Workers of all countries, unite!

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CONTENTS

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REPORT ON THE CONCLUSION OF THE ANGLO-SOVIET TREATY OF MAY 26, 1942

Comrades deputies, the Government has deemed it necessary to submit to the Supreme Soviet for examination and ratification the Anglo-Soviet Treaty concluded on May 26 in London. It does so in view of the great political importance of this treaty. The treaty consolidates the friendly relations which have arisen between the Soviet Union and Great Britain in their mutual military assistance in the struggle against hitlerite Germany and transforms these relations into a stable alliance. The treaty likewise defines the common line of our joint action with Great Britain in the post-war period. The entire contents of the treaty bears out its great political importance not only as regards the development of Anglo-Soviet relations, but also as regards the future development of the entire complex of international relations in Europe.

Both the Anglo-Soviet Treaty and the results of the negotiations which I conducted on the instructions of the Soviet Government in London and Washington testify to the substantial consolidation of friendly relations between the Soviet Union, Great Britain and the United States of America. This will be of greater significance to the peoples of the Soviet Union, who are bearing the main brunt of the struggle against hitlerite Germany, the more it will help to expedite our victory over the German invaders. The treaty, like the other results of the negotiations in London and Washington, should expedite the defeat of hitlerite Germany and her associates in aggression in Europe, and at the same time serve as a reliable base for the further development of friendly relations between the U.S.S.R. and Great Britain, as well as between both these countries and the United States of America. The treaty, as likewise the understanding reached both between the Soviet Union and Great Britain and between the Soviet Union and the United States of America on a number of most important questions relating to the present war and on collaboration after the war, signify the consolidation of the fellowship in arms of all the freedom-loving nations which are headed today by the Soviet Union, Great Britain and the United States.

Let me recall the events which preceded the conclusion of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty of May 26, and which

constituted the main stages of the development of the new and friendly relations between the Soviet Union and Great Britain.

As we know, on the very day Germany attacked the Soviet Union, June 22 last year, Mr. Churchill, the British Prime Minister, publicly and firmly declared that Great Britain would assist the Soviet Union in its war against the German invaders, as the British people considered it the common task of theirs and the peoples of the Soviet Union to defeat hitlerite Germany. *(Applause.)* Subsequent negotiations with Sir Stafford Cripps, British Ambassador in Moscow, in which Comrade Stalin took a most active part, led to the conclusion of the well-known Anglo-Soviet Agreement of July 12, 1941. In this agreement the Governments of the U.S.S.R. and Great Britain reciprocally undertook to accord one another assistance and support of all kinds in the present war against hitlerite Germany, and likewise not to conduct negotiations or conclude armistice or peace except by mutual agreement.

This agreement frustrated Hitler's plans to divide his adversaries and Hitler's hopes of combating each one of them separately. July 12 of last year marked the turning point in the development of Anglo-Soviet relations. On that day the foundation was laid of the friendship and fellowship in arms between our countries in the struggle against their common sworn enemy and in the interests of the great future of our nations.

The next stage in the development of the Anglo-Soviet and, at the same time, Soviet-American relations, was the well-known Moscow Three-Power Conference, which was attended by Lord Beaverbrook, representing Great Britain, and Mr. Harriman, representing the United States of America, and which completed its labours on October 1st, last year. At this conference a plan was drawn up for the delivery of munitions to the Soviet Union from Great Britain and the United States. As a result, tanks, aircraft and other armaments, as well as deficient materials, such as aluminium, nickel, rubber, etc., began to arrive in the Soviet Union in conformity with the big program of deliveries drawn up at the Moscow conference.

We must, of course, remember that the delivery of armaments and materials to the Soviet Union involved, and still involves, no inconsiderable difficulties. The German warships, German submarines and aircraft engaged in banditry and piracy in the Atlantic, constantly attack vessels transporting these armaments to the Soviet Union. In spite of the naval forces of our allies escorting them, a number of vessels carrying cargoes for the U.S.S.R. perished on the way to Murmansk and Archangel. Nevertheless, far from having diminished, the deliveries of armaments and materials from the U.S.A. and Great Britain have increased in the past few months. These deliveries serve as an essential and important addition to the armaments and supplies which the Red Army receives in overwhelming proportion from our internal resources. We considered and still consider it necessary to take measures to increase and improve these deliveries in the present and in the future. It must likewise be recognized that these deliveries have played, and will play in future, an important role in strengthening the friendly relations between the U.S.S.R., Great Britain and the United States.

A new and important factor in the development of Anglo-Soviet relations was the visit to Moscow last December of Mr. Eden, the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and the fruitful negotiations which Comrade Stalin conducted with him and in which I participated. These negotia-

tions were subsequently developed, and shortly after it became evident that they promised to lead to definite positive results.

Next, in April, followed an invitation from the British Government to the Soviet Government to send me to London to complete these negotiations and to discuss the corresponding draft treaty.

Simultaneously, the President of the United States of America invited Comrade Stalin to send me to Washington for negotiations on important military and political questions of an urgent character.

As you know, this visit of mine with a group of close collaborators took place, and I had long and friendly conversations both in London with Mr. Churchill, Mr. Eden and other members of the British Government, and in Washington with Mr. Roosevelt, Mr. Hopkins, Mr. Hull and other leading representatives of the U.S.A. The Soviet Ambassador Comrade Maisky took part in these negotiations in London, and the Soviet Ambassador Comrade Litvinov took part in the negotiations in Washington. Furthermore, a direct part in the discussion of military-strategical problems was taken by the Chiefs of all the Military Staffs of Great Britain and the United States, as well as by the competent Soviet military representatives.

As a result of the successful negotiations, there was signed in London on May 26 the "Treaty of Alliance in War Against Hitlerite Germany and Her Associates in Europe and of Collaboration and Mutual Assistance Thereafter, concluded between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United Kingdom of Great Britain." The treaty consists of two parts: the first part contains two articles defining the relations between the U.S.S.R. and Great Britain during the war against hitlerite Germany, while the second part contains articles defining the relations between the two countries after the war.

As regards the first part of the treaty it may be said that in the main it repeats the contents of the well-known Anglo-Soviet Agreement of July 12 of last year and transforms this agreement into a formal treaty. Lending greater precision to last year's agreement, this part of the treaty provides for mutual military and other assistance and support not only against Germany but also against "all those states which are associated with her in acts of aggression in Europe."

The second part of the treaty is comparatively new. The significance of this part of the treaty lies firstly in the fact that it lays down for the first time the basic principles for friendly collaboration between the U.S.S.R. and Great Britain after the war. It also provides for the collaboration of the two countries with other united nations in the peace settlement and in the post-war period, this collaboration being conceived on the lines of the basic principles of the well-known Atlantic Charter to which the U.S.S.R. at the time adhered. There can be no doubt that an agreement of this kind will be of great significance to the entire future development of Europe.

The two countries have agreed to collaborate after peace has been restored, "for the organization of security and economic prosperity in Europe." The treaty states that the two countries "will take into account the interests of the united nations in this object and will act in accordance with the two principles of not seeking territorial aggrandizement for themselves and of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states." These principles of the treaty fully accord with the well-known pronouncement made by the head of the Government of the U.S.S.R., Comrade Stalin, on November 6, last year, when he said:

"We have not and cannot have any such war aims as the seizure of foreign territories and the subjugation of foreign peoples, whether it be peoples and territories of Europe or peoples and territories of Asia, including Iran."

Stressing the absence of any desire for territorial aggrandizement for themselves and non-interference in internal affairs of other states, the Soviet Union and Great Britain proclaim the friendly principles of their policy towards all freedom-loving nations, and at the same time point to the fundamental difference between their policy and the aggressive policy of hitlerite Germany, which is fighting to seize the territory of other nations and to enslave them. In this connection it is necessary to recall what Comrade Stalin said about the aims of our Patriotic War of liberation against the fascist invaders when he adressed the peoples of the Soviet Union as far back as July 3, last year:

"Our war for the freedom of our country will merge with the struggle of the peoples of Europe and America for their independence, for democratic liberties. It will be a united front of the peoples standing for freedom and against enslavement and threats of enslavement by Hitler's fascist armies." *(Applause.)*

In conformity with afore-mentioned objects and principles of the treaty it is declared that both Governments desire "to unite with the other like-minded states in adopting proposals for common action to preserve peace and resist aggression in the post-war period" and likewise after the termination of war "to render impossible a repetition of aggression and violation of peace by Germany or any of the states associated with her in acts of aggression in Europe."

The two countries also agreed that should one of them during the post-war period be again attacked by Germany or any other aggressive state, the other party "will at once give to the contracting party so involved in hostilities all the military and other support and assistance in its power." The clear and categorical nature of this mutual undertaking is of great importance for our countries, which are striving to ensure a stable peace after the victorious termination of this war. Further, everyone realizes the importance of the fact that both Governments agreed that all the above-mentioned obligations relating to the post-war period shall remain in force for a long period, the treaty providing for a term of twenty years with the possibility of its prolongation.

It is also asked whether in addition to the published treaty any secret agreements between the U.S.S.R. and Great Britain were concluded. I must declare with all responsibility that these assumptions are absolutely groundless and that there are no secret Anglo-Soviet agreements, nor are there any secret Soviet-American agreements.

After all that has been said, one cannot help associating oneself with the words uttered by Mr. Eden in his speech on the signing of the treaty when he said:

"Never before in the history of our two countries has our association been so close or our mutual pledge for the future so complete. This is surely a happy augury."

The treaty met with a sympathetic response both in the U.S.S.R. and in Great Britain. Among the broad masses of the people of both countries the consolidation of friendship and collaboration in the struggle against the German fascist invaders, tyrants and oppressors met with warm approval and support. The United States of America, which was kept duly informed of the progress of the negotiations and the conclusion of the treaty, as well as the other freedom-loving countries which have experienced the oppression and bloody

tyranny of the hitlerite hordes, or are in danger of experiencing them, greeted our treaty with Great Britain with approval. In the camp of our enemies, in the camp of the German fascists and their associates, on the other hand, the treaty has caused dismay and malignant hissing. The camp of our enemies was caught unawares. All the more effectively will the treaty serve our just and righteous cause of liberation. *(Prolonged applause.)*

Important as are the questions which are dealt with in the treaty, and to which great attention was devoted in the London negotiations, these negotiations, as you know, were not confined to the afore-mentioned questions alone. Both in London and in Washington, other important questions were also discussed. I am referring chiefly to questions intimately bearing on the vital problems of our war against hitlerite Germany.

Serious attention was naturally paid in our negotiations both in London and in Washington to the problems of the second front in Europe. The results of these negotiations are dealt with in identical terms both in the Anglo-Soviet and the Soviet-American communiqués. Both communiqués declare that in the negotiations "complete understanding was reached with regard to the urgent tasks of creating a second front in Europe in 1942." *(Prolonged applause.)* This statement is of great importance for the peoples of the Soviet Union, since the creation of a second front in Europe will create insuperable difficulties for Hitler's armies on our front. Let us hope that our common enemy will soon experience to his cost the results of the ever-growing military collaboration of the three great powers. *(Loud and prolonged applause.)*

Furthermore, questions were discussed of further improving and increasing munitions deliveries to the Soviet Union from the United States and Great Britain. Here, too, positive results may be recorded. In the second half of the current year deliveries of munitions and supplies to the U.S.S.R. by the allies will be increased and accelerated. *(Applause.)* This is confirmed primarily by the increasing scale of deliveries from the United States. As we know, last November the United States of America decided to grant the Soviet Union a loan of one thousand million dollars with which to pay for the munitions deliveries to the Soviet Union. In the new program of deliveries, the United States fixes their total value at three thousand million dollars. *(Applause.)* Thus, we have a further substantial increase in the military and economic assistance rendered to the Soviet Union by the United States of America, as well as the consent of Great Britain to further improve munitions deliveries.

In this connection we must recognize the supreme importance of the "Agreement between the Governments of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America on the principles applying to mutual aid in the prosecution of war against aggression" signed in Washington on June 11, which follows the lines of a similar agreement between the U.S.A. and Great Britain. This agreement is of a preliminary nature and lays down only the principles of a future agreement between the two Governments on this question. The significance of this Soviet-American agreement lies in that it not only proceeds from the recognition of the existence of a fighting collaboration established between the Soviet Union and the United States of America in the present war against hitlerite Germany, but also provides for coordinated action between the two countries in the post-war period. The agreement implies an understanding between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. as regards the improvement of international relations after the war in the interests of ensuring a stable peace. Conse-

quently, the Washington agreement is of great significance to the United States and the Soviet Union as well as to the other nations.

Lastly, in Washington as in London were discussed all the basic problems of collaboration between the Soviet Union and the United States in ensuring peace and security for the freedom-loving nations after the war. In this, as in the other fundamental questions of our relations, the parties noted with satisfaction our mutual understanding and identity of views.

I must declare that as the representative of the U.S.S.R. cordiality and exceptional hospitality were accorded me both in London and in Washington. I must particularly note the personal attention paid to and the most active part taken in the conversations by the President of the United States, Mr. Roosevelt, and the British Premier, Mr. Churchill, to whom I take this opportunity of expressing my sincere gratitude. *(Prolonged applause.)*

In all this we perceive the consolidation of the international position of the Soviet Union. Fact after fact confirms what Comrade Stalin said in his May First Order of the Day:

> "As regards the international ties of our country they have lately grown stronger and become more extensive than ever before. All the freedom-loving peoples have united against German imperialism. Their eyes are fixed on the Soviet Union. The heroic fight which the peoples of our country are waging for their freedom, honour and independence evokes the admiration of all progressive mankind. The peoples of all the freedom-loving countries look upon the Soviet Union as a force that is capable of delivering the world from the hitlerite plague. *(Applause.)* First among these freedom-loving countries stand Britain and the United States of America, to which we are linked by bonds of friendship and alliance and which are affording our country ever increasing military assistance against the German fascist invaders." *(Applause.)*

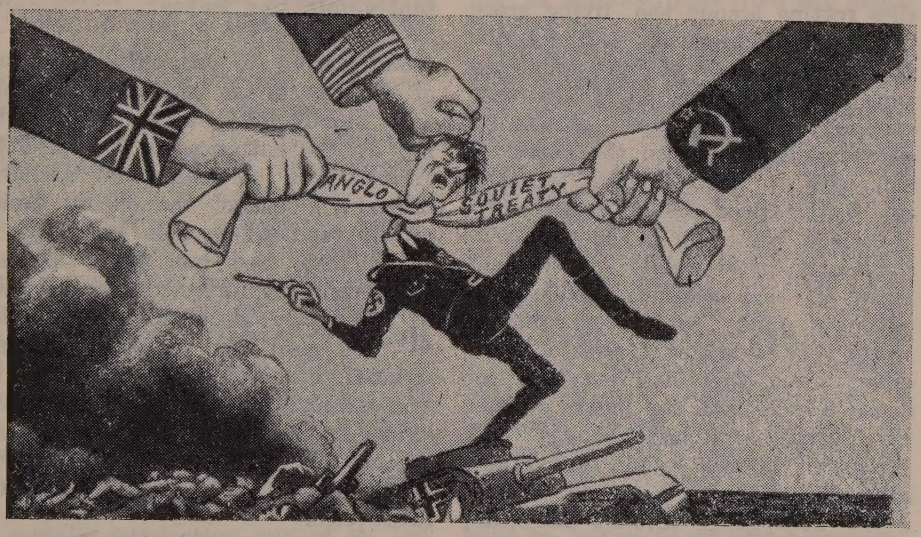
The treaty, and the results of the negotiations in London and Washington in general, testify that bonds of friendship and alliance between the Soviet Union, Great Britain and the U.S.A. are growing ever stronger and closer. This is a sign of the growing international recognition of the strength and successes achieved by the Red Army in its struggle against the sworn enemy of all the freedom-loving nations, in its struggle against Hitler and his bloody underlings. In this we discern also a confirmation of the correctness of the foreign policy of our Government, which is unswervingly concerned to strengthen the friendly relations with Great Britain and the United States of America as well as with all the other freedom-loving nations for the purpose of expediting the defeat of Hitler's hordes and their expulsion from our country, and for the sake of the triumph of the cause of all the freedom-loving nations united in the struggle for their existence and a happy future. *(Prolonged applause.)*

The treaty with Great Britain, as well as the results of our negotiations in London and Washington, strengthen our confidence, the confidence of the Red Army and of the entire Soviet people, that the united forces of the adversaries of Hitler's army are growing ever stronger and becoming more consolidated. They strengthen our conviction that the defeat of the German invaders is drawing near, that our victory over the predatory German imperialism will now be greatly accelerated. *(Applause.)* The growing strength of the Red Army, the invincible Soviet rear, and the increasing military assistance of our allies will defeat

all the designs of the German-fascist invaders. Our forces are growing and our confidence in victory is greater than ever. *(Applause.)*

On behalf of the Government I request the Supreme Soviet to ratify the treaty before it as one which fully coincides with the interests of the Soviet people. *(Prolonged applause.)*

Under the great banner of Lenin and Stalin we are waging our heroic struggle of liberation against German fascism. Under the great banner of Lenin and Stalin we shall carry this struggle to a victorious conclusion and to the triumph of the cause of our country and of all freedom-loving nations. *(Loud and prolonged applause. Voices: "Long live Comrade Stalin!")*



Cartoon by Kukryniksy

MIKHAIL SHOLOKHOV

HATE

. . you cannot defeat an enemy without having learnt to hate him from the bottom of your heart."
(From the May Day Order of the Day of the People's Commissar of Defence, Comrade Stalin.)

Trees, like people, each meet with their own destiny in war-time. I have seen a huge tract of woodland cut down by our artillery fire. Here, quite recently, the Germans, driven out of the village of S., had entrenched themselves and had thought to make a prolonged stay, but death mowed them down with the trees. Under the felled trunks of the pines lay German dead, their mangled bodies rotting among the living green of fern and bracken; and all the resinous fragrance of shell-splintered pine was powerless to drown that stiflingly-sickly, pungent stench of decaying bodies. Even the earth itself with its dun-coloured, scorched and brittle-edged shell-holes gave off, it seemed, the odour of the grave . . .

Silently, majestically, death held sway in that clearing, made and ploughed up by our shells; solitary, in the very middle of it, stood a brave silver birch that had survived by some miracle, and the breeze swayed its splinter-scratched boughs and whispered in the young, glazed and gluey leaves.

We were going through the clearing. The young signaller just ahead of me touched the tree-trunks lightly, asked with sincere and affectionate astonishment:

"How did you manage to come through it, my sweet?"

But if a pine that's hit by a shell perishes as though mowed down with a scithe, leaving only the spinous crown oozing pine-tar, the oak-tree meets its death otherwise.

A German shell landed in the trunk of an ancient oak growing on the bank of a nameless stream. The yawning, jagged wound sapped the life from half the tree, but the other half, bowed by the explosion towards the water, revived marvellously in the spring-time and burst into luxuriant leaf. And to this day, no doubt, the lower boughs of that mutilated oak bathe in running water, while the upper still hold out eagerly to the sunlight their chiselled, reluctantly-unfolding leaves.

Tall, rather stooped, with something of the kite in his high, broad shoulders, Lieutenant Gerassimov was sitting at the entrance to the dug-out, giving us a circumstantial account of today's action, the enemy tank-attack repulsed by his battalion.

His lean face was calm, almost indifferent, his inflamed eyes screwed up wearily. He spoke in a cracked bass and from time to time interlaced his big knotty fingers; it was curiously out of keeping with his strong frame, his manly, vital countenance—this gesture so eloquent of wordless grief or profound and painful reverie.

Suddenly he ceased speaking and a change came over his face: the olive cheeks paled, the muscles twitched in the hollows beneath the cheek-bones, and the eyes gazing before him lit up with such a fierce and inextinguishable hatred that I involuntarily turned to follow the direction of his glance. Three German prisoners were passing through the wood from our nearest defence-line, and behind them came a Red Army man in a summer tunic faded almost

white by the sun, his trench cap on the back of his head.

The Red Army man trudged on at a leisurely pace, the rifle in his hand swinging rhythmically to his movement, the pointed bayonet flashing in the sunlight. And the Germans dawdled on too, dragging their feet shod in low boots splashed with yellow mud.

The foremost German—an elderly man with hollow cheeks overgrown with a bristly brown beard—cast a glowering, wolfish glance at the dug-out as he passed, then turned sharply away and adjusted the helmet attached to his belt. Then Lieutenant Gerassimov sprang to his feet and barked at the Red Army man:

"What are you up to? Taking'em for a stroll or what? Now then get a move on and be smart about it!"

He evidently wanted to add something but lost his breath in his excitement. Turning sharply, he ran down the steps into the dug-out. The political instructor, who happened to be present, volunteered a reply to my inquiring, astonished glance.

"He can't help it," he said in an undertone. "It's his nerves. He was taken prisoner by the Germans—didn't you know? You ought to talk to him sometime. Went through an awful lot there, and naturally he can't bear the sight of a live German after that—yes, particularly a live German. He doesn't mind looking at dead ones, I'd say—he even got a certain satisfaction out of it; but let him only catch sight of prisoners, and he either shuts his eyes and sits tight all hot and cold, pale as death, or turns away and clears out." The political instructor moved nearer and dropped his voice to a whisper: "I went into action with him twice. He's as strong as a horse, and you ought to see what he does. . . I've seen a thing or two in my time, but the way he lays about him with butt and bayonet—I tell you, man, there's something terrifying about it!"

* * *

That night the German heavy artillery kept up a perturbing fire. At regular intervals there would be a dull rumble in the distance, followed a few seconds later by the metallic hiss of a shell high above in the starry sky; the drone would rise to a scream and gradually die away till somewhere at our backs, in the direction of the high-way, crowded in the day-time with trucks bringing up munitions to the firing-line, there would be a spurt of yellow lightning flame and an explosion like a thunder-clap.

In the pauses between the bursts, when silence fell on the woods once more, you could hear the thin whine of the gnats and the diffident croaking of startled frogs from the neighbouring swamp.

We were lying under a hazel bush, and Lieutenant Gerassimov was giving us leisurely an account of his life, beating off the gnats with a branch meanwhile. I give the story here as far as I can remember it.

"Before the war I was a mechanic in one of the Western-Siberian works. I was called up last year—the ninth of July, to be exact. I've got a family, a wife and two children, and then there's my father, he's disabled. Well, my wife, naturally, cried a bit when she saw me off and sped me on my way with parting instructions: 'Defend your country and your folks to the last. Lay down your life if need be, but we've got to win through.' I remember I laughed then, and I said to her: 'Who do you think you are, my wife or the family agitator? I guess I'm big enough to know myself what I'm about, and as for winning through—we'll wring it out of the fascists, with the throat, don't you worry!'

"My dad's made of tougher stuff, of course, but I didn't get off without a bit of parting advice from him either. 'Remember, Victor,' he said, 'that the name of the Gerassimovs is no

ordinary name. You come of a line of workingmen: your great-grandfather worked for Stroganov; our family's been turning out the country's iron for hundreds of years, and you've got to be like iron in this war. The government we have is of our own making, it made you a commander of the reserves even before the war broke out, and you've got to let the enemy have it good and hard.'

"'We will, dad,' I said.

"On the way to the station I dropped in at the district Party Committee headquarters. Our secretary was a dry, matter-of-fact chap given to reasoning, and I thought to myself: 'Well, if my wife and my old man simply couldn't desist from giving me some parting advice, this fellow will surely never let me go without a rigmarole that'll last half-an-hour at least.' It turned out just the very opposite. 'Sit down, Gerassimov,' he said, 'it used to be the custom in the old days to sit down for a minute or two before taking a journey.'

"We sat still for a bit, and then he stood up, and I saw that his spectacles looked sort of blurred. . . 'Well,' I thought to myself, 'wonders are happening today.' And then he said: 'There's nothing much to be said, Comrade Gerassimov. I remember you when you were just so high, a lop-eared youngster wearing a pioneer's red kerchief. And I remember you afterwards as a League member, and I've known you as a member of the Party for ten years now. Show no mercy to those German swine! The Party organization has confidence in you.' For the first time in my life we kissed each other in the old Russian custom—and somehow that secretary didn't seem such a dry old stick as he used.

"And I felt so warmed by the affectionate way he treated me that I came out of the district Committee building gladdened and moved.

"My wife, too, put me in a more cheerful frame of mind. You can well understand it's not a particularly cheerful business for any man's wife—having to see her husband off to the front. Well, and mine also got a bit upset, she wanted to say something really important, but everything had gone clean out of her head. The train was just pulling out, and she ran alongside, wouldn't let go of my hand and kept on repeating:

" 'See you look after yourself, Vitya, and don't catch cold out there at the front.' 'Good heavens, Nadia!' I said. 'What do you take me for? I shouldn't think of catching cold. It's a very healthy and even temperate climate out there.' And I felt at the same time sad at parting from her and cheered up by the silly but sweet things she said. And then a quiet anger at the Germans took hold of me: 'Since you were the first to start, my fine treacherous neighbours, you'd better look out. We'll give you the drubbing of your lives.'"

He was silent for a few minutes, listening to the spasmodic exchange of machine-gun fire on the forward fringe. It ceased as unexpectedly as it had begun, and he went on:

"Before the war we used to get machinery from Germany. When I was assembling it, I remember, I used to examine every part five or six times, turning it over and looking at it from every side. There was no doubt about it, skilful hands had made those machines. I used to read books by German writers, and somehow I'd got into the way of respecting the German people. True, I need to think at times what a shame it was that a people so gifted and industrious should stand that abominable hitlerite regime. But that, after all, was their own affair. Then the war in Western Europe broke out. . .

"On the way to the front I couldn't help thinking: their army's a pretty good one, and they are very strong on the technical side. Why, when you come to think of it, it's really

interesting to cross swords with an enemy like that and break his ribs. We weren't so simple either, in 1941. I must admit I never looked for any very honest scruples in this adversary of ours—you can't expect anything of that sort when you're dealing with fascism; but still I never thought I'd have to fight such a downright unprincipled gang as the Germans actually turned out to be. Anyhow, we'll come to that later on. . .

"At the end of July our unit reached the front. We went into action early on the morning of the twenty-seventh. At first, being new to it, it was a bit terrifying. They gave us hell with their trench-mortars, but towards evening we'd got the hang of things, knocked them about a bit, and sent them packing from one of the villages. We rounded up a bunch of them, about fifteen in all, in that engagement. I remember it clearly as if it had only just happened. They were brought in looking frightened and pale. My men had cooled down already by then, and each brought the prisoners what he could spare: a bit of tobacco or a fag, some gave them tea. And they clapped them on the back and called them 'camrades.' 'What are you fighting for, camrades?'—and all that sort of thing.

"One of our fellows, a man with many years service to his record, watched this touching scene a while, and then he said: 'Chuck slobbering over these friends of yours. Here they're all 'camrades.' Wait till you see what they're doing behind their own lines, how they treat our wounded men and civilians.' Well, his words had about the same effect as if he'd poured a bucket of cold water over us. And then he walked off.

"Soon after that our troops launched an offensive, and then we actually did see what they were doing: villages razed to the ground; hundreds of women, children and old folks shot; mutilated corpses of Red Army men taken prisoner; women and girls, some only children, raped and then most brutally done to death.

"One case in particular sticks in my mind: it was a girl of about eleven. She must have been on the way to school when the Germans caught her, dragged her into a kitchen-garden, raped and then killed her. There she lay among the crushed potato tops, a little slip of a girl, a mere child, with her school-books lying all around, bespattered with her blood. Her face was frightful gashed with sabre cuts. She was still clutching her school-satchel, and it was open. We covered the body with a cape and stood a minute or two by it without speaking. Then the men went away just as silently. But I lingered on, whispering over and over, I remember, in a sort of daze: 'Barkov, Polovinkin. Physical geography, reader for higher-grade schools.' It was the title of one of the books lying there in the grass. A book I knew, because my own little girl was in the fifth form. . .

"This was near Ruzhin. At Skvira, the place of execution was in a gully. This was where the captured Red Army men had been tortured to death. You've most likely been in a butcher shop, haven't you? Well, that'll give you an idea of what this place looked like. . . The trunks of the bodies clotted with blood hung from the boughs of the trees growing in the gully. The hands and feet had been hacked off; and half the skin was flayed off. . . The bodies of eight more men lay in a heap at the bottom of the gully. And you couldn't tell which man the limbs belonged to. It was just a pile of slaughtered flesh hacked into big pieces. And stacked on top of them, like plates, one fitting into the other, were eight Red Army trench caps. . .

"You think, perhaps, that it's possible to convey in words all that I've seen? No! It's impossible. There

are no words to describe it. You have to see it yourself. And anyhow it's about time we changed the subject," and Lieutenant Gerassimov said nothing for a long time.

"Is one allowed to smoke here?" I asked.

"Yes, of course, but don't show a light," he replied in a hoarse voice, and having lit up himself, he went on:

"You can understand that after seeing all that the Germans have done we've become pretty furious ourselves. It couldn't be otherwise. Everyone of us realized that we weren't dealing with human beings but with foul beasts, blind with fury. It was apparent that the Germans kill, rape and murder our people with the same thoroughness they once applied to making lathes and machinery. Then we had to fall back again, but we kept on fighting like devils, though, all the time.

"Nearly all the men in my company were Siberians. But we put up a stubborn fight for every inch of Ukrainian soil. Many a man from my parts was killed in the Ukraine, but the Germans had to pay a still heavier price. Yes, we were losing ground, but we let them have it hot just the same."

He took a pull or two of his cigarette, then he went on in a different, modulated tone of voice:

"Fine country the Ukraine, and the surroundings are lovely too. Every village, every hamlet, seemed near and dear to us. Maybe it's because we hadn't grudged spilling our blood for them, and blood, they say, is thicker than water. . . And when you had to leave one of those villages, our heart ached, ached like the very dickens. You felt sorry, so devilishly sorry! Here we were abandoning a place for the time being, and we simply could not look each other in the eyes.

". . . Little did I think at the time that I'd ever be a prisoner of the Germans. But that's what happened. I was wounded in September for the first time, but I stayed on with my company. And on the twenty-first I was wounded for the second time in the fighting around Denissovka, Poltava region, and taken prisoner.

"The German tanks had broken through on our left flank, and their infantry came pouring through the breach right on their heels. We were surrounded, but we fought our way through. That day my company suffered particularly heavy losses. We repulsed two tank attacks, set fire to or crippled six of the enemy's tanks and an armoured car, accounted for some hundred and twenty Hitlerites in a maize-field. But at this point they brought up their trench-mortar batteries, and we were obliged to abandon the elevation which we'd held from midday till four o'clock. The weather had been sultry since morning. Not a cloud in the sky, and the sun blazing down till you felt you couldn't breathe. Mines were coming over thick and fast, and I remember, we were so thirsty that the men's lips were swollen black; I was issuing orders in a hoarse croak that I didn't recognize as my own voice. We were crossing a glade when a mine burst right in front of me. I saw, I remember vaguely, a pillar of black earth and dust—and that's all. A mine-splinter went through my helmet, a second got me in my right shoulder.

"I don't remember how long I lay there unconscious, but the tramping of feet brought me to myself. Raising my head, I saw that I wasn't lying in the place where I had fallen. My tunic was gone and my shoulder had been roughly bandaged. I had lost my helmet, too. There was a bandage round my head, but it hadn't been properly fastened and the end trailed down on my chest. It flashed through my mind that my men must have carried me off the field and bandaged me on the way,

and it was them I hoped to see when, after much difficulty, I raised my head. But running towards me were not my men, but Germans. It was the tramp of their feet that had brought me back to consciousness. I saw them perfectly clearly now, as though on a cinema screen. I groped about me: neither revolver nor rifle, nor even a hand-grenade could I find. Someone—one of my own men probably—had relieved me of my arms and despatch case.

"'So this is the end,' I thought to myself. Of what else was I thinking at that moment? If what you have in mind is material for a future novel, you had better fill in the gaps yourself. To tell the truth, I hadn't time to think of anything just then. The Germans were close at hand, and I didn't want to die lying down. I simply didn't want to, I just couldn't meet the end lying down, you understand? So I made a terrific effort and got up on my knees, touching the ground with my hands to steady myself.

"By the time they reached me I was on my feet. Yes, I stood there, rather groggy, and terribly afraid that any moment my knees would give way and they'd finish me off with their bayonets while I was down. I can't recall a single face now. They clustered around me talking and laughing. 'Kill me, you blackguards!' I said. 'Kill me, and be done with it, before I fall.' One of them hit me with his rifle—I fell but was up again in a flash. They burst out laughing, and one of them waved his hand as much as to say: 'Get a move on.' I did.

"My face was caked with blood from the wound in my head, and blood was still streaming from it all warm and sticky; my shoulder ached, and I couldn't raise my right hand. I remember now that all I wanted was to lie down and not go anywhere, but still I went on. . .

"No, certainly didn't want to die, and even less did I want to stay a prisoner. With a tremendous effort, fighting down my dizziness and sickness, I plodded on, so there was life in me yet, and I could still act. But, oh, how the thirst tormented me! My mouth was parched, and all the time though my feet went on of themselves, a sort of black mist seemed to be billowing before my eyes. I was on the verge of unconsciousness, but I went on, thinking to myself: 'As soon as I get a drink and a bit of a rest, I'll make a dash for it!'

"All of us who had been taken prisoner were assembled on the fringe of the wood and lined up. They were men from a neighbour unit of ours. From my own regiment I recognized only two Red Army men from the 3rd company. Most of the prisoners were wounded.

"A German lieutenant demanded to know, in broken Russian, if there were any commissars and commanders among us. Nobody answered. Then he snapped out an order: 'Commissars and officers—two paces forward march!' Nobody budged.

"The lieutenant paced slowly in front of the line and picked out about fifteen or sixteen men who looked more or less like Jews. He asked each of them: 'Jude?' and, without waiting for an answer, ordered the man to fall out. Among the men he picked out there were not only Jews but Armenians and Russians who happened to be swarthy and have black hair. These were led off a little distance away and shot down before our eyes by a burst from automatics. Then we were submitted to a rather perfunctory search and deprived of our pocket-books and other personal belongings. I was never in the habit of carrying my party card in my pocket-book: it was in an inside pocket of my pants, that's why they overlooked it. Men are queer creatures, when you come to think of it: I knew for certain that my life hung on a

thread, that even if I wasn't killed when I attempted to escape, I'd be sure to be killed on the road because I'd lost so much blood that I wouldn't be able to keep up with the rest. And yet, when the search was over and I knew I still had my party card on me, I was so glad, that I actually forgot all about my thirst.

"We were lined up and driven off westward. A pretty strong convoy kept the roadsides, and in addition a dozen German motor-cyclists brought up the rear. We were kept going at a quick pace, and my strength was ebbing fast. I fell twice, but each time I scrambled to my feet and went on, because I knew that if I stayed down a minute longer than was necessary, the column would pass on and I would be shot then and there in the roadway. That was what happened to a sergeant just ahead of me. He'd been wounded in the leg and could hardly drag himself along. He groaned terribly and sometimes even shrieked with pain. We'd gone about a kilometer when he cried out:

"'No, I can't stick it any longer! Good-bye, comrades!' and sat down in the middle of the road.

"The others tried to give him a hand, but he slumped down again on the ground. I remember him like someone in a dream—the drawn pale, youthful face, the knitted brows, and eyes wet with tears of pain. The column passed on. He was left behind. I glanced round, and I saw a man on a motor-cycle up close to him and, without getting off his bike, pull out his pistol, shove it against the sergeant's ear and fire. Before we reached the river, the Germans shot several more of the Red Army men who fell behind.

"And now we came in sight of the river, the ruined bridge and a truck that'd got stuck at the side of the crossing. And right there I fell face downwards. Did I faint? No, I didn't. I just measured my length in the road, and my mouth was full of dust. I ground my teeth in fury, I could feel the sand gritty between my teeth, but I couldn't get up. My comrades were marching past me. 'Get up quick!' one of them said in a low voice as he passed, 'or they'll do you in!' I started to tear my mouth with my fingers, press hard on my eyeballs, so that the pain would rouse me and help me to get to my feet again. . .

"The column had passed on, and my ear caught the swish of the motor-bike wheels coming toward me. Somehow I did manage to struggle to my feet. Without glancing at the motor-cyclist, and staggering like a drunken man, I forced myself to overtake the column and fell into line somewhere at the back. Crossing the river, the tanks and trucks stirred up the mud in the water, but we drank of it gratefully—that warm brown slosh, and it seemed sweeter to us than the purest spring water. I splashed my head and shoulder with it. That refreshed me, and my strength came back to me. Now I could trudge on in the hope that I would not drop and be left lying in the roadway. . .

"Hardly had we left the river behind us when we met a column of German medium tanks. The driver of the leading tank, seeing that we were prisoners, stepped on the gas and drove full tilt into our column. The front ranks were mangled and crushed under the treads. The motor-cyclists and the rest of the convoy roared laughing at the sight, bawled something to the tank crews who had popped their heads out of the hatches, and waved their hands. Then they lined us up again and drove us along by the side of the road. Oh yes, they've a queer sense of humour—the Germans, there's no doubt about it! . .

"That evening and night I made no attempt to escape, as I realized that I wouldn't be able to do it,—I was too weak from loss of blood. Besides, a strict watch was kept over us, and any attempat tescape

would be bound to have ended badly. But how I cursed myself afterwards for not having made the attempt! Next morning we were driven through a village where a German unit was stationed. The German infantrymen trooped out into the road to look at us, and the convoy made us go through that village at the double. They wanted to humiliate us before the German unit that was just coming up to the front. And we did it at the double. Whoever lagged behind or fell, was shot at once. By evening we had reached the war-prisoners' camp.

"This actually was the yard of some machine and tractor station, well-fenced off with barbed wire. Prisoners were huddled inside, shoulder to shoulder. We were handed over to the camp guard, and they drove us inside with blows of rifle-butts. To call that camp hell would be calling it nothing at all. For one thing, there was no latrine. Men had to relieve themselves where they stood and then sit or lie in filth and stinking pools. The weaker of us never got up at all. We were given food and water once a day—that is to say, we got a mug of water and a handful of raw millet or mildewed sunflower-seed. Nothing else. Some days they forgot to give us anything at all.

"After a day or two heavy rains set in. The slush and mud was up to our knees by now. Of mornings the men, drenched to the skin, steamed like horses; and the rain never ceased. . . Several dozen of the prisoners died every night. We were getting weaker and weaker for want of food. And my wounds troubled me a lot.

"By the sixth day I felt that my head and shoulder were much more painful. The wounds were suppurating. Then they started to smell. Alongside the camp there were collective-farm stables, where seriously-wounded Red Army men were lying. In the morning I went to the sergeant of the guard and asked leave to see the doctor who, as I had been told, was with the wounded. The German NCO spoke Russian quite well. 'Go to your doctor, Russian,' he replied. 'He's sure to help you right away.'

"I didn't understand the sneer then, and, pleased to have got leave, made the best of my way to the stables.

"A third-rank army doctor met me at the door. He was a finished man, I could see at once. Thin to the point of emaciation, worn out, he was already half out of his mind with all he had gone through. The wounded lay about on manure litter, suffocating with the abominable stench. The wounds of most of them were crawling with maggots, and those of the wounded who were able to do so, dug out these maggots with their finger nails and sticks. . . Beside them lay a pile of dead prisoners that no one had time to clear away.

"'See that!' the doctor said. 'So how can I help you? I haven't a bandage or anything. Clear out, for God's sake! Take those dirty bandages off and sprinkle ashes on the wounds. There's some fresh ashes at the door.'

"I did as he advised. The German NCO met me at the door. He was smiling broadly: 'Well, how did you get on? Oh, your soldiers have a splendid doctor! Did he give you any help?' I wanted to pass him without speaking, but he punched me in the face and shouted: 'So you won't answer me, you swine!' I fell, and he started kicking me in the chest and head, and he went at it until he was dead tired. I'll never forget that German as long as I live, never! He beat me up several times after that. As soon as he'd catch sight of me through the barbed wire, he'd order me out and start to beat me in a silent, concentrated sort of way. . .

"You wonder how I stood it all?

"Before the war, and before I became a mechanic, I worked as longshoreman on the River Kama, and I could carry two sacks of salt, each

a hundredweight, at one time. Yes, I was pretty strong, nothing to complain of, and in general I have a sound constitution. But the chief thing here was—I didn't want to die, my will to resistance was so strong. I had to get back to the army, among the men who were fighting for their country: and I did get back eventually, to avenge myself on my enemies to the very end!

"From that camp, which appeared to be a distributing centre, I was transferred to another, about a hundred kilometers away. It didn't differ at all from the first one: the same tall posts with barbed wire around them, and not a bit of roofing over the prisoners' heads—nothing! And the food was just the same, except that, occasionally, we got a mug of mouldy grain that was supposed to have been cooked, instead of the raw millet, or they would drag in the carcasses of some dead horses and let the prisoners divide the meat up among themselves. We ate it so as not to die of starvation, and hundreds who ate it died of it. . . Then, to make matters worse, the cold weather set in; in October it rained without ever stopping, and there were frosts in the mornings. We suffered cruelly from cold. I managed to get a tunic and a coat from one of the prisoners who died, but even these didn't protect me from the cold. We were used to hunger by then.

"The soldiers who guarded us were well-fed, fattened on what they were stealing. They were all tarred with the same brush. A choicer selection of scoundrels would be harder to find. Their idea of entertainment ran on the following lines.

"In the morning a corporal would come up to the barbed wire and announce through the interpreter: 'Rations are to be given out just now. They'll be served out from the left side.'

"The corporal would leave. Every man able to stand on his feet would line up on the left side. And then we'd wait—an hour, two hours, even three hours. Hundreds of shivering, living skeletons standing in the piercing wind. Standing waiting.

"Suddenly Germans would appear from the opposite side. They'd throw pieces of horse flesh over the wire entanglements. The whole crowd, craving with hunger, would stampede across. There would be a regular scrimmage over the bits of horsemeat smeared with mud.

"The Germans would roar. Then there'd be a prolonged burst of machine-gunning. Shrieks and groans followed. The prisoners would run pell-mell to the left side again, leaving the killed and wounded on the ground. . . The lanky first lieutenant, who was the superintendent of the camp, would then approach the barbed wire entanglement accompanied by the interpreter. Scarcely able to control his laughter, he would say:

"'It's been reported to me that a disgraceful scene took place during the distribution of rations. Should this occur again, I'll give orders to have you, Russian swine, shot down without mercy. Clear away the killed and wounded!' The crowd of German soldiers behind the officer would be splitting their sides laughing. This was the sort of 'wit' they were fond of.

"In silence we dragged the dead away from the camp-yard and buried them in the gully a little way off. . .

"In that camp we were beaten up regularly; they laid about us with their fists, sticks and butts. Sometimes they beat us out of sheer boredom, sometimes for amusement. My wounds were beginning to heal, then they opened again either from the constant dampness or the beating, and the pain was almost unbearable. But I stood it, I lived through it all, still clinging to my hope of delivery. . . We slept on the muddy ground, they wouldn't give us even a bit of straw. We would huddle close

together and lie around like that. And all night the fidgeting would go on: those who were at the very bottom, in the mud, would freeze, and those who were on top would be just as cold. There was neither sleep nor rest, but only bitter torment.

"So the days went by as in an evil dream, and with every day I grew feebler. A child could have knocked me down. Sometimes I looked with horror at my skinny withered arms and wondered: how shall I ever get out of here? And how I cursed myself for not having attempted to escape the first days! If they'd killed me, I would have been spared all this ghastly torture.

"Winter came. We cleared away the snow-drifts and slept on the frozen ground. Our numbers were dwindling steadily. . . At last it was announced that in a few days' time we were to be sent to work. We all brightened up. In everybody's breast hope stirred, faint enough, but still a hope that somehow we might get a chance of escape.

"That night it was very still and frosty. Just before daybreak we heard the booming of artillery. The people around me awoke to life. And when the rumble of guns came again, someone cried out:

"'Comrades, it's our troops attacking!'

"What followed is well-nigh inconceivable. The whole camp was on its feet, even those who hadn't been able to get up for days. All around you could hear feverish whispering and stifled sobbing. . . Someone near me was crying just like a woman does. . . And me too. . . me too. . ."

Lieutenant Gerassimov's voice broke as he said this quickly. After a short pause, he pulled himself together and went on in a quieter tone:

"The tears rolled down my cheeks, too, and froze in the chill wind. . . Someone started to sing the *Internationale* in a feeble voice; it was taken up by our cracked piping voices. The sentries opened fire on us with rifles and automatics. An order was snapped out: 'Lie down!' I lay flat, pressing my body close to the snow, and cried like a child. Yes, but they were tears of pride as well as joy, pride in our people. The Germans could kill us, unarmed and enfeebled as we were with hunger, could torture us, but they hadn't been able to break our spirit and never would! They've got hold of the wrong kind for that, I'm telling you straight."

I didn't hear the end of Lieutenant Gerassimov's story that night. He received an urgent summons from headquarters. We met again a few days later. The dug-out smelled of mildew and pine-tar. He was sitting on a bench, leaning forward, the huge bony wrists resting on his knees, the fingers interlocked. As I looked at him, it occurred to me that probably in the prison-camp he had got into the habit of sitting for hours like that, with his fingers interlocked, sitting silent, lost in gloomy, oppressive, fruitless meditation. . .

"You want to know how I managed to escape? This is how it happened. Soon after that night when we'd heard the rumbling of guns, we were put to work building fortifications. The frosts had been followed by a thaw. It was raining. We were marched off in a northerly direction from the camp. On the road we had a repetition of what had been before: people dropped with exhaustion, they were shot and left there. . .

"One of the men, by the way, was shot by a German NCO for picking up a frozen potato. We were crossing a potato-plot. The man in question, a sergeant, a Ukrainian, called Gonchar, picked up the blasted potato and wanted to hide it. The NCO saw him. Without saying a word he went up to Gonchar and shot him through

the back of the head. The column was ordered to halt and line up again. 'All this is the property of the German State,' the NCO explained, indicating everything with a sweep of his arm. 'Anyone of you who touches anything without permission will be shot.'

"On the way we had to pass through a village. The women, directly they saw us, came out and threw us pieces of bread and baked potatoes. Some of us managed to pick them up, others didn't: the convoy opened fire on the windows of the houses, and we were ordered to quicken our step. But the children—there's no frightening them!—ran out into the roadway a good way ahead of us, and left the bread there, so as we could pick it up without delay as we went along. I got a big boiled potato, I remember. I shared it with the man next to me. We ate it, skin and all, and I'm sure I've never tasted anything so delicious in my life!

"The fortifications we were put to work on were in the woods. The guard was strengthened, and we were given spades. But it wasn't of building for them that I was thinking: I wanted to destroy.

"The evening of that same day I made up my mind: I scrambled out of the pit we were digging, took up my spade in my left hand, and went up to the guard. . . . I had noticed that the rest of the Germans were some distance away, near a gully, and except for the man who was keeping watch over our group, there wasn't another guard anywhere in sight.

"'Look, my spade's broken,' I muttered, going up to the soldier. For an instant it crossed my mind that if I couldn't muster enough strength to knock him down at the first blow, I was done for. The German must have noticed something in my face, for he made a movement of his shoulder to unsling his automatic. Then I hit out with the spade and caught him full in the face. I couldn't get at his head because he was wearing a helmet. Still, I had enough strength left to hit him hard, and he dropped on his back without a sound. . .

"Now I had an automatic and three clips. I started to run. But I found that I couldn't. I hadn't the strength, and that was all there was to it. I stopped, got my breath and started off again at a slow trot. The wood on the other side of the gully was thicker, so I made for that. I can't recollect now how many times I fell, got up, fell again. . . But I was getting farther away every minute. Half-sobbing, breathless, with weariness, I had made my way at last to the grove on the other side of the hill, when far behind me came the rattle of automatics and shouting. It wouldn't be so easy to catch me now.

"Dusk would be falling soon. But if the Germans did contrive to come upon my tracks and get near me—well, I would keep my last cartridge for myself. That thought sustained me, and I went on at an easier pace and more cautiously.

"That night I spent in the woods. There was a village about half-a-kilometer away, but I was afraid to go near it, for fear of bumping into the Germans again.

"Next day I was picked up by some partisans. I lived with them in their dug-out for a couple of weeks till I got strong. At first they were rather suspicious of me, in spite of the fact that I showed them my party card. I'd managed to sew it in the lining of my coat in camp. But afterwards, when I took part in their operations, their attitude to me underwent a change. It was there that I opened my account for the Germans I'd killed, and I've kept the account very carefully till now; the figures are mounting, gradually nearing the hundred mark.

"In January the partisans smuggled me across the lines. I was about a

month in the hospital. They got the splinter out of my shoulder there, and as for the rest of my ailments, the rheumatism I'd got in the camp and so on, they can wait until the war is over. Then I was sent home from the hospital to recuperate. I was a week at home,—I couldn't stand it any more. I just got a yearning to be back; after all, my place is here, to the very end."

At the entrance to the dug-out we said good-bye. Gazing out thoughtfully over the sunlit forest-clearing, Lieutenant Gerassimov said:

". . . And we've learnt to fight the real proper way, and hate and love. War is the whetstone that grinds all feelings fine. You'd think that love and hate couldn't be placed side by side. You know the saying: 'You cannot harness well together a stallion and a timid hind.' And here you can see them harnessed and pulling well together! Bitter hatred is what I feel for the Germans, for all they've done to my country and to me, and at the same time I love my people with all my heart and I want them never to suffer under the German yoke. That's what makes me, and all of us for that matter, fight so savagely: it's just these two feelings, embodied in action, that will lead us to victory. And if love for our country is cherished in our hearts, and will be cherished until those hearts cease to beat, still we always carry our hatred on the points of our bayonets. Forgive me if it's rather an elaborate way of expressing it, but that is what I think," concluded Lieutenant Gerassimov, and for the first time in our acquaintance he smiled—the candid smile of a child.

And now for the first time I noticed that this lieutenant of thirty-two, whose grim face bore traces of the harrowing experience he had been through, but still sturdy as an oak, had dazzlingly silvery white hair at the temples. And so pure was that hoary whiteness won through great suffering, that the white thread of the spider's web clinging to his trench cap was lost against the gleaming white temple, where I could not distinguish it, try as I might.

ILYA EHRENBURG

PATRIOTISM

It is not an easy task to grow a fruit-tree. It demands a good deal of labour and care. Thistles, now, are not exacting. When Hitler founded the "Hitler Youth" organization, he based it upon the worst instincts of man. He did not educate,—he hounded on.

The world-outlook of a Hitler-educated German cannot be called patriotism. Patriotism means love for one's people, for one's fatherland. Just as any great love, patriotism broadens the spirit. A real patriot loves the entire world. It is impossible to hate the universe having once realized the grandeur of the mother-country. Loveless men are poor patriots. And yet the fascists' pseudo-patriotism is based on contempt for other nations. It narrows the world down to a small circle limited by one language, including only one breed of men, one type.

Long ago, even before the first world war, while still a youth, I happened to go to Germany. I admired the wonders of German technique. One afternoon I found myself at a small suburban restaurant. It was

Sunday. Some Germans were sitting in a summer-house. They had taken off their coats, and were drinking beer and singing some song, occasionally rising from their chairs and standing up. I listened to the words of the song. It was *Germany Above All*. And all at once I realized that notwithstanding the cleanliness of Berlin streets, despite all the achievements of German polygraphic art or engineering, Germany was not in the least "above all" and that its self-assertion actually signified the most terrible human meanness.

Hitler found excellent soil for his "racial theory." It was not difficult to suggest to young Germans (the sons of those who had been singing in that summer-house) that they were men and all the rest but "undermen," "lower races." The clerk in Wolf's cigar store felt flattered to know himself a superior man, to be able to imagine himself as if on stilts and from that height to contemplate the world with deep disdain. What is Paris? Magdeburg is better. The University of Oxford? Prussian barracks are more venerable. And who is Tolstoy anyhow? Evers is far more entertaining.

The horizon of even the most enlightened German brought up in modern Germany is limited by the confines of the Reich. I once had a talk with a German officer in Paris. He was a University graduate. In Paris he felt not only an occupationist but also a tourist, so he went sightseeing. He mistook me for a Frenchman and asked me a funny question: "How do you manage to make your backward country look cultured?" It never occurred to this well-read savage that he had found himself in a really cultured country.

Germans always appreciated appearances very highly. So they were not bewildered when fascists substituted for the anthology of world literature, the works of Shakespeare, Cervantes and Hugo, descriptions of ideal producers of the German race. Bad cigarettes were sold in Germany in stunning metal boxes. A tobacco manufacturer told me once that the packing cost him more than the tobacco. And are not the Germans brought up by Hitler to value most of all the shape of the human skull and to pay no attention whatever to its contents?

Everybody knows that the nazis annihilate the national culture of other nations. But it is necessary to mention that they have shorn and humbled the national culture of the German people itself. Heine's poetry warmed millions of hearts. Its romantic irony was salt to a country fed only on unleavened bread. The Hitlerites found that Heine's skull did not conform to the accepted pattern, and hence the new generation in Germany is even ignorant of Heine's name. Thus Hitler, even though adding to the Reich Polish Posen and French Lorraine, has cut the Germans off from the very source of German poetry.

Narrowing down the idea of national culture within the limits of language alone and an artificial definition of "race," Hitler has led Germany back to barbarism. Hitlerites banished modern French painting from German museums, this making young German painters to weare blinkers. Modern architecture in Germany is replaced by a servile imitation of old German architectural styles. And it never seems to dawn on the nazis that one can't create a railway station by copying a Gothic cathedral. German literature hardly knew the art of the really great novel: it was flooded by poetry. Goethe, Schiller, Lenau, Heine, Rielke. The twentieth century's German writers found their teachers in the foreign novels. They studied *The Old Curiosity Shop*, *Les Misérables*, *Old Goriot*, *War and Peace*. What masters are now left to teach modern German writers? Goebbels, perhaps?

Soviet patriotism is a natural continuation of Russian patriotism. Dis-

dain for other nations has always been alien to the Russian nature. The dignity of Peter the Great was not humbled by his studying shipbuilding in the Netherlands. He remained Peter the Great. Pushkin's genius, organically Russian as the poet was thoroughly rooted in Russian history and Russian speech, belonged at the same time to all mankind. Pushkin was passionately in love with eighteenth century France, with Shakespeare, Byron, Goethe, Mickiewicz. Young Russian patriots who fought against Napoleon found the embers of the French revolution still warm in Paris. That paved the way to December 14th, 1825. Mechnikov was a disciple of Pasteur, just as many Western scientists were later Mechnikov's pupils. The lessons of the labour movement in France, Germany and England fanned the Russian *Iskra* (*Spark*) into blazing flame.

Even periods of the utmost hardship could never make the Russian people give up their faith in the ultimate happy destination of their fatherland. The Russians loved their country fervently, without bitterness against other nations or cheap conceit, without bombastic assertions: "We are above all," which are in reality but an expression of a servile slave psychology.

We have not earned our fatherland easily. We paid for it with the blood of our best, with the fierce toil of an entire generation. What wide spaces of virgin soil had to be ploughed, how many cities built, what obstinate passivity overcome! We did not close our eyes to the difficulties. We knew and we know that there are many trees that bear fruit only fifty years after they are planted.

We did not expect miracles, but we trusted the power of the human will. And the country changed before our eyes. Like children rejoicing loudly at their new frocks, we gladly welcomed all the new things that happened in our life,— tomatoes grown near Archangel or the production of *Hamlet* by a collective-farm theatre. We watched the growth of our towns, but what made us happiest of all was the swift development of our people. It is easy to bring up ten thousand of the select at the expense of the rest, to create an enlightened aristocracy set off against the ignorance of millions. We are seeking something quite different: enlightenment for all. We were pioneers, but the path of progress is not a high-way set with milestones,— you have to cut it through virgin forest with your hatchet in hand. But we saw the dawn before us, and we always found the right way without fail.

Soviet patriotism breathes a high inward joy: our nation is rightly proud of its historical mission. But at the same time Soviet patriotism is simple and organic, like the attachment of a bird to air, or of a fish to water: we love the element we can not live without.

Every Russian author fervently loves the Russian language. But has this love ever prevented his appreciating the beauty and power of other languages? We know the role the Caucasus has played in Russian poetry, beginning with Pushkin and Lermontov and ending with Mayakovsky. A fascist hates a man who differs from him in the colour of his hair, or in the language he speaks. We are glad of the multiformity of the world and proud of the rich diversity of our country.

During these grim days of ordeal the many peoples of our land have shown what true kinship is. The tidings of the first child killed in White Russia roused the Siberian villages. Russian and Ukrainians, Georgians and Armenians, Jews and Uzbeks,— all the nations of our land are fighting to liberate the captured Soviet towns. Men of the Ukraine display wonderful gallantry in far-off Karelia, and Trans-Baikalian divisions fight for the dear Ukraine.

The Russians advanced in the vanguard and are continuing to do so along a road where men encounter not flowers alone, but bullets as well. This is the reason why the Russian people and the Russian language are so highly honoured. In times of peace we used to say: it is the language of Pushkin and the language of Lenin. We say now: it is the language of battle.

When we now say "Russia," it is not meant to discriminate between one nation and another. The word "Russia" is not the name of a State any more, it is something deep at the bottom of our souls, connecting us with our history, binding the second war for the fatherland with the first, asserting the kinship of the young Red Army man with Suvorov, the children's cradles with the graves of the ancestors.

Our patriotism helps us to love other, remote nations, and understand foreign culture. As for us, not only the armies, but also the nations deserving friendship and respect are our comrades-in-arms. Therein lies the significance of the latest acts signed in London and in Washington. We appreciate the antiquities of England and the bold youthful verve of America. We are aware it is the centuries of culture that helped the British to defend their island against fascism and reply to the plane of Hess by a thousand planes over Köln. For us Paris does not mean Laval, because we remember Valmy and we have not forgotten Hugo either. We are incensed when reading how Hitler pulls down Czech towns and slaughters Czech intelligentsia: we know what Prague stands for. Our patriotism fans our love for mankind and for man.

Fascists know neither friendship of nations, nor comradeship-in-arms. Hitlerites despise their "allies." They fling decorations at them as one throws bones to a dog, and at this price the vassal nations have to shed their blood. A Rumanian fascist is ready to cut the throat of a Hungarian fascist. Kicked by Hitler, Mussolini is eager to slap Pavelich in the face. They are spiders, ready to devour each other. To this grovelling slum we oppose a world free and manifold, wherein all tongues are free to glorify life, labour, creative power.

We do not shift our hate for fascism upon races, nations, languages. No crimes of Hitler's can make me forget the humble house in Weimar where Goethe lived and worked. And I cannot believe that the wretched buffoon Mussolini speaks the same language as Petrarca and Garibaldi.

We know that the regime of a nation is not a result of chance. It is not an accident that the first page of the new history of humanity opens with an autumn night in Petrograd. It is not an accident that a Tyrolian rascal managed to convert millions of Germans into soldiers of a bloodthirsty and marauding army. Nations are not journeying along the high-way of history in a swarm but as a well-ordered caravan. Glory and honour to the nation that was the first to start out!

It is not an accident that the fascist armies experienced their first defeat on Russian soil,— at the gates of ancient Kalinin and young Stalinogorsk. This is the reason that the name "Moscow" calls forth friendly feelings in England and America at present. That is the reason why the very name "Moscow" makes worn-out, down-trodden nations—Frenchmen and Czechs, Serbians and Poles—lift their heads higher. The Hitlerites wanted to conquer the entire world, and in this war Germany lost its character and its soul. We came out to fight in order to defend our homes and our soil, and in this just war we gained the love and acknowledgement of the world. Such is the power, such is the magic of true patriotism.

Soviet Caricatures

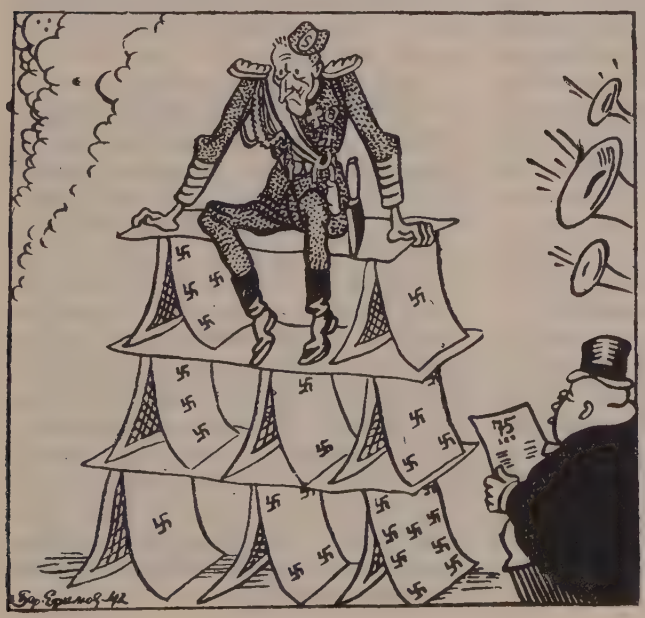
THE PRIME MINISTER AT WORK

A decree made public in Vichy states that the control over the French police has been removed from Darlan and transferred to Laval

GERMAN BLOODHOUNDS IN VICHY

Drawn by Boris Efimov

THE MARSHAL AND HIS HOUSE



On Marshal Mannerheim's 75th birthday the Finnish Parliament decided to present him with a residential house as a mark of their gratitude

Drawn by Boris Efimov

FYODOR PANFEROV

WITH THEIR OWN EYES

MAJOR SHILOV

It was said of Major Shilov that he was a man of more than usual courage — courage alone won't get you very far in modern warfare: a man given to thought, of sound military judgement and initiative. Many other things were said about him: that time and again he had penetrated far behind the German lines, blown up their munition dumps and wiped up their staff-headquarters. Rumour had it that he had "been round the world," seen service in Spain, in the Sahara, in China. Many other things were said about him. At the front people not only fight, they also weave legends.

Regimental Commissar Levchenko offered to accompany us. He was about twenty-eight, perhaps even less, and his youthful face and winning smile at times gave him the appearance of a boy in his 'teens. Four years ago he had graduated from the Agricultural Academy, and recently he had been the senior agronomist in one of the large State farms in the Ukraine.

The front-line trenches were only about two or three kilometers away, but it was a dangerous stretch.

"The Germans pot away from hill N. at anything and everything, whether it's on four wheels, two wheels or on two legs," Levchenko said.

That's why we set out only at dusk.

At first the three of us walked side by side, but as we drew nearer to our objective, Levchenko insisted that we walk Indian file.

"And for heaven's sake keep to the track: the field all around here is mined," he said. A little while later he whispered: "Duck down, as low as you can, and dash after me."

We dived into a narrow trench and ran. The bullets whizzed by overhead.

"They've got this spot well covered," Levchenko explained, when we scrambled out of the trench. "From time to time they treat us to a burst of machine-gun fire. Just on the off chance. The other day one of our sergeants was killed here. He was a splendid chap. He was killed through his own carelessness, though."

Again we dived into a dark hole and, shortly afterwards, we reached the dug-out.

A lamp was burning, shedding a light on the walls of the dug-out; the birch logs of the roof, a bunk strewn with sweet-smelling hay, a small table and a samovar.

"But where is Major Shilov?"

"He's in action," Levchenko replied. "The day before yesterday we received orders to drive the Germans from hill N." He unfolded a map and indicated the place with the blunt end of a pencil and began to explain the lay of the land. "Here you have hill N. which is held at present by the Germans. As you see, it isn't very big, but from a military standpoint it's of vital importance: the Germans have dug themselves in here and are sitting tight; they have a fine eagle's nest from which to observe the disposition of our troops and to keep them under fire. Our orders are to drive them from the hill. We've been at it since yesterday."

"What? Since yesterday? And a thing no bigger than a mole hill?"

"Yes. Since yesterday. The enemies are cunning. We must outwit them. All last night Major Shilov simply drove them crazy, he kept on harassing them, wearing them down with a series of small sorties. Finally, when they imagined that we had about exhausted all our forces, they themselves launched an attack. That's what Major Shilov was waiting for: he simply wiped the Germans out with his trench-mortars. And today? Well, today Major Shilov has something special up his sleeve. . . We may as well go along and see for ourselves."

The night was pitch-black, the sky overcast, and the wind as chilly as in the morning. Only the sky seemed alive, heaving like a gigantic sea, illumined by flare rockets, bursting shells and flashes from trench-mortars.

"This way, this way," Levchenko said, leading us along a dark and narrow communication trench behind a haystack.

How wonderfully the hay smelled!

"Everything has changed here except the smell of the dry grass," Levchenko said thoughtfully.

Just then three flare rockets lit up the scene of action.

Hill N. was quite near, about a kilometer away. It seemed to be covered with scrub. A well-worn track wound up the hillside. To the right was a potato patch, black as a pool of spilt oil. To the left lay a hollow which in the darkness looked like a lake.

The light from the rockets had barely died away when the Germans opened up a hurricane of fire from their artillery, trench-mortars and machine-guns. Suddenly this ceased. Everything was enveloped in gloom. Only the wind continued to howl. Somewhere to one side a single tracer-bullet clove the sky.

A rumbling sound came from the direction of hill N. Again three flares soared skywards, lighting up everything. We could see a company of German soldiers marching down in serried ranks towards the hollow, their rifles pressed firmly to their shoulders.

"A psychological attack," Levchenko whispered.

Three more rockets. . . The company had almost reached the hollow. . . One of the men could not keep himself in hand, he jumped up. The Germans, marching in step, came on and on. Now they'd almost reached the potato plot. Every now and then rockets were sent up from their lines as though to demonstrate how calmly German soldiers went into the attack.

Suddenly two searchlights swept the potato plot, throwing a beam of light on the company. The company came to a halt as though suddenly faced with a stream of molten lava. And at that very moment, from somewhere to the right, from the brushwood, machine-guns began to splutter. The Germans, apparently, were still blinded by the glare of the searchlights when the machine-guns began to mow them down. Those who remained alive scattered in various directions, followed by the beam of the searchlights and a hail of bullets. On they ran, stumbling, falling, like hares caught in the glare of headlights, and the bullets going home cut short their lives, right there and then, on Russian soil.

All this happened in a flash.

And it seemed that the insanity of this psychological attack was apparent to everybody,— even to the German command.

But the ruthless machine had been set in motion, and from the height, again marching in serried ranks, and again lit up by the flare of rockets, a second company came marching down. They, too, were caught in the beam of the searchlights, and, at that very instant, the machine-guns came into action. The ruthless

machine, however, rolled on, and a third company left the hill top, marching as before in serried ranks.

The searchlights swept upwards, swerved this way, and that and then, as though in play, went out.

Again a pall of darkness enveloped the fields, the woods and the height. Only the wind continued to howl.

"What swine they are!" Levchenko said viciously, breaking the silence. "Major Shilov was splendid, he had everything figured out." And again he was still.

Suddenly the fields and gulleys, deep in gloom, resounded to a ripping cheer.

"That's our men attacking," Levchenko said with a tremor in his voice. He spoke in a whisper as though afraid that his words might hamper the attack.

Just then another rousing cheer was given, and, then, somewhere on the approaches to the hill the German trench-mortars, spitting fire, began a hideous croaking, but too late: hand-grenades were already hurtling into the trenches and dug-outs, and the Red Army men after them. From where we stood we could hear the desperate cries of the Germans.

"Aha-a-a!" Levchenko exclaimed exultantly.

At daybreak, about an hour after hill N. had been taken, Political Instructor Pshentsov was brought into the dug-out. He had been with the machine-gunners during the entire engagement, in the brushwood, from where they had mowed down the three German companies. He had gone to report to Major Shilov that orders had been carried out, but, on the way, had stumbled on a mine. Now he was lying on the bunk, deathly pale, his face covered with blood, blood caked with gunpowder and earth on his lips. Levchenko wiped Pshentsov's face, forced half a glass of cognac between his teeth, but the wounded man continued to shiver as though with the ague. He kept on muttering something, pointing all the time in one and the same direction, but nobody understood him.

"Vassya! What is it? Vassya!"—Levchenko bent over him, looking into his dimming eyes, and, unable to understand a word of his jabber, he took a notebook and put a pencil and paper into Pshentsov's hand.

Pshentsov tried to write something, but what he scrawled was absolutely undecipherable. The pencil fell from his fingers, he began to tear at his tunic, helplessly, like one delirious. He was already in the throes of death.

Shortly after he was sent to the hospital. He died on the way.

Those who were in the dug-out sat silent, saddened by the death of Pshentsov. We sat and waited for Major Shilov hoping that he would dispel our gloom. But Major Shilov did not show up. Levchenko looked into his dug-out several times, but every time he came back he reported that the major was either dressing, or busy with some new plan, or writing letters home. Only when he came back the last time, did Levchenko tell us the real truth:

"It's terrible! The major simply cannot get over it: he's terribly cut up about Pshentsov's death," and after a pause he added: "It's nothing to be surprised at. Pshentsov was a brilliant mathematician. At twenty-four he was a professor at Moscow University."

Major Shilov's adjutant entered the dug-out.

"Major Shilov will see you now," he said in a clear and distinct voice.

Again we entered the dug-out where we had been the evening before. It had been tidied up, a small looking-glass hung from the wall, and the samovar had even been polished up. Judging from the scratches on the surface, a brick or a rasp had evidently been used for the purpose. The table had been laid, and there were even a couple of bottles of cognac

to wash down the various dishes. A soldier stood nearby, he was about twenty years of age, stocky but nimble. When we entered he drew himself up and reported to Regimental Commissar Levchenko:

"Major Shilov's orders are to wait. He'll be here in a minute or so."

All this he said in a tone as though it was not he who was subordinate to Major Shilov but Major Shilov to him. Addressing himself again to Levchenko, he blurted out warmly:

"Now you, Comrade Levchenko, put me in a very awkward position the other day,— the samovar, you said, hadn't had a scrub for ages. See what a polish it has now. Like a real looking-glass!"

"Gee, Kolya," Levchenko said with a laugh: "You have really. Once or twice more, and there'll be holes in it."

"There's no fear of that. It'll do for another couple of years. I'll polish it once a year."

We all laughed.

When Major Shilov entered the dug-out, he impressed us as being a big, burly man. He was dressed neatly in a perfectly ironed tunic. His hair was carefully brushed. He was freshly shaven. It seemed to us at first that he would greet us in an official tone. Instead he said to us simply:

"I was told, comrades, that you were here, but I couldn't come at once, I was busy."

He sat down, and we saw that he wasn't such a big man after all. He had open features, his eyes were clear blue, like a child's. His face was lit by an attractive smile.

"Haven't you overdone it, Kolya?" he said pointing to the bottles of cognac. "A glass a piece will do us nicely."

"It's all that's left of the wine cellar, Comrade Major. I think we came to an arrangement that at table you're my subordinate."

"Not when guests are present, Kolya."

"Because," Kolya continued, without paying the slightest attention to what the major had said, "I feed you and not you me. And that's that. And since we gained the day, I propose that you eat and drink. . . ."

"What a chap you are!" Shilov said with a smile, but at the same instant his eyes grew sad.

"Was it Pshentsov's death that upset you so?" we asked.

The major gave a start and turned his head away:

"Yes, in wars bullets don't spare even the most gifted of people. Sometimes I think that, say, in five hundred or, maybe, three hundred years time, or possibly sooner, people will come to have a physical repulsion not only to killing but even striking a man."

"But even then I think people won't think badly of us," Levchenko declared.

Major Shilov smiled and, turning to us, said:

"Of course, of course! That's understood. People will consider us and our country as the pioneers in inculcating this sentiment. . . ." He got up. Apparently he was in the habit of pacing to and fro when thinking, but here the place was cramped. And yet he did manage it,— a step in one direction and then a step in the opposite direction. "And. . . yes, and that's the very reason we'll wipe up the ground with this scum. For Pshentsov alone I'll exterminate them like lice. Remember Gorky's splendid words: 'The enemy must be destroyed like lice,' that's to say, without mercy, with the same feeling of loathing. That's how we will give it to them, Kolya," he said, bringing his fist down on the table with a bang and looking altogether a different man.

"Why, of course, of course, we'll make it hotter than hell for them, Comrade Major." Kolya also seemed to be transformed. He became more serious, more thoughtful. He tugged the major by the sleeve. "But

eat something, Comrade Major, you simply make my heart ache. For two days you haven't had a proper bite, you've been all the time on the go. You can't do things like that. You've got to keep up your strength," he said in the tone of a mentor, "you've got to harbour your strength for the enemy."

"That's true, Kolya. Well, sit down, comrades. We might as well make an affair of it. Let's ask Sasha Krainov to play us something."

A young ruddy-cheeked soldier entered the dug-out, followed by another, a thick-set fellow.

"He's our pet," the major said introducing Sasha Krainov and patting him affectionately on the back. "He's an excellent accordion player. That you, Uraz?"—he turned to the thickset soldier who had almond-shaped eyes with a touch of gold in them. "He comes from the Astrakhan steppes. Uraz Buzakarov is as skilful with the machine-gun as in rendering a song. Well, sit down, comrades, and let's have our favourite song." He was the first to strike up the opening bars of the *Stalin Song*.

We had never heard the song given like that before. Everybody joined in, there, deep down under the ground, and as they sang beneath that roof of birch logs they looked as men inspired, entirely different from when in action — tender, mild, thoughtful. Major Shilov's weather-beaten face became buoyant, young.

While we were singing, Junior Lieutenant Yartsev entered the dug-out. It was his company that had been the first to break into the German trenches. He was black from the smoke of the battle, had a thick growth of stubble on his chin, and there was such a tired look in his eyes that it seemed to us that in a moment he would lean against the wall of the dug-out and fall fast asleep. But as soon as the song ended he drew up to attention and reported:

"Hill N. has been strengthened, Comrade Major."

"Excellent!" And, addressing everybody in general, Major Shilov said with feeling: "Comrades! Junior Lieutenant Yartsev deserves the place of honour, he's the hero of the day."

We made room for Junior Lieutenant Yartsev, giving him the place of honour. He sat down. It seemed to us that now he would lean against the wall of the dug-out for certain and go to sleep. But no sooner had Major Shilov struck up a new song than Yartsev pulled himself together and, with his hand to his ear in the manner of peasants, chimed in with his rich, deep bass.

Major Shilov suddenly stopped singing. Everybody looked at him in surprise.

"Why, yes! I forgot to tell you. Baby has a contusion. . . Her condition is serious."

"Baby? Tony?" Levchenko asked in alarm. "Where is she?"

"She's been taken to hospital."

"Then I. . . I'll run along. . . I'll go there." And Levchenko, his face white as a sheet, left the dug-out.

BABY TONY

Everybody called her that—Baby Tony, although as a matter of fact she was twenty-four, had graduated from the Medical Institute and had a medical degree. And her height, too, was about the average. But for some reason or other everybody, from the commissar down to the rank-and-file soldier, or even we, who had only just arrived at the front, called her Baby Tony. Maybe it was because of her hands, so tiny and so tender, and her smile—just like an infant's? Or perhaps it was because she was so frank, because she loved people, loved them disinterestedly, just like children love adults? Why that nickname stuck to her, nobody knew,

considering that she was far from helpless. When she came to the front, she knew only what she had acquired at the medical school, but here she soon became a lecturer who could speak popularly, was excellent in reading newspapers to the men, and in a short while she learned to drive a car. Whatever she did, she did efficiently. Only one thing she somehow could not master, and that was how to handle fire-arms. Major Shilov once presented her with a Browning, in a leather holster:

"Baby! You roam all over the place, you'd better take it, in case of accidents."

But the Browning, in its leather holster, hung in its usual place on the wall above her bed. It's true that the first evening she examined it long and carefully, enquired even how to shoot with it, but when she was asked to try it out of doors she screwed up her eyes and said:

"No. Some other time. I might happen to kill somebody."

"Whom? At night? In the air? A bat perhaps?" the senior surgeon Innokenti Gavrilovich said reproachingly.

"Supposing even a bat? It also wants to live."

"You're being silly. At the front—and afraid to kill a bat!"

Tony put her head on one side, and looking into the corner, her lips slightly curled, said in her quick, offhand way:

"Why, of cour-s-e! I'm silly! And you're not silly always sitting down to table in your helmet!"

"There's no harm in being cautious," Innokenti Gavrilovich retorted, somewhat hotly. It was his one weak point. He never parted with his helmet. He would always have it on: at dinner, in the street, in the hospital, and even when he went to bed it was always under his pillow. "There's no harm in being cautious," he repeated, trying to hide with his hands the vivid colour that suffused his cheeks. "Trying to tease me," he said to himself. "But you wait, I'll get my own back one of these days."

Nothing more was said on the subject at the time.

Today Innokenti Gavrilovich had decided to be firm.

Only the day before yesterday the Germans, from hill N., had shelled the living quarters of the Red Cross staff. On the roof of the building was an enormous red cross visible from far away. The Germans, however, had deliberately fired on the building. Several members of the staff had been killed or wounded. Today the command had decided to drive the Germans from the height.

"That means that Baby Tony will be wanting to be off to the front-lines, there's no doubt about that. She's got to be stopped. Rather than let her I'll go myself. After all, I can order her to stay. I'm senior surgeon after all." And ruminating in this way Innokenti Gavrilovich entered the hut where the field-station was located and where Baby Tony had her quarters.

She was in her corner, busy with something, humming a song to herself.

Innokenti Gavrilovich coughed. He wanted to take his helmet off, but on second thought he didn't, deciding that to wear it would serve to emphasize the fact that the situation today was complicated, tense and even dangerous.

Tony looked from her corner.

"That you, Innokenti Gavrilovich!" she exclaimed. "Take it off. Take your helmet off. After all we're not being bombed here," and she went up to him, in full kit already, with her medical satchel across her shoulder.

"So-o," he ejaculated, adjusting his helmet more firmly on his head.

"So-o?"—she looked at him questioningly.

"Just s-o, s-o. . . I mean no. Not that. I don't mean that," Innokenti Gavrilovich blurted out, afraid that she, too, would repeat his "just s-o,

s-o" and that this sort of conversation might go on without end.

"What are your interjections suppose to mean today, Innokenti Gavrilovich?"

He said nothing in reply. He sat down.

"Maybe," he thought, "I'm not doing the right thing wanting to detain her here." In general, Innokenti Gavrilovich was fond of putting himself questions, but he never answered them. He probably would have gone on asking endless questions had not Tony taken a step towards the door as though about to leave the hut. "And without your pistol?"—were words that burst from his lips. "No, you can't do a thing like that! Fix it to your belt. I insist!"

With his own hands he adjusted the Browning for her. He adjusted it and became scared.

"Do you know how many of our ambulance-men were killed yesterday?" he said. "No, I don't mean only in the living quarters, but out there, at the front-lines? Do try and understand that those thugs are hunting after people like us out there too, at the front-lines. It's savage. Do you realize it? A thing like that never happened in any war before. Do you realize it?"

"Of course, I realize it. But it's time for me to be going. We can't leave the wounded to shift for themselves out there."

Innokenti Gavrilovich frowned and said in a voice that was deliberately rough:

"Weren't you writing to your mother today? Better look out, be more careful, otherwise that letter might never be finished." And slamming the door he left the hut.

Innokenti Gavrilovich had hardly left when Tony took from a book the letter she had begun writing to her mother. "Mama, everybody loves me here. And I want to tell you. . ." She hadn't written any further, and now, for an instant, she leaned over the letter vividly picturing to herself her old mother, Auntie Grunya, as everybody called her. Taking out a photograph and slowly stroking her mother's head with a caressing motion of her small finger, she said to herself:

"Darling! How white the hair on your temples is. . . and yet maybe. . . no, no!" She at once dispelled the gloomy thought, and a sweet smile hovered on her lips as she recalled how her mother had seen her off. She hadn't shed a tear, and while making her daughter comfortable in the train she had kept on grumbling all the time in a manner that was deliberately rough, every now and then adjusting the blue beret on Tony's head. It was only after the train had started to move that the tears suddenly came. Tony recalled this just now. "Darling mother!" and, hiding the photograph, she darted out of the hut.

Night had fallen, pitch-dark, thick and heavy as though weighted down with lead. The rumbling of guns could be heard from the front-line trenches. Trench-mortar shells whizzed over Tony's head with a hoarse spluttering, and it seemed that, at any moment, she might be hit by one. From time to time flares soared upwards. They burst high up in the sky, lighting up an enormous expanse, and then, dropping, went out. Suddenly the sky was cleft by tracer-bullets,—blue rapid flashes. And although this was happening at the front and spelled death, Tony could not stop for a moment to admire this nocturnal display of fires and explosions. Then she sped along the familiar track and soon after reached Major Shilov's dug-out.

Major Shilov was seated at the telephone issuing orders that were totally incomprehensible to Tony, first calling up "Volga," then "Tver," and then for some reason or other

"Paris." Having done with his telephoning and turning to Tony, he said with a smile:

"A-a! Baby! You've come? Good. Just in time." He looked at his watch. "The attack will begin in a few minutes' time. You'd better go out there. Only don't go alone. Take an orderly with you, Yasha. He's here, in the next dug-out. Well, run along!"

Yasha was younger than Tony. Freckled, with a turned-up nose, he had a peculiar way of talking all his own. For instance, if something took his fancy, he would say: "This is most excellent, awfully so."

Together with Tony they made their way to Junior Lieutenant Yartsev's company. When he saw Tony, Yartsev, who was always taciturn in the manner peculiar to peasants, and even stern, let the news out to the men: "Baby Tony has come." The men livened up, everybody at once seemed to feel much jollier. Baby Tony was well-known to all of them. She had spoken to them more than once and read the newspapers to them.

And now Junior Lieutenant Yartsev, with a deft turn of his flash lamp, looked at his watch. It was exactly twelve. Turning to Tony, he whispered:

"Stay here. Don't show your nose over there, in the trenches. I'm going to give the order now," and raising himself to his full height, a strapping figure of a man, he shouted: "For our country, comrades! Forward!" He was the first over the top, making for the German trenches.

The company was after him like a shot. Moving rapidly, with fixed bayonets, glinting in the light of a flare, the whole countryside resounded to their stirring "Hurrah," and bounding over humps and hollows, the men tore into the enemy's trenches with the force of a torrent that carried all before it.

Baby Tony stayed where she was, her hands pressed tightly to her breast, like one spell-bound, her eyes all the time on the headlong rush of the men.

Yasha shouted to her:

"Wounded!"

She dashed after Yasha who was already busy bandaging a wounded Red Army man. Administering first aid, he muttered in his slow, hesitant manner: "The way they're ferreting out those Germans from their lairs is something wonderful. Awfully so!"

Tomy lent him a hand. Her tiny firm hands were nimble, efficient and tender in putting on a bandage.

Junior Lieutenant Yartsev's company had already driven the Germans from the first line of trenches and dug-outs. Then they stormed the second line, and then the third.

The cheering of the men now sounded quite a distance away, muffled. Yasha and Tony moved after the company. Busy over their work, they did not even notice how the dawn lit up the fringe of the forest.

Near one dug-out a wounded German was writhing on the ground in pain, screaming.

"Bandage him," Tony said to Yasha, herself making for a Red Army man who was moaning with pain.

The man was lying in a small dip in the ground, and like all wounded in such circumstances, he was trying to crawl to a ditch to be under cover from stray bullets. Tony went down on her knees and set to work, deftly bandaging his leg which had been pierced by a bullet. The man began to speak rapidly, his breath coming in short gasps, stressing the "o's" in the manner of people from the Volga:

"Leave me my leg, Comrade Doctor! Without a leg I'm a gonner. Do what you like but leave it, you understand me, Doctor?"

"It doesn't require much to understand. It stands to reason you'd be a gonner without a leg," Tony replied, involuntarily dropping into his style of speaking and laying stress on the "o's."

The man was overjoyed when she spoke to him like a native from his part of the country, and, breaking into a smile, he said to her in a tone of familiarity:

"So you're one of us. You speak like my sister Marussya does. You're really one of us, upon my word!"

"Really and truly, from your parts. When the war's over, I'll certainly pay a visit to your village."

The man nodded his head to her welcomingly.

And just then something happened that was entirely unexpected. Not far from Tony a German soldier scrambled out of a hole that had been carefully camouflaged in the brushwood. He was in tatters, dirty, unkempt. At first, he seemed to be demented. Getting to his feet, and glancing in the direction of Yasha who was bandaging the wounded German, he hurled a hand-grenade at him. What happened next became seared on Tony's mind. She saw the hand-grenade burst, Yasha's arm torn off as though it had only been tied to his shoulder with a bit of string. She saw the wounded German tossed into the air and the second German turn towards her and lift up his hand with a second hand-grenade in her direction.

Tony dashed forward. "You swine!" she shouted. She saw the German throw up his hands as though to shield his face from the dust, and fall flat on the ground. The well-aimed bullet of a soldier who had suddenly appeared from somewhere behind her, had found its mark.

"A-a! he's killed!" was the thought that flashed through her mind, and just then something hit her heavily on the head and she collapsed in a heap like a tiny sparrow. Somewhere at the back of her mind was the thought: "My old mother, grouchy, but kind Innokenti Gavrilovich, the wounded Red Army man, the unwritten letter to my mother, the savage face of the German. . ." —and suddenly everything became blurred, and Baby Tony seemed to be dropping down and down. . .

A groan burst from Major Shilov when he saw the German fall, and when the hand-grenade burst and threw Baby Tony off her feet. He ran up to her, caught her up in his arms and carried her away from the battlefield.

"Oh, you poor thing!" he whispered. "Poor little Tony!"

Baby Tony recovered consciousness a few days later, and a few days after that she could talk again. Today she was lying in the ward, the very same ward she had been in and out of so often as a doctor. She was writing a letter to her mother. She was lying near the window. Winter had set in. The first soft flakes of snow covered the ground. Glancing every now and then at the snow, she wrote:

"Mama! Everybody loves me here. The first snow has fallen. The men brought me some pine branches from the front-lines instead of flowers. And how fragrantly they smell, mama. . ."

The letter was disjointed, but straight from her heart, warm and frank, just as frank as Baby Tony's own soul.

COMMISSAR LEVCHENKO

Walking with a light step, Commissar Levchenko cut across the field and made towards Junior Lieutenant Yartsev's dug-out. He always walked with a light step, a tingling feeling all over his body, on days when things worked out well. And today was just such a day: the Germans had been driven from hill N., and now their trenches and dug-outs had been occupied by Junior Lieutenant Yartsev's company. Between Levchenko and the lieutenant there was a kind of tacit friendship. They never spoke about it, but every time they met

they looked fondly in each other's eyes.

Levchenko made his way down into the dug-out and then stopped short. He had expected to find Yartsev alone, but he saw him in the midst of his men. A discussion was on. Everybody was engrossed in it. Sasha Krainov, the young accordion player, was arguing heatedly that friendship, in general, was something very rare, that in most cases friendships simply scatter to the four winds at the first sign of danger. He was attacked from all sides. Only Yartsev kept quiet. He sat in a corner and seemed to be dozing. But just then he raised his hand, stroked his chin, and said:

"In action, besides one's duty, which is obligatory to our country, our main trump card is friendship." The words "trump card" were hardly off his tongue when Yartsev felt confused. He sensed that he had not expressed his thought correctly, but seeing that his men were all listening to him very intently, he felt easier in his mind and continued:

"There is one man in our regiment. As my superior I, of course, always obey his orders, but if anything were to happen to him I would go out of my way to save him, and not only because I'm in duty bound to do so."

"Even if your own life was in danger?" Sasha Krainov shouted, in the naive and provoking tone of a youngster.

"The thought would never even occur to me, because, I know, if I did not try to save my friend I should lose my own self-respect!" Yartsev's face flushed darkly.

"What a splendid chap he is!" Levchenko thought and was about to join in the discussion, but just then Sasha Krainov, in a still more provoking tone, shouted:

"I know whom you mean! Commissar Levchenko!"

Levchenko drew back and, unnoticed, left the dug-out.

Outside it seemed to have grown still darker. Asking the sentries the way to the second line of trenches, Levchenko made for the place without taking his adjutant with him, a thing he should never have done. It wasn't long before he lost his way, blundered into some woods, and there, at a bend leading towards a gulley, he was suddenly pounced on by some Germans. Before he could whip out his gun, Levchenko's arms were pinioned.

"A fine kettle of fish!" was the thought that flashed through his mind. "Fancy being bagged as a 'tongue!' Well, I suppose I'll have to experience that, too." Levchenko usually kept his head under the most trying conditions, but now his heart involuntarily contracted, his throat was parched and he desperately wanted a drink. "That's all very well, of course, but I've got to let them know somehow in what a predicament I am," he thought and tried to tear himself away.

A sack was thrown over his head, and he felt that he was being picked up and carried off.

Several hours later he was bundled into a room hung with rugs, the windows of which were covered with blinds. A German, his hair slicked back, was sitting at the table. Smilingly he got up and, signing to an armchair, began to speak in Russian:

"Please sit down, Commissar Levchenko. We are almost old acquaintances. True, you have taken far less interest in me than I have in you. That's a reproach. But, please, take a chair. My name is Johann Miller. Do you recollect the name? No? There's a certain matter which we must discuss. Don't you think so? Ah! You don't want to be seated? You want to remain standing before me, before the representative of mighty Germany?"

Levchenko sat down.

Tiny wrinkles appeared under Johann Miller's eyes, but again he

smiled and, jerking up the blind, said:

"Shall I show you how we train young recruits? Your young people."

Levchenko looked out of the window He could see a stretch of the village street and a pole; a naked man was tied to the pole crosswise.

"That's one of your soldiers," Miller said. "He's going to serve as a live target for young recruits to learn to shoot."

And, actually, a batch of youngsters filed out of a hut. There must have been about twenty of them. Judging by their clothes, they were pupils from a vocational school. The last to appear was a German. He walked up to the youngsters, harangued them for a long time, pointing with his finger towards the bound Red Army man.

"He's explaining to them," Johann Miller said, "the vital spots in a man's body. Do you understand? The head, the heart, the stomach. Personally, I prefer to aim at the stomach. Hit your man in the stomach, he imagines he's still alive, but as a matter of fact, he's a dead'un for sure. And our famous Dr. Friedrich is well aware of that."

The man whom Johann Miller called Friedrich stepped away from the naked Red Army man, went up to one of the youngsters, put a rifle in his hands and snapped out an order—apparently "fire." The youngster seemed to shrivel up, he looked from one side to the other, and suddenly, throwing down the rifle, he fell flat on the ground and began to toss about just like a fish out of water. Friedrich went up to the boy and, bending slightly over him, shot him through the back of the head.

"Good man! Bravo!" Johann Miller exclaimed and, turning to Levchenko, spoke to him in a tone full of conviction: "That's how things should be. How can you expect it to be otherwise? That wasn't a man, but a milksop. When a man gets an order to shoot, he shoots. And how can you expect it to be otherwise? We are rounding them up, doing our best to put some backbone into them. And how can you expect it to be otherwise? But look at the way the young Hitlerites shoot."

Six young toughs dressed in military uniform ran out of the courtyard. They stood in line, and at a command from Friedrich they fired a volley at the naked Red Army man and right away dashed up to him to "examine the vital spots."

Johann Miller noticed, apparently, the angry flash in Levchenko's eyes, and then, letting down the blind, he said with a curl of his lips:

"You think that those kids of yours won't shoot at a Red Army man? Well, they will. They won't? And what do you think will happen? We'll shoot them. We'll get one out of a hundred. Oh-ho-ho! But that will be a brave. . ."

In the next room a band struck up. Johann Miller seemed to become as one transformed; there was a vicious look in his eyes, and, discarding all his seeming politeness, he went close up to Levchenko and tweaked the latter's nose:

"Eh! You! Enough of this fool playing." He, evidently, wanted to say "playing the fool." "I don't want much from you,—I want you to lead my men inside your lines, that's all. And then you're free. W-e-l-l?" And he laid a pistol on the table.

"He may kill me if he wants to, but I'm going to sock him on the jaw," was what flashed through Levchenko's mind as he threw himself at Johann Miller.

The door was flung open, and three pairs of hands seized Levchenko by the shoulders.

"A-a-a!" Johann Miller squealed. "Give him the swing! For fifteen minutes. No, ten will do: I'm in a good humour today!"

The door opened with a screacn, and Levchenko was thrown into a semi-dark room. He couldn't get his bearings at once. Judging by the music that was thundering from somewhere up above, he decided that he was in the same building but on a lower floor. A few minutes later his eyes became accustomed to the gloom and he could see where he was.

The room wasn't very large, it had several windows, and all of them but one, which had iron bars on it, were shuttered. Moving cautiously, as though expecting a trap, Levchenko went up to the window and gripping hold of the iron bars tugged at them. They were strongly embedded in the windowsill.

"Y-e-s, there's no getting out of here," he thought turning towards the dark corner in order to examine it, but suddenly he felt that his hands were all slimy. He looked at the palms of his hands and stood petrified: his palms were covered with blood. Levchenko looked at the bars, then at the windowsill, the floor, the walls, the ceiling—everything was covered with blood. "Can that really be human blood?" he thought with horror, and involuntarily he stretched his hand out towards the windowsill and with two fingers touched the mass of congealed blood. The blood began to quiver, just like overstewed chagrin leather. He began to shake all over, shivers ran down his spine, his teeth began to chatter. "It can't be human blood," he said to himself and ran into the dark corner. And from there, from the dark corner, he saw, beside the door, almost on the doorpost, the bloody trace of a man's hand. He had a vivid picture of a man dripping with blood, how he rushed blindly to the door, missed his direction and leaned his hand against the wall next to the doorpost. . . And Levchenko realized that not cowards were tortured in his room, but men who were deeply devoted to their country, men of sterling character and purity of heart.

The door opened, and Johann Miller entered accompanied by two soldiers.

"Ah, it's you. . . Pardon me if I'm intruding. You still won't speak? What a strange man you are!" and he smiled. "Excuse me if I was rather rude to you upstairs. To show you that I really mean it, I'm letting you have the swing not for ten minutes but only for eight. Only eight minutes. However, you'd better keep an eye on these louts," he said pointing to the soldiers, "that they don't keep you up any longer. Only eight minutes," and, explaining something to the soldiers, he made for the door, but wheeling round and pointing to the walls, the ceiling, the windowsill, he said: "That's bolshevik blood. Do you realize that? You had better be reasonable. I'm sorry for you, you are still young, probably you have a sweetheart, a mother. Just imagine how your sweetheart's, particularly your mother's heart will flutter at that very moment when you will. . ." He made a sign with his hand across his throat and emitted a sound like the cry of an old goose. "I'm not asking you for much,—only to lead my men behind your lines. You can take my word for it, nobody will ever be the wiser. You can say that you missed your way or make up some other excuse." Johann Miller looked at Levchenko's eyes and turned on his heel. "Eyes like that should be gouged out," he muttered. He left the room slamming the door.

The soldiers stripped Levchenko naked and began to share out his belongings.

"So that's how things are," Levchenko decided, "they're sharing my things, as if I was dead already! In other words, I won't get out of here alive. Well, nothing can be done about it, but I'll give them as much trouble as I can while I'm alive."

The soldiers led Levchenko to

rings in the ceiling, then they tied two towels to the rings and making a noose at each end fitted them under his armpits. Giving a jerk, they strung him up. When they did that Levchenko even smiled. "What's this tomfoolery of theirs?" he thought. But a few seconds later his head began to swell, his eyes bulged out of his forehead, and he felt a gnawing pain all over his body. Exactly four minutes later Levchenko fainted dead away. They took him off, poured salty water over him and threw him into a corner. When he came to his senses, he could not move hand or foot, his head was like a lump of lead.

Johann Miller paid him another visit. He came in briskly, with a slightly swaying step, and began to speak before he had hardly crossed the threshold:

"Well, how did you like our swing? I must say you're not the type to stick it out for eight minutes. As a matter of fact nobody ever has. Four is about the most. You still have another four minutes."

Levchenko looked at the two towels. Four more minutes! Four agonizing minutes. Now it seemed that it was not the swing that was so terrible but the anticipation, that again you would be hung up by the armpits, again your head would begin to swell, your eyes bulge out on your forehead, and an unbearable gnawing pain would run through the whole of your body.

"I understand you," Johann Miller continued, swaying slightly. "It's unpleasant to be strung up. Well, in that case, the simplest thing for you to do is to lead my men behind your lines and have done with it. After that they will, as your muzhiks say, wish you God speed and nobody will ever know that you were here. Make up your mind," and, with that, he left the room.

Again Levchenko was tortured. When he was strung up, somebody stuck an awl into his shoulder and then quickly jerked it out. The blood spouted up to the ceiling. They twisted his arms, tore off his nails. But he would not speak. They beat him with rubber truncheons, beat him on the back, the kidneys. Levchenko still would not speak. Clenching his teeth, he kept his eyes fixed on one spot—on his bloody toes. Once he recalled his friend, Junior Lieutenant Yartsev, and a smile flitted across his face; and again, firmly clenching his teeth, he kept his eyes on his bloody toes.

The next day Johann Miller, besides himself with rage because Levchenko would not speak, issued the order:

"If he doesn't come to his senses inside three hours, set him up as a target!" And he went out.

Levchenko was led out into the street and tied to the very same pole to which the naked Red Army man had been trussed the evening before.

And just then a group of men came rushing from a side street. They were dressed in peasant garb, armed with rifles and hand-grenades. The men, fourteen all told, rapidly deployed. Hand-grenades were sent hurtling into the next building from which strains of music could be heard. And from there, from that terrible house, the Germans began to scramble out of the windows into the street, where the bayonets of the men made quick work of them.

Among the fourteen, Commissar Levchenko recognized Junior Lieutenant Yartsev.

EGOR YARTSEV

After the battle for hill N., with its accompanying racket of heavy guns, bursting mines, incessant rat-tat-tat of machine-guns and groaning and moaning of wounded, silence again reigned. The sun came out, melting

the first fluffy flakes of snow, and it seemed, for some reason, that spring had returned, and everyone had a feeling of buoyancy, a feeling which was further enhanced by a pigeon, a wild pigeon, gray with a touch of pink, which had flown from somewhere or other. It perched on the branch of a birch, right in front of a howitzer, and began to cock its head this way and that, as though sizing up the situation.

A pigeon! A pigeon! The sentiments it arouses are entirely different from those aroused by a raven. And there were so many ravens in the neighbourhood, inspiring such a feeling of revulsion, that the very sight of them made one want to destroy this black and croaking tribe on the spot. But what perched here was a pigeon, a wild pigeon, gray with a touch of pink, and this wild pigeon brought recollections to the men of their folks at home, and they set about writing letters to their people, showing one another the photographs of their womenfolk, wives, sweethearts and children. At the front, whenever there is a lull in the fighting, the conversation among the men generally turns on home, their friends and, mainly, about their near and dear ones—their wives and children. The other day, for instance, Egor Yartsev received a postcard from his wife Olga, from the village of Vilki. Olga wrote that at home everything was as well as could be, that Egor's mother, Ekaterina Yartseva, was the chairman of the collective farm, and that Elena, a friend of Olga's, had given birth to a son. Egor had intended to reply to his wife's card at the time, but had had to put off doing so because, first of all, the village of Vilki, he found out, was now occupied by the Germans and, secondly, an order was received to capture hill N. So he had hidden the postcard in a safe place, intending to reply to it later on, when he was back again in his dug-out.

Now he made his way to his dug-out, sat down at the table, took out a sheet of paper and wrote the first endearing word: "Olga". . . He was interrupted. . .

The alarming news went the round of the trenches that Commissar Levchenko had disappeared. Kolya was the first to discover it. He got up as usual at dawn, prepared breakfast, called the major and then went to wake the commissar. The commissar was not in the dug-out.

"I was under the impression he was staying the night with the major," the adjutant said, at a loss.

A search began.

Commissar Levchenko had been seen late the night before in the vicinity of Junior Lieutenant Egor Yartsev's dug-out; after that he had been seen at the junction point of the two regiments, not far from the hollow Gorkaya; after that he had spoken to the night patrol at Chornaya River; further all traces ceased. A dreadful suspicion crept into everybody's mind, a suspicion which was voiced by Major Shilov. At the risk of his life, under cross-fire of the German ommygun men, or "cuckoos" as they are called at the front, he turned up at hill N., and searching out Egor Yartsev said to him:

"Your company has disgraced us," and wheeling about, he left.

Yartsev sat down on a bunk, humming to himself a Russian song about Lantsov. He sang softly, sadly, refusing to speak to anybody, refusing to reply to any questions. The men saw the deep furrows on his forehead, the fixed and far-away look in his eyes. He sat there, swaying to the rhythm of his song which told of how Lantsov conceived the idea of escaping from his dungeon. He dragged out the refrain in the old-fashioned way, with his hand to his ear as though several other people were sitting in front of him and singing too, and with every moment that passed his face grew darker and darker.

"He'll peg out if he goes on like that: his heart will simply burst," Sasha Krainov, who was as efficient a soldier as accordion player, said. "We've got to shake him up somehow."

They all knew of the deep friendship between Egor Yartsev and Commissar Levchenko, they all realized how heavy his heart must be, and each sought, in his own way, to help his commander, but did not know how. Sasha Krainov took himself off to the woods. And he, too, at the risk of his life, made his way there under cross-fire of the German tommy-gunmen, gathered some ripe berries and, entering the dug-out, placed the golden yellow fruit in front of Yartsev.

"Your favourites. . . the grouse are still pecking away at these beauties," and Sasha burst into a hearty laugh, hoping to infect Yartsev by his mirth. But Yartsev just went on singing, swaying to and fro to the tune of his song about Lantsov.

This was too much for Sasha.

"So you didn't save your friend after all!" he shouted roughly.

Yartsev's eyes twitched, and he gave Sasha a wry look:

"Do you want to help me? But understand, it may cost you your sweet life. . . Well, what about it?"

"Socrates died for his ideas. Giordano Bruno was burned at the stake for his ideas. And lots of others," Sasha replied, heartily glad that his company commander had broken his silence at last.

"Oh-ho!" Yartsev exclaimed in surprise. "In that case let's be going."

Having obtained permission from Major Shilov, and taking Uraz Buzakarov, the machine-gunner, along, they disappeared that very evening, and three days later made a daring raid on the village of Otradnoye.

The Germans got wind of the impending raid. Scouts reported that two days before three men, dressed as peasants, had crossed the Chornaya River and had paid a visit to one Irgizov, a peasant living in the village of Malyie Ozerki. Irgizov had shown them the way to a neighbouring village, and there the three men had been joined by six others; some time later, already fourteen in number, they had gone on. When this was reported to Johann Miller, the chief of the intelligence division, he issued the following orders:

"Let them alone for the time being. When there are more of them, we'll round them up. We'll do it in the good old Russian fashion—get the whole bunch at one stroke. It'll be easy enough especially as the peasant Irgizov is our man."

But what happened shortly afterwards was like a bolt from the blue: fourteen men cleaned up the staff-headquarters, forced the Germans to take to their heels and ran a bayonet through Johann Miller. The Germans at first were taken aback at this sudden and daring raid, but an hour later, when they had recovered from their surprise, they sent a party out after Yartsev. But it was too late: Yartsev, together with his whole group, had succeeded in crossing the stretch of marshland and had taken cover in the thick woods beyond.

Then the Germans ordered Irgizov to carry out all arrangements previously made with Yartsev; at the same time they sent fifteen mounted men and five bloodhounds to the outskirts of the village of Malyie Ozerki, knowing that Yartsev would have to pass that spot on his way back.

Egor Yartsev knew nothing about all this. He did not know in whose pay the cross-eyed, undersized and shifty peasant Irgizov was.

The daring raid on the village of Otradnoye, and the fact that he had succeeded in snatching Regimental Commissar Levchenko "from the

clutches of the hangmen," overjoyed Yartsev, increased his daring, and he led his men through the dense woods in a bee line to the village of Malyie Ozerki. Yartsev had made the acquaintance of Ivan Irgizov a long time before. Several years ago, when Yartsev's father was still alive, Ivan Irgizov had often visited their village to collect scrap. His father had said about him at the time:

"Ivan is one of those tight-fisted muzhiks, a mean little soul, always on the lookout to get something for nothing."

It was a coincidence, perhaps, that this very same Ivan Irgizov should be the first man to meet them in the village of Malyie Ozerki and that he should volunteer to act as guide to the next villages. Egor Yartsev, with true military caution, took careful stock of the man, but the fact that Ivan Irgizov so readily volunteered to act as their guide to the next village and just as readily showed them where they could find the partisans, and fell in right away with his proposal to have some washing across his fence as a signal, on his way back, that the road through the village of Malyie Ozerki was clear, and that he had called him his "pal,"—somewhat lulled his suspicion.

"Apparently he isn't as mean a little beast as he used to be," he decided, and boldly he led his men to the village of Malyie Ozerki.

He walked in front, behind him marched Sasha Krainov and Uraz Buzakarov carrying Commissar Levchenko who was wrapped up in a German greatcoat; the partisans brought up the rear. Time and again a doubt would creep into Egor Yartsev's mind as to whether Ivan Irgizov could be depended upon. Then he would call a halt and send out a man to reconnoitre. But the scout always came back with good news. The last time the scout reported on his return:

"There's some washing on Ivan Irgizov's fence."

"Come on, let's be going," Yartsev said gleefully, and he already began to picture to himself how they would get back to their own lines, how he would call up Major Shilov, and how he, Yartsev, would look into the major's eyes and say: "Remove the disgrace that is on my company, Comrade Major." And wouldn't all the men be glad! Egor could think of nothing else.

They pressed on.

It was getting late. An evil smelling mist arose from the swamp, three belated flocks of wild ducks came to rest on the surface of the lake, and from somewhere, far away, could be heard the mooing of a cow.

Judging by the sound Yartsev determined that the cow was mooing on the other side of the German lines, on "our own territory," and that soon they, too, would be "home." At last they reached the edge of the woods and from there could see the washing on Ivan Irgizov's fence. The sight of the washing almost brought a cry of joy to Egor Yartsev's lips as to those of one who again sees the sun after a long sojourn in darkness. But he kept himself in hand. He went up to Levchenko and whispered:

"Buck up, Comrade Commissar, we'll be home shortly." He wanted to say something more to the commissar, but, just then, Uraz Buzakarov, who had the eyes of a hawk, came running up to him.

"Comrade Commander, look, there are horses behind the fence," he said, indicating the place with his hand. "D'you see them, the horses' heads and ears?"

They looked—and, sure enough, there were horses behind a high fence.

"Back!" Yartsev commanded, grinding his teeth. "A-a-a! We'll get him yet, that 'pal' of mine! Pass the commissar to the partisans," he ordered. "Buzakarov, Krainov, come

here!" He went down on one knee and trained his automatic on the fence.

Krainov and Uraz Buzakarov took up a position alongside. The partisans had no sooner disappeared in the woods than Yartsev ordered:

"Fire!"

The horses reared and tore away, neighing and snorting. At the same instant wild, irregular firing from German tommyguns came from somewhere on the right. The Germans were blazing away haphazard, "at the sparrows," as they say at the front. Judging from this desultory firing, Yartsev concluded that the Germans had not anticipated an attack and that they had been lying in ambush for them. And the horses—how they galloped madly through the woods, and the soldiers—racing after them! "Oh, for a machine-gun to mow them down!" Yartsev jumped to his feet with the intention of edging nearer to the fringe of the woods, the better to take aim at the German soldiers who were trying to catch their horses, but, just then, Uraz Buzakarov tugged at his sleeve.

"A dog," he said. "A bloodhound."

A big, heavy hound, its head low, in the manner of a wolf hunting its quarry, tore down the track. It flashed past like a shot, past Yartsev, Uraz Buzakarov and Sasha Krainov. On it sped, in the direction the partisans had taken. Uraz Buzakarov threw his rifle to his shoulder, but Yartsev stopped him.

"Leave it to me. I'm a hunter. This is the way I've brought down hares," and taking aim, he fired.

The bloodhound turned a somersault and fell flat on the path.

"Good for one!" Yartsev exclaimed exultantly.

But a second hound was already tearing after the first one. Egor Yartsev brought that one down, too. And when a third dog came speeding from the village, he whispered to Uraz Buzakarov:

"Dash after our men and warn them. The dogs are more dangerous than the Germans. And tell them, by the way, to make for Lyushkino and get through that way."

Uraz Buzakarov dashed into the woods as fast as his legs could carry him to overtake the partisans. Sasha, in the meantime, nimbler than a cat, climbed to the top of a pine,—a thing he should never have done,—in order to take a few pot shots at the Germans, but he was hit by a bullet. He fell to the ground just like a dead woodcock—with a heavy swish.

"Sasha!" Yartsev exclaimed, rushing to the spot, and at the same moment he noticed that a fourth and then a fifth dog were speeding down the track. A second or so later, two shots rang out, in quick succession, and Yartsev understood that it was Uraz Buzakarov who had fired. "Sasha! Sasha!" he whispered, lifting the lad's head onto his knee. "Sasha!"

The body of the Red Army man grew heavier, his head dropped to one side, a thin stream of blood appeared at the corner of his mouth and trickled down onto his chin, his collar, his tunic.

"Sasha!" Egor Yartsev called out again and shook him, as one shakes a man out of a deep sleep. And seeing that he was past all help, Egor Yartsev burst into tears.

It was already quite dark. All firing had ceased. A clamour of German voices, loud as always, suddenly came from the village. Somebody was abusing somebody else. The voices drew nearer, and Yartsev understood that the Germans were heading for the pine. He lifted up the dead body of Sasha and carried it into the woods, forcing his way through the dense, dark and prickly undergrowth. Sasha's body appeared to him to be terribly heavy, and Yartsev thought:

"How heavy a man gets. . . when he's dead!"

Just then he stumbled against the trunk of a dead tree and, groping around with his hand, he found that he was on the edge of a gulley. He let himself down to the bottom, and working quickly with his small sapper's shovel, an instrument he always carried with him, he dug a grave, put Sasha into it, and covered him over with earth.

The voices of the Germans drew nearer.

Egor Yartsev stumbled on, not knowing where, but realizing that it would be hopeless now to try to find the path which the partisans had taken, and that it was up to him to get away as best he could from the Germans. He scrambled over fallen trees, pushed trough ravines thick with undergrowth, and only when he had reached a clearing did he remember that he had left his automatic rifle, which had been damaged by a bullet, near the pine. He became terrified, just as he had once before, years ago, when quite still a youngster he had strayed from the grown-ups and got lost in the woods. He had climbed a tree then, made himself fast with a rope and had sat there for two whole days without making so much as a sound in order not to attract wild animals. Now, without his automatic, he felt just as terrified. He had his revolver with him, but there were only five bullets in the barrel. He strode on, picking his way with the utmost care, terrified at the snapping of the twigs under his feet, at the slightest breath of wind. He proceeded in what seemed to him to be one direction, but when he stumbled against the trunk of the dead tree he realized that he was walking in a circle just like a hare that had been hit, and he became angry with himself at his own confusion.

"And you call yourself a hunter! Why, everything you ever know has gone clean out of your head! Come on, man, try and recollect how you used to find your bearings! Well! Where's the South, where's the North? Come on, man!" And he even shouted at himself as he bent down under a bushy spruce, groping with his hands for the moss. He knew that moss grew only on the North side. Having found it, he ascertained where the North was, and understood in what direction he had to go. Then he set out boldly, heading straight for his native village of Vilki which was not more than fifteen kilometers from the village of Malyie Ozerki.

Without hesitation he made his way out of the woods to a field, and there he came to a stop. Not far off, probably not more than ten kilometers from him, the sky was all aglow. Everything indicated that a village was on fire—tongues of flame licked the sky, giving out dense clouds of smoke, and smoke like that meant that thatched roofs were burning.

"I wonder if that's our village," he thought to himself and quickened his step.

But by the time he got clear of the woods, it was already dawn. To go any further would be risky, so he decided to hide himself in a hayrick until dusk. He crawled into the hayrick, grew warm and was soon fast asleep.

The voices of people speaking in Russian woke him. With utmost caution he raked some of the hay away with his hands and peeped out.

A group of people, about thirty in number, were coming down the road leading from the forest. All of them had axes hitched onto their belts. Two carried saws. To the untrained eye they appeared to be lumberjacks. But Egor Yartsev had an eye for details, and he noticed that the sawblades were not wrapped up, whereas lumberjacks, as a rule, wrap up the sawblades in bits of sacking or in tow. And then again

not a single one of them had a satchel slung across his shoulders.

"Well, I'm blowed! Why, they are. . ." Yartsev whispered to himself and scrambled out of the hayrick. He recognized the agronomist Lyubin among the "lumberjacks."

"Lyubin! Stepan Egorovich!" he yelled out and went up to him. The latter was so thunderstruck on seeing Yartsev that he stood there rooted to the ground, unable to say a word.

"How are you, Comrade Agronomist?" Yartsev said, glancing at the others; he recognized several people from his own village and gave them a wink: "Well! So you've turned to peaceful labours! But where's my mother?" he blurted out, addressing himself to the agronomist.

"Your mother? Ekaterina Petrovna?" Lyubin heaved a deep sigh, and pointing to where the glow in the sky was dying down, he said: "D'you see? That's our village, Vilki."

"Yes, but mother? Where is mother? And Olga, where is she?"

The agronomist preserved a long silence. The others also stood around, silent, their heads bowed down.

"Where's mother?" Egor Yartsev roughly shook Lyubin by the shoulders.

The agronomist took an axe from the belt of the man standing next to him, tried the edge with his finger and handing it over to Egor Yartsev said:

"Here, take it, Egor!"

Everything was clear. Yartsev stood a long time leaning against a hayrick damp with dew, and again his eyes took on a fixed and far away look. Lyubin touched him on the shoulder:

"Olga stayed behind, but your mother has got to be avenged, Egor."

Yartsev knit his brow and turned to the agronomist.

"I've got to pay a visit to Malyie Ozerki tonight. . . There's a 'pal' of mine there I must make a call on; and what a 'pal!' After that we'll get in touch with my men. Commissar Levchenko is with them."

They moved on, penetrating deep into the forest, and lay down to a troubled sleep. In the evening, leaving the rest where they were, three of them set out for the village of Malyie Ozerki.

"Ivan Irgizov lives in that hut over there. If I'm not mistaken, Comrade Agronomist, you speak German. You've forgotten? Never mind. Act as though you do. Now you," Egor Yartsev turned to his second companion, a man by the name of Borissov, the clerk of the collective farm, "you'll play the part of interpreter. Translate that this German gentleman,"—pointing to the agronomist,—"wants to locate the whereabouts of the partisans, and that's why he's dressed to look like a peasant. Call this 'pal' of mine out into the street and bring him down to the river."

Borissov walked up to the hut and knocked softly. A window opened. An old woman looked out, roundly abusing them.

"What are you prowling around at night for? He's asleep."

Lyubin mumbled something in a tone that was supposed to be German. Borissov translated:

"Mr. Wolf wants to see Ivan. He's after the partisans. It's none of my business: I had no option. . ."

The old woman was about to snarl back at them, but Ivan Irgizov was already on the porch, speaking as he came as one absolutely sure of himself:

"Why, of course. I know where to find them. . . Why, I. . . Why, I. . . Why, damn it all, I'm the sort of chap who can catch a bird on the wing," he went on boastfully. "I do what I'm supposed to do. Only yesterday somebody asked me to show him the way to the village of Otradnoye. . ."

Ivan Irgizov led the way, muttering to himself. But when he came to the Chornaya River, to the ferry, he stopped short, as though turned into stone: facing him, with an axe in his hand, stood Egor Yartsev.

THE MURDER OF EKATERINA

Everybody knew her, not only in her own village of Vilki, but throughout the district. She was tall, red-cheeked and strong, but above all she was lively, with a retentive mind and a pure, generous heart. Ekaterina never did anything against her conscience, not for anybody.

"Ekaterina is a woman you can rely on," people said of her. "Nobody can equal her in the field, and at a public meeting, if an opinion has to be expressed, she's the one to do it, and she won't mince matters either."

"Yes, she's a corking woman."

And, true enough, when she did speak up at a meeting, her voice rang, and then people who had shirked their work had better beware: she'd put anybody to shame, irrespective of whether the person in question was just a plain, ordinary collective farmer or an official of the local authorities.

That's why Lyubin, the local agronomist, who was a quiet sort of fellow, sometimes called her aside and said to her in a whisper:

"Ekaterina Petrovna! You are a gifted woman! You come from the land, and your brain, well, it's like the richest black earth: sow—and what a harvest you'll reap! But. . ." he dropped into a more familiar tone, "but must you forever be lashing out and pushing ahead of everybody else? Do you need more than anybody else?"

"More," Ekaterina replied. "I have three sons and four daughters."

"You know best," the agronomist replied gruffly, and stooping slightly he walked on.

"Truth will always out," she flung after him, "so put that in your pipe and smoke it, Comrade Agronomist!"

And when many of the menfolk, including Ekaterina's three sons, were called up to the army, the chairman of the collective farm, who had also been called up, declared with the agreement of all the collective farmers:

"By all right you should be the chairman. Keep the flag flying, Ekaterina Petrovna."

From then on Ekaterina handled the affairs of the collective farm.

"A fine one. . . they've elected," Lyubin grumbled. "A woman like that should be bearing children!"

"A fine one. . . this agronomist of ours," Ekaterina said of him in the same jocular tone. "A man like that should be strumming on a mandoline!"

But when they were out in the fields they instinctively turned to each other: Lyubin was no good at speaking to the collective farmers, Ekaterina lacked the knowledge the agronomist Lyubin had, and that's why she always advised the collective farmers:

"The fact that his hands are as slender as a girl's doesn't mean a thing. He knows his job: he's a wizard in the field, and you should listen to what he says."

One rainy morning the Germans swooped down on the village of Vilki. The main body of troops passed to the right, leaving in the village a group of forty soldiers and a certain Karl Klaus. This same Karl Klaus, slashing the calves of his fat legs with the butt end of his whip, inspected the collective farm, took a long look at the fields and then, clicking his tongue, he said something to Neumann, the interpreter—a man with an ashen-gray face and quick and nervous movements. Neumann bowed deferentially to Klaus and then, turning to Ekaterina who had only just come out of the barn, he shouted:

"All this—the fields, the woods, the river—is very much to Herr Karl Klaus' liking. Eh, what!"

"I should think so! . . ."

"He was promised, you know, two hundred hectares of land together with farm hands, Russians, of course, to work the land for him."

"Well, what of it! Promises are not always kept," Ekaterina replied with a sneer.

"Yes, yes! He likes it very much," Neumann shouted.

Ekaterina walked gloomily through the village. Her heart contracted painfully, as though it were bleeding. In front of the collective-farm office she sat down on a log.

"And a swine like that is going to reap the fruit of our labour!" she thought to herself. Pulling herself together, she went from house to house, and tapping on the windows told the owners to pass on the order not to turn up for work.

That evening the inhabitants of the village of Vilki were rounded up in front of the office of the collective farm. They were surrounded by a cordon of armed soldiers. Klaus, looking as dapper as ever, appeared on the porch accompanied by Neumann, the interpreter. Karl Klaus looked long and searchingly at the collective farmers, a smile hovered on his lips, then, shrugging his shoulders, he said something to Neumann. The latter began to speak rapidly:

"Herr Karl Klaus is very sorry that he cannot speak Russian. He is very fond of you and will always be fond of you. But you must not shirk your work, the corn must be threshed and stored in the barn."

The collective farmers listened in silence, keeping their eyes on the ground. And in that tense silence Ekaterina's voice rang out challengingly:

"Yes, he's fond of us like a wolf is of sheep! But we're not sheep!"

Neumann translated Ekaterina's words. A quiver ran down Klaus' body, his face turned livid. Then, with a forced smile, he snapped out an order to the soldiers. The soldiers immediately brought their rifles to the ready, a machine-gun was rolled out from the court-yard. The agronomist Lyubin, in order to dispel the threatening atmosphere, bawled out:

"The corn? Of course, the corn has to be threshed. Who'd refuse to do that? And even Ekaterina Petrovna. . ."

Klaus waved his whip. The soldiers lowered their rifles, the machine-gun was rolled out of sight. Klaus brought the palms of his hands flabbily together, applauding, nodding approvingly to Lyubin. When he did that, the agronomist experienced such a feeling of nausea as though he had struck a helpless child.

But just the same nobody turned up for work the next morning. The evening before, when they were dispersing from the meeting, Ekaterina had gone up to the agronomist and, swaying on her heels as if she was about to hit him in the face, she said:

"Shall I spit in your mug? That wouldn't be enough. You old washout!"

"Kate! Katie!"—the agronomist touched her sturdy shoulders, and she could see how his hands trembled. "Do you really want them to put daylight through us like a bunch of fools? We've got to think how to wriggle out of the situation. What's to be done? Give us your orders!"

"Set fire to everything! Set fire to the corn in the stacks! If you won't do it, they'll do it," Ekaterina said, pointing to the people. "If they won't do it, my girls will do it. If my girls won't do it, I'll tackle the job myself and set fire to the corn!"

Everybody agreed with her.

Karl Klaus realized that everything depended on Ekaterina, and that evening he made his way to

her house, wearing the same smug smile, confident that he would be able to bring the "stubborn lady" to reason.

Ekaterina was not surprised at the visit: she had expected it, and that was why, the previous evening, she had told her daughters to hide in the woods. When Klaus came, she was ready for him.

The interpreter Neumann said:

"Karl Klaus wants the corn threshed."

"We know what's to be done with our own corn without you," she retorted.

Klaus became furious. Neumann again translated:

"Herr Karl Klaus says that the land attached to your village, the fields, the woods, the corn in the stacks and in the barns, the livestock and everything else, all belong to him: it was given to him by the Führer, by Hitler."

"Let him first sow himself, and whatever he gets he can make a present of," Ekaterina replied and turned towards the window.

Klaus nervously tapped his fat calves with the butt end of his whip, and then, swinging up his arm, he lashed out at Ekaterina's face. Blood spurted from her cheek. Klaus flung out of the house, and in the street he shouted to the interpreter:

"Make her submit! Don't kill her, but make her obey! Make her obey first, and then finish her off!"

An hour or so later Neumann was back again accompanied by two soldiers. He put a sheet of paper on the table in front of Ekaterina and said gruffly:

"Hey! You! You vixen! Put your signature to this. We don't require anything more from you."

Ekaterina glanced through the paper—it was an order to the collective farmers instructing them to turn up for work.

"I didn't write it, so I don't have to sign it."

"The worse for you. You'll be ashamed of yourself."

"Why do I have to be ashamed of myself?"

"You are a mother, and I know you have daughters."

A half-suppressed moan burst from Ekaterina's lips, she sat down on a stool and looked pensively out of the window. One thought was in her mind: "Did my girls manage to get away?"

"Sign and have done with it," Neumann said, moving the paper over to her.

Ekaterina took it and again looked out of the window, her mind busy with one and the same thought: if only they'd managed to get away, she'd know how to settle with this creature!

Neumann saw the struggle that was going on in Ekaterina's mind, and he became still more insolent. Going up to Ekaterina, he patted her on the shoulder with his flabby hand.

"Eh-eh-eh! Why should you care about that stacked corn? Your girls are more precious than anything to you: you're their mother, I, too, am a father, and to me my children are the most precious things on earth. That's how things are. Now put your signature to it, otherwise your daughters will cease to respect you."

Ekaterina's heart boiled over:

"Our girls are taught to respect honest people and to have a contempt for cowards, particularly for rats like you!" And, crumpling up the sheet of paper, she threw it into Neumann's face.

"A-a-a! You crazy fool! Strip her!" he shouted to the soldiers. "Strip her and turn her out into the street!"

The soldiers, evidently, knew what was expected of them. In spite of the fact that the order was given in Russian they hurled themselves at Ekaterina and ripped off her clothes. They grabbed her with their foul

hands, twisted her arms, pinched her, punched her on the back. And when her thick braids of hair unloosened and fell down her bare back, Neumann set fire to them.

"I'll make you sizzle like a bit of fried plaice!" Neumann shouted.

Ekaterina clenched her teeth and kept silent.

At night a heart-rending shriek was suddenly heard all over the village. The shriek came from Ekaterina's hut. It was born in the cold night air along the line of houses and brought the startled people from their beds. Folks ran out of their houses, listening to Ekaterina's shrieks, clenching their fists threateningly.

"They're torturing her," they said. "They're torturing Ekaterina! The swine!"

And when Ekaterina's shrieks could no longer be heard, the whole village, men and women, old and young, without waiting for orders from above, silently snatched up a few belongings and made for the woods.

And there, to the dense forest, in the first rays of the new day, the agronomist Lyubin and the clerk Borissov brought the dead body of Ekaterina wrapped in a blanket. She had a gaping bayonet wound in the stomach. Her hair had been burned off; a livid scar, the mark of a whip, ran down her right cheek.

And there, under a birch, they dug her grave.

Somebody knocked a coffin together. Without shedding a tear they placed Ekaterina in the coffin; and silently, without tears, they lowered the coffin into the grave and covered it with earth.

The agronomist wanted to say something, something important, something that would pull at their heart-strings, but, looking at their faces, he realized that nothing need be said.

"They murdered her," he said. "How shall we avenge her?"

After that they each took a handful of earth from Ekaterina's grave and moved on through the dense woods, over the swamps, to their brothers, sisters, sons. . .

The sun peeped out. It thawed the golden catkins of the birches. Drops began to fall from the catkins, and it seemed as though the birches were shedding tears over Ekaterina's grave.

That night the partisans, armed with sharp axes, with the agronomist Lyubin at their head, swooped down on the village of Vilki and wiped out all the Germans. They set fire to the village from every side and vanished.

MEN IN A BARREN LAND

The German lines wavered—the enemy began to fall back, abandoning arms and ammunition, leaving a devastated land behind them. The Germans, usually, fought stubbornly for every hamlet, every town, every height, but now they swept back with the force of an avalanche. Soon, the famous hill N., which in the course of thirty-six days had changed hands more than once, was left behind. When the height was finally taken, an inscription, written in bad Russian, was found on the wall of one of the trenches: "Comrades! Give it to Hitler and his gang, give it to them in the neck." Everybody understood from this inscription that Hitler's crack units of marauders had been wiped out, that he had been forced to call up reserves on whom he could not altogether depend. A smile was on everybody's lips, and they pressed on after the enemy, driving him out of our fields and woods, our villages, hamlets and cities; and our cities, villages and hamlets, our fields and woods, which till then had looked so forbidding and hostile, suddenly took on a gay and friendly appearance.

Today, Major Shilov decided to

make a tour of the front, to drop in on the regiments and divisions on the way and look up some old friends of his.

"I'll take only Uraz Buzakarov with me. I'm very fond of the lad," he said.

"What's come over him, why is he so reserved?"

"He's brooding over something. He's been that way ever since he lost Egor Yartsev. He's a splendid lad: frank and open."

"By the way, have you any information of Egor Yartsev and Levchenko?"

The major shrugged his shoulders.

"What I do know is that a partisan detachment is pretty active on the other side. Judging by the daring raids and information from certain sources, this detachment is led by men of Yartsev's and Levchenko's calibre. Probably it's their work. But it's only a conjecture on my part. In my opinion, if they were still alive they'd certainly have found a way to send us word."

Uraz Buzakarov sat next to the major in the car. He was looking blue, fidgeting all the time, looking anxiously from side to side. When they reached Chornaya River, he half stood up and said:

"This is the spot. . . This is the spot, Comrade Major, where we crossed with Comrade Yartsev. The river wasn't frozen over then, and we swam across. Oh! how bitterly cold the water was, ice-cold; it seared like fire. Yes, this is the spot. . ."

The major turned towards him and, putting his hand on Uraz's knee, he said in a low voice:

"Uraz, your friend will turn up. Don't think badly of us: we all believe in you, we know that if your life could have saved Yartsev, you would have sacrificed it. We know that."

Uraz locked searchingly at the major, and speaking also in a low voice, he said:

"I didn't desert him. He ordered me to overtake the partisans who were carrying Commissar Levchenko. He told me to warn them about the bloodhounds. The Germans sent some hounds after us. A breed. . . just like wolves. I dashed after the partisans, but all of a sudden I saw two dogs coming down the path for all they were worth. I threw my rifle to my shoulder and brought them down one after the other. I overtook the partisans, told them everything I had been ordered to, went up to Commissar Levchenko, said goodbye to him, and after that I rushed back. . . but I didn't find Comrade Yartsev."

He took a long time to tell his story of how he had crossed back into our lines, and it was evident that something lay heavily on his heart: Uraz Buzakarov was afraid that nobody believed him, and the very thought tormented him, but what tormented him most of all was the loss of his friend.

"Don't lose heart," the major said, "and don't offend us: we do believe you, Uraz."

Uraz stretched out his hand but withdrew it immediately, remembering evidently in time that he was after all only a rank-and-file soldier, while Shilov was a regimental commander. But Shilov with a smile gave him his hand.

"Cheer up, Uraz," he said.

Gusts of wind swept viciously over the battle-scarred fields, thinly covered with a shroud of snow. Shells and mines, trenches and dug-outs, tank-traps and bomb-craters had left their mark on the face of the fields.

The village was situated on a hill. The charred birch-trees had turned black. Properly speaking, there was no village any more, the only reminder of it were the half-ruined chimney-stacks which stood out forlornly, and a plough-share from a discarded

old plough which dangled from one of the charred birches. Its clanging every morning had called the inhabitants of the village, the adults to their work and the youngsters to school, and its droning at eventide had seemed to invite people to rest. Nothing else remained of the village. . . And the gusts of wind tore viciously down the deserted, demolished streets, wringing a creak from the charred birch-trees.

Shilov and his companions walked the length of the street, if with the piles of ruins which stretched on both sides it could still be called such, their feet hitting every now and then against shell splinters, cartridge cases, smashed wheels, battered German helmets. . . And over there, to one side, in a hollow, was a long line of crosses. And on almost every cross, looking just like a head, was a blackened, battered, bullet-pierced German helmet.

Major Shilov stood on a hillock. The wind tore at his grey coloured greatcoat. Shilov looked at the devastated village, the battle-scarred fields, the hollow covered with crosses, the blackened birch-trees.

The major was about to say something, but just then a man's head popped up for an instant from one of the dug-outs. The only thing he managed to see was the look of terror in the man's eyes. That the man's face was covered by an unkempt growth of hair and that a home-made cap of a sort, made out of sacking or canvass, was on his head—that he noticed only later.

"Who's there?" Uraz called planting himself in front of the dug-out.

The howling of the wind and the melancholy and forlorn creak of the charred birch-trees was the only reply. Uraz took out a hand-grenade.

"Who's there?" Uraz shouted again, bending down.

The muffled, half-suppressed scream of a child came from the dug-out. Again the head appeared, and this time it could be seen that the man's face was covered with tiny wrinkles and that one of his eyes squinted He brushed aside the hand in which Uraz held the grenade and stood there at a loss, his mouth open, despondent, dejected; then suddenly he began to yell, beating his hands against his thin ribs:

"Ou. . . ou. . . ours! Eh-eh-eh! Ours!" And turning towards the pile of ashes he shouted at the top of his voice: "Ou-u-u-rs!" Beside himself with joy, not knowing what to do first, he began to hop around us, feel us, repeating all the time: "And I thought it was they. . . And it isn't, it's ours! . . . Ou-u-u-u-rs! Damn it all! Ou-u-rs!"

"Who are you?" Uraz asked, cutting him short.

"I? Well, I'm. . . the owner of this house," he said pointing to the pile of ashes, and then, listlessly, as if all the life had been taken out of him, he said in a whisper that could hardly be heard: "House!? Some house! Not a stick left. . . Some house! Ye-e-s!" And he gathered the folds of his threadbare coat more tightly around him, shivering from the biting wind and his own emotions. "And you know. . . I have a son, Pshentsov's his name. And was he good at figures! Why, the whole village would come to him: 'Reckon it up, Vassya,' they'd say. And in two ticks he'd have it done. That's when he was a kiddy still. Then he went there, you know, where they teach people—to Moscow. That's where he went. A professor. My son. . . The Soviet Government made him what he is—that's who did it. And then these swine came along: 'Swap the Soviet might for German delight.' Oh, yes! Delight! Here's their delight," and he kicked viciously at the pile of ashes. "We lived. We worked. We built with our hands, and they came along and burnt it all down. Some 'German delight!'"

Major Shilov went up to him and, embracing him heartily, kissed him. And then, turning away, he said:

"What a wind!" And he furtively dashed away the tears that welled up in his eyes.

Pshentsov stood there for some time looking at Shilov, unable to understand, and then, all of a sudden, his face lit up:

"Kissed me! Well—I'm blowed! Kissed me! Me! A-a-a! Why, whatever for?"

Shilov told him that he knew his son, Pshentsov, the mathematician, the professor. What he kept to himself was that several months ago, during the fighting for hill N., Political Instructor Pshentsov had been wounded and died. Shilov did not mention that, he went up to Pshentsov's father, embraced him and again kissed him.

Pshentsov, evidently, began to suspect something. He looked long and searchingly at Shilov, and then he said in a low voice:

"There's been no letters from him for some time. But, of course, the Germans were bossing us here for over two months. . . Possibly there is a letter for me somewhere. But why are you standing in the cold? Come into my house," but instantly he recollected: "House? There isn't any house anymore. . . And in there," he said, pointing to the dug-out, "it's dark. We are like people in a barren land. That's the situation we're in. But never mind. We'll drive the beasts out, and then—will we work! We'll build everything anew."

While they were talking, other people began to come up from various directions. They approached timidly, but as soon as they saw who the newcomers were, their eyes gleamed brightly, and somebody said with a sigh:

"At last! You've come at last! What a relief! What didn't they do here without you!"

"And cocks do they love, cocks! Directly they see a hen, they grab it, and into the pot it goes, and swill it down with vodka." Pshentsov unbuttoned his coat as if he was hot and took a step towards the dug-out. "Things will straighten out. We never lose heart, and that's our trump-card. We'll pull through. In all the village there's only one hen they didn't gobble up, — and we'll pull through! Petka!" he shouted into the dug-out. "Come out, let's have a look at our beauty. Come on!"

A youngster of about six or seven, also in tatters, with a scared look in his eyes, scrambled out of the dug-out. He held a motley-coloured hen in his arms. A bit of blue ribbon was around its neck, and two others tied to its legs. The youngster hadn't even reached us when he was surrounded by the owners of the one-time houses and the hen went from hand to hand. They fondled it, called it pet names.

Pshentsov, smiling happily, related:

"This hen is really smart. Escaped the fate of its sisters. With the first streak of daylight it would be off into the fields, and in the evening back it would come to me, into the dug-out. That hen knows a thing or two—don't get into the hands of the Germans, or else you'll be gobbled up. The only one that is left in the village. We're keeping it for breeding. You cute little thing!" and he petted the hen fondly.

The folks around called the hen by the tenderest names. Only one woman stood apart, her hands under her armpits. She must have been about twenty-five. Her heavy eyebrows were slightly knit, setting off the large, sad, brown eyes beneath them. The blush on her cheeks seemed as if at any moment it would suffuse her whole face with its warmth. And her whole figure breathed of virtue, something maternal

She went up to Major Shilov, and the smile on her lips made her face more tender, attractive and simple.

"If I'm not mistaken, you must be Comrade Shilov?"

"Yes," Shilov replied.

Everybody's head turned towards him. The woman gave him her hand and shook it warmly:

"We want to express our thanks. . . And there's another thing I'd like to ask: where is Egor? You know, Egor Yartsev?"

Uraz Buzakarov dashed up to her.

"Are you Olga?" he shouted. "Yes? Olga? Tell me? Are you Egor's sweetheart? Yes?"

"His wife," Olga replied tenderly. "We were sweethearts, but that was before we married. Now I'm his wife. Why, what is it?"

Major Shilov drew her aside and spoke to her for several minutes.

After that we said good-bye all round, got into the car and left. . . And for a long, long time we could see the burnt down village, the charred birches, the half-frozen people in tatters.

"Back to the trenches! Home!" Major Shilov said. "We've got to make them pay for it."

LIFE

Guryev—the very name brings to the mind sand dunes, high grass lands, olive coloured, almost black, vast expanses which the eye cannot grasp. Fleet-footed horses graze among the rich pastures—Bashkirian and Kalmuck breed—and herds of well-nourished cows.

It was from here, not far from Guryev, that Uraz Buzakarov came from—Uraz with his almond-shaped eyes with a touch of gold in them, born in 1918. He only had a smattering of Russian, but he had a quick and inquiring mind, an unquenchable soure of energy, and was bent on mastering everything.

When he had scarcely turned seven, his father, as was the custom of his forefathers, set him on a bare-backed horse, and giving it a cot with his whip sent it galloping over the steppe. The horse, bounding off, tore at a mad gallop over the sand dunes, cutting through the high grass, striving to throw its inexperienced rider from its back. But Uraz, clutching the horse's mane, hung like a leech, until it reached a drove of just such fleet-footed horses. There the keeper lifted Uraz from the horse.

"You'll be a sturdy lad," he said. "A real man."

And just that—a sturdy lad, a real man—he came to Major Shilov's regiment. Uraz asked to be assigned as a machine-gunner.

"The steppe trains a good eye," he said, "a very good eye. Can you see what's going on there in that farthest field? No? You can't see? I can. The steppe trains the eye to see things a long distance away."

Soon he could speak Russian quite well. In his spare time, after drill, or when he went for a stroll to the edge of the forest to feast his eye on the distant horizon, somebody or other would surely hail him:

"Uraz! Drop in and see us. Spin us a yarn or give us a song."

And he told them of the sea, of the sand storms, how fish should be caught, or how to break in a horse, or else he sang them his songs—so plaintive and yet so touching. Once he told them how the dream of his life was shattered. He was studying, had graduated secondary school and was bent on going to the Astrakhan Fisheries Institute.

"I love to catch fish. No, not with a line, but with a net. What glorious fun it is! You heave the net into the sea and bring up a real catch, whole shoals of fish, five, ten thousand poods! That's fun! The net is simply bursting with fish: dig a stick in, and it will stand upright. And what a song we sang! It contains only

a few words, very few: 'Heave her up, up, eh'—that's all the words. But everybody sings to his own time. One sings 'heave her,' another 'up, up,' and the third 'eh.' The general effect is the swell of the sea. The Caspian! What a sea! There's not another like it all the world over!"

"You bet there is," the others retorted.

"There isn't! There isn't another like it all the world over. It's so beautiful, and when the sea is calm. . . so bewitching, particularly when the sun sinks below the waves. But when a storm is raging—then sit tight, it will tear you to shreds. That's the sort of sea it is!"

Uraz Buzakarov had been wounded several times in action, but he had never budged from his machine-gun. Only just recently, during one engagement, he had been wounded in the leg. A machine-gunner from a nearby position ran up to him.

"Uraz," he asked, "is there anything I can do? Shall I help you to take off your boot?"

"Don't trouble. If you give me a hand with my boot your machine-gun will be out of action," Uraz replied. "No, you'd better keep your machine-gun going. I'll crawl to that copse over there and manage myself."

That evening, after the engagement, he was visited by some of his comrades. They brought him boiled mutton—his favourite dish. Uraz was commended for his grit, for his bravery, but he replied simply:

"I was defending my country, I was defending myself. I don't want to die, my country doesn't want to die, and so I fight."

The battle that raged today was the hottest in his experience.

Shortly before dawn the Germans who were entrenched in the village of Bolshoye Dno, covering the retreat of their main forces, suddenly launched an attack. Either their scouts had reported that Major Shilov's regiment was considerably depleted, or, probably, they had received orders to "manoeuvre."

Anyhow, early that morning a regular hubbub could be heard from the direction of the village, accompanied by spasmodic firing from automatics. Major Shilov very soon ascertained that the enemy intended to launch an attack not on the right flank, where the hubbub arose, but on the left, where everything was quiet. The enemy was trying to catch him napping, taking a leaf out of his own book.

Shilov smiled and sent Uraz Buzakarov and his friend with two machine-guns in the direction of the din.

Acting according to orders, Uraz took up a position near the fringe of the woods. Although it was still quite dark, his keen eyes caught sight of the clamorous enemy and he opened fire with his machine-gun. The Germans ceased their racket. But soon after they subjected the fringe of the woods where Uraz Buzakarov and his friend had dug in to a heavy bombardment from their trench-mortars. Trees were carried clean away, torn out root and branch, clods of earth were sent hurtling in the air and showered down on the machine-gunners as from a volcano. They had one desire—one keen and overwhelming desire—to dash off with their machine-guns to some other place, over there at least to that ditch, where everything was so quiet and where—this, too, was hardly noticeable—the wind lightly rustled the bushes hoary with frost.

"Orders are orders," Buzakarov said. "The orders of a commander must be carried out explicitely. Supposing we do save our skins, but in that case our comrades will be doomed. Their trench-mortars may tear me to shreds, but I'll have fulfilled my orders, and I'm not going to budge from here." And again he brought his machine-gun into play at the invisible enemy, his sensitive hearing

telling him that the enemy was over there—just beyond that ditch.

All of a sudden Uraz Buzakarov noticed some men making their way through the hollow to his left, merging completely with the ground, with the frost-covered grass. It was impossible in the dark to determine by their helmets who they were—friends or enemies. But Uraz Buzakarov had keen eyes, and he shouted to his friend:

"Fire!"

Instantly voices called from over there, from the hollow:

"We're friends! We're friends! Don't shoot!"

"Hey! We may be really peppering away at our own men," Uraz's companion exclaimed warningly.

"Shoot!" Uraz shouted furiously and sent burst after burst of machine-gun fire.

The men in the hollow jumped to their feet and raising a cheer made a dash at them. But Uraz Buzakarov not only had keen eyes but also sharp ears. From the way they cheered he understood they were Germans.

"They're cheering now," he said to his friend, "let's make them change their tune," and the two machine-guns blazed away at the enemy.

The enemy faltered, took to their heels, throwing up their hands, throwing away their rifles, but the two machine-guns kept on mowing them down, bringing them crashing to the ground.

"That's the stuff! Give it to them! Give it to them! Let them have it, man!" Uraz laughed approvingly, and just then he saw a trench-mortar shell bursting not far from where he was. "They're aiming at us. Getting the range," and Uraz was just about to lug his machine-gun to another spot when a shell burst right near him, and then another. . . and an avalanche of earth tore him away from his machine-gun and sent him hurtling to one side. Green dots jumped before his eyes, his hands clutched the earth,—the hoary frozen grass,—and his lips of their own accord began to greedily lick up the snow.

That evening Uraz lay in hospital He had been wounded, a shell-splinter had lodged in his spine. Doctor Baby Tony had him under her charge. How pleasant it was to feel the touch of her small but tender hands!

"Uraz," she was telling him, "you know Olga came here today—the wife of your friend Egor Yartsev. She wants to work here in the hospital. You haven't forgotten your friend Yartsev, have you?"

Baby Tony knew that the best medicine for wounded men was to speak to them about what they cherish most.

"Aha! Aha!" Uraz said, and made an attempt to get up, but a spasm of pain in his back bound him to the bed. "Ask her to come and see me." Uraz smiled. "I've still got that postcard, Olga sent it to comrade Egor, and when we left the trenches I looked for it, I found it in his dug-out and took it along."

Just then two men entered the ward. One of them had a beard, the other was clean-shaven. The bearded man led the clean-shaven one by the arm, in the way blind men are usually led. They both stood in the doorway, and the clean-shaven man, turning his head away, for some reason or other, in an opposite direction, said:

"How are you, Uraz Buzakarov? How are you?"

Before Baby Tony could recognize who the guests were, Uraz already shouted:

"Levchenko! Comrade Levchenko!"

"How are you, friend, Uraz Buzakarov?" said the second man, the one with the beard. Seating Levchenko on a chair, he went up to Uraz and going down on his knees he hugged him warmly—just like a man would a favourite brother.

Uraz, as happy as a child, began to laugh loudly.

"His nose! His nose!" he shouted,

unable to contain himself with laughter. "His nose! Tony. . . Baby. . . Just look, just look at Egor's nose and that beard. . . Dear friend, Egor. . . Yartsev! . ."

They grouped around Uraz Buzakarov's bed. And again, for some reason, Egor Yartsev took Commissar Levchenko by the arm and led him to the table.

"Has he gone blind?" Uraz thought and looked into his eyes.

Levchenko's eyes were clear and even slightly moist with tears. Baby Tony stood near him and her fingers,—one can always recognize true love by a person's fingers,—her small, slender fingers crept up his shoulder ever so tenderly and caressingly. And from those fingers Uraz understood that Baby Tony loved Levchenko with a love that was deeper, greater than that she had for other people.

"Kiss," he said. "Now do kiss, please."

Levchenko touched Baby Tony's elbow, and again, watching these fingers, Uraz saw that Levchenko was telling Baby Tony all he felt for her. The fingers moved up, reached to her shoulder, then fondled Tony's face, and after that he embraced her.

"Tony! My darling Tony! . . I can see you," Levchenko said softly.

The door of the ward was thrown open, and Major Shilov stood in the doorway. He was in his same old bullet-pierced greatcoat, jolly, happy. From the doorway he shouted:

"I greet my brothers!"

He took a step forward and stopped. What could it mean? He expected that Levchenko, like Egor Yartsev, would jump up from his chair and rush forward to meet him. But Levchenko only nodded his head; then, getting to his feet, his hand in that of Baby Tony's, he for some reason took a step in quite the opposite direction. Major Shilov understood in a flash, he realized that his friend, that Commissar Levchenko was blind. He went up to him, and looking into his moist eyes, shook him warmly with both hands.

"Vassya! My dear, best friend, Vassya!"

"Yes. That's how things are. Only my hands can see," and Levchenko gave Baby Tony's hand a squeeze.

"They beat him up. . . the Germans. We took him off the swing. . . We took him off, and two days later he went blind," Yartsev explained. "But we made them pay for the eyes of our commissar," Yartsev added, gathering up his beard in his hand, a smile in his youthful eyes.

Levchenko also smiled, he stretched out his right hand, and touching Major Shilov he said softly:

"And you, my friend, haven't changed, what a smell of the battlefield there is about you!"

"And from you too," the major replied. "We heard, we know what you and your partisan detachment did there, behind the lines. And not only I know, the whole country knows about your exploits."

They sat in the ward around Uraz Buzakarov's bed. They related in turn what they had been through these past months, how they had fought, what their feelings were, how they helped the advance. Baby Tony sat on the floor next to Levchenko, her hands on his knee, a look of tenderness and love in her eyes. And Levchenko related all that had happened to him.

Then Olga came into the ward. She stood in the doorway, the door gaping open behind her. It seemed to the others that she was swaying and that at any moment she would fall. Egor Yartsev rushed up to her and embraced her.

"Darling!" was all she could say.

And both of them went out through the open doorway.

The others remained in the ward. They sat there silently, looking through the window, and they could see how Egor and Olga slowly crossed the court-yard and disappeared out of sight in a distant house.

J. NIEDRE

THE CHIP

A July evening, warm as new milk. A faint vapour shrouded the streets of Riga, and the footsteps of the few belated passers-by were quickly muffled by the softened asphalt. A smell of burning and of gun-powder hung in the air. The dust of ruined houses lay as it had lain since Riga the Beautiful had been bombed and battles fought in her streets. From the direction of Liberty Street came the occasional dry crack of a rifle; it sounded like something falling.

"Shooting again," Lieknis growled, hastening his already hurried steps. "They're at it every night. The night before last bullets were as thick as peas on the railway embankment. There were some pretty loud explosions, too. Probably hand-grenades.

"The Germans had given the city a more than thorough combing. Lanky young Germans, who had been repatriated only the year before, returned again to the Baltic, behaving in other people's apartments as though they owned them. And now they were all in green uniforms and sported a death's head on their caps and helmets, arresting anyone they wanted according to the lists they had. And in spite of all that, the German commandant would still tell you that Riga was swarming with bolsheviks. Try and make head or tail of it! When you looked around, it seemed as though the citizens were quiet and peaceable enough, bowed to the dust, cowed, shrinking as though always expecting abuse or a blow. . . But still shooting went on. Every night rifle shots could be heard. What was the idea? The devil alone knew. Perhaps it was to create a panic? Goodness, it would be awful to bump into a German just now,"—Lieknis pulled himself up before he uttered the thought aloud,—"or the fat would be in the fire again. They had been on the spree ever since they had got into Riga. And where, in the name of all that was wonderful, had they found such a stock of liqueur? Once they got tipsy, there was the very devil to pay."

Such was the general trend of Lieknis' thoughts that warm July evening.

At last he reached his home. With a smart blow of his fist he flung open the outer door, and the hollow echo was like the thud of an air-bomb falling near at hand. Lieknis gave a start that shook him from head to foot.

"Getting awfully nervy these days. Although I certainly had much more reason to be nervy some time ago. Now all that seems to have been a distant past."

He leaned back against the glass panes of the door. The house was as silent as a tomb. Not even the scratching and scuttering of mice could be heard.

It was all his fancy, of course. On an evening like this the very air around you might seem full of strange mists. He raised the wrist on which he wore his watch closer to his eyes. Tinted shadows fell on it through the panes of the door, and a faint phosphorescent light came from the hands of the watch. A quarter to ten. Yes, it was all a fancy, a silly fancy. . . Lieknis straightened himself and stamped noisely upstairs, as he used to

when he returned from the club of a night.

When he had mounted the staircase, he groped at the door for a long time before he could find the keyhole. And the longer he fumbled, the stronger grew his former disquieting presentiments, until alarm took complete possession of him.

That fool of a porter! He had put the most abominable locks on these doors. . . Bah, he ought to be handed over to the proper people! . .

"The proper people?" The palms of Lieknis' hands suddenly perspired. For the porter had already fallen into the hands of the "proper people." Practically all the house-porters who during Soviet rule had been transferred from their squalid basements to better living quarters had been arrested. Yes, Liepa the porter had been arrested only yesterday and beaten unmercifully as well. Some dashing young fellow in an immaculate brown uniform and light-coloured summer shoes had dislocated his arm, and the unfortunate man's shrieks of agony still rang in Lieknis' ears.

Now he was groping in the darkness for the hat-rack; all the electric bulbs had been unscrewed: the Germans kept up an absolute black-out in Riga all the time.

Lieknis coughed; his wife must have gone to bed. She had been behaving very queerly of late. Whenever she heard a shot or a shout outside, she would jump up and wring her hands and moan.

"Where are you, darling?"

Dead silence.

"Look here, dearie, what's all this mystification? Are you in bed already?"

Dead silence.

"Austra, whatever's happened to you?"

The silence struck a chill to his heart, and he began to tremble.

"Austra!" he called once more in a voice that did not sound like his own.

"For goodness' sake, stop your bawling!" a faint, peevish voice answered from the gloom.

"Oh, you were in the kitchen, were you?"

"Yes, and where else should I be? With those thieves coming every hour or so, breaking down the door, swearing, and forcing open the trunks and cupboards. . ."

"Forcing open the trunks? What do you mean? Who was it that broke in? Why didn't you ring me up and tell me?"

"Who? Who indeed?" his wife mimicked him spitefully. "You're worse than a child, asking silly questions. . . I suppose you drank yourself quite silly the time you and your Aizsargs [1] held that celebration. . ."

"Now, Austra!" He reached out in the direction of the voice, and the tips of his fingers came in contact with a knitted jumper.

"Don't touch me!" Space intervened between his fingers and the jumper. "And don't speak to me! I don't want to hear you!"

"Austra, pull yourself together, what are you saying?"

"You'd do better to pull yourself together, I think! Would you like to see what they've been doing in your home? Here, take a good look at it!"

A box of matches fell with a rattle at his feet. He stooped and groped for it on the linoleum, then made his way into the room and struck a match.

No, this was surely not his own comfortable room with its formerly welcoming cozy look, these were simply premises hastily left by people who were fleeing from a deadly danger. The doors of the wardrobes and cupboards, the drawers were all open, the cloth had been dragged off the round table that usually stood in the middle of the room. The flowers he had brought home yesterday lay on

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[1] The Aizsargs are a military organization of the Latvian bourgeoisie.

the floor, the vase that had held them,— a vase painted with delicate silhouettes of women by Vidberg, an artist famous all over Latvia,— had vanished. The contents of the drawers and cupboards,— underwear, brassières, odd silk stockings and the like,— lay strewn about everywhere. His favourite blue tie hung from the leg of an overturned chair. The sideboard was open, the dishes in disorder. At the door of the bedroom he saw one of his own old worn-down camel-wool slippers.

The match sputtered and went out, after showing him that an old oaken chest painted with Latvian designs was standing with its lid wide open.

"How could all this have happened?" When he spoke, his throat felt parched. There was no answer save the hysterical sobbing of the woman, whose tears flowed as though a dam had burst.

Only by degrees did he come to himself and find out what had taken place in his absence. It appeared that about ten o'clock in the morning three Germans in brown uniform had broken into the flat and searched it. They had taken Austra's new pink silk slip that had cost 130 lat and had been bought for Easter, all the winter underwear, Lieknis' boots and galoshes. Then, after giving Austra a condescending slap or two, they had gone out laughing. All she had gone through made her feel faint, so she lay down on the bed. Hardly had she done so when another gang—military this time—burst in and turned the rooms upside down. They had taken even the braided red rug and the grandfather's portrait in the bronze frame.

"But didn't you tell them who I am,—who we are, I mean?" Lieknis swallowed his saliva with difficulty. He was shaking, the tips of his fingers felt numb.

"'Who we are?'" the woman repeated mockingly, mouthing the words. "And who are we? Latvian boors, farm-labourers and cooks, the slaves of a conquered country, — that's who we are! The names they called your Trade and Industrial Department were of the unprintable kind. And what an office it must be, anyway! It'll remain Latvian till the moment when some hitlerite sergeant-major thinks fit to spit upon it, and not a moment longer. One of those creatures actually tried to throw me down on the bed," and the recollection threw her into hysterics again.

"Austra, Austra, wait, calm yourself!" But it was more than Lieknis himself could do to stand on his feet. This must be a horrible nightmare. Yet he was not drunk!

"I won't stay in Riga another minute," the woman said, controlling her sobs at last and speaking in a voice that admitted no remonstrance. "I'll clear out of the place tomorrow, whether you like it or not. My uncle in Lillaste will surely find a corner for me, and at least he'll be able to protect me from these friends of my husband's."

Lieknis wanted to argue, to raise some objection. If he went away now, it would look like treachery, he would then be in the opposition to the representatives of Great Germany! But his wife was beginning to cry again. Against his will he had to listen to heartrending stories about the searches that were carried out wholesale in the streets, about what had happened to the wife of Pastor Gross,— she had had her ring torn from her finger; and to Sandman's daughter, the one who had graduated from the Vienna Conservatoire not long before the bolsheviks came,— the Germans had snatched off her amber necklace and almost torn her neck in doing so; of how, in the Sala district, all the members of the Aizsarg detachments had been taken out and shot; they had stood silently by the roadside, with ribbons of the Latvian national colours on their sleeves.

It was an extremely foolish situation that had arisen.

Far, far different was this from the situation as imagined by the representatives of the Latvian burghers and the students' corporations who had aided the German command to establish the new order in Latvia. Their conception had been: a German Führer somewhere far away in Berlin, while here they would keep their own defence-detachments, their own aristocracy, as it had been in the days of Ulmanis. There had been a time the German resident officials had promised the leaders of the Aizsarg organizations something of the kind. But now it appeared that Latvia was nothing more than a stretch of territory that had been occupied by the Germans. And already rumours were going about the town that the Latvians were to be evicted from the best flats and houses, that the best shops in the city would be open for trade with Germans alone. It was said, too, that all the industrial enterprises would be transferred to Göring's firm.

By the time morning came Lieknis himself had arrived at the conclusion that there was nothing for it but to leave Riga. There was no alternative: if one stayed here, one would be certain to get into some trouble. Very likely he would also fall into their hands. . .

The food problem was becoming more and more acute. A shortage of bread,—it could only be obtained with difficulty; meat, butter and fat were not to be had for love or money. And yesterday the Germans had opened centres where nursing mothers had to give up their milk. Yes, it was time for him and his wife to go. But first he would have to speak to his chief. After all, they were both members of the same students' organization and had known each other for a long time.

It was not yet half past eight, but Lieknis was already seated at his desk in the Trade and Industrial Department. On the polished glass lay a sheet of paper with the printed heading: "Wirtschaftskommando des Ostbaltikums," and it was addressed to the Industrial Department. Lieknis was impressed by the precision evident in the printing of the form, where everything was calculated to the last millimeter. But when he came to take in the contents of it, his pleasure vanished as if by magic.

Referring to such and such an order of the High Command and the instructions of such and such an office, the higher German economic organs requested the "administration" to see that industrial enterprises made no demands for raw materials. Great Germany was under no obligation to supply the requirements of conquered provinces. The said provinces were supposed to look after themselves. . .

Conquered provinces. . . A queer stabbing pain shot through Lieknis' breast, and the ganglions of a sensitive nerve ached.

If no raw materials were to be got, then they would have to close down a number of Latvian works. Before the clock struck nine, the telephone would start ringing and demands would come pouring from the "Riga Silk," the "Boston," the "Vef," the Habek and the Kalnyn works. As soon as the bolsheviks had gone, the mills closed down, and there was unemployment. If one could only get milk and bread in the shops! And this was the order they had promised! Well, it was already time for him to go and talk to the chief about leaving. . .

Lieknis took a little silver mirror out of his pocket and studied the face of a very weary man. His black hair seemed plastered to his skull, his eyebrows were shaggy and uneven, his eyes deep-sunken, with blue shadows under them.

"So you made up your mind to leave us, to get out of it, to go while

the going's good?" the chief drawled, laying stress on the words "get out." "So that's the way the wind blows now, is it?" he went on, apparently talking more to the space under his desk than to Lieknis. "But what's become of all those who were so devoted to our cause?" He gave Lieknis a penetrating glance. "Yes, you're a nice lot to take advantage of a political situation!"

"I have a wife," Lieknis ventured a feeble protest.

"Stop pretending and speak out plainly: the long and short of it is that you've lost your nerve, you've been frightened by the leaflets the Reds distributed, you've grown worse than an old woman. Some can't reconcile themselves to the German requisitioning. Do you really think that the Germans came here for the special purpose of preserving your feather-beds intact? I can assure you that they came here for their own sake, not for ours. Now there are no two ways about it: if you value your life, you've got to dance to their tune, or be off to hide in the woods with the rag, tag and bobtail, and hang on till you either starve to death or get your head in the noose that's waiting for you. I don't forbid you to go," he went on after a brief pause, "in fact, it'll be even better if one or two of those in responsible positions can't be found just at present."

Lieknis made no bones about accepting his discharge and handed over his few affairs to another official.

"Well, I wish you a safe journey," said the latter as he pressed the very tips of Lieknis' fingers. "I would do the same if I had the chance. The thing is that. . ."—here he bent his bald head confidentially and rather familiarly toward Lieknis,—"the thing is that you have to have a realistic approach to life these days. I don't know, of course, what the food situation is like now. They say the peasants have stopped bringing anything to market. It's just one requisition after another in the villages. Yes, and I must ask you not to forget me in this connection," he bent still closer, nearly knocking Lieknis down with a breath redolent of onions, rotten teeth and cheap spirits. "Be sure to send me bacon, butter and cheese. Curd-cheese is rather a wonderful thing, too, you know. I was reading about it somewhere,—in a book by a Swiss doctor, I believe. He asserts that curds contain no end of nutritive things. . ."

Lieknis hastened to take leave of his successor.

By the tumbledown restaurant in Mill Street he found a peasant with whom, after a great deal of bargaining, he managed to come to agreement: for a hundred Soviet rubles and ten German marks they were to be conveyed to the country. About midday the covered cart set off for the outskirts of the city.

Progress along the thoroughfare, once known as Liberty Street, and now renamed by the Germans after Adolf Hitler, was slow and extremely painful. Burned and ruined houses were to be seen on either side.

"We found out all we wanted to know about their 'order' four days after they came," growled the peasant-driver, a sandy-haired, stocky man, with tufts of reddish hair on cheeks and chin. "The third requisition's going on in our district. They're taking peas, lentils and beans now, not to mention grain, meat, wool and flax. There are some folks who were looking forward to the Germans coming like their saviours, and all they got was a kick in the ribs. As the saying is: 'Run from a wolf, and you're like to come on a bear. . .'"

"Still it's quite different now from what it was," Lieknis said fidgeting on the sack of straw, which proved to be an uncomfortable seat.

The driver shot a quizzical glance at the speaker.

"Different is it, friend? Then I wonder at your running away from all the good the Germans are doing you. Or maybe it overwhelms you? Mark my words, soon there won't be a crumb of bread for anybody in Riga. The barons are back again. They'll make short work of those who got land from the Soviets. It won't be long before every honest man'll be finding himself a good sharp pitchfork and going over to the Reds."

"Are there many of them out your way?" Lieknis' wife asked.

"The Reds? And who's to count them? Wherever you find bogland and woodland, you find Reds. Sometimes they come right up to the village," the peasant mumbled.

"Well, that's why the Germans are so hard on us," Lieknis said in an admonitory tone.

The driver gave him a contemptuous look and said no more.

When they reached the country villas on the shores of a lake, they were greeted by the noise of merry making, music was heard from all sides and through the open windows drifted the sounds of drunken laughter and shouting.

"They're on the spree. . ." the driver muttered. "We'll be lucky if we get by with a whole skin."

They were stopped much further on, five or six miles from the lake, at the cross-roads where the German patrol was stationed.

"Halt!"

Lieknis produced the paper given him by his department. But the tall Prussian in spectacles hardly glanced at it. With marked contempt he swept away Lieknis' outstretched hand and ordered them all to get out of the cart.

"I hold a responsible position in a government office," Lieknis stammered in German. His tongue had become thick and clumsy. "I've been sent out of town on business. Don't dare to delay me."

"Aussteigen![1]"—and at a sign from the tall Prussian the three other soldiers seized the valises and shook out their contents.

"Why, this is highway robbery! We're set on by marauders in broad daylight!" Lieknis exclaimed, when the Prussians began on his last suitcase.

"Now whom are you calling marauders and robbers?" the bespectacled German demanded, wheeling around sharply on his heel, as though he were on drill-ground. "To think of a louse like you daring to call a German soldier a robber! Take him away!"

"The woman as well, sir?" asked one of the soldiers, a Prussian with one shoulder higher than the other. When he spoke, he held the tips of his fingers pressed against the seams of his trousers.

"The woman?" The bespectacled one subjected Austra to an appraising scrutiny.

She was really not bad-looking still. She held herself proudly erect, had plump breasts and well-rounded hips.

"No," the corporal bowed to her gallantly and saluted. "The Frau will come with us."

"Robbers, marauders, blackguards!" —and Lieknis struggled to reach the cart again.

"Be quiet, you scum!" was the last thing he heard, for at that moment a little soldier, who looked like a pub-keeper, hit him on the forehead with the butt of his rifle. Lieknis saw stars. He fell, striking his head on something hard. It seemed to him that the whole world went to pieces.

He lay where he had crumpled down till nightfall, and knew nothing of what was going on around him.

The little Prussian soldier did not feel, evidently, that the lesson he had given Lieknis was enough for him;

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[1] "Get out!"

he wanted to send a few bullets into the prostrate figure, but Austra uttered such an unearthly shriek that he thought better of it. Another thing was that he caught sight of a group of Germans advancing towards them from the direction of the city. The tall, bespectacled German, casting an experienced eye over the contents of the small valise, was unwilling to share the booty with anyone. The menacing roar of Soviet planes overhead decided him. A bomb dropped less than a kilometer away. The corporal bawled an order to his gang, the soldiers gathered up the scattered things and threw them into the cart, jumped in, dragging Austra along with them, and drove off as though a pack of hounds was in hot pursuit. With loud lamentations the peasant-driver ran after them.

Darkness had fallen when three men in workers' clothes, with caps pulled well down over their eyes, found Lieknis and gathered him up. They were all armed with rifles and hand-grenades. When they first stumbled upon him, they first looked about them attentively; then one bent over the still form.

"He's unconscious. But his heart's beating. Are we to leave him where he is?

"We can't leave the man like this," another said decidedly. "I was told that the Germans took away their cart, and there was a woman in it crying and complaining, but this fellow was left lying in the roadway. Let's take him to the lodge, and then we'll see later what's to be done about him."

It was only on the next day that Lieknis awoke. He found himself in a forester's lodge. His head ached as though compressed in iron bands. In one corner of the hut lay a pile of rotting last-year's hay, and in the middle of the floor a pit had been dug and a fire lit. Two men, with rifles between their knees, were throwing dry twigs onto the fire. Over it hung an iron kettle. A wisp of smoke wreathed slowly upward, to dissolve in the sunbeams that crept in through the dilapidated thatch.

Very slowly and painfully Lieknis turned over on the other side. One of the men rose, and pushing his cap onto the back of his head, went over to the injured man.

"See how soon he's getting well! He'll be on his feet in a minute. Well, how do you feel now?"

"Very bad. . . My head's splitting. . ." he managed to say, with long intervals between the words.

"That was a terrific crack you got. You've a bruise on your forehead as big as a good-sized plate. Was it a German?"

"Yes, a German." His teeth chattering, Lieknis began his doleful tale. Painful as it was to go over his experiences, his burning hatred forced him to tell all he had gone through, down to the smallest detail. So keenly did he feel the injury that every nerve seemed strained to breaking point. He was with the partisans now, as far as he could see, and they would be able to wreak vengeance on the Germans for all his, Lieknis', wrongs.

They gave him a drink, offered him bread and a bit of smoked meat. Lieknis refused the food, the very thought of it repelled him. The thin-faced man who did most for him looked like one of the new farmers who had received land when the Soviets were in power. The other one, who wore high cowhide boots, hid his rifle under his mackintosh cape, and went out for long spells from time to time. "Looks like a fisherman or a carpenter," Lieknis thought to himself.

Worn out, he fell asleep very soon. He awoke towards evening. Dusk was gathering in the hut, when seven men entered it. Two of them were little more than boys, their rifles were too heavy for them and weighed down their shoulders.

"Well, how's our foundling getting on?" a short, thickset man asked.

"I hear you're one of those who were looking forward to the time when the Germans would come. Now I expect even you got a pretty fair idea of what the Hitlerites are like, haven't you?"

Lieknis' former mood, thoughts and wishes had vanished now with the drowsiness that was gradually leaving him. His head was getting better, his hatred had lost its edge. He mumbled something in reply, and pretended to clear his throat violently.

"Well, our 'defence man' will have a talk with you now," said the short, thickset man, turning to his comrades. Then, taking up their rifles, they went out of the hut, all except one man who wore a tunic like those of the Aizsargs and had a bandage around his head.

He lingered near Lieknis, pulled a piece of bread out of his pocket and began to eat it, breaking off big lumps at a time, and munching very slowly. He evidently had something wrong with his lungs, for at times he breathed with difficulty and wheezily.

"Want a bit of bread?" said the thin man offering him a piece. "Eat while you can, and while there is something to eat. Soon rye-bread will be something that we Latvians can only dream about. The brown locust will devour everything, even to the husks. There'll be nothing left but the bare black earth. You know these bandits have eaten us all out of house and home." He smacked his lips loudly over a piece of bread and moved nearer to Lieknis. "Yes, I'm telling you, all the corn-bins are empty already. The land is going to be taken away from the Latvians and given to the Brown Shirts. Our land! What do you think of that? I was in the Aizsargs myself once, and I kept aloof when the Soviets were in power, but after these German scoundrels dishonoured my own child and plundered my home, I went up to the attic and found the rifle I'd hidden—I had it in the last war—and I came away to the woods. We shot these rascals no worse than the workers' brigades. Three days ago I sent a German motor-truck into the river at Tsarnikava. And what a crash it made! A lot of our fellows from the Aizsargs have joined the partisans. And the Prussians will break their necks soon, you just mark my words."

A sudden crackle like the snapping of dry twigs interrupted him. Someone was shooting. Then, as if quite close at hand, came a roar like a thunderbolt, and a gust of air swished over the roof.

The man talking to Lieknis looked to see if his rifle was loaded, took out a hand-grenade that had been wrapped in a cloth, and crouching, ran quickly out of the hut. He returned only after a long time, when quiet reigned once more.

"You'll come with us tomorrow," he said, punctuating nearly every word with a cough. "You haven't any broken bones, have you? There's more and more work to do and never enough people to do it. Last night our fellows tried to blow up the Prussians and mine the road. We've plenty of arms, you'll get a rifle, too. Very soon all our partisans will be riding German motor-bikes and shooting from the new tommy-guns. We're going to send appeals to the people, too, through the numerous wireless sets we took from the Germans. It's a pity, though, the peasant isn't as active as the worker. The worker has all his wits about him and acts promptly,— that's his nature. The peasant's different. But once anyone touches his land or his last cow, you'll see he'll prove sharper than the very devil. You know yourself the way it was in 1905 and 1919, when the Bermont barons tried to get us under their thumbs. But now—take Stalin: that's a very clever man." Lieknis' companion settled himself in a more comfortable position on the floor and very cautiously raised a light to his

pipe. "He's calling on the people to join the partisans and help in the struggle, and he shows us plainly how this great Germany they are talking about is cracking up. There were some fools here who actually thought during the first few days that the Germans could smash the Red Army. But you can see now that it's got the whole country behind it. You're a good shot, very likely—and God grant you may find the man who wronged your wife."

"My wife?" Lieknis started. "Oh yes, yes! . . What's happened to Austra? Has anybody seen her?"

"I can't say. Our fellows tried to find out. Yesterday evening those Germans drove up in the cart to the Machine and Tractor Station the Prussians are occupying now, but she wasn't with them. If she managed to give them the slip and hide somewhere on the way, then she'll alive, and you'll find her in time, but if not,—then let all the Prussians pay, one after the other, for her. We partisans have to avenge the honour of many thousands of wives, daughters and mothers. It is not for very long now that these mad dogs will be allowed to go scot-free and do as they like. No, not for long now! . ."

"Good God!" Lieknis moaned, clutching his aching head.

"Groaning and complaining won't do any good! It's rifles and grenades that are needed."

"Well, and what am I to do? Fight a whole army?" Lieknis demanded. The question sounded unbelievably senseless.

"You're a mollycoddle and a fool!" the other burst out indignantly as he got to his feet and spat out viciously. "Do you mean to say you're going to be frightened and live in fear and trembling of their army when we've got the whole people behind us? You're not worth a rap! And here I was thinking that all you'd gone through would have opened your eyes and made you look at things differently at last. Now I see I've only been wasting my time on you. How is it you can't see that now you just must fight to defend yourself and your own people?"

At this point Lieknis, who had been lying motionless, raised himself a little and leaned his head against the wall. The cool breath of the woods was wafted to him through the half-open doorway. His head was gradually growing clearer. What was he to do now? He had neither property nor wife. . . Go back to Riga? After all that had happened? None of his friends or acquaintances would help him now that he had fallen on evil days, nor would they point a way out as these people were doing. . . The people whom he knew had only one motto: "Charity begins at home."

Yes, he saw clearly now, once and for all time, that he had to go with the partisans. But still. . . being a partisan was. . . Why, it was like staking your life on the totalizator. And supposing you lost?

The thread of his thoughts was broken by the return of the man who had been talking to him. He had brought a second rifle and a pouch of cartridges for Lieknis.

"Well, which side did you choose?"

"I'm staying with you," and Lieknis seemed to swallow a lump that had risen to his throat.

"Then get up and be quick about it. Take this rifle and let's go. We've got to clear out of here. . . We won't have to wait long now, there's a whole company of Germans coming in this direction to comb the woods. They'll shoot at sight everyone they come across here."

Reluctantly Lieknis picked up the rifle. It was still warm to his hand. Whose warmth is it?—he wondered. The tall partisan's or. . .? This was a German rifle, after all.

A partisan detachment of eighteen men awaited them in the forest. In silence they split up into small groups

and one after another, at short intervals, these departed in different directions. Lieknis caught, however, an occasional whisper: the name of the town of Tsesis was mentioned. At daybreak the unit to which Lieknis belonged settled down in a swampy bit of woodland and, after setting up sentries, started cleaning their rifles, rewinding the strips of material they wore as puttees, and dividing up the food.

The tall partisan showed Lieknis how to use the new German rifle. He noticed that nearly all of them had tommy-guns instead of ordinary rifles. "And they've managed to get all these from the Germans?" he thought to himself.

That night the detachment halted near the Murian bridge. A party of Milgrav workers had blown up this bridge in the German rear in July, but the Germans had contrived more or less to reconstruct it. Traffic on it had, of necessity, to be very slow, and drivers put the brakes on when they got to the bend of the road. This was the spot where the partisans resolved to set up their barrier. Having collected heaps of stones here and there, they threw some logs across the road just where it turned on to the bridge, and then lay in ambush in the adjoining wood.

"Fritz always drives in carts in this part of the country," Lieknis' neighbour, a very young boy, whispered in his ear. "Never mind, you just watch, we'll give them a good warming. We'll make them hop."

Soon after daylight a drizzling rain set in. It turned cold, and the dampness made people shiver.

Then several carts came in sight. Helmeted Germans were riding in them, with their legs hanging over the sides and their tommy-guns held against their stomachs. The drivers and soldiers were quite drowsy. The first cart reached the barrier and came to a standstill.

"Fire!" the order slashed the curtain of damp mist like a whip. Shots came from every side, and even the tops of the birches rustled strangely. Then a bright opaque flame shot up from beside the first cart in the roadway and soared skyward; the earth rumbled and shuddered as though the steep bank of the river was tumbling down into the water. Panic broke out among the Germans. Some of them flung themselves down in a ditch and began to shoot at random.

"Forward!" the leader ordered.

The partisans advanced at a rush, firing from automatics, flinging grenades. The impulse caught Lieknis, too, and he jumped up with the rest.

"Yes, but these are bullets whizzing all round me!" came the sudden realization. And his legs grew as heavy as lead. The rifle dropped from his limp hand fell to the earth with a thud. The bullets were coming faster now, and still more vicious was their whizzing. "Run!" The idea struck him like a blow of a hammer in the temples. "Run!" Lieknis turned sharply and then found to his horror that his legs could hardly obey him. A sudden snap like a rusty spring released came from somewhere behind, a stab of pain between the shoulder-blades, then his legs gave way under him.

Half-an-hour later the partisans collected their trophies and left the carts with their loads to burn in the roadway. It was time to take cover again, for the spasmodic tap and rattle of German machine-guns came from across the river.

The partisans found Lieknis' body and decided to bury him in the wood.

"A bullet in his back. So he must have tried to run away," the short, thickset partisan muttered through his teeth.

"It was surely not Latvian blood that ran in his veins," the ex-Aizsarg remarked. "A spineless creature he must have been! We're better off without those kind. What we need in these days is real love and real keen hatred!"

POETRY

BARTLETT ADAMSON
Australian poet

The Monster of Fascism

Stealthily, from the caverns of the past,
This monster crept, like some incredible ape,
And ignorance, with mind and mouth agape,
Stared at the thing aghast.

Sired when old avarice, in gusty fear,
Mated with treachery for price and price,
Begotten as a deal in merchandise
And spawned in what bleak year,
Pre-dedicated to the god of gold,
Suckled by foster hate on dregs of crime,
On ooze of cruelty, malignant slime
From dugs grown lank and cold,—
So was this fascist monster born and bred,
In secret vaults dimlit and dank with tears,
Where moans and screams were music in its ears
And even dreams lay dead.

This fascist monster, beckoning for its aid
All those of miser creed and bestial taint,
And those of superstitious unrestraint
Trained to the murder trade,
And those of blood diseased and twisted brain,
Homicide, sadist, flagellators, freaks,
Despots with bloated paunch and sagging cheeks
Mumbling their words insane.
And power-drunk humans of inhuman kind,
Creatures of vulture beak and cavernous maw,
Of strutting pose and posed prognathous jaw
And megalomaniac mind,
And gibbering dwarfs who limp and swill delight
From pogrom-cries and sobbing prison cell,
Who dance and prance to hear their victims yell
For mercy through the night,—
Such are the fascist lackeys. Where they go
Horrors flame out and deeds of vilest price,
Vast agonies and traitorousness and vice.
And war, and war-wide woe.
Such are the fascist minions, marshalled all
To strangle freedom, progress, reason, hope,
Enslaving life in ever-diminishing scope,
In ever-tightening thrall.

But man was born to freedom. Progress leaps
Vibrant along his blood. Hope knows no death:
Courage persists where even the foulest breath
Of fascist evil creeps.
And man, indomitable in face of wrong,
Steadfast for liberty, passionate for right,
Rallies in world-wide brotherhood and might
To fight this fascist throng.

The fascist monster reels. Its lackeying hosts,
Discipline-drugged, and with up-clutching hands,
Go, whirled upon its tempested commands,
Tangled in frenzied gusts,
Dragged and engulfed in vortices of gloom,
Whirled where the monster goes with lurch and lunge
To roar in self-annihilating plunge
Over the brink of doom.

WILLIAM DOCKRILL
Australian poet

The Workers' Army

The Red Army of the U.S.S.R.
Have shown comrades from countries afar
That they can stand the test
Against fascist Hitler's best
And what workers' Armies really are.

Like Napoleon Hitler made his mistake
When he decided Russia he could take.
Again Russia will flood
With the mass invaders' blood
In the fight for humanity's sake.

Like all tyrants fascist Hitler must fall,
All dictators must go to the wall.
Until universal peace
The Red Armies won't cease
In answer to democracy's call.

The huge Red Army with all their might
For freedom will continue to fight.
When Stalin gave the call
All Russian youth they did fall
Into line, fighting for human right.

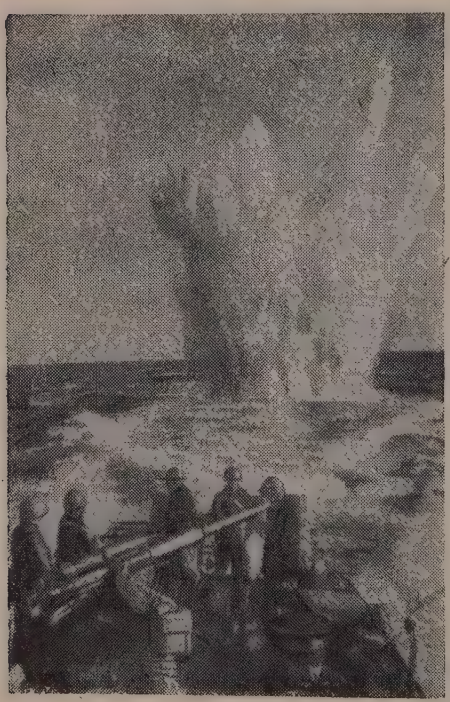
Men of Iron Will

(From a Correspondent's Notes)

The Black Sea sailors and the infantrymen of the Sevastopol garrison fought for their beloved Soviet land to their very last cartridges, with every ounce of their strength. If his right hand were injured, a man of Sevastopol would throw the grenade with his left; if his weapons were smashed, he would throttle the enemy with his bare hands.

But who are they, these immortal heroes?

Up to now, time out of mind, among all peoples, in wars great and small, the highest criterion of military valour was to compare it with the courage of a lion.



A Black Sea Fleet cutter throwing depth charges on an enemy submarine

"They fought like lions," people would say of heroes who had performed an exceptional exploit. Nowadays, there is no higher praise than to say: "They fought like men of Sevastopol."

"Men of Sevastopol"—this means infinite courage personified, this means iron staunchness, winged daring. "Men of Sevastopol"—this is the supreme rank of valour, the glory of immortality.

We have seen the men of Sevastopol in action, and for a long time to come their stern faces, blackened with the smoke of battle, will remain in our memories. We saw a man who has since been awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. When we met him, he had just forced his way through the enemy's ring and was wiping the dust off his sun-burnt face. He stood, the centre of a compact circle of his fellow-soldiers, and spoke in a soft voice, rather incongruous with his powerful frame:

"Well, I clutch at his throat, and he screeches something in his lingo. I say: 'So you'd creep along, the lousy little soul that you are!' And so his face turns blue, as if he had been out in the cold. Well, I spit in his shameless eyes and smash him down. The Fritzes seemed to be flabbergasted, and while they stared I made a dash for the ravine. That's the long and the short of it. Give me a smoke, will you, one of you fellows. . ."

Several pouches were willingly offered. He rolled himself a cigarette usually called "a goat's foot," sat down on a boulder, and shaking his head meditatively, evidently lost in thoughts of something private and intimate, puffed absentmindedly, saying between puffs:

"Well, so that's how it is. . ."

He was corporal Ivan Ivanovich Bogatyr, a machine-gunner. During a recent battle he was left alone against a hundred nazis. For several hours Ivan Bogatyr resisted the enemy's drive. The barrel of his gun grew red-hot. About a platoon of Germans sprawled lifeless in front of him. Yet the rest kept crawling sluggishly forward, like fat lice. They managed to surround Bogatyr. They wanted to take him alive.

In besieged Sevastopol

Ivan was hit. Having staunched the wound, he nestled up still closer to his machine-gun and went on rattling away, his teeth pressing into his underlip. He aimed persistently at one and the same place, to break through the constricting circle.

When the ring was broken, Ivan Bogatyr had no cartridges left. He drew a deep breath and re-adjusted the bandage over his wound. Then deftly, with a single blow he put his machine-gun out of action. Without any hustle, he straightened up to his full height and started going. He had no weapon in his hands. A nazi officer rushed forward to block his way: Ivan gripped him by the throat, shook him and for a moment held him suspended in mid-air; then he spat in the face that had already begun to turn bluish, let the German fall with a thud onto the dry ground, and in two leaps vanished amid the hills.

* * *

Red Army men Vorobyov, Rubinstein, Alyoshich and Gurevich ran across a company of Germans when on a scouting expedition. With whoops and yells, the nazis rushed at them. The Sevastopol men lay low. They let the enemy come close and then opened vigorous rifle and machine-gun fire, accounting for forty of them.

This did not stop the Germans.

"Fire! Fire!" their officers kept on shouting.

Automatics crackled incessantly.

Vorobyov was wounded. He said to the others:

"Not a step back! Let us fight to the very last. We must do our duty. Come what may, we won't disgrace our town, our Sevastopol!"

He was the first to jump up and charge the Germans. A brief hand-to-hand struggle ensued. Using their bayonets and grenades, those four men of the Sevastopol garrison dispersed the enemy without even noticing that all four of them were wounded.

* * *

A group of Red Army men under Lieutenant Shostka found themselves surrounded. They had nothing left but a few anti-tank grenades. At the lieutenant's word each of the men threw a grenade. Several Germans were blown up. But now there remained just one grenade apiece. They lay low. When the smoke of the explosions had rolled away, there was calm again. Lieutenant Shostka and his men waited for the next move.

The Germans, too, seemed to hesitate. They greatly outnumbered the Russians. At last, seeing that the Russians were in no hurry to rise, they began to yell:

"Russ, surrender!"

Lieutenant Shostka turned to his men:

"Comrades, let's die like heroes! We won't retreat!" He rose and calling: "Better death than shameful captivity!"—dashed

into the very thick of the Germans. The air was rent with the crash of the grenade he had been pressing to his breast. Lieutenant Shostka perished, but at the same time he killed four Germans.

His example was followed by Sergeant Kilmanov, Junior Sergeant Parkhomenko, and the Red Army men Zakharov, Buyanov and Golnikov. One after another they advanced to the Germans and were killed by their own grenades, together with twenty more Germans.

* * *

From the first day of the German onslaught against Sevastopol Mezentsev's artillery unit was surrounded. But not a man faltered. The first day the gunners destroyed four of the enemy's heavy tanks and a large group of infantry. The next day the brave artillerymen wiped out two companies of foot, and set on fire two whippets and four tanks; the third day they smashed about a battalion of infantry and six tanks. During the next four days the artillerymen, still surrounded, demolished eleven tanks, four field-guns (one of these self-propelling), thirteen lorries and over two battalions of infantry.

For several days on end the Germans rained bombs and shells on Senior Lieutenant Korol's battery. In one short period they spent on it seven hundred bombs and one thousand four hundred shells. The battery was silent. The staunch artillerymen were well entrenched and this torrent of fire did them little harm.

After that the Germans thought the battery was finished with. They rose and charged. The battery welcomed them with a lively fire. The Germans marched across the corpses of their dead. Attacks continued till late at night. Finally, the enemy retreated, leaving three hundred dead. But at three a. m. they renewed the attack, this time on the battery's flanks, with the intention of taking it in a vice. Korol organized an efficient defence, and once more the enemy was thrown back.

The day was quiet. The Germans were busy preparing themselves for a new onslaught.

At dawn the Hitlerites succeeded in breaking through to the battery. A fierce hand-to-hand battle ensued. And again the gunners accounted for some three hundred Germans.

For five days the battery fought against tremendous odds. It killed and wounded more than one thousand men and officers, captured two fixed-platform machine-guns, three tommy-guns, thirty rifles, a standard and some very important papers. Its own losses were eighty-seven.

In this unequal fight every man was a hero. Commander Biryukov alone killed one hundred and twenty nazis. Commander Sokolov killed sixty with his accurate fire.

* * *

The self-sacrificing defence of Sevastopol will be recorded in the annals of history as a marvel of military art, and the Sevastopol garrison—as a garrison of eternal glory.

Unprecedented exploits were all in the day's work. Here people of iron will dauntlessly fought the enemy to the very last.

P. SAZHIN,
Senior Political Instructor

Letters from the Far North

A RUSSIAN HEART

Captain Pozdniakov was buried in the morning. His coffin was mounted on a trailer covered with green pine branches; pilots off duty and all those who were with him in that last fight followed the hearse which took the captain on his last trip. Among them was Alyosha Khlobystov, his friend and assistant, walking just as he flew—without his helmet. His curly head was sunk low. A band from the city played a funeral march, and when the coffin was lowered into the grave the pilots did not weep, but neither were they able to speak. Standing on the edge of the grave and looking at his friend for the last time, Khlobystov raised his eyes, dry and dark-rimmed with fatigue and sleeplessness and looking at everyone in turn, said that he, Alexei Khlobystov, the friend of the deceased and his assistant, who was now to be commander of the squadron, would avenge his death. Then a triple rifle salvo was fired and the general threw the first heap of earth into the grave.

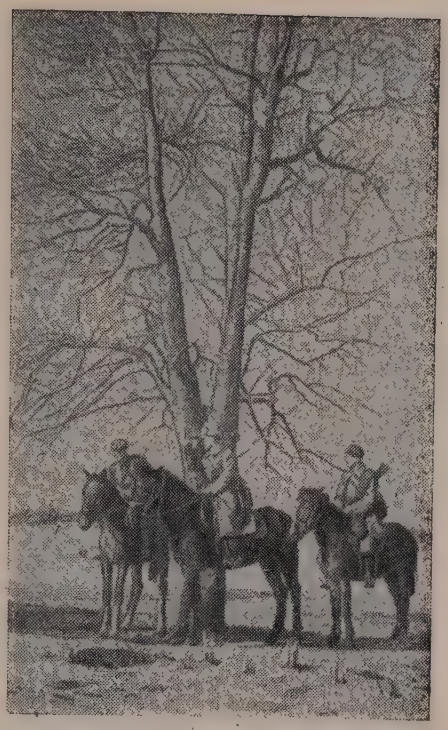
Less than an hour later Khlobystov was again on duty near his plane. These were the pale days of the northern spring, when the sun would merely approach the hori-

zon, without disappearing beyond it. The pilots were on duty day and night, sitting in their stocky, buzzing fighter-planes. There was hardly any time left for sleep, but these days even during those scarce hours Khlobystov was unable to fall asleep. Lying motionless on his bunk he did not take his eyes off the vacant cot next to his.

And now Khlobystov sat in the cabin of his plane, looking absent-mindedly about him. As his eye fell on the plane next to his he suddenly recollected the first plane which he saw at close quarters. This happened in Moscow, when a "U-2" unexpectedly landed in the yard of their factory. It was an old rickety thing, but he, still a kid then, felt a strange tremor and a mighty urge to climb into the machine, to grasp one of those intricate unknown parts and to take off into the air. Even then, as now, he liked to carry out his decisions quickly, and six months later he was already taking flying lessons at the airclub. He smiled as he suddenly remembered his old instructors and chiefs. He was lucky though: all of them were regular fellows, and so was his last commander Pozdniakov.

To get even! That's what he had said at the grave: to get even with them for Pozdniakov! He'd give them more than they bargained for, all right. Now he'd be able to do it, for he was no longer that greenhorn who, having shot down his first "Junkers" on July 1st, became so excited that he ran a temperature and had to be taken to the hospital right from the plane. Twenty-two German planes shot down by his flying squadron, and six shot down personally by him,—this was something not to be sneezed at! Now, as he climbed from the cockpit after a fight, his chest and back might ache badly, but not a trace of excitement! No, now he was cool and collected. He climbed into his green machine, and it became a continuation of his body, while its guns struck in front of him as if they were his fists. If he should have to give up flying now, he'd go insane with grief! Good old machine! He just couldn't live without it; to be without it would mean to be left without a breath of air.

It happened in the fall; he had brought down his fourth plane when his machine took a sharp dive and struck the tree tops, snapping off the branches as it hurtled to the ground. Later, as he lay in the hospital with a bruised chest, he often thought that his breathing was so painful not because of the damaged chest, but due to the hospital air, and that he would be rid of all aches if only he could climb into his plane, rise way, way up, and take a full breath of air. The doctors said just the opposite, but he knew better. And when in the evening



On a scouting expedition

he was asked: "Khlobystov, would you like to learn how to fly a new machine?"—he only nodded in the affirmative, for he was afraid to answer aloud: a coughing fit was about to choke him, and if he were to cough now, they would tell him to stay in bed a while longer. When he caught his breath, he merely said: "Yes, I would."

They had brought him to the hospital all bandaged up, without his helmet and flying suit, and now, when he was leaving and they brought back his suit, he trembled all over with excitement—for the second time in his life,—that same excitement he had experienced long ago when he saw the old "U-2" in his factory yard for the first time.

A month later he was flying his new machine, the kind he was sitting in now, with its short, stout wings and sharp, pointed nose.

A pale sun appeared from behind the clouds and threw a streak of yellow light on the left wing. Khlobystov turned to the left and could not help recalling what this wing had looked like as he returned from that day's fight. Only two thirds had remained of the wing, and from the broken part some tattered rags dangled loosely. On his way home the boys asked him by radio: "Are you all right?" and he answe-

red: "So-so." What else could he have said? After all he was really getting back though he himself could hardly believe his eyes.

. . . His duty was about over, when a few people walked toward his plane. The political instructor of their aviation paper, a good fellow but a torturer (he always wanted you to tell him something), introduced two correspondents to Khlobystov. The latter was displeased and did not even try to conceal his dissatisfaction. It was much better to keep silent and think of the future than to recall the past. But the correspondents were either extremely clever or just good simple fellows; they did not ask him how and at what altitude he attacked the enemy, they just began to talk of things here and there, and in addition one of them turned out to be from the same town as Khlobystov, a fellow from Ryazan, where he spent his childhood.

Duty was over, and the three went to the dug-out. There the correspondents cleverly steered the conversation toward the subject of the day when it all happened and after which his portrait appeared in the newspapers. Khlobystov made a wry face and began to tell the story of that fight; he had told it many times, and he now spoke dryly and briefly. But they stopped him. That they knew already, and it was not what they wanted to ask him about. They wanted him—if he possibly could—to try to recall what he had felt at that time. Khlobystov planted his elbows on the table and rested his head on them. Indeed, what had he felt?

It was a busy day, and he was very tired. First he had been with Pozdniakov on a reconnoitering flight, then they had been on a raid and afterwards filled the gas tanks of the plane. He stood nearby, aching for some sleep, if only for an hour, but they were to take off in fifteen minutes. He listened to the gurgling of the oil as it filled the tank, and by that sound he could tell how far the tank had been filled. In five minutes more, they were to take off. At this moment the commissar of his unit walked over and handed him his party book right there, near the plane. And just because all this was so simple, because only he and the commissar were present beside the plane, and the oil gurgled, because he was to take off in a few minutes,—it all seemed to him to assume an air of exceptional solemnity. In a voice stifled with emotion he said that he would try to be a bolshevik, not in words but in deeds. And mentally he added: not only on the ground but up there, too. At this moment a rocket shot up and he had no more time to add anything else, and it was hardly necessary. Up they went to meet the enemy—Pozdniakov, he and four more pilots, youngsters who had been up only two-three times before.

How well he recalled his first emotion as he caught a glimpse of the twenty-eight enemy planes: it was the feeling that danger threatened Murmansk. The fact that there were twenty-eight of them was the feeling that came next. It was not so terrible, though very, very serious.

"Look, how many are coming against us," he radioed to Pozdniakov, and the reply came over his earphones:

"Keep an eye on the youngsters, I'm going to attack."

And a minute later the fight was on. One "Messerschmitt" went down after the first attack, and he said to himself that there were twenty-seven of them now. Then there was no time left to think, for he had to take care of the youngsters, turning and twisting to cover their tails. When a double-seater "Messerschmitt-110" appeared below, he took advantage of his upper position and went after him. He could see clearly the gunner's head and the tracer-bullets which passed by spreading out fanwise. The distance was rapidly diminishing, the gunner lowered his head and stopped firing. And now they were flying over the very edge of the forest with an extinguished volcano lying ahead of them.

It was at that very second—when the sight of a hill should have made him turn the joy stick and climb upwards—that he decided to ram the enemy plane. To climb would have meant to allow the German to get away. For a fraction of a second he looked back and saw three Germans coming. The German in front of him was so near, his tail with the black cross so clearly visible, and the distance between them so precise and palpable, that he thought coolly and clearly how he was going to get somewhat behind and to the right of the enemy plane, raise his right wing and strike the tail with its end. His was a single and furious desire multiplied by the speed of the obedient machine. The impact was powerful and brief. The German hit the top of the hill, and Khlobystov climbed up. It was strange to see that the right wing was shorter than the left one and that part of it was missing. He saw at once that the entire surface was bent upwards, and at that moment he heard his commander's voice for the last time:

"I've got one!"—Pozdniakov's triumphant voice came huskily through the earphones.

The plane, however, was not as obedient as it used to be; it no longer felt like the continuation of his own arms and legs. The next second the planes formed a circle, defending themselves against the attacking Germans. The latter, who had scattered for a while after the ramming, renew-

ed their frontal attack. He saw Pozdniakov rushing into a head-long attack on a German "ace." Later, on the ground, as he recalled the scene, he understood that Pozdniakov had resolved to shoot down the German commander and to scatter the enemy planes, even if it took his life to do so. But at that moment Khlobystov had no time even to think, for the two fighters were coming toward each other at a terrific speed; the German would not turn aside, and they crashed, the mangled planes forming a single maze. The next moment he felt that he was the commander now. Pozdniakov was no more, gone forever, and it was up to him, Khlobystov, to fight it out.

With parched lips he passed the order over the radio: "I am commander now. Cover my tail, I am going to attack."

Two German planes were advancing on him. His fuel was running low, the Germans were still many, and behind him were four young pilots, whose commander he now was. This time, as he resolved to ram, he did not expect to come out alive. A single thought dominated him: there will be a crash, the Germans will scatter and the boys will be able to get out of the encirclement. Once more, for a fraction of a second, his rushing thoughts gave way to cool calculation. His calculation was correct, and as the German to his right swerved aside, he struck the left wing of the other with his damaged wing. The impact was violent and his steering got out of control, as he was dragged after the German, who dropped after a triple somersault. But even as he was dragged down he felt instinctively as he tried to steady the machine that it was still in good enough shape to be steered to safety. And when he rose and felt that he was still alive, the words which he later said on Pozdniakov's grave shot through his head: "To get even!" The plane was tilting and falling, and he did not steer but dragged it. The ground crew, the fragment of the wing and the commissar taking him in his arms—all this passed hazily through his overfatigued brain.

Khlobystov sat at the table, his head propped up as before in his hands; keenly glancing at the people sitting next to him, he remembered that there was something on his mind just then. In fact there was a lot on his mind.

. . . The door leading to the dug-out opened, one of the pilots on duty, apparently a newcomer, entered and asked where the vacant cot was. Khlobystov hesitated, and then, motioning slowly towards the cot next to his, he said: "This one is vacant," and added again, after a pause: "yes, quite vacant. . ."

* * *

. . . On a Polar night we flew back from the North.

"Isn't Khlobystov on duty tonight?" we asked.

"No," the commissar replied. "He is not here, he is in the hospital. Yesterday he rammed his third plane and, when the German crashed, he jumped with his parachute. Yesterday he had no luck: he was shot through the leg and arm from the start, and, feeling unable to fight, he decided to ram his German."

"Couldn't he have avoided the fight instead?"

"That I don't know," the commissar replied. "He'll soon be well, and we'll ask him. I am sure he'll say that he could not. That is his way: he cannot see a German getting away from him alive."

I recalled Khlobystov's face in the plane's cabin: an unruly shock of hair without a helmet and daring, clear boyish eyes. And I understood that he was one of those who sometimes err, who often take needless risks, but who have a heart which may be found in Russia only,—a merry, indomitable Russian heart.

A tank-landing unit at a front-line position

AMERICANS

Jolly, husky men dressed in leather salt-eaten coats and heavy velvet sea-jackets, and wearing brightly-coloured scarves wrapped around their sunburnt necks, walk about the Russian city. The people here have grown used to them—to their merry, keen eyes, their snappy speech and passion for endless souvenirs. They enjoy toy-shops above all. They come in and buy painted wooden horses, hand-made toys, wooden cups with bright designs on, all sorts of curious trifles which we don't notice any longer, and which they have never seen before. They take them into their large tanned hands—the hands of toilers of the sea, and laugh as they examine them. They are bent on bringing back from distant Russia, from this dangerous voyage, some curious souvenir to put on a table in a small room somewhere in Seattle or San-Diego. It does not matter that it is only a trifle, it will remind them of the hard time when they got their first baptism of fire.

They are all brave seamen and fine fellows. But I remember particularly well two of them whom I met on different days and on different boats.

I spoke with Captain Clarence MacCoy on board his steamer. A Scotchman by birth and American by breeding, he struck up a friendship with the sea when still a boy—nineteen years ago. He climbed all the steps of the difficult ladder—from cabin-boy to captain. The sun of the South seas bleached his hair, and the Northern winds bronzed his face.

He is an old seaman, but a young captain. Quite recently he still sailed in the capacity of first mate, and his voyage to the Soviet Union is his first as captain.

The icy water of the North dashed against the side of the ship; overhead hung a solid grey sky with huge snow-white curls of smoke lingering there after the aerial battle which had been fought not long before. Anti-aircraft machine-guns and guns stationed on deck-superstructures reared their black barrels towards the sky. They were cooling in the cold wind, and the gun-crew commanders together with the first and second mates and the two mechanics walked about the deck with their hands in their pockets, whistling and exchanging brief remarks about the battle.

"The bomb that fell closest to the ship hit the water right here," said the captain pointing to the water over the left broadside, "within sixty feet. And, believe me, it sent up a fountain larger than that of a whale."

This was not the first time he had seen this sort of thing. He had experienced aerial bombings in the Red Sea and in the Suez Canal. But it was the first time his men had seen such fountains near their ship. It was all right, however, they calmly remained at their posts and fired together with the Soviet anti-aircraft artillery.

"It's a pity you weren't here about an hour ago when a Russian pursuit-plane brought down a German over the harbour. The boys were something to look at then. I'm sure it's been a long time since a German was so enthusiastically cheered, on the way to his grave. The boys shouted and whistled, and Simon, a Philippino,—there he is, the fellow in the white jacket, walking along the deck,— went off in a jig. Incidentally, he's been cook for twenty-five years, but now he wants to become a machine-gunner, and has been pestering the captain for days on end, as if the captain had as many machine-guns as there are men in the crew.

Then, there's that man with the rifle walking along the lower deck. That's old Devine, the chief mechanic. He's over fifty now. He's a reserve officer, and fought against the Germans in the last war. Now he's always carrying a rifle and wants to shoot down a plane all by himself. He's very persistent, this man Devine."

MacCoy smiled.

"We're all becoming soldiers to a degree," he went on to say, "everyone in his own way. I am very pleased that my first voyage as captain was of a military nature. I shall go back and by all means make another journey to Russia.

The Germans thought that their submarines would prevent us from getting here. What fools—they don't know the Yankees! Our ships are sailing to Russia and will keep on sailing. The Germans thought that by air-raids they could hamper our work here in the harbour. But we've seen the bullets fired by your pilots send their planes spinning to the ground in flames. Together with your longshoremen we're unloading the steamer and paying no attention to their raids. It's a job that has to be done, and it will be done."

And, as if to confirm his words, the huge clanking cranes again dive into the deep holds and lift in their iron arms huge

wooden cases with black inscriptions in English.

Devine, whom we noticed on deck five minutes ago, comes over to us. He has a mane of grey hair, and his eyes twinkle slyly behind his eye-glasses. He never parts with his rifle. His old Remington hunting carabine, which withstood many tests, is militantly slung over his shoulder. In his judgement, he says, anti-aircraft guns and machine-guns are all right, of course, but a good hunting rifle in the hands of an old experienced hunter is also not to be sneezed at.

"But there is nothing in it," mocks MacCoy.

Giving him a haughty look, the old man fiercely pulls the lock open and points to the cartridges in the magazine. MacCoy smiles again.

"I don't know, Mr. Devine," he says, "whether you will ever kill a German, but I am certain that, with your warlike bent, you may yet shoot me or someone of the crew before this voyage is over."

. . . The ebb began. The steamer was rocking slightly. The seamen stood by the brass railings smoking and looking now at the sky, now at the distant snowy peaks of the mountains. One can't help thinking of the many thousands of miles they had to cross to get here, and the many thousand miles back, then here again, then back again! They are fine fellows, at home on the sea, and getting used to the war.

Next day in a small room in a Northern loghouse I met another American. He was not a captain, but an ordinary sailor who worked as mechanic on a freighter. He told me about himself, now and then inhaling the smoke of his cigarette, and whenever he came to a point that seemed to him amusing, he would give a friendly wink.

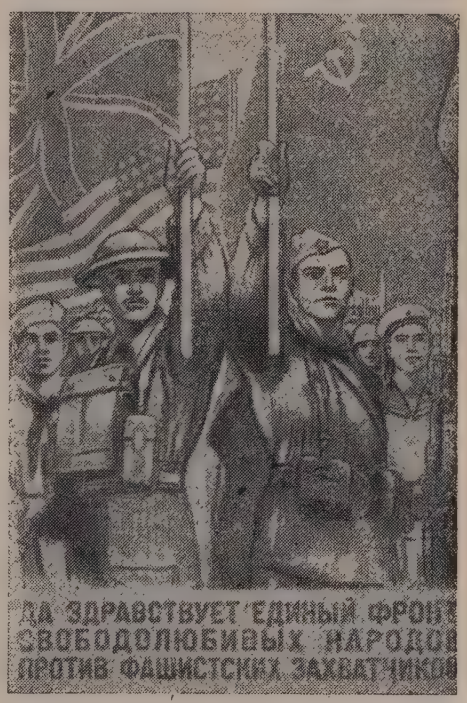
This short, robust, fair-haired fellow is twenty-nine-year-old, and a native of St. Paul, Minnesota. It's a fine town, not very big, but nice. According to his calculations, a few days ago, just as he was crossing the Arctic Ocean, or perhaps right now while he was talking to me here in Russia, his wife Mary must have given birth to a son. But, then, it might be a daughter. They had not time to settle the question before his departure.

His name was Norman Edward Dorland of Minnesota. Perhaps it wasn't even necessary to remember his name, since it was not in any way celebrated, but his father and grand-father had been fine fellows, both of them mechanics like himself. However he was very happy to be the first to add to the old trade of mechanic that of a soldier.

To sail on a merchant ship under the Stars and Stripes across seas over which the German roved, made it look like serving in the army. But that wasn't the only thing he had in mind. He had become a soldier a long time ago—in 1936, when he had fought in Spain in the ranks of the Lincoln Battalion. There had been good Yankees in the battalion, and its name had been well chosen, because President Lincoln had been a good President.

He had fought in Spain for a long time—over a year. They had all been very willing there, but had had absolutely no experience. Still, where there's a will there's a way. They had learnt how to fight. When he had been wounded at Brunette near Madrid, he had had nothing but a rifle. After he had recovered from his wounds, he had asked to be put in charge of a machine-gun. You see, he had resented the injury and wanted to take revenge for his wounds and for the wounds of his friends. And he did take revenge. His machine-gun had been a great weapon!

As for the Germans, it was also not here in the Arctic, on the way to Russia that he had had his first encounters with them, but back in 1936. So much the better: it did one's heart good to hurt an old enemy by helping to bring to Russia



Long Live the United Front of Freedom-Loving Peoples Against the Fascist Invaders!
A poster by V. Ivanov and O. Burova

something that he did not care to mention for the time being. That "something" would soon enough account for itself on the fields of battle.

He had always wanted to visit Russia. So he quit his job as mechanic in a shipyard in Baltimore and applied for a job on a steamer chartered for this country. It was not so easy, to be sure. When Yankees fight, they mean business, and so when the captain told the crew that the steamer would sail for Russia and that it was going to be a dangerous voyage, none of the seamen even thought of staying behind. To the pride of sailors was now added the pride of soldiers.

He did get the job of ship-mechanic, however, and his old experience as machine-gunner also came in handy. During the four raids they had in the Arctic Ocean he did his bit four times at the machine-gun. The sky was covered with very low and very grey clouds all the time, and the "Junkerses" (not the same kind he had seen in Spain, but something like them) emerged each time from the clouds at an altitude of about a thousand feet. He couldn't vouch that he himself shot down any of the German planes, but four of the nine which attacked them did land in the water. American seamen are peaceable fellows, but when they see German raiders they get as angry as hell.

During the attack he was glad to see how side by side with Russian shells American shells were hurtling through the air toward the German aeroplanes. When they saw Germans in the air, it was impossible for them on the steamer to refrain from shooting, although the Russian anti-aircraft artillery hardly needed their help. When they witnessed the firing here, the Americans said in jest that this was another Scapa-Flow umbrella. When the anti-aircraft guns are very active, they call it "umbrella."

No, he wouldn't say that it was easy for everybody, and that it was an easy voyage. No, the voyage was difficult, but everyone of the crew whom he knew was prepared to repeat the experience. They were ready to sail here again and again, and carry armaments for their Russian comrades. If it depended on him personally, he would bring much more of the stuff, despite of all the danger involved.

When he had been saying good-bye to Mary she, after all the kisses, had given his hand a strong grasp,—oh, she had a strong masculine squeeze!—and he well understood what it meant. It meant that he should go and do his job. And then come back to embrace his son, because it was going to be a son after all.

K. SIMONOV

To My Beloved

Wide and boundless are the roads of war—forests and steppes, the sea and the sky, but difficult to pass. Wide and immeasurable are the warrior's thoughts in the days of war: there is the past—gone and lived over again anew; there is the present—comprehended and realized in the roar and din of the fray; and there is the future—glimpsed through the smoke of the battle. And not everybody will divine them.

But I think however that you will understand me. Remember how we used to understand each other at the first syllable. And now I have not written to you for such a long time! I want my emotion to pass through all fronts, all military roads and partisans' paths, to find you and prove that our strength, our deeds and thoughts are one forever.

The war has brought a profound change in our lives, it has scattered us in different directions, but it has not separated us. Well shall we remember Nikolai Ostrovsky's commandment—our conscience will not accuse us of having spent the years uselessly.

Our conscience does not plague us even for the years of our pre-war adolescence. Remember how intense our lives were, how all work thrived in our hands! We were dreaming of heroic deeds, nothing that we did could satisfy us, and we always wanted to do more, restless and turbulent beings that we were.

When Valentina Grizodubova, Marina Raskova and Polina Ossipenko accomplished their heroic flight on the "Fatherland," you envied them and you wanted to be in their place. You dreamt of a plane as of something fantastic and yet quite real. We knew how to find reality in dreams.

It is true that we were spoiled a great deal, perhaps too much. But we always remembered that ahead of us lay hardships and that we would have to go through grave trials.

I recall the last time we met in Petrozavodsk, after graduating from the technical school. We were waiting to be commandeered by the Commissariat to work somewhere. There we sat deep in our thoughts, for we knew that they would send us to different parts of the republic: you were to go to Pudozh and I to Sortavala. But we did not give way to melancholy, and our last meeting was the warmest of all. Yielding to an old habit of ours, we were discussing the film *The Great Waltz*. And why conceal the truth? You imagined yourself to be Karla Donner, and I—Johann Strauss. A big life requires big dreams.

Outside lay Lake Onega, glistening in the sun. Somewhere on the other shore Pudozh lay hidden, plain and unknown. And on the western shore of Lake Ladoga lay Sortavala. You were about to go East and I—West. And thus we parted, young, romantic Strauss and Karla Donner. Who could have known that it was our last meeting ere the great events broke loose?

Then followed the first days of work with their difficulties. In the distant foresaken Pudozh province you felt somewhat discouraged: you dreamt of work on a gigantic scale—and came to work in a regional industrial plant instead. But you were undaunted, and with your usual sense of humour you wrote me: "London Pudozh and Paris." And we laughed together. I understood you, but I was somewhat worried as I followed up your work, lest you should become discouraged and soured.

The days went by and I learned to love Lake Ladoga and Sortavala. You began to like Lake Onega and Pudozh. And each day letters, warm, heartfelt letters, went from Lake Ladoga to Lake Onega and back. Each evening, before retiring, I'd sit down at the table and write you a short letter. And you knew what I had done on that day and what I was about to do on the morrow. Each morning they'd handed me a small, neatly-folded letter from you, and I too knew what you achieved yesterday and what you were doing today.

Space could not interfere with us. We dreamt and worked together as before. The icy water of the Savain-Yoki and the fragrance of the Sortavala woods became home to me, and when I left for the army I felt lonesome for the mighty forests of the Karelo-Finnish republic and for the white-capped waves on Lake Ladoga.

You saw me off, but you spoke little to me. You merely said that you had faith in me and that you hoped that I would behave worthily. These words I have repeated many times since then, and each time I found a new meaning in them. When the first German bombs whistled by and the ground moaned and quivered, I understood

Nelly Kopyleva, a former Metro worker, now a volunteer nurse

that the hour of grim trial and of grave events had arrived.

You must have been sleeping then, in ignorance of what had happened, while I saw the blood of our men and the smoking ruins of the town. My short letter was already on its way to you. I do not recollect what I wrote in it, but I know that that letter was an oath.

I received no reply: the times were too severe and grim. Burning and pillaging, the German fascist army advanced, while we retreated step by step, fighting in defence. Among others we abandoned our native town where you were spending your vacation at the time. Thus I have lost you.

I have not written to you for a long time, and I believe I have lost the habit of putting down my thoughts on paper. But as I think of you always, I have become used to the thought that our warm and tender correspondence has never been broken off.

When I meet a girl in active service at the front, I imagine that you too are like her, quiet and grown-up, modest and fearless, somewhere among us. Many times I have felt your presence, and this feeling lent me strength.

When I saw in the newspaper the portrait

of a girl who had established some production record, I thought that you too, together with the rest of the people, were forging arms day and night. I kept the portrait of that unknown girl, and I got used thinking that you were she. And it instilled courage and strength in me.

When I heard of the heroic feat of Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, I divined you in her. Zoya died but she won. Her death, like the fiery heart of Danko[1], pointed out the road to victory for the many hundred of thousands of friends and comrades of hers. Like the rest of us I was burning with a desire to avenge her death, and this too gave me additional strength and assurance.

It is during the storm that the captivating beauty of the sea reveals itself in full. So the warrior's nobility manifests itself in battle. Every Soviet man is a warrior today. And I know that wherever fate has placed you now, you must have found your front-line. I think this is so, I wish it to be so.

I know that even now you are not satisfied with your achievements, you want to do more. If you are in the rear, you work day and night, forgetting about yourself, and you dream of being sent to the front. If you are at the front or with a detachment of partisans, you are hoping to come to grips with the enemy. This is how our girls have been brought up.

[1] One of the characters in Gorky's story *Old Woman Izergil*.

Each part of a tank or plane which you have made above the plan is your victory. Each wounded fighter whom you have carried from the field of battle, together with his arms, is your pride. Each well-aimed bullet which you have fired from your tommy-gun is your strategic blow at the enemy. You must know that one of these blows dealt from the rear is felt ten times as keenly by the enemy as ten blows from the front. The blood of Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, Liza Chaikina, Tonya Petrova and of hundreds of their comrades calls for revenge.

I know that you have found your front-line. I am more than sure that you will take part in our common struggle, in crushing the enemy.

What if wrinkles should line our young blows? We shall know them to be a sign of manhood. In our eyes we shall preserve the flame of love, which we shall carry through every trial. I know that I will not be ashamed to gaze into your black trusting eyes, and I am sure that you will not lower your long lashes under my gaze, for you are a warrior, the same as I.

I feel so stirred, I have not written to you for such a long time. I was going to write tender words of love, but it seems to me I have not. Yet you will understand me. Remember, dear, we used to understand each other from the first syllable.

Red Army man I. PETROV
Western front.

The Cossac Women

Clouds of dust whirled up beyond the wind-mill. The faint silhouettes of the riders melted away in the hazy distance, and on the horizon for a long time one could see the red tops of the Cossacks' fur caps flicker and vanish like will-o'-the-wisps.

It was at them that the women were gazing so intently. They had come out to the outskirts of the stanitza (village) to bid their husbands god speed in the field, and now they stood motionless. On their lips they felt the farewell kisses, their husbands' last words were still ringing in their ears:

"Be brisk with your work, bring up the kiddies and stick up for your honour. Out there with the Germans we'll keep up ours all right."

"We'll do it!" the women whispered through parched, burning lips, as they drew themselves up on tiptoe, peering after the departing men.

Days, weeks slipped by full of bustling about on the collective farms and caring for the children at home.

Infrequent brief letters would come from the husbands at the front.

"In the battle yesterday with a real good Cossack stroke of my sabre I sliced two officers out of one," Olga Piatnitsyna's husband wrote to her to the stanitza Grushevskaya.

"Oh! And aren't those Fritzes afraid of the likes of us!" Barbayanov informed his wife in the stanitza Krivianskaya. "As soon as they catch sight of a braid they turn tail."

"What about the seeds? Have you got them ready?" the Kuban Cossack Lagutin demands insistently in the letters to his sister in the stanitza Otradnaya.

The Cossacks were fighting on all the fronts. The blades of their sabres swished through the air in the forests of Smolensk; they blinded the eyes of the Germans with sheer terror near Leningrad; like lightning they flashed over the foes' heads in the Ukrainian steppes.

"You just slash all these reptiles to pieces and then turn back home," the Cossacks' wives wrote to them. And meanwhile the front was moving nearer to the primordial lands of the Cossacks. The guns started to roar on the banks of the Don. Across the river Taman their threatening thunder re-echoed right over to Kuban.

"Be worthy daughters of our country," the Cossacks wives were reminded by their husbands.

And the Cossack women were.

* * *

The hamlet which the Red Army unit had entered was blazing like a bonfire. Black pillars of smoke whirled up like great oil-fountains from the ground. The bare poplar-trees loomed black in an ocean of fire.

The men were marching along the demolished, death-like streets. Glassless window frames looked like empty eye-sockets. The scorching flames crawled all over the roofs of the houses like fire-snakes. The familiar creaking of opening wickets was not to be heard. No one came out to welcome the Red Army men. Charred bodies were seen on the sites of the fires. Corpses hung down from the branches of the trees.

But when walking past one of the burning houses on the hamlet square the men suddenly heard from within a muffled, long-drawn moan and a knocking at the closed shutters, which were propped up from the outside with wooden stakes.

The Red Army men rushed into the house, flung the windows open. Out of one of them a woman with her dress all aflame dropped down and was caught up in somebody's arms. She was quickly laid down on the ground. Ambulance-men tried to bring her back to consciousness, but she was past saving. Her whole body was but one great purple-brown burn. Only her face remained untouched—young and beautiful in its fine gold-dust powdering of tiny freckles.

"What's your name?" the ambulance-men asked bending over her.

For a second the woman opened her eyes.

"Ksenia, Ksenia is my name. . ." she breathed out with a deep sigh; those were her last words.

It was many days later that people learnt her story.

. . . Ksenia saw her husband off to the front and remained to keep house by herself. With her strong able hands she made any kind of work hum. In the collective-farm brigade she held her own alongside of the men there at carrying sacks of grain and at the plough. At home, skilfully handling the saw and hammer, she covered the roof of the house with new planking and built a log-wall round the draw-well.

"Why, the woman's a regular Cossack, and no mistake!" the village people decided approvingly.

When the Germans came to the hamlet, Ksenia did not leave her house. If the cow required milking or water had to be brought, she would rush out to do the job and then flew home again. Through the window of her room Ksenia could see the rioting of the Germans in the hamlet, the slaughter of women and children in the neighbouring houses. She heard the moans of her neighbours, and the heart of the Cossack woman bled. Unable to help them, she kept silent, inwardly wondering why it so happened that this dreadful fate seemed yet to spare her.

One day a German officer was walking past Ksenia's house. He saw the young Cossack woman and was struck by her loveliness. And indeed Ksenia possessed that swarthy, dark kind of beauty which distinguishes the Cossack women of the Don steppes. Ksenia noticed the officer's stare, and her heart stopped beating.

In the evening a former follower of the white-guards, Makhno, whom the Germans had appointed elder of the hamlet, knocked at her door.

"Come along!" he said rudely.

"Where to?" Ksenia turned quite pale.

"Herr Oberleutnant demands your presence."

"I'm not going anywhere," and Ksenia gave a decided shake of her head.

"How's that? You won't go?" The elder opened his eyes wide in amazement. "But don't you know, wench, that you'll get it hot for this?"

"Come what may. I don't care!"

"Look here, wench," said the elder in a menacing tone. "I wanted to do the handsome thing by you, but it seems you have an inclination to kick. I was ordered by the Oberleutnant to bring you along, and that's all. . . If you won't come of your own free will, I'll just call in the soldiers, we'll bind you and carry you away. You are free to choose!"

"All right," said Ksenia after a moment's thinking, "I'll go."

Suddenly a sparkle flashed in her eyes and instantly died down again.

"I'm coming."

She returned to her room and in five minutes emerged somewhat smartened up, a dark-green fringed shawl thrown over her shoulders.

"That's right!" the elder approved gleefully. "Now the Oberleutnant will be quite pleased."

In the house into which the elder pushed Ksenia a party of German officers was making merry. The window-panes rang with their sottish shouts. The oil-lamp was burning low in the air thick with the smell of corn-vodka, and huddled on a bench in one of the corners sat several of the village women. Little Nastia Khromina's black eye was evidently a token of her convoy's zeal. The tipsy Germans stuck to the women like gadflies. The Cossack women turned away from them with disgust.

"Sehr gut!" cried out one of the officers seeing Ksenia; it was the same one who had passed by her window.

He was lean and gaunt, and had sparse, yellowish hair. The officer tugged at Ksenia's sleeve and forced her to sit down beside him, then he spattered some vodka out of a bottle into a tumbler.

"Drink!"

Ksenia just shook her head.

"Very nice that you come," the officer said in broken Russian.

He began to tell Ksenia that he had always wanted to see the Cossack women. Some years ago in Germany he had read *And Quiet Flows the Don* in the German language, and since then the image of a Cossack girl had flurried his imagination. Yes, he was quite convinced now that Cossack girls were deucedly handsome.

"It's a perfect dream-land country we've tome to," Herr Oberleutnant addressed the other officers. "Mountains of grain, oceans of wine and beautiful women. True, till now we are eating our own bread and drinking our own wine, but I hope we will be compensated for all this. I drink to the German army, gentlemen!"

The officers clinked glasses.

"Drink!"—and the officer pushed the tumbler of wine towards Ksenia.

"No!" Ksenia compressed her lips. "I won't drink."

"Drink!" the German insisted, and there was a new note in his voice.

"Well, all right,"—and Ksenia heaved a deep sigh; "I'll drink."

She raised the glass and stood up to her full height.

"I'll drink," she repeated loudly, "but not to the health of your wolfish army. I'll drink to our own Red Army. Drink with me, girls!"

. . . They tortured her during six days and six nights. They bound her hands above her head, corded her tight to a tree and let her hang there for five hours at a time. They burnt her abdomen with red-hot rods. They shaved her hair off and squirted boiling water from a tea-pot down the nape of her neck.

"Will you still drink to the Red Army?" shrieked the Oberleutnant, torturing Ksenia.

"I will!" came hoarsely from the depths of the young Cossack woman's throat as she spat out clots of blood.

When retreating from the hamlet, the Germans locked Ksenia up in an empty house and set fire to it.

* * *

On the outskirts of Taganrog hundreds of Cossack women from the collective farms were driven by the Germans to build earth-ramparts. On the slops of the Sambek they were drawn up in ranks, spades were handed to them, and they received orders to dig an anti-tank pit. The women would not stir.

"Now dig!" was the brusque command of the German officer.

Still not one of them stirred.

"Dig!" repeated the officer, seizing hold of his automatic.

Then from the ranks of the women a tall, strong-chested Cossack girl stepped forward. Measuring the German scornfully with a fixed stare of her black eyes, she said:

"Arent't you a smarty, mister officer! You order us to dig a pit against our tanks. Our tanks will come to help us out, us and our kids, and you expect us to block up the way for them?"

The woman laughed a short, broken laugh and turned away from the German with disdain. She did not even glance back when she heard the threatening clang of the metal; she received the bullet in her back without a shudder, without a moan. Silently she sank to the ground. The other Cossack women dropped in rows to the earth, mowed down by a volley of fire from the automatic.

Thus they perished but did not bend their heads before the enemy.

A. KALININ

Southern front.

Rhythm

The wing is still bare, showing its skeleton, its tendons and bones uncovered as yet. This is so to say the cornerstone of the machine, its foundation. Only two operations have been applied to the wing so far, but they have meant creation. And now a man walks toward the wing to perform the third operation on it. He is a quiet man, with a plain face and high cheekbones, and his accent betrays the native of the Volga region.

He is a carpenter by profession, a profession which has been assumed to be one of unhurried work, allowing one to meander around the object, to saw, glue and potter here and there, to glue on a piece and plane and saw again, while the golden shavings curl up and drop gently to the floor in a workroom smelling of glue and the pungent odour of resin.

The carpenter is now standing near the wing of the plane. His hands move with speed and assurance and with the care of a draftsman. On the enormous surface of the wing he locates the exact point he was looking for, the spot where the special equipment of the future plane is to be fastened. This is responsible work, allowing no greater error than half a millimeter. Next to the mighty wing are spread the carpenter's simple and peaceful tools—a plane, a handsaw, a chisel and several hammers. The carpenter works on with scrupulous and careful precision.

This is merely the third operation, but it has to do with an additional function of the wing, a very important one at that, and the man with his homely plane does very responsible work. Let us have a look at what he is doing.

The point where the equipment is to be fastened can be measured anew each time, but it also may be located by pattern, repeating the calculations which have been made previously, which would mean greater speed; and this is exactly what the man is doing.

He comes to work early and prepares his tools; he walks about the shop—a peaceful carpenter among mighty, grim wings—and sees whether there is any delay in the operations which precede his own work; he makes all the necessary mental preparations for the alloted number of units assigned to him for the day, so that when the first wing is ready to be worked upon he too is trim and prepared, ready at a second's notice to begin his task.

N. Arzhanukhin, a steel worker who overfulfilled his norm by 149 percent

Conveyor tank assemblage in a Ural plant

Certain norms were assigned to the shop, some of them to the carpenter, whose name is Skripkin. This norm he overfulfilled. After Stalin's May Day order, the time allowed per operation was halved. The following day, as carpenter Skripkin went to work he mentally went over every single movement required by the operation; he was looking for every little pause and interval, for anything that could be condensed and blended closer, until he would find a movement as short as a blow; also for anything that could be prepared and foreseen beforehand.

And this new norm he overfulfilled almost three times.

Skripkin is a skilful, experienced carpenter, but this is not the principal thing. The thing that counts is the way he prepares and plans his work beforehand, so that he knows exactly what he is about to do at any moment. This probably is the main "spring" in his work.

Rhythm, the great rhythm of production, that organizing, clever force. It is possible to make a dash, to treble the norm, to put up a record at the cost of an enormous effort, but suddenly one may feel a weakening, and the taut, vibrating cord gives way to something flapping loosely in the wind. The rhythm has been interrupted, and like an ailing heart, it beats irregularly, now jumping and now palpitating.

It is possible to sense the rhythm differently, as one feels the strength of the muscles and the purity of breath, and to enter it gradually and quietly, experiencing a sensation of joy at the way each muscle feels that rhythm, subordinating itself to and becoming one with it.

To sense the correct production rhythm is a great achievement! To feel how one works in this wonderful rhythm always gives enormous joy, but when a brigade, a collective body of men, an entire shop works under it, linked by a single will and the law of a certain adopted rhythm, then it becomes no more the accidental success of an individual but a system, a regularity.

Factory No. 30, of which we are writing here, has a large shop where cutting tools are made. There they make cutters, mills, sinkers, reamers, and many other tools. Some of these tools were not manufactured in this factory before, and now everything used here in the shops and on the lathes is made by the factory itself. It is very important to supply the shops with tools in time, to provide the necessary equipment and make it possible to use it appropriately.

In this shop almost all the workers are youngsters, yesterday's apprentices. Now they are doing work requiring great skill and precision.

Imagine a hole being drilled in some part of the plane; it is necessary that this hole should be absolutely precise; to do it a reamer is placed in the hole and turned in it until the diameter becomes just the necessary size. These reamers are of different sizes, some as tiny as two mm in diameter; it enters the hole like a steel worm, and there it turns about and grinds the metal. This tiny reamer has to have six

cutting edges, and to make it is far from simple.

There is also another cutting tool, a miniature vertical mill, three mm in diameter. It cuts a thin, clean, tortuous channel in the metal. This cutter is so thin that it requires much skill to make one, for despite its thinness it must be strong enough not to break while it winds its way through the metal.

Or take the enormous cutter "O. K.", a quarter of a meter in diameter, used for the larger parts of the plane. Or the finger drill, a spiral roller used in cutting an intricate part.

All these tools are made right on the premises by young boys who have had yet but little practice, hardly any experience. To begin with, they were given a certain norm at a slower rhythm. They made that rhythm their own, mastered it and began to overfulfil the norm assigned to them. Then they were offered a different rhythm, a faster one. This one they mastered, too. A special emulation began, and they were told the pace would become still faster. But it turned out that they were able to manage this higher rhythm too, and quietly at that, without breathing any faster and overstraining themselves. The first four 300-percenters—those who fulfilled the norm three times—made their appearance. Soon they were followed by others, for the rhythm drove them on, infecting everybody, spurring people ahead.

This rhythm may be felt most in the assembly shop, where the planes are put through the final operations, after which the machine is sent to be tested. Here the planes are assembled not by small parts but by entire sections: ready fuselages, wings, ready tails. The planes are assembled from large pieces, connecting them and turning the separate parts into a machine which knows how to fly and fight.

This is so-called noticeable work, for every assembled unit means a ready machine. It is very tempting to speed up the rhythm, to make a dash and to have two machines ready instead of one. But nowhere is the carefully thought out will of the rhythm felt as strongly as here: while it is a high rhythm in itself, it is a smooth one, without jumps or jerks; it is tense but even, growing but not hasty.

The plane is covered with people as a cake is covered with flies. Not a spot is vacant, yet there is no pushing and no interfering with each other.

It is the sequence of operations, their inner cohesion and locational precision which is of utmost importance when people do not work at lathes but on a common territory,—in this case on a plane. The plane is assembled and dressed by connecting all odds and ends, and fusing the labour of the whole plant, of a large number of people working devotedly and self-sacrificingly. And a formidable machine is born from parts, large and small, from parts treated by cutters and reamers, from parts made by carpenter Skripkin, from parts born under the drill of milling-machine operator Skliarov, and from parts made by the whole plant in general.

It will leave the plant and rush into the fray.

And all those who work in the plant will have the right to say: "This machine is mine."

And those among them who will hear of its victory in battle will say: "In this victory there is also a particle of my labour."

TATYANA TESS

Warriors from Dendanekan

One could guess it was winter only by consulting the calendar. For about two hours a blue shower had been monotonously pouring down on the roofs of the town. But after the sun had peeped out through the heavy clouds, the stifling winds of the desert began to blow from the Kara-Khum, bringing with them the spicy fragrance of cloves. Black columns of sand whirled round, through the orange haze of the streets; they raised into the air thin and frail tamarisk branches and the faded and rusty djuda leaves. Professor Zakhoder closed the latticed window.

"Still there is nothing better in the world than a Russian winter," he sighed wistfully, turning to a corner of the room where, squatting on the floor, the archaeologist Ershov was fussing over some ancient grave stones.

"We seem to have missed the latest news, Boris Nikolayevich," remarked the archaeologist, fidgeting and flicking off the dust from his knees. He came up to the wireless. A crackling sound was heard, and then a man's voice distinctly pronounced:

"... By the order of Field Marshal General von Reichenau, the commander of the 6th German Army..." Then again there was some noise. "... as well as

buildings are to be destroyed. Nothing of historical or high artistic value is of importance in the East."

"Gangsters! What do they understand in art?" said the professor angrily. "The Kumlies, people of the desert, who only yesterday lived a nomadic life, are now treasuring the best works of painting with the greatest care in the Ashkhabad Museum.

There was a knock at the door.

"Come in!" Ershov called.

A Red Army man entered the room. He was carrying on his back a wooden box which was obviously rather heavy, for beads of perspiration covered his forehead.

"Where should I put it?" he inquired, after having it on the table.

"Just let it remain where it is," acquiesced the professor.

The man handed Ershov an austere looking envelope with a number of seals on it:

"Sign here, please. And don't forget to mark the time."

Having returned the empty envelope, Ershov unfolded the letter:

"Dear comrades!

During drill-time in the Kara-Khum desert, we quite accidentally came across some ancient objects buried deeply under layers of sand. After some digging we discovered a number of ruined buildings. These buildings are decorated with fine mosaic and architectural ornaments which are to our mind of great artistic and historical value. Herewith we are sending you some samples. Taking into consideration the fact that this discovery may turn out to be of great scientific value and that it will perhaps throw some new light on one of the still unexplored fields of human knowledge, we have put a Red Army guard in the desert.

We earnestly request you at once to dispatch a scientific expedition to the southern part of the Central Kara-Khum mountains, to Tash-Rabat Hill, which is situated at a distance of 35 kilometers southwest of the town of Mara.

Commander of the Red Army unit
Captain *P. Mezdrikov.*
Commissar *I. Vassiliev.*
Assistant Commander of the Red Army unit, Military Technician of the 1st rank
P. Polivanov."

All night long lights were burning brightly in the building of the Turkoman branch of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. The scientists were rummaging through and looking over heaps of books written by Arabian. Uzbek, Persian and Russian travellers. But even the most ancient maps could not help to explain the mystery. According to them, at the place pointed out by the command of the Red Army unit there was nothing to be found but insipid, lifeless sands. In the morning an expedition consisting of three persons, namely: Doctor of Historic Sciences, Professor B. N. Zakhoder, Senior Scientific Collaborator of the Turkoman branch of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., Archaeologist S. A. Ershov, and Assistant of the Chair of Archaeology G. B. Fyodorova, — left for the desert.

The desert was trailed all over by thousands of herds of camels, donkeys and mules, which had been moving for centuries from the Far East to the Mediterranean sea ports. Caravans carrying silks, different fabrics, fragrant tea and spices, had been for months making their way from India to Greece. A long time ago that had been the chief high-way of the shah. The last Sassanid shah Nesdagerd III fled from the Arabian cavalry along that great caravan route. Formerly there was water there, and trees were growing abundantly, but wars have converted the luxurious Merv oasis into a lifeless desert.

Captain Mezdrikov appointed some of his men to help the expedition, and the excavation works started. When the first layer of sand was removed, a fallen mosque appeared, to the great delight of scientists. Its columns, richly decorated with ornaments created by ancient craftmen, were pillowed on the sand. Then copper and bronze household was unearthed, vessels with handles shaped like a serpent or a wild cat, or a fox; bracelets and little bells turned green from age; rosaries made of blue stones.

"We are now in the rich quarter of the town," explained the archaeologist Ershov to the Red Army men, after having attentively examined the things. "Here lived the rulers, the nobility and the courtiers of this mysterious town. Let us now look for the quarters where the artisans and the poor lived."

He led the men to another place. On digging only a little way into the sand, their spades struck against earthernware jugs and remnants of brick-kilns.

The town had been built of fire-brick of extremely high durability and was decorated by first-rate architects and painters. But still the question remained as to the name of this ancient city.

In the manuscript *The Boundary of the World* Ershov found some remarks concerning a town where the rampart of the fortress was 500 paces long. When the men had discovered the ancient walls built up for the purpose of defending the town from desert hurricanes and alien unvasions, the archaeologist counted 500 paces, and that fact confirmed his diffident surmise. In the military notes of Beikhaki who accompanied Sultan Mossud in his campaigns

Professor Zakhoder came across the following noteworthy records: "The Gazievid troops of Mossud could find no water either in ruined Serakhs nor along the Merv road. Only on the third day, at about noon, Mossud came up to an unknown town and from a hilltop asked for water. And then a number of inhabitants appeared on the walls of the fortress and began to lower jugs with water. Like beggars did the Emir's warriors drink water given them out of charity, and very sad they were. Great rivers became arid, and all around there was a terrible, ghastly, barren desert."

In the unknown town the scientists also discovered traces of a sewerage system and water-pipes made of clay.

The latest notes concerning the town refer to the year 1158.

"The nomads," noted an historian, "attacked the town and annihilated a part of its inhabitants. The other part after a ferocious battle left its walls for good."

Many centuries had passed. Breaking the silence of the desert, the buildings of the dead town fell down with a crash. Like mighty ocean breakers, the sands splashed against the ruins of the mosque, the piles of ancient buildings and the high wall, until the whole town was buried under heavy layers of sand.

Having compared all the intimations given by Arabian geographers with modern maps, the scientists finally placed the newly discovered town.

On a sunny morning Professor Zakhoder sought out the captain in the desert and embraced him heartily:

"Congratulations, Comrade Commander! Your men have discovered a town which existed a thousand years ago."

"A thousand years?" repeated Captain Mezdrikov in astonishment.

"Exactly. And it was called Dendanekan."

"An excellent name. But why wasn't it marked on any of the maps?"

Professor Zakhoder handed the captain a faded scroll of paper, saying:

"At the beginning of the XIIIth century, on the eve of the Mongolian invasion, a famous geographer, Yakut, visited the town on whose streets we are now standing. He made the following notes: 'Dendanekan—a town in the region of the Merv Shakhitdtan, situated at a distance of 10 pharsakhs from Merv, in the sands. At the present time it is ruined, and nothing remains of it but the minaret of a mosque. The town is situated between Serakhs and Merv. I saw it, and there was nothing there, with the exception of a wall and some traces of beautiful buildings, that could point to the fact that here a town had once existed.'"

"So that is why we could not find Dendanekan on anyone of the ancient maps," added Zakhoder.

By nightfall the expedition began to prepare for its return journey.

The commissar assembled the Red Army men, and the scientists delivered them a lecture about Dendanekan, a town-fortress, which ten centuries ago stood on the international high-way which led from the Mediterranean to the Far East. In this unit there were several Turkmens, born in this region. In their youth they had led a nomad life near the site of the disappeared town. When filling up a form they usually answered the question: "Where were you born?" as follows: "I was born in the Kara-Khum sands," and everybody would laugh at this.

Now these men asked the commissar's permission to consider the town Dendanekan as their birth-place.

"So be it," consented the commissar.

A. GUTOROVICH

Modern Jack-the-Rippers

Warm vapour rises from the ground, the birches sway in the gentle spring breeze; all day long the room is brightened by a great shaft of sunlight. Caught in the sunlight, all the familiar objects around take on a special festive glamour,—even the pair of scisors on the table, even the rubber sponge, to say nothing of the toy parrot hanging above one of the children's beds.

He is altogether splendid, this parrot, with his hooked beak and rainbow-coloured tail, and the little girl who is lying on the bed longs to give him a swing. Furtively she draws aside her bed-covers, and in the sunlight two clumsy bandaged stumps appear. With one of these stumps the child touches the parrot, then looks at him with great admiration and sighs.

"What is it you're doing there?" inquires a curious voice from the next cot.

"Playing," says the little girl of the stumps. "See what a beauty of a bird I've got hanging here."

Soviet children on the Pskov highway shot by fascist gangsters in aeroplanes

"But I can't," answers the childish voice (it is quite a matter of fact, calm voice). "I've got no eyes. The nazis burnt down our house, and they locked us in, mummy and me, and that's how the fire scorched my eyes."

The sound of this simple childish voice seems to make the very daylight grow suddenly dim, and the shaft of sunshine but to emphasize the horror and piteousness of those maimed little bodies prostrate on their tidy white beds.

Since December, 1941, up to the present day the Russakov Hospital—the most ancient children's hospital in Moscow—has nursed and rendered surgical aid to one hundred and seventy children mutilated by the German nazis.

The eldest of the lot is fourteen, the youngest—just one month and a half. The world over one could not find more eloquent and terrible evidence incriminating fascism and bearing witness against the hitlerite henchmen than the sight of all these kiddies with lacerated arms and legs, mangled jaws and burnt out eyes.

"Will my fingers grow again, Uncle Doctor?" the surgeon is asked by a four-year-old mite whose frozen fingers have had to be amputated. During a severe, thirty-degree frost her mother and she were turned out of their house to accomodate a few German officers. The soldiers robbed the mother and the child of their warm felt boots and woolen mittens, acting according to orders of the German military authorities.

Twelve-year-old Sania Malkina is making signs to the doctor to show him that she has something to say. She is given a pencil and writes: "Won't I ever at all be able to eat with my mouth as I used to?"

Sanias's jaw was smashed with the splinter of a grenade thrown by a German corporal into the middle of a trench where only women and children were taking shelter.

Since the war began people have learnt to steel themselves against pity; without a shudder we look the corpses strewn all over the battle-fields. But the sight of these little handless, legless bodies in blood-soaked bandages has something so horrible and unnatural in it and raises such a wave of fury against the nazi tyrants that even war-hardened men grow pale and clench their teeth.

At a meeting organized by the Society for the Defence of Children Against Fascist Cruelty, Ivan Mamonov, captain of the famous regiment whose twenty-eight men resisted the onslaught of fifty German tanks, told us:

"Our guardsmen are steel-hearted men, but I saw them turn pale when in one of the villages the body of a nine-year-old lassie was found lying in the blood-soaked snow. The men laid her down very gently on a stretcher, but the child died. In the village of Navoloki I saw seven youngsters killed by the nazis. In a barn we came across a twelve-year-old girl who had been raped and whose felt boots had been torn off her feet."

Ivan Mamonov is a military man by profession, but there was a catch in his voice when he spoke of those tortured children. Surgeon Kruzhkov (head-doctor of the Russakov Hospital) is well used to dealing with children's diseases, but even he says that he feels a storm raging within him when a youngster mutilated by the hitlerite hirelings is lying before him on the operation table.

Bullets, bayonets, grenades, red-hot wires, bombs—anything may be used by these inhuman degenerates against children.

On November 28th, 1941, the general in command of the 13th German army-corps ordered his men to destroy as partisans "boys and girls aged from 12 to 16."

Three days before, the fascist authorities issued an order which makes the heart of every honest-minded person quiver with hatred and loathing.

"Fear of the Germans must be instilled into the people to their very bones," thus runs the order. "No lenience is permissible to anybody, women and children included." A pioneer is crossing the railway line,—shoot the pioneer! A child begins

to cry and interferes with your listening to some Tyrolian waltzes over the radio,—knock the brat's brains out! A little girl walks along the street at dusk,—to the gallows with her! And when they see a small lifeless victim lying in the snow before them, the infanticides feel no compunction in robbing it of its clothes. The gas-mask bags of the nazi soldiers are crammed with small frocks, underwear and other children's things. Their knapsacks are full of cheap toys which they pilfer from the children of the collective farmers, when quartered at some village. Not far from the town of Youkhnov a suitcase was once found in one of the disabled and discorded motor-cars; this suit-case apparently belonged to the senior lieutenant of an artillery regiment and contained, besides a pair of smart bedroom slippers, some children's stockings, a small fur coat and a tiny bonnet trimmed with white rabbit fur.

One's hair stands on end, and if one's heart has not yet turned to stone one feels quite dumbfounded at the cynicism of the letters written to the German jackals by their Traudels and Gretchens who crave for blood-stained booty.

"Pirna-Iessen, 4, II, 42.

"Do try and find me a fur coat, also a pair of warm knitted drawers and a jacket for Martha; if you get them too large, we can always take them in; but I wouldn't like to have them smaller than for a child of 6—7. Never mind if they are somewhat soiled or blood-stained: they can be washed."

The German field post delivers hundreds of letters of this kind, greedy, demanding, insistent, and the nazi jackals are doing their best. They are not in the least abashed by the sight and smell of children's blood: in the countries occupied by them in Western Europe they weltered in it; now all the hatred and spite of these blood-thirsty ogres is directed against the children of our country.

In the city-park of Rostov the worker Cherevichny found his son Vitya. Vitya was a passionate pigeon-lover. There he lay in the park, his pet grey tumbler pigeon clasped in his hand. When the fascist villains saw that boy with his bird,—a very emblem of daring, winged youth,—they could not stand the sight, so they killed both child and bird.

The sum total of crimes and iniquities of the Hitlerites has not yet been reckoned, but the wrath of all nations is rising the world over, and the hour of retribution is drawing nigh.

N. KALMA

A group of school-children before their departure for a collective farm to help gather harvest

A Soldier-Writer

We have suffered a great loss: a fine writer and a wonderful man has perished. Eugene Petrov introduced into Soviet literature the fantasy of the South and a profoundly human, illuminating humour in the traditions of Russian classics. He had the ability to see things; he had not only the eyes but the heart of an artist. He could immediately discern those seemingly unimportant details which determine the character of a person or an object. He could appraise the complexities of life. He saw and understood not only our Soviet construction but old Paris too and the energy of the New World. One had to be an acute observer to see "one-storey" America in a land of skyscrapers. One had to be a real artist to hear the lyrical confession of a heroic soldier amid the storm of war.

Eugene Petrov was a light-hearted man in love with life. He was an optimist to the marrow of his bones, an optimist by nature not by policy. He wanted life to be even better, so that people could live happily. He talked passionately of this. He realized that stagnation, philistinism and bureaucracy hindered the progress of mankind. He fought against these foes of everything human. He was not a bitter satirist, he did not scourge, but there was a force in his gentle humour which helped people to fight and to love more strongly. Such a man should have lived and lived, he was born for happiness. But he died at his post, he died because he loved life, loved his friends, loved his fatherland.

By L. Kozintseva

From the very first day of the war he had but one passion: to defeat the enemy! He did not step aside, he did not think twice or calculate. He was everywhere with our people. The defenders of Moscow saw him during the eventful stirring November days. He was in liberated Volokolamsk. One day in winter he set out for Yukhnov and returned with contusion but as high-spirited as ever: "We shall take Yukhnov," he said. Recently he visited Murmansk in the Far North. I was present when he was asked: "Would you like to go to Sevastopol?" His face

brightened: "Certainly!" That was two weeks ago. Petrov knew that the days of Sevastopol were numbered, but he wanted to tell his people and the whole world the story of the unprecedented courage of Sevastopol's defenders.

He wrote for *Pravda* and for *Krasnaya Zvezda (Red Star)*. In the course of a year of war he had been sending dispatches to America, they were printed in many best-known papers there. He told the Americans of the valour of the Red Army. Petrov knew America and could find words which reached the very hearts of his readers across the ocean. His newspaper stories encouraged the workers building planes and tanks, they inspired American soldiers preparing for an ocean voyage and a strenuous European campaign. Petrov did much to make America see the truth about this war. Petrov did much for our victory.

Eugene Petrov wrote novels with Ilf who died so early. Who has not read *Diamonds to Sit on* or *The Little Golden Calf*? Now millions of readers of these novels are fighting for their fatherland. They share the grief of Soviet writers. Proud of our literature, they will think: "Petrov was with us. . ."

It was not an accident that the last chapter of Petrov's life was his participation in the heroic defence of Sevastopol. The darkness into which he vanished from our eyes is illumined by the fire of the Red Fleet. For us and for history his name is bound with that of Sevastopol.

We learn of the writer's death in hard days when the enemy, conscious of his inevitable doom and frightened at the prospect of the second front, is straining every nerve to penetrate into the depths of Russia. Readers in uniform, soldiers-friends, remember the gay pre-war days when you laughed as you read of Ostap Bender and of his ancient automobile. Remember Petrov's newspaper articles about the heroes of our winter offensive. Your grief at the loss of the beloved writer will give you strength. We shall make the Germans pay for everything. We shall avenge Eugene Petrov.

ILYA EHRENBURG

Shelley

(In commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the day of his birth)

In August, 1942, the 150th anniversary of the birth of the great English poet Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792—1822) was commemorated. A number of English poets enjoy great popularity in the Soviet Union, not to mention Shakespeare, who is one of our favourites. Byron is very widely known and has had a profound influence on Russian literature, principally on the two great Russian poets Pushkin and Lermontov. The latter, by the way, was the author of excellent translations of *My Soul Is Dark*, from *The Hebrew Melodies*, and of the fragment *The Gladiator*. Chaucer has become well known here only in recent years, owing to the Soviet translators J. Kashkin and O. Rumer, who were the first to re-create *The Canterbury Tales* in the Russian tongue. Robert Burns at once won everybody's heart in the excellent translations done by the Soviet poets S. Marshak and T. Shchepkina-Kupernik. In our magazine (Nos. 1-2, 1942) we have noted

the splendid translations by S. Marshak of English folk ballads.

The above examples suffice to show to what a great degree the popularity of a foreign poet depends on his translator. The art of Soviet poetic translation has made great progress, and new excellent works written originally in English have found as it were a new reincarnation in the Russian language.

It is the business of the translator to welcome the poet to a foreign tongue, to make him feel, so to say, at home in a strange country. But not every poet yields readily to the translator's wishes. There are "stubborn" poets, who demand much coaxing and "breaking in."

Many in Russia are astonished at the fact that the great Russian poet Pushkin is comparatively so little known in England and America. But it is quite sufficient to read the translations of Pushkin's poetry in English to understand immediately the reason for this. As a rule these translations leave much to be desired. In them it is difficult to recognize one of the greatest poets the world has seen.

And if Pushkin is difficult to translate, the same may be said of Shelley. And this is the explanation of the *comparatively* limited popularity of this remarkable English poet in our country. Our translators must study Shelley very carefully and perseveringly. We do not doubt that soon many of the splendid works of the great English poet will appear in the Russian language.

Before the revolution Shelley was translated by one of the most outstanding representatives of Russian symbolism, Balmont. The result was beautiful and musical verse. But for Balmont Shelley's art was only an excuse for creating his own independent compositions. These poems have nothing of Shelley about them except the name. They are Balmont's. Besides, for Balmont Shelley was no more than a lyricist.

But for us Shelley is something more. We cannot agree with Mary Shelley that if the poet had not left philosophy for poetry he would have been a remarkable thinker; we cannot agree for the very reason that in his poetry itself Shelley was a remarkable thinker. In Soviet Russia the first serious work on Shelley's world-outlook has been written. This is a chapter in a comprehensive history of English literature being published by the Institute of World Literature of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., and at present is in the press. The author of this interesting work is the young literary scholar D. Zabludovsky, who is at present in the ranks of the Red Army, fighting against the German invaders.

Shelley's views on society, first and foremost, call for careful study. Shelley mercilessly lays bare all violence, all crude and brutal oppression. His *The Masque of Anarchy* is brilliant in this respect. Somehow these verses have a new ring today, in these times of struggle against the bloody fascist tyrants. In so far as, for Shelley, the temporary sway of the powers of evil and darkness was an anomaly, a departure from nature, he never doubted for a moment the final triumph of all the best in mankind:

And Anarchy, the ghastly birth,
Lay dead earth upon the earth;
The Horse of Death, tameless as wind,
Fled, and with his hoofs did grind
To dust the murderers thronged behind.

Shelley's indestructible faith in the bright and glorious future of mankind never left him even in his darkest moments. In the breath of the autumn wind he felt the coming spring:

If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

He never doubted that the day would come when humanity would fling off its chains of slavery and inhale deeply the air of freedom. Among the magnificent lyric works created by the poet, the greatest is *Prometheus Unbound*. Mankind, like nature, according to Shelley, exists as a stream of eternal and living change. (The poem *The Cloud* is an excellent illustration of this in regard to nature.) In English and American criticism it has frequently been pointed out that Shelley as early as in *Queen Mab* cast off the world-outlook of Godwin and left behind him the mechanical materialism and deism which are so typical of the thinkers of the eighteenth century, and in the essence of his philosophy drew near to Spinosa. But the question as to which aspect of Spinosa's philosophy is most fully reflected in Shelley and what Shelley himself added to this philosophy, has not yet been investigated. In any case it is certain that it would be difficult to find a poet who so powerfully portrays the ceaseless and unwearying creativeness, the infinite potency of the "great mother," Nature. Although his romantic imagery is "rich and strange," Shelley is no Ariel. He is one of earth's own sons. Could Ariel ever have created, for instance, such a tragedy as *The Cenci*? This tragedy, by the way, was prohibited by the tsarist censorship and was first staged in Russia only in Soviet times.

Remarkable, too, was Shelley's life. This fiery spirit, passionately and indomitably striving towards his goal, never laughed at what he believed in. In this regard there is a sharp contrast between him and those "ironists" whom English literature spawned in such abundance after the war of

1914—1918. His hatred of the frivolous attitude Shelley expressed, as he frequently did, in a paradoxical form when he said to his friend Hogg: "You laugh at everything! I am convinced that there can be no entire regeneration of mankind until laughter is put down!" On the other hand, his biography is interesting in that the impetuosity and fire of Shelley, that typical Englishman, go to refute the widely spread idea of Englishmen as slow and phlegmatic. Shelley was not only a contemplative philosopher and a creator of sweet verbal melodies. Today the voice of this singer of struggle and freedom sounds a clarion call to the English people, to all progressive mankind who are battling against the dark forces of violence and oppression.

M. MOROZOV

HENRI BARBUSSE

J. Mancisidor, a Latin-American revolutionary writer, who is known for his novel *Rose of the Winds,* is about to publish a biography of the famous French writer Henri Barbusse. That Mancisidor has chosen the noble figure of Barbusse for his new book, is no accident: before that he had written a biographical essay on Zola; and now, after Zola—on Barbusse: the teacher and his disciple, both of them outstanding humanists. The Dreyfus trial, in which Zola appeared as an ardent fighter for truth and justice, played the role of a message and determined the road chosen by Barbusse. Later it was to him not just a crime committed against somebody, but a new trial of calumny, perfidy and hatred of the people when the French bourgeoisie, the same which condemned Dreyfus, joined the world bourgeoisie in undertaking its sordid and mean campaign against the Soviet Union. In the attack and calumny directed against the Soviet Union Barbusse saw a new Dreyfus trial, and like Zola, Barbusse took a hand in the matter and defended the U.S.S.R., to which he dedicated his time and thoughts.

In these tragic days, full of crime and hope, Barbusse's biography is like a powerful proclamation of faith, like the flame of new enthusiasm akin to a "brilliant light in the darkness."

It was in Paris, on the 7th of September 1935. According to Josephine Herbst's testimony, "that Saturday afternoon in the small ubiquitous establishments which stretch all along the way from the Porte de la Chapelle to the Père Lachaise cemetery, no business whatsoever was transacted." In the course of several hours an enormous multitude, like an impetuous and threatening human torrent, had flooded everything. A dike of joined hands directed that stream from which a dull rumbling surged forth. In front of that torrent, far ahead of it, flaming banners, blue shirts and voices full of emotion rose and floated under a brilliant sun which shed its rays and heat from above. On benches, balconies, flat roofs and in small garret windows stood men, women and children performing miracles of equilibrium, raising their arms, clenching their fists and saluting a last sad farewell to the dead. The majestic strains of a funeral march rose slowly over all these sounds.

Faces moved by deep emotion are seen under the raised clenched fists. Thick boots stained with the white powder of plaster of Paris, with black coal dust and street mud, make the pavement resound heavily. Workers on an unfinished building stop their work and salute with grave faces from their scaffolding. Below, among the crowd, there is a man without one leg, leaning on his crutches, and behind him a war veteran in a wheeling chair pushes himself forward, proudly holding erect his fine head.

On the Place des Combat, some resting circus actors watch with amazement the crowd which as it throngs past appears to frown upon the queer comical heads of the horses of a merry-go-round, the brilliant carts of a "wheel of fortune" and the motionless swings installed on the Boulevard de Belleville. An unemployed who is washing his clothes in the smooth waters of the quietly-flowing Seine, stops in his work and looks fixedly, with a religious intensity, at the silently marching crowd.

All these people—workers, employees, ex-combatants, intellectuals, old women and young mothers,—have now gathered to bid farewell to a man. "Beautiful, severe faces which have been roughened by work and misery; poor whithered faces in which anguish and weariness seem

to have effaced the once firm outlines; sad eyes in which a new pain brings up so many old ones. . . ."

Everybody passes and salutes briefly. Tomorrow they will meet again under an endless sky, with misery and insecurity as their only company. Their salute is not a simple farewell, it is an oath, a promise and a threat against the insatiable enemy who lurks in the shadows.

In the Père Lachaise, the earth is waiting, under the shade of a sycamore tree. Nearby some communars of 1871 stand on guard. Abelardo and Eloisa have been left behind. They will be Barbusse's companions.

J. MANCISIDOR

"FIELD MARSHAL KUTUZOV"

The Great Patriotic War against hitlerite tyranny has evoked in the Soviet Union a new and special interest in the Patriotic War of 1812. Many studies of the famous partisans of 1812, the peasant army, the girl-private in a cavalry regiment Nadejda Durova, have already appeared. The Maly Theatre has staged *The Year 1812* after Leo Tolstoy's novel *War and Peace*: the Vakhtangov Theatre—a play in verse by Vladimir Soloviov, *Field Marshal Kutuzov*; the Lenin Komsomol Theatre—Alexander Gladkov's play *Long, Long Ago*, about the life of Nadejda Durova, though it somewhat departs from historical truth. Some few weeks ago Mikhail Bragin, a young Soviet writer, published a short monograph *Field Marshal Kutuzov* of which we give some details below.

Mikhail Bragin draws no parallels between Kutuzov's time and ours. Yet both these wars have one characteristic in common: they are patriotic wars, that is to say, people's wars, in the deepest sense of this word. Any real history of either of these wars will always be a story of how the people grew furious with those who had dared to think that one can conquer Russia, of how magnificently Russia fought, of what enormous diabolic forces it brought to the surface.

Kutuzov was a great leader of armies, if for no other reason than because he knew the people and believed in them. Suvorov's favourite pupil and comrade-in-arms, he did not build his plans on any scholastic "dispositions," like a Weyroter or a Pfuel, who used to expect that for some unknown reason the enemy would keep strictly to the program of action provided by that same Weyroter or Pfuel. Kutuzov always considered the soldier first.

At the same time Kutuzov's position was rather complicated because his opponent, too, never left out of consideration "the factor of morale," as we call it now. "Napoleon's soldiers knew that the Prussian and Austrian officers still flogged their soldiers, whereas the French soldier was told by Napoleon that the marshal's bâton lay in the soldier's knapsack. And what is more — the soldier knew that Lannes, private of hussars, a simple hostler, Ney, the son of a cooper, and other marshals who had proved their valour and ability in warfare, had already attained

"Field Marshal Kutuzov," a novel by M. Bragin, published in an edition of 400,000 copies

this bâton." His position was made still more difficult by the violent opposition of Emperor Alexander and his entourage to the fieldmarshal's care for the soldier, for his spirit and morale growth.

After the conclusion of the peace of Bucharest, which was a victory for the Russians, the Emperor was disloyal enough to discharge Kutuzov. Kutuzov returned to his estate of Goroshki in Volhynia, at the very moment when the army of Napoleon, undefeated for nearly twenty years, was approaching the Western frontier of Russia.

"I cannot be sure of my success in Europe as long as the Russian army increases by half-a-million soldiers every year!" declared Napoleon. This shows that this war was not fought to gain any disputed territories, but because Napoleon desired to stop the growth of Russia, to prevent her growing into a dangerous rival for France. The people understood this peculiar character of the war quite well, though they were a people still in bondage, serfs crushed by never ending toil for their master, the landowner.

Lenin said: "The wars of the great French revolution started as national ones, and such they were. These wars period were revolutionary, their aim was to defend the great revolution against the coalition of the counter-revolutionary monarchies. But when, subjugating quite a number of long existant large and vital national States of Europe, Napoleon created the French empire, the national French wars became imperialistic wars, and in their turn begot wars against Napoleon's imperialism for national liberation."

"The entire Russian people, defending their country with valour and selflessness, rose to fight this patriotic war for national liberation, and of their own free will sent thousands of recruits to Kutuzov's heroic army.

"One might often see Kutuzov surrounded by crowds of peasants thousands strong, talking with them, explaining to them the methods of partisan warfare.

"Groups of French rearguards, stopping in villages for the night, awoke in burning houses and rushing out were cut down by the partisans. Large units were held up by demolished bridges and blocked up roads. Escorts could hardly ever defend baggage trains against capture. Davydov's, Figner's, Seslavin's, Dorokhov's, Kudashev's and other detachments of horse and cossack units of Kutuzov's army played an enormous part in the partisan fighting, but certainly no greater than that of the partisan units commanded by peasant-elected leaders.

"There was Guerasim Kurin who organized a partisan band of six thousand peasants from the Vokhra district. . . History has not forgotten the name of Vassilissa, the wife of a village bailiff, who joined the partisans in the Sychov district. . . One of the most talented organizers and commanders was Chetvertakov, a private of the Kiev dragoons. . . He began by having only one follower. Then by stratagem he captured two French dragoons. Having taken their arms, he and his peasant friend captured some more. Very soon Chetvertakov's band increased to forty-seven men, then one hundred and fifty, and at last the whole region had taken up arms. . . Chetvertakov introduced everywhere a most remarkable order supported by the peasants themselves. All men joining his band received special military training. He took the cuirasses of his prisoners and used them as targets for shooting practice. He mounted his men upon horses captured from the French, organizing by this simple method a cavalry detachment. Towards the end of the war Chetvertakov's detachment was included in the regular army units.

"There were many popular heroes like Kurin and Chetvertakov. . . Kutuzov combined the efforts of the army with the efforts of partisans on a giant scale and led them to a common goal. . ."

We shall not recall here how the war proceeded. Mikhail Bragin tells it very graphically. We shall only mention the chief facts which reveal the general scheme of this great conflict.

Russia in 1812 faced quite singlehanded France followed by nearly the whole of Europe. Hardly 200,000 Russians defended the Western frontier of Russia against the army of Napoleon half-a-million men strong. Napoleon had carefully prepared the suddenness of his attack. His instructions to Loriston, French ambassador in Russia, are a classical instance of diplomatic double-dealing. The nearer the French army came to the Russian frontier, the more insistent became Napoleon's declarations of friendship and his requests for the conclusion of peace. Simultaneously Napoleon was riddling the country with spies.

Napoleon's first victories were greatly helped by Alexander's deep-seated distrust of Kutuzov, by the Russian Emperor's constant desire to ensure his own personal leadership in the war, by his extraordinary ability to select the least gifted and the most worthless advisers, as also by outright treachery among the higher commanders.

Napoleon had a thorough knowledge of the real conditions in Russia. He could say that he had foreseen everything, and the only unexpected thing he met with was well defined by Colincourt (Minister of War), who said: "It seems it is not enough to kill the Russians, one has to fell them to the ground first."

Napoleon answered Colincourt (they were talking before the beginning of the battle of Borodino): "I shall fell them with my artillery." And yet it seems that artillery could not help here. At this stage of the war Kutuzov limited his efforts to preventing the enemy from defeating the Russians. In contravention of the direct orders of Alexander who dreamt of glorious spectacular battles, Kutuzov led his men away, made them retreat, and forced his adversary to incur fruitless bloodshed.

After Borodino Napoleon understood that he had lost, even though the field of battle remained to the French. He understood that he had lost something bigger than a single battle. In later years on the Island of St. Helena he used to say: "Of all the battles I have fought the most terrible was the one near Moscow. That day the French showed themselves worthy of victory, but the Russians proved their right to be unconquerable."

After Borodino, when Napoleon was in Semyonovskaya, a burned down Russian village, his marshals spoke to him of his guard which Napoleon refused to make use of even at the most critical moment of the battle.

"I cannot risk my last reserves three thousand kilometers from Paris," Napoleon answered sharply, and turned his horse away.

Kutuzov retreated with his army and straddled the road by which the French were forced to retreat just at the moment when this decided the results of the campaign.

"While the Russian army had marched on its retreat from Braunau to Tznaim under the hard conditions of autumn, starvation and the knowledge of being doomed, fighting the whole time an enemy at least four times its strength; while this army carried out a successful retreat from Niemen to Moscow followed by an enemy three times stronger,—the aggressor army composed of so many nations proved unable to stand the difficulties of its retreat. . . Out of a hundred thousand soldiers that started out from Moscow, Napoleon possessed only forty thousands when he arrived at Smolensk. Attempts have been made to explain his immense losses as the result of cold and starvation, but by now it has been definitely shown that that autumn was extraordinarly mild and that the cold only set in near Smolensk. Starvation set in because Kutuzov had forced Napoleon to take an already ravaged road. And this starvation increased greatly because of the complete disorganization growing in the fleeing army as a result of the heavy blows received in battle."

"Let the courageous example of our great ancestors inspire you in this war."

J. Stalin

A poster by V. Ivanov and O. Burova

Kutuzov explained his point of view in a talk with Puitsbosque, a commissary of Napoleon's army, who had been taken prisoner.

Puitsbosque writes: " 'You could see, Puitsbosque,' he told me, 'that as soon as your army left Moscow, I closed up all the new exits you wanted to slip through. . . I led you from Viazma to Smolensk as surely as if you were already prisoners. I could have destroyed you all even before you reached the town, but sure of your ruin I did not want to sacrifice a single one of my soldiers. . . This is the way how we, Northern barbarians, care for our men. . . Be assured that few of those who saved their lives near Krasnaya will be able to pass Orsha. My orders have been given all the way to Beresina, so that the travels of your army and its commander will have to end there. I mean if my orders are faithfully carried out.'"

As we know, that is just what happened. The soldiers followed exactly the instructions of their leader who so thoroughly trusted their patriotism.

LEONID BOROVOY

CURRENT PUBLICATIONS

THE RUSSIAN EDITION OF "INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE" UNDER REVIEW

Issues 7 to 12 of the magazine *International Literature* in Russian cover the period of July to December 1941 inclusively, i.e., the first period of the Patriotic War of the Soviet Union against the German-fascist invaders. The fundamental requirements the reader may wish those numbers to meet may be indicated in a few questions, viz.:

How did the magazine respond to the events of war, to the ever growing resistance of the peoples of the nazi-invaded countries, and to the powerful wave of solidarity with the U.S.S.R. which has spread over England, America and other freedom-loving countries? How has the magazine exposed the loathsome nature of Hitlerism, its foul, savage "ideology" on which the hordes of those murderous degenerates were reared, trained and incited by Hitler for the extermination of mankind? Such are the principal questions which furnish the criteria that should be applied when reviewing the literary matter published in the magazine during those months.

* * *

The bulk of the matter printed in the belles-lettres section of the magazine belongs to antifascist literature. Among the most prominent works we shall mention Constancia de la Mora's autobiography, the publication of which was begun prior to the outbreak of the war; it reflects one of the early periods of fascist aggression—the heroic struggle of the Spanish people against the German and Italian interventionists and their Francoist hirelings. In this book Constancia de la Mora, a gifted writer and one of the ablest politicians of republican Spain, tells us of the agonies suffered by the Spanish people, of their heroism and fortitude in the fight for the cause that was not merely the private concern of Spaniards, but the common course of all advanced and progressive humanity. The author's sincere and passionate patriotism, her abhorrence of the enslavers of the Spanish people, together with the richness and vividness of her style, awaken the readers' keen interest and sympathy.

The same feelings are roused by the short story *Jules*, by the German antifascist writer Friedrich Wolf (No. 7-8), which is, in fact, a reminiscence of the days spent in a French concentration camp where men of the International Brigade were interned after the defeat of republican Spain.

This tale of wonderful comradeship that welded the ranks of the enemies of fascism, of true friendship and solidarity in the struggle for the common cause, is one of the best stories in the issues under review.

A series of one-act plays by Berthold Brecht, *Germany—a Tale of Horror* (No. 7-8), as well as antifascist plays like *The Witness* by Heinrich Mann and *Magnificat* by Alfred Kurella (No. 11-12), represent the horrifying aspect of present-day Germany. We are shown a terrible portrait gallery of the offscourings of humanity, born of the villainy of Hitler's regime: soulless and impudent nazi bureaucrats, the S.S. brutes, sadists, hangmen, professional crooks and black-guards; we see their hapless victims, and also people whose spirit has not been broken by the nazi atrocities and in whose hearts are germinating seeds of ineradicable hatred for the torturers of the German people.

We may consider as belonging to the same literary genre a great deal of matter depicting the frame of mind of the peoples in the European countries under hitlerite occupation. In the talented story by the Norwegian writer Erik Jens Petersen, *Who Called You Here?* (No. 7-8), we see Norwegians fighting for the freedom and independence of their country; in the story by Elisabeth Kyle *Zizka's Town* we have Czechs, true to the fighting traditions of their fatherland, to the traditions of Jan Zizka, which rouse so savage a fury in the hitlerite butchers.

A short story by an English writer, Storm Jameson (No. 7-8), wery simply and powerfully written, relates the tragic episodes of the days when the hitlerite butchers seized Vienna.

All these stories, plays, etc., though they are by no means of the same artistic value, give a sufficiently expressive and truthful picture of the European rear of the hitlerite army of adventurers; a rear which, to use Stalin's striking expression, is "a volcano, which is ready to erupt at any moment and overwhelm the German imperialist house of cards."

The literary matters depicting the political situation in fascist Italy is not so richly represented. A chapter from Upton Sinclair's novel *Between Two Worlds* (No. 11-12) just outlines the features of the

regime of butchery imposed on the country by Mussolini, who has now sold the Italian people into serfdom for life under Hitler. A short story *One Glass Less* by Luigi Spada (printed in No. 1-2 of our magazine for the current year), portraying the way antifascist ideas are conceived in present-day Italy,—is undoubtedly a good example of antifascist literature, but it is the only short story about Italy for the whole six months.

The section devoted to Anglo-American war stories (No. 11-12) is highly interesting not only because of the intrinsic artistic value of the stories, which are among the best examples of Anglo-American short-story writing (their authors being such talented and popular short-story writers as Albert Maltz, Ben Field, Eric Knight, Manuel Komroff and others), but also by virtue of their political antifascist acumen. And if Maltz narrates about a *Peace of Paper*, if he takes for his subject the American Civil War of 1861—1865, this is but to make use of historical parallels in order to pass quite unequivocal judgement on the Hitlerites who dream of driving all mankind into serfdom.

Komroff's story *Tomorrow, Tomorrow* does not depict any events of the present war against Hitlerism, its theme being a striking episode of concentration camp life in hitlerite Germany, but it makes the reader feel the author's undisguised loathing for the sadistic regime of the hitlerite butchers, and so inspires the determination resolutely, relentlessly to exterminate them.

One cannot fail to note the stories respectively titled *Ocean Convoy* which reveals the popular and patriotic character of the war the English people are carrying on against the nazis, and *Six O'Clock Whistle* depicting the process of mobilization which is taking place in American industry for the carrying out of the extensive armament program.

Poetry is represented mostly by verses of German antifascist poets. The best of these are Johannes Becher's *Moscow* (No. 9-10) which expresses the poet's admiration for the city the very name of which "makes all hearts throb faster," and Hugo Huppert's *Where Are You Driving Us, Corporal?* dealing with the moral dejection manifested among many of Hitler's soldiers on the Soviet-German front.

Other verses worthy of note are *A Hungarian Song* and *The Soldiers Ballad* by the antifascist Hungarian poet Emil Madaras (No. 11-12); these are imbued with hate for Horthy, the bloody butcher of the Hungarian people, who has driven Hungarian soldiers to the shambles to satisfy Hitler's predatory appetite.

Slav poetry is amply represented in the section *Heroic Traditions of Slav People*, where fiery patriotic lines by Senkiewicz and Mickiewicz harmonize with verses by Radule Styenski, Ondra Lysohorsky, Victor Dyk, M. Vazhinska and other contemporary poets, who glorify the courage and heroism of the people of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, which persist in the gallant struggle against the hitlerite invaders.

The only shortcoming of the belles-lettres section in the magazine during those six months was the absence of complete larger-scale fiction on antifascist war themes. A short story or a one-act play (however good or brilliant of its kind), by the very nature of its construction and peculiarities, is debarred from giving such colourful and life-size pictures as a lengthy narrative or a novel can afford.

This deficiency, however, is made good to some extent by the abundancy of sketches, of reportage.

Among these the first worth mentioning is the excerpt from Martha Dodd's *Through Embassy Eyes* (No. 9-10) which English and American readers are well acquainted with. The memoirs of Martha Dodd, the daughter of the former American ambassador in Germany, who spent four years in Hitler's inferno, provide most valuable evidence, an eyewitness' record exposing the essential foulness of Hitler's regime.

Of particular interest is Harvey Kiemmer's *Everyday Life in Wartime England* (No. 7-8) depicting the life of Londoners during the period of mass German air-raids. The air-battle for England is described by R.A.F. pilots in sketches entitled *Pilots at the Microphone* (No. 11-12); these fragments from the English book *Airmen Speak* are indisputably among the most striking records of the fight carried on by freedom-loving peoples against Hitlerism.

The same may be said of *Women on the Spot* by Storm Jameson (No. 7-8) describing the share done by English women in the defence of their country.

Among other writings in this section we should also mention Erskine Caldwell's *Impressions of Moscow* (No. 11-12), the writer notes describing Moscow during the German air-raids carried out last summer; and fragments from Dirk van der Heide's book *My Sister and I*, relating the irruption of the German-nazi hordes into Holland.

The section of criticism and political articles opens with the declarations of antifascist writers on the patriotic war of the Soviet people. The pith and marrow of these declarations is well expressed by Jean-Richard Bloch who states that the fight of the Soviet people is also the fight of all freedom-loving peoples. The writer concludes his declaration with the following

words: "Long live the Red Army and its leaders!"

Of the savagery engulfing nazi Germany, of nazi obscurantism and barbarity, of cannibal-rearing schools and universities in "the Third Reich," we read in the articles: *Fascism—the Destroyer of Culture, Writers Murdered by Fascism, Against Nazi Libel on Ibsen, Cannibal Rearing* and *The Philosophizing Pterodactyl* (which latter concerns the book of Gottfried Leske *I Was a Nazi Flier*). Very interesting is the pamphlet by the German antifascist writer Arnold Zweig *Tales and Reality* (No. 11-12) where Grimm's fairy tale is used as groundwork for exposing the insatiable brutish cupidity of that miserable adventurer Hitler.

Among the articles devoted to the fight of the peoples in occupied countries Professor Zdenek Nejedly's *About the Czech People and Their Culture* is of considerable interest; it contains much data concerning the history and cultural traditions of the Czech people.

Problems of Russian-Anglo-American cultural relations are allotted much space, the magazine regularly publishing reviews and articles, both of a political and literary character, on the subject of cultural intercourse and accord among peoples of the antihitlerite coalition.

From this point of view A. Startsev's article *America and the Russian Public*, showing the development of literary connections through a period of a century and a half, is of considerable interest and importance.

Among other articles in this section *English Classical Literature in Russia, Soviet Editions of English Literature, Relations Existing Between English and Russian Art* and a few others are undoubtedly worthy of consideration.

We read about Latin America in F. Kelyin's article about Juan Marinello[1], one of the most prominent writers in Latin America, whose creative work is indissolubly associated with the fight for the noblest ideals of advanced and progressive humanity.

Well assorted, though not very numerous, bibliographical notes and reviews complete this section, giving the Soviet reader ample information on the best works of antifascist and patriotic-war literature in the Western democracies.

The reader will find reviews on the following books: *Hound-heads*, a novel by the outstanding Czech writer Alois Jirásek, telling us about his people's struggle against the Austrian-German yoke; *Europe to Let*, a book of sketches by the English writer Storm Jameson which tells about the Central-European countries at the time their occupation by the German fascists was perpetrated; *The Seventh Cross*, a novel by the well-known German antifascist writer Anna Seghers, a war-novel *Night Raid* by the American Eugene Lohrke, showing the attitude of the English people at the time of intensive German air-raids, as well as on many other new books.

We may consider as belonging to the same section literary matter printed under the headings *Letters from Abroad* and *Echoes, Letters, Meetings*, where letters from foreign writers, contributions for the magazine, are published, as well as articles and pamphlets reprinted or condensed from English and American periodicals.

Such literary news keeps the Soviet reader abreast of the latest achievements of modern literature, which reflects the fight of the peoples of England, America and other freedom-loving countries against the common foe.

Besides these urgent militant problems of the day, the magazine also gives some space to works of universal intellectual value.

These comprise first of all fragments from Mark Twain's autobiographical book *Mark Twain in Eruption*, newly published in the U.S.A., every line of which is worthy of absorbed interest and even research, and some new translations from Emil Verhaern (No. 11-12).

Verhaern's poems, published now in *International Literature*, sound in a different and more forceful key at present, when the crimes committed by Wilhelm's Germany, so ardently hated by the poet, have been exceeded a hundredfold by the hordes of Hitler's assassins.

The reader appreciates the novel *Somewhere Far Away* by the German antifascist writer Theodore Plivier, which tells of the lot of a sailor marooned in an out of the way spot somewhere in South America.

The firmly antifascist attitude held by the countries of Latin America, their warm sympathies for the U.S.S.R. and its fight against the German-nazi invaders, their aid to the cause of the international antihitlerite coalition, all this enhances the interest felt by the Soviet readers in the life and struggle of the peoples of these countries.

Viewed in this light, Plivier's novel, as well as correspondence from those countries published under the heading *Letters From Abroad*, together with the chronicles of cultural events in Latin America, are assuredly worthy of the reader's attention and interest.

ALEXANDER ABRAMOV

[1] See our No 3-4 for the current year.

THE PAINTER OF WAR SCENES

The art of V. Vereshchagin, an ardent patriot and one of the finest Russian painters, is at present of particularly vital significance. Contemporary Soviet artists are faced with the responsible task of recording all the grandeur and heroism of the Great War for the Fatherland. Thus it is quite natural that they should turn to the history of battle-painting, so as to study and learn from the brilliant old masterpieces the skill and power of artistic execution.

The figure of Vereshchagin stands out amidst the painters of battle-scenes of the past in striking relief. He devoted all his life, his rare talent and skill, all his boundless love for the people, and in particular for the Russian soldier, to the cause of the peace. In our time the works of Vereshchagin arrest attention also in that they touch upon questions of great social significance.

My acquaintance with Vereshchagin started when I was a young fellow still living at home; in an official capacity I met the artist in the spring of 1900. I had just been appointed assistant secretary of the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts in St.-Petersburg, and the first task assigned to me was to arrange an exhibition of certain objects of the orthodox religious cult that had been collected by Vereshchagin during his travels in our northern districts: ikons, wood-carvings, chased metal work, fabrics, sculptures done in wood, multicoloured sets in mica, etc. For about a week I worked with another assistant secretary, the painter Victor Ivanovich Zarubin, on the setting out of the exhibits, and the artist himself invariably dropped in every day, gave various instructions and corrected our arrangements.

To be sure, both Zarubin and I wished to make the very most of our meetings with Vereshchagin: we wanted to find out about the artist's life, his manner of working, about much that was connected with his name. The picturesqueness of Vereshchagin's vivid narratives was enhanced by the mobility of the artist's handsome face, the expressive inflections of his voice, the liveliness of his fine deep eyes. When there was anything comical, he would be the first to laugh; and his laughter was most captivating—frank and infectious.

I remember Zarubin was especially interested to know why Vereshchagin during the first years of his work never touched the palette, restricting himself to his pencil, and using the brush only in those rare instances when he resorted to Indian ink washes. He asked the artist about this.

"I have often had to answer the same question," Vereshchagin said. "Many people wonder why I didn't take to painting during the first two or three years. Certainly, it wasn't because I was afraid of using colours, as someone wrote of me. But as I am drawn heart and soul to military themes,—military and no other, and as I conceived my future artistic work only as a portrayer of battle-scenes,—I felt that I must

master the technique of drawing to the utmost perfection so far as in me lay, and only then switch off from the pencil to the use of brush and colours. I also felt from the very first steps that the subjects of my paintings should be exclusively what I had seen with my own eyes, what I had experienced myself and lived through, and that my impressions should come directly from the pictures of life and nature which unfolded themselves before me. I was never able to draw anything entirely from imagination or fantasy, and all my compositions and conceptions are without exception taken from scenes I have actually witnessed, drawn in pencil and afterwards painted in my field albums and sketch-books

"If I had not mastered drawing so thoroughly, could I with the accuracy and swiftness necessary for my art have recorded the episodes of war, the character of military engagements, the types of the participants both of our own and of the enemy troops?

"At that time, when I just kept on drawing and drawing, I was very hard up: a piece of bread and cheeze and a mug of milk were my usual daily fare, but I worked sixteen to eighteen hours a day.

"The artist Theodor Horschelt with his drawings, his superb skill as a designer, influenced me greatly. When at the beginning of the sixties I lived in Tiflis, I doubt if there were a single Georgian or Russian family of any culture which did not possess a few drawings by this excellent artist. He was prolific to a fantastic degree, and apparently scattered gifts of his brilliant drawings right and left. Later on a warm and close friendship sprang up between Horschelt and myself. When Horschelt died suddenly, he nevertheless had found time to instruct his wife that his fine studio in München should be handed over only to me. This was done, and I worked in it three years, from 1870 to 1873; it was there that I painted, from materials I had accumulated, all the pictures of the Turkestan period.

"Apotheosis of War" *A painting by V. Vereshchagin*

"I tell you that I was all the surer of the correctness of my method, if I may call it such, when I learnt that Horschelt too, as a painter of war pictures, had travelled the same path in his artistic development: first drawings and drawings, and only then paintings. And I always say to all young artists who wish to render battle-scenes—I hate the word 'battalist,' though I sometimes use it—if accuracy of drawing and firmness of hand are necessary to every painter, to us, who depict war, they are absolutely indispensable.

"When the famous artist and teacher Jérome, to whom I owe much, selected my drawings before a big gathering of artists as being far and away superior to ordinary good drawings, I was inexpressibly proud." (Stassov[1] in one of his articles on Vereshchagin recalls that Jérome often told Vereshchagin: "Nobody can draw like you.")

"Yes, and there's another quality that every painter of war-scenes ought to have,—courage. True," added Vereshchagin with a twinkle in his eye, "this quality, like every other feeling, abounds in one, and is entirely absent in another. And those of the latter type would do better to abstain from war themes."

It is interesting to read the remarks about the Vereshchagin of those days in one of the big French papers, *Gaulois*: "Vereshchagin kept to pencil-work for a long time; he seemed afraid to start on the brush. Jérome and Vida tried in vain to persuade him. From his second journey on the borders of Persia" (thus the French, always careless about such things, called our Caucasus) "he still returned with nothing but drawings (1865). The two above-named artists, when they were shown his albums and sketch-books, urged him still more insistently to devote his powers to painting."

Vereshchagin went over to painting only when he himself felt that he was ready for it and was drawn to it.

To us young people Vereshchagin seemed a most unusual personality, who had broken all the traditional rules of battle-painting, a man of enormous energy and adamant will; and such in fact he was.

It is certain that no works aroused so much discussion, such furious arguments and debates, as Vereshchagin's canvases.

The spectators were amazed by the portrayals of the sufferings of the rank-and-file soldiers, by paintings unparalleled among battle-pictures for their truth, strength, and the love and respect shown for those unknown heroes, the defenders of their fatherland.

But Stassov very truly remarked that "Vereshchagin's soldiers are flesh and blood of the people. . . His soldiers are the very same individuals who haven't ceased for a single moment to live the life of the people, as Leo Tolstoy's soldiers in the brilliant Caucasian and Sevastopol stories."

Not only the Russian public, but the public of France, Austria, Germany, England and America, were stirred as never before. Everyone was interested in this remarkable artist.

Vereshchagin's pictures attracted Russian spectators not only in enormous numbers, but of an unusual type. A journalist of those days remarked upon the presence "at Vereshchagin exhibitions of democratic rank-and-filers, small townsfolk, who never before visited our galleries."

His first exhibition (1874) attracted to St.-Petersburg such a mass of people that extra detachments of police and gendarmerie had to go on duty; many times a day the doors of the hall had to be locked and the

[1] V. Stassov—an outstanding art critic and historian, who for thirty years stood by Vereshchagin through thick and thin, and defended him with his fiery pen from numerous attacks and even insinuations.

people let in in groups, and still queues crowded round the entrance from morning till closing time. The second exhibition (1880) during the forty days of its existence in St.-Petersburg attracted two hundred thousand people. The same collection, taken to Berlin, in the course of sixty-five days was visited by one hundred and forty-five thousand, in Vienna in twenty-eight days by one hundred and ten thousand, and all these not counting all the people let in free whom Vereshchagin himself generously admitted.

The usual attendance for art exhibitions in those times, even the most popular ones, was twenty to twenty-five thousand.

Both in Russia and abroad discussions, arguments and debates went on amongst wide circles of people about Vereshchagin's pictures. The arguers split up into two sharply defined camps: in one, Vereshchagin was loved and admired heart and soul, with wild enthusiasm; in the other he was no less heartily hated. There was no middle way.

Kramskoy [1] wrote to Tretyakov [2] about the Vereshchagin exhibition of 1874: "Now about Vereshchagin: I repeat, I cannot speak calmly; in my opinion, he is an event." He added that Vereshchagin's pictures "were an acquisition for Russia considerably greater than any territorial acquisition."

The artist's numerous enemies could not forgive him either his new interpretation of the principles of the art of battle-painting, nor his refusal to accept a professorship in the Academy of Arts, nor the unconventionality of his artistic development. "He never ceased to be persecuted during his whole life," Vereshchagin's biographer tells us.

[1] Kramskoy I. N. (1837—1887), noted Russian artist.

[2] Tretyakov P. M. (1832—1898), founder of the Tretyakov gallery, one of the largest in Russia.

* * *

Much has been written of Vereshchagin's heroic behaviour on the battle-field. I have heard stories about him both from Stassov and from the artist's brother, Alexander Vassilyevich, and, especially, from his contemporary, the painter Nikolai Nikolayevich Karazin; the latter now is quite forgotten, but at that time he was one of the most popular Russian book-illustrators.

Karazin spent part of the summer of 1868 together with Vereshchagin in Samarkand, and they both took part in the defence of Samarkand in June 1868. For his conduct on this occasion Vereshchagin received an officer's military order, and, it seems, Karazin was awarded a gold weapon.

"Vereshchagin," Karazin relates, "fought with such courage, with such scorn of death, that even seasoned old soldiers were filled with astonishment and admiration. Attired in some sort of fantastic suit of once white linen, in a broad-brimmed felt hat of the Garibaldi style, overgrown with a jet-black beard and with blazing eyes, Vereshchagin was a figure that his enemies soon learned to fear the very sight of, but at the same time on whom they fell with especial fury.

"Once Vereshchagin's rifle was hit, another time he got a nasty wound in the leg, lost a lot of blood and was lame for a long time after, but not for a moment did he leave his comrades-in-arms.

"Our troops were in a bad fix. The Commander-in-Chief, the Governor General of Turkestan, General A. A. Kaufman, under whom Vereshchagin acted as war-painter, officially going by the name of ensign in attendance on the Governor General, had gone off somewhere on an expedition and had not taken into account the possibility of an attack on Samarkand.

"Well then, when all was over with the attack on Samarkand, Kaufman

"Forgotten" *By V. Vereshchagin*

returned with his detachment and his suite. The General thanked the officers, and they with one accord drew his attention to Vereshchagin as the man to whom more than to anybody else the victory was due, as the man who, by the example he set of courage and fearlessness, inspired his comrades again and again to repulse the enemy attacks and themselves to make ever fresh sallies.

"General Kaufman summoned Vereshchagin and began to thank him. Vereshchagin received Kaufman's words coldly, and declared that victory was victory, but all the soldiers said the same thing,—that he, Kaufman, had left the fortress without having properly organized its defence.

"Kaufman became confused, and the officers of his suite were so indignant at such insolence on the part of a mere 'ensign' towards a general in command of a whole military district that nothing would satisfy them but that he shoud be shot.

"For a long time Vereshchagin was kept under the military arrest; at one period his fate literally hung by a thread.

"But however indulgently Kaufman looked upon the 'ensign' who was attached to his personal staff, nevertheless he was the first to notice the 'harmful influence' which Vereshchagin's pictures might have on wide circles of the public,—not directly of course, but indirectly. In particular, three pictures of the Turkestan cycle: *Forgotten*, *Surrounded and Pursued*, and *They Have Got In*, aroused the General's apprehensions. Nonetheless these three pictures were at first hung in the Vereshchagin exhibition of 1874. But Kaufman energetically set to work to prejudice public opinion against them. And even the tsar, who was to visit the exhibition, managed to bias against them.

"I well remember stories about how the tsar, coming up to these pictures, made a grimace of displeasure and remarked to the artist who was following behind him: 'In my army such things do not take place!' The result of this remark of the tsar's is well known—the same evening Vereshchagin burned all the three paintings. Vereshchagin changed beyond recognition, everybody was afraid he would have a nervous breakdown; only his strong constitution helped him through the crisis."

Rumours about Vereshchagin's having burnt his pictures only because of the fact that they portrayed a reality that was not to the taste of the government and the military clique, flew from one end of Russia to the other, and even abroad. Photographers just couldn't print enough reproductions, especially of the picture *Forgotten*. It is known that Mussorgsky in the autumn of 1874 wrote an excellent ballad to the words of the poem *Forgotten* written by the poet Golenishchev-Kutuzov. And Stassov told me how much fuss and to-do there was to get permission to publish either of them; for a long time both music and words circulated in manuscript.

As the writer Dmitri Vassilyevich Grigorovich rather wittily remarked, "Vereshchagin was never a 'painter of note'—he was a popular painter right from the start."

It is interesting to note that General Kaufman's fears were widely shared in military circles not only here in Russia, but also abroad. The German Field Marshal Moltke for instance forbade soldiers to visit Vereshchagin's exhibitions in Berlin.

At the time of the Russo-Turkish war of 1877—1878, Vereshchagin displayed his extraordinary fearlessness. Again Karazin met Vereshchagin on the battle-field and often visited him when he was in the Bucharest hospital recovering from a severe wound received when he took part in the attack of a small pinnace on a big Turkish monitor on the Danube. Vereshchagin was always in the very forefront of the fray, where the battle raged most fiercely; he made his drawings on thin little pieces of board, often during the battle itself. Vereshchagin took part in attacks, in stormings and in cavalry charges.

Not for nothing did Vereshchagin himself write that he went to the war "not only to see and reproduce various war episodes, but so as to come into closer touch with people and to study them."

In what kind of conditions Vereshchagin worked, we may judge from his letter to Vladimir Stassov of October 9th, 1877. "The Nikolai cliff at Shipka," he wrote, "has a sort of fantastic look. There literally isn't a safe spot on or about it. Wherever you settle down to work, leaden bonbons rain down from all directions. I found a nice little cosy corner, and had just set to work on the *Valley of Roses*, which you know probably from the papers, when crash came a grenade on the roof. A shower of dust came down. All the same, I think, you won't get the better of me so easily, I'll finish the painting. In two minutes another grenade. Both yours truly and his palette and paints are smothered in earth and bits of tile. There's nothing to be done, I daub in the rest as best I can and get out while the going's good."

* * *

The artist V. I. Zarubin, who worked together with me on the arrangement of the Vereshchagin exhibition, was a great sceptic. "Look here," he said, "Vereshchagin declares that he can only work from nature and in no other way. But what about his 1812 paintings? There's something here I can't make out. I'll have to ask him." And ask he did.

"You know," answered Vereshchagin, smiling, "I've expected your question. As far as I remember,

I've never had a talk with artists about my work, but that they've put me similar questions. Certainly for this cycle of pictures it was impossible for me to paint from nature in the direct sense of the word. It stands to reason, I couldn't have seen any of these subjects in real life. But remember how much severe training I had previously gone through in the course of my life, how much I had already done, and to what an extent I had cultivated my powers of vision, my artistic insight and feeling.

"I don't wish to hide the fact that the pictures of this cycle gave me a lot of trouble to paint, much more than anything I had done before; and at the same time, in spite of all the recognition accorded them, I don't consider them to be complete successes, or to count them among the best that I have done in my long career as an artist.

"But I was, and still am, too strongly attracted by the amazing records of the glorious military exploits of the Russian army and of the whole Russian people in the epoch of the War for the Fatherland. I tell you that in working on the 1812 pictures I felt as though I were first and foremost making a kind of present to myself. The desire to portray the episodes of this war arose in me very long ago, when I was quite a young man. I had one aim, and one only: to show in my pictures of the events of the year 1812 the great national spirit of the Russian people, their self-forgetfulness in their struggle against the enemy. And yes, there was another thing, too: I wanted also to take Napoleon off the pedestal on which he had been placed. But that was secondary: only the first I felt to be really important. And the very same thing that worried you, namely, the impossibility of my using material presented by life itself,—that is, of my following the usual method in this instance,—troubled me too and kept me from attempting the cycle for many years.

"I worked hard and for a long time before I set to work on the 1812 pictures. I did all that was in my power to attain the greatest historical truth and accuracy. The amount of literature I studied, the number of drawings, etchings, pictures, maps, articles in common use at that time, both military and civil, that I examined, the quantity of material I looked through which might yield me some knowledge, even in the tiniest doses, was enormous: I literally devoured everything. Ap-

"All Quiet at Shipka" *By V. Vereshchagin*

parently I digested it all in not so badly, for my book on Napoleon in Russia in 1812 ran through four or five editions even in France, where they are so jealous about everything concerning the "Little Corporal."

"I've seen it said somewhere that I took a hint from Meissonier and Menzel, and used for my pictures of the Napoleonic cycle some kind of complicated settings and even specially got-up scenes, a sort of tableaux vivants, scattering salt on the ground for snow scenes and decorating the trees with bits of cotton wool. Of course that's all nonsense.

"I can tell you what I did in reality. During my lifetime I wandered much and long about the site of the battle of Borodino and along the roads in the Moscow and Smolensk provinces by which the much vaunted army of Napoleon advanced on us, and afterwards fled back in disgrace. And, as usual, I made a lot of drawings of local types and of landscapes. Then, very stubbornly and perseveringly, taking my time over my choice, I sought the models I needed, and all the figures in my pictures of the 1812 cycle are none of them creations of my imagination, only nature, and again nature.

"In my search I collected all that I could, too, from the traditional stories of the old folk, as, for instance, the story about the partisan Stepan Arkhipovich, the elder of one of the villages of the Mozhaisk district, whom I portrayed in the picture *Don't Hinder Me! Make Way! (The Way Is Open)*. Somebody remarked in the press that the figure of Stepan Arkhipovich reminds one of Ivan Sussanin, whom we are accustomed to see in Glinka's opera. Well, so what of it, if my partisan is reminiscent of Sussanin, the most heroic, the most supremely devoted to his fatherland of all Russian partisans? Not only do I see nothing deserving of reproach in this, but I go further: I was inexpressibly glad when I found a peasant who resembled Sussanin in appearance.

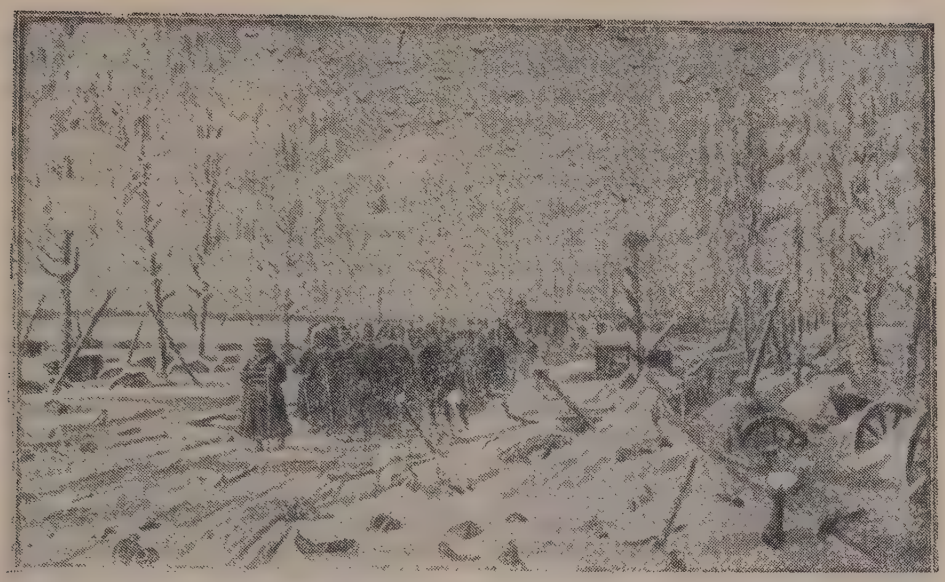
"The criticism has also been levelled at me that my Moscow fires of 1812 are like stage fires lit up by bengal lights; and that this, forsooth, is so, because I lit my models of these scenes in this way. This is rubbish. I painted Moscow on fire only on the basis of my many sketches in oils of the blazing conflagrations in Bulgarian villages, which were mercilessly burnt at the time of the Russo-Turkish war in 1877—1878."

It is worth remembering that not one of the series of war-pictures painted by Vereshchagin caused the artist so much anxiety and trouble as this 1812 cycle.

To begin with, for this exhibition, in which the pictures of the Napoleonic epoch predominated, Vereshchagin could not succeed in getting even some kind of decent premises, and had to be satisfied with an inconvenient old house on the Nevsky. The critics gave the pictures a rather hostile reception.

But what is most interesting of all, Stassov himself, that convinced apologist of Vereshchagin, hasn't a word to say about the 1812 pictures. He even once wrote that "Vereshchagin is a great and profound historian, but only of his own times." And in the columns of a St.-Petersburg paper of the time, *The News*, in which Stassov for many years conducted the art criticism section, instead of the opinion of Stassov himself, which the artist expected, there appeared the opinion of a quite unauthoritative second-rate journalist, which distressed Vereshchagin considerably.

Stassov commented on the pictures of the 1812 cycle only in his speech during an evening in memory of Vereshchagin, who was killed on the battle-ship "Petropavlovsk" on April 12th, 1904. Also, Stassov wrote about these pictures in an article about a posthumous Vereshchagin exhibition in December of the same year, and



"Retreat of the Great Army" (Napoleon's) *By V. Vereshchagin*

said it was enormous luck that they had remained in Russia.

Vereshchagin keenly desired to see his 1812 pictures in one of the Russian museums. But their rulers were almost without exception members of the Academy of Arts; they were still smarting under the insult Vereshchagin had put upon them in refusing their offer of a professorship in the Academy of Arts; and in the question of the acquisition of the 1812 pictures, too, they kept up their usual policy of trying to get even with the painter. The negotiations were dragged on so long, financial questions were put in terms so humiliating to the self-respect of the artist, that Vereshchagin lost patience and broke off the transactions. And only when he had already almost sold the pictures to the United States and a place had even been prepared for them in one of the government buildings in Washington, and an article had appeared in some influential foreign paper about the strange action of the Russian government in letting pictures of such a national and patriotic character go abroad,—suddenly the tables were turned and the pictures were purchased in a hurry by the Russian government.

I remember still another interesting incident in connection with these pictures. Sometime during the summer of 1915, a correspondent of a French paper with whom I was acquainted rang me up and asked me to let him have reproductions of Vereshchagin's 1812 pictures as quickly as possible. I didn't have them, and sent him off somewhere to hunt them up. As we learned later, the journalist was looking for the reproductions for his colleague, Washburn, then military correspondent of the *New York Times* with the Russian army; and he wanted them for the following purpose: Washburn had only just done the rounds of our foremost positions, and, on his return, suggested to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sazonov, that he should have postcards printed with reproductions of the Vereshchagin pictures, supply them with an appropriate text in German and scatter them from aeroplanes over the Germans, so as to frighten them properly with the

horrors of the Russian winter. Sazonov approved of this idea. But the usual departmental red-tape business started, and nothing came of the proposal of the American correspondent.

Vereshchagin's enemies accused him of eccentricity and love of publicity. I may confidently assert that they did so only because in the arrangement of his exhibitions, in the printing of catalogues and in the titles of many of his works he departed from the beaten track. Nobody, for example, except Vereshchagin decorated his exhibitions with an abundance of objects of industrial art produced in the districts represented in his works. Weapons and carpets, ceramics and bronzes, and finally many ever-green plants in the corners of the hall—all this was a novelty, "not the thing," and so met with nothing but criticism and censure.

And even Vereshchagin's widow, Lydia Vassilyevna Vereshchagina, came in for a lot of criticism from the press for having, in a posthumous exhibition, placed in the section where there were paintings showing General Skobelev, a personal friend of the artist, a shot-riddled battle emblem, Skobelev's banner, and his coat, also shot-riddled, which had been preserved in the Vereshchagin family.

Sticklers for propriety in exhibitions were also shocked by the inscriptions with which Vereshchagin liberally supplied many of his works. And they really were unusual. I shall give two or three examples from the catalogue of his 1896 exhibition:

A picture of a young woman, and the inscription: "A young seamstress in Vologda, gets a wage of one and a half roubles a month." Or, beneath the portrait of a well-fed monk: "Father Varnava, a monk of the Prilutsk monastery. Treasurer, and experienced in the collection of voluntary offerings in the capitals. Devotes his leisure to embroidery on canvas and the production of artificial flowers." Beneath the portrait of an old woman: "An old beggar-woman, ninety-six-years-old, the incarnation of eighty years of ceaseless suffering. Remembers Napoleon."

* * *

The moment the Russo-Japanese war broke out, Vereshchagin, now sixty years old, immediately made ready and set off for the Far East. The Russian Pacific Fleet was under the command of a close friend of the artist's the well-known scientist and valiant seaman Admiral S. O. Makarov.

He invited Vereshchagin onto his flag battle-ship, the "Petropavlovsk." On this vessel Vereshchagin perished on the 31st of March (mod. 12th April) 1904, together with almost all the crew of the battle-ship which had struck a mine.

* * *

In conclusion I would like to tell about the memorial gathering held to commemorate the death of Vereshchagin in the conference hall of the Academy of Arts on the 20th of April, 1904.

All of us felt it somewhat strange that we should be gathering to honour the memory of the artist in the building of the very institution under the auspices of which Vereshchagin had been defamed during the whole of his career.

The organizers of the evening, the sculptor I. J. Ginsburg and the librarian of the Academy of Arts F. G. Berenstam, had a great deal of trouble to persuade Stassov to be present and to make a speech.

In Stassov's speeches people were always won over by his sincerity, his fervour and his deep conviction; and on this occasion, in his speech devoted to Vereshchagin, also by the boundless personal love of the critic for the artist, in whose work, as he once said, "loudest of all sounded the note of indignation and protest

against barbarity, pitilessness and cold-blooded brutality, wherever and by whom soever these abominations were let loose."

The figure that attracted the greatest attention at this memorial gathering, which took place in an atmosphere of deep love for and appreciation of the deceased artist, was Ilya Yefimovich Repin.

Repin was met with a prolonged ovation. Especially furious was the applause of the Academy students. For a long time they did not give Repin a chance to speak. I was sitting not far from the speaker's stand and saw Repin becoming more and more moved and agitated at this reception, saw too with what affection he looked away beyond the first rows to where he saw the excited faces of the young painters. Finally, the applause died down, and Repin made an improvised speech that was close to inspiration.

Repin called Vereshchagin a giant both in life and in art, pointed out the meaning of Vereshchagin's creative work, and emphasized the artist's energy in fighting for his ideas. Dwelling on Vereshchagin's Asiatic and Indian pictures, Repin stressed the fact that Vereshchagin always tried to contrast the grandeur of the buildings of the Asiatic overlords with the hovels of poor folk humbled by slavery clustering around them; he represented their rags and tatters alongside the gorgeous apparel of the rich. Vereshchagin was not so much interested in the portrayal of individuals: what attracted him, was the rendering of masses of grey soldier uniforms, of bayonets, the movement of crowds; however, he also devoted much study to the Russian common folk.

Repin concluded his address with a direct appeal to the Academy students. He called upon them in the name of

"Found with Arms in Their Possession? Shoot Them!" (Partisans captured by the French during the Napoleon's campaign)

By V. Vereshchagin

the glorious creative life of Vereshchagin to travel still further along the same path, always to remember the unprecedented love Vereshchagin bore to our Russian people, and especially his deep patriotism; to lay out their course as artists with the greatest possible independence, and, with the same fiery ardour as Vereshchagin, to fight with all their strength, and first and foremost with all the power of their art, for the great cause of peace, and, like him, to hate the least falseness in their creative work.

"Thought, feeling, sincerity and truth—these must be your guiding stars, young artists," said Repin in conclusion.

In all my life I cannot recall anything to compare with what took place when Repin, utterly exhausted, left the speaker's stand and resumed his seat. For some minutes there was an uninterrupted roar of applause and the shouts of excited young voices. Repin was too spent to stand up, and in response could only raise his hand in a simple touching gesture.

I. LAZAREVSKY

RUSSIAN AND ENGLISH CARTOONS DURING THE WAR OF 1812

(*Terebenev—Cruikshank*)

The Russian political cartoons of the 1812 Patriotic War period are the forerunners of the modern war poster. Within the bounds of their rather limited possibilities, they carried out in those days the same functions as do the posters of today, namely the "TASS Illustrated Windows." The "TASS Illustrated Windows," the result of the united efforts of Soviet painters and writers, posted up everywhere, in streets, squares and in show-windows, give a striking picture of the heroic exploits of the Russian people and its Red Army in the present Great Patriotic War; they smite the enemy with scathing ridicule and show the intensive work done in the rear. The cartoons of the war of 1812 are similar in many ways to those of the present day: in the same striking manner they depict those heroic days and call to the struggle against the Napoleonic hordes, at the same time ridiculing the enemy. They were issued in single sheets, frequently as an appendix to a magazine or newspaper; they were passed on from hand to hand, collected by amateur collectors and often pasted on the walls "instead of advertisements"; thus the "plain folk" were able to contemplate them free of charge without even paying the little money that they cost.

In our days, the days of war for the liberty and honour of our great fatherland, the cartoons of the 1812 period attract the attention of a wide circle of people interested in the arts or connected with them in some way or other. While studying the cartoons of that period, we simultaneously become acquainted with the first and earliest steps of Russian social-political caricature, which came into being only in the first decade of the XIXth century, to be exact—in 1808, if we consider as its moment of "birth" in our country the earliest attempt of a cartoonist to

"Napoleon's Flight" *Engraving by I. Terebenev*

submit his work to the people's judgement.

It was in that year that a young Russian painter Alexei Venetzianov (1780—1847) had the courage to undertake the publishing of *The Journal of Caricatures for the Year 1808*. He published the January copy only, and this volume now represents the greatest bibliographical rarity (there is only one single copy in the State Hermitage collection). The magazine contained four caricatures, executed as etchings by Venetzianov himself: "The Lord," "Young Man Being Introduced into Society," etc. The *Journal* was prohibited at once and its sale discontinued; the author of these cartoons was given a severe reprimand, while the censors were advised to "be more careful in granting permits for such publications." It must have been prohibited for the drawing named "The Lord," which depicted a high official asleep in the arms of a woman while receiving solicitors in his office. Possibly this cartoon was a caricature on some definite personage of high standing.

Thus the first attempt at social satire was a failure. The ground had not yet been prepared for it. But at the end of three or four years cartoons—this time of a purely political character—were called into being by the march of events.

During the period of the Patriotic War of 1812 and the following years of the struggle of the anti-Napoleonic coalition for the "pacification of Europe" and the overthrow of Napoleon's tyrannical regime, many political cartoons made their appearance in Russia.

Most prominent amongst Russian cartoonists of the war period of 1812 was another Russian artist, who unfortunately died prematurely; his name was Ivan Terebenev (1780—1815). But before going into his intensive, though brief activity in the realm of caricature (which lasted for some four years only), it is necessary to describe, however briefly, the atmosphere in which Russian political cartoons came into being, and the part which Western cartoons, especially English, played in the history of their development.

Let us recall, first of all, that ever since the second half of the XVIIIth century English drawings and en-

gravings were abundant in Russia. A proof of the interest in English graphic art and the high appreciation which its achievements found here, was the existence of numerous and excellent XVIIIth century collections of English prints, which later on partly formed the foundation of several remarkable museum collections (State Hermitage in Leningrad, the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow, and others).

In the first and second decades of the XIXth century English cartoons aroused the keenest interest in Russian society; this was largely due to their political nature, as exemplified in the work of James Gillroy and Cruikshank junior. This applies first of all to the "anti-Napoleonic cycle" by the above masters.

Russian society of the period of the Napoleonic wars never altered its highly negative attitude towards Napoleon, for they always saw in him a menace to Russia's internal and economic interests. But it was not only Russian society that was interested in anti-Napoleonic cartoons, no matter where, by whom and in what language they were published; there is a very complete collection of anti-Napoleonic caricatures which was gathered during the years of the war against Napoleon, and kept at one time in the library of the Russian General Staff (it is now in the Lenin State Library of the U.S.S.R. in Moscow). This shows clearly that in those days the problems of the "ideological" war with Napoleon were of the utmost interest not only to Russian social circles, but to the Russian General Staff as well.

There is no doubt that the interest in cartoons manifested by Russian society at the beginning of the war of 1812 was largely due to the influence of English caricature; the ground for national political satire was fully prepared at the moment when Terebenev, a sculptor by profession and in those days a hardly known etcher and designer, came forward for the first time as a cartoonist. Prior to this, Terebenev, a modest drawing-master in a provincial town, lived in dire poverty. And only the cartoons brought him success.

In an article published in 1820, Pavel Svinyin, an art critic and himself a designer, wrote that Terebenev's first attempts at caricatures were made in 1811 and were received favourably by count Alexander Stroganov (1738—1811), then president of the Academy of Arts. "His attention was attracted by the inventor," whom he encouraged, and since then,—so Svinyin says,—"all the great personages vied with each other for the pleasure of owning a Terebenev." These first attempts made in 1811 probably refer to drawings which have not reached us, since all the known political cartoons by Terebenev were done later and based on the events of 1812—1813.

Pavel Stroganov (1772—1817), the son of the above mentioned president of the Academy of Arts and a friend of young Alexander Ist, was known in those days as one of the leaders of the anti-Napoleonic opposition in Russian society and as one of the most ardent and influential supporters and advocates of a rapprochment between Russia and England. [1]

It is very likely that Terebenev's initial success and support were due not so much to the patronage of the elder Stroganov, as to the protection of Stroganov junior and his wife. The political flavour of Terebenev's cartoons could not but be close to

[1] Pavel Stroganov, a member of the "Secret Committee" and Assistant Minister of the Interior at the beginning of the reign of Alexander Ist, did some diplomatic service in England in 1806; in 1807, not wishing to take part in the negotiations which aimed at a rapprochment with Napoleon, he resigned as a sign of protest and volunteered for the army. He took part in the wars with Napoleon and in the famous battle of Borodino.

Review of the French Troops on Their Returning March Through Smolensk. Etching by I. Terebenev

Etching by G. Cruikshank

Pavel Stroganov, an anglophile and an active political opponent of Napoleon.

Terebenev's success and his cartoons soon reached out far beyond the drawing-rooms of the rich and enveloped all of Russia; Terebenev's change from drawings to etchings, as a means of circulation, contributed widely to this success. Undoubtedly Terebenev's art, flaming as

it was with patriotic passion, corresponded perfectly to the mood of all the strata of Russian society without exception. Their humour, though somewhat vulgar at times, fully satisfied the general passionate desire to expose the enemy, who subjected the Russian people to untold hardships and trials, as venemously as possible. An indication of the brilliant success of Terebenev's etchings may be found in the fact that their appearance was immediately followed by a great number of imitations and copies. These, which in the majority of cases were in the form of cheap roughly coloured prints and were therefore accessible to the broad masses of the population owing to their low price, were acquired with amazing rapidity by the people. Thus Terebenev's art soon became very popular with the masses.

The success of Terebenev's cartoons found an echo in England as well, in that "fatherland of all parodies and caricatures" (these words are ascribed to the great Russian poet Pushkin). Some of these cartoons soon attracted the attention of young George Cruikshank (1792—1878), one of England's leading cartoonists in the first half of the XIXth century. This great master often re-created satirical sketches of other artists, somewhat modifying the original and frequently enlivening it by the glamour of his manner. It was he who, during 1813, re-etched and published some of Terebenev's drawings, which he marked as copied from original Russian prints. The attention of such a master as Cruikshank manifested towards the first Russian political cartoons was in itself a recognition of Terebenev's gift.

What then were the themes of Terebenev's cartoons in general and which were the sheets which were re-etched by Cruikshank who made them known to a relatively large circle of Englishmen?

Here we must first of all refer to a large, but probably least interesting series of Terebenev's drawings, of which Napoleon himself was the main figure; such as the sheets entitled "A French Traveller in 1812," "Napoleon Teaching His Son how to Run," etc. In these cartoons Terebenev tried to show Napoleon in a most ridiculous and unattractive light. Yet Terebenev's ridicule was not always equally successful, oftentimes being rather vulgar. One of the successful drawings by Terebenev caught the attention of Cruikshank, who re-edited it on May 18th, 1813. This was a sheet known under the title of "Napoleon's Dance," with a text reading: "Since you were unable to change us to your tune, you may as well dance to ours, you pagan!" It was drawn by Terebenev on the theme of a tune very popular in 1812, which related how Napoleon, "who wanted to become a dancer," has danced the Anglaise first, the Ecossaise next and the Polonaise afterwards, but soon all this bored him and he resolved to dance a Russian dance.

The etching "Napoleon's Dance" shows Napoleon doing some lively steps during which he loses his hat. On either side of him two peasants stand, one with a whip in his hand, the other playing a pipe.

Among Terebenev's etchings ridiculing Napoleon, we may mention one which shows Napoleon fleeing from Russia (see ill. on page 111) and carrying his own glory on his shoulders. A cossack with a knout is shown in the sky, as the severe goddess of vengeance. Hurrying towards Napoleon we see a pig with a rifle, holding a "message" in its snout, representing the Hamburg armed population, which on December 16th, 1812, somewhat belatedly appealed to Napoleon with the "most humble request" to be permitted "to share the glory of the great nation and the feats of the great army." This anonymous and rare etching was pre-

viously not considered Terebenev's work. However, a reproduction of it bears Terebenev's own signature made in ink in the lower right-hand corner; this leaves no doubt as to the authorship.

Another allegorical etching by Terebenev, entitled "Napoleon's Glory," was re-etched and re-edited by Cruikshank in May 1813. Here Terebenev depicted the "Glory" standing on a pile of bones, and flanked by a soldier, a cossack, and a peasant—Vavila Frost. The text of this cartoon reads as follows: "She has got herself in a hole. The Russian soldier has torn off her mask with his bayonet, the cossack has beaten off all her laurel wreaths with his knout, and Vavila Frost has stuffed her loud trumpet with snow."

Of far greater interest than the above mentioned jokes and allegories are those of Terebenev's works which depict the heroic exploits and the firmness of the Russian people of those days.

Terebenev's "heroic series" contains many excellent sheets, among them "Russian Scaevola," — a Russian chopping off his hand which was branded by the French. There also is a "Peasant taking away a French cannon and bringing it to the Russian camp, while the French detachment was busy plundering a Russian village." The latter was re-etched by Cruikshank (published in London on the 8th of June, 1813). Like the majority of Terebenev's sheets, which show the heroism of the Russian partisans, this one depicts a true episode of the war of 1812, about which the newspapers and magazines of the day printed detailed reports.

It is interesting to note that as early as January 8th, 1813, Cruikshank re-etched and published another Russian cartoon, which, though it is not by Terebenev himself, but probably the work of one of his followers, is therefore worth mentioning. It shows also the exploit of a Russian partisan, a peasant striking a French officer with an axe (the corpses of two Frenchmen are seen lying on the ground).

Finally, the last and perhaps the most popular series of Terebenev's cartoons, mocking the hapless plight of the ill-starred French army as it retreated from Russia, show the hungry, half-frozen, ragged French, feeding on crows and carrion. Such are: "French crow soup," "Retreating French cavalry, which ate up its horses in Russia," "A wise retreat will bring us rest,"—an etching showing Napoleon dashing in a sleigh and holding a sheet in his hand on which is written: "Grand projet de perdre l'Angleterre" (ascribed to Terebenev),—"Retreat of French generals" and "Review of the French troops on their returning march through Smolensk." This is a list of the most famous caricatures belonging to the last group. Of these two latter ones were re-etched and published by Cruikshank. On the first sheet we see nine generals fleeing in a sleigh; on the second the cartoonist depicted Napoleon reviewing a group of ragged French soldiers (see ill. on page 113). By the way, in the English re-etching by Cruikshank the very expressive figure of a French marshal marching along the line, sabre in hand, is not reproduced.

The number of Cruikshank's reproductions of Russian caricatures is most likely not limited to the above mentioned six. But even these are enough to show that the period of 1812—1813 witnessed not only the united struggle of Russia and England against their common enemy, but the collaboration of Russian and English artists in the sphere of graphic art as well.

ALEXEI KOROSTIN

BYELORUSSIAN ART

The Soviet newspapers once featured a photograph taken from a plane, showing Minsk, or to be more exact—the ruins to which the fascists have reduced the once beautiful capital of Soviet Byelorussia. A close look at that photograph will reveal the remains of the beautiful buildings of the Byelorussian theatres. The Hitler gangsters may have believed that by destroying Minsk and by pillaging and ruining the land of Byelorussia they have done away with its people, its culture and magnificent art.

But even if the towns of Byelorussia have been ruined and its fields burned, the Byelorussian forests are seething with life, hatred and the will to fight. They are not to be caught, those partisans, avengers who manifest the people's will. Byelorussia is alive as ever, and so is the national spirit and culture. The inspiring Byelorussian language, which has been proscribed over there, penetrates back to its people, reaches them across the front, and no tanks or guns, no forces on earth are able to halt the march of the life-giving words of Byelorussian poets and writers, or to quench the fire of their militant songs. All Byelorussia harkens to them.

A clay flower vase made by the Borissov Ceramic Artel at the exhibit of Byelorussian art in Moscow

New values have been created in the art of Bielorussia. Bielorussian theatres perform in Omsk and Uralsk, where they stage plays by European and Russian classics: Molière, Sardoux, Ostrovsky and Gorky, plays from the Soviet war repertory and the excellent Byelorussian national play *Nesterka*. The Byelorussian Jewish theatre is playing in Novosibirsk, where it performs heroic dramas and musical comedies. A new State theatre of opera and ballet is beginning to work at Gorky; it is born, too, from the Byelorussian branch of culture. This theatre has staged the first national Byelorussian operas and the first Byelorussian national ballet. Composers of the Byelorussian republic years ago wrote several monumental compositions in operatic form: *The Flower of Happiness*—a touching fairy tale about the people's quest for happiness; a musical drama dedicated to Mikhas Podgorny, and the opera *In the Groves of Polessye*, singing the praises of the heroic Byelorussian partisans of 1918. New operas about the partisans of the great patriotic war against nazi Germany and heroic symphonies dedicated to the national heroes are now being composed by Byelorussian musicians. Byelorussian art breathes in unison with the rest of the land of Soviets.

In the Soviet Union much has been done to further the choreographic art. The folk dances of the various nationalities have been collected and restored. An All-Union ensemble of folk dances has been created. And when the treasury of the national dance has been opened in all its splendor, in the full variety of its rich movements and in all the remarkable traditions of craftsmanship, accumulated and polished through the ages,—that art will take its rightful place together with the academic ballet. An exciting task presented itself

A scene from "Nightingale," a ballet presented by the State Bolshoy Opera and Ballet Theatre in Minsk

to the producers: to create on the basis of folk dances choreographical sketches, ballet miniatures as it were. The dances proved rich enough to supply the patterns of such a theatralized ballet. Thus the conception of a genuine folk ballet was born. And who will deny that national themes—lyrical and heroical ones—could be best expressed by folk dances performed to the tune of folk music played on folk instruments? In the development of this new art Byelorussia occupied a place of honour. Thus the national ballet *Nightingale*, based solely on folk dances, has been created in Byelorussia. There is much charm and expressiveness in the tender, lyrical scenes which show how the heart of young Zoska experiences love for the first time; and a fitting background is formed by the maze of folk dances, including the whirlwind dance "Lyavonikha" and others of the sort.

Two years ago Byelorussia demonstrated its art in Moscow; it embodied with extreme simplicity the past of the Byelorussian people, their historical struggles and undying faith in the people's happiness, which really began for them when Byelorussia joined the great Union of Soviet Republics. Recently the Byelorussian artists visited Moscow again, and in the grim days of war they showed their growing and flourishing art to the Moscow audiences. Songs born in the din of the war were on the program. Such were *Fatherland*, *We Are Coming*, *Byelorussia*, and *Our Toast*, the latter a song expressing in a most vivid way their firm belief in complete victory. It is a composition by the gifted Byelorussian musician Lyuban, who has been fighting in the front-lines from the very first days of the war. L. Alexandrovskaya, People's Artist of the U.S.S.R. and a winner of the Stalin-prize, performed this song at a Moscow concert, to the accompaniment of a band of folk instruments; she sang it with that skill which is so charasteristic of this true national Byelorussian singer of folk songs.

The best singers of the Byelorussian opera sang Bielorussian folk songs, songs of the war, of sacred revenge meted out on the invaders of their fatherland, and airs from national operas. The audience of the packed house paid its dues to these excellent performers of Byelorussian and also of the classical music, which included Tchaikovsky, Rossini, Puccini and Thomas. Marriage songs and festive folk-airs from the Byelorussian operas *Mikhas Podgorny* (music by Tikotzky), *The Flower of Happiness* (by Turenkov) were performed as well as the chorus of partisans from Bogatyriov's opera *In the Groves of Polessye*. A power-

A scene from "In the Groves of Polessye," an opera presented by the Minsk Bolshoy Theatre in Moscow

ful impression was made by this mighty chorus of the gallant Byelorussian partisans, the elder brothers of the national heroes who are at present fighting the Hitlerites.

Alexandra Nikolayeva, the young ballet dancer of the Bielorussian opera, revealed her brilliant abilities in some fragments from the ballet *Nightingale* (music by Kroshner). This talented master of the academic classical dance showed that she could perform lyrical folk scenes with that poetical warmth and youthful charm, with that simplicity which mark the genuine folk artist.

An excellent musical ensemble from the Western front took part in the concert. The Red Army chorus sang of fraternal Byelorussia and the Byelorussian partisan song. In this music one could hear all the enormous might and power of the land of Soviets, on its way to free Bielorussia.

There was a special significance in this creative unity of the masters of Bielorussian art and the militant Red Army musical ensemble born at the front: the friendship of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. is unshakeable, and the day of their inevitable and glorious victory over the enemy is near at hand.

A. NOVIKOV

STEPAN DEGTYAREV

On the eve of the Patriotic War of 1812, Moscow heard the strains of the first Russian oratorio dedicated to the exploits of the heroes of the Russian people: *The Redemption of Moscow or Minin and Pozharsky*. And now, on the eve of the great Patriotic War with Hitler's hordes, this undeservedly-forgotten, patriotic composition was performed in Moscow again after a long interval and was warmly acclaimed by an appreciative audience. In the days of stress and struggle against Hitler Germany, Soviet art has paid its dues to this talented work of the gifted Russian musician and composer, Stepan Degtyarev.

* * *

Who could have predicted Stepan Degtyarev's future as the seven-year-old shepherd's helper ran about barefooted in the meadows of Borisovskaya, a foresaken estate in the Kursk region? This lad with the bristling hair stood out among the rest of the village boys. When he sang folk songs, not only children but grown-ups as well listened with admiration to the ringing childish voice. But these were days of serfdom, and the future of each "soul" lay in the hands of the landlord. . .

Thus the years went by, until a sudden event gave the dormant life of the talented boy a violent jolt. Count Nikolai Sheremetev, the first magnate of Russia, a famous patronizer of the arts and a man of untold wealth, was looking for singers to be used in the choir of his palatial theatre near Moscow. Runners were sent to all the estates, and anyone—young or old—who could sing or show musical ability, was enlisted without much ado and sent away forthwith. Count Sheremetev would not stand for any delay, once an idea had struck him.

The boy was simply dazzled and stunned when he first arrived from the faraway dull province to Sheremetev's palatial estate near Moscow. But his natural talent soon overcame his shyness. Soon young "Stefanida Degtyareva"—the young musician's stage name, as he acted in female

roles at first—appeared on the stage of the serf-theatre, next to Parasha Zhemchugova, then a star of the Russian opera.

"Forsooth, this singer might go far," Count Sheremetev mused as he watched the young musician's progress.

A new page soon opened in the unusual fate of the serf-artist. The gates of Moscow remained far behind, and the flourishing valleys of Italy opened before the enraptured gaze of the Russian musician, as he travelled over foreign lands. Here the talented boy, a serf belonging to Count Sheremetev, was to acquire European culture and learn the complicated laws of musical science.

Degtyarev amazed his foreign teachers with the ease with which he mastered his studies. In Italy he became thoroughly acquainted with the theory of music. He also translated Italian books on music and began to study composition. Soon the compositions of the Russian serf-musician called forth the sincere admiration of his European contemporaries.

Degtyarev returned home, burdened with knowledge and experience. The famous Sarti gave the finishing touches to his musical education in Petersburg, and Sheremetev's prediction came true: the serf-singer did go far, and soon a fine musician, a talented composer and an excellent conductor took charge of the count's famous opera theatre and the equally famed chapel of singers.

Degtyarev knew little rest, what with rehearsing with the singers, the choir and the orchestra. And all the while orders like these kept on coming from the count's office:

"Stepan Degtyarev is to teach the serf-girls singing; should they prove to be lazy, such girls are to be punished by putting them on their knees, keeping them on bread and water and advising me of the least offense."

How often the serf-musician would spend many hours thinking how to save the serf-actresses from the count's chastisement! In the meanwhile the orders kept on arriving from the office:

"All musicians and dancers are to appear for inspection in the morning and in the evening. . . The musicians must practice their symphonies and concerts in their room during appointed hours in the morning, afterwards the music-masters are to study with their pupils."

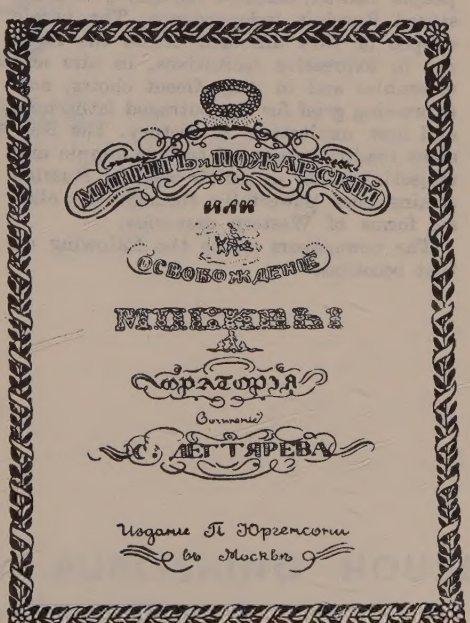
Thus the days went by in fear, care and toil. There was little time left for any creative work,—a few hours snatched at night, which should have been spent in sleep. . .

Degtyarev was past fifty when Count Sheremetev died in Petersburg and the caretaker of the estate set him free. Degtyarev, who had longed so passionately for liberty, felt at a loss at his sudden release. He wanted to say something, but meeting the indifferent gaze of the caretaker, he bowed in silence and left.

He wandered along the bank of the Neva, on a light Petersburg night, his head low, recalling in his mind the events of his life day after day, remembering the few joys (how scarce they were in the serf-musician's life!) and the many sorrows which, alas, fate had lavished so generously upon him.

Yes, freedom had come to him too late! So many years and strength irrevocably lost! But now that he was free, he would try to do the most in the field of free creative activity.

It did not take him long to get ready for his trip to Moscow. There the artist began his career as a singer and serf, and now Moscow was to welcome him as a finished musician and free man. It was then that the idea of a Russian heroic oratorio was ripening and taking shape in his mind. Only it should not resemble the modern and pompous compositions of that Italian Sarti, where next to violins and flutes whole regiments and artillery batteries were used and where the musical phrase was drowned out by the din of cannon, the noise of fireworks and the ringing of bells. No, the modest composer was thinking of entirely different music, simple, but coming from the bottom of the heart.



Cover of "Minin and Pozharsky" by S. Degtyarev

In this music he wanted to preserve the memories of the glorious Russian patriots who did not hesitate to face anything for the salvation of the fatherland. Near the Moscow Kremlin walls these thoughts took on flesh and blood, and there Degtyarev heard the musical theme of the heroes of 1612, the saviours of the fatherland from the foreign invaders,—Kuzma Minin and Dmitri Pozharsky.

This was in 1811, and the clouds of war already were gathering over Russia, as Napoleon was getting ready for his attack. In those days every word which recalled the great historical past and glory of Russia found a warm response in the heart of every Russian patriot. And when the first Russian oratorio *The Redemption of Moscow or Minin and Pozharsky* was announced, the concert hall was crowded to the doors. The composer himself conducted. With captivating simplicity, sincerity and deep emotion, he told in his music of the great deeds of the national heroes, of those remarkable pages in Russian history, brimful of glory, gallantry and majesty.

The alarming events of 1612 were brought home to the Moscow audience. Moscow in the hands of the invaders and Russia threatened with slavery. But now we hear the manly voice of the Nizhny-Novgorod bailiff Kuzma Minin, calling upon the people to rise in defence of the fatherland. Under the leadership of Prince Dmitri Pozharsky and of Kuzma Minin, the people rallied, defeated the enemy and restored Russia's independence. The heroic epopee of 1612 unfolded before the listener in expressive recitatives, in airs and ensembles and in magnificent choirs, now expressing grief for the outraged fatherland and now exultation in victory. The Russians readily responded to this simple and majestic music, in which original Russian strains bore powerfully through the classic forms of Western oratorios.

The newspapers wrote the following on that occasion:

"Each part of the oratorio was greeted with a storm of applause and demands for encores. This important event should be considered a milestone in the history of our native music. And what better place could there be for the glorification in music of these great heroic deeds, than Moscow, where they were carried out, where Russia's devoted sons, moved by a boundless love for their country, left a memory of their glorious exploits?"

In those days it looked as if recognition had come at last to the former serf; upon the public's demand the oratorio was repeated, and its success was as great.

But fate was not kind to Degtyarev. When Napoleon entered empty and burning Moscow, Degtyarev returned to his native Kursk region. One of the old-timers took in the aged musician. A year after the Patriotic War Degtyarev died of consumption. To the last day he kept on working on new compositions. These were to be the oratorios *Moscow Redeemed in 1812* and *Napoleon's Flight*. Towards the end of his life Degtyarev manifested distinctly his credo of an artist who sought for monumental forms to preserve the great ideas of patriotism, civil duty and courage. In this sense he was the first in the constellation of old Russian composers.

* * *

The only copy of the score of *Minin and Pozharsky* may now be seen in the former Sheremetev palace near Moscow, at present a museum. The author of these lines happened to come upon this rare monument to old Russian music. The talented composition, which had not been performed for 130 years, has now become part of the repertory of radio-concerts and the concert-stages of Moscow as well as of those of the largest cities in the Soviet Union.

E. KANN

Editor-in-chief: HELEN STASSOVA