside at a time when the fascists are threatening Moscow. . ."

I must confess that I could not keep back my tears. It was such a shock to me! And I somehow could not realise that my only little daughter was going to war. . .

Zoya saw my distress and said to me—these are her exact words: "Why do you cry, mother? You told me yourself that I must be brave and honest, didn't you? Mother, I am proud I'm going to fight the fascists, and you should be proud that I'm leaving for the front. You must not see me off with tears!"

And I swallowed my tears. I looked at my daughter, and I even had a feeling of remorse—she was in such a joyous, festive mood, in such high spirits. . . That evening we had a long heart-to-heart talk.

Zoya let me see her off as far as the tram stop. She carried a small camp bag, the one I myself had bought for her. . .

At the tram stop we said goodbye. Zoya told me—even now I can hear her proud, happy voice:

"I shall either return or die a hero; you cheer up, mother."

And she smiled. This was the last I ever saw of her.

Comrades! My heart has been wounded sorely, and time cannot heal the wound. But I am proud that my daughter has bravely embraced a great cause and remained strong, honest and proud to her dying breath. Zoya has met her death like a man, like a fighter.

I am glad to know that Zoya will never be forgotten. In my motherly heart she will live as long as that heart beats, but she will continue to live on in your hearts even when I am gone. Even your children will remember her with pride. . .

I was riding in the tram on the day when the article "Tanya" appeared in the newspaper *Pravda*. I had not read the paper, but I heard everybody repeat: "Tanya," "Tanya," and tell of the heroic deed of a girl, of her remarkable will-power. At that moment I did not even suspect that Tanya was my own daughter. . . Only I felt troubled and couldn't help thinking of my Zoya: how was she faring at the front? And I thought: if my child should be confronted by danger, I hope she'll be as strong as this wonderful Tanya.

And later I found out that Tanya was my Zoya. . .

A curse be on these German-fascist blood-suckers and killers! Let my daughter's gruesome execution haunt the dreams of their mothers and daughters! The blood-thirsty executioners will be given what they deserve! This I know. Fascism will be swept away once forever. Of this I am sure, comrades! But I beg you, as a mother who has lost her beloved child: avenge quickly also my daughter Zoya!

To you, young people, I say: take revenge on the German beasts who have tortured and defiled my daughter!

This I beg of you. And I repeat the words of my unforgettable Zoya:

"Be braver, fight! Death to the fascist executioners! Death to them!"

A Letter from the Front

(Addressed to the mother of the Hero of the Soviet Union Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya—"Tanya,"—L. Kosmodemyanskaya)

It is night now, dark and ominous. There are five of us here, all Red Army commanders. We are sitting in a dug-out. The battle has died down long ago, but it will start again at dawn.

We really should have some sleep but we cannot, for we have read your speech addressed to us, young Red Army men. Never before have we read anything with such passion and fervour.

On the tracks of war we have seen burned villages and towns, insane peasant women holding frost-bitten babies in their arms, raped and tortured girls, hundreds of killed and hanged. We have seen everything that the blood-thirsty hitlerites have left in their wake, and yet there never was a tear in our eyes.

Today your speech has forced tears of wrathful indignation from our eyes. We dried them and solemnly took the following oath: never shall we forget "Tanya" and never shall we forgive the Germans her death. Her sacred image enraptures, sets afire, calls and leads us into the fray.

And to you, our mother, who has brought up a heroine for us, we convey our filial gratitude.

In the moments of danger our men say "Tanya," and "Tanya's" spirit lends them strength and courage. Now for us the name of "Tanya" is the embodiment of patriotism.

We recall how in the battle for Liepaja four German hordes attacked our trenches. Another minute—and they would have been upon us, but just then a girl in the communication service leapt up to her full height in front of us:

"Comrades! Why are you lying down? Forward!"

A mighty wave of strength seemed to lift us up from the trenches, and with a thundering "hurrah" our men rushed into a bayonet attack.

The girl lost her life, but the enemy was thrown back. We did not know her name, but now we call her Tanya.

No, mother, we shall not forget Tanya, and we shall avenge her. She died the death of a hero, but her spirit is alive.

Tanya is alive! Brace up, mother! Victory will be ours!

Greetings!

Senior Lieutenants: KORYAGIN, KURTASHOV, MITYUGOV
Lieutenant BARSUMYAN
Jun. Pol. instructor DESSYATNIK

North-Western Front

Behind the Front-Line

Captain Tsvion returned with frost-bitten cheeks. The pilot was wounded.

They had been under fire on their way back. The explosion of the shells owing to the mighty roar of the engines could not be heard. But, pressing his face against the window, the captain had seen balls of fire darting after them, and little holes appearing on the planes. The pilot had steered the airplane so skilfully, had manoeuvred so boldly and cleverly in the zone of fire, had shot through the fire of the anti-aircraft guns with such speed, that the captain had moved his head away from the window with the intention to gesture his appreciation. That saved his life. The instant he had turned away, a shell-splinter had hit the celluloid in the very spot where he had just leaned his face. Another splinter struck the pilot's leg.

The captain had not slept for many hours. Several times he had been within a

hair-breadth from death. The pilot lost a lot of blood. He had to be helped out of the airplane. But both of them—the captain and the pilot—amazed us by a sort of inner rejoicing. There was astonishment in the pilot's eyes when he told us: "If you could have only seen what's going on there!" His eyes dilated as if they beheld again something great and pleasant. The captain also began his story with expressions of enthusiasm, exclaiming:

"Why, you can't even imagine what mighty forces are surging behind the enemy lines! Our landing was only a spark that set the people aflame!"

* * *

The monotonous roaring of the engines is deafening. Most of the parachutists, sitting alongside the walls of the airplane's cabin, are dozing, their eyes half-closed. Sasha Aksyonov, the famous scout, is supporting a comrade who feels somewhat air-sick. This is not the first time that Sasha has set out to land behind the German lines. He was once in a detachment which the Germans surrounded eight times, marked it off with red pencil on the map and considered it as good as doomed, but still were unable to wipe it out. He knows from experience what dangers are in store for the parachutists. He looks the very incarnation of the Russian land: a lock of flaxen hair escaping from under his cap, his eyes a cornflower blue, gestures bold and sweeping. When he was introduced to us, Aksyonov said:

"Born of my own free will in 1913."

That was the last joke he cracked. Now he looked as grim as the others. There was one thought in everybody's mind: what reception was being prepared for them down on the ground, beneath the wings of the airplane?

Then, like a jolt scattering away all drowsiness and stray thoughts, the command to get ready rang out. The men jumped up from the benches, squared their shoulders, tested the strength of their straps, put their arms into the rings of the parachutes. At once it became crowded and dark in the cabin. The hatch was opened, and a gust of wind rushed in.

Then came the command:

"Jump!"

One after the other the parachutists dropped into the frosty blue space. Captain Tsvion jumped the last.

Beneath him lay a little village lost in the snow. As he was descending, the captain saw some running grey figures. They were silhouetted distinctly against the background of the snow. When still lower he could make out their motions, the figures were hastening towards the field where the wind was carrying him. For an instant he saw himself surrounded on all sides, recalled the admonition of the general: "Fight, captain, to the last bullet!"—and felt strong enough to carry out that instruction. While still in the air he began to undo the holders on his legs, and when he hit against a snowdrift he caught hold of the upper guy-ropes and, straining as if on a trapeze, began to pull down the parachute, which crumpled slowly and finally lay flat.

The small grey figures were coming closer. Hidden by the snow, the captain loaded his tommy-gun; but glancing ahead, again he immediately lowered it and rose on his elbow. With his other hand he shielded his eyes from the sun.

The first to get there were some boys, our tireless urchins. They were followed by grown-ups with welcoming arms outstretched. The wind wafted towards him their rejoicing cries:

"It's not Germans, it's us!"

The boys swarmed around him, embraced his legs, brushed off the snow. Women came running up, likewise full of glee. One of them took off her shawl and tried to put it on the captain's head.

"Why, what are you trying to do, mother? I have a warm cap on."

"That's all right, sonny, this way it'll be warmer."

Then he was showered with questions: how soon would the Red Army come, how was Moscow, how was Stalin, how were things at the front. They immediately informed him that there were no Germans in their village, and each invited him to his or her own house.

Surrounded by the crowd, the captain proceeded toward the village. At its outskirts they met the old men.

"How long we've waited for you!" they exclaimed. "Now—according to our Russian custom—let's kiss!"

And embracing the captain each one of the old men pressed him to his bosom.

He went into the house of an old woman whose son had been killed by Germans. He had scarcely sat down at the window, unfolded a map and began to figure out the distance to the rallying point that had been agreed upon, when a jug of hot milk and a large slice of bread appeared on the table. He was in a hurry, but the old woman stood in the doorway and barred his way out.

"I just won't let you go until you have eaten!"

And while the captain was having his snack she kept her eyes fixed on him all the time. And there was so much motherly love, solicitude and joy of reunion in those eyes that the captain could not help thinking of his own mother. As he looked

A man from the sanitation service carrying a wounded comrade

at her, he thought to himself: no matter what cruel torture the Germans subjected her to, they could never extort a single word from her that would betray him.

A whole flock of excited children rushed into the hut.

"Uncle, there are your men over there,—we saw them jump from the sky. Right near the forest."

"That's fine. Go tell them to come here."

The children dashed away for it in their eagerness to carry out their first military assignment.

Most of the parachutists landed safely. One had lost his felt-boots while still in the air, but the moment he started to wrap his feet in the silk of his parachute, there appeared before him another pair of felt-boots. One of the lads had run to the village and brought his grandfather's felt-boots.

An interesting incident occured when the parachutist Zdanovsky landed near a farmstead where there were some Germans. Three Germans immediately rushed out toward him, apparently intending to capture him alive. But the snow in the field was very deep, and that somewhat retarded their progress. Zdanovsky took advantage of a gust of wind. Before the very eyes of the Germans the still expanded parachute lifted him up and carried him away toward the forest. The Germans opened fire, but he succeeded in landing safely. He made for a ravine near the forest and, emerging from the other side, reached the rallying point.

Half-an-hour later all the parachutists were at the appointed place. They established contact with headquarters, organized reconnoissance along a circle and proceeded to carry out their assignment.

The commander's post was situated in a squat and roomy hut. The hostess, eager to do her utmost, stacked the table with everything she had, even the bacon she had kept hidden from the Germans.

"Warm yourselves, dear ones, eat your fill; there's nothing we'd grudge you."

The door was opening and closing incessantly. People kept coming in all the time. The commander was too busy to shake hands with everybody, yet many of the visitors were so excited that they could not be put off with a mere handshake.

The news of the landing rapidly spread to the neighbouring villages.

The night was dark and the blizzard so violent that people were swept off their feet. But they kept on emerging from huts and dug-outs,—some carrying rifles, some machine-guns, some hand-grenades, and some nothing more than axes.

They were going to lend a hand to the parachutists.

The Germans had spread stories about the fall of Leningrad, about street-fighting in Moscow. But no one had believed them. People had held on to the leaflets with the text of Stalin's speech made on November 7th in the Red Square, which had been dropped from airplanes, kept Stalin's portraits. They had stowed away arms, trusting that the time would arrive when the Red Army would advance again. Now that moment had come.

"It's too good to be true, and of course we couldn't wait till morning!" With these words a peasant in a torn sheep-skin coat and with a German tommy-gun in his hand entered the hut. He shook off the icicles from his beard, squinted, saw immediately who was the commander, and reported:

"A German punitive detachment is in our village, there are twelve men."

"Do you know in which hut they are?"

"The third to the right. There are two carts standing in the yard. The devils are asleep now."

"Sergeant Sidorov, here! Take several men. . ."

"Why, comrade commander!" The peasant's voice sounded hurt. "And what about us? We can deal with them ourselves!"

"Well, then go to it!"

Some time later the peasant in the torn sheep-skin coat, accompanied by other peasants, came back driving two German carts loaded with German arms. They had dispatched the men of the punitive detachment without firing a single shot, using only axes and bayonets.

By sunrise the small landing party had become a considerable force. The commander of the group knew exactly how many Germans were stationed in the various villages, where their dumps were, what was going on on the roads. The Germans, of course, also knew that parachutists had landed in the neighbourhood, and were taking measures to capture them. But they had no idea of the actual size of the landing party and that the local population had rallied around it so quickly.

From a village situated on the summit of a hill, whence the landing of the parachutists could have been easily watched, a sledge with hay left in the morning. It was kept under observation. When it came close to the forest, the parachutists who saw it were astonished to see the driver remove the straw and begin furiously to hack the sledge to pieces. They rushed over to him. It turned out that beneath the hay lay two Germans dressed like peasants and covered up with matting. They were on their way to report to their superiors on the size and location of the landing party.

On the way back from reconnoissance, senior lieutenant Petrov with three of his men went to warm up into a hut at the end of the village. Just then six German carts loaded with goods stolen from the peasants drove into the village at the other end. Large as the village was, there was not a single traitor there who would warn the Germans of the landing party. Several panting women rushed into the hut where Petrov and his men had stopped.

"Germans!" they shouted.

The parachutists took up position on the porch and opened fire from their tommy-guns. Seven Germans fell near their carts, the last raised his hands.

At noon a peasant delegate from a neighbouring village came to the commander's post. He reported that the rear-guard of some German division was stationed in their village, and he asked on behalf of the people that an attack be made that night, while the Germans were still unaware of any danger.

"We'll all lend a hand," said the delegate. "Young and old are ready to fight the accursed invaders. Life under their heel isn't worth living anyhow."

The commander bent over the map. That operation had been planned for the next day, when a larger force was to collect. But since the people asked for it, and the Germans were not expecting any attack, he decided to act sooner.

That same evening some of the partisans infiltrated into the German positions. After nightfall the parachutists, camouflaged in white overalls, surrounded the village and noiselessly dispatched the sentries. For the first time in three months the mighty sounds of the Russian "hurrah!" rang out in that district. The Germans leaped out of the huts in their underthings, and they fell stricken by bullets from tommy-guns or pierced with bayonets.

In eight of the huts the Germans shut the doors and opened fire through the windows. One of these huts belonged to Darya Lukashova. Her entire life was connected with that house. In it she had been married, here she brought up her son. Every nook in it was familiar; with her own hands she had rebuilt the stove and last year had covered its roof with thatch. But now she herself stole through the garden toward her own house and set fire to it with a brand from the neighbouring hut which was already on fire.

One hundred and eleven Germans, among them two officers, were destroyed that night. The parachutists and the partisans seized important military documents, large quantities of arms, big stocks of French wines, Norwegian canned goods and Bulgarian cigarettes.

* * *

The events described above were but incidental actions of the landing party. At the same time it fulfilled brilliantly the main assignment it had been set. The partisan movement, which gained new moment after the landing of the party, helped out in carrying out this assignment. Behind the enemy lines telegraph wires are being cut, troop trains are being derailed, munition dumps are in flames, and the invaders are never safe either in villages or on the roads. The German command is unable to extinguish this conflagration, for the landing of the parachutists was but the spark that was needed to start the flame.

P. SINTSOV

A Mother

In the town of Uvarov, just beyond Mozhaisk, during the chill November days of the year 1941, the Germans tortured and put to death a woman-partisan, Alexandra Dreiman, and her new-born son.

She went to the forest and joined the partisans on a rainy, windy night when the enemy's tanks were already in the square, in front of the school, and the German cars were moving to Borodino and Mozhaisk. Those were the alarming days of the German onslaught towards Moscow.

No one seems to remember now whether Alexandra had been asked to come and join the partisans. She just appeared and everybody saw her on the other side of the gully, near the tent: a woman no longer young, wearing a padded jacket, tall boots and a dark kerchief. Accustomed from childhood to constant toil, she at once asked the commander of the detachment Semion Khlebutin what she was expected to do. He smiled at her and answered: "You just keep house for us."

So Alexandra rolled up the sleeves of her jacket and brought a boilerful of water from the brook which gurgled down a stony slope near at hand; and from that very moment she fell in with the rhythm of everyday life, drying the boots of the partisans—just back from scouting—over the fire in the mud-hut, helping the cook with the dinner, cleaning the arms and tidying the tent. Both day and night Alexandra went on working, and everyone in the camp was soon near and dear to her; she would jokingly call them "my children," though there were quite elderly people among those living in the forest. They in return gave her the tenderest name they could think of, they called her "Mother."

The detachment had been in action for a fortnight. Snow fell, and the hardened hillocky ground grew even. The warble of the birds in the forest ceased, but the shooting did not stop, neither did the rattling of the machine-guns—a far-off, dry sound like the rasp of a stick against the stakes of a paling. German tommy-guns, helmets, soldiers' grey coats, cartridges were brought to the camp. The partisans attacked baggage trains, exterminated the fascists who were roaming about in the villages. The commissar of the detachment Pavel Fomin was getting his men ready for large-scale operations.

The enemy was rallying his tank divisions for a new assault on Moscow. Fomin decided to blow up the bridge on the main road and thus to impede the movement of the German columns. An experienced scout was needed, one who would know all the paths and by-ways in the forest, for the mines could not be transferred to the bridge along the open forest cuttings; bringing them through the dense thickets was preferable. And here it was that Alexandra asked to be sent into action. She knew the Uvarov forests as well as her own house, as well as the village Porechye where she grew up. Had they not often wandered about in those forests all day long, picking mushrooms and berries for the landlord and cutting willow-rods for weaving baskets? Here, in the vicinity of Uvarov she had drudged for the landlord together with her mother, and later on, after the Revolution, she had studied at the village school. Recently she has been elected chairman of the Yerishov village Soviet. Who better than she could know all the footpaths and secret tracks in the Uvarov forests?

At night, when the bridge was crowded with enemy tanks and lorries full of infantrymen, it was blown up. In the morning the partisans returned to the forest, tired, noisy and feeling very hungry. Only Alexandra kept to a corner of the mud-hut and lay there all day, shivering and covered up with her sheep-skin coat. She was pale and pensive. Twice the commissar of the partisan-body Pavel Fomin came up to her. But she muffled herself in her sheep-skin and pretended to be asleep. At daybreak she rose, boiled the water, tidied things up in the tent, put on her padded jacket and took leave of the partisans.

"I can't stay," she said to Fomin. "Haven't got the strength to. Don't want to be a burden. . . It hurts to leave you, but I must go. . ."

Nobody knew the true reasons of her departure. Evening had come when the cook told everybody that Alexandra Dreiman was expecting a child. She had worn her sheep-skin coat all the time, because she was afraid that if people noticed something they would fuss over her. When scouting she had sat down three times to have a rest, and the partisans had waited for her. Now, was this the time and the place to be hampered by children?

The cook stopped speaking, and the crashes of bursting shells brought back to their minds the terrible battle that was going on all around them, in the fields, on the roads, in the woods. But terrible though it was, in the eyes of a mother this battle could not abate the importance of the experience so natural yet so distressing in a woman's life—the birth of a new being.

The scouts on duty were given orders to search the town Uvarov for Alexandra, to

surround her with care and to guard her from the enemy. But they did not succeed in finding her, and a week later the people in the camp heard that she had been brought with bound hands to the German commandant's office which was situated in the large stone building of the new school.

After that the detachment could learn nothing about their comrade. She had disappeared. Only ten days later at daybreak the carpenter Efrem Tsygankov, the father of one of the partisans, saw two German soldiers dragging along in the snow a bloody corpse, and when they were shoving it under the ice into the lake, he recognized it to be the body of Alexandra Dreiman.

In what way she had fallen into the hands of the Germans, what tortures she had endured, what had happened to her new-born child, no one in Uvarov knew. And only now, from information given by the local inhabitants Anna Minaeva, Anna Gusliakova, Evdoxia Kalionova and Efrem Tsygankov, who saw how the Germans led away and how they tortured the heroic woman, after talks with people who had been imprisoned together with her in the yard of the printing-house, as well as from the deposition of the German commandant's interpreter Ilyinsky, captured by our troops,—only now are we in a position to form a vivid picture of the martyrdom of this partisan and mother.

She reached the town at night and took up her abode in a little house where there was a physician. He advised her to keep to her bed, to avoid the streets: Uvarov was full of executions, of the moans and tears of the tortured, and emotions are harmful before lying in. Alexandra counted up the contents of the little store of canned food and sausages given her by the partisans, and for three days she lay undisturbed. On the fourth, however, someone knocked at the door. Alexandra looked out of the window: some German soldiers were standing in a semi-circle near the porch. She threw a warm shawl over her shoulders and opened the door. In burst a fat little German. He struck her. She tottered but was not given time to fall. Two of the soldiers grabbed her, bound her hands and led her to a little stone shed in the yard of the printing-house.

She found many of her friends there. They were all standing pressed close together: sitting down was not allowed, and in any case it was hardly possible to sit in such a dense throng.

Alexandra made her way to the wall and leaned against it; her hands bound tightly behind her back swelled painfully, but she bore it in silence. In the night she was summoned by a soldier before the German commandant of the town of Uvarov captain Haase. There she was questioned. The interpreter Ilyinsky was present at the examination.

"Sit down," Haase said.

Alexandra went up to his table and said in a calm voice:

"Let me give birth to my child. Only three days remain. . . Then you may kill me."

Haase looked at her, laughed and ordered his men to undress her. She made an attempt to resist, but somebody's heavy hobnailed boot struck her and she fell. She was then forced to stand up, but not allowed to sit. Haase said:

"In the name of your child tell us where we can find the partisan detachment. We know you come from there."

After a moment pause she answered:

"I know nothing and will tell you nothing. You've got me now, so it means I'll have to die. But not a word will I tell you about the detachment, torture me as much as you will."

Then Haase asked whether she was a Communist. The partisan shook her head saying: "I'm too poorly educated." Then the commandant ordered her to walk through the streets of the town and show them all th ehouses where her friends lived. She should have to walk bare-footed and naked with nothing but her shawl on, but the more houses she showed, the oftener would she have the opportunity of warming herself.

Two soldiers led her through the sleeping town; her body smarted from the frosty wind; she tried to muffle herself up in her shawl and walked silently on. Her fair hair got undone; she twisted it into a tidy knot. Her bare and swollen feet stepped on the icy, well-trampled down snow. Just before daybreak she returned to the commandant's and the soldier reported that this woman had not found a single house she knew. She was led back to the shed, and the people there made way before her, such sympathy did her appearance create. She was blue with cold; even in the faint light of dawn, in this gloomy shed one could discern how aged and worn her face had grown. She tried to lie down on a coat that somebody had given her, but a German soldier attended by the self same interpreter ordered everybody out of the shed leaving Alexandra alone. He did not allow her to lie down: she should stand up, just stand up.

Three days she remained in the solitary confinement of the shed, half naked, without either water or food. No one knows what her thoughts were, her torments, her sufferings. Only once the collective farmer Eudoxia Kalionova secretly brought her some bread and soup. She knocked on the wall of the shed and heard a stifled moan.

Kalionova began to weep. The Germans seized her, took away the bread and soup, and beat her up.

Then Alexandra was brought again before the commandant. She could not move from emaciation, her aching body was swollen with cold. Again Haase asked her:

"Where is the partisan detachment? Was it you who blew up the bridge?"

The woman looked at the man with a fixed, steady gaze, as if she were trying to understand what it was that he wanted to extort from her. Then she said:

"Yes, it's all my doing."

She uttered not a word more and lost consciousness. Anna Gusliakova, who was just passing by, heard someone screaming in the commandant's office. Stealing up to the window, she saw Alexandra lying prone on the floor while two soldiers beat her with their rifle butts.

The pangs of child-birth started that very night. She was taken to the shed, thrown on the cold planks. All night long the people in the houses next the printing-house yard could hear a woman's shrieks and moans. Everyone knew that it was Alexandra, but on pain of death it was forbidden to approach the yard, so nobody could help her, she was there alone to walk in solitude the painful path of martyrdom, faint with hunger, exhaused with beating and torture. She bore the new being that was within her, and somewhere in the depths of her soul she found the strength that kept her alive. Her child was a son. She washed him with the snow that had made its way through the chinks in the shed, then she fainted away.

She came to herself at the commandant's. They had wrapped her in a kind of dirty overall. Haase said to her:

"Your son will live only if you tell us where the detachment is."

Alexandra drew herself up to her full height, looked at everybody with wide-open eyes and whispered:

"Spare the kid... He is innocent."

They silenced her with a bayonet, then she moaned and suddenly cried out:

"Don't imagine you'll ever drown our country in blood! You'll kill my son... well! I've a whole forestful of sons, a whole detachment!"

Again they struck her. She reeled. Haase kicked her. But the end of her tortures had not yet come.

She was asked whether she would go to the forest and just show the road to the partisan camp. She rose asking for her boots and coat. She could not walk, so they laid her down in a sledge. Efrem Tsygankov was witness to the fact that Alexandra led the Germans to the East whilst the partisans were camped in the forest to the West of the town. When night came, she returned, or rather she was driven back along the streets of the town, all beaten up again and covered with blood.

In the commandant's office she was shown her dead son. Then for the first time during all these days of martyrdom she wept as though at the end of her tether.

They led her then to the porch of the school where the commandant's office was. People were standing about, they were ordered to move on. Alexandra dried her tears lest they should betray her weakness, and said hurriedly:

"Don't give in to these wild beasts, the day of our victory will come! Good-bye, my dear ones!..."

She was pushed with the butt end of a rifle, lost her footing and fell into the snow, then struggled up again, bare-footed, all black and blue, swollen, excruciated by the fascist henchmen. Again her voice resounded in the thickening darkness:

"Mothers, dear ones, do you hear me? I go to my death at the hands of these brutes. I didn't spare my son, but I've kept my secret. Do you hear me, mothers?"

Now the German soldiers were forcing the people away, and Alexandra was dragged into the yard, pierced with bayonets, beaten, then stabbed again until with a wild cry of agony she parted with life like a brave warrior, like a true hero of the land of the Soviets.

Until the foe is crushed, Alexandra's last call, this call which sounds from the depths of the soul of a martyr, will be remembered by all honest people in our country and by all those in whose breasts a mother's heart beats. And in the memory of the people nothing will ever efface the heroic image of a mother whose love for her country and freedom proved stronger than her love for her own child.

O. KURGANOV

Western front

Matvey Kuzmin

Matvey Kuzmin had a reputation for unsociableness. He lived in a solitary hut on the outskirt of the village, was sullen ond taciturn, and was fond of wandering about alone in the forests and marshes with his dog and a gun slung over his shoulders.

In the spring, when the snow began to

melt and take on a bluish hue, when the buds swelled on the trees and the grouse began to foregather for the breeding season, he and his grandson Vassya would depart for some distant lake, where the two would spend weeks on end in an osier hut.

The collective farmers did not actually dislike Matvey Kuzmin, but they were wary of him: who knows what lurks in the mind of a man who never opens his mouth for weeks on end and who wanders in the woods nobody knew where? However, as a collective-farm watchman he performed his duties conscientiously, and although he was already over eighty, there was not a man in the district who would risk an attempt on the collective farm's property when it was guarded by old Matvey and his shaggy, mangy, savage dog Sharik.

When the Germans occupied the village, the commandant, who had been told by some traitor about the unsociable habits of the old man, thought he would be just the right person for a village elder. He was summoned to the commandant's office. There he was at first offered a glass of German spirits. Matvey declined the refreshment on the plea of ill-health, and he also excused himself from the post of village elder on the plea of his age, deafness and general debility. After that he was let alone.

So Matvey continued living in his little hut on the edge of the village, and as he had neither pig, nor cow, nor chickens, nor geese, nothing in fact that might interest the hungry and vermin-ridden Germans, nobody molested him.

However, the Germans recalled the old man when they received orders to attack a Red Army unit commanded by Gorbunov, which was stationed a score of kilometers or so from the village. The Germans were anxious to learn about some secret forest paths by which they could make their way into the rear of the Red Army's lines. And who would be more familiar with these paths than old Matvey, who had wandered through them time without number and knew every tree and every marshy patch? The old man was summoned to the officer who suggested that at night he should lead a German battalion into the rear of our lines, and in reward promised him money, flour and a fine hunting rifle.

The old man stood before the officer lost in thought, twisting his shaggy sheep-skin cap in his hands. The officer gazed at him impatiently, drumming meanwhile on the table with his knuckles.

"And how much will you give me?" asked the old woodsman at last, emerging from his brown study.

"Oh, tell him that the German high command is generous towards those who serve us faithfully. Offer him a thousand rubles," answered the officer.

The old man listened quietly as these words were translated to him, gazing for some time at the officer from under his grey eyebrows, and then after some reflection said:

"You buy cheaply."

"Tell him we will give him fifteen hundred... two thousand," rejoined the officer, beginning to get annoyed.

The old man slowly adjusted his cap over his eyes and said:

"Very well, I will lead you there by a secret path which nobody knows but me."

The collective farmers saw him leave the officer's quarters and make his way home, hiding a smile in his grey beard. Half-an-hour later they saw his grandson Vassya run out of the hut, get on his skis and make his way across the frozen river to the forest. Later they saw the old man bring his broad hunting skis out into the street and give them a good rubbing down with grease. Then he busied himself with other preparations for the journey. It cannot be denied that at the sight of these activities many of the villagers cursed the old recluse in their hearts and regretted that they had not driven him out of the collective farm on time.

That evening a battalion of Germans on skis, headed by a captain, in full battle equipment and tugging machine-guns along on sleds, left the village and made their way towards the forest. They were preceded by Matvey Kuzmin, gliding along on his skis with a sweeping hunter's stride. The battalion disappeared into the forest.

The old man led the Germans through the deep virgin snow. All night they stumbled along through the drifts, through the forest wastes and ravines. Time and again the officer, who was keeping track of their course with a compass, stopped the old man marching ahead of the detachment and asked through an interpreter whether it would be long before they arrived at their destination.

"Patience, patience, we shall be there by the morning," was the old man's invariable reply.

At daybreak the detachment arrived at the border of the forest and halted before a ravine with steep banks covered with scrub. The old man took off his cap, wiped his sweating brow with it, glanced at the sun which was beginning to rise above the snow-covered fields, and then at the Germans who, utterly exhausted and haggard from their long march, were emerging from the wood, their camouflage overalls torn and tattered from contact with the bushes. The forest was so still that one could distinctly hear the snow settling beneath

the skis and the robin-redbreasts chirping in the nut copses.

Suddenly the silence was rent by a brisk rattling of machine-guns coming from the other bank of the ravine. These were our machine-guns, firing quite close, almost point-blank. Before they realized what was happening, dozens of Germans collapsed in the snow, never to rise again. And still the machine-guns rattled away. The Germans turned and made for the forest, but before they could reach it the machine-guns opened fire on their flank. The snow became dotted with dirty grey clods—dead Germans in their tattered overalls.

The officer dashed towards the old man. Matvey Kuzmin stood on a little mound, bareheaded, a conspicuous object, visible from afar. The wind blew through his grey locks, and his narrowed eyes, gleaming and wrathful beneath his bent brows, gazed mockingly at the grey-clad Germans scurrying hither and thither on their skis, sinking up to their knees in the snow, stumbling, leaping to their feet and again falling. The officer, trembling with rage, pulled out a revolver and levelled it at Matvey Kuzmin. The old man chuckled:

"So you wanted to buy old Matvey for a couple of thousand rubles, you swine! Don't you know the soul of a Soviet citizen is not to be bought? You have only purchased your own death."

The old man turned with contempt from the revolver levelled at his breast. He noticed that our machine-guns were not firing in his direction, fearing to hit him. The Germans were taking advantage of this to escape into the forest from that side. The old man waved his shaggy cap and cried out loudly to our machine-gunners:

"Now don't you be afraid of hitting old Matvey, boys! Just fire at them, fire at the vipers! Don't let a single snake crawl away alive! . . ."

The words were hardly out of his mouth when the old man collapsed, struck down by the officer's bullet. But the officer himself did not escape. He had scarcely run a couple of paces when he fell headlong in the snow, riddled with machine-gun bullets.

With their rifles at the ready, our men leaped from their trenches to pursue the fleeing Germans, felling them as they ran with bullet, bayonet and rifle butt.

Together with them ran Vassya Kuzmin, the old woodsman's grandson, whom the latter had sent on in advance to warn our troops of the enemy's plans.

Not a single German escaped. Over two hundred and fifty fascist corpses were left lying in the snow at the edge of the forest.

So perished Matvey Kuzmin, an old collective farmer. He sold his life dearly—at the price of the lives of two hundred and fifty Germans.

B. POLEVOY

A Letter

The night sky is just tinged with blue by the moon rays, the frosty air takes on a deeper blue, the surrounding field is one vast stretch of pure shimmering snow.

We are on an aerodrome of short-distance bombers. It is near midnight, and work at the aerodrome is in full swing. Every now and then an airplane returns from its night raid: one hears the approaching hum of the motor, points of light float in the air, the electric letter "T" appears on the snow, a searchlight flashes, and the plain skims over the field raising a cloud of snowdust with its skis.

The commanding post has its quarters in a small watch-house on the aerodrome. Inside the stove is red hot. The squadron leaders are sitting at the table, on another table nearby tower the containers full of supper for the airmen.

The roar of a motor is drawing near. One of the squadron leaders, glancing at his watch, says: "That is Klionov!"

We have heard much about this airman; his daring raids and the heavy damage he inflicts in the enemy rear, on marching columns and fortifications are famous.

Now we see him enter the watch-house of the commanding post. He is a tall, square shouldered, fair young man, with big capable hands. He is just back from a successful bombing raid, his face all aglow from the frost wind. His fur-booted feet seem enormous. Having reported to his superior, he sits down at the table and unfastens the strings of his helmet.

"Is supper ready?"

He eats heartily, with the appetite of a healthy man. His pilot, Semionov, a black-haired, keen-witted fellow who seems shorter than he really is beside the giant Klionov, gulps down his supper in haste and takes a seat near the flight-commander of the regiment's flagship. Together they map out the route: this time Klionov is given the difficult task of scouting to the

enemy rear. The flight is to last three hours.

After that both of them, flying officer and pilot, tie on their helmets, button up their fur-lined leather coats and come up to the commander of the regiment.

"May we hop off?"

They quit the room. A roar of starting motors, a whirl of snow dust, and through the frosty blue haze the plane is seen rising into the air; its lights fly past high up in the sky under the stars. Then the lights disappear. The plane has gone.

Three hours pass. Klionov is not back. Half-an-hour more—no Klionov. An hour passes—no Klionov, no Semionov!

"They'll get through!" says the flight-commander of the regiment. "Klionov will always manage to scramble out."

But inwardly he feels anxious. Each time the roar of a plane on its way back from an air raid is heard, the secret hope arises: Klionov! But Klionov is not there. Planes come and go, and still no Klionov in sight.

Day light is beginning to dawn. The stars are paling. A strong wind tears at the flaps of greatcoats, lashes the men's faces. A limpid roseate hue spreads slowly over the East. White fluffy smoke clouds float over the village chimney-pots. It is morning. And Klionov has not returned.

. . . A fortnight went by. Our units forced the Germans out of the village of Petrovka. News spread that Klionov's plane had been found.

The plane was lying near the outskirts of a forest, all pierced by the splinters of anti-aircraft shells, half buried under the snow. The bodies of both the airmen, Klionov and Semionov, were dug out.

The neighbouring collective farmers told us the story of their death. The plane had been brought down at night, on its return flight. The Germans surrounded it, and at daybreak they made an attempt to approach it, having received the order to bring the two pilots back alive—a long yearned for prize. Klionov and Semionov greeted the German attack with machine-gun fire.

All this took place quite close to the village. Two hours running Klionov and Semionov fought the Germans, machine-gunning every man who attempted to approach them. They killed or wounded 36 nazis. When all their machine-gun disk plates were used up, Klionov and Semionov took to their hand-grenades. They were soon short of these too, and the Germans began to press forward more boldly, narrowing the circle around them. The pilots seized their pistols. They had to be sure of their aim, as there remained but a limited number of cartridges. Twelve shots—eight killed. Now each of them had but the last seventh cartridge left. The enemies were creeping up quite close. All was up. . . . A farewell embrace, a brotherly kiss, and turning towards the East, they pressed the muzzles of their pistols to their temples. Two shots rang out. They had preferred death to captivity.

A letter addressed to his comrades-in-arms was found in a little inner pocket of Klionov's vest, it had escaped the Germans' notice. He had scribbled it hurriedly, apparently just a few minutes before his death. There was scarcely any hope that it would reach the addresses; yet it had reached them.

It ran as follows:

"Dear comrades! We are going to die. We were brought down and surrounded by the Germans. We fought to the very last cartridge. Comrades, our farewell greetings to you—Kolya's and mine. Remember us, don't forget us. We have decided to shoot ourselves, our faces turned to the East, facing you, dear friends, facing our Army. Write to my mother, her address is in my knapsack. Comrades, write her a long letter. Tell her that at the last moment I thought of her, of our life together in the little flat on the Serpukhovskaya, with my father's big portrait on the wall and the cuckoo-clock. Tell her not to weep, not to mourn. The day of our victory will come and our happy people will compose songs in memory of all those who died for their country. Maybe our story—Kolya's and mine—will also be put into verse or sung about in a song, so that we shall live again!"

Factories, plants and towns will be named after our glorious fallen heroes! On days of national celebrations their dear faces will look down upon us from banners and placards. They will go on living in the ballads and songs of our people.

Let everyone of us during our campaigns and battles cherish in his mind as a thing sacred every deed of valour that he was witness of, so that the exploits thus enshrined in our memories may live on till the glorious day of our coming victory!

E. GABRILOVICH

Exploit of a School Teacher

Varvara Liashkova has been teaching at a primary school for twenty-five years. During the last twelve years she has been working as head-mistress of an elementary school in the town of Yeletz.

At the end of November, a medical

station was opened in the school. The enemy was then approaching the town. On the 4th of December, the wounded were evacuated. The Red Army units were moving to other localities. Sixteen Red Army men, not having received orders to leave, remained on the spot.

The Germans entered the town. Shells were exploding, machine-guns rattling. Now it was too late to think of leaving, and the school teacher decided to save the Red Army men. To stay on in the school had become dangerous, so she hid them in the cellar. Very soon seventeen more Red Army men made their way to the building; they too were given shelter in the cellar by V. Liashkova.

The enemy was everywhere about the place. Machine-guns were set up in the garrets of the neighbouring houses. The school was being watched by German soldiers armed with tommy-guns. Going out into the streets was not permitted. Scraping together all her provisions, V. Liashkova fed the Red Army men, but by the evening all her store of food-stuff had run out.

Heedless of danger, V. Liashkova made up her mind to get help from some friends of hers, all of them railwaymen: the Mukhins, Tokarevs and Sarychevs. These comrades were warmly responsive to her request and gave her some cereals, potatoes, cabbage, bread and also a few articles of clothing.

Having fed the Red Army men, V. Liashkova held council with her friends as to what should be done next. They advised her to reconnoitre and to find out the enemy's whereabouts. She betook herself to the suburb of Argaman, where she visited the parents of some of her pupils. After a talk with them she had the exact location of the enemy and knew how many men strong they were.

"On my way back," says V. Liashkova, "I met fifteen Germans making for our school. Among them I noticed one of the Yeletz townsfolk dressed in civilian clothes. Stopping me, they started questioning me as to where the Red Army men were hiding. I well understood what all this meant and told them I knew nothing. Unable to obtain an answer, one of the German scoundrels struck me twice on the cheek.

I returned post-haste to the school, told our men what I had experienced and transferred them to the garret. Then I locked the door, went downstairs and took up my post near a broken window so as to watch and see what was going on.

The Germans entered the furnace-room. I hurried to them. One of them asked in broken Russian: 'Russ soldier here?' I answered: 'No.' The fellow in civilian clothes kept affirming the men were in the school. I was threatened with being shot, and then they started their search. They prowled in every corner, except the garret."

Four times the Germans came and rummaged in all the rooms, with no result whatever. For four days V. Liashkova kept a vigilant watch over the lives of the thirty-three defenders of our country. She fed them twice a day, she boiled water for them. In case escape should be possible, she provided many of them with civilian clothes.

Street fighting started in Yeletz on the eve of December 9th. The Red Army was pressing forward and gaining ground. The enemy fled panic-stricken. In the morning, V. Liashkova saw the first Red Army men who had entered the town. Bearing the glad tidings, she ran to the school, hurried up the stairs to the garret and in great excitement called out:

"Comrades, the Red Army is here!"

The men ran out into the streets, their eyes moist for sheer joy. And how heartily they shook the school teacher's hands, how warmly they embraced and kissed her!

A. USTINOV

You Are no Orphan, Kiddy!

(On the noble initiative of the women of the "Krasny Bogatyr" factory)

Little Zoya is in the hospital. Her eyes are full of unchildish horror, her hands and feet are frost-bitten. Trembling she whispers something and keeps on glancing back, as if being chased by somebody unseen.

Something terrible has happened to this little girl. The German pack stormed into Spas-Pomazkino and started to burn down houses and shoot away at the people. Zoya's mother woke the children and just as they were the family fled from the village. Clasping the baby to her heart, she led her three-year-old by the hand, while her six-year-old boy and daughter ran alongside. The Germans aimed, a shot rang out, and the mother fell dead in the snow, dropping the baby. Zoya grasped the baby in her arms, the six- and three-year-old children clutched her skirt tightly. And she herself not even ten yet!

Thus the three of them kept on run-

ning. . . Once more the monsters fired and killed the six-year-old boy. He fell bleeding profusely. The girl with the baby ran as fast as she could. Behind her staggered the three-year-old tot, weeping loudly, stumbling, falling on the snow and rising again. A fascist bullet mowed him down also, and he dropped on the snow, the little arms flung wide apart in his death agony. The girl kept on running, demented with fear and horror. The baby froze and stopped breathing. Pressing the tiny corpse to her, the girl sped on and on. The wind tore off her kerchief, and snow fell on the little blond head. . .

"Comrades, this is unbearably terrible. . . And there are such a great many children just like Zoya! Deprived of their fathers and mothers, homeless miserable orphans. No matter how good a command a man may have of himself, he will be unable to restrain his tears seeing such a little girl calling: 'mother, mother!' in her delirium and moving her bandaged little feet restlessly, as if still running, running. . . One cannot help imagining one's son or daughter in Zoya's place, and a chill grips the heart."

This is how Elena Semyonovna Ovchinnikova, a woman worker at the Moscow rubber factory, felt. Drawing herself to her full height, pale with emotion, she stretched out her arms.

"Comrades! Let me have the floor. . . Comrades, just a few words from a mother. . ."

This happened in shop number 3 of the Moscow "Krasny Bogatyr" factory. A meeting was under way during the dinner recess. Everybody spoke of the fascist atrocities, of the orphans, and everybody wanted to find a way of helping the people who have suffered at the hand of the Germans.

"Women! Mothers! All this is quite right, all this is very well," Ovchinnikova said. "We'll rummage in our trunks, and shirts and frocks for the children will be found. But how about the children themselves? I feel so sorry for these orphaned children! Why, their fathers have shed their blood for us. Mothers! I can't bear it, and I want you to know that I'm going to adopt a child, I'll love and cherish it and bring it up. . . You know very well that I have four daughters, but I'll take a fifth one. We'll manage somehow!"

The women workers wept.

Another mother rose.

"Comrades," she said, "I too am going to adopt a baby, whose mother has been murdered by the fascist reptiles. And should its father be at the front. . . well, I'll raise it for him, and when he returns, I'll say: 'Here is your son, you have been fighting for me, and I have taken care of your son for you.'"

Six women workers requested the government to allow them to adopt orphans. They were interviewed, their health and home conditions were investigated, and permission was granted.

Now the women went to call for the children. Never shall we forget that day. The older children clustered around the arrivals, looking at them askance with big eyes, saddened by grief. These understood everything. Many of them witnessed their mothers being murdered by the Germans before their very eyes. Two- and three-year-old tiny tots ran towards the women, and cuddled to them as if they were their own mothers. Others, quite babies, stretched out their arms and babbled: "Mama, mama!"

The women swallowed their tears. It all took place quickly and spontaneously. Vera, a three-year-old blue-eyed baby-girl, clung trustingly to Sofia Sharova.

"I want up," she prattled. Sharova lifted the child and strained it to her bosom.

"My baby daughter," she said, and her voice trembled with emotion, "let's go home, my own little girl!"

Vera put her arms around Sofia's neck. The elderly woman, her face wet with tears and pressed against the child's warm cheeks, announced to everybody:

"This one is mine. . ."

Trutneva took seven-year-old Svetlana, Tsibulskaya—eight-year-old Dussya, and Idelchuk—three-year-old Galka. Ovchinnikova took Nadya, whose father and mother the Germans had killed. . .

Sadridtinova, a Tartar woman, could not make up her mind. She sat at the bedside of a boy who was so weak that he could not walk. She patted him on the head, all the while looking at the children and making up her mind as to whom to adopt. She had two daughters of her own. It was time to decide, and Sadridtinova rose.

"Mu-u-um!" trembling all over, the sickly boy suddenly called. "Mum, don't go away! Where are you going?" He caught her hand and pressed it against his face. The boy's beautiful blue eyes were full of tears.

"Sadridtinova," the women whispered to her, "he is sickly and weak. Think it over, perhaps it'll be too hard on you?"

"But I'm sorry for him, I'll take him," Sadridtinova resolutely nodded her head. "I'll cure and take care of him and make a man of the child."

Those were unforgettable moments, when the women workers of the "Krasny Bogatyr" took away the children. The other kiddies clung to their arms and embraced their knees.

"With you. . ." they lisped.

One of the older children came over and muttered in a low bashful voice:

"Take me along. . . The Germans

S. Dezhurnov, a worker of the "Krasny Bogatyr" plant in Moscow, and his wife adopted the orphan Lida

buried my daddy and mummy in the earth. I am all alone. . ."

With tears in their eyes the mothers recall:

"We wrapped up the children and left in a hurry, but to this day we can still hear those children crying: 'Take me too. . .' "

The "Krasny Bogatyr" arranged a hearty reception for the children who were lucky enough to find a home. Hot tea and supper were served in the spacious apartment of the woman worker Matryona Ivanova. The children were given toys and oranges. They were caressed profusely. Nobody asked any questions. . . Then the mothers took them to their homes. Ovchinnikova's children received tiny Nadyusha like their own sister. The older girls warmed up some water, getting ready to bathe her, and the little ones readily displayed their toys. . .

Recently we visited Sharova at her home. Little Vera, fresh and clean, wearing a warm red sweater, was lying comfortably on the couch after dinner. Next to her sat Sofia Afanassievna and Ivan Ilyich, beaming with happiness. Vera was singing in a thin tiny voice.

"This is the first time! She is singing for the first time!" Sofia Afanassievna announced joyfully.

During the first few days the child had been quiet and morose. She was presented with a doll, but would not look at it. To a gift of a multicoloured gnome she said: "German!" and began to tremble. When the topic of felt snow-boots to be bought for her was brought up, she whispered: "The felt boots are dug in the sand, so that the Germans won't take them!"

We found Svetlana in grandmother's company. Tatyana Trutneva was away at work, and Svetlana with grandmother sat at the stove. Svetlana is eight, a musing expression on her face, and her eyes still lost in sadness. Thus she sits like a little scared rabbit. She is a native of Solnechnogorsk and has seen many horrors. Sometimes she'd take the doll, remove its dress absentmindedly and relapse into her thoughts. An airplane roared by, and Svetlana trembled and shrunk with fear.

"The Germans! Granny, the Germans ! . ."

"No, darling, no, these are ours," came grandma's soothing voice. "Why, you are shivering? Are you cold, my child? Come, let me wrap you up well."

A warm expression appeared in Svetlana's eyes, and her lips smiled. How wonderful—the child has found a home, warmth!

Looking at Svetlana, I think of all the children who have lost their fathers and mothers during these months of war with the mad fascist wolves. . .

No, you are not orphans, darlings! The Soviet people will get even with the reptiles for the death of your fathers and mothers. The Soviet people are not going to abandon you, you poor little one, from whom the accursed Germans have stolen your mother, your home, your happiness, everything. . . Some of you will live in childrens' homes, others will be taken under the patronage

of the collective farms, and still others will be adopted and cherished by Soviet mothers. But no matter where you are, you will be sheltered by the warm wing of your fatherland.

We'll let nobody harm you, child! The fear will dwindle from your eyes, your tears will dry, you will get healthy and strong and grow up to be a fine Soviet man or woman.

Honour and glory to the women workers of the "Krasny Bogatyr!" Soviet women have a warm heart!

HELEN KONONENKO

Duty

She volunteered for the front the very first days of the war. She was just seventeen, and to the Red Army men whose wounds she tended it seemed that it was a beloved younger sister touching their burning foreheads.

Once, after a particularly hot engagement, nurse Tamara Kalnina was entrusted with the evacuation of the wounded Red Army men and commanders. The red crosses on the ambulance stood out quite clearly, and this may have been the very reason why the fascists decided to smash it and exterminate the wounded Red Army men!

Seven enemy planes were flying just over the road. Seeing the ambulance car, all the seven of them dived. A hundred meters. Then fifty. Forty. Fifteen meters. Nearly touching the ground, the hostile birds of prey swooped past. Then they returned, flew past again and lashed the ambulance lorry with incendiary bullets.

Tamara sat riveted to her seat, not daring to breathe. The wounded moaned. She readjusted their bandages, gave them water from her flask. After that they felt better and calmed down.

Another volley—and the car was enveloped in flames. It stopped in the middle of the wood, blazing like a gigantic bonfire. The wounded tossed about falling off their racks, shifting their bandages; they gasped and choked in their helplessness, gulping down the scorching air. For an instant, only one instant, Tamara lost her presence of mind. The girl leapt out of the flaming car. To flee! Into the forest. To escape from imminent death. . .

What was that?! Instantly she came to herself. Where could she flee, leaving behind her the wounded, the men entrusted to her care? She—a Young Communist. . . a volunteer. . . How could she go on living after that? How would she look people in the face?

She rushed back to the car. With feeble, childish hands she started dragging out the wounded. At first the driver helped her, but there!—the enemy planes had again returned, again they were attacking the burning car, and, mortally wounded, the driver fell to the ground.

Tamara was now alone. Alone in the middle of the wood, in a blazing car, her fifteen wounded desperately in need of her help, the enemy's bullets flying overhead.

Fifteen times she clambered up into the burning lorry. Fifteen times, clasping her arms around the big heavy body of a wounded man, she dragged him, panting heavily, to a hollow near the wood, and there stopped to gasp for breath, to gulp down a whiff of fresh air, to put out the fire that had caught her dress.

The whole thing seemed impossible. It seemed beyond all human strength. Yet it was not beyond the strength of a real human being, a fearless girl who defeated the flames, defeated seven fascist vultures, defeated death itself.

Some of the wounded lay unconscious, others opened their eyes and with wonder, with rapture looked gratefully at this mite of a girl who had saved their lives.

"Don't worry, dear," she whispered, moving her cracked, parched lips with difficulty. "Never mind, it'll be all right. I'll never, never leave you!"

And only her eyes could smile to them, her large, deep compassionate eyes.

The lorry was burning out by the time Tamara had dragged all fifteen men over to the hollow. Tearing off her smouldering clothes, not paying any attention to the dreadful pains she felt in her burnt limbs, half delirious, she ran, walked, crawled to the Health Division for help. In a broken whisper she explained where they could find the wounded, and then lost consciousness.

The fifteen men were saved, everyone of them. They were taken to a hospital.

And many of them never even learnt the name of their heroic young rescuer. She is Tamara Kalnina. Will you ever forget this name?

She lay on the brink of death—from her burns, and from the chill she had caught. She was sent to a hospital by plane and was snatched from the jaws of death. They saved her as she saved you, Red Army men and commanders!

She will live.

And when the greatest artists of our country will erect a monument in honour

"Women of the Soviet Union, strengthen the defense of the U.S.S.R!"
Poster by A. Melnikova

of victory and glory, by the side of our mighty warriors, by the side of Gastello and Mamedov, beside our airmen, tankmen, riflemen and sappers, let them place the figure of a slight, small girl with a Red Cross on her sleeve, the figure of the Young Communist Tamara Kalnina.

By the order of the Military Council of the North-Western Front, the Young Communist Tamara Kalnina has been awarded the Order of Lenin.

AL. ISBACH
Battalion Commissar Z. ZLATOPOLSKY

Heroism

On the 6th of October 1941, on the 81st kilometer stretch of railway between Vyazma and Kaluga, the Germans bombed a Red-Cross train which carried 850 wounded.

All attempts to get the wounded away failed. Several units of a German motorized division, breaking through our lines, surrounded and destroyed the ambulances and medical personel who were trying to reach the train with assistance. The wounded, it seemed, were doomed.

Help came from a quite unexpected quarter.

The old doctor's assistant Polikarp Dmitriev had followed his profession for 31 years in the village of Obraztsovo. All the folk knew and loved Dmitriev. He had helped people not a little in his lifetime. Shura Sletysheva worked along with Dmitriev as midwife. And so these two—the old man and the young girl—set off together on their mission. They went from house to house, and for the first time in his life Dmitriev sternly reminded people of what he had done for them. But they answered him with hurt looks:

"Why, how can you, Polikarp Moisseyevich? Do you think we don't understand anyway?" And immediately they started dragging mattresses into their attics and cellars and spreading clean sheets over them.

They went the rounds of three villages: Danilovka, Gorbatovo and Obraztsovo. By evening all the wounded were distributed, except the more serious cases, and these Dmitriev and Shura carried away by themselves during the night.

The villagers brought Dmitriev window-curtains, sheets, pillow-slips, linen. At night Dmitriev and Shura washed all the things and ripped them up into bandaging.

It was difficult to keep the wounded hidden from the Germans. They had to be spirited away by night to other villages, transferred from sheds to bath-houses, from bath-houses to attics, from attics to cellars.

However, one wounded commander was discovered by the Germans. They dragged him out on the porch and shot him in the head. They gave orders that the corpse was to be buried in the kitchen-garden. But the commander turned out to be still alive. The bullet had passed into the jaw and through the tongue. The wounded man was brought again to Dmitriev who treated him, hiding him in his own bath-house. Conversation with the commander, who naturally had lost the power of speech, was carried out by means of notes. He was fed with milk through a stomach probe.

When all the medicaments had come to an end, Shura, taking a sledge, set off in a snow-storm to cross the front-line and reach the railway-siding of Koshnyaki; from the medical station there she brought back the necessary medicines.

For two and a half months Dmitriev and Shura tended their wounded. Never resting, they went from hiding place to hiding place, in constant alarm for their patients' safety. As to themselves, the least slip threatened them with martyr's death, but they didn't think of this. On the other hand, what rejoicings there were when one of the men recovered! Wrapping him up warmly, they would take him away into the forest, where they would have already one of the Dmitriev's former patients awaiting with a sledge. The newly recovered man would be put on the sledge and taken by secret forest paths across the front-line back into Soviet territory.

In this way these simple and modest Soviet folk, Dmitriev and Shura Sletysheva, medical workers of the village of Obraztsovo, Iznoskov district, Smolensk region, saved the lives of 850 wounded Red Army men.

VADIM KOZHEVNIKOV

Western front

The Story of a Betrayal

There was a time when Knut Hamsun wrote beautiful novels about the love torments of hearts uncomprehended, about picturesque rocks and pines. In his old age this eminent writer has become a petty politician. He has betrayed Victory for the sake of Hitler. He has renounced the god of Nature, Pan, for the sake of Wotan, the war-god of the ancient Germans, the deity hungry for bloody offerings. Thus a writer of fame has applied for a job on the footboard of Goebbels' carriage.

Hamsun hates the Soviet Union. In order to revile our country he is even prepared to sing the praises of old Russia. Long before the revolution he spent several days in Moscow and a week in the Caucasus, after which he published an inconsequential book entitled *In Fairy-Tale Land.* The book says nothing about Russia, but it tells a great deal about Hamsun himself.

Today Hamsun writes: "In old Russia people made merry. Life then could be described as a quiet poetical dream." Let us open the book *In Fairy-Tale Land.*

In Moscow Hamsun, by preference, frequented night resorts. In those he ate plentifully and drank still more. The latter explains the fantastic nature of his notes: "A restaurant. . . I bow to everyone and brandish my huge passport. But no one can read it. . . The waiters call me 'Excellence'. . . Suddenly, without any reason at all, I rise, walk up to the icon and cross myself. . . Then I begin to hum a song. . ." Apparently it was that drinking-bout that Hamsun recalled when he wrote: "In old Russia people made merry."

The book contains also the following scene: "The officer makes an imperious gesture: 'Halt!' And the peasants halt. He is apparently their master. Perhaps the village is his property? . . . When in St.-Petersburg a threatening crowd once pursued Nicholas the I in the streets, he shouted in a stentorian voice: 'On your knees!' And the crowd kneeled." (In such a fashion the ignorant tourist describes the events of December 14th, 1825.) Then Hamsun sings the praises of slavery: "Napoleon was obeyed with enthusiasm. It is delightful to obey. And the Russian people is still capable of obedience."

Well, Hamsun is satisfied with the ersatz-Napoleon. In the presence of a German gendarme he experienced "delight" and at the ripe age of eighty-two obediently went down on his knees. He is indignant at Russia: "Why does not the Soviet people stop when the Tyrol corporal yells 'Halt?'"

Hamsun extols the "new order," that is to say, the submission of the entire world to Germany. He calls the British "a cowardly and lazy nation," and the United States "the country of bluff." The senile pen servilely jots down epithets worthy of the fish-market. The writer Hamsun is no more, we are confronted by a wretched plagiarizer of doctor Goebbels.

Anyone who has visited Norway knows the sterling qualities of the Norwegian people. The struggle against harsh nature has taught the Norwegians hardiness and courage. People in Norway live at great distances from one another; there are miles and mountains between one house and another. This, perhaps, is the reason why

they have learned to respect man. They appreciate friendship and revere fidelity. From times immemorial they have had a passion for the highest of all fortunes—freedom. In Norway the invaders have had a hard time finding servile people, corrupted by easy life and willing to be partners in any sort of "co-operation." Quisling's name is mentioned with scorn. But this old writer who owes his fame to his country, its beauty, its customs, its people, went over to the camp of his people's enemies.

The Germans have condemned the Norwegians to extinction. One need but mention the fact that the daily bread ration is but 150 grams per person. Prior to the war the prisons in Norway were empty. Now there is not enough room for all the arrested; military courts sentence brave men to be shot. But the Norwegians have not submitted. The Lofoten Islands, formerly known only for the cod caught in their waters in spring storms, have now become centres of national resistance. Larsen's partisans continually attack German detachments.

The world-famous writer Hamsun and the modest Norwegian Larsen have chosen different paths. One prefers treason and Goebbels' praise to loyalty to his country; the other has chosen the thorny path of struggle and self-sacrifice.

When a pimp from Marseilles' "special quarter" enlists in Hitler's "legion," there is no need to bother about his reasons; it can be left to the rifle to settle the question. But how could a famous writer, a man in his ripe old age, fall so low as to excuse robbery, praise hangmen, betray his country? We find the answer in Hamsun's spiritual biography. His enthusiasm for Nicholas I was not fortuitous. This "rebel" has long been fascinated by obsequiousness. He hates progress, and Hitler appeared to him as an almost mythical gendarme capable of halting the course of history.

It is, of course, a far cry from Hamsun the tourist's reflections of long ago to the ditch of death near Kerch and the gallows in Volokolamsk. But the old writer has discovered that the SS-men are his successors. He gives them his blessing in their pogroms and murder. What is fascism to Hamsun? Primarily, a revolt against progress, the power of the elements of darkness over reason, a rabble of people devoid of genuine traditions, of all those who may be described as the waifs of history.

The fascists entered the arena hurling curses at the future. They were fond of holding forth on the beauties of the past. But as soon as they seized power they set out to destroy all lofty traditions. What has Hitler taken from the past? A few superstitions, the top-hat of the executioner and the Nuremberg instruments of torture. The fascists not only slay writers, they destroy books. The Berlin auto-da-fe are still fresh in memory; scores of thousands of books were burned then. In Paris the Germans included two thousand condemned books in their "Otto's Index Librorum Prohibitorum."

They pulled down the monument to Chopin in Cracow, they removed the monuments to Voltaire and Rousseau in Paris, they defiled Yasnaya Polyana. Those are not fortuitous pranks of an unbridled soldiery, they are part of a systematic extermination of the past. In France alone the hitlerites destroyed three hundred monuments of art, among them that architectural masterpiece, the Château Amboise. To this should be added the library of Louvain, the Romanesque cathedral of Coventry, the Westminster Abbey, the British Museum, the temples of Greece, Istra, Smolensk, Novgorod.

How is this deliberate vandalism to be explained? To men who hate mankind's future, its past too is hateful. Fascism emerged as the negation of the nineteenth century.

The habitués of Berlin beer-halls said that it was a century of "error." But neither is there anything they can look back to beyond that century. The eighteenth century was also an "error" as far as the fascists are concerned, for it was the century of the Encyclopaedists and the French Revolution. In the seventeenth century they are confounded by the activity of the humanists. Sometimes it is claimed that fascism has "revived" the Middle Ages. This is a wrong assertion and an insult to our forefathers. The men of the Middle Ages were ignorant of many things, but they wished to know. The epic poems and the Gothic cathedrals were the encyclopaedia of that age, its aspiration to come closer to knowing the world. But fascism is the renunciation of knowledge, it is outside the pale of history.

Why is it that all spiritual forces of mankind have made a common cause in the struggle against fascism? Wells' world-outlook is not the world-outlook of a Soviet writer. The catholic thinker Maritain and Einstein do not follow the same road. The physicist Langevin and Hemingway live in two different worlds. But none of them conceives of the development of mankind divorced from traditions, divorced from the cultural heritage. We may say without being boastful that our people has in many respects left other peoples behind. We love the future, it is the atmosphere we breath. It is for this very reason that we do not renounce the past. Hellas, the Renaissance, the age of Enlightenment—who has not drunk from those wellsprings? That is what links us with Wells, Maritain, Hemingway, Langevin, Einstein, with all thinking mankind. The great insists on its own immortality. When the grandeur of the past has been comprehended, it is impossible to supress the urge towards creative activity and progress.

Marx is inconceivable without the Encyclopaedists, Rodin without Greece, Shostakovich without Beethoven, Hemingway without Tolstoy.

It is not for nothing that fascism hurls its curses at the intelligentsia. In the huge prison erected by Hitler darkness is the rule. The years during which Hitler scored his easy victories the historian will designate as Europe's eclipse. The fascists fear the representatives of thought, in whose faces can be discerned the shining of an inner light, whether denoting the birth of new thought or representing a phosphorescent reflection of the past. Fascism has never for an hour enjoyed the support of genuine intellectuals. In the cultural sphere it was the revolt of the scum of society, of failures, semi-literate know-alls, intellectual tramps and philistines, who have an innate aversion for every living thought.

A terrible fate overtook the writers of the older generation,—those who began their literary careers at about the same time as Hamsun. Some were tortured to death, some have been hounded out by the fascists. Thomas Mann and Heinrich Mann are in exile. Stefan Zweig committed suicide. Romain Rolland keeps silence,—in his house live German drill-sergeants. Roger Martin du Gard keeps silence. The Germans burned Duhamel's books and robbed him of his manuscripts. The eminent Spanish poet Antonio Machado died at the frontier, fleeing from the fascist invaders. Unamuno before his death cursed fascism. The graves of the dead and the enforced silence of the living—that is the answer Hamsun gets: he has betrayed not only his country, he has betrayed the human word.

Nor did the next generation of writers accept fascism. Roth died in exile. Toller hanged himself. Remarque, Renn, Doeblin, Brecht, Becher, Werfel, Seghers, Frank are in emigration. Maurois, Romain, Maritain, Bernanos have left France, which is pining under the heel of the hitlerites. Mal-

reaux, Moriac are condemned to silence. The Polish poet Tuwim, the Spanish writers Bergamin and Alberti, Italy's best novelist Moravia, are all in America. The Czech writers have been gagged. The Norwegian writer Nordal Grieg is in England with the Norwegians who are fighting against Germany.

This list could be extended. The story might be told of the fate of artists and composers. The torments of the aged and famous landscape painter Marquet or of the celebrated chemist Perrin in occupied France might be described. But is it possible to exhaust the martyrology of European thought in an article?

Hitler has seized a dozen countries, and he found in Europe but one to sing laudations—the senile Hamsun. We will not burn Hamsun's books. We will not deny his literary gifts. But the writer Hamsun has ceased to exist long ago, and even Goebbels is a better writer of fascist essays. Neither thousands of tanks nor the grey hair of an ex-writer who has disgraced himself by betrayal can serve as a cover for fascism.

Hamsun's apostasy will serve to weld the progressive intelligentsia even more closely in the fight against fascism. We understand why the people of two hemispheres look with hope to the Red Army. We realize what sentiments inspire the greetings which scientists, writers, artists of Europe and America address to our people. On the fields of Russia we are defending all cultural values, the memories of mankind and its creative forces. Progress is a relay race. It is not an easy race. History has known the invasion of the Vandals, the auto-da-fe of the Inquisition and the thickheaded bigotry of rulers of an hour. But each time a new generation seized the torch from the bleeding hands of the representants of progress. Under fire we are marching forward, under fire we are beating back the great invasion of darkness.

We will lose a great deal in this fight, but we will preserve thought, light, the conscience of mankind for a new, happy generation.

I. EHRENBURG

Ira Aldridge*

The Negro tragedian Ira Aldridge (1805—1867) is one of the most picturesque figures of the nineteenth century stage. His extraordinary biography reads like a novel.

Aldridge was born in Baltimore. His father was a Negro minister. From his teens irresistibly drawn to the stage, the lad Aldridge begins his career by joining a Negro amateur theatrical company. He introduced his first innovation when staging Shakespeare. He deliberately refused, both for himself and for his troupe, to make up as Europeans. As Durylin remarks: "He considered it possible for a black Romeo to find a black Juliet. And this was not merely a gifted youth's whim. It was a conscious affirmation of the Negro people's right to its own independent place in the ranks of art."

Aldridge wants to join a regular professional theatre. He even consents to work as a footman behind the slip—anything to have the possibility of penetrating behind the scenes and breathing the stage atmosphere. Conservative criti s met Aldridge's appearance on hte stage with hostile yelling. Those were the days of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, when the great majority

* An Essay by S. Durylin, Publishing House "Iskustvo," 1940.

of the U.S.A. Negro population were yet slaves. Their liberation becomes Aldridge's most sacred dream. Later on, when the great struggle for the liberation of Negroes began, Aldridge gave fifty per cent of all his earnings to forward it.

Aldridge leaves U.S.A. and goes to Europe. He tours England and the continent. It is a great pity that we know so little of Aldridge's romantic acquaintance with his future wife, the daughter of a lord, who fell in love with the Negro actor and threw her lot in with his, following the homeless wanderer—a second Desdemona.

In 1858 Aldridge visits St. Petersburg for the first time, and since then keeps returning to Russia. He appears in St. Petersburg, in Moscow, and makes numerous tours all over the country, applauded with enthusiasm by the progressive Russian stage reviewers who hailed him not only as an actor of exceptional power but as an incarnation, a living symbol of the great struggle for the emancipation of slaves, not of Negroes alone, but of the Russian serfs as well. The reactionary press, on the contrary, hisses furiously at Aldridge's successes and tries in every way to detract and cheapen the artistic value of his acting. The general public greets Aldridge with warm applause. Famous Russian actors—Shchepkin, Sadovsky—pay hearty tribute to his vivid talent.

Durylin quotes a contemporary's description of the Negro tragedian's meeting with Shchepkin (1788—1863), the founder of the realistic school in the Russian theatre. It was Aldridge who asked Ketcher, translator of Shakespeare's plays, to introduce him to Shchepkin. "Immediately after greeting Shchepkin, Aldridge desired to know if this small corpulent old man with kind eyes and a sly smile had seen him act. 'Tell him,' said Shchepkin to Ketcher, 'that I have and that I am extremely pleased with it. He is a man of great talent.' Aldridge responded by a low bow, but added persistently that it was criticism that he wanted from the famous Russian actor. 'Oh, well, then tell him,' countered Shchepkin promptly, speaking very swiftly, 'that he did not satisfy me in the second act, and that I disapprove of the entire scene of Desdemona's arrival. After her galley's mooring and her landing, Aldridge moves calmly and majestically to meet her, offers her his arm and leads her to the foreground. Now, doesn't this seem to be quite impossible? He forgets absolutely that Othello is a Moor, that hot southern blood seethes in his veins, that he not only loves, but passionately adores. . . Why, he ought to rush at her, gather her up, carry her in his arms and then only remember that he is an army commander and that many curious eyes are following his movements. . .' Shchepkin always fought against every outward theatricality and insisted on colourful psychological expressiveness of every detail, every gesture, and on their realistic justification at the same time. It is all the more notable therefore that, according to contemporary records, this severe judge still considered Aldridge's Othello as an unrivalled performance on the whole.

P. M. Sadovsky, the renowned character actor, whose great fame was founded chiefly upon his wondrous acting in plays by Ostrovsky, also admired Aldridge greatly. They were introduced to each other in the Artistic circle (this was a kind of club where Moscow actors used to meet). Sadovsky called for some wine. Aldridge's interpreter attempted to join them, but Sadovsky waved him away saying: 'We shall understand each other just as well without any help.' And so they did! Sadovsky did not know a word of English, nor Aldridge of Russian. They sat over their wine looking fixedly at each other, then Sadovsky would heave a

deep sigh and shake his head as if to express delight in his gifted boon companion. Aldridge would repeat the same play. Then he would take Sadovsky's hand and shake it heartily. Sadovsky immediately followed suit. One smiles—the other smiles back at once. Again a deep sigh, a handshake, a smile. This mute expressive colloquy having lasted for some time, they both rose, kissed each other three times on both cheeks according to Russian custom and parted. Sadovsky was then stopped at the exit door by a friend who asks: 'How do you like Aldridge? What have you been discussing with him for such a long time?'—'He is an excellent fellow, warm-hearted, and, what's important, he's no chatter-box. I like that.' And the contemporary closes his story with the words: 'This scene is a brilliant portrayal of artists who are such not only by profession, but by vocation.'"

Aldridge's acquaintance with Shevchenko, also described by S. Durylin, is very touching and symbolical. The great Ukrainian poet and the gifted Negro tragedian at once found a common language. A warm friendship sprang up quickly between them, though Aldridge was not acquainted either with the Russian or the Ukrainian language, nor did Shevchenko know any English. Aldridge's acting fascinated Shevchenko. Once, when Aldridge had not yet had time to rub off his make-up after a performance of *King Lear*, Shevchenko rushed into the artist's dressing room, embraced him and showered kisses upon his greasy face, weeping bitterly all the while. The two used to meet at F. P. Tolstoy's house where, with the aid of an interpreter, they discussed the friendship of peoples and the immense importance of national poetry for a fraternal intercourse of nations.

Shevchenko wished to paint Aldridge's portrait, but the hotblooded actor just could not sit still. . . "'May I sing?' he would ask unexpectedly," says a contemporary, "and then would break out into a plaintive Negro melody. Little by little it changed to a more lively tune, and a few minutes later Aldridge would be dancing a most violent jig up and down the studio. And then he would perform entire comical scenes taken from life." Shevchenko painted an excellent likeness of Aldridge. It hangs at present in the Tretyakov Art Gallery in Moscow.

Shakespeare's plays formed the tragedian's principal repertoire, and his best parts were Othello, then Lear, Shylock. The humanism of Shakespeare's art is what Aldridge strove most to interpret in his acting. Thus in Othello, for instance, he showed not so much the tragedy of jealousy as the tragedy of trust deceived. Therefore the feeling he calls forth in the bosom of the spectator is hardly a thrill of horror, but a heart-felt compassion with the noble Moor.

The contemporary Russian theatregoers and critics have left many descriptions of Aldridge as Othello, forming most valuable materials for the history of the stage. Davydov, a well-known Russian actor, writes: "The expression of his face, his gestures, conveyed his meaning so clearly, that one could understand him perfectly even without any knowledge of English." "His face was pensive and full of a mellow sadness," says another reviewer. "He was quite imbued with a feeling of self-respect. When Brabantio's servants rush at him sword in hand, he stops them with noble dignity, and with the same dignity does he plead his cause before the Senate." A provincial Russian critic notes: "'Come, Desdemona!' says Othello, and what a boundless wealth of passion, what childlike tenderness these simple words convey! They sound like a vow to replace her father, mother, home, the whole world." The actor's majesty in the second act was striking. His

nobility, his grandeur, his eyes which flashed like lightning, were hardly to be borne. Everyone, whether right or wrong, seems to be in his presence but a timid miserable child at such a moment. Iago is enmeshing Othello in his net of lies, but Othello is in no way a fierce and sombre man full of green-eyed jealousy, he is a victim. Othello-Aldridge, remarks a critic, "was at that moment a tortured martyr." "Now he rages and storms, and now he cries and sobs like a sorrowing child, and then again he breaks down entirely in body and soul." "There is not even a trace of the furious Othello in Aldridge as in the fifth act he enters Desdemona's bed-chamber with the words: 'It is the cause. . .' His face is settled in immutable firmness and yet softened by a deadly anguish." "I shall never forget the scene of Othello strangling Desdemona and the one following his enlightenment. Dagger in hand, he throws back the bedcurtain and looks at Desdemona. The flame of his lamp lights up her sleeping countenance. Tenderest love and racking doubt, hate and anger and despairing sorrow—his face expressed them all at the same instant." "With a kiss tender, chaste and awe-inspiring he bids farewell to his love as one takes leave from a beloved dead." "Looking at the artist personating Othello to our eyes, at this fateful moment one even forgets the victim, so strong is the compassion, the pity which he evokes. It is a moving and odd contradiction."

These and many other reminiscences of Russian play-goers and theatre-critics collected by S. Durylin are obviously of great interest not only for specialists in the history of the theatre but also for all those who love Shakespeare. The acting of great tragedians is surely a playwright's most effective commentary.

Aldridge as Lear was not a crazy despot, but a noble, trusting and loving heart. Shylock in his impersonation was first and foremost a persecuted tormented Jew of the dark Middle Ages. It is not accidental that the conservative newspaper *Novoye Vremya* upbraided Aldridge for being Shylock's advocate and not his accuser in *The Merchant of Venice*. It is quite natural that the disfranchised Jewish population of tsarist Russia hailed his interpretation of Shylock's part with transports of rapture. A contemporary notes that "in Zhitomir, where the audience was mainly Jewish, Shylock was considered Aldridge's best performance." One realizes that Shakespeare performed by Aldridge was an outstanding event from the point of view of ethics no less than in the realm of dramatic art.

S. Durylin does quite right to note all this, but he is wrong in considering Aldridge's interpretation of Shakespearean heroes to have been an absolute innovation at the time. His great contemporary, the actress G. Fedotova, says that Othello-Aldridge is "a guileless child of nature." But if S. Durylin is right to contrast Aldridge in this respect with Karatygin, an actor who played Othello as "a ferocious tiger," he ought to mention at least Bryansky, that remarkable Russian tragedian, whose interpretation and impersonation of Othello resemble so strongly that of Aldridge. And Bryansky played Othello long before Aldridge ever came to Russia.

To accentuate Lear's kindheartedness was no novelty either. On the contrary, already Richard Burbage, the very first performer of this part (1567—1619), played "kind Lear." It is also well known that it was Edmund Kean (1787—1833) who in his performance justificated for the first time in the history of the stage the figure of Shylock.

S. Durylin ought to have shown the connection between Aldridge's art and that of his predecessors and successors, the analogies to his crea-

tions. Without these, the historical background is lacking, and Aldridge is presented as somehow standing outside of the history of the stage, apart from all, a solitary figure in a vacuum.

The book has another essential fault. S. Durylin quotes only laudatory reviews of Aldridge's acting. This makes Aldridge an abstract and absolutely perfect incarnation of the dramatic art. S. Durylin makes him seem superior to the great English actor Edmund Kean owing to his greater realism and to the psychological truthfulness of his types; superior to the renowned Russian actor Mochalov because of the Negro actor's more conscious art. Still Durylin was forced to quote also a few detracting criticisms of Aldridge's acting. And certainly only a small number of them may be explained away by pointing out the reactionary views of the critics.

A historian has to see the actor he describes with the eyes of divers men of a far off age. He must try to analyze deeply and from many different viewpoints the aesthetic ideas of the contemporaries whom he quotes. Otherwise he is apt to confuse the reader by a multitude of contrasting or even contradictory testimonies. S. Durylin explains the contradictions in the records of contemporary reviewers in a rather unsatisfactory way: ". . . their very contrariness is an evidence of Aldridge's independence in his art. . ." To put it all in a nutshell, S. Durylin should not have been afraid of showing the unavoidable historical limitations of Aldridge's art and of his interpretation of Shakespearean characters. Aldridge's portrait would have only gained in lifelikeness and convincingness.

But notwithstanding all these blemishes Durylin's essay reads with glowing interest. Very little has been published on Aldridge's work. The Russian period of his stage biography is the most valuable owing to the volume and interest of the facts recorded, and as S. Durylin's book covers mainly this period, it fills up an important gap in that chapter of the world history of the stage which deals or, let us say, ought to deal with Aldridge.

The spiritual and humane character of Aldridge's art is especially near and comprehensible to us in these days of our struggle with an enemy attempting to enslave the world, an enemy striving for that kingdom of darkness against which Ira Aldridge, the great Negro tragedian, had fought, with his magnificent art for a sword.

M. MOROZOV

Juan Marinello

During the last few years the Latin-American countries have become important centres of the movement in the defense of the U.S.S.R. and its international policy. This movement has gained momentum especially since the fascist hordes have treacherously attacked the Soviet Union.

With the exception of numerous insignificant bribed papers subsidized by German agents, the Latin-American press is full of resolutions, manifestos and appeals adopted at meetings and gatherings of Latin-American workers' organizations called in the defense of the U.S.S.R. The best representatives of the progressive intelligentsia, such as people active in social and political life, writers, scientists, artists and actors, loudly proclaim their ardent sympathy for the Soviet Union and its great leader, J. Stalin, and their admiration for the heroic Red Army, which brings crushing blows to the brutal nazi pack.

The following appeal, quoted from a statement issued by the Confederation

of Cuban workers, uniting more than half-a-million people, is an excellent illustration of the moods manifested by the Latin-American workers today:

"We appeal for unlimited help for Russia. Let the Soviet brothers know that the Cuban proletariat is burning with a desire to help them in their struggle against the worst enemy of their fatherland. This is the utmost duty of everybody today."

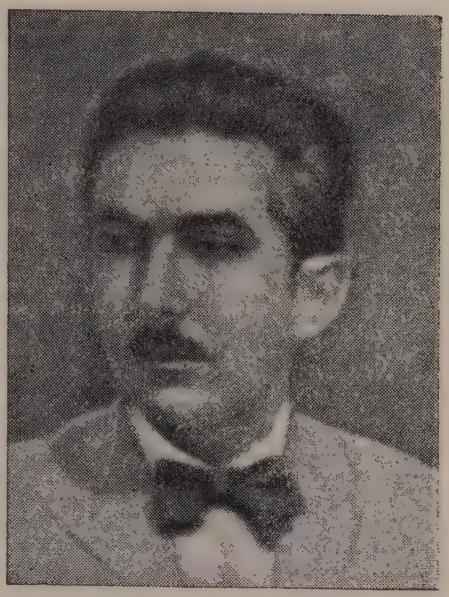
The peoples of Latin America are aware like never before of the fact that in carrying on the greatest struggle ever fought in the history of mankind the Soviet Union is fighting for the future of their continent as well. The conspiracy unearthed in Bolivia and the events in Argentine, Uruguay and Mexico have shown that the nazis have been carrying on their subversive activities for a long time, endeavouring to gain possession of America's natural wealth for their own criminal purposes.

While embracing all the Latin-American countries, the movement of solidarity with the mighty anti-Hitler coalition has some special centres where it acquires a particularly organized character. These are Cuba, Mexico and Chile. Among the leaders of the movement there are many prominent social figures and representatives of the arts.

The present article intends to acquaint the reader with one of these—the Cuban writer Juan Marinello, whose name appears more and more often in the Soviet press.

Juan Marinello was born on November 2nd, 1898, in Jicota (province of Santa Clara). He went to primary and secondary school in the city of Santa Clara and then graduated the Havana University as doctor of civil and public rights, and doctor of philosophy and literature. Having graduated, Marinello took up teaching. He was in succession: professor at the Institute for new languages at the Havana University; professor of history of Spanish America at the summer school of the National University of Mexico; professor of Iberio-American literature at the faculty of literature and philosophy of the same university; professor of Spanish and Cuban literature at the high school for teachers in the city of Havana.

Simultaneously Marinello was active in the field of journalism and soon became widely known as the author of articles on political and literary problems. He corresponded in the majority of American and in many European periodicals, and at the same time he was in charge of several papers of great importance in Cuba. Such was the progressive magazine *Revista de Avance*, which played a prominent role in



Juan Marinello

the literary and artistic life of the island. Of similar importance were the other periodicals headed by Marinello, such as the newspaper *La Palabra*, the organ of the Cuban workers, and the *Masses*, a magazine which greatly influenced the Cuban progressive youth and helped it in finding the right road. In addition to the above cited, Marinello was the founder and permanent collaborator of the magazine *Mediodia*, which consistently defended the political program of the most progressive Cuban elements.

Marinello did not limit himself to journalistic work only, he also lectured and appeared in the largest cities of Latin America.

Marinello's social activity stretched over a period of 16 years. It would be no exaggeration to say that during all that time Marinello participated in every important political movement in his country. It began with the movement of the so-called "veterans and patriots," directed against president Sayas' reactionary government. Marinello fought him in the press and from the speaker's rostrum. He was imprisoned several times, and once he spent six months in one of Cuba's most ill-famed prisons—on the Isla de Pinos. Persecuted by the bloody Machado dictatorship, he was compelled to emigrate to Mexico.

When Machado fell, Marinello was able to return to his native country; with redoubled energy he resumed his political and social activity and carried on a fierce propaganda against reaction in the newspa-

per *La Palabra* and the magazine *Masses*. In February 1935, Marinello and a number of his comrades from the editorial offices of the *Masses* were condemned to imprisonment, this time in the central jail of Havana—Castillo del Principe.

His sentence served, Marinello had to emigrate to hospitable Mexico again. There he spent nine months, teaching the history of Iberio-American literature at the Mexican University. In the summer of 1937, Marinello, together with the well-known Cuban poet Nicolas Guillen, was delegated as the representative of the progressive Cuban intelligentsia to the Second International Congress for the defense of culture, held in Valencia, Madrid, Barcelona and Paris. At this Congress Marinello delivered a powerful speech in which he referred to the strong bonds uniting the peoples of Latin America and Spain and demanded the social and writers' circles of the American continent to intensificate their struggle against fascism and increase their help to the Spanish Republic. The delegates of the Latin-American peoples elected Marinello to be their leader and chose him as one of the chairmen of the striking and exciting session held in Madrid during July 6th and 7th, 1937.

Marinello spent four months in Spain; there, as he himself says in his autobiography, he "studied Spain's marvellous defense against fascism and maintained constant and close communication with the country's principal leaders." His stay in Spain resulted in a series of articles in the Latin-American press and a book, *Spanish Milestone*, published in Cuba. In it we find, among others, a touching description of the reception arranged for the Congress members by the population of Minglanilla, a small Spanish village on the road from Valencia to Madrid. Marinello wrote an excellent portrait of Dolores Ibarruri and some brilliant articles about Garcia Lorca, the poet of the Spanish people, and Miguel de Unamuno.

On his return from Spain to Cuba Marinello became the head of "Union revolucionaria," Cuba's most powerful political party. Though completely occupied with the social and political life of his country, Marinello did not for a moment stop his propaganda in defense of the Spanish people, explaining the conditions of war in Spain to the masses and mobilizing public opinion in the Latin-American countries for the struggle against fascism. The scale of this campaign may be judged from the fact that more than 40,000 people were present at one of his public appearances.

Lately Marinello's political activity has transcended the boundaries of his native country and of Latin America. Thus, he took part in the All-World Youth Congress and in several meetings organized in the defense of the Spanish Republic by the North-American democrats in New York. In the capacity of representative of the "Union revolucionaria" Marinello appeared at the Montevideo Democratic Congress in 1941. He also acted as chairman at the Continental Conference for the defense of Spain, held in Buenos-Aires. When travelling through Chile, Marinello was proclaimed guest of honour by the local Union of intellectuals. The Santiago University, the students' corporations and the People's Front party joined in fêting him. This goes to show the popularity enjoyed by Marinello in Latin America.

Marinello is the organizer of the Cuban Union of writers and artists. This union is a powerful anti-fascist organization which does very useful work and enjoys the deep respect of all progressive elements of the Latin-American continent. Marinello is secretary general of this union.

In 1940 Marinello's native province of Santa Clara elected him to be its delegate to the Constitutional Assembly; there, together with the other best representatives of the Cuban people, he fought for the people's rights and for a new political charter. In 1940, too, Marinello was running for mayor of the city of Havana, and at these elections 31,000 votes were cast for him.

Today Marinello is a member of the National Council under the Ministry of Education, where he carries a large-scale work of enlightment among the Cuban workers.

During the 15 years of his literary activity Marinello has published several books of a semi-journalistic character. Criticism and philosophy constitute the main topics of his articles. In these Marinello not only deals with themes of a general character (such as his *Old Age and Youth*, 1928; *Poetics—Experiments on Enthusiasm*, 1933), but he also tries to give an answer to the questions which mostly interest the intelligentsia of Latin America, especially to the problem of the place which the culture of the Latin-American continent occupies in the cultural life of mankind. This is the aim of his essays *On Cuba's State of Alarm* (1929) and his *Iberio-American Literature,—People Who Ponder* (1937). The struggle of the Spanish people for their independence has even enlarged the scope of this theme, introducing the problem of All-Spanish culture as one of the leading cultures. Two Marinello's last books, *Spanish Milestone* (1937, second edition 1939) and *Men of People's Spain* (in collaboration with the Cuban

poet Nicolas Guillen, 1938), deal with All-Spanish culture.

Marinello introduces philosophical notes also in his poems, real master-pieces which entitle him to occupy a place of honour in the ranks of Latin America's outstanding poets.

Such is the life and work of this remarkable anti-fascist writer, whose written word is closely interwoven with the struggle for the loftiest ideals of progressive humanity. This is why his name commands such respect in the Latin-American countries. His voice today carries enormous authority on the American continent and to all for whom the struggle against beastly fascism is a matter of life and death, to all those who are fighting for a new and better future for mankind.

F. KELYIN

Aids to the Young Recruit

In the patriotic war waged against the German invaders, the Red Army is carrying on a strenuous fight along an extensive front stretching from the Arctic Ocean to the Black Sea, a fight demanding supreme courage and endurance. And one of the conditions for the victory of the Soviet Union over hitlerite Germany is that its armed forces should be constantly reinforced with new divisions and regiments of highly trained reserves.

The series of popular booklets published by the "Molodaya Gvardia" (Young Guard), the publishing house of the Young Communist League, is designed to help in the training of these reserves and to steel and temper the Soviet youth to the stern conditions of modern warfare.

On the March, a booklet edited by General-in-Chief I. Apanassenko, a prominent figure in the Red Army and a hero of the civil war of 1918—1921, deals with the question of the stamina and endurance of the man, as an essential requisite for victory. It opens with a description of an episode which took place in the early days of the present war with Germany. A considerable force of fascist troops attacked a small detachment of Soviet frontier guards. In spite of the heavy odds, the handful of courageous men put up a brave resistance and repulsed attack after attack. Twenty kilometers away from the scene of battle was stationed a rifle regiment of the Red Army. The problem was to reach the battle-field in time to save the situation. The regiment was ordered to proceed by forced march. On the way, the column was attacked by nazi aircraft, while the enemy's artillery kept the line of march under heavy fire. The regiment arrived at the scene of action just when the Red frontier guards were already at the end of their tether and on the point of being overwhelmed by the enemy avalanche. Without a moment's pause, the regiment deployed and went into action against the Germans. The nazis were unable to withstand the counter-attack and retreated. The issue was thus decided by the endurance of the Red Army men, who accomplished a difficult march under fire and yet were still fresh and sound enough to plunge into an attack without a moment's delay.

To attain this valuable quality of endurance, of hardiness, prolonged and systematic training is necessary. The author deals at length with correct methods of marching, so as to cover the greatest distance with the least expenditure of energy, with the subject of breathing while on the march, and with the proper alternation of movement and rest. Details such as careful adjustment of kit and all the equipment, the correct arrangement of articles in the knapsack, and care that the feet should be comfortably shod, receive adequate treatment. However, a properly adjusted kit is not enough to insure endurance. The soldier must know how most efficiently to negotiate water barriers, ravines, marshes and other obstacles encountered en route, how to find his bearings in diverse terrains and how and where to strike camp. Naturally, the greatest responsibility lies on the commander of the column. He must familiarize himself by proper and timely reconnoissance with the peculiarities and difficulties of the proposed march and with the nature of the terrain to be encountered. If necessary, he must take measures to protect his unit from air attack.

The text is illustrated by practical examples of how to solve different problems on the march, by calculations and diagrams. This booklet will be a useful aid to young men about to join the army.

The second booklet in the series, *Reconnoissance*, is a fairly voluminous handbook of 140 pages. It is a truism that an army can fight effectively only if it is properly informed of all that is going on around it, if it knows what the enemy is doing; moreover, what the enemy is planning to do. Reconnoissance is one of the most important branches of military activity,

and it is an art that requires considerable training, knowledge and skill, all of which it is the purpose of the booklet to inculcate. It is furnished with numerous interesting tables and charts, and illustrated with amusing cartoons by MacReedy, which ridicule clumsy and simple scouts, who can be easily spotted by the enemy.

As a rule, the author declares, the main purpose of reconnoissance is threefold: 1) to gather information about the enemy—his location, strength, disposition of forces and the operations which are being prepared; 2) to gather information about the nature of the terrain: how best the various troops can proceed through it, what facilities it offers for the use of the various armaments of the unit, also the state of roads, bridges, etc.; 3) to gather information about the inhabitants of the locality which is to become a battle-field, to probe their sympathies and attitude towards the Red Army—the availability of water and victuals, the existence of infectious disease among inhabitants or cattle, etc.

The scout, by the very nature of his duties, must possess unusual daring, agility, physical strength and astuteness; he must be a good fighter; he must know how to conceal himself from the enemy, and he must possess exceptionally keen eyesight and hearing; he must know how to creep forward unheard and unperceived, find his way in the darkness, climb trees, dig himself into the ground or snow, and hide in water. All this he must be able to do when left to his own resources far from his own people on enemy territory, actually face to face with the enemy's forces. He must be able to find his bearings by map and compass, by sun and by stars. He should be familiar with various systems of communication and signalling. He must know how to camouflage himself and must have a perfect knowledge of arms. It is obvious that the art of reconnoissance is a complex one. And it must be said that this has been developed to a high level of perfection in the Red Army. Our newspapers daily contain reports of the exploits of scouts, who, singly and in groups, make their way into the enemy's rear even under the most severe winter conditions. The information they secure is a valuable aid to the staffs in planning their offensive operations. From this standpoint, *Reconnoissance* (edited by General-in-Chief Tiulenev) is a highly valuable aid to the young Red Army man.

The third booklet in the series is entitled *Signals—the Nerves of the Army*, and has an introduction by Major-General I. Bulychov. In its 64 pages it explains in clear and simple style the principal signalling ystems adopted by the Red Army. The signallers constitute an important branch of the armed forces, and their technical equipment is highly complex. The days of the beacon fire as a means of signalling are long past. In this age of electricity and radio, the army possesses a large and highly diversified assortment of signalling methods. The Soviet signal service is equipped with the most up-to-date instruments, and the signallers perform their duties with credit. They advance under the hurricane fire of mine-throwers and automatics, laying telephone cable or setting up radio stations and insuring communication between the command post and the units in the advanced lines. The signal service entails special training and technical knowledge. The booklet under review contains that essential minimum of information which is indispensable to the rank-and-file signaller. Its description of the systems of signalling, the method of using them, the carrier-pigeon service and other elementary means of sending messages is written in a clear and popular style.

Adapt Terrain to Your Own Use is one of the bestbooklets in the series. It is edited by General Khrenov, a hero of the Finnish campaign of 1940 who had no insignificant share in the breaching of the Mannerheim line. As its title indicates, the booklet is intended as an aid to sappers, but simultaneously it is designed to familiarize all troops with the basic elements of military engineering. Modern warfare has made it abundantly clear how important it is for every fighting man to know how to adapt the terrain to the needs of battle, to make it serve as a protection to himself and a hindrance to the enemy. "The Art of the Trench Tool" is the title of the first chapter. With the aid of charts and diagrams, it explains how to dig in, how to build the simplest kinds of dug-outs, rifle trenches and machine-gun pits, and how to erect and furnish an observation post. The second chapter deals with the subject of camouflage: the art of the sapper not only consists in digging a good trench, but also in concealing it from the enemy. The third chapter explains how to build infantry and tank obstacles. The importance of this in our days of massed tank action need not be stressed. The use of tank traps, tank barriers, mine-fields and other means of combatting tanks has been mastered to perfection by the Red Army. The concluding chapter explains how to discover enemy mines and render them harmless. All these are problems which the Red Army man encounters daily in action. Hence the value of this little book.

While the booklets annotated above are intended for land troops, the one entitled *At Sea*, written by Captain N. Avra-

amov, is designed, as its name implies, for the benefit of sailors and of young men who intend to join the navy. The primary duty of the future sailor, as the author correctly points out, is to know how to swim and how to row, subjects to which the first half of the booklet is devoted. The second half explains how to manage sailboats and motor launches. Whatever the speciality of the naval man may be, he must know how to swim, row and handle boats. The author therefore recommends the would-be sailor to acquire these arts and to harden and temper his body, for all this will come in useful in the defense of the maritime frontiers of his country.

All the booklets in this series ("Military library for members of the Young Communist League") are appropriately issued in convenient pocket size, printed in clear type and illustrated with simple and legible sketches and diagrams. They are a valuable contribution to the war against the fascists.

No less valuable is a publication of another type—the *Partisan's Handbook*. This is an indispensable guide to every partisan operating in the rear of the German-fascist invaders. Soviet partisans, their sudden and vigorous raids, are the terror of the invading forces. The first chapter of the book describes the tactics of partisan warfare: ambushes, surprise attacks, road mining and destruction of communications and of munitions and food depots. The chapter on "Weapons" describes the use and proper handling of rifle, hand-grenade and tommy-gun. It explains how to destroy the enemy tanks, how to take one's bearings in various terrains, what precautions must be adopted while on the march, describes the necessary equipment of a partisan, etc.

This little "encyclopaedia" of partisan warfare will be of extreme use to every partisan.

Its small size, strong binding and compact type printed on thin paper make it convenient for carrying in a partisan's knapsack. The publishers are to be commended for their important and useful patriotic enterprise.

G. GEILER

Humour and Satire at the Front

The Red Army, inspired by the lofty and noble aims of the patriotic war, consists of high-spirited warriors, of splendid and brave Soviet youth. The Red Army men did not lose spirit even throughout the tedious, gloomy days of retreat, lasting almost for six months, when our forces held back the furious onslaught of the nazi army. This is quite natural because the whole Soviet people rose to do its share in the war. Great peoples never lose heart and are always able to offer a witty remark, an encouraging joke even in the most difficult emergencies.

This war is a people's war; fiery and unquenchable is the hatred for the loathsome enemy. The hearts of the men of the Red Army are full of sacred wrath: the desire for vengeance and the flame of their hatred prompt them to notice and to ridicule mercilessly the grotesque and shabby features of the detested enemy.

The foe is dangerous, but he is also a sorry and execrable sight when he hops about fretfully to keep warm, shod in undescribable ersatz-"snow-shoes" on wooden soles; a real laughing-stock huddled up in women's petticoats and shawls, and scratching himself without a stop, so infested he is by lice.

He is cowardly and ludicrous, this "conqueror" all of a tremble, who starts and shudders at the very word "partisan." These hateful cowering thievish Fritzes[1] taking to their heels in the face of the Red Army, excite contempt and mirth.

The most difficult task is alleviated when accompanied by a joke. Among the national traits of the Russian people, a sharp sense of humour has ever been a prominent feature. Beginning with ancient Russian epos, where alongside the pathos of heroism there was always place for a joke, the folklore and literature of the Russian people has always reflected this ability to smile and joke whenever they found themselves in the most precarious situations, when life seemed at its hardest.

One of the greatest geniuses of humanity—Leo Tolstoy, describing the battle of Borodino, noted the unquenchable healthy sense of humour shown by the Russian soldier; the humour that accompanied the Russians even through the din and haze of a bloody and annihilating war. Amid the stirring events of the battle of Borodino, along with hatred for the enemy, the frenzy and self-oblivion of the skirmishes, and the painful death scenes, not only the groans of the wounded, the cries of the dying and the thunder of the battle could be heard: one discerned also guffaws of laughter and from time

[1] "Fritz" is a nickname given by the Red Army men to Hitler's soldiers.

"In search of reserves"
"Why do you keep them sitting on pots when they should be riding motor-cycles?"
Cartoon from front newspaper

to time a joke. And the Russian soldiers jested not only during Napoleon's retreat, they had the spirit to crack a joke when he was carrying on the offensive.

This happened a hundred and thirty years ago, and now again the Russian fighters reveal their ability to string up all their forces at a time of danger, rising like an invincible wall against all attacks to smite the enemy not only with arms and shells, but with caustic words as well.

The laughter of the Red Army men rings out with hatred and contempt for the enemy, this laughter resounds with deep love for his country.

The gift of making a timely joke evinces itself at the most unexpected moments, when it would seem the battle is at the most unfavourable stage.

The newspapers which are published at the front [1] have tactfully responded to this humorous trend in the Red Army man's character. In almost all the front and army papers space is reserved for satire and humour. These features are very popular among the men. Not only professional authors, journalists and cartoonists help to contribute: a great part of these columns are filled with the witty writings of Red Army warriors, commanders and political instructors themselves.

Already at the early stages of the patriotic war, Ilya Ehrenburg observed this capacity of our warriors to grin mirthfully even when in emergency. In September, during the days of our retreat, in an article printed in *Red Star* (*Krasnaya Zvezda*), after one of his visits to the front, along with many other episodes, the writer relates the following:

". . . Here was a flegmatic native of the Ukraine—Khomenko. He was eating porridge (kasha). Two German motorcyclists came tearing up. Khomenko shot them. Then he sat down to finish his porridge. 'It's quite cold already. . . Damn the villains! Well, that's all right, we'll get square with the Hitler buddy himself yet.' "

This incident with the cold porridge popularized by the *Red Star* has passed through a series of interesting developments. Soon after the publication of this incident, in one of the army newspapers appeared a cartoon with the inscription: "Mad with

[1] A number of samples of front humour have been printed in the newly-issued collected volume *Warriors Have a Laugh*, "Young Guard," 1942.

fear." This drawing represents a Red Army man eating porridge, a comrade who has approached him, and in the background an overturned motor-cycle and the bodies of two dead Fritzes. Beneath the drawing we read the following dialogue:

"I suppose you were mad with fear when the fascists came along?" the arrival asks chaffingly.

"Yes, I did experience a certain fear."

"How's that?" queries the former in amazement.

"Well, I was so afraid my porridge would get cold! . ." answers the Red Army man playfully.

We were also told that the Red Army men of one of the battalions composed a popular song to the refrain of "I fear my porridge is growing cold," and this song, performed at self-entertaining concerts, has invariable success, for Khomenko's spirit and words are comprehensible to all and would be natural to everyone.

The morale of the German army is one of the most popular targets for the Red Army witticisms. Let us introduce several examples cited from army papers.

HIGH MOTIVES

German officer: "Tell me please what high motives have prompted you to enlist as volunteer in the German army?"

Volunteer: "Well, you see, had I refused to become volunteer, I would have been shot for sure, and now, having joined the army, there is still the possibility of my being taken prisoner."

To be sure, this sounds quite like a stenographer's note of the numerous avowals of the many Fritzes taken prisoners! It's not even exaggerated in the least. One would say: Fritz to the life! Is it then possible not to laugh at him?

As is well known, the activity of the partisan detachments sorely tries the nerves of the Germans. The paper *The Defense of Our Fatherland* gives the following dialogue in the "Answers to the point" column:

A German doctor is studying the ailments of General Schmidt.

"What ails your Excellency?" asks the doctor with servility.

"The activity of the partisans," snaps the General gruffly.

Medical themes are very popular. Our men on the Western front have composed a dialogue: "In the doctor's reception room." Here is the text:

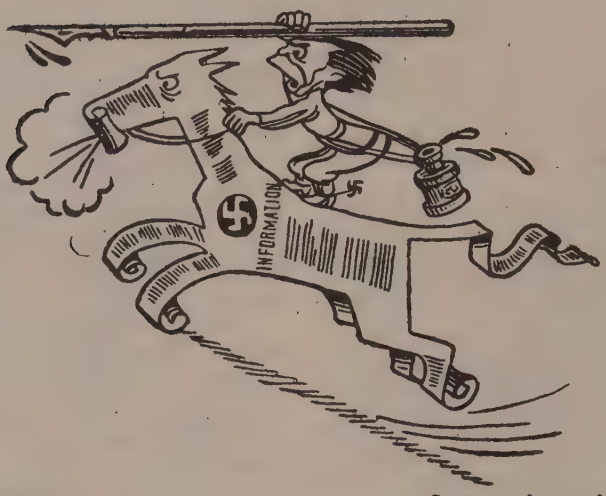
Hitler: "I have very bad pains, doctor, I'm feeling quite rotten."

Doctor: "Dear Führer, in what region are you suffering pains: in the region of the heart or in the abdominal region?"

Hitler (impatiently): "In neither, they're all in the Eastern region."

The paper *To War for Our Country* cleverly ridiculesHitler's soldier-automatones, making note also of the fact that these automatons are beginning to think.

"Your Excellency, we have captured a volunteer!"
Cartoon from front newspaper



"Dashing cavalryman" *Cartoon from front newspaper*

"What are you thinking of, Hans?" inquires one Fritz of another.

"I'm thinking," answers Hans sadly, "that I ought not to think, because the Führer does all the thinking for me."

"And what does the Führer think about all this?" continues the inquisitive German.

"He thinks that I don't give all this a thought. And it's just about this that I'm thinking," answers Hans, ridiculing Hitler and himself as well.

The following jest printed in one of the front newspapers gives a vivid description of the confusion which often reigns at the German staff headquarters:

AT THE GERMAN HEADQUARTERS

"Herr General, we have been searching for the twenty-fourth division for three weeks, and it has been found at last!"

"Oh, it has been found at last, has it? That's fine! And where is it, colonel?"

"Well, it's not exactly faring well. Here, read this: the bolsheviks announce that they have completely annihilated it. . ."

The German marauders tore through Soviet villages, killing, robbing, destroying all on their way, and one of their favourite refrains when entering the peasants' cottages was: "Give us drei cocks" (meaning three cocks or hens).

At present the Fritzes look by far less cheerful then they did in autumn when they rolled boldly along the Soviet roads on their motor-cycles and shot at random out of their tommy-guns.

Under the blows of the Red Army the Fritzes have lost all taste for Russian fowl. In one Red Army unit the following satiric song is performed with gusto:

Empty belly can but moan,
Hunger makes my forces sink,
German cocks from bold have grown
Chicken-hearted in a twink.

The letters German women write to their husbands at the front are full of orders for materials, sweaters, footgear and food-stuffs. The greedy Gretchens implore their beloved spouses not to hesitate to plunder as much as possible. Inspired by a letter of the wife of a German sergeant, the political instructor Tomashevsky wrote a satirical letter in verse. Here are extracts from it:

I want a pair of drawers. Then get
Some stockings, shoes, and frocks;
My brothers ask for boots, my pet,
And sonny wants some socks.

Snatch all, my dear, a soldier may
Take what he wants. . . You know the game?
They grab—well, quickly do the same!

Thus, through the prism of satire, the odious aspect of these scarcely human beasts that have invaded our country, counting upon an easy conquest, is clearly revealed in all its naked hideousness.

Hitler's contemptable myrmidons, his so-called "allies," are also admirable targets for the arrows of our satire. The army papers have a special column of humorous advertisements, for instance:

> German headquarters ready to purchase Rumanian army (by weight only).

> German dachshund (basset), name "Ruti." Colour white-finnish (dirty looking). Barks by German orders at Soviet Union. Lame on all fours. Tail bobbed. Put on sale for second time.

In this same column, there is a short emphatic advertisement which has a solid foundation to it:

Teeth of fascist wild beasts
will be smashed by Red Army.

The people at the front create their own folklore. It is full of vivid words spoken to the point. It bristles with caustic satire when aimed against the enemy, and has a good-natured jolly humour when speaking of their own men.

In his description of the bloody battles on the approaches to Leningrad, one of the war correspondents mentions the following fact:

In a forest blindage the hero of the Soviet Union, Colonel Krasnov, while studying the map before him, and mapping out a plan how to overcome the main forces of the German resistance on a certain point, finds time to give directions on the telephone to his artillery battery, crying out: "Give them some more hot dogs, don't economize!" Shells in his regiment are now always called "hot dogs." Frequently, these "hot dogs" get various epithets such as, for instance: "make 'em hotter," "snappier," "saltier," "do pass some more salt," and so on.

A merry joke, a neat thrust against the enemy, are inherent to the Red Army men. The fighting political trend of front-line satire and humour, and a well-timed invigourating sally indubitably help and frequently uphold throughout heavy battles the spirit of the heroic defenders of our country.

A. ALEXANDROVA

"Fatherland"

Soviet writers are active participants in the great war of liberation which the Soviet people are fighting against the German invaders. Some in the ranks of the army, some in political work and others in the editorial offices of the front newspapers,—all of them share the dangers and hardships of a campaign life on an equal footing with the fighting men. Catching a minute here and there, while resting, in the blindage or in the trench, during the brief intervals between battles, they jot down in their notebooks short and laconic descriptions of war events, or sketch some momentary impressions. This is why pamphlets form the greatest portion of the war literature of 1941—1942. These are booklets of few pages, but much ardour. Such is *Fatherland* (Letters to a Comrade) by Boris Gorbatov. From the very beginning of the war, this writer has been with the Red Army units operating in the Southern front, in the region of the Donetz Basin. He knows that part of the country well, he loves it and writes about it with warmth and feeling. The articles that make up his book are held in the form of letters addressed to his friend, now a Red Army man. They are penetrated by a single feeling of boundless, irresistible love for his fatherland.

"Fatherland! What a powerful word! It embraces twenty-one million square kilometers and two hundred million fellow countrymen. But to every man the fatherland begins in that place and house in which he was born. To me and to you it begins in the Donetz Basin mines. There are our huts under the common grey weed, mine and yours. There we spent our happy youth, you and I. There the steppes are boundless like a sea, the sky is grim; and all over the earth there are none better than the Donbass boys, no sunset prettier than the sunset over the pile-engine, and no smell more homey than the bitter-bitter unto sweet odour of coal and smoke.

There, in the Donbass, our fatherland began for us, but there are no bounds to it. Gradually the many-tongued regions of our fatherland entered our hearts: the Apsheron sand tongues, the black oil-derricks of Baku, which you visited with a miners' brigade, the rusty steppe of Magnitogorsk and the Siberian snows. And though you never were on the North Pole, your heart was there with Papanin. Because there, on the ice floe, were our people, Russians, Soviet people, our glory."

This sentiment of love for the fatherland, boundless in its vastness and great in its sufferings and victories, permeates Gorbatov's booklet. The writer tells how at the height of a battle he met a grey-haired collective farmer in one of the villages near the Dnieper. And the man's first question was about Leningrad. "Their heart aches for far-away Leningrad, as if it were their native village."

Deep emotion is roused by a story describing another meeting with a collective farmer; this time it is old Ovcharenko, from the Ukrainian collective farm "Red Bank": "'For five years I've lived in the collective farm as happy as could be,' the old man says, but now the iron heel of the Germans threatens to crush his life. '. . . It looks like life is coming to an end,' the old man muttered in a low voice, 'that's where the trouble is.' And clasping my arm he whispered in a voice of melancholy pain: 'I

can't live without my collective farm. Don't you see? I just can't!' "

It is for the sake of these millions of Soviet people, to whom renouncing their accustomed life is equal to death, that the author calls upon his friend and thousands upon thousands of other friends to join the grim life-and-death struggle with the enemy.

A man who had escaped from the Germans once came to the unit in which the author of the book was staying.

"I looked at this man's back, only at his back. He spent no more than a month and a half under German rule, and his back had become bent. As if his spine had been broken. This was the back of a man under the yoke, the back of a slave.

At the enemies of his people the author flings words of wrath and hatred:

"Over my native Donetz steppe the sun of battle rises. Under its rays I solemnly swear to you, comrade: I shall not waver in the fight. Even wounded, I shall not leave the ranks. If surrounded by the enemy, I shall not surrender. In my heart there is no fear, no confusion, no pity for the enemy, nothing but hatred. A bitter hatred. My heart is aflame. This is our fight unto death. I am coming!"

Gorbatov's booklet is an artistic document of great power.

VL. RUBIN

"Little Children in Great Want"

Little Children in Great Want, by the two German authors Kurt and Yarmina Gauzner, has been published by the Publishing House of Children's Literature here some time ago. Though it is mostly about children, it was read by grown-ups and youngsters alike with poignant emotion.

"This book is dedicated to the innumerable half-starved proletarian children and worn-out, harrassed proletarian mothers of fascist Germany; it is dedicated to four-months-old Ingeborg, eighteen-months-old Wolfgang and four-year-old Bernhard, slaughtered by German fascism in 1935, in Berlin, together with their hapless mother, Charlotte Yuneman."

Such is the truly tragic dedication with which the book opens.

The name of Charlotte Yuneman is not fictitious; the same should be said of the subject matter of the book. In 1935 a scandalous trial took place in Berlin: a nazi court condemned to death an unemployed woman, Yuneman, living in the basement of house No. 27, Weinstrasse, on the ground that she "deliberately murdered" her three children, by locking them up in a room and throwing the key into the canal from the Potsdam Bridge.

The judges had to hurry with the sentence, because the press of almost the whole world was beginning to discuss the real murderer of three innocent children—the fascist regime of Germany.

Now, when fascism has enslaved many countries of Europe, the Gauzners' book has acquired special significance: the fate of Charlotte Yuneman has now become the fate of hundreds of thousands of women, not only in Germany, but also in the invaded and occupied countries.

Little Children in Great Want tells how the fascist order, senseless, cruel and purblind, brought a woman, driven out of her senses by want and starvation, to such a pass that she forgot the very names of her children, and for two hundred hours wandered about the town, leaving in a basement her three dying children—two sons and a daughter.

House No. 27, Weinstrasse, is one of Berlin's many houses. On the first floor lives Albert Merker, chief of a storm detachment, with his wife and son Robby. Robby, dressed up in a child's storm trooper uniform with swastikas on the buttons, goes down into the yard looking for someone to show off to. But there is nobody in the yard. The young nazi goes around to the back-yard where the rubbish bins are and where the residents of the whole house throw away their garbage. There, in the basement, lives Bernhard Yuneman, a boy who will certainly be envious of the new suit of the nazi's son.

"Robby tip-toes to the door and puts his ear to the key-hole. Hark! What's going on? The baby is crying, dishes are rattling. Robby recognizes Bernhard's voice:

" 'But, Mummy, I don't want them all. Only one little one!'

" 'Bernhard, don't make me lose patience with you. The potatoes are for supper.'

" 'But, Mummy, just one! Can't you give me just one?'

" 'Don't pester me, Bernhard! Haven't I given you coffee and bread?'

" 'Mummy! Mummy! One tiny little potato! Just one!' comes Bernhard's pleading voice again.

" 'Will you stop it, Bernhard? Leave me alone!' says the woman's voice.

" 'That's his mother, of course,' think Robby. It sounds as though the womansie

crying. There she is talking again. But now she is speaking so low that Robby can only just make out a word here and there:

" 'Why, you're the eldest, Bernhard. You ought to understand things. Those potatoes are the last we have. When Wolf cries, it's different. He's only a baby. But you? You're a big boy, Bernhard. . .'

"Then silence. Only the baby kept on crying and crying. Suddenly Robby felt frightened. Ugh! He even began to get creepy all over."

Charlotte Yuneman takes her son to a charity institution. There the children of the poor are brought up in the spirit of the "great Führer" Adolf Hitler: less food and more kicks.

To the extreme dissatisfaction of Germany's leaders, the hungry children don't seem to take kindly to hitlerite ideas.

The mother of the charity child Bernhard Yuneman goes in search of some kind of work. These pages of the book are a terrible indictment of fascism. Here we see revealed the real character of fascism—pitiless, cynical and bullying.

The labour-exchange with its thousands of unemployed, the catholic hospital with its nuns who demand payment in advance, merchants from the nationalist-socialist party, the pastor who sacrifices his dilapidated old couch to Charlotte Yuneman when she begs him to help her children,—all this is told quite simply, without any embellishment or exaggeration, and arouses such a storm of disgust and indignation that an involuntary cry of protest breaks from the reader.

The pastor forces Charlotte Yuneman to go begging from house to house. In one house they give her a pair of down-at-heel gilt evening shoes, in another they throw her a cigar-case with some cigars in it. Tired-out, hungry, carrying these useless things, she happens to meet some residents from the upper story.

" 'Do you know, that impudent woman goes round pestering everybody to help her children, and at the same time buys herself pretty clothes and dances the whole night through.'

" 'You don't say so!' says Frau Merker in astonishment.

" 'You can take my word for it. The other day I was going along with my husband, and we met this Yuneman in the yard. Just imagine, she was carrying home a pair of brand-new gilt evening shoes!' "

The hitlerite State machine is set in motion. Charlotte Yuneman is deprived of her dole: the neighbours report that she leads a dissolute manner of life. Her children are slowly dying of hunger. The poor hunted creature, the incarnation of all the sufferings of the German people, rushes helplessly about the great Moloch of a fascist city.

Later on the nazi press begins in a chorus to accuse Charlotte of wasting money on gilt evening shoes and spending her nights dancing. The woman's last place of refuge is a deserted brick-kiln. The key of the basement in which the children have been left lies in the canal.

In a few days the trial of Charlotte Yuneman is to take place.

Leaflets fly over Berlin. It's useless for hitlerite agents to pounce on them: people have already managed to read them and learn the truth about Charlotte Yuneman, a victim of fascism.

Kurt and Yarmina Gauzner's book is read with unflagging interest. It reveals to the reader the savagery of fascism, its bloodthirstiness and inhumanity.

Now, when the fascist brigands have treacherously invaded our free Soviet country, this book is fraught with an even more vital meaning. It arouses a stubborn determination to stamp out, to exterminate forever the black plague.

N. KALMA

One Hundred and Thirty Years Ago

Looking through the yellowed pages of a copy of the old Russian magazine *Son of the Fatherland*, we came across an interesting article bearing testimony to the unanimity of views held by the people of Russia and Britain during that period when these two countries were threatened by a common enemy—Napoleon.

Son of the Fatherland was one of the largest and most influential Russian magazines published during the first half of the XIXth century. It appeared in Petersburg and existed for over half-a-century.

The first copy of this magazine appeared at a time fraught with grave danger for Russia. This was in September 1812. Napoleon's troops held sway in the Russian towns; they occupied Moscow, the heart of Russia. But Moscow turned out to be the beginning of the end for Napoleon. He expected to find there "Russian boyars" begging for peace and frightened crowds of submissive people, but it was far from being so! Moscow was empty. "There still were some people, there still remained in it one fiftieth part of its former inhabitants,

but it was empty. Empty as a dying, queenless bee-hive" (L. Tolstoy).

In this empty town death dogged the footsteps of the French. The journalist and playwright S. Glinka, an eye-witness to the events of 1812, described how the French "roamed the streets in the darkness of the night, like so many pityable spectres, walking aimlessly, starved, dusty, ragged and worn out by long marches. . ."

Moscow was aflame. And Napoleon's ambitious plans collapsed finally in the fire and smoke of the Moscow conflagration. Soon began the retreat, which turned into flight. The hungry, half-naked, demoralized men, who still called themselves the French army, hurriedly retreated westwards. They were decimated by sudden, unexpected blows from Russian detachments, by the cruel frosts of the Russian winter and by the hatchets and sharpened pales of the Russian partisans. . . Napoleon himself, however, according to Colencourt who accompanied him on the retreat, "appeared calm and in good spirits, and even joked sometimes." Circumstances compelled him to put on a smiling face despite the fact that he was playing a losing game. A great military leader that he was, he could be a great actor as well when circumstances demanded it. It was necessary at all costs to return to Paris as a victor.

It was to Napoleon's entry into Paris that the English journal *The Courier* dedicated a biting ironical article, which the *Son of the Fatherland* published in Russian. It appeared in the No. 1 for 1813; in England it must have been published in November or December 1812. This coincides with the development of the catastrophe which overtook the French army in Russia. The *Son of the Fatherland* headed this article as follows:

Remarks
by an English journalist on
Napoleon's entry into Paris

The article was written in the form of a witty account of Napoleon's "triumphant" entry into Paris, supposed to have taken place already. Maintaining a style of respectful exaltation, the author wrote of "a magnificent procession, compared to which Alexander the Great's entry into Babylon was as nothing. . ."

Then follows a funny enumeration of the victor's "trophies." Here are his exact words:

". . . Two Siberian cats, somewhat injured during the seizure of the Kremlin, were brought in a sleigh.

"The cap and slippers which Charles the XII lost at Poltava.

"A grenadier of the late French Imperial Guard, frozen in Smolensk, but still in quite a good state of preservation.

"A skilfully made ice model of a small Russian village, in which Napoleon billeted his troops after the brilliant victories of

"A Puppet comedy, or Cossack prisoners passing through Frankfort"
Cartoon by Terebenev, 1812

"Napoleon justifying himself before the people upon his return to Paris from Russia"
Cartoon by Terebenev, 1812

marshals Davoux and Ney on November 5th and 6th.

"Twelve dummies representing Cossacks, Kalmyks and Bashkirs all captured by the French. . .

There is devastating irony in mentioning the "victories" of Napoleon's marshals, who, as we know, had suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the Russian troops early in November 1812.

The enumeration of the "prisoners" is also of interest. It shows that the Cossacks, Kalmyks, Bashkirs, as well as the rest of the peoples inhabiting the territory of Russia, were well known to the French as dangerous and brave opponents. Indeed, as S. Glinka stated, "like the native Russians, they all were ready to die for the Russian land. Mordovians, Tepters, Meshcheryaks and Cheremisses gladly joined the service; the Orenburg Bashkirs volunteered and asked the government whether it did not need their regiments."

This is the reason why the London press of the time wrote: "The entire Russian nation is fighting. . . Russia will make Napoleon feel what it means to fight a courageous and united people." (This opinion of the English press was quoted in the Petersburg newspaper *Northern Post* of October 23th, 1812.)

There can be no doubt that the "Remarks by an English journalist on Napoleon's entry into Paris" found great favour with the Russian readers. They fully fell in with the public mood of the period. In the face of the grave danger which threatened their fatherland, Russian society was swept by a single and general patriotic impulse. This feeling of national upsurge throbbed in the verses of the poets of those days—the closest and direct fore-runners of Pushkin; it resounded from the theatre stages, where heroic national plays were performed. This explains the success which greeted the patriotic cartoons of the painter I. Terebenev which were circulated in the form of separate coloured leaflets. Cutting and expressive, bearing signatures in the vein of somewhat vulgar folk humour, they enjoyed much-deserved popularity. Terebenev did about two hundred cartoons; their principal personages were Napoleon and the French soldiers. Here are some starved grenadiers, greedily tearing to pieces a dead frozen daw. There a Russian woman-partisan captures some frost-bitten French soldiers. And here again we see Napoleon's marshals, who, having eaten their last horses, are prancing about on sabres, trumpets and drums. . .

Two cartoons by Terebenev again call our attention to the article of the English journalist.

The first is called: "Napoleon justifying himself before the people upon his return to Paris from Russia." Napoleon on stilts faces a crowd of surprised Parisians. Behind him clusters the tattered army. A marshal triumphantly carries a bundle of killed crows. Two others sit on a kicking donkey, whom some tramps are pulling by the bridle. In the background are some dim figures with "trophies". . . Doesn't it remind us of the "brilliant procession" described in *The Courier*?

The second cartoon is just as amusing. It is called shortly "A Puppet comédy" and depicts some French soldiers leading dummies rigged up as Russian Cossacks, as their "prisoners." The dummies are made in a hurry: beards attached in a haphazard way, caps slapped straight onto sticks; one dummy is about to fall to pieces; but never mind!—those who wish to be deceived will take them for real Cossacks. . . Isn't this caricature an excellent illustration to the joke about the "prisoners" told in the article of the English journalist?

Those who have studied Terebenev's art maintain that the subjects of many of his works "first appeared in the periodic press, m o s t l y in the *Son of the Fatherland*, at the end of 1812 and the beginning of 1813" (V. Vereshchagin, *Russian Caricatures*).

This gives us reason to assume that the themes of the two cartoons described above have also been prompted to Terebenev by the article published in the *Son of the Fatherland*.

Thus hatred for the common enemy has united the pen of an English journalist and the pencil of a Russian painter.

S. BOGOMAZOV

The peasant of Sychovka

The Moscow Art Theatre in Saratov

During the early months of the war, the Moscow Art Theatre gave performances of one of its latest peace-time productions — *The School for Scandal*, Sheridan's masterpiece, sparkled brilliantly from the stage, alive with the vivid colours lent it by the incomparable art of the producers and actors. At the same time the directors' studies and the rehearsal halls hummed with activity as new productions were being prepared. Moscow theatre-goers were soon to see N. Pogodin's *The Chimes of the Kremlin*, a play about the early days of the Soviet land, about its struggles, creative work and all-triumphant labour. The theatre was busy rehearsing this dramatic poem about the grim and inspiring days of 1920.

The Moscow Art Theatre was also working on a new play by M. Bulgakov at the time. This is a play about Pushkin. Only, the author purposely refrains from making Pushkin himself appear in it. The entire play, however, is permeated with the poet's personality, his genius, his stimulating spirit. And there can be no doubt that on the stage of the Moscow Art Theatre we shall behold a true reproduction of Pushkin's epoch and of the people of those times, we shall sense the finest thoughts of progressive Russian society, understand the powerful well-springs of our national life which gave birth to the first great poet and immortal master of Russian verse.

But the war brought about changes in the plans of the theatre. When the Soviet government transferred factories and institutions working for defense to regions far removed from the front, the spiritual treasures of the Soviet Union were likewise carefully and lovingly transferred to the rear.

The nazis in their arrogant way declared that in the East cultural values deserve no consideration. The Soviet Union has removed these treasures, and the hitlerites will never lay hands on them. It was during those crucial days that the Moscow Art Theatre was evacuated to Saratov.

One need but picture to oneself what it meant to evacuate such a complex and delicate organization as the Moscow Art Theatre at a time when the fascist hordes were launching one "general" and "decisive" attack after another in their effort to reach the heart of the U.S.S.R., and when the fascist carrion-kites, roaming the air, tried to establish "control" over our roads! One need but picture to oneself what is involved in the evacuation of a theatre in whose art nothing is superfluous and when it is an infinite number of the finest details, of which the spectator at times has even no inkling, that go to make up its art!

In the art of the Moscow Art Theatre nothing is ever left to chance. Every object on the stage has its definite place, it is there for a certain purpose, each thing plays its own

definite part. In the play *Woe to Wit*, in the scenes depicting Moscow at the time Griboyedov lived, for instance, there is a distinct and expressive role assigned to the antique China cups which the widower Famussov handles with clumsy care, emphasizing that there is no mistress of the house. When *Tsar Fyodor Ioannovich* was staged, the theatre spared no efforts to obtain booming Rostov bells for the bell-ringing in the play. Similar instances can be cited in regard to every production of this theatre.

The Moscow Art Theatre moved to Saratov and began to work in that city on the Volga without surrendering any of its artistic principles because of war or evacuation.

"The Moscow Academic Art Theatre," wrote I. Moskvin, who assumed the duties of director, "in coming to Saratov, sets itself the aim—despite the complicated conditions created by the great patriotic war against the fascist invaders—fully to preserve and develop its art, which belongs to the Soviet people."

The audiences have changed. Like everywhere throughout the Soviet Union the audiences now consist of war-workers and Red Army men, those who in Saratov, just as in every other place, are working for the defense of the country. But the Moscow Academic Art Theatre has remained the same as it was on the Proyezd Khudozhestvennovo Teatra in Moscow. The same sea-gull spreads its wings over the folds of the curtain. Nor is it a newly-made sea-gull. Oh, no! it is the very same emblem which graced the theatre in its native Moscow and which it brought along with it to Saratov.

The first performances were held in the small but cozy hall of the Saratov Young Spectators Theatre. The old Saratov Hotel "Europe," where the members of the Moscow Art Theatre company took up lodgings, hummed with theatrical activity: here talks on subjects pertaining to the work of the theatre were held, questions of art were discussed. In short, here the creative forces of this wonderful theatre were set to work with all the usual zest and fire.

The first productions to be shown in Saratov were *The School for Scandal*, *Anna Karenina*, *Three Sisters*, and *Down and Out*. In this repertory certain pages in the history of the Moscow Art Theatre came to life in all their unfading glamour and in a new way.

Three Sisters. . . In the annals of the Moscow Art Theatre this was not the first production of a Chekhov play. By that time the Moscow Art Theatre had already discovered Chekhov. It had already produced *The Sea-Gull* and *Uncle Vanya*. But when it tackled this new play by Chekhov, the theatre again keenly sought after that "something" that was specific to and characteristic of the new play, that embodied what was new in Chekhov's conception. Stanislavsky subsequently confessed: this "something," once they found it, was very simple, as everything in Chekhov:

"Chekhov's characters by no means flaunt their despondency; on the contrary, they seek merriment, laughter, cheerfulness; they want to live, not vegetate."

Strict as was the ever-searching Stanislavsky's attitude to the theatre, he said of the production of *Three Sisters*: "As regards the art of actors and director, this production is considered one of the best in our theatre."

In Soviet times the theatre again put in a great deal of work into this play, bringing Chekhov's characters still closer to our own day.

The production of *Down and Out* established a lasting kinship between the Moscow Art Theatre and Maxim Gorky, whose name it now proudly bears. The history of this production dates back to an evening in the

Crimea when the great writer confided to the members of the Art Theatre company the idea of the play which he had at that time just conceived.

Anna Karenina, produced in recent years, proved to be another signal victory scored by the theatre in its new attempt—by far not the first—to turn to the heritage of Leo Tolstoy.

Those were the first plays produced during the season in Saratov. On the anniversary of Lenin's death, January 22nd, 1942, the theatre gave the first performance of *The Chimes of the Kremlin*. The theatre had worked a great deal, in friendly collaboration with the author, over its final version of the play. And this play about the grim days of 1920 has proved fully consonant with our present. Critics and spectators alike are unanimous in their opinion that everything in this play is reminiscent of the present times. The soldiers among the audience felt it most keenly, perhaps. In the finale of the play we see on the stage Moscow, Lenin and Stalin. We hear Lenin's injunction to guard the young republic—the injunction which Stalin made it his sacred duty to carry out. And every spectator travels in thought to our own days, when under the hallowed walls of Moscow the brown "knights" of the spiderlike swastika, repulsed by the Red Army, fell back and are continuing to retreat.

As was to be expected, the Moscow Academic Art Theatre very soon found the hall of the Saratov Young Spectator's Theatre too small. There were only 500 seats there. And so the Moscow Art Theatre, in about a month or two after its evacuation, began to give parallel performances in the Chernyshevsky Opera Theatre of Saratov. At the same time artistic recitals were held in the Saratov Conservatory and in the city of Engels across the river. Actors of the Moscow Art Theatre took part also in concerts given in Red Army units. Thus the Moscow Art Theatre continued its exciting, full and varied existence. Honour and glory to this great Soviet theatre, the magnificent citadel of creative endeavour and artistic work!

Strictly adhering to its original plans, the Moscow Art Theatre will produce the play about Pushkin, which is to follow the production of *The Chimes of the Kremlin*.

Writing of Pushkin, Gorky said: "See how wide is the range of his interests in life, how much he grasped on earth. . . that is how life should be taken."

The Moscow Gorky Art Theatre will produce a play about Pushkin, which will be imbued with this affirmative force of life and love for his country which suffuses all Pushkin's works.

The theatre will also revive some of its earlier productions. Among them *The Pickwick Club*, distinguished for its subtle humour and warmth, Ostrovsky's *Ardent Heart*, and A. K. Tolstoy's *Tsar Fyodor Ioannovich*—that remarkable performance which opened the history of the Moscow Art Theatre.

The return to Gorky, Chekhov, Ostrovsky and A. K. Tolstoy testifies to the never-waning interest both of the theatre and of the Soviet theatre-goers in our classics. Following these lines, the theatre has begun to rehearse another Ostrovsky's play, *The Last Victim*, which will be a new addition to its repertory. During its season in Saratov the theatre will also revive Vsevolod Ivanov's *The Armoured Train* in a new version. It is also awaiting impatiently a play by Jean-Richard Bloch, dealing with France in 1941. The author has promised the theatre his new play born of the war, a play surging with the wrath, hatred and thirst for vengeance of the free French people.

The Moscow Academic Art Theatre has always drawn up its plans for a

long period ahead. Among these plans is the production of one of Shakespeare's tragedies. The theatre will continue along the path marked by its productions of *Hamlet*, *Julius Caesar* and *Othello*. This Russian theatre which has justly become a representative of world culture, could not really fulfil its artistic mission unless it turned to Shakespeare too.

At present the Moscow Art Theatre is in Saratov. And its season in that city will add another valuable page to the annals of this remarkable theatre. The Moscow Art Theatre will return to Moscow. It will play in many Soviet cities which will have returned to peace-time conditions, and it will show what it accumulated in the days of the great Soviet war for the fatherland. The intensive artistic activity of the entire company, which has not been interrupted for a single moment, is a guarantee that the magnificent art of this theatre is constantly being enriched by new attainments.

A. NOVIKOV

Actors and Singers at the Front

The war is being waged not only by the Red Army and the workers in munitions and armaments factories: scientists, writers, actors, singers and artists are also contributing to the war effort, doing their share in the fight against German fascism.

The war has not compelled our workers in the field of culture and art to suspend their activities. On the contrary, it has welded them into a more closely-knit family, strengthened their will and character and given a stimulus to their talents. All the violence of Hitler's sudden and treacherous attack on our country has not interrupted the development of creative activity. The lights still shine brightly in our crowded theatres, new songs are being composed, new

Concert given by artists of the Leningrad Opera on the North-Western front

films produced, new plays performed, and new symphonies created glorifying the might and invincibility of Soviet country. Along the whole length of the great front stretching from Sebastopol to the Barents Sea well-known actors and singers perform to the army in action, and to barrack and dug-out is brought the music of the world's greatest composers—Tchaikovsky, Glinka, Rimsky-Korsakov, Beethoven, Liszt, Chopin and Mozart, whose works are so beloved by the Red Army.

In spite of the difficulties and hardships of the campaign, the men and commanders have a deep and unquenchable thirst for art and are keenly responsive to the charm and delight of music and drama.

When the war broke out, the best representatives of Soviet art formed travelling troupes and abandoned the concert hall for the forest glade, the theatre stage for the motor-truck, their comfortable homes for barracks and dug-outs, travelling thousands of miles by motor from one section of the front to another. Overhead they saw now not the familiar ceiling of a packed house, but the stern expanse of dangerous skies where purely "military" performances are often enacted before their very eyes.

Soviet actors, singers, composers and artists were prepared for serving at the front by long years of close friendship with the Red Army which took the shape of a cultural and artistic patronage.

In times of peace thousands of actors and singers performed in their spare time in Red Army barracks, clubs and camps. In the summer time, the theatrical season ended, the companies of the Moscow Bolshoy Theatre, Art Theatre and Maly Theatre, as well as the Leningrad theatres would travel to the Far East, Uzbekistan and other remote army stations to perform their plays before distant garrisons and to help the training of amateur army concert and theatrical groups. Thus, the Red Army was always provided with restful recreation and was constantly kept in touch with the very best in the realm of art. Some of the finest singers and actors of the Soviet Union, such as Barsova, Moskvin, Tarkhanov, Tarassova, Dobronravov, Khmelyov, Korchagina-Alexandrovskaya, Yuryev, Kozlovsky, Cherkassov, Livanov, Elanskaya and scores of other representatives of Russian art, as well as actors of all the numerous Soviet national minorities, were frequent and welcome guests of the Red Army. Soviet actors always were the army's comrades-in-arms, and now they carry their weapon—a high and noble art—to the front-line.

This close friendship of long standing between Soviet artists and the Red Army was a vivid expression of the love the people manifested for their fighting forces.

From the very early days of the war dozens of musicians' and actors' groups travelled to the front by train, motor and airplane. It is a life full of hardships and dangers, for modern warfare with its swift and rapid movements and rapidly changing front-line rendered their work extremely complicated.

Performances had to be given at all times of the night and day, and often several times a day, under the most varied conditions and in the most varied places—in peasant huts, in barns, in forests, in dug-outs, on aerodromes and under the wings of airplanes.

The actors' arrival always awakens great animation and excitement among the men at the front.

Often enough these concerts at the front-lines are drowned out by the sinister roar of enemy artillery, and the noise of bursting shells weaves itself into the melody of a song performed on the guitar. But the artists are never dismayed and appear in the most unexpected and dangerous sections of the front, taking advantage

of momentary lulls in the fighting.

In the forest men just returned from battle for a brief rest sit in rapt attention, drinking in the words and music greedily.

One hears laughter, enthusiastic applause, and again gusts of mirth. After the concert one of the men climbs on to the truck and in the name of his comrades thanks the performers for their courage in having faced so many difficulties and dangers in order to bring their art to the front-lines. Imperceptibly, the concert is converted into a meeting. Men and performers rise and speak of the war, of the Germans and their brutalities, and their voices tremble with wrath and hatred. The visitors spend the night in the dug-outs and in the morning set out for another part of the front.

Another concert, and they are again on the road. The roads are bombed and bombarded by the enemy, but the artists continue their work undauntedly, moving forward with the Red troops.

They entertain the men with song, music and comedy. Caustic satirical sketches and jokes at the expense of the hated enemy are applauded boisterously. The audience make a dash for their planes to repulse an enemy attack. On their return from an air combat, they calmly resume their seats in the "theatre," and the performance is continued.

Once, during a concert in a certain military unit, two of our fighter craft were chasing through the skies an uninvited "spectator," a fascist scout plane. The two performances ended simultaneously, the rounds of applause to the actor Permyakov mingling with the roar of the explosion of the crashed German vulture.

The programs of these concert brigades include the music and drama of the best Russian and European composers and playwrights, and recitations from the works of Tolstoy, Pushkin, Chekhov, Lermontov, Saltykov-Shchedrin, Shakespeare, Balzac, Maupassant and Gorky.

In the first eight months of the war thirty concert brigades gave over 19,000 performances on the shores of the Barents Sea, in the Arctic, in the forests of Karelia, in besieged Leningrad, in Sebastopol, in Kerch and at other parts of the front.

These travelling troupes often play to our allies. One such performance was given for the British stationed in the Soviet Union. An English captain acted as introducer and interpreter. The concert was a great success, and the captain seemingly carried off the task with credit, for the British fliers were in fits of laughter. Only one word—*bliny* (pancakes)—seemed to occasion him some difficulty: he translated it "cakes." After the concert the British fliers came on to the stage thanking the Soviet artistes for the entertainment, and expressed their surprise that such a performance could be given so near the battle-front under conditions of modern warfare. They said that in England this would have been possible only in the case of a positional warfare, and that the forces in action are usually without entertainment. Particular admiration was expressed by our allies for the women who were bearing all the hardships and privations of the front on an equal footing with the men.

Not far from the front, in a crowded dug-out, men and commanders who happened to be free from duty sat resting and listening to a concert. Among them were many famous heroes, men who had taken part in daring attacks and in raids into the enemy's rear. At any moment the order might come which would send them again into battle. This, however, was a moment of leisure.

Outside, above the roof of the dug-out, grenades were bursting, rifles cracking, machine-guns rattling and engines roaring. Yet here, underground, some five hundred yards

Actors of Moscow Review give a performance on the Southern front

from the front, a concert was in full progress. The faces both of the listening men and the performers beamed with pleasure and excitement. In truth, what greater stimulus to his art could actor or singer desire? No wonder they were so anxious to reach the front and urged their escorts to conduct them "further, further ahead to the foremost, the most advanced lines." The keen response of such an audience is compensation enough for all hardships and dangers.

Before the concert, the commissar told the actors of the glorious deeds of the men gathered in the dug-out, and these stories of valour and heroism put the artists on their mettle.

"I dedicate my performance to Red Army man Tsipkin, who in nineteen days killed twenty-one fascists," declared Kalganov, Honoured Artist of the Republic. "I will now recite a tale by Guy de Maupassant, *The Port.*"

It seemed strange at first,—a tale by the French writer here, in this forest in the war zone. Would the men understand, would it appeal to them amidst this utterly different life they were leading? But the audience listened with rapt attention as the story with its simple and genuine characters was unfolded to them, for the appeal of true art is all-compelling.

In response to Kalganov, Red Army man Tsipkin rose and said that the day on which he did not annihilate at the least two fascist skunks he would regard as wasted.

Then songs were sung by Honoured Artists of the Republic Ovcharenko and Kraskovskaya, and their voices resounded in the dug-out with a depth of feeling and emotion they had never revealed on the stages of their theatres back home. They were followed by dance numbers performed by members of the ballet of the Leningrad Little Opera Theatre Varkovitsky and Marimanova and by a violin recital. Then the circus performer Michel set the men into fits of laughter with his jokes. But the most enthusiastic reception of all was given to the music of Tchaikovsky, for these were

the days when on another section of the front Red troops had recaptured the town of Klin, the home of the great Russian composer, whose house had been wrecked by the fascist barbarians.

The theatres which have been evacuated from the war areas into the interior of the country do not forget the front and regularly send the best members of their companies to perform for the men on active service. Mention may be made of the best members of the Moscow Maly Theatre: People's Artist of the Soviet Union Sadovsky, People's Artist of the Republic Gogoleva, Stalin-prize winner Ilyinsky and Honoured Artist Mezhinsky, who did the role of Professor Mamlock in the film of that name,—to enumerate only a few of the thousands of leading actors of the Soviet stage. Thus, all Soviet theatres are participating in the entertainment of the fighting forces.

Concert brigades from Alma-Ata, Sverdlovsk, Cheliabinsk, Ufa and many other distant cities also visit the front.

Kabalevsky, composer of the opera *Cola Breugnon*, Dzerzhinsky, composer of the operas *And Quiet Flows the Don* and *The Soil Upturned*, Byely, composer of a number of songs, and many other prominent musicians make trips to the front and stay there for weeks, teaching the men new Red Army songs.

Among the Red Army men there are many gifted singers, dancers, actors, reciters and budding poets and composers.

The visiting actors and singers, in addition to performing, help the Red Army amateur concert and dramatic groups with advice and instruction, attend their rehearsals and teach them new songs and plays. They also help to form new groups, and these in their turn do their share in organizing the recreation and entertainment of the men at the front.

It is satisfactory to know that in these sore days of trial Soviet artists have proved equal to the demands made upon them by the country and the army.

Battalion Commissar J. RAGINSKY

Romeo and Juliet in War-Time

Masha is one of the most widespread and ordinary Russian names. This, for instance, is reflected even in the existence of a popular Russian people's proverb: "Masha's the bonniest lass, but her smiles aren't for us, lads, alas!" Therefore it is not merely a coincidence when two writers, having decided to show the gradual formation of the character and image of a simple Russian woman, named their heroine Masha. Mashenka—such is the name given to the heroine of his play by the playwright Afinogenov, and, although beyond the name this play has nothing in common with the recently released film *Mashenka*, there are many points of resemblance in these two creations.

The events which take place in Afinogenov's play seem to relate the earlier history of the Mashenka shown in the scenario by film-playwright Gabrilovich, on the basis of which regisseur Raizman has built an exciting and thrilling film.

What have the heroines of the two productions in common? At first glance it seems difficult to answer this question. Afinogenov's heroine is introduced to the audience as a 15-year-old girl, brought up in cultured, intelligent surroundings; her grandfather is a famous scientist. Gabrilovich's Mashenka is a girl from the people, a post-office worker. And yet the two heroines have a certain kinship of what we would define as the

A still from the film: Mashenka and Alyosha

features of the modern generation of new Soviet women. And having seen the film, one understands better the things that are taking place in our everyday life, for only when they are filtered through the prism of art one sees them as an important and general reflection of the essential processes of life.

Here they are, these heroic Russian women, the gallant daughters of the great Russian people, they who have proudly carried aloft their glorious banner throughout history. And when *The End* appears on the screen, one begins to understand whence springs the heroism of the Soviet people, which has amazed the world and formed an unconquerable barrier on the path of Hitler's aggression. The fascist generals, the fascist spies and scouts could well have collected various information on the military might and defense capacity of the Soviet Union, but it was beyond them to comprehend the heart, the character and the will-power of our people, who stand ready to defend to the last drop of blood their free and independent existence. These features are shown with great skill in the character of the principal heroes of the film.

Its contents are simple. It is somewhat like re-telling the story of Romeo and Juliet—of two lovers, whose fate differs from Shakespeare's heroes in that it ends with hope of the near happiness, to come after the annihilation of the enemy who has attacked us.

By mere chance Mashenka meets the chauffeur Alyosha, the hero of the film. The young people took a fancy to each other, and soon a genuine friendship sprang up between them, which did not take long in growing into a deep, serious feeling. Masha is a wholehearted, uncompromising character, honest, insistent and with a strong will-power. Alyosha is a good fellow, but he has a number of essential shortcomings. He can tell a lie if

only to show off before a girl whom he happens to like, and he has not enough will-power and persistence to achieve a set purpose. For the sake of a minute's passion he may forfeit the happiness of a lifetime. But with all this he really is a good man, though still untrained and not hardened as yet in the battle of life. However, after passing through a number of trials, he attains a correct understanding of his duties as a citizen and becomes a worthy, courageous representative of his people, deserving the love of such a remarkable girl as Mashenka, who, by the time the film is over, wins the love and admiration of the audience.

What is it about Mashenka that captivates us? She is not pretty, not very cultured or educated, but there is something extraordinarily sweet, endearing and warm in her personality. This feeling is awakened in us not only by the features which the playwright lends to Mashenka, but even more by the thrilling acting of the part by the young screen actress Valentina Karavayeva, who, by the way, makes her debut in this film.

The whole story of our Romeo and Juliet takes place against a grim war background. May, 1939. Serene and peaceful is the life of the land of Soviets, bent on its great work of construction. But suddenly the abominable sound of a wailing siren cuts the stillness of the warm spring evening. An alert. This, however, is an alarm sounded only in rehearsal so as to prepare the civil population to meet the danger of a possible enemy attack from the air. Thus the theme of possible war arises on the fringe of the acts; this theme passes through the film like its leitmotiv, which sounds stronger and more powerful with every new act, especially towards the end, when it dominates every other melody and theme of the picture.

It would be wrong to think that all this had been planned intentionally by the authors of the film. No, many thoughts and ideas blossom out perhaps even beyond the will and consciousness of its creators. Such is one of the frequently observed laws of art. Much food for thought is given even by brief separate episodes. Such, for instance, is Alyosha's letter to Mashenka. Accidentally it is not delivered to its address and is received by one of the fighters at the front instead. Follows the scene where the Red Army men, who have just returned from the front-line, read the letter aloud and, carried away by its deep humane feeling, they decide to find by all means the one to whom these touching emotional lines were addressed. And the audience rightly feels quite sure that this decision will be carried out and the letter delivered to the proper party, although it does not know how it is going to be done.

I recall having read in our daily press a letter addressed to our writers by a certain young girl. She rightly pointed out the fact that our novels, plays and films often show a hero and his actions only after his character had been definitely moulded, "while to us," the girl wrote, "to the younger generation, it is not the final result but the road travelled by the heroes which is of most importance and value in a work of art."

Mashenka gives a correct and convincing answer to this very rightful demand. Both the hero and heroine of this film are plain Soviet folk, not outstanding in any way. And although by the end of the film they achieve, in the eyes of the audience, the level of real heroes, they themselves would be astonished and refuse to believe it if told that their actions have something of the heroic in them. Alyosha's daring and courage may be seen in several episodes in the film, and Mashenka's valiant deeds the producers of the film have depicted as they are conceived by other

acting persons in the picture; this even enhances the heroic image of the simple Russian girl. We see the affection which this girl enjoys among the men at the front, the friendly, comradely warmth which permeates her entire surroundings at the front, and we are shown how Mashenka has found there the place where she really belongs.

What also contributes to the success of this film is the perfect treatment of separate, even insignificant details by the regisseurs, as well as the operator's skill and the excellent acting not only of the main but also of the secondary roles. It is difficult to explain the quality of their acting. At the first glance there is nothing remarkable about Karavayeva. There are no new methods or effectful psychological emotions, and yet her performance thrills the audience to such a degree that it often forgets that it is faced by a screen and imagines to be confronting real life. It is the reality and truth to life of this film, the simplicity and naturalness of the acting that makes this production so close, comprehensible and pleasant to the audience. The events which take place in the lives of the heroes of the film are simple and ordinary, but this very plainness moves us more than many an effectful hit. For thousands of people recall that something similar had happened in their personal lives, and this recollection builds up the closest kinship between the audience and the film.

A few words about the war episodes shown in *Mashenka*. There are not many of them but enough to give a fully-realistic picture of modern war. Of outstanding brilliance are the moments when the tanks rush into the burning town, when the infantry launches a bayonet attack against the enemy and the hero of the

Mashenka — V. Karavayèva

A still from the film "Mashenka"

film destroys the crew of a Finnish machine-gun firing from the attic of a half-ruined building. Modern warfare is grim, and grave are the obstacles placed in the way of the Soviet troops to victory, but our men have been brought up in the school of courage; they are the children of the heroes of the October Revolution and of the victorious civil war, which has cemented its achievements once and for all. Our Red Army men have been brought up in the school of bolshevism, the tradition of which it has been to inculcate in the fighters for a happy life for all mankind the idea that one of the most valuable qualities of man is a character which knows how to overcome each and every obstacle on the road to the set purpose.

Mashenka is a film which will be understood and appreciated not only by Soviet audiences, but by the audiences of every democratic country the people of which has risen for a decisive struggle with hitlerism. Therein lies the great merit of the film which gives a good idea of the character of the Soviet people, of their whole-hearted courage and resolution to defend their fatherland and progressive ideals at any cost. In this resolution and readiness to achieve victory regardless of all difficulties lies the optimistic faith of our people, who believe that never shall the river of history flow backwards or the medievalism resurrected in Hitler Germany succeed in stopping mankind's progress.

The stormy and humane finale of the film calls upon the audience to keep on fighting and imbues it with a faith in the ultimate victory. Therein lies the great educational merit of the film *Mashenka*, which no doubt will rank next to such outstanding Soviet pictures as *Girl-friends at the Front*, one of the films which enjoyed a wide popularity with the audiences of the Western democracies.

T. ROKOTOV

NEWS AND VIEWS

FROM THE SOVIET UNION

"Everything for the front"—such is the slogan, as compelling for the intellectual as for the worker and collective farmer, in short for every citizen of the U.S.S.R. The war is a cause that has been most wholeheartedly espoused by the Soviet intelligentsia, including one of its vanguards—artists of all professions. Writers, actors, painters and cameramen may be seen in the editorial offices of army newspapers, at radio microphones, in Red Army auditoriums, in dug-outs and blindages, on aerodromes and on the battlefield. Moscow alone sent to the front more than 230 literary workers, who in one way or another take part in the struggle waged by the Red Army against German fascism. 60 Ukrainian writers and almost all of the Byelorussian writers are to be found in the ranks of the Red Army. The Leningrad actors have given more than ten thousand performances for the men at the front.

* * *

The art of the cinema has become one of the most effective means of reflecting and expressing the heroic episodes of the patriotic war. The short war newsreels, which are shot directly on the battle-fields, breathe the fiery spirit of war; they are demonstrated in the furthest corners of the Soviet Union, showing the people the heroic deeds of the Red Army. The Soviet cinema, however, has the right to be proud not only of this direct reflection of heroic war exploits. Not for a moment does the motion-picture industry pause in its work. The work of the Moscow studios which have transferred their main activity to the Central Asia republics, is in full swing, and so are the studios of all the national republics. The Tashkent studio is about to release a film about Alexander Parkhomenko, the legendary hero of the civil war. The same studio is working on a film entitled *Son of the Sea*, dealing with the heroic defense of Odessa during its siege by the German-Rumanian hordes. At Ashhabad they are about to complete a film entitled *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppes*, depicting the national heroes in their fight behind the German-fascist lines. The same studio is to release a film, *Son of the People*, about a Turkmenian youth, a hero of the patriotic war. In the city of Alma-Ata, where the Moscow studio is working at present, film producer Alexandrov, author of several remarkable Soviet films well known abroad (*The Circus*, *Volga—Volga* and others), is preparing a new film—*Fallen Leaves*; this picture will tell of the heroic work of the Kazakhstan railway workers in aiding the army to smash the enemy. Film producer S. Gerassimov, author of the picture *The Teacher*, is now working on a film *The Defense of Leningrad*. A. Kapler, the author of several outstanding scenarios from the life of V. Lenin, has written a new remarkable scenario about the partisan movement, under the title *Peaceful People*.

The Tbilissi studio is preparing a film about Georgi Saakadze, the great military leader and statesman of XVIIth century Georgia. The memory of this famous strategist may and will serve as an example that will inspire the men of the Red Army to new heroic deeds. The same studio is working on films dealing with the patriotic war—*The Bridge* and *Red Navy Man*. An anti-fascist film entitled *Yan the Invisible*, which shows the heroic partisan movement in Czechoslovakia, is being prepared.

The Baku studio has released a remarkable film entitled *Sabukhi*, which in translation means *Man of the Morning*. It is about the life and deeds of Mirza Fatali Akhundov, the famous Azerbaidjan classic writer.

The Soviet cinema has also released several films on scientific and war themes to assist the men at the front and the workers in the rear. The best among them are those dealing with tanks and automatic arms, medical films and films teaching the population how to defend itself against air raids and their consequences.

* * *

Soviet literature and drama do not lag behind the cinema.

Two plays, the late A. Afinogenov's *On the Eve*, and *Smoke of the Fatherland* by the brothers Tur and L. Sheinin, are embued with great patriotic spirit.

On the Eve tells us of an ordinary Soviet family which became a family of Soviet heroes from the very minute the perfidious enemy has crossed into the land of Soviets. So also the play *Smoke of the Fatherland* which portrays ardent love for the fatherland and deep Soviet patriotism. Episodes of the patriotic war inspired a new play by K. Simonov, *Russian People*, and *The Ruza Forest* by K. Finn.

The Soviet theatre is marching in step with Soviet drama; during the last few months several excellent performances have been staged. It is interesting to note that the theatres in the outlying parts of the country are quite the most active and the most highly productive.

The State Theatre at Kazan has staged a play *The DD Regiment*, written in collaboration by the famous Soviet ace airman M. Vodopyanov and the writer Laptev. The Molotov theatre staged Kaverin's play *The House on the Hill*, dedicated to the 24th anniversary of the Red Army. The theatre in Frunze is staging Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, translated into the Kirghiz language; also a play *The Black Cloud*, dealing with the heroic deeds of a Kirghiz Red Army man. The Vakhtangov Theatre (now at Omsk) has given two new performances: *Oleko Dundich* about a hero of the 1918—1920 civil war, and *Welcome to Arms*, by the playwright B. Voitekhov. Several Moscow theatres are now appearing in the outlying districts. In addition to the Vakhtangov Theatre, mention must be made of the Kamerny Theatre, now performing in the city of Balkhash, on the stage of the club of the copper-smelting plant there; also the Moscow Art Theatre, now giving performances at Saratov, among these a brilliant production of *Kremlin Chimes*.

* * *

In accordance with the requirements of the war, Soviet painters have found new forms and methods of artistic propaganda. The satiric genre, as displayed in the so-called "TASS Illustrated Window" posters, has come to stay in Soviet graphic art; these are a continuation of the glorious traditions of the outstanding Russian poet V. Mayakovsky. The "TASS Illustrated Windows" subject to cutting satire the stupid self-complacency, the vain self-assuredness, stupidity and cowardice of the Hitler bandit gang so fittingly named "the Berlin dopes."

In general the art of the political posters inspired by the great patriotic war occupies a special and prominent place in Soviet artistic life.

Important changes have also taken place in the graphic art of the fraternal national republics. The exhibitions which were organized at Baku, Yerevan, Tashkent, Tbilissi, Frunze and other cities, have brought to light an immense creative upsurge called forth by the great patriotic war.

A great deal of most important work has been done by the Leningrad painters as well. They went to the front, visited the ships of the Baltic navy and, inspired by the heroic deeds of the Red Army, painted a number of outstanding pictures, which will surely go to form part of the history of Soviet art.

Several monumental paintings have been created. Among these the particularly fine *Naval Landing* by the painter Odintsov, and *Naval Battle Episodes on the Baltic* by the painters Nisski and Shtralikh should be noted.

* * *

To wind up this far from complete chronicle of cultural life in the U.S.S.R. during the last three or four months, it is necessary to point out the achievements of Soviet music during the same period. Here we must first of all mention the *Seventh Symphony* of the gifted Soviet composer D. Shostakovich.

Among the compositions written during the war and inspired by it, we must mention *Suvorov* by the composer S. Vassilenko; this opera was performed at the K. Stanislavsky and V. Nemirovich-Danchenko Theatre in Moscow.

The opera *Chapaev*, a recent production dedicated to the famous hero of the civil war, was given at Saratov. This opera was written by the young Soviet composer B. Mokroussov. A new opera dedicated to the patriotic war and entitled *The Blood of the Peoples* was written by I. Dzerzhinsky, author of the well-known opera *And Quiet Flows the Don*.

Soviet composers are very active; we should like to mention first of all the contributions of those who are known abroad: N. Myaskovsky has recently written a symphony, a ballad and a quartet; S. Prokofiev has written the *Suite 1941* and completed the second act of the opera *War and Peace* on the subject of L. Tolstoy's novel. New ballets have been created during the last few months: *Purple Sails* by V. Yurovsky, *The Kidnapping of Tatiana* by A. Krein and *Spartak* by A. Khachaturyan. The composer G. Yelizarov has finished a ballet dedicated to the Soviet youth and entitled *Towards the Crests of the Hills*. The composer L. Polovinkin has written a ballet on the historical subject of *Ivan Bolotnikov*.

In their productions Soviet writers, artists and musicians glorify the great Soviet people, a people of heroes. Their works will remain a fitting monument to the gallant men of the Red Army which is liberating the sacred soil of the Soviet Union from the enemy.

ANGLO-RUSSIAN AND AMERICAN-RUSSIAN LITERARY TIES

This interesting subject stood on the agenda of the three-day scientific conference held by the Gorky Institute for World Literature under the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. The session was held at Tashkent and aroused considerable interest in literary circles and among the public in general.

In his report "Pushkin and English literature" V. M. Zhirmunsky, corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences, showed to what considerable extent the development of Pushkin's genius was influenced by the works of Byron, Shakespeare and Walter Scott. Shakespeare's historical tragedies served as a model to Pushkin when he wrote his *Boris Godunov*. As to such realistic stories as *The Captain's Daughter*, the speaker rightfully pointed out that they surely may be traced to the influence of Walter Scott.

The so-called "Russian Byronism" of the 20's and 30's of last century was dealt with in several reports, among them one made by N. Piksanov, a corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences. All the speakers were unanimous in stressing the fact that "Russian Byronism," having adopted the democratic principles of the great English poet, did not, however, take up Byron's individual pessimism and preserved its own national, purely Russian manner.

Speaking on American literature, the well-known expert Startzev, who chose the subject of "Franklin and Russian XVIIIth century society," showed the enthusiasm with which the leading Russian intellectuals of the time responded to the great American emancipator's ideas of the struggle for liberty and human dignity.

Kornei Chukovsky, the well-known Soviet writer, pointed out that such giants of Russian literature as Turgenev, Tolstoy and Mayakovsky greatly valued the American poet Walt Whitman, despite their differences of conception. It is interesting to note that in his report Chukovsky cited a passage from a foreword by Whitman to the first Russian edition of his writings, which was prohibited by the tsarist censorship and therefore did not appear in print. In this foreword the poet pointed out that the Russians and the Americans have their independent leading position in the world and that both great peoples are ready to fight for their ideals.

Speaking on Soviet-American literary relations, the translator I. Kashkin said that in the U.S.S.R. large-scale work is being done on the translation, study and popularization of American and English letters. The writings of Bernard Shaw, Theodore Dreiser and Upton Sinclair are published in large numbers in the Soviet Union. The speaker also dwelt on the influence of the Russian classics on modern American and English literature. Such was, for instance, the influence of Tolstoy and Chekhov on the creative work of the American and English writers.

At the session it was learned that a new issue of the journal *Literary Heritage* was under preparation; it will contain several unpublished documents touching on the history of Anglo-Russian cultural relations. In this connection considerable interest was roused by a statement made at the session to the effect that Walter Scott corresponded with Denis Davydov, a famous poet and hero of the patriotic war of 1812. These letters mainly concerned the partisan warfare, and in them Walter Scott expressed his admiration for the part played by Russia in liberating Europe from Napoleon.

This session showed that the mutual bonds existing between the Russian writers and poets and the outstanding representatives of English and American literature have long been of beneficial and fruitful influence and have enriched the literature of the three great peoples.

ARGENTINA

MANIFESTO ISSUED BY ARGENTINE INTELLECTUALS

A thousand Argentine journalists, among them the editors of the newspapers *El Mundo*, *Critica*, *Libre Palabra* and *El Diario*, also the editor of the Italian paper *Italia del Popolo*, have published a manifesto sharply criticizing the aggression and barbarity of the nazis. The manifesto calls upon to increase the help for the Soviet Union and Britain and offers to organize a committee of assistance to the peoples fighting nazism and fascism.

NORWAY

CULTURE PERSECUTED

The Oslo police department has sent out a circular ordering a strict censorship on every play and public appearance. Everything that goes to criticize or ridicule the invaders, Quisling, his party and followers is strictly forbidden. Even classic Norwegian plays, which tend by analogy to refer to the present time, are not allowed by the police. Plays by Jewish, modern English and Soviet playwrights are totally proscribed.

The fascist "Department of culture and education," organized in Oslo and promptly nicknamed by the Norwegians "Department for the liquidation of culture and

education," has recently passed a drastic regulation, upon proposal by the Reich's commissar Terboven. This regulation empowers the forces of occupation to prohibit any book, magazine or newspaper which "harms the national and social prosperity of the Norwegian people." The prohibition may also apply to libraries, museums and private collections. The extent to which use may be made of a similar prohibition may be seen from a speech made by Terboven himself, who attacked the growing opposition of the Norwegian intelligentsia against the fascist invaders and declared that "there are no bigger political fools than the intellectuals."

MISTREATMENT OF SCIENTISTS

According to news received from Norway, professor Seip, the dean of the Oslo university, also professors Bregger, Schreiner, Mohr, Francis Bull, Frede Kastberg and others, were put in the concentration camp of Grini. The newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* reports that only a few days ago the aged professor Seip was thrown by the Germans into a dark, damp cell and kept on a diet of bread and water. The mistreatment of scientists on the part of the Germans aroused deep indignation among the Swedish public. A number of representatives of science in Sweden appealed to the Swedish government with a request to adopt every measure necessary to attain an early discontinuation of the mistreatment of the representatives of the Norwegian intelligentsia.

FRANCE

HUNTING UP "SUSPICIOUS LINES"

The best French playwrights, regisseurs and actors have left their country and now live in exile. The few theatres which still function in France today make ends meet by restaging old plays and by compulsory productions of plays by pro-fascist authors. Here is what the *Neue Züricher Zeitung* writes about the *Comédie Française*: "The first dramatic theatre in France is constantly in the throes of a crisis." The *Comédie Française* is staging a play by Jean Copeau, *The Daughter of the Kings*, the première of which had been shown in. . . 1914. The theatre *Gymnase* is staging anew the antiquated play *Jazz* by Marcel Pagnol. Travelling companies, of which there are many in France today, perform their old repertoires, but even these are permitted by the raging censorship only on condition that not a single monologue or couplet should set the audience thinking of "analogies." As soon as the spectators applaud to indicate the reference of a certain phrase to present-day France, the play is canceled or the "suspicious" lines are eliminated. In order to avoid such contingencies, the travelling companies have lately been strongly advised to stage medieval mysteries and farces.

ERSATZ-LITERATURE

The French newspaper Quislings are straining every effort to be obsequious to their German masters. These mercenary scribblers use the pro-fascist newspapers and journals to slander the classics of French literature which portray men of strong will-power, fighters for the liberty and age-old traditions of French culture. Thus, for instance, the permanent contributor of feuilletons in the newspaper *Temps* published now in Lyon, a certain Jean Lefranc, attacks Anatole France and George Sand. He writes: "It took me many days to read three small volumes in which France writes of his childhood. I chanced to come across a few books by George Sand, which I was able to overcome only by skipping entire pages." Of course, the writers of a later period altogether fail to satisfy Lefranc, for the themes which they deal with are "too near," "too painful." Instead the reader is recommended to turn to the concoction of the fascist boot-lickers, which are similar to the fabrications of their colleagues in the "Third Empire;" "memoirs" by mercenary penpushers describing the events of 1939—1940; books and pamphlets "which tend to bring up a feeling of obedience in the youth," and similar ersatz-literature.

Editor-in-chief HELEN STASSOVA