International Literature

2

1943

THE STATE LITERARY PUBLISHING HOUSE

Printed in the Soviet Union

CONTENTS

No 2 February 1943

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

TO THE XXV ANNIVERSARY OF THE RED ARMY

February 23rd, 1943, will be twenty-five years that the Red Army was founded as the regular armed force of the Soviet Union. This anniversary finds the Red Army, the entire Soviet Union engaged in a fierce battle with the troops of nazi Germany and its "allies." In the war with Germany the Red Army has proven to the world that it is a first-class armed force capable of resisting the German army, though it passed in triumphant march through a number of countries in Western Europe. Even more than resist, it can deal this army heavy blows, despite the fact that the German army is not alone in the war against the Soviet Union, but is reinforced by the numerous divisions of its "allies."

It is no mere chance that the Red Army has turned out to be the only power capable of arresting the onslaught of the German troops, of exhausting them in stubborn battle, and dealing them a series of crushing blows that hasten the final defeat of the Italo-German coalition. This circumstance follows, on the one hand, from the very nature of the Soviet State, and on the other hand, from the system of organization, training and leadership of the Red Army both in peace- and in war-time.

It is these two related factors which have been the basis of the Red Army's tenacity and are the explanation of its successes in the struggle against the enemy.

The German command, evidently basing its plans on the experience of the war in France, where in 1940 the German motorized forces made a deep thrust in the Sedan—Amiens—Abbeville direction, advancing about three hundred kilometres within four or five days, in its very first orders assigned a period of three weeks for the capture of Moscow. This was to have led to a "blitz" end of the war on the Eastern front. The Hitlerites hoped that a "fifth column" would arise in the Soviet rear, that after the first hard blow and the Red Army's preliminary reverses, sharp conflicts would break out between the workers and peasants, and between the various nationalities comprising the U.S.S.R., that there would be uprisings and the Soviet Union would disintegrate. The Hitlerites had underestimated the strength and might of the U.S.S.R.

The Soviet system, established in Russia, has ensured the moral and political unity of the Soviet country. When the hour of danger dawned, not only was there no rift in the friendship binding the peoples of the U.S.S.R. in their fight for freedom and peaceful labour, but on the contrary, the links between the dozens of large and small nations comprising the Soviet Union became still closer. Uzbeks and Kazakhs fight at Leningrad and Stalingrad with the same heroism with which Russians and Ukrainians are defending the honour and liberty of the Caucasian peoples. On the home front, the peasants are putting their backs into their work, ensuring the Red Army its food and other supplies, doing their bit with the same patriotism as the workers whose devoted labour is keeping the front supplied with a continuous stream of arms. Scientists in their laboratories, engineers in their offices, writers and artists doing creative work for the front, demon-

strate the complete unity of the Soviet intellectuals with the masses of the people, the source of fresh cadres of specialists.

It was this firm unity of the workers, peasants and intellectuals, whatever their nationality or generation, which in the hour of danger has welded the whole country into one fighting camp, in which the interests of front and rear are indissolubly connected.

The Red Army is a faithful reproduction of this gigantic whole, of the Soviet people. This is plainly shown both by its present struggle and by its past.

The Red Army is the youngest of all the armies fighting against fascist Germany. It is only twenty-five years old, nevertheless it has an eventful and instructive history behind it.

In the period from October, 1917, to February, 1918, the October Revolution freed the entire territory of Russia. It was, in the main, the Red Guards detachments that were breaking the armed resistance of the counter-revolutionary forces to the Soviet State. In the beginning of 1918 the struggle on the territory of Russia entered a new phase, marked by the open armed struggle of counter-revolutionary forces in Russia against the young Soviet State.

The chief enemy of the Soviet power in the first months of its existence was German imperialism. In February, 1918, German troops inundated the Baltic provinces, Byelorussia and the Ukraine. This raised before Soviet Russia the urgent problem of creating a powerful regular army capable not only of successfully fighting against internal enemies, but also of protecting the young Soviet State from external hostile forces,

On February 23th, the Red Guards units inflicted a severe defeat on the German troops near Narva and Pskov. This day has gone down in history as the birthday of the Red Army. The Red Army was originally composed of volunteers from among the most progressive elements of the Soviet country. In the following months, as the Soviet State grew stronger and the democratic elements of the country consolidated, while at the same time the civil war spread, it was transformed into an army recruited by general military conscription of the toiling section of the population of the whole Soviet country. By the end of 1918 the Red Army had changed from picked volunteer troops to a regular army. The former Red Guards detachments and the first voluntary Red Army regiments formed the framework about which the new mass formations developed. In this aspect the Red Army carried on and successfully terminated the three years of civil war from 1918 to 1920.

The Red Army was handicapped from the outset by the devastation of the country, lack of arms and unprecedented economic hardships which it inherited from the old bankrupt regime. It was the devotion and heroism of the masses at the front and in the rear which transformed this army into a formidable force. Conserving the heroic traditions of the first Red Guards detachments and voluntary regiments, the Red Army combined the best traditions and the entire military experience of the Russian armies of the past. It was this that enabled it in the years of the civil war already to become a first-class fighting force, ranking higher than its adversaries with respect to fighting qualities.

One must take into consideration the moral-political aspect of the young Red Army in order to understand the secret of its successes in the most difficult conditions. The Red Army had very little technical equipment at its disposal at that period. Nevertheless, even from a military point of view its military operations during the civil war were a step forward in comparison with the war of 1914—1918.

The war of 1914—1918 settled down into heavy positional fighting. The positional character of this war was the result of the powerlessness of both sides to carry out decisive man-

oeuvres. It was a war to exhaustion in the broad and the narrow, the figurative and the literal senses of the word. Its outcome was decided chiefly by the material and technical advantages of one of the combatting sides.

The civil war was a war of manoeuvres; it was accompanied by a series of extensive operations characterized by a rapid shifting of the line of the front and by many tense crucial moments in the development of the operations themselves. Such operations demanded of the troops and their leaders strenuous efforts and great skill in battle. The manoeuvering character of the Red Army's operations in the civil war is to be explained not only by the width of the front and the comparatively small (with respect to the length of the front-line) armed forces fighting on this front, but as well by the methods of struggle then employed by the Red Army. The new feature introduced into the history of military art by the experience of the Red Army's operations in the civil war consisted in highly skilled manoeuvres accomplished by means of the so-called cavalry armies which were founded and developed on the initiative and under the leadership of Stalin. Great masses of cavalry had appeared in previous wars also. But there they had played a secondary part.

In the civil war cavalry armies made their appearance on the side of the Red Army as basic shock- and manoeuvering groups operating in unison with the main masses of the general forces; they combined the efforts of mobile shock-groups with those of the less mobile but more numerous and decisive main body of troops. It was this combining of mobile troops with the general armies and skilful use of both in the civil war that comprised the new feature introduced into the history of military art by the Red Army.

The Red Army carried out a number of classical military operations in the years of the civil war, the most important of which, those which attained historical significance, being originated and put through under Stalin's leadership. They include the famous defence of Tsaritsyn (now Stalingrad), the crushing blow dealt to Yudenich near Petrograd, the defeat of Denikin, the campaigns of the spring and summer of 1920 in the Eastern and Western Ukraine. If one adds to this the operations carried out by M. Frunze, which brought to the defeat of Wrangel and Kolchak and the freeing of Turkestan, as well as a number of others, one is justified in asserting that from a purely military point of view the campaigns of the young Red Army merit as much attention as the famous Cannes or the operations of Napoleon at Ulm, Regensburg and Austerlitz, which Engels in his time specified as "a miracle of strategy." The successes of the Red Army in the civil war were a radiant manifestation of the new spirit of the emancipated people, and of new military ideas.

The civil war brought the Red Army its first great fighting experience, educating numerous new commanding and political forces. After the civil war the Red Army passed through a long period of formation in the peace conditions. However, the brilliant experience of the victorious civil war was not the only foundation on which the Red Army educated its personnel. Though it did not deny the immense instructive value of this experience, yet the Red Army understood that it was insufficient for the preparation for modern wars. While carrying out a peace policy, the Soviet people could not fail to take measures to guarantee its peaceful construction work. The Red Army and its leaders were fully aware that if the Soviet country was fated to pass through new wars, they would take place under new conditions and with new, more numerous, more destructive weapons. The Red Army was never to be numbered among the armies that are inclined to rest on the laurels of a successful war.

"Experience proves to us that

after a war military art advances with frightful speed," the deceased M. Frunze, who was at the head of the Soviet armed forces in the first years after the civil war, said in a speech at the Military Academy. "We must continually keep track of what is going on at home and in other countries; we must unceasingly increase, enrich our knowledge; otherwise, in case of a clash with a well-armed adversary, with nothing but the experience of the civil war, we may be left in a tragical position. Stubborn, systematical work in self-education is therefore indispensable; it is the duty of all commanders without exception. Whoever fails to do this will soon find himself left aside, in which case he will have only himself to blame."

In the first years after the civil war the Red Army solved these problems under the leadership of M. Frunze. The main features of the organizational forms of our armed forces were determined in this period by M. Frunze. It was then that the foundations of the defence of the country as a whole were laid, and the forms and methods of the military training of the troops determined. However, the Red Army at that time was not yet a completely modern army, being poorly equipped technically. After the severe shocks of the first world war and the civil war, the economy of the country was just getting to its feet. Soviet industry was yet too weak to give to the Red Army a sufficient amount of first-class equipment.

The problem ol technical equipment of the Red Army was solved in the years of the realization of Stalin's five-year plans. The Stalin's five-year plans changed the face of the country, transforming it into an advanced industrial and collective-farm power, simultaneously transforming the technical aspect of the Red Army. Inside of a few years the Red Army advanced to one of the first places among the armies of the world with respect to technical equipment. The country gave the Red Army a great and first-class technical equipment. However, the Red Army was fully aware that equipment alone is of small value. In order to be a first-class army, it is indispensable not only to have up-to-date technical equipment but to master it to perfection, in thoroughly modern fashion. The process of furnishing the army with technical equipment was thus accompanied by intensive study to master it.

The second world war found the Red Army in a period of continuing growth and technical improvement. The enemy attacked unexpectedly, immediately throwing enormous forces into the struggle. He figured that the suddenness of the blow, the swift advance over Soviet territory, the impetuous capture of the most important centres and regions of the country, would crush the advance troops of the Red Army, disorganize its main forces, prevent the timely arrival of reserves, in a word end the war in "a flash of lightning," before the country could manage to set into movement and organize all its forces and means for the struggle. The first blow struck by the army of fascist Germany was tremendous. A hundred and seventy divisions, including all the German tank- and motorized troops and the greater part of the German aviation, were thrown into the battle immediately. World military history had never before witnessed such an amount of troops concentrated for a simultaneous blow. Due to the unexpectedness and treachery of the attack, the enemy caught the Red Army unprepared for immediate large-scale operations, and thus gained a number of considerable military advantages (surprise and initiative in action, wide experience in modern warfare, superiority in forces on the battle-field, etc.).

However, the enemy miscalculated. Led by Stalin, by the man who is in all justice termed "the greatest military leader of our time," the Red Army upset the enemy's plans. In 1941 yet it withstood the pressure of the German troops, holding up their

advance, while towards the end of the year it dealt them a series of severe blows, first near Moscow and then in a number of other places, destroying millions of German soldiers and officers, capturing an enormous amount of enemy guns and transport, and thrusting back the hostile armies hundreds of kilometres to the West.

The end of 1941 showed that the struggle of the Red Army against the forces of fascist Germany had entered a new phase; the German troops had lost the advantages which they had derived up to then from the suddenness of the initial blow. The permanently acting elements of war now came into play. "The Germans now no longer possess that military advantage which they possessed during the first months of the war as a result of their treacherous and sudden attack," J. V. Stalin wrote in his order on the 24th anniversary of the Red Army. "The element of surprise and unexpectedness, as a reserve of the German-fascist troops, is completely spent. This has put an end to that inequality in war conditions which was created by the suddenness of the German-fascist attack. From now on the outcome of the war will be decided not by such an adventituous element as surprise, but by permanently operating factors: stability of the rear, morale of the army, quantity and quality of divisions, equipment of the army, organizing ability of the commanding personnel of the army."

The first phase of the war was difficult for the Red Army. It required the great endurance of the troops, the coolheadedness and skilful leadership of the commanders, boundless faith in our own forces, the selfless support of the rear, the power and reliability of this rear, to withstand the first sudden mighty blow of the entire German military machine. In the final reckoning the Red Army solved this problem brilliantly. The Soviet country lost a number of important regions, but it conserved the strength of its armed forces, its industry, and its main territory on which a gigantic work in organizing resistance to the enemy was set going.

This creative work was prepared by all the achievements of construction in the fields of industry, agriculture and culture. It is sufficient to point out the transplanting to the East of a number of important branches of industry, the war industry above all, carried out in war-time. The foresight of the Stalin five-year plans which created great new centres of industry in the Urals and Siberia, has become evident even to disinterested observers. No wide spaces alone could have relieved the situation in the conditions of the present war, had not in these spaces been created during a quarter of a century gigantic centres of industrial and cultural life. The longer the war goes on, the more this permanently operating factor of the material strength of the Red Army tells.

When the first phase of the war ended and the initiative passed into the hands of the Red Army, the radical difference between the Red Army and the armed forces of fascist Germany made itself felt. ". . . One circumstance should be noted," J. V. Stalin wrote in February, 1942, "it only wanted the element of surprise to disappear from the Germans' stock-in-trade for the German-fascist army to find itself with disaster."

The Red Army is an army comprising one entity with the whole Soviet people. As such, temporary reverses cannot weaken it; they merely draw it closer to the masses of the people, mobilizing all its strength and means for new resistance to the enemy. The army of fascist Germany is capable of dealing strong blows; it can develop a swift offensive, especially if it scents the possibility of promising plunder. However, it possesses no firm moral foundation for a protracted war. It was due to this that the reverses suffered by the German army near Moscow and other Soviet cities in the winter of 1941-1942 brought it

to the brink of catastrophe in the full sense of the word. The German troops managed to escape from this situation only by taxing all their means and strength, by pumping Germany dry of all the remaining vestiges of man power. In addition, as has been repeatedly pointed out, the absence of a second front in Europe allowed the German army to throw the brunt of its forces on the Eastern front.

In the summer of 1942 the Red Army had to bear the main blow of the German military machine. For the offensive of the summer 1942 the rulers of Germany found themselves forced to mobilize, in addition to all their own forces and reserves, those of their "allies" into the bargain. At the commencement of the 1942 offensive the German army had 179 German and 61 "allied" divisions on the Soviet-German front. 240 divisions is a formidable force such as has never before been concentrated for an offensive on one front. It can be pointed but for comparison that in 1918 the German army had 192 divisions ready for action on the Western Anglo-Franco-American front, in 1916 the Germans and their allies had approximately 130 divisions, the Anglo-French forces in 1940 were defeated by 120—130 divisions. Nevertheless, in 1942 the German command considered even 240 divisions insufficient for a simultaneous offensive against the Red Army along the whole front. The blow was aimed in one direction only, but even so the Germans gained no strategical successes, despite heavy losses. They advanced 400 kilometres, distending their front and exposing it to the blows of the Red Army.

The offensive of the German forces against Stalingrad ended up in a catastrophe for them. The main shock group of the Germans found itself wedged in between the Red Army forces advancing in a counter-offensive; its rear was demolished, all roads of retreat cut off by the Soviet troops. A Soviet offensive followed on the Central front, in the middle Don region and on the North-Caucasian front. This is the best proof of the growing power of the Soviet armed forces and the weakening of the fascist army.

The indissoluble unity of front and rear, and the daily help which the people are rendering the Red Army, is the basis of the Soviet Union's strength, in this just war. One very vivid expression of this unity can be seen in the patriotic movement which began in the village and has spread throughout the country. In the middle of December, 1942, a letter to Stalin was published in the press sent by the men and women collective farmers of Tambov district. In this letter they stated that on the initiative of some collective farmers and organizations they had gathered forty million rubles in the district for the construction of a tank column, which they wished to be called "The Tambov Collective Farmer." This found an immediate response throughout the U.S.S.R. among the collective farmers, workers and intellectuals, who are contributing considerable sums for tank columns, aircraft squadrons, etc., requesting that they be named after the collective farm or district which has donated the means, or after heroes who embody the military glory of Russia. In addition to monetary contributions, the collective farmers are contributing food supplies over and above their plan for State deliveries, and workers are competing for higher output. Letters addressed to Stalin are daily to be seen in the papers, in which collective farmers, factories, schools and theatres as well as individuals, collective farmers, workers, writers, scientists, artists, doctors, teachers and clergymen, right up to the incumbent of the patriarchal seat Sergei, are announcing the contribution of their savings for the construction of weapons for the Red Army. "The mighty arm of the whole people is supporting the Red Army," with this phrase the Soviet press has aptly characterized the

patriotic movement in the U.S.S.R.

In the struggle for its noble aim, for the liberation of its land from the invaders, the Red Army is displaying human and military qualities which, as is known, are arousing the sincere admiration of all freedom-loving peoples. All references to the Red Army by foreign statesmen, military specialists, writers and artists inevitably speak of the "unparalleled," "epic" deeds performed by Soviet soldiers and commanders. These numerous expressions lead to the general conclusion that not only in the realm of military skill but in that of the spiritual qualities, of moral greatness and the force of national spirit, history has never known anything to equal the defence of Leningrad, the two hundred and fifty days' defence of Sevastopol, the resistance put up by Odessa or the historic battle of Stalingrad. Let us recall a few facts, taken at random.

During the defence of Moscow, twenty-eight guardsmen belonging to General Panfilov's unit held a line against fifty-four enemy tanks. At first there were twenty-nine of them, but one was killed by the guardsmen themselves for cowardice: he was the only one who thought of surrendering. These twenty-eight included Russians, Ukrainians and Kazakhs. These heroes disabled eighteen enemy tanks; but when the remainder continued to advance, they still did not retreat; they were firmly determined to defend Moscow to the end, to die at their post. And that was what they did.

At Sevastopol, heroic marines and infantrymen withstood numerous German divisions and a whole air corps, holding a tiny patch of earth on the extremity of a peninsula, daily showered with tons of lead, where only a small number of stormers and fighters could have their base. They beat off from twelve to twenty attacks daily. Every day the fascists dropped from 2,500 to 6,000 bombs; in all, over 125,000 bombs of a hundred kilograms and over were dropped on Sevastopol in a month. The tenacity of Sevastopol's defenders caused the fascists to lose about 300,000 officers and men in killed and wounded during this period, and in the last twenty-five days alone the enemy lost over 250 tanks, over 300 aircraft and up to 250 guns.

In full conformity with the role which the peoples of the Soviet Union are filling in the history of mankind, the fight which is being waged by the Red Army alone has assumed an importance universally recognized.

The Red Army is meeting its XXV anniversary in a decisive battle with German fascism.

Its entire heroic history, all its triumphs over the German forces, testify to the fact that it will be victorious in this war too. It will free the Soviet territories occupied by the enemy.

ALEXANDER GOLOUBEV

THE HEROES OF THE CAUCASUS

The Chechen knitted his shaggy eyebrows and stared steadily down at the raging battle in the Terek valley where the low-backed black-cross tanks were trying to break through to the oilwells of Grozny. The ancient abodes of his brethren, the Terek Cossacks, were in flames, and the villagers behind him were anxiously waiting for news from the battle-fields.

The Ingush coming down to the plateau from the tall crags of his narrow gorges, clenched his teeth as he listened to the tales of how German robbers devastated Ingush villages.

The old Osset departed along deep ravines following the cart carrying the women and children. He left Ardon, Alaguir and Digora, but in his heart he carried away with him the song of freedom, the ancient Osset "digora."

The Kabardian saddled his charger, while his relatives from ravaged Baksan and Cheguem stood by lamenting. He forsook sunny Nalchik, the city of roses and happy life.

The Balkar parted with his Alpine meadows to join the partisans just as he had done in those remote years of the Civil War.

The Kuban Cossack dreamed of his beloved Kuban river, of the early mornings in the Cossack villages wrapped in the rosy haze of sunrise. He dreamed of the flocks going to the pastures, of vineyards; of ancient cherished groves and boundless fields. All his ancient Zaporozhian blood rushed to his heart, and unconsciously his arm reached for his sword.

Russians and mountain dwellers, all sons of the united people, saw but one thing alone: their fatherland torn to pieces by the enemy, their fatherland committed by the enemy to flame and sword, filled with the sound of groans and flooded with the blood of innocent victims.

The eagles of the Caucasus were suddenly and treacherously attacked by black crows. I had once occasion to observe an immense flock of crows attacking a hawk. They

Osset M. K. Mariyev (right) back from front in his native village liberated by the Red Army from the German invaders. Photo shows Mariyev listening to his countrymen accounts about the atrocities to which the Germans subjected the villagers

fell upon the hawk from out of the sky like a black pillar. And this black pillar seemed to be endless, because the crows dropped from the upper row into the lower and, having pecked the hawk that was taking cover behind his wing, shot upwards again and joining the uppermost row made way for the next black bird. They pounced upon him unceasingly, filling the air with their disgusting triumphant cawing. Their lines took turns in strict order, and the blows of their beaks rained down with never a break. The hawk was falling back upon his nest and the crows pursued him exulting over their easy victory. At this juncture the she-hawk made her appearance. Making a sharp turn to the right, she outflanked the black flock and pierced the middle of the black pillar with a short swoop. She scattered the crows, and then the hawk burst into the black swarm from below. He darted through it, with upward and downward swoops. Both birds were fighting hundreds of crows at once. Black feathers were whirling in the air like so many rags. The hawks struck home every time, and very shortly the entire loud, croaking black flock was scattered, broken, dispersed. The crows shielded themselves in every way possible, but on all sides they met with the hard beaks and the sharp talons of the two hawks. They dropped down, turning somersaults in the air, they dodged about, gathering in small groups, but their rout was complete. They fled pursued by the ruthless blows.

The day came, and our Caucasian eagles struck at the black swarms from all sides. None of their tricks were of any use. The German regiments wavered. The easy path of victory turned into a hard road of ghastly defeat. It was being whispered in their ears that the end of the war was near, that Baku was already at hand, that the health resorts were ready to receive the conquerors and afford them relaxation. Black graves were waiting for them, the uninvited guests, the enslavers, murderers and thieves. Thrice blessed be the arms that routed the Hitlerites, the arms in the hands of the avengers, deliverers of the native soil!

The Chechen, Ingush, Osset, Kabardian, Balkar native country is again breathing freely and happily. The nightmare of those sorrowful months of foreign yoke is ended. The swish of blades and the thunder of guns, the roar of Soviet tanks, the glitter of bayonets proclaimed to the German gangsters the beginning of their end.

The German in the Caucasus trained for mountain war, loaded with ropes, ice cutters, shod with hobnailed boots, and expecting the campaign to be a kind of an Alpine excursion, was snarling and bleeding, and beating a hurried retreat along the mountain paths. In Berlin they called it euphemistically "shortening of the front."

There was a day when Kabardian riders, astride of excellent steeds of the "Saulokh" breed, above the precipice of the Alpine pastures of Shitketmes used to point at the blue mists of the valley and say proudly:

"You can see great distances from our borders. Look, down there is Kislovodsk. Let's ride to Kislovodsk!"

Every road was open to them before the war, not only the road to Kislovodsk. Just as proud and free could they ride through life, well aware of their goal. But a day came when standing above the precipice of Shitketmes these same mountain dwellers knew that they could not ride down into the valley because the nazi rabble was encamped there, tormenting our peaceful towns, mocking and harrowing Soviet citizens. The nazis turned the peaceful towns, where people used to come for rest and medical treatment, into dreadful cities of death and desolation.

And then again came another day. Torrents of Soviet horsemen, tor-

In the North Caucasus. A trench-mortar crew under the command of Junior Lieutenant I. I. Tskholadze headed for the firing position

rents of tanks rushed down from the heights of Malka and flooded the valleys. And the enemy had not the force to stop them.

Broken was the black power, and the Caucasian eagles pecked at the black-cross crows with upward and downward swoops. The air was full of feathers wrenched from the robber gangs.

The cliff archipelago, as scientists call Pyatigorye[1], is liberated by the mighty blows of our troops. These quiet scenes of age-long peace have now became a historic Soviet battlefield, the site of shame and death for the enemies of the fatherland.

What overwhelming joy the news of this great victory brings to the distant North, bound by the closest ties to the kindred Caucasian hills! Listen to the glad heartbeats of mountain dwellers fighting for Leningrad, look at the happy faces of Leningradites struggling for the Caucasus! There are no Germans any more on the Terek, on Malka, on Baksan.

There are now no Germans in our sanatoria, the hangmen are no longer resting in our health resorts, nor promenading in Pyatigorsk, nor drinking our Narzan, polluted with their foul lips! In the language of the mountains Narzan means the water of valiant knights. The cut-throats shall never again desecrate this water of valiant knights.

The victorious regiments are marching North. Kuban Cossacks are hurrying forward to the stormy waves of the Kuban, and bringing deliverance to their native villages. All the men of the mountains, their friends, their valiant brothers-in-arms, are riding and hastening with them.

Far and wide stretch the steppes! The snow-capped mountains recede further into the distance with every step. They are smiling. The rays of the winter sun tint with rosy-red the snow of their summits. They are pleased, the icy knights, "the guardian giants at the Caucasus gates," contemplating their sons' mighty deeds which do not disgrace the fame of their ancestors.

Our struggle is unanimous, our cause is unanimous, and just as unanimous will be our joy, our victory!

NICHOLAS TIKHONOV

[1] Five mountains in Russian.

VADIM KOZHEVNIKOV

MARCH TO APRIL

The torn togs, scorched in places where he had lain too near the fire at night, hung loose on Captain Pyotr Fyodorovich Zhavoronkov's emaciated frame. A matted growth of reddish beard and wrinkles into which the dirt had become deeply embedded made his face look positively old.

In March he had parachuted down on a special mission to the enemy rear, and now, when the snow had melted and little brooks were singing everywhere, it was no easy matter to make his way back through the woods in felt boots that had absorbed moisture and were doubly heavy. In the beginning he had only tramped at night and lain low in pits during the daytime. But now, spurred on by dread of his increasing feebleness from lack of food, he kept going in the daytime as well.

He had carried out instructions. All that remained was to find the wireless-operator-meteorologist who had parachuted down here two months previously.

He had "carried out instructions." How simple it sounded now! Yet how many kilogrammes he had lost on that same raid, he who had never had a spare ounce of fat on him!

He had had practically nothing to eat the last four days. As he trudged through the wet woods, he eyed the slender white birch-trunks; birch-bark, as he knew only too well, you could chop up, stew in a dynamite tin and eat in the form of a bitter mess that smelt and tasted of wood.

At moments, when he had had about as much as he could stand of all this, the captain would talk to himself as though he were a different person, some plucky fellow-traveller worthy of respect.

"Taking the untoward circumstances into consideration," the captain said, "you might, if you liked, make your way out to the high-road. If you did do that, by the way, you'd have a chance to change your boots. But, generally speaking, raids on isolated German transports point to your position being pretty bad. And, as the saying goes, 'your belly thinks your throat's cut' and drowns the voice of reason." Accustomed now to long periods of loneliness, the captain could argue with himself by the hour, until he grew tired or until, as he admitted to himself, he began to talk nonsense.

He fancied sometimes that this other fellow he talked to was really not such a bad sort—quick enough in the uptake, good-natured, sincere. But still the captain would feel called upon to break in upon the fellow's cogitations from time to time with a rough rebuke: "Jabber away as much as you like, but keep your eyes skinned, my lad!" This happened every time the slightest stir caught his ear or his glance fell on the tough, thawed ski-tracks.

But curiously enough, there were some points on which he could not altogether agree with this sincere and understanding double of his. The captain, by the way, was regarded in his detachment as difficult to get on with. Taciturn, reserved, he did not attract friendly confidence from others. He never had a kind, encouraging word for the raw recruits who were going out on a raiding-party for the first time, but, on the contrary,

contrived very cleverly to frighten them with the prospects of the dangers that confronted them; unsuspected powers of eloquence awoke in him at these times.

He thought nothing of putting a man out of a plane just as they were going to take off.

"You're a coward!" he would shout. "I don't want any white-livered creatures like you round me," and slam the door.

On his return from a mission he invariably avoided enthusiastic welcomes. And as he strove to keep clear of the handshakings and hearty clappings on the back, he would mutter:

"Got to go and get a shave. . . face feels like a hedgehog," and hurry off to his own room.

He didn't care to talk about his work in the German rear and confined himself to reporting to his chief. He would fling himself down on his cot to rest after his labours and then appear at dinner with a sullen, sleepy face.

"That's a dull fellow," was the general opinion, "nothing interesting about him."

At one time a rumour got about that somewhat accounted for and justified his unsociable conduct. It was said that during the first few days of the war his family had been killed by the Germans. When he learned what was being said about him, the captain came to dinner one day with a letter in his hand. He held it before his eyes as he ate his soup and went so far as to say aloud:

"My wife's written. . ."

The men exchanged glances, many in disappointment, because they wanted to attribute the captain's chronic gloom and unsociability to a great sorrow. And now it turned out there wasn't any sorrow at all.

Another thing: the captain couldn't stand the sound of a fiddle at any price. The sweep of the bow across the strings affected him exactly as the squeak of a blade on glass affects some people.

A bleak, wet wood with sopping ground, pits full of dirty water, soft, flabby, boggy snow. It was dreary work for one lone worn-out man, wandering through these wild deserted places.

But the captain purposely chose places where he was least likely to encounter Germans. And the more neglected and godforsaken the land looked, the firmer and more confident his stride became.

The only thing was that pangs of hunger were beginning to torment him. There were moments when he couldn't see very well. He had to stop and rub his eyes, and if that didn't help, thump his temples with his fist in its woollen glove to restore the circulation.

He descended into the gully and stooped to quench his thirst at a miniature waterfall that tumbled from the icy fringe of the bank. The water had the flat, stale flavour of melting snow, but he went on drinking even after he no longer needed it, simply to fill the vacuum in his aching stomach.

Evening was closing in. Lean shadows straggled across lean and moist snow. It grew colder. The puddles froze over, and the frail ice-crust crackled loudly underfoot. A film of ice formed on the dripping boughs which tinkled as he put them aside. No matter how hard he strove to move noiselessly, every step was accompanied by what seemed a loud report.

The moon rose and set the woods sparkling. Countless icicles and frozen ice-pools reflected the moonlight and gleaned with a chill flame like the pilasters on the Palace of Soviets Underground station.

Somewhere in this quadrant there should be a wireless-operator. But you couldn't expect to find him all at once in a quadrant of four kilometres. If he had any sense, this wireless chap had probably dug himself a lair no less secret than a wild animal's.

In any case he wouldn't be likely to go about the woods bawling:

"Hey, comrade, where are you? I'm right here!"

The captain was going through a grove flooded with moonlight, and his wet felt boots were heavy with the night frost and hard as kerb stones.

He was angry with the wireless-operator for being so hard to find, but he would have been still angrier if the man had been easy to find.

Then he stumbled over a long log buried under crushed snow and fell. And when at last he struggled to his feet, pressing his fists into the snow for support, the metallic click of a revolver came from somewhere behind him.

"Halt!" a voice said softly. And again: "Halt!"

The captain reacted in a very curious way. Without even troubling to turn round, he stood rubbing the knee he had bruised. When the same whispering voice ordered him in German to put up his hands, the captain turned and scoffed:

"If a man's fallen down, what d'you want to tell him to halt for? What you ought to have done was throw yourself on me and fire, through your hat, if you wanted to muffle the sound. And anyhow, this for your information, a German calls 'halt' out loud, so that his neighbour can hear and lend a hand if necessary. Good Lord, we're always and forever teaching you things, yet you never seem to know anything you ought. . ."

The captain stood up, pronounced the password soundlessly, moving his lips only. When he heard the reply, he nodded and thrust his "Sauer" back into his pocket.

"Still you kept your pistol in your hand?"

The captain gave the wireless-operator a withering glance.

"And what did you think? That I'd trust to your having horse-sense?" Then, impatiently: "Here show us where you hang out."

"You follow me," said the other, keeping his very unnatural kneeling pose, "and I'll crawl along."

"What d'you have to crawl for? The wood's quiet."

"I've got a frost-bitten foot," the wireless-operator explained softly. "It hurts a lot."

The captain gave an exclamation of annoyance and followed the other who crawled on all fours. Without giving the matter much consideration, he asked:

"What were you doing? Running about the woods barefoot?"

"No, but there was a strong vertical current, and I got pretty badly shaken when I baled out, and my boot dropped off before I landed."

"You're a nice sort of parachutist, I must say." Then the captain added: "Wonder how you think we're going to get you out of here."

The other sat back, supporting himself with his hands on the snow, and said in an offended tone:

"I'm not thinking of getting out of here, captain. Leave me some grub, and then you can go on by yourself. When my foot's better, I'll get back."

"Naturally you will! They'll run a sanatorium specially for you here, sure! The Germans have spotted the radio, understand?" Then suddenly bending closer to look into the wireless-operator's face, the captain asked in alarm:

"Just a minute, what's your name? I seem to know your face."

"Mikhailova's my name."

"There you are!" the captain muttered, in an aggrieved, embarrassed tone. "Well, never mind, we'll get to the bottom of it somehow." Then in a more courteous tone he added: "Maybe, you want me to help you?"

The girl made no reply. Up to the elbow in snow, she wriggled and crawled steadily along.

Now the captain's irritation gave place to another feeling, vague and more disturbing. He remembered this Mikhailova among the students at the base. From the very start she had aroused his antipathy and even his indignation. He couldn't understand why on earth she should be here, this tall, pretty, very pretty girl with the proudly-held head and the rather large, very clearcut, vivid mouth,

which it was difficult not to watch while she was speaking.

She had an unpleasant manner of looking you straight in the eyes, unpleasant not because they were the kind of eyes that are unpleasant to look at: on the contrary, they were good eyes, beautiful, large, attentive and calm, with sparkling golden flecks around the big pupils. But what was wrong with them, was that the captain couldn't stand their steady glance. And the girl had noticed that.

And then that fashion of wearing her hair, rich, shining hair with gold lights in it, too, hanging loose over the collar of her army coat!

How many times had the captain told her about it:

"Put away those untidy locks of yours. You're in army uniform now, not at a fancy dress ball."

It had to be admitted that Mikhailova was diligent enough about her work, stayed after hours, and often put the captain questions that were very sensible. But, convinced that knowledge was not for her, that she would never have any use for it, the captain gave none but the most curt replies, glancing at his watch all the time.

The director of the courses even reprimanded him once for paying so little attention to Mikhailova.

"After all, she's a very good girl, you know."

"Yes, very good for family life," and thereupon the captain declared with unexpected heat: "You must understand, comrade, that we fellows can't afford anything that'll tie us up in any way. How do we know that at any moment circumstances may require that we destroy ourselves? And what about her? How could she do that? Of course she couldn't. She'd hate to do it. How could she bring herself to destroy anything so. . ." Here the captain broke off, confused.

To get rid of her, he transferred her to the wireless group.

The landing-troops courses were held in one of the rest-homes outside Moscow. The winged, glassed-in verandahs, the red carpets and polished furniture, all the surroundings that still held the charm of peacetime life, tended to make one seek peacetime amusements in the evenings. Somebody would play the piano and start the dances. And had it not been that they were all in uniform, it might have been thought that this was just an ordinary Saturday evening in a rest-home near Moscow.

The antitank guns could be heard, the white flame of the searchlights stretched their unbending tentacles into the spaces of the sky. But there was no need to think of all that.

When studies were over for the day, Mikhailova often curled up on the sofa in the drawing-room with her feet under her and a book in her hand. She read by the light of a lamp with a huge shade poised on a high, sturdy mahogany stand. The very look of the girl with her beautiful calm face, the very pose that suggested tranquillity, the bright hair loose about her shoulders, the slim white fingers, all seemed very far indeed from the technique of a sapping and undermining or learning to stab with a knife that had a rubber-covered hilt to prevent it slipping.

When Mikhailova noticed the captain she always sprang up, stood at attention and saluted as she was supposed to whenever a commander passed.

Captain Zhavoronkov would pass her with a casual nod, his irritating indignation rising again. This strong man with the ruddy, weatherbeaten face of a sportsman, though rather weary and sad, was ruthless and exacting to himself, too.

German sappers had mined the cuttings through the wood leading out to the high-road. At night he shot the signaller with a small-calibre pistol that made almost no sound, and taking the German's lantern, stationed himself on the road.

He signalled red and green when cars came in sight, and let them pass. When a tank column appeared, he

barred its progress along the high-road with his red light and opened the way with the green into the lane that was mined.

Having discovered the cable that led to German headquarters, he cut it and settled down to wait. The signaller did not come alone; he was accompanied by soldiers armed with tommy-guns. When he had repaired it, the signaller departed. Then the captain stripped off the isolator and laid the cable on the ground. His ruse was successful: audibility was bad, the signaller returned alone, and the captain bayonetted him. Then, winding up the coil of cable, he threw it into a haystack and sat fire to it.

He scrambled on to the roof of a German blindage, got some cartridges out of his satchel and dropped them down the chimney. As the Germans rushed out of the blindage, he picked them off one by one with his tommy-gun.

He prefered working on his own, and he had the right to do it. The loss of his wife and child had frozen his heart in chill agony. They had been crushed in the iron clutches of the German tanks at a frontier post on June 22nd.

The captain hid his grief like a shameful thing. He didn't want his fearlessness to be attributed to his sorrow. So he deceived himself and his comrades, told himself: "My wife and child haven't been killed, they're still alive. I'm not one of these small-minded people, I'm just like everybody else. I've got to fight calmly and collectedly." And he wasn't a small man. He thought nothing of death and concentrated all his life-force on revenge. There are many like the captain in this war: proud, grieving, but strong; their hearts may bleed, but they carry on.

A gay, cheerful, good-natured people, this of mine! What trouble you have to harden your heart! Even now, trailing along behind the creeping wireless-operator, the captain strove to keep himself from being distracted by any thing that might interfere with his thinking out what to do. He was hungry, weak, worn-out with the long march. Of course, this girl was expecting him to help her. But then, she didn't know that he was no good.

Should he tell her all? Oh no, better make her pull herself together, and then he would make an effort and perhaps somehow contrive to. . .

The spring floods had hollowed out something resembling a niche in the sheer face of the gully. Overhead hung the hard twisted roots of the trees, some thin as twine, some sinuous and wiry like banks of rusty hawsers. There was a sort of icy penthouse outside through which the light filtered like that of a hothouse. Inside it was clean, dry and carpeted with fir-branches. The square receiving-set and a sleeping-sack lay in one corner, a pair of skis stood against the wall.

"This is a cosy little nook you've got here," remarked the captain. Then, slapping the fir-branch carpet, he said: "Sit down and take off your foot-wear."

"What?" the girl exclaimed in indignant surprise.

"Take off your foot-wrappings. I've got to see whether you're any good with this foot of yours."

"You aren't a doctor. And besides. . ."

"You know what," said the captain, "let's get this straight from the start: you're to do less talking."

"Oh! You're hurting me."

"Don't whine," the captain commanded, feeling the swollen foot with its tightly-drawn, glazed blue skin.

"But I can't stand any more of this."

"Don't worry, you'll have to stand a good bit yet," he replied, unwinding the woollen scarf around his neck.

"I don't want your scarf."

"You prefere a stinking sock?"

"It doesn't stink, it's clean."

"Look here," the captain began again, "you just stop bothering me

with your nonsense, will you? Have you got a bit of string?"

"No."

He reached up and tore off a length of withered root, bound it round the foot he had wrapped in the scarf, and finally declared:

"That'll hold pretty well!"

Then he dragged out the skis into the open, and worked on them awhile with the knife that had a rubber-covered hilt. Reentering the niche, he picked up the wireless and said:

"Now we're off."

"You want to tow me along on the skis?"

"I don't suppose I want to, but I'll have to."

"Oh well, there's nothing else I can do."

"And that is the right spirit," the captain agreed. "You don't happen to have anything to chew, do you?"

"Here, take this," she said pulling a broken dried crust out of her pocket?

"That's not much."

"It's all I've got left. For several days now I've. . ."

"Oh, it's all perfectly clear," the captain interrupted. "Only other people eat up their crusts and rusks first, and leave their chocolate for a rainy day."

"You can keep your chocolate for yourself."

"I wasn't thinking of treating you to any," and with this parting shot the captain went out, bowed under the weight of the radio.

After an hour's march, he realized that things were going badly. And, though the girl on the skis, or rather on the sled he had made of skis, did all she could to help him by pushing off from the snow, his strength was ebbing away. His legs trembled, his heart thumped so hard that it seemed as though it had caught in his throat.

"If I let her know I'm going all to pieces, she'll get into a state. Yet if I strain myself any more, it'll end up badly."

He looked at his watch and remarked:

"A hot drink wouldn't be a bad idea just now."

"Got any vodka?"

"You just sit still," he replied. "I wouldn't give you vodka if I had it."

He hollowed but a pit in a snow-drift, made a hole for a chimney, then covered the opening with green branches and snow. These would filter the smoke and render it unnoticeable. Breaking off some dry branches, the captain laid them in the bottom of the pit, then drew out a silk bag. He sprinkled a handful of gunpowder on the branches and put a match to them.

The flame hissed and licked at branches. He set a tin that had held dynamite on the fire, threw some icicles and lumps of ice into it. Then he pulled out the dry crust, wrapped it in a handkerchief, laid it on a tree stump and started to thump it with the haft of his knife. He sprinkled the crumbs into the now boiling water and stirred it. Then, taking off the tin, he set it to cool in the snow.

"Is it nice?" the girl asked.

"Lovely. Nearly as good as that 'Health' coffee we used to have at home," he replied, offering her the tin of brownish, muddy-looking liquid.

"Oh, don't give it to me. I can stick out a good while yet without anything," she said.

"You're going to have to stick plenty if you're coming along with me," the captain hinted darkly. "And meanwhile don't bother me with your niminy-piminy ways, just drink this."

Towards evening he managed to kill a rook with a blow of his stick.

"Fond of crows for dinner?" the girl asked him.

"This happens to be a rook, not a crow," the captain explained patiently, and proceeded to roast the bird over the fire.

"Want to try it?" he said, offering her half.

"No, I wouldn't touch it for anything in the world!" she cried, recoiling in disgust.

The captain hesitated a moment, then said thoughtfully:

"Well, after all it's only fair." and ate the whole bird.

As he lit a cigarette after the meal, he inquired politely:

"How's the foot now?"

"It seams to me that I could walk a bit," the girl said.

"Chuck that!"

All night the captain dragged the improvised ski-sled after him; the girl dozed.

As dawn was breaking, they came to a halt in a gully.

A mighty pine overthrown by the wind lay on the ground. Under the great wrenched out roots there was a hollow. The captain scooped out some of the snow, broke off branches and spread them on the ground, covering them with his tarpaulin tent-cloak.

"Are you going to sleep now?" the girl asked, waking up suddenly.

"Well, I'll have a snooze for an hour, maybe, no more," he said. "I've nearly forgotten what it's like."

The girl started to creep out of her sleeping-sack.

"What's all this?" he demanded sitting up.

She crept closer and said:

"It'll be warmer if I lie by you, and we can cover ourselves with the sack."

"Look here, you know. . ." the captain protested.

"Move up," said the girl briefly. "You don't want me to have to lie on the snow, do you? Or are you uncomfortable?"

"Put away your hair, it keeps getting in my nose, makes me want to sneeze, and in any case. . ."

"You want to go to sleep, don't you? Well, sleep then. It isn't my hair that's preventing you."

"Yes, it is," the captain retorted drowsily, and dropped off to sleep.

No sound but the faint rustle of melting snow, and the patter of drops. Cloud shadows trailed over the snow like wisps of smoke.

The captain slept with his fist pressed to his lips, and his face was weary and drawn. The girl bent over him and cautiously slipped her hand under his head.

Heavy drops gathered on the overhanging branches and fell on the sleeper's face. The girl freed one hand and cupped it to catch the drops and shield his face. When the water collected in her palm, she threw it out very carefully.

The captain awoke and started to rub his eyes and face with the palms of his hands.

"You've got some streaks of grey," the girl remarked. "Did it come after that time?"

"Which time?" he asked, stretching himself.

"The time they shot you."

"I don't remember," the captain replied, yawning. He didn't care to remember that time.

. . . It had happened this way. In the month of August the captain had blown up a big German ammunition-dump. He had got shell-shocked by the blast, and scorched by the flame. He was lying prone in his smouldering, blackened clothes when the German ambulance corps picked him up and took him, together with the injured German soldiers, to the hospital. There he lay three weeks. Before being sent into the rear, the wounded had to undergo a medical examination. The captain and a group of malingerers he was with were sentenced to death, but at the last moment the sentence was commuted. They were put into transport planes and sent to a place outside Yelnya. Here they were driven into a "psychological attack," with a company of Germans armed with automatics behind them. The captain was hit, by our men this time. He was picked up and lay a fortnight in one of our hospitals.

. . . Wishing to put an end to the conversation, he asked the girl roughly and insistently:

"Does your foot still hurt?"

"I've told you I can walk," she replied with some irritation.

"All right, squat on this sled. You'll run quick enough when I find it necessary."

So the captain harnessed himself to the sled and once more trudged manfully through the thawing snow.

A thin drizzle of rain mixed with snow was falling. The captain stumbled on, his legs slipping from under him. Sometimes he floundered into ruts and hollows, filled with a wet snowy mess. The day was grey and overcast. Wearily, the captain wondered if they would manage to cross the river: the ice was probably covered with water now.

The carcass of a horse that had been killed lay in their path.

The captain squatted down by it and pulled out his knife.

"You know what?" said the girl, getting up. "You've got such a knack of doing things that I don't even find it disgusting to watch you."

"It's just that you want something to eat, I guess," the captain rejoined calmly.

He speared some thin slices of the meat on the radio-antenna and roasted them as though on a spit.

"It's awfully tasty!" she said in surprise.

"I should think it would be: roast horseflesh is nicer than beef."

After the meal he rose and said:

"I think I'll go and see what's happening there. You stay here."

"Very well," she agreed. "You may think it funny, but I must tell you I'll find it very hard now to stay by myself. I've got used to our being together."

"Now, then, no nonsense!" was all the captain found to say. But the words were addressed more to himself than to her, because he was abashed.

It was night when he returned. The girl was crouching on the sled, with the pistol on her knees. She smiled and got up when he reached her.

"Sit still, sit still," he said, in the tone the sud to the military students who rose on his appearance. He lit a cigarette and, looking at the girl rather dubiously, said:

"The point is that the Germans have equipped an aerodrome not far from here."

"Well, what about it?"

"Oh, nothing, but they've done it rather cleverly." Then, in a more serious tone, he asked: "Is that radio of yours working all right?"

"Want to try it?" she asked, brightening up.

"You said it!" he agreed.

Mikhailova took off her cap and put on the earphones. After a few minutes she asked what message she should transmit. The captain sat down beside her. Striking his palm with his fist to emphasize his words, he delivered himself of the following:

"In a word, it's this way: the map's gone to pulp with water. I can't determine the quadrant of the aerodrome's position. I'm giving the coordinates by the compass. Since there's a very low cloud-ceiling, the line-bearings won't be visible. So our wireless transmitter will serve as coordinate on so-and-so wave-length. Tell us your wave-length."

The girl took off the earphones and turned to the captain with a radiant face.

But he was busy rolling another cigarette and didn't even raise his eyes.

"Now, listen," he said at last, in a rather hollow voice. "I'm taking the transmitter and going that way,"—with a wave of his hand,—"so as to be nearer my objective, see," he added by way of explanation. "And you'll just have to make your way back as best you can. As soon as it gets properly dark, go down to the river. The ice is thin, so take a pole of some kind with you, it'll help in case the ice breaks and you fall in. Then crawl along to Malinovka, three kilometres from here, and you'll be met there."

"Very well," said Mikhailova. "Only you're not getting the transmitter."

"Now, now, none of that," said the captain.

"I'm answerable for it, and it stays with me."

"As a kind of free supplement," he growled. Then, really annoyed, he said raising his voice: "I'm ordering you to give it up."

"You know, captain, that any of your orders will be obeyed. But you have no right to take away the transmitter."

"But you must understand. . ." he blustered.

"I quite understand," she interrupted quietly. "This job concerns me alone." And looking the captain angrily in the eyes, she added: "You work yourself up and interfere in what doesn't concern you."

He turned sharply round on her, was about to snub her, but pulled himself up short. Then, with an effort, he said:

"Oh, all right, carry on, work on your own," and, evidently to pay her out for offending him, he added: "You couldn't think of it yourself sooner, and now you see how you behave. . ."

"I'm very grateful to you for giving me the idea, captain," Mikhailova said in a mocking tone.

He turned back the sleeve of his coat to look at his watch.

"What are you sitting still for? Get going, there's no time to waste."

Mikhailova took the rope over her shoulder and set off. When she had gone a few steps, she turned and called out:

"Good-bye, captain!"

"Get along with you," was the surly answer, as he turned in the direction of the river.

A mist lay over the ground, there was a damp breath in the air, and everywhere the sound of running water that did not freeze even at night. Particularly unpleasant weather to die in. Well, for that matter, there isn't any weather in the world that would make dying pleasant.

And if Mikhailova had read three months ago a story in which the heroes lived through adventures similar to these, her beautiful eyes would undoubtedly have assumed a dreamy expression. Curling up under the warm blanket, she would have pictured herself in the heroine's place. Only, towards the conclusion, she would be certain to have saved the haughty hero's life to pay him out for everything. And afterwards he would have fallen in love with her, and she would totally disregard him.

The evening that she communicated her decision to her father, she had no conception of the superhuman efforts this work demanded, that she would be required to sleep in mud and dirt, suffer hunger and cold, and patiently bear dreary hours of loneliness. And had anyone explained these hardships to her in detail then, she would have asked simply:

"But other people stand these things, don't they?"

"And supposing you're killed?"

"Not everyone's killed."

"And what if they torture you?"

She would have been thoughtful for a few moments and then replied very quietly:

"I can't say how I'll behave in that case. But at any rate I won't give anything away. You know that."

When her father learned of her decision, he sat with bowed head, and in a husky voice, unfamiliar to her, said:

"Your mother and I will be very sad and anxious now, very."

"But, father," she said in a ringing voice, "father, you surely see that I can't stay at home now!"

He raised his head, and she was startled to see how old and worn-out he looked.

"I understand you," he said. "Well, well, it would be worse if my daughter wasn't that kind."

"Oh, father!" she burst out. "You're such a good father that I feel I'm going to cry this very minute."

Next morning she told her mother that she was joining the training courses for telephone-girls.

Her mother turned pale, but kept a tight hold on herself, only pleading:

"Be careful, child."

At the courses Mikhailova was a diligent pupil. At the tests she was

as worried and agitated as she had been during school examinations; it made her very happy when her level of education and not only the number of characters transmitted, was mentioned in the reports. But the captain had hit the nail on the head: left alone in the woods those wild, black, gloomy nights, she had wept bitterly and eaten all her emergency supplies of chocolate. Nevertheless she had kept up regular transmissions, and, to save electricity, had refrained from adding a word about herself, although she longed to do so to relieve her loneliness.

And now, as she made her way to the aerodrome, she was surprised to find how easily it all came to her. Here she was, soaked to the skin and with a frost-bitten foot, crawling through wet snow. In the old days, whenever she had been laid up with influenza, her father had set by her bedside and read to her so that she need not tire her eyes. And her mother, looking worried, would warm the thermometer a little between her palms because her daughter didn't like the chill touch of the glass under her arm. Whenever anybody rang up, her mother would reply in an agitated whisper: "She's ill." And her father muffled the telephone in paper so that its ringing would not disturb his daughter. And now, if the Germans succeeded in locating the radio, Mikhailova would be killed.

Yes. They would kill her, such a good, beautiful, kindhearted, and, perhaps, gifted girl! And she would lie on that wet and horrible snow. And she was wearing fur-lined togs. The Germans would strip them off her dead body. It struck terror to her heart to think of herself lying there stark in the mud and filth. German soldiers would stare down at her naked body with their abominable eyes.

How very like this wood was to the grove at Kraskovo, the little country place where she had stayed for summer holidays. There were the same kind of trees. Yes, and when she had gone to the Pioneer's summer camp, she had seen the same trees there. And a hammock swinging between twin pines like these.

When Dimka had carved her name in the bark of a birch like that one over there, she had been very angry with him for mutilating and disfiguring the living tree, and would not speak to him. He had followed her about, watching her with eyes that were mournful and, because of their mournfulness, beautiful. When they made it up later, he had asked if he might kiss her. She had closed her eyes and said plaintively: "Only not on the lips." And he had been so agitated that he had kissed her on the chin.

She had been very fond of pretty dresses in those days. Once, when she had been sent to make a report, she had put on her smartest dress, and the others had demanded:

"What are you all swanked up for?"

"What about it?" she had retorted. "Why shouldn't a report be read by a pretty, smart girl, I'd like to know?"

And now here she was all dirty, and wet, crawling on all fours, looking about her furtively, straining her ears for a sound, dragging her frost-bitten, swollen foot after her.

"Supposing they kill me? Well, what about it? They killed Dimka, didn't they? And other good people. Well, and they'll kill me. Am I any worse than the others?"

Snow fell, the puddles squelched under her weight. Rotting, melting snow filled the gullies. She crawled painfully on and on. Sometimes she rested, lying on the wet ground, with her head in the crook of her arm; she had no strength to crawl to a drier spot.

Then she went on again with the dull, plodding perseverance of a wounded man who crawls somehow to the dressing-station, where they will stop his blood from ebbing away and give him a drink. And he will find the blessed peace he longs for and others to care for him.

The damp clinging fog turned black

because the night was black. Somewhere up above in the sky great ships were sailing. Leaning back in his armchair, half-closing his eyes, the navigator of the squadron-leader's aeroplane listened to the rustle and whistle in the megaphones, but there were no radio-signals.

The pilots and the gunner-wireless-operator listened, too, to the whistle and shrieks in the megaphones, but there were no signals. The propellers bored the black sky. The great ships sailed on and on into the gloom of night, but still there were no signals.

Then suddenly, softly, cautiously, the first signal calls came over the air. Clinging to this thread of sound, frail as a spider's web, the ponderous ships of the air turned with a roar of engines and rushed into the clouds. Familiar and sweet to the ear as the cricket's chirruping song, as the sigh of dry wheat-ears in steppe-wind, as the rustle of withered autumn leaves, the faint sound was the guide that drew the steel ships onward through the night.

The formation commander, the pilots, the gunner-wireless-operators, the technicians and Mikhailova, too, knew that bombs would be dropped there on the spot from where that familiar welcome summons came. Because here were enemy planes.

Mikhailova was kneeling in a pit full of black muddy water, and bending over the radio set, tapping out a signal. A heavy sky hung low overhead. But the sky was empty and silent. The girl's frost-bitten foot grew numb in the soft slush, her back ached, her temples throbbed as though a red-hot hoop was squeezing them. She was feverish. When she touched her lips, she found them hot and parched. "I must have caught cold," she thought wearily. "Anyhow, it doesn't matter now."

Sometimes she seemed to be losing consciousness, then she would open her eyes with a start and listen. The signals rang out clearly and distinctly in her earphones, so her hand must be working the key automatically. "That's training and discipline for you! What a good thing that I and not the captain came here. His hand couldn't work automatically, like mine. If I hadn't come here, I might have been in Malinovka now, and perhaps they'd have given me a sheep-skin coat. . . there's a hot stove in Malinovka. . . and everything would have been different. And now there'll never be anything any more. . . It's queer, I'm lying here and thinking: there's a city called Moscow somewhere. And people, lots of people. And none of them know that I'm out here. Still, after all, I'm behaving rather well, you know. Perhaps I'm quite plucky? I don't think I really feel scared. No, that's because I'm ill, that's why I don't feel scared. . . If only it would end quickly, one way or another. What are they doing, anyhow? Can't they understand that I can't stick it out any longer!"

With a sob, she lay back on the slope of the hollow and, turning over on her side, went on tapping. Now she could see the ponderous immensity of the sky. Now the searchlights licked at it, and the deep panting of the aircraft reached her ears. Gulping back her tears, Mikhailova whispered desperately:

"Dear people, good people, you've come for me at last! Oh, it's so hard for me here!" She was startled to find herself saying such things. "What if I've been talking like this instead of giving the signals? What will they think of me?"

She sat down and began tapping again, separately, distinctly, repeating the code aloud to prevent herself slipping into forgetfulness again. The humming of the engines was nearer now. Then the anti-aircraft gunners got to work.

"Aha, you don't like that, do you?"

She got up. She felt no pain now. She used her key with all her might. It was not so much a signal as a cry of "Hit them! Hit them hard!" that rang from the metal key.

The first bomb came down cleaving the air, and crashed. The blast bowled her over on her back. Orange blots of reflected flame splashed in the puddles. The earth shook with the hollow blows. The wireless transmitter tumbled over into the water. Mikhailova attempted to raise it. The screaming bombs seemed to be coming straight for her, into the pit.

She crouched down with her shoulders hunched up to her ears and shut her eyes tight. But the glare from the flashes pierced her eyelids. The force of the blast blattened to the ground the stakes with the barbed wire entangled around them. In the intervals between the explosions something burst and crackled hollowly away at the aerodrome. The thick black fog stank of gasoline.

Then a stillness fell. The anti-aircraft guns were silent.

"It's all over," she thought to herself drearily. "And now I'm alone again."

She tried to rise but her legs. . . What was the matter? She couldn't feel them at all. What had happened? Ah yes, she remembered. She must have been shell-shocked; your legs go numb then. That was all. She lay down with her cheek on the wet clay, to rest a moment. If only a bomb would fall just here! How simple everything would be! And she wouldn't know the worst.

"No," she said with sudden resolution. "Worse things happened to others, and still they got out. Nothing very bad should happen to me. I don't want it to!"

Somewhere the engine of a car was grunting, and cold, white rays slid over the black thicket. Then came an explosion, fainter than the preceding bomb explosions; shots rang out close by.

"They're looking for me. And it's so nice to lie quiet like this! Is it possible that there isn't going to be any more of this?"

She tried to turn over on her back, but the pain in her foot rushed in a red-hot torrent to her heart. She gave a sharp cry, tried to struggle to her feet and fell again.

Cold, hard fingers were fumbling at the loop of her collar.

She opened her eyes.

"It's you? You've come for me?" said Mikhailova and burst into tears.

The captain wiped her face with his hand, and she closed her eyes once more. She could not walk. The captain seized her by the belt of her togs with one hand and pulled her up out of the pit. His other arm hung limp like a rag.

She could hear the runners of a sledge hiss as they glided over the slushy snow.

Then she opened her eyes and saw the captain. He was sitting on a tree stump, holding one end of his belt in his teeth and dragging the other tight around his bare arm. Blood was oozing from under the strap. He raised his eyes and, as they met Mikhailova's, he asked:

"Well, what about it?"

"It's no go," she whispered.

"Doesn't matter. I'm no good for anything any more," he ground out through his teeth. "No strength left. Try and get back yourself. It isn't far now."

"And what about you?"

"And I'll rest a bit here."

He tried to get up. Then he smiled in a queer apologetic way and rolled off the stump onto the ground. He was very heavy, and she had a terrible time getting his helpless body onto the sledge. He was lying in a very uncomfortable position, face downwards, and to turn him over on his back was beyond her strength.

For a long time she tugged at the reins to move the sledge. Every step caused her the most exquisite pain. But she tugged manfully at the reins and staggered on with the sledge over the wet heavy ground.

She could not grasp it all: how could it be still going on? why was she on her feet and not lying helpless, exhausted, on the ground? Leaning against a tree, she closed her eyes and dreaded to fall, for if she fell

she knew she would never get up again.

She saw the captain crawl along the ground, lie head and shoulders across the sledge, and cling to the crossbar with his good hand.

"It'll be easier for you this way," he said in a whisper.

So he dragged himself along on his knees, hanging half out of the sledge. Sometimes he let go, and fell, his face striking the ground. She pushed the sledge under his chest, but she had not even the strength to turn her eyes away so as not to see the blackened, torn face.

Then she fell. Once more she heard the hiss of the muddy snow under the runners. Ice crackled. She gasped and gurgled; the waters closed over her. And it all seemed like a dream.

She opened her eyes at last because she felt someone's attentive glance fixed on her. The captain, yellow, emaciated, with a filthy beard and an arm in a sling contrived of a rag and two dirty bits of board, was sitting on a sleeping-shelf, staring at her.

"So you did wake up?" he said in a voice that sounded unfamiliar.

"I wasn't asleep."

"It's all the same," he said. "It's a kind of sleep, too."

She raised her hand and saw that her arm was bare.

"Did I undress myself?" she asked in a complaining tone.

"No, I did it," he admitted, and, playing with the fingers of his wounded hand, he explained: "You and I had a dip in the river, and besides, I was wondering if you were wounded."

"It doesn't matter," she said softly and looked him in the eyes.

"Of course not," he agreed.

Then she smiled and said:

"I knew you'd come back for me."

"Why?" he said, with a little laugh.

"I just knew."

"Nonsense," he said. "You couldn't have known anything. You were the point from which the planes were taking their hearings during the bombings, and you might have been hit. I was looking for a hayrick to give a beacon-signal in case that happened. And in the second place you were spotted by an armoured car with a wireless. It had bombed the whole locality before I sent a grenade into it. And in the third place. . ."

"Yes, what about the third place?" Mikhailova demanded in a ringing voice.

"In the third place," he replied gravely, "you're the right kind of girl." Hereupon he added: "And, generally speaking, wherever did you hear of anyone behaving differently?"

Mikhailova set up, holding a heap of clothes against her chest and, looking at the captain with glowing eyes, said very audibly and distinctly:

"You know what: I think I love you very dearly."

The captain turned away abruptly, and his ears crimsoned.

"Now, now, that's enough of. . ."

"I don't mean in love. I just love you, that's all," Mikhailova repeated proudly.

The captain raised his eyes and, looking at her from under his eyebrows, said thoughtfully:

"Well, if it's like that, then it's another thing."

When the captain returned this time from the hospital, his comrades could hardly recognize him, so cheerful and excited and talkative was he. He laughed heartily, cracked jokes and found a kindly word for everyone. But all the time his eyes were searching for someone.

Observing this, his comrades guessed the reason, and remarked casually:

"It seems Mikhailova's on a job again. . ."

A bitter little line appeared for a moment on the captain's face, then vanished. Without looking at anyone in particular, he said:

"She's the right kind of girl, there's no doubt about it," and with a tug at his tunic, went to report his return to the chief.

BORIS LAVRENYOV

THE OLD WOMAN

When nine friends, nine wireless-operators of a regiment of marines, reached the hamlet Sharonovo, it became obvious that there was no hamlet at the place indicated. The hamlet existed merely as a conventional sign on the staff map. There was nothing but smashed, felled and splintered wood around, deep craters filled with coffee-coloured marshwater, heaps of bricks, remnants of smashed stoves, and bitter dry ashes which the wind swirled about and drove into your eyes.

Both artillery and aeroplanes had done their worst to the hamlet, and the German torchbearers had completed the devastation. Before they fled, they had burned down whatever had not been demolished before.

That made it all the more strange and striking to discover the new cottage of the Sukhonino in the middle of the chaos of ruins and devastation, at the very centre of the burned village. The house, solidly built of good strong timbers not yet browned by rain and weather, had been damaged by neither shells nor fire.

As the wireless-operators crawled from under the charred brushwood out into the open space, they stared astonished at this cottage towering above the burnt out village like a memorial raised to the village that had been. They were even more astounded when they noticed a woman by the cottage wall. She was doing a domestic job, fixing bits of glass, which she had picked up among the rubble, into the window frame, glueing them together with long strips of old newspapers. The presence of a living soul in this dreadful place was just as unaccountable as the existence of an undamaged house.

When the wireless-operators approached, they saw a miserable old woman incredibly thin. Straight grey wisps of hair fell from under the canvas kerchief upon her furrowed, hollow cheeks. Her dim eyes were deeply sunk and stared blankly and indifferently. The torn and dirty rags dangling from her shoulders revealed her shrivelled yellow body. The coming of the nine marines made no impression upon her. She barely glanced in their direction, and went on with her work.

Vinogradov, the sergeant major of the detachment, the regiment's indefatigable joker and wag, took off his sailor's cap, flourished it gracefully like one of King Louis XIV musketeers, clicked his heels and said briskly:

"Greetings from the Red Navy, with knobs on, granny! We have got the order to drop anchor at this port. Your palace seems to be the only one left, and the population too seems to amount to one person. So let us introduce ourselves. We are heroic marines forced by war conditions temporarily to leave our beloved battleship 'Marat' and become landlubbers. Won't you take us as lodgers?"

The old woman moved her lips, and the marines saw that her mouth was toothless. She answered dully, muttering and mumbling:

"Stay if you must. What do I care? The house is empty. There is room enough. You go your way and I'll go mine."

Vinogradov was perplexed. He scratched the back of his head.

"Why, granny, it's funny to find you so indifferent to your own people. What do you mean by 'you go your way and I'll go mine?' Here are nine

unfortunate water-babies, 1942 model, who have lost their daddy and their mummy in the storm and stress of war. And the married ones have lost their wives too. Won't you take pity on us poor little orphans?"

The wireless-operators broke into a laugh but the old woman continued to stare at Vinogradov in the same dull and lifeless way. Then she sighed and her chest gave a grating sound like a creaking door. And she mumbled in the same lifeless way:

"Do what you like. If you need anything, I'll do it."

With tottering steps, hardly moving her skinny legs under the torn skirt, the old woman climbed slowly up the steps and disappeared into the house.

"Jolly old dame," Vinogradov said regretfully. "The dead spit of Marlene Dietrich. What a merry life we'll lead here, boys! Well, it can't be helped. So let's settle in and start our official duties."

The whole night the wireless-operators were busy installing the wireless equipment and testing the contacts. And throughout the night they heard the old woman coughing, groaning and moaning in the little room to the right of the passage.

"The old thing seems to have suffered a lot," said Peregudov, the pock-marked Siberian, frowning. "How long did the Germans hang about here? About seven months, I reckon? Quite enough to dry up a tree, let alone an old woman."

"She'll die most likely," added Kostya Malinin half doubting, half agreeing. "We had better feed her up a bit, mates. You know, she is sure to be some lad's mother. Maybe her son is helping our mothers somewhere at the other end of the front."

"Yes, that's right," Vinogradov joined in. "Let's put a spot of grub into granny's inside, and we'll live to see her dance with us. Let's consider ourselves adopted by her, boys, and that's that."

Next morning the nine marines, who each had some old Russian woman for a mother, somewhere beyond the blazing line of the front, started to vie with each other in looking after the old woman's needs. They repaired the house, lugged firewood from the forest, mended the garden fence, cleaned out the well, filled in the cracks in the stove and lit it. After that they poured tinned peas-and-pork soup into a pailful of boiling water and chocolate cubes into a copper teapot, sat down to dinner and forced the old woman to sit down with them in spite of all her refusals. She could not hold out against the combined attack of nine merry sailors who poured out soup and chocolate for her, spread her bread with lard and were untiring in their care for her. By the end of the meal, the sullen old eyes had a warm look in them. She carefully wiped her spoon with the end of her canvas kerchief, got up and folding her hands over her hollow abdomen, made a deep bow to the marines:

"Thank you, my dears!"

And the nine pals saw tears rolling down the grooves of the old woman's wrinkles. They felt shaken and moved, and Vinogradov said shyly:

"You mustn't thank us, granny, and you mustn't cry. I'll tell you straight it's for our own sakes we're trying to get into your good graces. We are military folk and rather unpractical. There's our washing to be done and mending and darning, and our hands are untrained for it. So let's organize our existence on the basis of brotherly exploitation."

The old woman glanced at Vinogradov and smiled faintly for the first time.

"He's a jolly one," she mumbled.

"You bet," answered Vinogradov. "Life's too hard for the mournful, granny dear."

Very soon the wireless-operators were as used to the old woman as if they had really grown up in that cottage and had always lived under her motherly wing. And the old woman herself seemed to come back to life. She began to enjoy talking to the marines but shrank from any questions

about the things she had gone through during the German occupation. Whenever anybody even mentioned it, she would shrivel up, go rigid and start crying. One day Vinogradov said to his pals:

"I notice some of you are tactless about mummy's nerves and insist on asking about her life under the Germans. It's quite obvious that asking such questions is like sticking pins into her. Besides, why should we torment her with painful memories? What are we, anyway, marines or war correspondents? So no more pestering of our benefactress! I put it to the vote, who's for it, and nobody can be against."

From that time on there was a tacit agreement that none of the nine marines should ever mention the Germans to the old woman. She, on the other hand, turned out to be a loving, attentive mother to the nine water-babies. She washed their underwear, mended and darned, cooked their food, in short, did everything that could be expected from a careful housewife. And the seamen lived with her as cozily and comfortably as in their own homes. They got used to the old worn out woman and grew very attached to her. They let her share their thoughts, read to her their letters from home, asked her advice and confided to her their most intimate secrets.

After dinner one day, when the old woman had cleared the table and gone to the vegetable garden to weed the potato-patch, Peregudov glanced after her, shook his head and said gruffly:

"It's time, boys, we began looking after mummy a bit. She's got quite shabby. Look what a mess she is. We won't stay here for ever, and she will be quite done for when the frosts come. It will be our fault if she gets her death of cold. We've got to fit her out. Let's look through our kit. There are things we don't need."

"Do you want to rig her out in sailor's trousers?" guffawed Malinin.

"Don't talk tripe!" Peregudov snapped. "Why should it be sailor's trousers? We must make some woman's clothes for her. Luzgin here has worked in a ladies' tailor's. He should do a bit of work for the old lady's sake."

The proposal met with general approval. The marines went through their sacks and collected two pairs of old trousers, one sailor's coat, and three jerseys. Vinogradov gave a reefer which was a bit worn but still in good condition. And Luzgin sat down to work. He worked in the garret on the sly, since it was decided that the presents were to be a surprise for the old woman. So the attic door was decorated with an inscription: "Secret department. No admittance." Vanya Kleimyonov, a small and lean electrician, whose figure was rather like the old woman's, was used as a mannequin. In a week's time Luzgin had finished his work. Kleimyonov looked quite smart in a navy blue cloth skirt of good quality and a jacket to match, with a turned-down collar. But when he put on the tailored overcoat cut out of Vinogradov's warm reefer turned inside out and of the second pair of trousers, everybody took his cap off to Luzgin. The three jerseys Luzgin had turned into two striped blouses ornamented by insertions made out of brightly coloured handkerchiefs that Peregudov had bought in Riga before the war. The outfit was ceremoniously presented to the old granny, the nine friends forming up in line. Vinogradov improved the occasion by giving a short, enthusiastic speech:

"Our most respected adopted mother, given to us by the war, if I may say so, we beg you to accept our gift. We are simple-hearted men, and we just want to lighten the burden of your great age. Change into these clothes and wear them for our sake. And either throw away those rags of yours, or, still better, put them aside and keep them till we dress that devil Hitler in them and lead him about at the end of a string."

The old woman took the neatly folded clothes from Vinogradov with trembling hands, tried to say some-

thing but only uttered a sob and darted into her small room with positively youthful speed.

"Never mind," said Vinogradov. "Let her have a good cry."

When the old woman had changed and came out, the marines thought she looked quite different. Her bent back had straightened, there was a glitter in her eyes, and there was something vaguely youthful even about her toothless mouth.

From that day on, the old woman was even more sollicitous in her care for her foster children.

One day Vinogradov decided to take a good wash in a miniature lean-to built off the passage, which the wireless-operators had transformed into a bath-house by the simple means of putting there a wash-tub found among the ruins of a cottage. The sergeant major had stood a pail of hot water by the side of the wash-tub and was scrubbing himself hard with a wisp of bast. Big soapsuds splashed on the walls and clung to them like so many snowballs. But try as he would, Vinogradov could not manage to scrub his back properly. As he was vainly trying to reach between his shoulder blades, the sergeant major suddenly noticed through the half-open door the old woman on her way back from the yard.

"Hi, there, granny!" called Vinogradov. "Come here and be a friend. Scrub my back, old dear. I just can't get at it."

The old woman stopped at the door and did not answer immediately.

After a while she said:

"It's a little awkward, my dear. I'm a woman, you know. . ."

"Now, come on!" broke in Vinogradov with a laugh. "Don't be so fussy! You aren't much of a woman at your age. I bet you think of me as a babe in arms. . ."

"All right," said the old woman, opening wide the little door and rolling up her sleeves. "Well, let us fix you up since you are so helpless. . ."

She snatched the soapy piece of bast and began rubbing the sergeant major's back hard. Vinogradov sat in the wash-tub purring with pleasure and half closing his eyes like a cat being scratched behind the ears, and wondering where the old woman had got so much strength. Having rubbed the sergeant major's back till it was flaming red, the old woman disappeared swiftly before he could thank her.

"Isn't it queer?" ruminated the sergeant major. "So old and so bashful! Seems to me a woman is a woman till she lies in her grave."

And having expressed this original opinion on the Eternal Feminine, the sergeant major scrambled out of the tub.

In this way the nine pals lived at the old woman's house till the order came for them to move to a new place. When the old woman heard that her adopted sons had to move, she relapsed into her former glumness.

Vinogradov tried to cheer her up:

"But, granny, we're not parting for ever. We'll remember you as long as we live. And when the war is over we'll get you out of here. And you'll live with whichever one of us you prefer, or take turns with everyone of us so as not to offend anyone."

But the old woman did not listen to these words of comfort. She sat on the porch leaning her head on her shrivelled arms and stared sadly at the green forest beyond the open space.

In the evening the boys packed the wireless equipment in a cart and prepared to leave. Vinogradov walked up to the old woman.

"We hope to see you soon, granny dear. Don't think badly of us. We thank you with all our hearts for your kindness and love. Look forward to our return. You are certainly pretty old, but we do hope to see you again. We'll write to you, and you too please let us know how you are getting on."

He embraced the old woman, and suddenly she threw both her arms round his neck, pressed her limp wrinkled cheek against his and hung on his neck, quivering with heart-breaking sobs. Through her sobbing

the marines caught some choking, pitiful words:

"Oh my darlings, my dear, dear boys, what shall I do without you? It was as if life had begun once more for me with you here, and now it's like returning to the grave again!"

"Don't, granny dear, don't get upset. And don't talk such nonsense," said Vinogradov patting the old woman's bony back. "Why talk about the grave? You have at least thirty years to go till you are a hundred."

"My God, my God!" cried the old woman, and her arms dropped from the sergeant major's neck. She covered her face with her hands. "My God! What are you saying? Do you know how old I am? You've been calling me mummy and granny all these weeks, and yet I am only thirty-three. That's what the Germans did to me!"

And as if frightened by her confession she tore herself out of Vinogradov's arms, rushed into the house and slammed the door.

The marines stood staggered, silent, avoiding each other's eyes. Their faces darkened and the muscles of their cheeks twitched. Vinogradov lifted his hand slowly and took off his sailor's cap. The eight pals imitated his movement without a word. They were staring blankly at the closed door of the house just as you look at the grave of someone you love.

Then Vinogradov began slowly and thickly as if speech were difficult. He spoke for all of them:

"Forgive us, sister!"

He pulled his sailor's cap down over his eyes, and the wireless-operators did not recognize their merry, carefree sergeant major. Vinogradov's face had gone grey, and he said slowly, as though swearing a solemn oath:

"Well, boys, we've got a big job to do. We shan't be through with them till all the fascist bitches have gone grey and die like dogs howling over their stinking dead mates. . . Right about march!"

And the nine men crossed the open space with drooping heads without looking back, in case they saw the woman they were leaving in the house come out and stand on the threshold.

IN MEMORY OF A FEARLESS RUSSIAN WOMAN

Black bordered lines in the newspapers told the Soviet Union of a great loss. The gallant airwoman, Marina Raskova, Hero of the Soviet Union, perished in the performance of her official duties.

The whole life of this modest, cheerful woman was devoted to her beloved aviation. Wide possibilities were open to her by her richly gifted nature. She loved music and from childhood showed uncommon musical ability. She was attracted by chemistry, the science of the future. Not by accident is the first chapter of her memoirs entitled: "Music or chemistry?" Yet she became neither a chemist nor a musician. She chose, instead, a profession that combines the inspiration of the artist with the exact calculations of the scientist: she became an aviator. In this field Marina Raskova went far, rising from a humble worker in an aeronavigational laboratory to a famous navigator of long-distance planes.

Though she died a young woman, yet she already had behind her long years of persistent, intensive, heroic work in aviation. Her ardent nature continually sought new, difficult tasks.

The name of Marina Raskova won national fame in 1938, when together with two other Soviet airwomen, Valentina Grizodubova and the late Paulina Ossipenko, she made a non-stop flight from Moscow to the Far East. The women's crew of the plane "Rodina" covered a course of 6,450 kilometres, or 5,947 kilometres as the crow flies, in 26 hours 29 minutes, thus establishing an international women's record in both a straight and a broken line.

Before landing the plane the commander ordered Marina Raskova, the navigator, to jump out with a parachute, as it was dangerous for her to remain in the navigator's cabin. There was no time for reflection, and Marina jumped. She spent many days alone in the dense, solitary taiga, keeping up her strength with occasional clusters of rowanberries and swamp water. Her bruised feet ached; the bitter autumn wind chilled her to the bone; at night the Pole star twinkled faintly overhead. . . During these endless days Raskova preserved self-control, endurance, a calm spirit. The crew of the "Rodina" was found; the friends met once more. They returned to Moscow as heroines and were greeted in the Kremlin by Stalin.

Only four years have passed since then. Marina Raskova continued her tireless work in aviation. She wrote a book about her flight, displaying yet another aspect of her many-sided nature, real literary talent. *A Navigator's Notes* by Marina

Raskova has become a favourite book of Soviet young people. She tells about her life truthfully, simply, with charming sincerity. She also wrote a little book for children entitled *In the Kremlin*, dedicated to her meeting and conversation with Stalin.

From the first days of the war Marina Raskova joined the ranks of Soviet military aviators. This was her duty, and she did it. At the time of her death she held the rank of a major, commanding an air regiment. Under her direction aviation units were prepared and young aviators trained.

Marina Raskova fought against fascism in the name of her country, for the defence of truth and justice on earth. Only with the extermination of fascism will mankind be guaranteed peace and freedom. This was felt with all her heart by the gallant Russian woman, Marina Raskova, who used always to say of her beloved life's work: "Soviet aviation was created and exists to defend peace!"

SERGEI BOGOMAZOV

NICHOLAS ASSEYEV

MANKIND IS WITH US

Hear—my word
carries weight,
Hear, for truth
will prevail,
Do your utmost,
my mate,
Fight! Fight on
tooth and nail.

On your shoulders
today
Rests the fate
of the earth,
Justice lies
our way,
Truth must have
a rebirth.

Have we battered
in vain
Through disaster-charged
clouds,
To see nothing
remain
Of the truth
that is ours?

Twenty-five years
is a stride
Of a whole
generation—
Twenty-five years
of pride
In our own
creation.

And, remembering
this,
Will you, gasping
for breath,
Drop in fear
to your knees
'Fore the phantom
of death?

No! Not one
of our sons!
We have always
been taught
That all men
die but once,
There's one death
to be fought.

And this one
we will send
Spinning, whirling
through space,
Flying headlong
to land
In the foe's
embrace.

Our blow
must fall
With a force
that can blind,

For behind
like a wall
Stands the whole
of mankind,—

Mankind, thrilled
and inspired
By the tread
of your feet,

Mankind, swelling
with ire,
Breathing fire
and heat.

Never fear,
never yield,
Train your gun
on his breast,
Firmly cling
to the field,
Do not swerve
from your quest.

And when victory's
nigh,
Give the foe
no respite,
Future songs
will ring high
With our glory
and might.

Our fame
will be told
In heart-stirring
pages,
And the banner
we hold
Will wave on
through the ages.

Through privations
and gore,
Through smoke
and through flame,
On the highway
of war
We will win
just the same!

Mankind's with us
for ever,
For ages
to come,
Our glorious
banner
Will proudly
wave on.

Translbted by Leah Gavurina

THE RISE AND FALL OF FRITZ TODT

1

Fritz Todt[1] was born in 1891. A year before, the old chancellor, Bismarck, has resigned, and Kaiser Wilhelm II had become the advocate of the interests of the grasping young German imperialism. In 1900, when Fritz was just starting at the technical school, Kaiser Wilhelm made a send-off speech to the German soldiers setting off on a punitive expedition to China:

"Just a thousand years ago the Huns under the leadership of Attila gained for themselves a reputation that has gone down in history; so now let the name of Germany become so well-known in China that in a thousand years not a single Chinese will dare to give even a sidelong glance at a German. . . No mercy, no prisoners; let everyone that falls into your hands become your victim... Once and for all clear the path for civilization."

When Fritz was fourteen years old, he had an opportunity of seeing and hearing the kaiser in person. On the 27th of April, 1905, the kaiser was in Karlsruhe, where he was met by his loyal men of Baden. Fritz and his parents had gone to Karlsruhe on an "Ausflug," an excursion. The kaiser spoke from the balcony of the town-hall, and Fritz had a good view of him from the square. The kaiser looked not nearly so imposing as Fritz had expected, but the occasion was very impressive, the kaiser held himself with an air of assurance, and the boy long remembered the haughty expression of his face, the moustaches twirld dashingly upwards, and the gloved hand, hanging limp as a whip-lash, which the kaiser tried to hide away from the view of the public. Along with all the rest Fritz clapped when the kaiser said: "I hope that the day when we shall consider the time ripe for action, in order to secure for Germany a place in the sun,— I hope that that day will find all of us Germans one and united."

In 1910 Fritz Todt joined the artillery division at Karlsruhe as a volunteer.

The countenance of the young Frizt Todt could hardly be called inspiring: it was an ordinary face such as is common among South-German "burschen," with regular features, those pale-grey eyes that are called steel-grey only out of politeness, a sharply-drawn mouth with thin hard lips and scanty moustaches which volunteer Todt without a murmur shaved off at the orders of the military command. But Fritz had clever hands: they could give a spirited salute, quickly and accurately carry out all the necessary manipulations with a rifle, and take that weapon to pieces and put it together again. His hands were trained to do things in an orderly fashion, and they acted quite automatically. Though Fritz was no fool: he had an undoubted talent for mathematics, at school he had been brilliant at solving construction problems, and

[1] A German general, minister in charge of armaments and munitions, who met his death in 1942. Fritz Todt was the builder of Siegfried line; this fact prompted the author to undertake a biographical sketch of his life, as of one of the leaders of the hitlerite war machine which is being beaten on the Soviet-German front. *Ed.*

he had been accepted as a volunteer so that in an year and a half he would be able to enter the higher technical school at Munich.

In the autumn of 1911, volunteer Fritz Todt at last received the right to array himself in a student's uniform.

But he was never able to finish the whole course: the war interrupted his studies, and he was called up.

His technical knowlegde made it possible for Fritz Todt to transfer from the artillery into a new branch of military service—aviation. In 1916 after some months at the front and training in the aviation school, he became a "spotter." Fate was kind to him: right up to 1918 he remained whole and uninjured. Only in August, 1918, when Germany's enemies gained a considerable superiority in the air on the Western front, the plane in which Todt was flying as spotter was shot down, and Fritz was wounded.

Thus the defeat of Germany and the conclusion of the armistice found Todt in hospital. It became necessary to think of the future.

His wounds healed, Fritz Todt returned home. The troops of Germany's late enemies, French, Belgian, English, were still on German territory: they had occupied the left bank of the Rhine. At Karlsruhe was an Anglo-Belgian detachment. At Pforzheim there was nobody. But he felt the bitterness of defeat keenly.

His father said: "I have something laid by for a rainy day. My money is well invested: in gold and silver, in goods and fixed property. You, Fritz, will continue your education. You will become an engineer, earn money, and work for the day when we Germans will take our revenge. The first time it hasn't come off, the second time it will."

In 1919 Fritz Todt returned to the student's desk, and in 1920 put up his D. Sc. thesis on the theme: "Sources of Error in the Construction of Asphalt and Pitch Roads." "Roads are always necessary both in times of peace and war. If you want victory, build roads," said the young engineer, Fritz Todt, graduate of the Munich higher technical school, when defending his thesis at Karlsruhe for the degree of doctor of technical sciences. And the members of the council of the Karlsruhe Institute of Technics applauded the young man, with the restraint befitting their age, rank and titles. "You have seen war service?" inquired the chairman of the council. On receiving an affirmative reply from the new doctor of technical sciences, who had also the rank of a retired lieutenant, the chairman of the council nodded approvingly.

2

Engineer Fritz Todt was again in Munich. The capital of Bavaria had just had a rude shock: the generals, with Kapp at their head, had tried with the aid of several military units to carry out a coup d'état, and, with Bavarian support, to dislodge from Berlin, where they had established themselves, the coalition of swallow-tails and surplices, of left bourgeois lawyers and catholic priests, together with their social-democratic satellites in caps and jackets. But the time was not yet ripe for the dictatorship of sabre and spur; the workers frustrated the Kapp putsch. It was necessary to take cover, to seek shelter behind the mask of Bavarian civil life.

Engineer Todt offered his services to the Bavarian government. Comparatively speaking, Bavaria was one of the provinces of Germany least generously provided with railways and highways. They must build, and keep on building at all costs, said Todt: even so, did not the most important international lines skirt round Bavaria? But the young engineer was informed that the Bavarian treasury was empty. Bavaria would refrain from road-building till times were more propitious.

Fritz Todt was indignant. He hoped that in Berlin he would get a more sympathetic hearing. So to Berlin he

went to talk over the same project with the minister Rathenau. Yes, he was the man to understand everything and, what was more, he had money, being at the head of the imperial ministry of public economy, and, still more to the point, president of the board of the General Electric Company, the famous A.E.G.

Rathenau said:

"Defeated on the battle-field, we shall continue the struggle in the sphere of economics. Germany will build roads along which will run the fastest trains and cars in Europe; Germany will build the best machines for herself and for her neighbours; Russia alone is prepared to buy any amount of German machines. Germany will set up on her own soil the best form of agriculture, and will provide herself, you will see, with all that is necessary. Certainly, the reparations are heavy, but it's an ill wind that blows no good, the reparations payments are discharged by means of goods exported abroad, and Germany is re-establishing her export trade with amazing speed. And besides after the 9th of November we one way and another managed to stop paying all these crowned idlers, all these Hohenzollerns, Wittelsbachs, Braunschweigs, Saxe-Coburg-Gothas and so on and so forth, and all their hangers-on too in court and military livery. I'll be bound they gobbled up among them as much as the reparations."

But Rathenau was too cock-sure of himself, it would come to no good. Todt received a technical commission from the minister: to prepare a report on the use of cheaper materials in the construction of highways in mountainous districts.

No sooner had he returned to Munich than he learned from the papers about the death of Rathenau. This Jewish minister, who had so unadvisedly spoken his thoughts about idlers in crowns and liveries, had been killed, by whose hand it was unknown. It was persistently rumoured that the assassins were here in Munich, where they felt themselves in perfect safety.

Soon, in that same ale-house where ten years before the green youth Todt had drunk beer with the other corporators, he made the acquaintance of a small but noisy company. At the head of this company was a queer, somewhat unbalanced individual with little black moustaches and a glance rivetted fanatically on one spot. This individual, he was called Adolf Hitler, frequently made speeches, banging the marble-topped table with one of those massive beer-mugs which even a Munich ale-house politician couldn't break: one's head would sooner split with alcohol fumes than a good clay mug break from a blow on the table. Adolf Hitler spoke to Todt, who had been recommended to him by the ale-house keeper as a regular customer. Hitler questioned Todt about his military service, about his work, "Ausflüge" (excursions), told the engineer that he, Hitler, had a group, a party behind him. "Not only these drunkards and dare-devils you see here. No, I have the backing of highly respectable people, on whose money I can afford to be enterprising. Come and have a chat with me."

When alone Hitler did not shout, as in the ale-house: he was polite, even ingratiating. "There will be room for you too in our movement, colleague Todt," he said. "We need you. My principals, Herr Baron Krupp von Bohlen and General Erich Ludendorff, insist that my following should consist not only of bawlers and bullies. For the time being we shall keep you in the background, colleague Todt, but you can be sure that your career will run perfectly smoothly, it goes without saying, if you join up with us. Later on, heigh presto, it will be your turn to come out on the stage. We shall look upon you as a delayed action bomb."

The thirty-two-year-old engineer Fritz Todt listened attentively. This individual had mentioned the name of Krupp von Bohlen, a name that spoke for itself. Krupp owned the

gigantic works at Essen; he was the most influential of the German industrialists who under the watchful eye of the allied commission were turning the sword into the ploughshare, but, no doubt, retaining all that was necessary for the reverse process.

Todt went on listening to the queer individual with the black moustaches. "We need you," said Hitler, "to continue working at the problem set you at the ministry, the problem of labour power. But we should like you to give us a copy of your reports for the ministry. Or better still, give us the original, and the ministry the copy. That's all right, they won't take offence, we have our own people there. We are interested in the question of labour conscription for road-building. How would you build roads if you had labour gratis, say slave labour?"

"O, if. . ." broke involuntarily from Todt.

"I am glad that you don't take fright at words," said Hitler. "Haven't I the right to use millions of lives in war and for labour, so as to secure for Germany world domination, so that I and my principals and capable people like you (a nod in the direction of his visitor) should occupy our real places as leaders? The people is a herd. It needs the whip."

Todt had no objections. "This individual with the black moustaches hasn't the same breadth of view as Walter Rathenau, I dare say, but he suits Germans better," thought Todt. And he agreed to send his reports not only to the ministry but also, at Hitler's direction, to his closest assistant, one Rudolph Hess, a handsome young fellow with bold eyes and silent feline gait.

3

Some years passed in labours for the ministry and for Hitler. On the recommendation of influential and, like himself, secret members of the hitlerite movement, Todt was given the opportunity to participate in municipal road contracts in Braunschweig, where the Hitlerites first attached themselves to the government apparatus, and then in Bavaria. The leader of one of the Bavarian districts jokingly remarked that the road was being built on American money received as a loan. "But the road, as you, colleague Todt, no doubt are perfectly aware, is of considerable significance from the military standpoint, as it joins our chemical works producing liquid fuel with the towns on the western border, where it is proposed sometime in the future to concentrate troops. But we don't tell our friends the Yankees about this," laughed the town councillor.

"If you want victory, build roads," Todt remembered his own words when defending his graduation thesis. He was young then and did not know that preparations for war should be made in secret.

In 1931, Hitler summoned Todt to talk things over. "The time has arrived for you to come out more into the open. Our party is now one of the most numerous. I appoint you, colleague Todt, chief of a detachment (Scharführer), and officially make you responsible for the technical department of the "Brown House," our headquarters in Berlin. By the way, you should present yourself to those gentlemen, my principals. Some of them already know of you from your reports. You are sure of a good reception. But you must produce the right impression. Your career depends on it."

Todt had already heard of the "Masters' Club," an influential and very exclusive organization of which the biggest industrialists, militarists, diplomatists and bankers were members. Now Fritz Todt was invited to make a report at this "Masters' Club" on the subject: "Rapid Methods of Building Automobile Highways and Their Significance in the Economy of Post-war Germany." He had to pass a serious examination, show himself a business man, an organizer and a realist.

His audience was very small: twelve people in all. The chairman, Captain Franz von Papen, introduced him to those present. "I hope," he said, "that our friend the doctor-engineer will not overburden us with technical details. When I was in charge of the affairs of Herr von Rintelen and his organization in the United States of America, Herr von Rintelen never overburdened me with technical details; he asked for only one thing: money."

Todt set about his report. In the thirty minutes allotted to him, he confined himself to two main ideas, which he tried to drive home to his listeners. Firstly, that the rapid construction of roads is the most important prerequisite for the transfer of large numbers of troops to the points where they are to be concentrated. Secondly, the rapid construction of roads presupposes the creation of industrial enterprises prepared to supply the roads with the necessary materials, machines and automobiles (with means of transport in general). In consideration of the first point, the roads should be financed by the State. In view of the second, the profits from the building of roads would go to private industrialists, who would benefit not only directly, from the contracts, but also indirectly, from the developments that would follow on systematic road construction.

The report produced a favourable impression. One of those present, an elderly banker with a cigar between his lips, made enquiries about labour power, and Todt, employing less crude, but none the less unmistakable terms, expounded Hitler's ideas on the subject of labour conscription. To Todt's satisfaction there was applause.

4

Under the Third Empire engineer Fritz Todt got on famously. In 1934 he was appointed inspector-in-chief of road construction for the whole of Germany. In 1935 he was put at the head of the technical department of the hitlerite party. In 1936 he was commissioned to study the problem of the construction of fortifications in Western Germany, and in connexion with this was created the organization of technical works, later known as the "Todt Organization."

Three hundred and forty-two thousand men worked day and night on the construction of roads and fortifications in the Todt organization. Three hundred and forty-two thousand men in dark olive-coloured trousers and jackets with swastikas on the sleeves presented themselves for work, at a word of command ate, marched, prayed, sang and slept. And each of these three hundred and forty-two thousand men in dark olive-coloured jackets were bound to unconditional obedience to inspector-in-chief Todt and loyalty to the Führer. All the rest of the Germans, so far as that goes, were also bound to loyalty to the Führer; but for these three hundred and forty-two thousand Fritz Todt was responsible.

Among these thousands of people in olive-coloured jackets there were naturally discontented ones. O, one knew how to keep them quiet: one gave them a severe lesson, punished them. It was well-known that there were only two means of escape from the Todt organization: death, or the concentration camp. The more far-sighted prefered death.

The fortifications were built on the western border. They were called the Siegfried line, in honour of the hero of the saga of the Nibelungs, the Führer's favourite work. Sometimes the fortifications were called the "Western Wall."

The fortifications were built at top speed, without resting, day and night. Hermann Göring came to inspect the "Western Wall." Later, on the 21st of August, 1939, in a speech delivered at Köln, Göring said: "In the building of the 'Western Wall' all the latest achievements of

technique have been applied. I can guarantee that the towns of Germany will never be open to attack either from land or from the air. There is no power on earth able to withstand German technique, German aviation and the German genius for organization." Todt was standing beside the rostrum from which Göring was speaking. His feelings were mixed. He knew that the "Western Wall" had been built in a hurry; knew that it was impossible to do more in the short space of time, knew too that the cost of this line of fortifications would be extremely high. "Cannon instead of butter" ("Kanonen statt Butter"): this was how that same Göring put it, taking food from the mouths of the people to pay for materials supplied by the big industrialists for the construction of the fortifications. But Todt also knew that the fortifications don't exist that are insuperable to an enemy sufficiently strong and sufficiently determined.

He expressed his doubts to Göring. Göring, corpulent, adorned with numerous medals, laughed heartily, and his face creased into folds of fat. "You are an excellent technician, colleague Todt, but a novice at politics. Without boasting and lying it's impossible to make a speech. But so far as that goes," and Göring's face grew serious, even gloomy, "if things get to the point of the Siegfried line being overcome, then it's good-bye to us, and it'll be all the same what I said. Then we'll be caught together and hung together ("Mitgegangen — mitgehangen"), as the old proverb says. But now it is very important that our enemies, and our loyal subjects too, should think the 'Western Wall' insuperable. It will frighten our neighbours and strengthen our nerve here at home. My speech was just dope." And a smile again appeared on Göring's fat, old-woman's face.

More than once Fritz Todt had occasion to recall these words of Hermann Göring's. He remembered them when the German-fascist troops burst into Poland, and the allies of Poland stood as though bewitched before the "Western Wall" and made not even the slightest attempt to test out the belt of German fortifications. Again Göring's words recurred to Todt when in the spring of 1940 Holland, Belgium and France were subjugated. Appointed minister of war supplies in 1939 in conjunction with his position as inspector-in-chief of road construction, Fritz Todt went to occupied France to become acquainted with the construction of the Maginot line. Tapping with his knuckle the walls of the deep casemate-fortifications built by French military engineers along the Maginot line, he thought how easily and quickly treachery had allowed them to overcome these fortifications, and, so far as that went, they were no worse, even better perhaps, than the German fortifications.

When Hitler rushed into attack against the U.S.S.R., Todt was already officially a general. He was at the head of the engineering service of the German army in the East. The Goebbels inspired press wrote: "The Todt organization will follow the army, will lay roads along which will travel supply transports for the troops and, in the homeward direction, freights destined for Germany: grain, cattle, trophies, from fertile Russia. And if it is judged advisable, from considerations of a military strategic character, temporarily to halt our advance on one or another sector of the enormous front, stretching from the Barents to the Black Sea, the Todt organization will build fortifications inaccessible to the eastern barbarians."

The Todt organization grew, by official figures, to one million persons, military and civil. In the districts temporarily seized from the U.S.S.R., men from the Todt organization drove away the local population, old people, women, boys and girls. There was no money, nor was

there need to dress them in the olive-coloured uniform of the organization. They were given a distinguishing mark: a tally with the name of the village and a number. The individual lost his name and acquired the registry number of a slave: his job was to build roads and fortifications for the German army. The Russians perished in hundreds; in their place the Germans drove off new unfortunates, organized sudden descents, punitive expeditions.

The "Blitzkrieg" in the East failed. The Todt organization had to undertake the building of fortifications on a larger scale than was originally intended. The organization came up against unforseen difficulties. The Russians did not wage war according to the rules invented by the Germans. The very ground burned under the feet of the Germans, and the partisans disrupted the German communications in the rear. It often happened that amongst the people forcibly driven to construction sites, people apparently sufficiently cowed by brutal treatment, the partisans would find support.

In winter, when the German soldiers dug themselves into the earth, built trenches with deep passages equipped according to the last word in German technique, the Russians began nevertheless to dislodge them.

In January, 1942, Todt carried out a trip along the line of the Soviet-German front. He was given the minutes of the examination of several prisoners of war. To the question of a German officer, a Russian lieutenant, taken prisoner when wounded, had answered with a phrase which Todt read over three times.

The Russian lieutenant had been asked: "How can you hope to storm German fortifications built according to the last word in technique?" The Russian had answered: "The devil is not so black as he is painted. There are no fortifications so strong that the bolsheviks cannot take them."

"There are no fortifications so strong that the bolcheviks cannot take them." Todt was informed that the bolsheviks had taken a number of well fortified points on the Western front and were continuing to advance. What if in reality "there were no fortifications so strong that the bolsheviks could not take them?"

Todt came to the conclusion that he ought to make his doubts known to the Führer.

On the 5th of February, 1942, Fritz Todt, general of the German army, minister of military supplies and inspector-in-chief of road construction of the Third Empire, made a report at an assembly of high functionaries of the national-socialist party in the presence of Hitler and Himmler. In Todt's report certain faint passages of doubt could be heard. He touched on the raids of English aircraft on the towns of the Ruhr province, making a circumspect reference to Görings speech in August, 1939. He told about the "furious" offensive operations of the Red Army on the western sector of the Soviet-German front. He touched on the question of the partisan war on the communications of the German army. And at the very end he quoted the words of the Russian lieutenant: "There are no fortifications so strong that the bolsheviks cannot take them."

Todt noticed Himmler lean over towards Hitler and whisper something in his ear. The audience received Todt's speech coldly. Nobody put a single question. Only Franz von Papen remarked a propos of nothing: "When I was travelling in the East, I came across a curious custom. If it was necessary to punish a vizir, his overlord would send him a silken cord. This by way of a hint to the effect that, in view of the vizir's past services, he was being given the opportunity to strangle himself, and his lord was prepared to deny himself the pleasure of attending a public execution."

"Technique in the West has made great strides," someone observed.

"In our age of aviation, trench-mortars and tanks there'd be no sense in a silken cord."

On the 8th of February, 1942, an official communiqué of the German government informed the world that General Fritz Todt, minister of war supplies and inspector-in-chief of road construction, holder of a Hitler Award of the first rank conferred for achievements in technique, had perished in an aeroplane accident. No details were given.

On the 12th of February, 1942, the official service took place in the Imperial chancellory. The Reichs-Chancellor and Führer, Adolf Hitler, made a speech befitting the occasion, did justice to the merits of the deceased Fritz Todt, outlined his career and the part he had played in Germany's struggle for world domination. A guard of honour consisting of the most prominent members of the gestapo stood round the coffin. Himmler was specially commissioned by the Führer to inform Frau Todt that she and her children would receive a pension.

On the 10th of February, 1942, the *New York Times* wrote that the death of Fritz Todt was a more serious loss to Germany than that of a dozen divisional commanders. The life work of the deceased was the building of the Siegfried line. The future will show how stable this line will prove when subjected to a forceful and energetic attack.

The experience on the battle-field of the brave Russians has shown that there are no German fortifications so strong as to be insuperable.

The way to the Siegfried line has been opened in Russia.

I. ZVAVICH

NEW APPOINTMENT

The latest scapegoat in the headquarters of the Supreme Commander Corporal Hitler

Drawn by Boris Yefimov

REDEMPTION

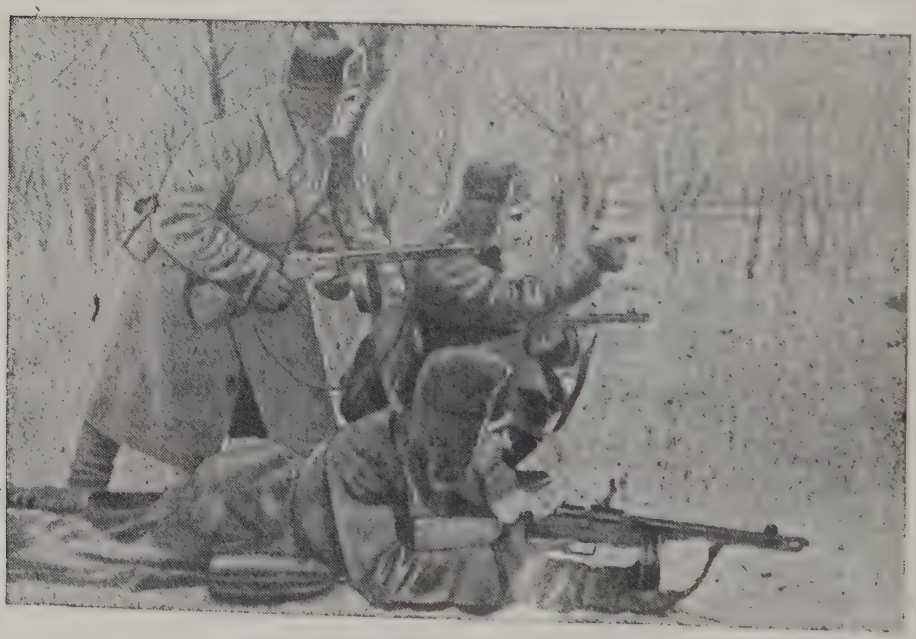
Dawn broke in hues of pink, and the mist that enveloped the steppe resembled a light rose-coloured veil. The fields were still. There was a chill in the damp air creeping up from the lover reaches of the Don. Autumn had come, and it could be felt in the light morning breeze, in the yellow crown of the still forest, and in the damp haze that hid the horizon.

This quiet morning found Red Army man Ostrovsky headed East. He was tired and hungry. His arms swinging limply, he plodded on with the unsteady step of a blind man, stumbling at times, and then planting his feet on the soft ground with a firmness that seemed unnatural. He walked as if oppressed by heavy load, this young soldier who never before had known what grief really meant, or realized how it could weigh down a man.

Slowly he walked up to his company political instructor who was standing near the headquarters dugout on the bank of the Don, and in a tone quite unlike his usual self and contrary to all his military training, mumbled almost in a whisper:

"I, Comrade Political Instructor. . . have been guilty. . . very guilty of. . ."

Political Instructor Novachenok



A group of tommy-gunners in ambush

carefully scrutinized Ostrovsky but said nothing. Something out of the ordinary must have happened, for the man standing before him bore no resemblance to the Ostrovsky that he had known, a lively fellow and not without an inclination to mischief.

"My machine-gun. . . it got left behind," blurted out the soldier not daring to look into the political instructor's eyes.

"You mean you abandoned it?" the instructor asked sharply as the truth dawned on him.

"Yes," came the reply, this time without hesitation, and Ostrovsky looked the instructor squarely in the eyes. He felt relieved, now that he had told someone about it.

"Go and get it, even if you have to die in the attempt! Understand?" said Novachenok and turned towards the dug-out.

"Looked for it all night. . . Can't find it. . ."

Ostrovsky stretched his hand out as if imploring the political instructor not to go away.

"Well, do you expect us to issue another gun?" The political instructor was almost shouting; he paused but did not turn around. "Or maybe you want to present the Germans with a second gun?"

He left, and Ostrovsky remained alone, staring listlessly ahead. Yes, it was all very clear. "Get it or die in the attempt! . ." The words still rang in his mind, stinging painfully, torturously. For a moment he regretted that he had reported the matter to the political instructor. But these doubts were cast aside as soon as they arose in his mind. No, he did right. One crime was enough, no need to follow it up by another. It was a good thing that he had plucked up the courage to come and report. Ostrovsky was glad that he was not frightened by the prospect of punishment or anger and could face what was coming to him. He was glad at the thought that he was not a hopelessly lost man, after all!

Ostrovsky found comfort in this thought and decided to go back. He walked along familiar paths, across familiar brush and mounds, through places where the day before he had been crawling on all fours. Every stone, every stump brought back to his mind the crime he had committed the day before. He had no desire to linger here for he felt that he must get away from the scene of his disgrace; yes, it was disgrace, Ostrovsky was sure of that now.

How did it all come about? Why did he abandon his reliable weapon and retreat to the East? What is more, none of the other boys had wavered, no one had turned back, he was the only one. Why, the company had not only held its ground but had dislodged the Germans from their positions. Many questions arose in his mind, but Ostrovsky could find no answer. No, there was an answer, he knew it, it was simple and cruel: he was a coward! He had been frightened by the German tanks which attacked his company and which his company managed to repel without his help.

But where did it happen? Where was the mound, the shell crater where he had left that ill-fated machine-gun? Ostrovsky renewed his search, but his appearance drew the enemy's fire. The Germans were nearby and kept the terrain in front under observation. Searching in daylight was out of the question, all the more since it would reveal our positions. Ostrovsky could hear the men swearing at him. At first he was completely oblivious of the bullets whistling overhead and around him. For hadn't the political instructor said: ". . . or die in the attempt!" Being killed was one way of solving the problem. But when the earlier feelings wore off, he began to think more soberly: "Any fool can die. I've got to find the gun first," he decided and crawled towards the woods.

Ostrovsky decided to wait. He spent all day lying in the woods,

exhausted and hungry, but firmly resolved to find the gun or to perish. Men moved around him, the leaves rustled in the cool breeze, but he was immersed in a world of his own, in his own thoughts, and lacked the strength to wrest himself free. For the first time in his life he was his own judge, and for the first time his conscience sat in judgement on his life.

Ostrovsky had lost his parents as a child; he grew up a homeless waif, the street had been his home. He liked mischief and was even a bit of a hooligan. He had served a term in a reformatory. He used to carry a knife, not that he had ever stabbed anyone, but among his buddies it was considered a mark of reckless daring. Indeed, he had been brave in the streets, among youngsters who obeyed him slavishly. But here, where lofty ideals, ideals which he fully understood and shared, required courage, he turned out to be a faint-hearted, lowly beast. The more he thought about it, the more he despised himself.

Night came, cold and windy, and a dreary autumn rain drizzled through the darkness. The jet-black night depressed Ostrovsky, for certainly there was no hope of finding his gun in the dark. He found some comfort in the fact that the strong sweeping wind raised enough noise to drown out all other sounds and prevent the enemy from detecting his movements. On a night like this one could crawl right under the very noses of the Germans without the slightest risk of being spotted. This sensation was all the more welcome, for Ostrovsky regarded himself a coward. Now he was elated with the joy that comes to a prospector on finding a hugget in the sand. His mind was exceptionally clear and sober, surprisingly clear, he thought. Perhaps this was explained by his firm resolution to carry out the political instructor's order at any cost, even at the cost of his life. Or, perhaps, his first misfortune, so keenly felt, caused him to notice such finest feelings as he had never noticed before.

The gloom obscured the outlines of the brush and trees, and made everything look equally black and impenetrable. It hid all the objects which could in any way distract a man's attention from himself. The burden seemed to become unbearable, and the night seemed endless, likely to last a lifetime. Ostrovsky crept on knowing that he was approaching the enemy lines. He had no arms and knew only too well that the very first encounter with the Germans would mean certain death. But he kept crawling.

Suddenly against the background of the black sky and the heavy clouds he saw an equally black human shape almost merging with the sky-line. Yes, this was a man, and undoubtedly an enemy! Looking up from the ground, Ostrovsky clearly saw him standing motionless as if afraid of his own movements. This was apparently a German outpost. He could be seen only from the short distance that separated him from Ostrovsky. Three steps back, and the man would vanish in the inky abyss of the black night.

But Ostrovsky did not creep back. He had no fear of the German and discerned him very clearly. Something seemed to have rooted him to the ground. Ostrovsky thought it over and decided that this was a chance to wipe out his disgrace. The sentry would surely have a machine-gun, or tommy-gun, and, although of German make, and not like the one abandoned yesterday, it nevertheless would make up for the loss. And he began to peer into the darkness, waiting for the opportune moment to attack. For a long time he lay motionless, his eyes riveted on the sentry, and time seemed to drag on even slower than before.

Finally he decided that the moment for action had come, and in a few minutes the first German he had ever strangled lay at Ostrovsky's feet. He did not wait to recover his

breath after the short but violent struggle. Slinging the German's gun over his shoulder and making no attempt to conceal his movements, Ostrovsky walked off to his own lines. His mind was blank. There was neither the joy of success, nor the fear of the danger not yet past. His fingers clutched the cold steel, just as a few minutes ago they gripped the nazi's throat. He was still under the spell of the indescribable feeling which takes possession of a man who had just come to grips with the enemy for the first time in his life and killed him. He straggled on as if walking through space, stumbling now and then, but never noticing. His senses dulled, he walked straight across the fields as if in a trance, and paid no heed to the road. He was heading for his company.

Entering the blindage, he showed the gun to the political instructor and said absent-mindedly:

"Here. . ."

"But this is not your own gun!" exclaimed the political instructor, inspecting the weapon. "Where'd you get it?"

"It's a German gun. I took it from a nazi."

"Nazi?" repeated the political instructor, perplexed and staring at the man. "Nazi, you say? Look at it! Why, it's an ordinary Soviet submachine-gun, probably abandoned by a hero like you. . ."

Only then Ostrovsky looked at his trophy for the first time. Good God! The gun was of Soviet make sure enough. Perhaps. . . was it possible that he had really strangled a Red Army man? Impossible. He had crept so far, there could not be any of their own men so far out. . . Gripped by a maddening fear, he thrust his hand into his breast-pocket and produced the documents found on the dead man. With trembling hands he unfolded them, afraid to look at the papers. But they were written in a foreign language. . .

A heavy load had been taken off his mind. The man strangled by him was, of course, a German. There was his soldier's card, his photograph, a letter. Ostrovsky silently passed them on to the political instructor. Although the latter knew nothing, he sensed that Ostrovsky was in the throes of some incredibly strong excitement.

"What's the matter with you?" he asked, and there was unmistakable concern in his voice. "You've atoned for your sin, calm down."

"Never mind, it's nothing. . ." stammered Ostrovsky in a vain attempt to smile. "That's just the after-effect of the fight with the German. . . It was a terrible thing, having to strangle him. As slippery as a worm he was. . . Look at him, isn't he a sight with those moustaches!" His laughter seemed unnaturally loud as he glanced at the photograph of the German soldier to convince himself once more that there was no mistake.

"Good thing you strangled him," said the political instructor sitting down on his cot. "But the fact that you found it so revolting should be a good lesson for you. If you hadn't thrown away your own weapon, you could have used a bullet, and would not have had to dirty your hands. Pity, he had a Soviet gun: perhaps, he used our own weapon to kill many more like you and me. Some scum must have abandoned it. . ."

"Scum. . ." The word came like a blow. Ostrovsky shuddered at the thought that perhaps his gun too had been found by some Fritz or Hans and was now firing at Soviet soldiers. He realized that he had not yet washed away his shame. No, nothing on earth, he thought, would remove this blotch from his conscience.

After that Ostrovsky became a dynamo of energy. He not only fired, attacked and fulfilled all that is required of a soldier, but almost every night found him crawling through the fields in search of weapons. If it happened that after an

unsuccessful attack his unit left even a single rifle in the field, Ostrovsky was sure to find it and fetch it back. He collected the guns of the dead, he intercepted enemy outposts, penetrated behind the German lines and brought back their weapons. He became an expert at this work, displayed exceptional resourcefulness, resorted to all sorts of tricks and provided his unit with such a stock of armaments that his mistake was soon forgotten and the men unanimously acclaimed Ostrovsky a hero.

He too discovered some new feelings, new qualities in himself. Unvarying success, coupled with faith and pluck, taught him to defy danger. He frequently wondered at himself, at his own boldness, at the way he dared to attack a German at close range, wrest his rifle or tommy-gun from him, and lead off the enemy trembling for fear, covered with his own weapon. This was courage fostered by himself, won at the cost of a torturous inner struggle.

One evening, going the usual rounds of collecting abandoned weapons, Ostrovsky met an unknown lieutenant and three Red Army men.

"What are you doing here?" the lieutenant queried.

Ostrovsky explained. For some reason, whether the lieutenant did not trust him, or whether he simply needed another man, he ordered Ostrovsky to take the grenades that he picked up and accompany the group on a scouting expedition.

Their destination was a short way off: a village on the low bank of the river. They descended an inclined path overgrown with brush and rowed across the river. The lieutenant wanted to leave Ostrovsky behind to watch the boat, but then changed his mind, apparently afraid to trust the boat to a stranger, and detailed one of his own men to guard it. At first Ostrovsky felt offended, but on second thought realized that the lieutenant was right and could not have acted otherwise.

The four men proceeded towards their goal. They entered a house to gather information from the local inhabitants. Suddenly the observer posted outside shouted and gave the alarm. They were encircled by Germans; they were caught in a trap.

The unequal battle began. Determined not to budge from the hut, the scouts kept the advancing nazis under fire. The lieutenant watched Ostrovsky and marvelled at his courage, but this was no time for expressions of admiration. During one particularly determined German attack Ostrovsky brought down a group of nazis with a single grenade.

"Well done! You've turned out a lucky find!" the lieutenant shouted to Ostrovsky.

But Ostrovsky barely had time to glance at the lieutenant, for the Germans had renewed their assault. At first they tried to take the four men alive, but gave up the idea after losing five more of their own men. They decided to set fire to the hut and burn the scouts.

Ostrovsky saw tracer bullets directed at the thatched roof, and realized that the end had come. The lieutenant was wounded, one man killed. Ostrovsky hoisted the limp body of the lieutenant onto the shoulders of the surviving man and ordered him to follow. He himself, armed with hand-grenades and tommy-gun, was to blast a way through the enemy ring.

They left through the window and began to grope through the darkness. A grenade flung by Ostrovsky at a group of Germans in front cleared the way, and he broke through. Then he ordered his comrade to make for the forest, while he covered his retreat.

In those moments he never thought of danger, nor of death. He saw the Red Army man with the wounded lieutenant on his back vanish into the forest. He knew that should he die the lieutenant would no doubt make his conduct known to the po-

litical instructor. He had no other desire. His own conscience was now clear. There was only one wish left, and that—a good word from the political instructor, the only reward he longed for.

SAVVA GOLOVANIVSKY

In the Voronezh district.

THE BIRTH OF A SOLDIER

Hamlet was being played. On the last step of the staircase leading to the pit of the theatre, stood Tokarev, leaning on the railing in front of the director's box. He was a sculptor and a carver of dolls, rather well known in Leningrad. I knew him. But I had never seen him look like this. With head thrown back, he was watching the stage, and his face with its wide-open grey eyes was full of delight. But it was not Hamlet that had stirred him so: he could not remove his eyes from the actress who was playing the queen.

In the interval we had a little chat. He invited me to his place, and I came a few days later. He lived on Vassilyevsky Island, in a spacious room on the sixth floor. From the balcony there was a view over the Neva, over the calm Lenin stadium, reddish-yellow in the glow of late autumn, and the Krestovsky and Yelagin Islands. In the mornings Leningrad must have looked very bleak and foggy from here. This was the home of the poet, and Tokarev himself, with his dolls and his soft Ukrainian accent and his queer way of listening to you absent-mindedly, thinking his own thoughts, was indeed a real poet, although he had never written a single line of verse. He got excited when I spoke of *Hamlet* and the actress who played the queen. "Here she is," said he, and I saw her portrait on the table,—a quiet Russian face with a beautiful forehead and bold eyes. "And here is Tatyana Romanovna with her son," and he showed me a sketch in the corner. "How old can he be?" "This year he finishes school." And we changed the subject.

That took place a year before the war. "Was it really like that?" Life seems to have made a sudden turn, and everything has become different: the bread you eat, the friend you see off to the front, the wife to whom you say: "Of course we'll meet again, but not for a while."

. . . After a tiring, rainy, pointless day we were sleeping in a dirty cottage in the Political Department of our division. The windows were blacked out with our tarpaulin tent. It was dark in the cottage, and a faint ruddy glow shone from the Russian stove where the embers were still smouldering.

The door banged. Someone had come in. The lieutenant brought in a bag belonging to a German officer who had been killed. A candle was lit, and people gathered round the table. I continued to lie with closed eyes. "Here's a map," said a voice which seemed familiar to me. I opened my eyes and saw Tokarev.

We chatted together till morning. It seemed a thousand years ago that I had been in his light spacious room overlooking the Neva. The room no longer exists nor does the house. "And how about your work?" "Everything was destroyed." He said it very calmly, but his face suddenly grew grim, his forehead smoothed

out and his eyes looked straight before him. He had on a military great-coat, singed and covered with stains, his face had grown thin and sun-burnt, and altogether he was much changed. Even his walk, that soft and slightly tip-toe step, was now replaced by something different, sharper and firmer. His voice, too. I thought about it when he started telling off his men for sleeping on the bare, dirty floor while quite close at hand there was plenty of fresh hay. "And where is Tatyana Romanovna?" "In Leningrad," he answered very simply, "she is working in a hospital." "Is her portrait still intact? That one you drew, do you remember?" He smiled. "Let's go, and I'll show you her portrait," he said.

We went out to a small bath-house in the yard. Tokarev peeped in and asked in a low voice: "Igor, are you asleep?" "Not at all, Pyotr Alexandrovich," answered a sleepy and similarly subdued voice. "Well, come here." Here was indeed her picture. The same open, simple face, the same glance, straight-forward and candid. He had still a child's pouting lips. Wisps of hay were entangled in his hair. He shook them off and screwed up his eyes with a sleepy air on noticing a stranger. "Is he like her?" "Yes, very much so." "Well then, now you go to sleep again," said Tokarev. Igor laughed, his white teeth flashed. After he had gone to sleep, Tokarev and I walked for a long time up and down the empty village street and chatted together. "A good lad." "Very," answered Tokarev with a sigh, "there's only one bad thing about him: his always rushing into danger. He's even looked upon as a desperado in his detachment."

It was already morning when we parted. The girls from the medical battalion were coming out from the side-streets and backyards, and we could hear them laughing and shouting to somebody: "Zhenya, they are shelling!" The Germans were shelling a battery situated behind the village; one shell, then a second fell short of their target, and instead struck the little bath-house already mentioned which, however, had long been evacuated. The liaison man came running into the Political Section, shaking the earth from his tunic: "Damn it all! It's like a rain of shells!" I went off to the artillery men and only came back at noon. The Political Section was empty, but for the chauffeurs who were cooking potatoes and reading to each other letters from home. One of them told me that the second regiment had just retaken two villages from the Germans.

When I came out, I noticed Tokarev in the yard. He was standing bare-headed near the fence, and two stretcher-bearers were standing silently at his elbow. "Pyotr Alexandrovich!" He turned his head but seemed not to recognize me. I took a step nearer. Igor was lying on the stretcher. He was motionless, one arm hanging down, and his face was white and very thin, as though carved in ivory.

An hour later we buried him under a birch-tree on the outskirts of the village, from whence broad meadows covered with unmown grass stretched away up to Gostilitsy.

Tokarev uttered a few words about his youngest and bravest commander.

"He was the bravest among us." He repeated these words twice. His face, dark with grief, did not move. But his eyes were burning. He was frightening to look at.

Half a year had elapsed before I met him again. It happened in a hospital far in the rear. He was wounded in the right arm. He seemed bored to death and feared only one thing: to be sent on from the hospital not to the front but to some training unit.

"You see, I'm doing gymnastics," he said as he feebly moved his swollen red fingers.

I asked him how Tatyana Roma-

novna had stood her son's death.

"How she stood it?" he repeated. "This is what happened. I was sent through Leningrad, and we spent two days together. Can you guess what we talked about? She made me tell her about all the Germans I had killed. I tried to change the subject, but that was the only thing she was interested in."

We often met in the garden attached to the hospital; it was very small but clean and tidy, and was beginning to turn green. Tokarev was making rapid strides towards recovery, no doubt because of his passionate longing to get back to the front.

"It's damned nonsense!" he once said. "To have learnt how to fight, and then suddenly to drop out of it all!"

He certainly had learnt to fight. Already in January he had been made chief of his regimental staff, and his regiment had won the guards' banner.

We touched on many subjects during our talks. We talked, among other things, about how characters change as a result of the war. Here was an artist, a carver of dolls, a man versed in art. When he first reached the front, what he really saw was not so much the war as a kind of panorama of the war. He was one thing, the war—another. But after the first and then the second week had passed, he was right in it. He no longer contemplated it as an artist. Now he was a soldier and did his best to become a good soldier.

Patiently, step by step, he entered into the enormous, intensive labour of war. A soft-hearted, trustful man to begin with, now he deliberately cultivated in his heart a spirit of cold precision. He became merciless, vindictive and spiteful. He had his own accounts to settle with the Germans, for the sake of the boy whom we had buried, for the sake of his mother whom he loved, for his right hand with its swollen red fingers. His hand, however, was almost all right now, and soon he would be discharged from the hospital.

I don't know where Captain Tokarev is now. On what front is he fighting for the right to love as he can love? Whether is it near Leningrad, or at Voronezh is he again studying the cruel science of war? But wherever he may be, let us wish him victory and good luck. Let him not be angry with me for having told his story. It is the story of millions of Soviet people who have become soldiers of the Great Patriotic War.

V. KAVERIN

EIGHT MINUTES

The forest raid by one of our large units was nearly over. On the very day when the Berlin liars were bragging about the debacle of our troops south-west of Rzhev and citing fantastic losses supposedly suffered by us there, a battle took place near the forest road, and as a result, our troops smashed the German covering units and reached their objective. The details of that battle have come to light only now, after the unit has reached its objective and carried out its task.

Late at night our troops reached the road held by the Germans. The latter held both sides of the road, which they had fortified; they were certain that we would not dare attack just there. Indeed, it would be hard to find a place less suited for an attack. Imagine a narrow hollow cutting deep into the forest, one side of which is flanked by a road patrolled by tanks, while the other side is protected by tommy-gunners, snipers hidden in trees and machine-gun nests. The

commander of the unit called for Major Yerokhin, and pointing with his finger to the light-green spot on his map, denoting the hollow, he said:

"Here they expect us least of all. Here they feel invulnerable. That is just why we should attack them right there, in the hollow. Make a reconnoissance of the whole place."

It seemed the major was in no hurry to carry out the commander's order. Returning at dawn not only was he unable to make a report on the situation, but he even asked for "a little more time," to get confirmation of what he had learned during the night. To some of us in the unit the major's conduct seemed a trifle frivolous. After all, how could he have spent a whole night in reconnoissance and not only fail to make a comprehensive report, but even ask for additional time to get further details which he considered necessary? No, in such circumstances there is no time to lose. The commander of the unit also felt that it was no use wasting time with an urgent job of this kind, but he knew Major Yerokhin as a brave, careful man, one who could act daringly but not rashly. And so the commander grudgingly granted him the additional time.

He waited all day, and only in the evening, when everybody's patience was nearly exhausted, the major reported on the results of his investigations. Listening to his precise and perfect report on his observations, the commander was once more convinced that the major, as usual, acted very cleverly. The report gave a clear idea not only of the enemy's forces, but also of how they would cooperate under any fighting conditions, the number and location of the snipers on trees, the place where the seven tank crews spent the night and the time the field-kitchen arrived. The latter item was given special prominence in the major's report. He described in detail how a few minutes before the appearance of the field-kitchen the German tommy-gunners looked impatiently at their watches and sent a messenger to the hollow to find out whether supper had been brought. Then the field-kitchen arrived.

"And please note," the major exclaimed. "This takes place at 22 o'clock sharp. I have checked up on it two evenings in succession, exactly at 22 o'clock. It takes about ten minutes to distribute the porridge and noodles, and by 22.30 supper is over; everybody is back on his post, and the men smoke and talk."

Then the major drew a plan of the enemy's firing points. In the forest, along the approaches to the road, were posted the "cuckoos" hidden in trees, their job being to stop any attempt to return along the road.

"They will let us pass without firing a single shot. The first to open fire will be the tommy-gunner patrols; they walk in pairs at a distance of 50 to 80 metres from each other. Behind them, nearer to the road, chains of tommy-gunners are posted in small trenches. Machine-guns are stationed along either side of the road; there are eight of them, at a distance of 150 to 200 metres from each other. The tanks are stationed on the northern end of the road, and their crews occupy a dug-out nearby."

Towards the end the major spoke again of the field-kitchen and of the supper brought up at 22 o'clock sharp.

"I want you to note that when supper is over, at about half past ten or somewhat later, additional patrols are posted for the night."

"That means?" the commander asked.

"That the attack has to be carried out at 22.10," the major replied at once.

"Before the noodles have cooled off in the mess tins?" the commander asked seriously.

And the major replied just as seriously:

"Exactly."

And so the attack was scheduled for 22.10. At the appointed minute, the detachment advanced in three columns; flanked by machine-gunners and distributing its tommy-gunners

so as to assure an unbroken line of fire along the entire front of the attack, it reached the hollow, and those in the first line realized that the major had spent the last twenty-four hours to good purpose. The field-kitchen with its lowered stove pipe was just about finishing its round of the various firing points. Soldiers were coming from the woods, mess tins in hand. The tank crews emerged from their dug-out and sat down for supper.

Everything was just as the major had reported, and it only remained to check up on the conduct of the snipers. Right enough, they let the detachment pass without firing a shot. The German tommy-gunners sat motionless in the trees, for they had been ordered not to shoot before the enemy started to run back. And they carried out their orders. But those advancing towards the road did not run. A tommy-gun ahead started, and all our machine-guns replied with a furious wave of fire, which swept through the woods like a hurricane, and to whose accompaniment our men rushed forward. A minute before this, a lean officer with an impudent red moustache, riding a tall sorrel, appeared on the road along which the first lines of our tommy-gunners had already taken up their positions; he was cock-sure that the position which his soldiers were occupying was immune from any assault! His arms akimbo and his chest stuck out theatrically, he shouted in broken Russian:

"Red Army men! Don't shoot! You are kaput and you'd better surrender!"

It was 22.09. The guttural shout of the officer echoed through the silent forest. The damp evening air enshrouded the trees, and every man in the detachment never forgot the solemn silence of that half-minute pause before the attack.

The officer was mown down by the first volley fired by tommy-gunner Borissenko. The horse dashed away, dragging with it the dead body of the red-moustached first lieutenant, entangled in the stirrups. The firing was so intense that the entire locality was soon enveloped in smoke, and many details of that whirlwind attack were hidden from the eye and the consciousness of the attackers. All they saw was how the German tank crews, upsetting mess tins, rushed for their tanks, but failed to get into them and start the engines. The tommy-gunners were mown down as they attempted to emerge from their trenches and dug-outs. The spot where the German machine-gunners were posted was blown up bodily. A fast and furious battle was raging in the forest, and the sweeping fire paved the way for our detachment. Not one of the German force holding the road remained alive, and not a single man of the five hundred Hitlerites got away.

When everything was over, the commander took a look at his watch. It was 22.18. That evening the Germans did not even manage to have their supper. This, however, did not prevent Goebbels from concocting his usual lying communiqué about the trophies taken by the Germans in the region south-west of Rzhev.

The fight, planned and prepared so carefully and cleverly, lasted but eight minutes. The detachment smashed up the German force and reached its objective according to schedule.

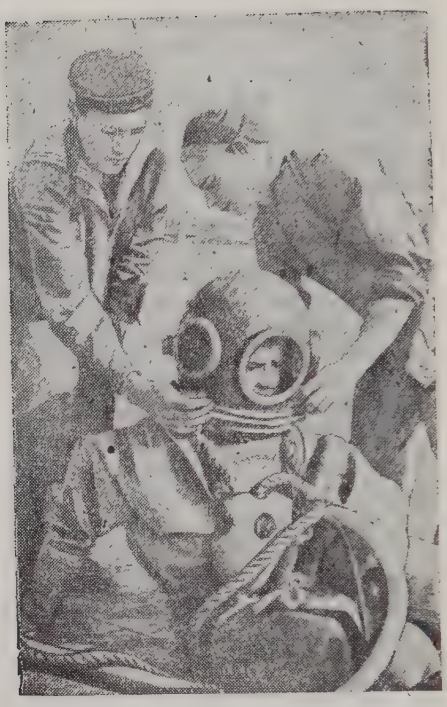
I. OSSIPOV

Kalinin front.

ON THE BOTTOM OF THE VOLGA

A young, broad-shouldered sailor stood in front of his commander. He was only a little over twenty, but you would not have called him a youngster.

"I've been told that you have



The young diver I. Olenich comes up after doing salvaging work

studied diving," the commander said to him.

"Yes. I took a short two-months course for light divers."

"Could you work as a diver on the bottom of the Volga?"

"Yes, I could, Comrade Commander."

"And your wound would not prevent you?"

During a hard-fought battle Nikolai Klekovkin had been wounded in the chest. The doctor found that the bullet had lodged in the lungs, and knowing his patient's passion for sports, he added:

"No more football and gym for you, and least of all any exercising with dumb-bells."

The medical commission wanted to exempt him from military service altogether, or at least class him as only partly fit, but he protested vehemently. He could not reconcile himself to the idea: all his relatives were in the service, his father Ivan Polikarpovich, an old foreman of the Izhevsk factory, his sister and his brother Boris, the sailor. And he was to become a non-com? Not on your life!

The doctors gave way.

"My wound won't give any trouble. I feel in perfect health."

"Well, then, listen to my order. Some guns fell into the Volga from a barge. They have to be raised at any cost, and I am giving you the job. The trawlers have everything prepared. You will have to go down to the bottom of the river and hook the cable to the load."

A cold, strong wind was blowing. It was autumn, and the night had shrouded everything in darkness. Only the rockets and the exploding mines and shells in the city pierced the darkness. Rocking gently on the waves, a cutter stood in the middle of the river. The pilot announced:

"The depth is 12.20, and the current strong. One fellow went below here, but couldn't stand it. I hope, brother, that you'll make a better job of it."

Right in the cutting wind Klekovkin removed his sailor's reefer and trousers, keeping on his pants, shirt and shoes. The diver's mask was put over his face, and down he went through the cold water, to a depth of 12.20 metres.

It was extremely difficult to walk on the bottom, for the current was strong, his hands numb and his body felt like lead. Clutching every stone, the diver pushed on with tremendous difficulty. It took him a long time to find the sunken load, and each minute felt like an age. A noise filled his ears, and his head seemed compressed by an iron hoop.

At last, in the pitch-black darkness, his hands felt the metal. He had found the guns! Klekovkin began to attach the cable. He recalled the advice he had once received from some artillerymen about the best way to attach the cable, so that the guns should not slip while being raised. But his hands failed to obey him and felt as if they were not his. Straining every ounce of strength, Klekovkin made

a clove-hitch. One more twist, a last superhuman effort, and the knot gripped the gun. It now remained to pull the signal cord. It was somewhere on his chest, he vaguely remembered. If only he could find it and be able to raise his arm. . .

When the diver was hauled up on deck, he was almost unconscious. A thin stream of blood trickled from his nose and mouth; his wound was now making itself felt.

The engine began to hum, and the whole cutter started to tremble from the strain of the cable, taut as a violin string. The diver came to, and with a look of worry he watched the cable.

"Keep quiet, everything's all right," the doctor said, guessing his anxiety.

Nikolai Klekovkin looked at the doctor and noticed a chunk of blood-stained cotton-wool in his hand. "Well, this means the hospital once more for me," he thought with regret and made every effort not to betray his fatigue.

When the first gun had been raised and taken to the shore and the cutter had returned to the middle of the river, the diver rose silently and reached out for the mask. The doctor felt his pulse and found it steady.

"I feel all right, don't worry."

"You have a remarkably strong constitution, Comrade Klekovkin."

That night he went down four times to the bottom of the river and took a rest only after the entire precious load had been raised.

. . . Nikolai Klekovkin sat surrounded by his sailor-friends. He wore his sailor's reefer over his wet undershirt. Only a few minutes ago he had come up from the water with his friend Nikita Stolyar, and now he was drinking hot tea to warm himself. It was late at night, but nobody slept. Street fights were in progress in the city, and shells and mines were exploding somewhere quite near. The commander entered the dug-out; everybody stood up, and the commander turned to Klekovkin:

"Two freight cutters have run aground. They tried to take them, but the tug is not powerful enough. They say the propeller has been fouled. You and Stolyar take a look at what's happened. The cutters must be taken off before dawn."

"May we start now?"

"Yes. A semi-glider is waiting for you at the shore, but be careful."

An inspection of the propeller revealed that a heavy rope had twisted itself around it, and the only tool at hand was an ordinary penknife. There was no time to be lost, dawn was breaking. The Germans had lit up the river with light rockets and had begun to shell the cutters. In the morning the fate of the two immobilized cutters would have been sealed.

For twenty minutes Klekovkin remained under water. His hands were frozen and weak with the strenuous work. Choking and growing fainter every second, the diver cleared the propeller. And again the sailor's iron will won. The propeller was freed, and the tug-boat was able to pull the cutters off the sand bank.

V. KOUPRIN,
D. AKOULSHIN

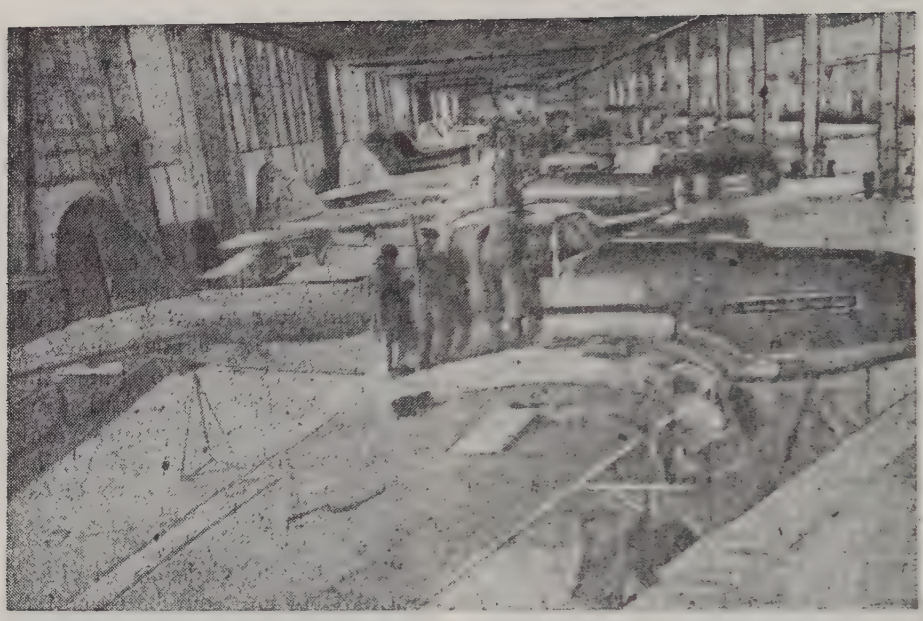
The Volga river-fleet.

NIKOLAI YEGORYCH

In the afternoon an army lorry arrived at the village of Krucha. The vehicle stopped; the driver leaned out and asked the way to the railway station.

There was a woman near the cottage, and by her side was a boy of about fourteen.

"Behind that copse there," said the boy, "you'll see a little bridge, and then a stream, then the road turns to the left." He hesitated for a moment



Assembling military planes

and then added: "You'd better let me show you to the station."

The lad climbed up into the driver's cabin, and the lorry started. They had left the village behind, and the little bridge and the stream had already come into view. when a helmeted motor-cyclist dashed out from a side-road and shouted:

"You can't get through! German tanks've broken through. Get off the road!"

"Is there another way?" the driver asked the lad beside him.

"There's no other road to the station. There's the only way to Moscow left," the boy said softly.

The driver looked askance at the boy.

"What am I to do with you?" he said. "The Germans are advancing on your village, do you hear that hell of a cannonade? . . You'd get shot straight off, like a kitten. Have you got any relations in Moscow?" asked the driver.

"Auntie. . ." replied the lad. "Father's sister. But what about mother? She's stayed at home, hasn't she?"

Just then an unearthy din broke out behind the lorry; there came the thunder of an explosion, the vehicle was pelted with clods of earth, wood splinters and fallen leaves, and the driver stepped on the gas and dashed on to Moscow road.

That's how the boy got there. It was late in the autumn of 1941.

Auntie accepted his coming as a matter of course, without any trace of astonishment, as if the youngster's appearance in the city which, in fact, he had never seen before, was just an everyday occurrence.

She made him a bed on the chest in a corner of the room, and he turned in without more ado, using his padded jacket as a blanket.

A few days later at one of the Moscow munition works there appeared an urchin, wearing an old padded jacket and a pair of boots looking rather the worse for wear; he could not be said to have grown too big for these boots, for to judge by the size of them they had evidently been his father's property. The boy had just turned fifteen, so he was full of dignity; when asked what his name was, he replied: "Vedeneyev," then

added after a while: "Nikolai Yegorych."

"Well, well," said the foreman, rather puzzled.

The workshop was enormously large. Though doing his best to look cool and independent, Nikolai Yegorych felt a bit intimidated. All around stood long-bodied, hook-nosed aeroplanes, with their green wings, like those of grasshoppers; the place positively reeked of toffee, so much so that it made your throat feel sore. Some of the machines, still tailless, were resting with their breasts on a kind of rough rollers; others already had both tails and wheels, while at the very end of the shop, before an enormous gate, stood a completed plane, and from its belly wheels slowly crawled out, only to be instantly pulled back, as if the aircraft were putting out and drawing in its claws.

A fellow of above twenty-five was sitting in the cockpit. This was the man who was to instruct Nikolai Yegorych.

The youngster stopped close to the plane; he kept on trying to look dignified, but felt shyer than ever. The big fellow was tinkering away at the machine's entrails without taking any notice of the novice.

"What's that you're doing?" the boy ventured to ask at last.

"Don't you see?" snapped the fellow grumpily. "I'm checking the legs."

"So that's it!" said the boy, who couldn't make head or tail of it all. He felt like asking some more questions but somehow wasn't bold enough to do so, and merely twiddled his thumbs nervously.

Finally the big fellow sent him on an errand to the tool shop to fetch a little bolt. He did it in less than no time and took up his position beside the aeroplane. He was sent a few more times to fetch something or other and stood in the same place in the long intervals between the errands. As time wore on, he grew more and more bored, and felt rather humiliated.

Plucking up his courage, he scrambled into the cockpit to join the big fellow. There were lots of little pipes and tubes, and stop-cocks, and levers, and no end of instruments there. The man was doing something to a kind of rigging, and the boy put the same question to him:

"What's that you're doing?"

"In case there's an accident," mumbled the grown-up.

"I see." There was despair in the youngster's voice. But his stubbornness getting the upperhand, he cleared his throat and went on: "But what are you doing really?"

"Checking the hermetics." The fellow looked annoyed at the lad's importunity. "You're a bit of a nuisance—aren't you?—with all these what's and why's of yours!"

Every morning the lad came to the shop to work, but got no instruction whatever. The big fellow couldn't or wouldn't explain things to him, but only sent him on errands occasionally,

I. N. Goryachev, a stakhanovite fitter, passes on his experience to a new worker

or, at best, let him screw on a loose nut. Time hung more and more heavily on the boy's hands, though there seemed to be some attraction about the vast shop and the huge planes, and the complicated gadgets they were being fitted with, which he felt eager to understand. But he was homesick; he missed his mother and the village of Krucha, and another village, Kochany, where the school was that he used to go to, over the little bridge and then along the stream, on the surface of which lay those big, fat-looking waterlilies. He saw his home in his dreams, and smelt the aroma of new bread coming from the oven; his mother was with him again, and on waking his one desire was to shut his eyes once more just to go on being with her. But instead of doing so, he would get up and take the tram, hurrying to the factory, and enter the cold vastness of the workshop, peopled with machines that remained a mystery to him. The big fellow didn't deign to help the boy in any way. He considered the novice as nothing more than an additional help of sorts, and too insignificant to deserve any attention. The boy knew this was all wrong and felt keenly about it, but he couldn't bring himself to go and speak to the foreman.

One day he happened to see, in another workshop, youngsters of his own age run turning lathes. The work of a turner appeared to him as both simple and comprehensible. He went to the chief of his shop his mind firmly made up.

"I'm going to leave you," he announced gloomily.

"Why, what's wrong?" asked the chief.

"I'm going to leave, that's all," said the boy still more gloomily. He felt injured and sad and lonely. "I'll go and be a turner," he declared, and all of a sudden his eyes filled with tears. This made him even more cross than before; he gave his cap a vicious smack that knocked it on the floor. "I'm off, and that's that. You can charge me with anything you like, you can drag me into court or do whatever you please. . ."

"Into court?" repeated the chief and laughed outright. "There's nothing to drag you into court for, is there? You're just a little shrimp. . ." He gave the youngster another look, and added quietly in a businesslike way: "Now suppose you get it off your chest. . . What's wrong with your work in the shop?"

And the boy got it off his chest.

When he was leaving the room, the chief asked him:

"What's your name, by the way?"

"Vedeneyev," said the boy, in a grown-up voice. "Nikolai Yegorych."

"Well, so long, Nikolai Yegorych. Tomorrow you'll find everything will be quite different."

"Good afternoon," replied the boy with grown-up dignity.

Next day everything was really quite different.

First of all, there was Smorchkov, the boy's new instructor, a kindly, good-natured fellow, very keen on his work; as instructor, he had the happy knack of making things easy to understand. He trained the boy first in one kind of job, then in another, incidentally telling him all there was to tell about the construction of an aeroplane. A flying machine ceased to be an incomprehensible and alarming conglomeration of pipes, stopcocks and levers. The boy began to understand what it was all about. Smorchkov also gave him a sense of independence. The boy could already replace a hose or a tube, he was able to check the system controlling the lowering of the under-carriage, the smoothness and synchronism of its work. The system was very intricate, and the boy did his best to master it thoroughly. The work Smorchkov entrusted him with became more and more responsible. The boy no longer thought of leaving the shop, his hands had acquired greater skill, and at last the day came when wild horses couldn't have dragged him out of the plane even though his shift was over.

The craftsman's pride was aroused in the youngster, the workman's awareness of his own skill. He realized he had become an inseparable part of the factory, a cog in the huge wheel, and this spurred him on, increasing his self-reliance and ability.

When passing by, the chief would invariably say:

"Hullo, Nikolai Yegorych!"

And the boy would answer gravely:

"Good morning!" or "afternoon!" as the case might be.

The chief was taking the boy's measure. The shop could boast of many youths who seemed quick in the up-take; but in earnest endeavour and thoroughness Nikolai Yegorych was outstanding. He serviced an aeroplane as if preparing the tractor on the field, as a good manager and with full sense of responsibility for the work. He was promoted from apprentice to full-fledged mechanic, and worked side by side with Smorchkov like an equal. They were to turn out one plane every shift, actually they turned out two or even three; so when pay-day came, Nikolai Yegorych found he had earned as much as 960 rubles for the month.

He brought the money home to auntie. She took it and started counting, but got confused and put it aside on the chest of drawers. Then with her apron she wiped some invisible speck of dust off a kitchen-stool, and the lad sat down. He let his body sink heavily, as a weary man does, and sat with his big red hands on his knees. It was for him his aunt poured out the first plate of cabbage soup, as if he were the head of the family. Again, his life at home rushed through his mind; he recalled his mother's speaking to him tenderly while she tucked in his blankets: "Go to sleep, my baby, sleep, my duckie. . ." Tears dimmed his eyes, and to hide them he shut his eyes tightly. Where's mother, what has happened to her, what have the Germans done to the village? He ate the cabbage soup in silence, and saw again the wattle-fence around their house, the tawny dog with a sour look, and the pot with a hole in its side that lay on the ground near the porch. . .

In the morning he went to the factory as usual.

. . . We were following the chief down the shop, and were already nearing the enormous gate at the end of it, with the narrow strip of cold autumnal sky beyond. An aeroplane stood before the exit. It seemed empty. But all of a sudden wheels crept out of its belly; they dangled irresolutely in the air for a while and were pulled back. We looked into the cockpit. No, there was nobody inside. Yet the wheels came out once more, to be just as quickly withdrawn. We climbed up the step-ladder. Then we saw Nikolai Yegorych. He was so small that he couldn't be seen from the cockpit. He was tinkering away at the machine's entrails with earnest deliberation.

"What are you doing, Nikolai Yegorych?" I asked.

He cleared his throat and replied with dignity:

"Checking the legs."

TATYANA TESS

SATIRE IN MODERN CHINESE LITERATURE

1

Satire is not a new genre in Chinese literature. In the struggle of the Chinese people for their independence against the foreign yoke of the Manchurian Ts'ing Dynasty, Chinese authors wrote a number of brilliant satirical works. Among them are the novels *The Unofficial History of Confucianism* (Wo Tsin-tzu), *The Travels of Lao Ts'an* (Liu Ngo) and others, which played a big role in the ideological preparations for the overthrow of the Manchurians.

Into modern literature Lu Hsin has introduced a new satirical genre, the short pamphlet (tsakan). For a number of years the pamphlet has served him as one of the strongest weapons in the struggle against all reactionary phenomena in the life of the country. He exposed the vices of social life, not glossing over the petty shortcomings in every-day life. With particular energy he fought against the literary traditions of the scholastics and their tendency to conceal social inequality and the miserable, ugly reality with pompous phrases.

Thus, for instance, in his pamphlet *Literary Pedants* (in the volume *Hua-kai*) he wrote:

"In Peking one may often come across nice-sounding names like 'Maecenas Alley,' 'Alley of the First Minister,' 'Temple of Joint Riches,' 'Alley of the Brave Prince,' 'Gate of the Noble Man,' etc. A closer scrutiny however reveals that the hieroglyphs 'Maecenas Alley' mean 'Woodcutters' Alley', the hieroglyphs 'First Minister' the Alley of 'Rope-Makers,' the 'Temple of Scorpions' has become the 'Temple of Joint Riches,' and the 'Alley of the Dog's Tail' and 'Devil's Gates' the 'Alley of the Brave Prince' and 'Gate of the Noble Man' respectively. However, despite the fact that the hieroglyphs have been changed, the meaning of the words in oral speech has remained the same."

Thus in each of his works Lu Hsin examined the life of his country and gave no peace to the reactionaries of all shades.

His caustic and biting pamphlets, which were printed in periodicals and later issued in separate volumes (*Only when. . .*, *A Book About Pseudo-Liberty*, etc.), educated a whole generation of Chinese writers. And now, in these years of war satire, this old, tried weapon of struggle has again been revived in Chinese literature.

2

From the beginning of the war practically all of the country's writers went to the front and, inspired by patriotic enthusiasm, sent into newspapers and magazines songs full of passion, articles, short stories and plays devoted to the courage of the masses, to the development and tempering of national unity. Literary works dealt both with the great themes of the people's struggle as well as with the unassuming, every-day heroism of the soldiers, of the partisans, of the whole of China's population who have joined the fighting alliance of the country's defenders, which steadily continues to strengthen.

However, writers saw not only courage and bravery in this struggle for

the Motherland. The whip of their satire lashed out at those who proved themselves unworthy in these difficult years for the Motherland, stigmatizing not only enemies but also all their accomplices big and little.

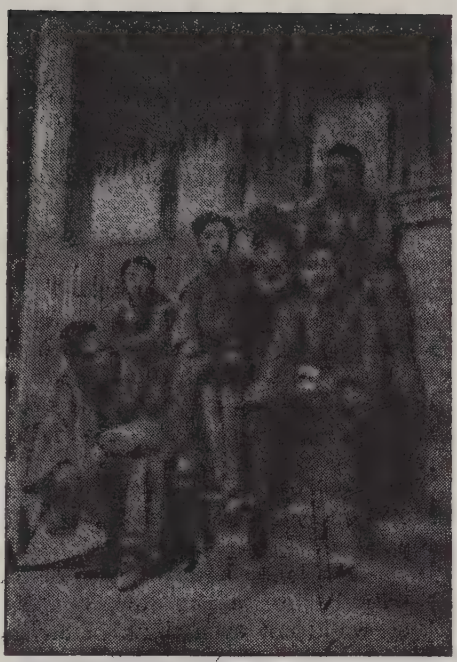
A number of such works full of humour and satire have been published in the past few years in magazines, books and volumes (for instance, in the volume *Short Stories About a Great Epoch*, etc.).

Thus the writer Tuanmu Hungliang, formerly known for his series of novels (*Terrestrial Sea*, etc.), in his amusing sketch *In Quest of an Apartment* with great humour portrays the snobbishness of a "denizen of the capital," her contempt for the "provincials" and her disillusionment.

It is well-nigh impossible to find a room in the war-time capital of Chungking, only recently a provincial city but now the seat of the government and all the central institutions. The housing problem is a most difficult one for all new arrivals. The same problem faces Miss Huang, a music teacher who has come together with a group of refugees from Wuhan. An empty purse, high pretensions and fear of bombardment have brought her to Chungking although she could have gone to another city.

A room in a hotel beyond her means, several days at a boarding establishment and a fruitless search for a room reduce her to despair. The situation is a hopeless one, she has exhausted her list of relatives and acquaintances.

And then a happy thought strikes her. She remembers a certain Li who paid suit to her at one time. A student with a funny nickname; she turned a cold shoulder to his attentions. He has been living in Chungking several years already, has an apartment there and, remembering the past, will surely place a room at her disposal. Soon a rickshaw is carrying her to Li. On the way her hopes blossom into a certainty; she will



A group of Chinese writers. Left to right: Sai K'ê, T'ien Chien, Nieh Kannu, Hsiao Hung, Tuanmu Hungliang, Ting Ling

make Li happy by her arrival. Miss Huang begins to build rosy plans. "Poor Li never had any taste. . ." "He most probably has not the slightest idea of how to furnish a room. . ." "Chungking is known for its cheap but beautiful bamboo furniture. . ." The rickshaw draws up in front of a furniture store. Miss Huang selects the furniture for her future room and even leaves a deposit on it.

She finally arrives at her destination. Li's wife comes out to meet her and together with her husband cordially welcomes the old acquaintance. The student years have been left far behind. Li has become a staid respectable employee. He is pleased to see her, promises to introduce her into local society and to pay her a visit together with his wife. The visitor's amazement gives way to despair. For appearance's sake she resorts to a clumsy falsehood, you see, she does not remember the address of her relatives with whom she is staying. The conversation passes

over to the war. A subscription list appears on the scene. Miss Huang sees a number of familiar names and also contributes ten dollars. Apparently Miss Huang will have to cure herself of her former snobbishness and her contempt for the "miserable provincials."

In another story by the same author, entitled *Ham*, a certain Mr. Wei figures as the principal character In his native town of Tsinhua he is known as an expert at curing ham. A fervent patriot of hams made in his town, Wei is a violent opponent of hams coming from any other place.

Obliged to flee to Chungking, Mr. Wei prudently takes along a big supply of "home produced ham." It is not long, however, before his supply begins to run low, but Mr. Wei would not even think of buying Yunnan ham on sale in Chunking.

In Chungking, Wei makes the acquaintance of a library director who, like Wei, is a staunch admirer of hams from Tsinhua. Their common interests bring them together, and they become friends. Taking advantage of his new friend's weakness for hams, Mr. Wei devises a cunning plan and, hoping to get a post in the library, presents the director with his remaining supplies.

A period of weary waiting sets in. In the meantime Wei meets an acquaintance from his home town who has recently come to Chungking. This acquaintance, reckoning on Wei's assistance in finding an apartment, presents Wei with two hams from Tsinhua.

Wei decides to present these also to the director. But here his wife intervenes in the matter by saying that she personally will deliver the present to the director's wife. What she actually does is to substitute the one for the other.

The long awaited for moment arrives, Wei receives an invitation to dine with the director. Overjoyed he goes there. His wife in the meantime prepares a dinner of genuine Tsinhua ham. Wei returns from the director in despair. It appears that one of the hams was from Yunnan, and the director, being an expert in the matter, immediately detected it. The deception played by Wei's wife fails, all hopes of getting a job collapse. Seeing the ham on the table so lucklessly saved by his over-frugal wife, Wei overthrows the whole table.

In this novel the author's humour is not as harmless as in the first one. Provincial narrow-mindedness, love for ham that replaces love for the Motherland, bribery, that old scourge of China, are sharply attacked.

In his third novel the writer directly exposes certain financial circles which, despite war-time conditions, contrive through speculation to keep themselves provided with everything they have been accustomed to enjoying in peace-time, and even to make profit out of the war difficulties.

Yinming, the daughter of a local rich man, daily meets her fiance Shih Tung during summer vacations. From their conversation the reader gets an idea of the Yinming family's circle of interests.

Miss Yinming has long been accustomed to handling big sums of money. She is displeased with her father who has introduced "economy" in the family. He does not permit members of the family to spend more than a hundred dollars at once, does not permit his daughter to buy foreign-made clothes. Miss Yinming, like her friends, decides to "earn" some money herself by speculating on the Exchange.

The action of the novel takes place in a tea-shop, thronged with students on vacation. In one of the corners are a young couple. It is Yinming and her fiancé. What are the loving couple cooing about? It appears their conversation is nothing but one string of complaints at the hardships entailed by the war. Both of them animatedly discuss the rate of exchange in Hongkong, count their profits from speculative operations. This "love" is closely connected with the

Exchange. It is no accident that the novel is called *The Index of Life*.

3

The authoress Hsiao Hung, known already before the war for her novel *The Field of Life and Death*, in her satirical stories lashes out at panic and cowardice. Her story *Flight* (*Short Stories About a Great Epoch*) and novel *Ma Pailo* (Hsiao Hung, *Ma Pailo*, Chungking, 1941) are most probably the best of the satirical works of the last few years that have reached us.

The story evidently served as a sketch for the novel. Although they portray different types and different situations, they nonetheless deal with one and the same theme.

Ho Nansheng, a teacher in an elementary school in Nanking, flees to Shensi province, where, with the help of a friend, he secures a position in a secondary school. Ho Nansheng lives in fear all the time. It seems to him that he is pursued by the enemy, and he thinks of flight. Actually the enemy is far away, the inhabitants are calm, and school-children attend to their studies as usual. But the teacher Ho is already packing his baggage, and to the inquiries of his pupils replies that "he is off to pay a visit to his relatives and will soon return." After all, "he has decided to link up his fate with the fate of the small town until the victorious end. . ."

Finally Ho and his big family are at the station. After repeated "excursions" back to the house to pick up a forgotten lampshade or a packet of cigarettes, there starts a veritable stampede to board the train which is packed with wounded and panicky types like Ho. When the Ho family finally reach Sian on the third train, all that is left of their belongings are a few pieces of remarkable furniture.

Hsiao Hung develops this same theme on a much wider scale in her novel about *Ma Pailo*.

"Ma Pailo was a coward even before the war," are the opening words of the authoress' novel. Ma Pailo is a helpless and egoistical person in private life, a shirker and parasite in public life. His friends are idlers like himself, who come from the section of the population to whom the public interests are alien and who are filled with fear for their own, personal wellbeing. In her story written in the traditions of the Chinese classic novel, Hsiao Hung depicts the type of defeatist always ready to capitulate and who has not become an outright traitor for the simple reason that the opportunity to do so has not presented itself. This novel can rightly be called *The Biography of a Coward*.

Pailo's father, a small landowner in Tsintao, is a despot in the family. Neither he nor his family are in the least interested in social questions, in problems relating to their country's development. Ma Pailo was married immediately after finishing secondary school and, even after he has become the head of a family, the father of three children, he nonetheless has no income of his own. While living

Cover of Hsiao Hung's novel "Ma Pailo"

together with his father, Pailo, of course, is provided with everything. However, to meet his personal expenses he has to solicit small sums from his father or wife who has her own income.

Three times in his life Pailo tries to "revolt" against the family customs, and on all three occasions his "revolts" take the form of flight.

The first time he runs away with a woman friend to Shanghai on the pretext of entering university, but fails in the entrance examinations. After spending all he has taken with him, including his wife's valuables which he has stolen, he returns to the "family bosom" like the prodigal son.

His second departure from home takes place "legally," with the blessing of his father. Posing as a writer, Pailo decides to open a publishing house in Shanghai. He leaves with a big sum of money, and the whole family offers prayers on his behalf. However, his utter incompetency soon reveals itself, and the "publishing house" peters out without having published a single book.

And then come the eventful days when the first shots were fired at Liukowtsiao. But Pailo is not worried by the thought of the country's ability to resist, nor of his country's fate. All he is concerned with is his own fate; his first thought is to flee. Nobody, however, has the intention of running away. His wife, too, refuses to leave. He thereupon departs for Shanghai without even taking a change of underwear.

His mind is dominated by the one thought: "one must prepare for war" and the word "prepare" in his vocabulary stands for the word "flight." Refugees must be economical. Pailo moves into the cheapest quarters available, a basement without windows; he does his cooking in the room ("because they steal in the kitchen"), manages without a laundry and baths, haggles over a drop of oil, and fries onions in a small frying pan, burning his clothes in the process.

Comes the day when Pailo receives a telegram informing him of his wife's arrival, and again he takes on a civilized appearance.

But after the first joy of the reunion wears off new clouds gather. His has to be persuaded to flee to Hankow. She, however, wants to go to Sian where a friend of the family, the director of a school, lives. He will help Pailo get a post as teacher. Pailo is horrified by the thought: does she imagine that he can earn enough to sustain his wife and his three children? Maybe she came without money? If so, he has no use for her. But it appears that his wife has brought money. The coward and idler Ma Pailo can continue his carefree existence. Reconciled to his wife, he leaves for Hankow to live there for the time being.

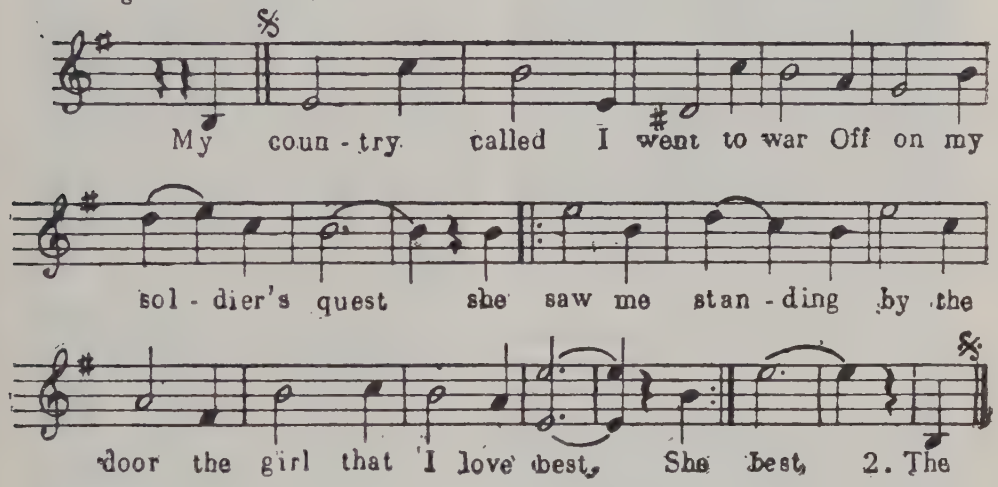
Such is the contents of Hsiao Hung's story. Unfortunately an untimely death put an end to her talented young life. This is her last story, and it is of great interest from the point of view of the development of satire in China. Her hero is one of the most typical negative figures presented with greater or lesser vividness in Chinese literature. This gallery consists of banal philistines and petty-bourgeois elements who consider their own well-being the all-important thing in the world, for which they are prepared to sacrifice their family, their country and their people.

LYUBOV POZDNEYEVA

MUSIC by M. BLANTER

My love

WORDS by E. DOLMATOVSKY



1. *My country called, I went to war.*
   Off on my soldier's quest
   She saw me standing by the door,
   The girl that I love best. } Repeat

2. *The brave platoon's my home today,*
   My hearth—the distant cove,
   The lads have asked me to convey
   Their greetings to my love. } Repeat

3. *To make a soldier's dream come true,*
   To bring the foes defeat.
   There's nothing like a smile from you,
   My sweetest of the sweet. } Repeat

4. *I always keep your picture in*
   The pocket next my heart,
   This means that we have always been
   Together, my sweetheart. } Repeat

Translated by Leah Gavurina

SOVIET MUSIC IN WAR-TIME

During the very first days after Hitler's scoundrely invasion of the Soviet Union the cultural life of the Soviet peoples, including their music, underwent very significant and profound changes. The musical life of the U.S.S.R. was at the height of its brilliant development when suddenly the war broke out. In the course of the years 1935—1940 one after the other a long line of such chefs-d'oeuvres as the *Fifth* and *Sixth Symphonies* by Shostakovich, Prokofyev's ballet *Romeo and Juliet* and his cantata *Alexander Nevsky*, Shaporin's symphony-cantata *Upon the Battle-field of Kulikovo*, Khachaturian's *Violin Concerto*, Myaskovsky's *Twenty-First Symphony*, made their appearance. Excellent performers' associations were created. At the head of the list stand the national operatic theatres of the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaidzhan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tadjikistan and other republics, not to mention the dozens of young performers, pianists, violinists and singers and the many new conductors who came to the fore during this period. Musical pedagogics, musical science and amateur musical activity were all carried on with energy and enthusiasm.

The terrible tornado breaking out over Russia on the 22nd of June, 1941, has radically changed the disposition and activity of the musical forces. The musicians have found their way of serving their people under the severe conditions of war. Composers created hundreds of songs and other musical pieces that focus the enthusiasm of the masses on the defence of their mother country. Dozens at least of these new productions have undoubtedly come to stay, being both gifted and sincere.

The new war subjects have found their clear expression in songs for the masses, in operas, cantatas, oratorios and instrumental music. At the same time one obviously cannot speak of any absolute delimitation of styles as many compositions that have been completed in war-time were undoubtedly drafted before its outbreak. What we mean is the general tendency of the creative powers, their intenseness, their focussing upon one idea, one picture.

Let us start our review of Soviet musical compositions in war-time with mass songs. Such songs are of exceptional importance in Soviet musical culture. They reflect most of the manysided aspects and stages of Soviet life. This is the reason why they meet the demands of millions of people in our country and constitute a kind of chronicle of national life. The importance of the mass-song has grown by leaps and bounds during the time of our gigantic battles. Soviet composers are throwing themselves heart and soul into the composing of battle-songs. The best songs have spread like wildfire both over front and in the rear. They are sung by Red Army men and children alike.

An excellent example of a war song is the most popular air, *A Holy War*, composed during the days of the October advance of the Germans on Moscow by Professor Alexandrov, a well-known master of this genre, winner of a Stalin prize. The stern strains of this song sung by a male choir stir the hearers to the depths of their souls.

Let fury surge in noble waves.
It is the people's war we waye,
A holy sacred war,

is the burden of this song. (The text was written by the poet Lebedev-Kumach.)

Many heroic songs, marches and marching songs have been composed in war-time besides this hymn to the people and the Red Army by Alexandrov. A large number of composers, including the brothers Pokrass, old masters of Soviet mass song, and Dmitry Shostakovich, the famous composer of symphonies, take part in the creation of popular songs.

Very stirring is the group of partisan songs. The dangers and difficulties of partisan life, the elusiveness of the partisans hiding to the enemy rear, all this strikes the imagination of Soviet artists and finds its expression in all forms of war-time art. The composers have created strong and striking images of partisans. An absolutely indelible impression is produced by the profoundly lyrical song of Victor Byely, written to the popular verses:

Fighters hide in the woods
Like eagles in the clouds,
And they pounce on the foe
When the sun is aglow,

and the choir suite *The People's Avengers* by Dmitry Kabalevsky telling of the Ukrainian partisans, which is remarkable for its folklore quality.

Yet the Soviet song of today deals not only with heroic ideas. Many tunes give us lyrical pictures of leave-taking, parting, of the everyday life of Red Army men, speak of the feelings of the simple Soviet people. The poetic creations of Sedoy, a Leningrad composer, attract special attention among the lyrical songs.

War-time has caused no interruption in the production of big compositions for choir, a musical genre which had reached a very high level of development in the years immediately preceding the war.

Cover for a very popular mass song "To Arms for the Fatherland, to Arms for Stalin!"

Marian Koval, one of the greatest masters of the Soviet oratorio, whose work *Emelyan Pugachov*[1] produced such a powerful impression in 1940, has completed a new opus of this genre for choir, solo-singers and orchestra. It is called *Chkalov*, and tells of the great pilot of our times, who was the first to fly from Moscow to the United States over the North Pole.

A very interesting page of Soviet musical life has been written by the composers who have produced new operas in war-time. The genre of the Soviet opera is one of the richest and most manysided forms of our art. The folkloristic quality of such operas as *And Quiet Flows the Don* and *The Soil Upturned* by Dzerzhinsky, based on Sholokhov's novels, and Prokofyev's *Semyon Kotko* based

[1] Emelyan Pugachov was a leader of a peasant uprising in the eighteenth century. During the Great War for the Fatherland Koval has converted the oratorio into an opera of the same name.

A dance scene from act I of Dzerzhinsky's opera "The Soil Upturned" at the Moscow Bolshoy Theatre

on a novel by Katayev, guarantee their staying on the boards. In these days war topics are the rule in opera too, both historical themes being used, as in Prokofyev's *The Year 1812* based on Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, or Mokroousov's *Chapayev*[1] based on a novel by Furmanov, and present-day themes, as in Dzerzhinsky's *The Blood of the People*, Kabalevsky's *Before Moscow*. These last kind of opera are of special interest, for instance the opera by Kabalevsky showing the memorable days of the hitlerite October advance upon Moscow in 1941. The characters of this opera are the Red Army men and partisans who took part in the battles in defence of Moscow.

Prokofyev's historical opera *The Year 1812* is a quite original musical achievement. The most valuable parts of it are the mass scenes of the battle of Borodino, pictures of the peasant army and of the French retreat along the Smolensk road. Choir songs and the free talk of soldiers and partisans lend especial appeal to the mass scenes of this opera. The image of Kutuzov, the great Russian Army leader, is powerfully drawn.

[1] Vassili Chapayev, a popular hero, was a great captain in the Civil War.

So far as instrumental music is concerned, the first thing to be mentioned is that this genre has developed very remarkably within the last ten years. This applies in primis to Russian symphony music. At the very beginning of this article we mentioned a number of works that contributed to the development of Soviet art during recent years. Dmitry Shostakovich's, a Leningrad composer's, *Seventh Symphony* was produced last year. It won undoubtedly the first and foremost place in the concert programmes of the Old and New World, speaking as it does on the great subject of the defence of Leningrad and the whole Soviet mother country against the invasion of fascist gangsters. Both the Russian and foreign press have time and again touched upon the range of ideas and images forming the contents of the *Seventh Symphony*. Quite an extensive literature of articles, reviews, opinions has grown up around this remarkable opus. Shostakovich called it "the symphony of struggle and of coming victory," and we can only say here that the symphony is absolutely worthy of this definition by its author.

About the same period Myaskovsky

completed his two symphonies, the twenty-second and the twenty-third, in which he treats military subjects in his original way.

For thirty years Myaskovsky has worked unremittingly at his symphonies, treading a long and tortuous path of development. And this path has led him out of his former grim subjectivity to vivid musical images instinct with life. This makes it all the more interesting to follow the famous composer in his reactions to the redoutable events of 1941.

The Twenty-Second Symphony was completed in November, 1941. Its name is *Symphony-Ballad on the Patriotic War of 1941.* Its three parts are very diverse. The first part lacks those dramatic conflicts which are common to classic symphonies. This part is out and out a song. The leading melody is broad and tuneful, imbued with noble sadness. This sad music is akin to Slavonic melodies because of its unhurrying, slow and profound lyricism. The first part tells of the sorrow of the people. The peaceful flow of the melody soon gives way to agitation. A certain monotony of constant repetitions is fully redeemed by the sincerity, emotion and unbroken song-like flow of this superb work.

The Andante conveys a profound sense of grief resulting from exceptional events. This song of mourning, accompanied by heavy sighs rent from the depth of the soul, has been inspired by something much higher than a simple personal emotion. In some places the expression of sorrow reaches a very high level of intensity, evidence that the composer is carried away by a wave of a general national feeling.

The third and final part of the *Symphony-Ballad* is full of energetic movement. In it the composer touches upon war episodes, though only from

Scene from Dzerzhinsky's opera "And Quiet Flows the Don" at the Bolshoy Theatre V. Davydova as Axinya, and N. Hanayev as Grigori

afar. The leading melody is full of will and impulse and is in the form of a march. One hears in it hints of gunfire, the trampling of horses, military signals, and at last all blends into the broad melody of a marching song.

The entire music of the finale is instinct with agitation, except the very end which is festive and majestic in accord with the general tradition of the finales of Russian symphonies. All in all, none can call Myaskovsky in his *Twenty-Second Symphony* an innovator. The power of this music is not based on the introduction of new methods, but on its unity, on the organic development of the music and the profound sincerity of this outstanding musician's reaction to the tragic events in the life of his mother-country. This Symphony-Ballad is an entirely Russian creation. It is Russian because it is written in the historic tradition of the Russian school of symphony. It is Russian because it is imbued with folksong, which is typical of many Russian symphonies, and it is Russian in the very quality of its Russian melodies.

His *Twenty-Third Symphony* Myaskovsky called a *Symphony-Suite*. The composer created it while living in the Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria (North Caucasus, at the foot of the majestic Elbrus). The symphony was completed in December, 1941, very shortly before Shostakovich completed his famous *Seventh Symphony*. But what an immense difference there is between these two works! Shostakovich's *Seventh Symphony* gives expression to the great historic conception of the sufferings and majesty of the mother-country embodied in the image of Leningrad, the heroic city, while Myaskovsky's *Symphony-Suite* gives the picture of the wealth and the beauty of the folklore of one flourishing region of the Soviet country during its time of severe trial. All the melodies of the symphony come from the opulent folklore of two Caucasian peoples, the Kabardians and the Balkars. Myaskovsky boldly puts side by side ancient tunes and modern Soviet songs and dances of this sunny Soviet republic. Even at the very beginning an ancient sorrowful tune reflecting the pre-revolutionary past of the oppressed peoples is contrasted with a merry youthful song of the Soviet times. Nearly all the melodies used by the composer of the *Twenty-Third Symphony* are equally beautiful and presented with the same grace and mastery.

The second part is pure lyricism. Its melodies are now deeply sorrowful, now intimately lyrical, and again full of passionate love. The brilliant dance finale, the third part of the symphony, is based on a melody, airy as leaping flame, of a Kabardian dance known as "Islamey."

The *Symphony-Suite* is the soul of harmony full of a serene elevation of spirit and characterized by great transparency of form. It is a graceful garland of folklore songs and dances. It was written at the same time as the *Symphony-Ballad*. While quite dissimilar in content, they form a certain unity. The *Symphony-Ballad* tells us of tragic events as they impress the great master. And the *Symphony-Suite*, on the other hand, tells of the forces of life embodied in a cycle of ancient and modern melodies of two peoples in our Union. The freshness of his perception of surrounding reality and the constant search for new forms of expression cannot fail to win our enthusiastic admiration.

Composers of the younger generation are also working at new symphonies. We cannot but mention the completed symphonies of Goloubev, one of Myaskovsky's most gifted pupils (the *Third Symphony*, 1942), and of Zhelobinsky, a young Leningrad composer (*Third* and *Fourth Symphonies*, 1941—1942). The colourful *Second Symphony* of Khachaturian, one of the leading Soviet composers, is nearing completion.

Among other symphonic works composed during war-time the overtures

of some of the representatives of the older generation of Soviet composers are worthy of mention: Glière (*The Friendship of Peoples*), Gedike (*The Year 1941*), and Shebalin's *Russian Overture*. All these works are written according to the good symphonic tradition of the Russian symphonic school.

It is not only the monumental genre of instrumental music that is flourishing in war-time. Some chamber music of extraordinary beauty has been composed lately, including the quartettes of Myaskovsky (No. 7), of Shebalin (No. 5, *Slavonic Quartette*) and of Prokofyev (No. 2). Shebalin used in his quartette a number of melodies of different Slav peoples, among them the songs of Western Slavs. Kabardian and Balkar tunes are heard in Myaskovsky's and Prokofyev's quartettes, especially in the exceptionally fine quartette of Prokofyev. All its three parts are built up entirely on the rich melodies of these two North-Caucasian peoples. Yet Prokofyev is in no way narrowly ethnographic in his treatment of their musical folklore. His quartette is an original creative conception of striking power and vividness and marked by that simplicity and limpidity which are the hallmark of really great art.

Though a war unprecedented in scope and violence is raging, the voice of art continues to be heard in our country.

Shostakovich says that "at the sound of our guns our muses lift their mighty voice. Never will anybody be able to wrest the pen from our hands." This conception of Shostakovich is quite sound. The music of the best Soviet composers maintains and increases its influence in war-time only because they have something to say, because they are in close contact with their people fighting for a just and noble cause, for the liberation of humanity from the fascist pestilence. Brilliant works have been created as a result of the close and personal intercourse maintained between our composers with the fighting and working people at the front and in the rear, in the army units as well as in the besieged city. Some of the best works were conceived at the front. The greatest symphony was written in besieged Leningrad. Artistic thought cannot but re-echo the great events of our days, the sacrifices and privations, the heroic deeds accomplished day by day where terrible battles are fought out and in the workshops in the rear. Soviet musicians together with the entire Soviet people are living and working under the slogan: "Everything for the front, everything for victory over the hateful enemy."

Professor A. ALSCHVANG

LENINGRAD ARTISTS AND THEIR WORK IN WAR-TIME

We knew that day by day brave Leningrad artists defied bombs and shells to record on canvas the epic defence of their native city, a battle unmatched in history.

We also knew that when the situation demanded it Leningrad artists put aside their brush and pencil to build defence fortifications, or take their place in the ranks of the defenders.

We knew, furthermore, that at the height of the winter, with bitter frosts and blizzards, their fingers numb with the cold, Leningrad artists continued to work in their freezing studios, by the dim light of night lamps, producing posters and illustrated leaflets.

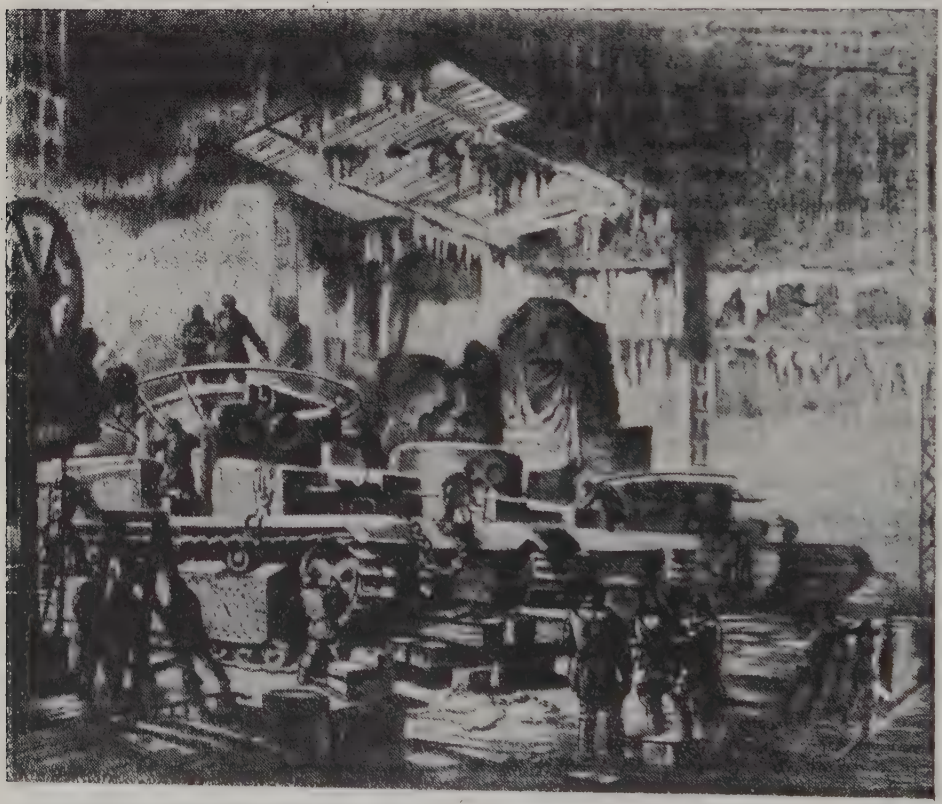
But only now that the works of Leningrad artists have been exhibited at the Pushkin Museum in Moscow, are we able to understand and appreciate the importance of their heroic service to art.

Inspecting stand after stand, canvas after canvas, each of the numerous drawings and sculptures, the visitor feels that everyone of the works of art was produced by a citizen of the glorious city, a citizen who with burning hatred in his heart gripped the pencil or brush as the fightening man grips his gun.

The visitor's attention is gripped by the paintings of Yaroslav Nikolayev. His picture "What for?" is tragedy personified.

On a War-Ship. Drawing by G. Petrov

Going for Water. Drawing by A. Pakhomov



Urgent Order for the Front. By N. Dormidontov

Cleaning up the Embankment. By P. Grigoriants

The Rout of a German Punitive Detachment. By I. Vladimirov

Woodcut by N. Pavlov

Indeed, why has the life of the young woman with delicate features that we see prostrate on the snow, been cut short in its prime? A feeling of profound hatred is evoked by "The Return," another painting by the same artist. It shows a partisan returning home to find that his young wife has been brutally tortured to death by the Germans; his little son clings to his father; in the background is the partisan's comrade-in-arms, shaken by grief at the misfortune which has befallen his friend.

Nikolayev's works displayed in other sections of the exhibition, his drawings and posters, are forceful, laconic expressions of the same idea: we will avenge.

"The Russian People Will Never Go Down on Their Knees" is the name of the picture, or rather sketch, by V. Serov. The partisan's vow is sacred and irrevocable. The same determination to fight to the end is expressed in "The Enemy at the Walls of the City" also by V. Serov.

Sincerity, simplicity and conviction distinguish the works of the woman artist V. A. Rayevskaya. One's attention is immediately arrested by her ability to seize on and portray what is characteristic in people, by the interest of the scenes depicted and by her original methods of work. Particularly is one impressed by "Wounded Partisan in a Peasant Home in an Occupied Village," "Evacuation of Children" (a sketch), "Illegal Post-Office Behind the German Lines," showing village children delivering mail at the risk of their lives.

"Partisan Detachment" by I. Serebryany and "Skiers" by N. Rutkovsky, well handled from the artistic point of view, give a faithful reproduction of life in a capital city in close proximity to the front. Of interest also are Rutkovsky's genre pictures "Off for Water" and "The Return." The landscapes by V. Kuchumov, V. Pakulin and G. Traugot give a splendid reproduction of the beauty of Leningrad and skilfully reflect the innermost life of fighting city.

Noteworthy and true to the traditions of battle painting is the canvas by I. Vladimirov "The Rout of a German Punitive Detachment." The author, who probably is the oldest Soviet artist, is over seventy now. Inspired by the struggle for liberation against the German-fascist invaders, the veteran artist still holds the brush with a firm hand and continues to work with youthful ardour.

Portraits of men at the front have especial appeal in times like these. We treasure the features of heroes with their contempt for death and supreme devotion to their native land. The exhibition displays fine portraits produced by V. Serov (particularly "The Portrait of an Editor of a Partisan Newspaper") and by Serebryany ("Portrait of a Partisan").

Leningrad artists have always excelled in the graphic arts. The stern and austere lines of the works of Leningraders correspond to the character of the reality that they reproduce.

There is a splendid study of a Leningrad child by A. Pakhomov, a fine graphic artist. The author has made a profound study of the psychology of a Leningrad child during the winter of 1941-42. Two little girls, exhausted, emaciated as a result of malnutrition, are shown arduously climbing the steps at the Neva riverside, carrying teapots filled with wa-

ter; one of them pours the water into a bucket placed on top of a small sledge, while the older one, quite exhausted, is leaning against the stony parapet. "Where the Bomb Fell" shows a mortally wounded girl being carried down the stairway in a ruined house. "En Route to the Sanatorium" shows two girls desperately pulling a sledge to get an exhausted man to the sanatorium.

An unforgettable impression is left by N. Dormidontov's series of drawings "Urgent Order for the Front," which show a shop humming with work. The spectator realizes at once the conditions in which the Leningrad workers are engaged in strenuous production. Using only black and white, N. Dormidontov has succeeded in producing a picturesque effect in "The Glow of Fire over Leningrad," a most convincing picture of what the heroic city had to go through.

The masterful drawings by N. Pavlov unfold before the visitor a true picture of Leningrad. They show a fire at the Senate building, the protective armour over the monument to Peter I; and there is the splendid series of drawings "Leningrad During the Blockade."

There's depth of expression in the drawings by G. Petrov, particularly in "Marine Anti-Aircraft Gunners on the Neva River," and "Destruction Caused by Explosive Bomb" by V. Uspensky. The portraits of Heroes of the Soviet Union A. Afanassyev, V. Gumanenko and S. Ossipov, by the master of the graphic portrait G. Vereisky, are well conceived and executed psychological studies.

The artists I. Bilibin and P. Shillingovsky, these veterans of Soviet graphic art, are no longer among us, but they have left an immortal heritage among the works of Leningrad artists in the shape of the originally interpreted "Battle of Kulikovo" by Bilibin and a series of block prints "A Beleaguered City" by Shillingovsky.

There are rather few sculptures in the exhibition. The groups and individual sculptures expressing sorrow and suffering may sooner be called sculptural studies. The works of the venerable artist V. Lishev who is nearing his seventieth year, are remarkable for their faultless modeling, as for example "Carrying a Wounded Man," "Inspection of Documents," "At the Gates." No less expressive are the works of the youthful woman sculptor V. Issayeva whose talent has developed during the blockade of Leningrad. Her works reveal keen powers of observation, sincerity, directness and good knowledge of form.

Leningrad artists not only produced original posters and illustrated slogans, but helped to multiply them, working as lithographers or as linoleum carvers. Front orders were always fulfilled on time. Posters by V. Serov, A. Sittaro, V. Dvorakovsky, S. Boym and many others may well be held up as examples in this field of art.

A glance at the issues of *The Fighting Pencil*, a periodical published by the Leningrad Artists' Union, reveals the secret of its success. Simple graphic means, ingenuity, sharp political satire were the factors accounting for the enthusiastic reception which *The Fighting Pencil* was accorded by the men at the Leningrad Front.

True, there are perhaps at the exhibition a few "colourless," not quite successful works, but as a whole the exhibition gives a stirring picture of the heroic struggle of the fighting city, of the courage and endurance of the Leningraders, citizens worthy of their city.

IVAN LAZAREVSKY

Woodcut by N. Pavlov

NEWS AND VIEWS

A new tank had been received at the guardists' tank unit. On its turret a caricature had been painted showing the tank firing a shell at Hitler and blowing him to pieces. The following lines were written bellow:

Fire away, keep it up,
Our heavy tank;
Hit the fascists from the rear,
Hit them in the flank.

Above, in large letters, was written the name of the tank: "Pitiless."

This mighty fighting machine had been built with the money donated by the Soviet poets V. Gussev, S. Marshak, S. Mikhalkov, N. Tikhonov and the famous caricaturists "Kukryniksy" (M. Kuprianov, P. Krylov and N. Sokolov).

The tank went through many fights. The number of enemy tanks destroyed by its brave crew is marked on its steel armour. These figures of revenge and victory grow steadily.

There is one fighting episode which its crew recalls with particular satisfaction. Once some German tanks went into an attack supported by nine fascist bombing planes. To take cover would have meant to let the enemy tanks pass. Then the tank commander resorted to the following ruse: from his hatch he sent up three white rockets seized from the enemy, in the direction of the German tank column. The fascist bombers took it for their signal and started bombing their own tanks! In the meanwhile the Soviet tanks also demolished several enemy tanks.

On another occasion the crew was ordered to tow away a damaged Soviet tank. The "Pitiless" attached a line to the damaged machine under intense enemy fire. At that moment fifteen German tanks undertook an attack. The "Pitiless" turned about at once and opened fire, destroying two German tanks and compelling the rest to turn back.

The men of the valiant tank crew often write letters to the poets and artists with whose money their tank was built. They write that the once trim machine has turned black, that its steel body now has twenty-nine dents, two holes, and three shells stuck in the plate, and that... one of the German shells has torn off Hitler's leg on the caricature.

The artist P. Krylov (one of the famous Kukryniksy) and the writers S. Mikhalkov and S. Marshak who donated money for building of the tank "Pitiless"

The famous Russian writer Anton Chekhov once told Maxim Gorki: "... If you only knew how much the Russian village needs a good, intelligent, educated teacher! One who should be an artist who ardently loves his work."

Chekhov's dream has come true. In the Soviet Union the teacher is a respected, educated, progressive man. Today the Soviet teachers are fighting shoulder to shoulder with the rest of the people against the German fascist hordes. They have taken up arms in the name of the defence of culture.

Soviet teachers have their own accounts to square up with the fascists. Who could forget the schools which the Germans have burned and destroyed, the teachers whom they have tortured and hanged, and the school-children whom they have murdered?

The indignation of the Soviet teachers has been voiced from the tribune of the Teachers' Anti-fascist Meeting held in Moscow. At that meeting speeches were delivered by the teachers of the various Soviet republics, by teachers now partisans, and by teachers now serving in the army. Their emotions were expressed in a striking speech by the teacher Baskakov, now a senior lieutenant at the front, who said:

"We have come to see an enemy who commits monstrous crimes, who annihilates our people with a cynical cold-bloodedness, who destroys everything we have created, with pitiless cruelty... Every sincere humanist, every honest friend of liberty and progress must now become an experienced fighter and be able

to strike the black beast of fascism skilfully and pitilessly. . ."

The Soviet teachers unanimously adopted the following appeal to the teachers of the world:

"Teachers of Poland, Norway, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, France, Yugoslavia and Greece! Increase your heroic resistance to the fascist oppressors. Rise to a man to defend your national independence. . . Teachers of the world! Let us hold out our hands to each other across the frontiers which now divide us! Hold aloft the banner of universal human progressive culture, the banner of humanism! . ."

From the very beginning of the Great Patriotic War thousands of Soviet teachers have gone to the front and joined the ranks of the partisans. The names of many Soviet teachers are found among the bravest of the brave warriors of the land of Soviets, such as the Hero of the Soviet Union Timothy Shashlo, the valiant sergeant Peter Sokur and the famous pilot, thrice decorated, Kurbati Kardanov. . . All these were teachers before the war. As Vera Krylova, a teacher of geography and history in far-away Tatarsk, Siberia, recalls:

"When I'd point on the map and tell the children about the great Soviet Union, I never dreamt that I myself would soon defend my country against the hitlerite cannibals. When I taught the pupils history and told them about our great military leaders, Suvorov and Kutuzov, it never entered my thoughts that a year hence I myself would don uniform and participate in battles."

Today the teacher Vera Krylova is a captain of the Guard in the Commissary service and has been decorated three times for outstanding service.

Those of the teachers who remain in the rear do everything they can to help the front. In their spare time and during summer vacations, they take charge of pupils' detachments and help the peasants in their work on the fields. They work in factories, replacing the workers who have gone to the front. A large column of tanks has been built with funds raised among teachers, and named "The People's Teacher." In every part of the country, in the Caucasian mountain village, in the Far North with its low and heavy sky, Soviet teachers, Russians, Georgians, Armenians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Uzbeks, Turkmenians, Tatars, Jews, Kazakhs, Azerbaidzhanians, collected funds with which they built their tank column; for the last few months it has been active at the front fighting the hitlerite invaders. Among the tank drivers of this column are several teachers who have given up their peaceful profession and manned some of these grim fighting machines.

The figure of the teacher who fights for the freedom of his fatherland, arms in hand, serves as a subject of many stories by modern Soviet writers.

A delegation of school-children came to see the chief surgeon of a large hospital, which the youngsters had taken under their patronage. Twelve-year-old Tamara stepped forward and rambled away with excitement:

"Comrade head physician, may we arrange a birthday party for him? I promise you, there will be no noise. . . Do let us! . . Will you? . ."

"Please, do! We promise to be quiet! Only let us do. . ." the rest of the children appealed.

"I don't understand a thing," the doctor shrugged his shoulders. "What is it? What birthday are you talking about?"

One breaking in on the other, children told him that in one of the wards there was a seriously-wounded lieutenant, who had no relatives, who received no letters from anywhere, whom nobody visits, who lay there so sad and seldom smiled. . . They had learned that his birthday was going to be tomorrow, and decided to arrange a party for him.

"Just let us, comrade head physician, and we promise to make no noise."

"All right, go ahead," the doctor said, and a suspicious moisture sparkled in the eyes of that strict, tired, grey-haired man.

Next morning the children tiptoed into the ward. At first none of the patients understood why little Vitya, smiling mysteriously, was spreading that snow-white table-cloth on the bedside table. On it he placed a large basket with beautiful white asters, a new shaving outfit and a large bar of chocolate wrapped in bright-coloured paper. The youngest of the girls, whose name the patients ignored and whom everybody called "Tiny Tot," placed a new, nice necktie next to it. A note was pinned to it, reading: "Put it on on the day of victory. The first day after the war."

The young lieutenant was deeply touched. It had never occured to him that he had so many devoted, loving friends.

Patronage of children over hospitals and caring for the wounded are ordinary things in the daily life of Soviet children in the days of war. In this work they reveal exceptional sensitiveness, attentiveness, zeal and care. They spend hours at the side of the wounded, give them something to drink, fulfil the less complicated orders of the physicians and nurses, read aloud to the wounded and write letters at their dictation.

This patronage of the children over hospitals is only a part of that great care which the Soviet people manifest for their wounded men. Each hospital has some organization attached to it, whose members engage in the important work of helping the wounded. Women come to the hospital from behind the counter, the fac-

tory and the kitchen to unload vegetables for the hospital dining-hall, to saw wood brought by a Volga steamer, and to put in double window-frames so that the cold should not penetrate from the outside. The noise of sewing machines may be heard from another room in the hospital: there other women are busy repairing coats, blouses, trousers. A group of actors enters the ward, and a performance is about to start for the patients. . . Thus do the Soviet people, women and children in the first place, work in the hospitals, assisting in every way the medical personnel in its work of restoring the health and the strength of the wounded Red Army men, the brave defenders of the Fatherland.

The memorable days of fighting at the gates of Moscow, in the autumn of 1941, are reflected at the exhibition opened in the Historical Museum.

Relics of Russia's historical past have been collected in the first hall. It is like a prologue to the exhibition, to the war of today. On the walls may be seen steel coats of mail and heavy spears, while piles of cast-iron cannon-balls are heaped up on the floor. Once upon a time these arms were a mighty power in the hands of the Russians, and today they serve to recall the glorious deeds of our brave ancestors.

The rest of the exhibits refer to the grim days of autumn 1941. Material evidence of those days has been collected at the exhibition. Here are some war trophies abandoned by the Germans: guns, machine-guns and automatic rifles. There are numerous photographs—documents of the heroic defence of Moscow. Wide streets of the capital, old Moscow lanes. Barricades on street crossings and anti-tank defences. People everywhere, worried but calm, gloomy but sure of victory. On the map the visitor may trace the path of the disgraceful flight of the Hitler invaders after the crushing blow they received near Moscow.

There are portraits of the heroes of this victorious offensive: Generals Zhukov, Rokossovsky, Byelov, Dovator, Govorov and Katukov. Here is a stand dedicated to the Soviet guardsmen, among whom were the famous 28 brave Panfilov guardsmen. The banners of the Guard are spread over the pictures of these fearless infantrymen, pilots and tank drivers.

The visitor's emotions are deeply stirred by the evidences of this recent past by these pages of the great battle, in which he himself has probably taken part.

Fifty years ago, P. M. Tretyakov, a fine connoisseur of art, presented his priceless gallery to the city of Moscow. His private collection of pictures became public property. Up to his death P. M. Tretyakov remained the honorary president of the gallery, the enlargement of which always remained his constant care.

On June 3rd, 1918, Lenin signed a decree nationalizing the gallery, thus establishing its universal State importance. During the twenty-five years of the existence of Soviet power, the number of the gallery's exhibits has increased sevenfold. The space of the gallery has also increased considerably, due to the addition of some new buildings. The number of visitors has increased enormously. Tretyakov himself had started to count the number of visitors to his gallery, and he was glad of every newcomer to his treasure of art. In 1881 he spoke with pleasure of the figure of 8,400 visitors for that year. How could he even have imagined of that in 1940 the number of visitors would reach a round million? Workers and peasants, schoolboys and professors, natives of Moscow and visitors from other cities, they all go to the Tretyakov Gallery and spend long hours before the immortal paintings by Andrei Rublyov, A. Ivanov, Surikov, Repin, Levitan, Perov, Kramskoy, Kuindji, Vasnetsov, Vereshchagin. . . It is hard to enumerate all the famous Russian painters whose creations are the real treasure of the Gallery.

A large number of military people may always be noticed among the visitors. Arriving in Moscow on leave from the distant frontiers, from their warship, sometimes covering thousands of kilometres to spend some time in the capital, the Soviet warriors will always pay a visit to the Tretyakov Gallery.

During the war the Soviet government has taken every measure of precaution to safeguard the priceless treasures of the Tretyakov Gallery, which are the common property of the people.

Today, in the war winter of 1943, the emotions of the visitors to the Tretyakov Gallery are stirred the more by the exhibition of works of art entitled "The Great Patriotic War." Numerous works by Soviet painters show the stirring events of the war which the Soviet people are waging against the Hitler tyranny, and the courage and gallantry with which the Soviet fighting men defend their Fatherland, their peaceful toil and their culture, of which the State Tretyakov Gallery is but one pearl.

The Germans were hurriedly retreating under the blows of the Soviet troops. It was at the time of the historical battle on the approaches to Moscow, when the German soldiers encountered the invincible resistance of the Russian army, came to a halt in powerless fury and then began to retreat in disorder westwards.

Upon entering one of the villages near Mozhaisk just abandoned by the Germans, the detachment of Soviet guards lost no time in bringing order to the place. Sig-

salmen repaired telephone wires, sappers rendered mines harmless, orderlies sped back and forth from the house where the commander had taken up his quarters. From the field kitchen came the appetizing smell of hot Russian cabbage soup.

A sapper cautiously entered one of the houses that had escaped damage. The narrow beam of his electric torch lit up a disorderly heap of articles consisting of plundered goods, the booty of professional marauders which they had discarded in their hasty flight. Wine bottles with multicoloured labels, children's chemises, silver halos torn off from ikons, men's felt boots. And next to all this lay a strangely shaped object wrapped in a woman's brightly coloured shawl. The sapper gingerly picked it up and unfolded the shawl. A quavering melodious sound broke the silence in the dark, smoky hut. It was a violin. Red Army men who ran up at the sound carefully examined the instrument. The strings were torn, the bow missing. The violin itself, however, was in perfect order. A careful scrutiny of it revealed a yellowed piece of paper pasted at the bottom of the violin, bearing the words:

"Kutuzov" violin. September, 1912.
In memory of the centenary of the
Battle of Borodino.
Violin-maker Timothy Podgorny.

A few days later a dust-covered automobile, its fantastic looking green camouflage design betraying it as a machine from the front, came to a stop in one of the Moscow's side streets. In answer to the ringing of the door bell, a stocky figure of an old man, his grey hairs brushed back from his forehead, appeared in the doorway. It was the outstanding Soviet violin-maker Timothy Podgorny, the creator of the "Kutuzov" violin. The Red Army men had brought him their find. Unable to believe his eyes, he took the violin which he had made thirty years ago on the occasion of the centenary of the battle of Borodino, naming the instrument in honour of the Russian national hero, Kutuzóv. The old master told his guests the story of this violin which had miraculously found its way back to his maker. For a long time his son, Jacob Podgorny, first violin in the Bolshoy Theatre, played on this instrument. He also played in the professors' quartet and at the exhibition of musical instruments in Petersburg in 1913, when the quartet won first prize. For the last ten years the violin had been the property of one of the artists of the Minsk Opera House.

The old violin-maker took warm leave of the Red Army men. He continues at his craft, giving his new violins such stirring names as "Partisan," "Warrior." He is confident that the day is not distant when he will be able to give his new violin—the finest ever made by him—the inspiring name of "Victory."

Sukhe-Bator is the name of the people's hero of modern Mongolia. The new film *His Name Is Sukhe-Bator* is dedicated to his noble, heroic life.

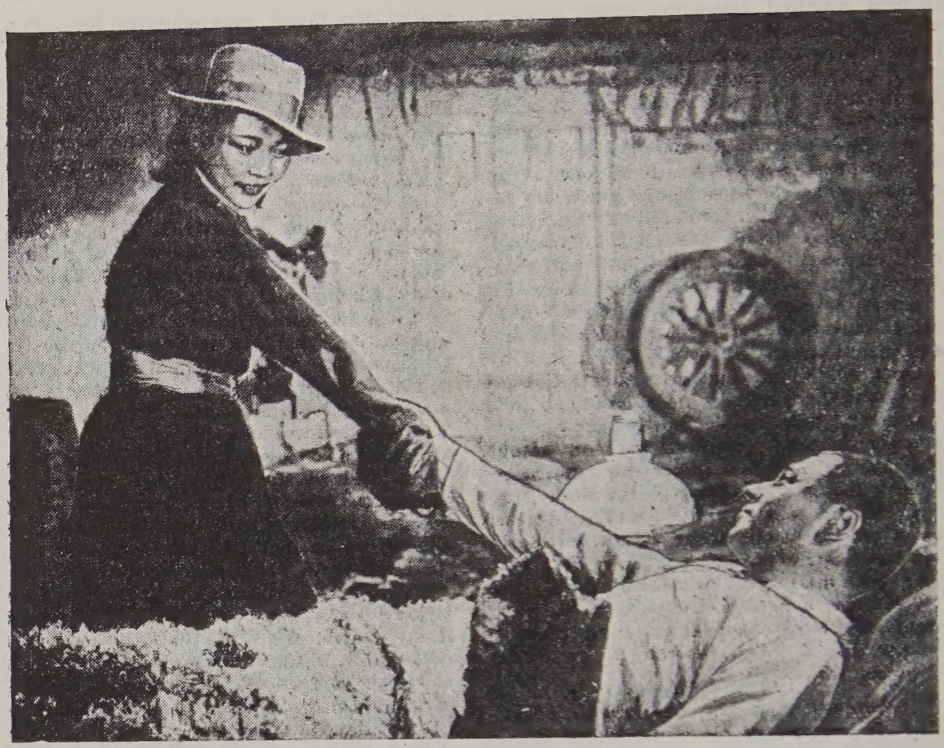
The action of this film takes place in Mongolia during 1919—1921. In those days the country was under the rule of Si Shichang, a cruel despote, greedy for power, "Little Si," equally hated by the Chinese and the Mongolian peoples. Right after his return from military service to his native village, the young Mongolian Sukhe is faced with "Little Si's" arbitrary cruel rule: wherever he turned, he finds blood and tears, death and destruction. . .

Sukhe decides to fight. He begins with an appeal to the people and gathers his partisans around him. When he learns of the October Revolution in Russia, he braves all dangers and hardships and goes to Moscow to see Lenin and Stalin. Returning home, Sukhe organizes a people's army, defeats the hordes of the whiteguard Ungern and, with the help of the Red Army, establishes a people's rule in Mongolia. But his enemies succeed in sending to him a surgeon who poisons him. Sukhe-Bator dies, but his name lives on in the heart of every Mongolian.

Such, in brief, is the contents of the film staged by the directors I. Heifetz and A. Zarkhi, and based on the scenario by B. Lapin and Z. Hatsrevin.

There are many striking, effective episodes in this film, which linger in our memory. Such is the concluding scene of Sukhe-

L. Sverdlin as Sukhe-Bator



Still from the film "Sukhe-Bator"

Bator's death. Friends of the dying man come over to his bedside and tell him that a rumour has been spread alleging that Sukhe-Bator had died and renounced the people before his death. This horrible news lends superhuman strength to the dying man. He rises from his bed, dons his military coat with all his medals, girds himself with his sabre and goes outside to the troops and the people.

"Hurry back where you came from," Sukhe-Bator tells the nomads who surround his tent, "and tell the people that I am alive."

His voice is firm and his eyes are aglow. A bird passes overhead, high up in the sky. Sukhe pulls out his pistol and fires, and the bird drops to the ground. . .

Leo Sverdlin, one of the ablest actors in the Soviet Union, plays the part of Sukhe-Bator. In his rendition Sukhe is brave, daring and resolute, one who loves his people deeply and to whose interests he remains true to the end. His personal courage and military skill are combined with the talent of a real military leader. He is both a diplomat and administrator. He is a true self-made man, an outstanding son of the people. He has no education, he even does not know properly the names of the countries of the world, and he addresses his telegrams to "all the governments of the earth," but he acts unerringly, for in his deeds he is guided by an ardent love for the people and a profound knowledge of its needs and interests.

N. Cherkassov, People's Artist of the Republic, who acts the part of Baron von Ungern, has created a biting satire on one of the "leaders" of the whiteguard adventurers. Tall and lean, never parting with his whip, this cruel reactionary, who dreamt of erecting an alley of scaffolds, recalls the half-mad maniacs of Hitler's Germany.

The actors M. Strauch and S. Goldstab have recreated the personalities of Lenin and Stalin with great nobility and simplicity.

The film *His Name Is Sukhe-Bator* is the result of joint efforts by the young Mongolian film-studios and those of Leningrad and Tashkent. This cooperation is one of the manifestations of the solid unity of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. and of Mongolia.

The events of which Sukhe-Bator was the hero, are still fresh in the memory of the Mongolian people. Friends, comrades-in-arms and partisans of his live and work in the country to this day.

The image of Wilhelm Tell, that dauntless Swiss fighter for the liberty and independence of his country, serves as a beautiful symbol of honesty, courage, true patriotism and national dignity throughout the years. This image has acquired new force today, when all of progressive mankind is struggl-

ing against the violence and cruelty of fascist tyranny.

This is why the immortal music of Rossini, who wrote his remarkable opera *Wilhelm Tell* more than a century ago, sounded so freshly and convincingly on the stage of the Bolshoy Theatre (in the city of Kuibyshev).

The composer Dmitry Shostakovich and the writer Valentin Katayev, who were present at the première, wrote a joint review of this new production by the best opera house in the Soviet Union.

"The noble figure of Wilhelm Tell cannot help finding the warmest response among the Soviet audience," they wrote.

The authors of the review consider the opera *Wilhelm Tell* one of Rossini's best works." . . .Its musical language is exceptionally emotional and lucid. The entire music of the opera, especially the overture, the ensembles, the chorus and the dances, abounds in evidences of rich inventiveness and mature, great skill."

The orchestra of the Bolshoy Theatre, under the baton of A. Melik-Pashayev, brought out the full ton of value of every group of instruments. Zakharov, who staged the opera, succeeded in creating an interesting play and in fully conveying its profound idea to the audience. Colourful and expressive were the settings by P. Williams, one of the ablest theatrical artists of the Soviet Union.

At the same time the reviewers mention the shortcomings of the libretto of the opera. Several situations which could have disclosed still more fully the fundamental themes of the opera, the struggle of the people against tyranny and its self-sacrifice in the name of the fatherland, have not been brought into sharp enough focus.

The actors and the ballet dancers have put on an excellent performance.

All in all, Rossini's old opera, as performed to the Soviet audience, sounded like a recent fresh and passionate work, crowded with emotional ideas, calling for the struggle for the honour, liberty and independence of the peoples.

There is a beautiful tradition among the workers of the First State cotton-upholstery factory: each fifth anniversary of Soviet power they celebrate by the manufacture of some artistic printed linen. This one, which is dedicated to the 25th anniversary, has been made by M. D. Buturlin, the factory's oldest craftsman, who has been working for 47 years in this line. War events form the subject of his work, which depicts a tommy-gunner hiding in a snow-covered Russian forest, keeping a sharp look-out, and ready to face the enemy at any minute. The design, which is executed in six colours, is striking, rich and expressive.

For the 25th anniversary of the October Revolution a new series of jubilee postage-stamps has been designed by the Soviet artists Mandrussov and Alyakrinsky. The stamps reproduce outstanding events which have taken place in the land of the Soviets during the last 25 years.

More that 900 original stamps, each issue running into the millions, have been printed in the U.S.S.R. during the last 25 years. These are in good demand abroad. Carefully packed in cases, they are shipped almost daily to the largest stamp-collecting firms of the U.S.A., Great Britain, Canada, Persia, China and other countries. The war has rendered more complicated the shipment of these stamps. To deliver them to their destination, these tiny posters have to be sent by all conceivable means of communication, by plane, ship, train, airsleigh, automobile, horse and camel. . .

NEWS IN BRIEF

Constantine Simonov's popular poem "The Artilleryman's Son" has been published in a million copies. True events, as told to the author on the Sredni Peninsula, form the subject of this poem. This is the story of the boy Lyonka, whom Major Deyev, a friend of his late father, liked and taught the art of war. Many years afterwards, the young Lieutenant Leonid Petrov meets his father's old friend at the front during the Patriotic War.

Kornei Chukovsky, the famous writer of stories for children, has written a new anti-fascist tale for children, "Let Us Overcome Barmaley" (the latter is met in Chukovsky's former writings and represents the power of evil and violence). The author read his new work to the school-children of the Pioneers' Home in Moscow and in other cities. The tale was hailed with much enthusiasm by the young audiences.

Valentin Katayev's *War Stories* have been published by the "Soviet Writer" Publishing House. The stories which appear in this book have been printed previously in many central and front newspapers. In these the writer reports on the people and the events of the Great Patriotic War.

The war has failed to impair the interest of the population of Moscow in the cinema. On the contrary, the Moscovites crowd the motion-picture houses more than ever, eagerly viewing every new film which depicts the heroic events of the Patriotic War. In the course of 1941, 22,635,000 people visited the capital's cinemas; this figure has risen to 26 millions in 1942.

A lecture on "Anglo-Russian Cultural Relations in the XVI—XX Centuries" was given in Saratov by Prof. M. P. Alexeyev, D. Ph.

In his *Letters from Siberia*, the great Russian scientist and critic N. Chernyshevsky, a native of Saratov, was the first to understand and appreciate the poet Swinburne (at a time when the latter was barely appreciated in England).

ERRATUM

The last line on page 20, col. 1, should read: tone he used to military students

Editor-in-chief: HELEN STASSOVA