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TOPICS OF THE DAY

A DECISIVE MOMENT IN THE PATRIOTIC WAR

The successes achieved by the Soviet forces in the course of their three-month offensive against the hitlerite army fully merit the celebrations with which the Soviet Union and all the freedom-loving peoples of the world marked February 23rd. And there could be no more splendid and brilliant way of marking the quarter-century of the existence of the Red Army and Navy than by the firm foundation for victory over the German-fascist armies fought for and won by the Soviet forces.

It is obvious that the present victories of the Red Army would be inconceivable without the previous twenty-five years during which Lenin and Stalin, the whole Soviet people, built up, fostered and armed its country's forces. It was the long years of indefatigable work for the creation of a modern army that made it possible for the U.S.S.R. to exhaust and check the German-fascist bands during the first stages of the war, not to allow them to penetrate to the central industrial districts of the country, to foil their plans for the capture of the capital, and further made it possible for the country in the course of the war to gather its forces and then strike at the foe, causing him tremendous losses and driving his hordes westward.

The twenty months of the Patriotic War against Hitler Germany falls into clearly defined, main stages.

The first stage is the summer and autumn of 1941, when the German forces, after their sudden assault on the Soviet Union, were able to press the Red Army back and capture considerable territory.

The next stage of the Patriotic War commenced when the Red Army, having thoroughly drained the enemy's strength, mobilized its forces, accumulated a certain experience in the war against the invaders and trained and developed its reserves, itself launched an offensive and dealt the Germans a number of hard knocks, smashing the picked German troops on the approaches to Moscow and on a number of other sectors of the front during the winter of 1941-1942.

In the summer of 1942, the Germans, utilizing the absence of a second front in Europe, brought up their reserves from all the vassal and occupied countries, pressed the industry of the majority of the European countries into the service of the war, extended the age for military service in Germany to include all from seventeen to fifty-five, and in this way succeeded in again bringing considerable forces into action against the Soviet Union, pressing the Soviet troops back in the south and south-west and capturing a number of important districts. But during this hard fighting in the summer and autumn of 1942, the Red Army again upset the plans of the Germans, and barred the way of the fascist beast. "Our people will forever remember," said Stalin, "the heroic defence of Sevastopol and Odessa, the stubborn battles near Moscow and in the foothills of the Caucasus, in the region of Rzhev and near Leningrad, and the greatest battle ever fought in history at the walls of Stalingrad."

The winter of 1942-1943 witnessed a new, decisive moment in the development of the Patriotic War, the beginning of the expulsion of the

enemy from Soviet soil on a large scale.

This was the first time during the whole war that the Red Army had undertaken an offensive on such a gigantic scale. The enemy's forces suffered severely, and the Red Army upset all his military, political and economic calculations, liberating from the German-fascist invaders a number of districts of the greatest economic and military-strategic importance, and capturing positions extremely favourable for further operations. The Germans had aimed at the seizure of the Grozny and Baku oil; the Red Army defeated the German armies in the North Caucasus and secured these districts from the enemy. The Germans had aimed at the grain of the Kuban, Don, Kursk and Voronezh districts; the Red Army smashed the invaders' armies in these districts and hurled them far back to the west. The Germans intended to restore the mines and factories of the Donets basin and exploit them; the heroic Red Army has already liberated a part of the Donets basin and is continuing here also to batter the enemy. The Germans calculated that in their future operations such towns as Stalingrad, Krasnodar, Nalchik, Mozdok, Rostov, Voroshilovgrad, Voronezh and Kursk would constitute the main military-strategic bases and starting points for their further offensive; the Red Army has driven the enemy from these districts, liberated these towns from the invaders and converted them into its own starting points for further victorious operations. It is with the closest attention and the liveliest hopes that the whole world is today following the course of events on the Soviet-German front.

What has happened during these twenty months of the Patriotic War? How has the correlation of forces of the warring States changed?

The essence of the change in the positions of the belligerents lies first of all in the fact that not one of the strategic plans of the German command has been realized, and after twenty-month fighting against the U.S.S.R. Hitler Germany is weaker than at the beginning of the war, despite its seizure of large expanses of territory. As for the Red Army, it has not only been able to check the enemy, but in a difficult, sanguinary war against the most powerful enemy the Russian people has ever had to encounter, it has become much stronger, more experienced, and has dealt the enemy crushing defeats.

It is sufficient to follow on the map the course of the Red Army's three-month offensive in order to realize the decisive changes which have taken place on the front during this period, and the definite turning-point in the war which has been brought about by the Soviet troops' successful realization of the plans of the Soviet Supreme High Command.

The Red Army has smashed the Germans at Stalingrad, in the North Caucasus, in the Kuban, in the Voronezh and Middle Don areas; it is successfully liberating the Ukraine from the enemy, and striking him on other sectors of the front. In their efforts to stave off the Red Army offensive, the Germans are being forced to draw off their troops from the occupied countries. Quite recently they have withdrawn over thirty new divisions not only from Germany, but from France, Holland Belgium and the Balkans, and hastily transferred them to the Soviet-German front. And as these fresh German units come in to the firing line, the Red Army smashes them in turn, one after the other, continuing its victorious offensive.

The history of war knows no offensive on such a scale and bringing such results. In his Order of the Day of February 23rd, J. V. Stalin noted that the Red Army has attained important successes in the offensive which it has developed during the past three months along a 1,500 kilometres front. It has smashed 112 enemy divisions, killed over 700,000 enemy officers and men in action, and cap-

tured over 300,000 prisoners. In all, about 9,000,000 German officers and men have been put out of action since the beginning of the war, and not less than 4,000,000 of them killed.

Thus a tremendous number of Hitler's picked forces have been placed hors de combat within a short period. It would be hard to overestimate the importance of this fact. Never before, either in the present world war, or in the European wars of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, have such a tremendous number of troops been disposed of within such a short space of time.

Stalin has noted that the German command is taking all possible measures to make good these immense losses. "But in the first place," he noted, "the weak spot of the German armies is that they lack reserves of man power, and, consequently, from what sources they will be able to make good these losses no one can say. Secondly, even if we were to assume that the Germans do manage, by hook or by crook, to scrape together the required number of men, they will need no little time to muster and train them. But time does not wait."

In its advance, the Red Army has destroyed or captured large quantities of enemy weapons. During this period the Germans have lost over 7,000 tanks, 4,000 aircraft, 17,000 guns and large quantities of other equipment. No little time will be needed to replace these huge losses, particularly in view of the swift exhaustion of Germany's resources in man power and material; and time will not wait.

The Soviet troops, smashing their way forward in hard-fought battles, have advanced about six hundred kilometres westward from Stalingrad, liberating a huge expanse of Soviet territory. And the path traversed by the Red Army from Vladikavkaz, through the Kuban and the southern districts of the country to Matveyev Kurgan, somewhat north of Taganrog, is still longer. Thus the Red Army in its three-month offensive has gained territory in the south that had cost the Germans millions of officers and men annihilated by the Soviet troops, and taken over a year to capture.

The history of war knows no such speed in an offensive against a million-strong army.

The successes of the Soviet forces are still more remarkable when one considers that they have been gained while there is no second front in Europe, while the Red Army is bearing the whole brunt of the war alone.

The Red Army offensive has filled the enemy camp with rage, fear and confusion, and its friends with joy and triumph, and a fresh wave of confidence in victory.

The successes of the Red Army are of inestimable importance for the further prospects of the war. This was especially emphasized by J. V. Stalin in his Order of the Day on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Red Army, in which he said: "In these great battles our gallant men, commanders and political instructors covered the banners of the Red Army with unfading glory and laid a firm foundation for victory over the German-fascist armies."

The prolonged, heroic fight the Red Army has put up against the enemy has brought its fruits. After developing its huge internal resources, the Soviet Union has created the necessary conditions for victory. An important turning-point has arrived in the war, it has entered a more determining, a more decisive stage. The task of the Soviet people and all the freedom-loving peoples united with the Soviet Union for battle against Hitler Germany now consists in making the fullest use of the favourable military conditions which have been created, in finally crushing the strength of the hitlerite war machine, destroying the hitlerite army, the hitlerite State, the hitlerite "new order" in Europe.

The yelps of the Hitlerites on the subject of The Red Army's successful offensive are extremely characteristic. When the Germans seized Poland, Belgium and Holland, they solemnly announced that Germany's position had become unalterable, stronger than before the seizure of these States. After the subsequent capture of France and the Balkans they again shouted about a further improvement in Germany's position. Later, when they broke into the Soviet land, they published dozens of proclamations in the summer of 1941 to the effect that, from now on, Germany was invincible.

This had been going on for three years of war. . .

But then Germany entered the fourth year of war. And what do we find? In a public speech, Goebbels, one of the chiefs of the hitlerite gang, was forced to admit that at present Germany is in a more difficult situation than three years ago, when she commenced the European war. After breaking into the territory of the Soviet land and receiving there a blow straight between the eyes, the Germans suddenly began in the fourth year of the war to raise heart-rending wails about being on the brink of catastrophe! This statement speaks for itself, as does the notorious "total mobilization" which the Germans are now carrying out in order to sweep up the last remnants of their reserves, listing even boys of ten for war work.

It is quite natural that the mood and morale of the German soldiers and civilian population has changed. The blows delivered by the Red Army have smashed the Hitlerites' illusions about an easy advance over the territory of the Soviet Union. Their faith in victory is swiftly melting away. Germany's international situation has also taken a serious turn for the worse. She has already exhausted her credit in foreign policy and has been unable during the past year to draw a single State into the war on her side. Germany's relations with her "tried and tested" vassals have also worsened. The Rumanian, Italian and Hungarian armies, which Hitler hurled against the Soviet Union, have been completely routed on the Soviet-German front.

After suffering such serious defeats in battle, the Hitlerites are launching forth into much demagogic noise and fury, striving to sow mistrust between the Soviet peoples, on the one hand, and Great Britain and United States, on the other, and to scare the freedom-loving peoples with the threat of the bolshevization of Europe. This frenzied campaign of the Hitlerites however is far from working in their favour. All these demagogic ravings only show the lack of confidence prevailing in the ruling circles of fascist Germany. As for the German efforts to sow mutual mistrust among the freedom-loving nations, this was well answered by J. V. Stalin, when he said: "The Red Army is an army for the protection of peace and friendship among the people of all countries. It was created not for the purpose of conquering other countries, but of protecting the frontiers of the Land of Soviets. The Red Army has always respected the rights and the independence of all nations."

The miserable demagogic efforts of the Germans are meeting with a decided rebuff from the State and public figures in the countries of the anti-hitlerite coalition and the trusted representatives of all the freedom-loving nations.

The actual results of the Red Army's operations during its three-month offensive are obvious. It has won tremendous victories over the fascist hordes which are plundering nearly the whole of Europe unscathed and laying it waste.

Soviet leaders have ever been distinguished for their ability to see things as they are. Stalin always teaches the Soviet people to be realistic in estimating the course and prospects of the war, not to labour

under any illusions. We must regard the present development of military events with a sober eye. That means that it would be impermissible to lull oneself with the thought that the enemy armies are already settled with. It is necessary always to remember Stalin's words that the fight against the German invaders is only unfolding and gaining momentum. A large expanse of Soviet land temporarily seized by the enemy still remains to be liberated. We have a strong, cunning and cruel foe to deal with, one who will use any and every means to hold what he has seized. There are hard, intense and bloody battles still ahead.

In his Order of the Day, J. V. Stalin pointed out that the enemy had suffered a defeat, that the German army was going through a crisis, but was not yet vanquished. "The Red Army," he said, "has a stern struggle before it against a crafty, cruel and still formidable enemy. This struggle will need time, sacrifice, the exertion of all our efforts and the mobilization of all our potentialities. We have begun to liberate Soviet Ukraine from the German yoke, but millions of Ukrainians are still groaning under the yoke of the German tyrants. The German invaders and their lackeys are still lording in Byelorussia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Moldavia, the Crimea and Karelia. Powerful blows have been inflicted on the enemy armies, but the enemy is not yet vanquished. The German invaders are putting up a frantic resistance, launching counter-attacks, trying to hold on to their defensive lines and likely to plunge into new adventures. That is why there must be no room in our ranks for complacency, negligence or conceit."

A sober calculation of one's own army, one's own State and the strength of the enemy, an understandig of the fact that the crisis which the German-fascist army is now experiencing by no means indicates that the enemy is vanquished and unable to recover, is increasing still further the Soviet people's cool-headed determination, their readiness to work tirelessly, to fight devotedly for final victory, to make ever greater demands on themselves.

The Soviet Union has sufficient forces and reserves, and in addition, favourable military and political conditions for the coming battles. This gives one grounds to regard the future with confidence. We have all that is needed for victory. Only one thing is necessary for the correct utilization of these possibilities and the attainment of final victory: one and all, whatever post they fill, whatever work they are doing, at the front or in the rear, wherever the country places them, must work devotedly for the good of their country, spending themselves for the great duty of defending their native land.

In his Order to the forces, J. V. Stalin said: "Our entire Soviet people are rejoicing at the victories of the Red Army. But the men, commanders and political instructors of the Red Army must firmly bear in mind the behests of our teacher Lenin: 'The primary thing is not to become intoxicated by victory and not to boast; the second is to consolidate the victory; the third is to give the enemy the finishing stroke.'"

This is the main task facing the Soviet people and the armed forces of the Soviet Union today: to give the ferocious enemy the final blow, to have no mercy on him, to drive him to the west, to free the whole of the Soviet land from the hated German enslavers!

GEORGE ALEXANDROV

SOVIET WOMEN IN THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR

Along with the whole Soviet people, women of the U.S.S.R. were confronted with tremendous tasks arising out of the Soviet-German war, and primarily with the task of replacing the men called up for service in the Red Army. During twenty-five years of Soviet power, Soviet women have fully revealed their abilities in all fields of endeavour, in town as well as in the countryside; nevertheless, there were still a number of trades and professions that were considered the exclusive domain of men, and their mastery by women called for tremendous exertion of strength and will-power. But to give credit where credit is due, it must be said that women passed the test with honour and coped with the difficulties encountered. Their love for their country, the realization that by helping their husbands, sons and brothers they were fulfilling their duty, lent them the strength to overcome all hardships.

"Our country is the embodiment of our freedom, our honour and valour, our rights paid for with blood, the purity of our thoughts and conscience. It is our life, for without a country there can be no life," they said to themselves, and for the glory of their country they took their places behind new machines, studied new tools, tasted the joy of creative labour which yields aeroplanes, tanks and guns for the front. Things did not always run smoothly at the beginning. Persistence, concentration, strength and skill were required, but all efforts were repaid a hundredfold, bringing great satisfaction. Thus, for example, Anna Denissova, who came to the X. plant with the aim of helping her husband at the front, is now exceeding her quota six times and has outproduced many of the men workers operating the same machines.

During the war a powerful wave of socialist competition swept the country. The initiator of the socialist competition movement in one factory was a young woman worker, a turner, Guryanova. Working on an important order, she exceeded the fixed norm of output by some 1,160 percent. Many, even experienced turners tried to compete with her, but this young woman invariably retained the lead.

Neither were women frightened away by the difficulties of working underground. Many of them went to work in the mines. Thus; Alexandra Leonova, a salesgirl in a store in Prokopyevsk, Kuznetsk Basin, went to work in the mines, and is now hewing coal in the Stalin mine, fulfilling her norm from 150 to 200 percetn. Recently she was appointed head of a brigade working on shield assembling.

Transport was another field where women encountered difficulties. But Zinaida Troitskaya, the first woman locomotive-engineer, has blazed the trail in this field of endeavour, and at present women working as locomotive-engineers, switchmen, dispatchers, etc., run into thousands.

In this field women have proved themselves true patriots and heroines. Locomotive-engineer Mary Svechnikova was on duty on the hump when enemy planes raided the station. Bombs dropped and exploded nearby, the enemy planes trying to reach the railway sidings where loaded trains were standing. Svechnikova remained in the locomotive awaiting orders from the station master on duty. As soon as the order was given, Mary swiftly drove her locomotive to the depot, coupled it to the munition train and under enemy fire took it to safety.

Water transport is of even greater importance during the war than in

Army Nurse Tuzova. Painting by E. A. Afanassyev

peace-time, and young women from the Far East and other maritime regions of our vast country have proved themselves splendid captains and navigators.

There is hardly any need to stress women's role in automobile transport, for in this field women have almost completely replaced men in the rear.

Already before the war women could be found driving tractors and operating combine-harvesters, and during the war they have completely replaced the men on this type of job. Even before the war the tractor crew headed by Pasha Angelina, Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., was famous throughout the country. Today this team, having evacuated from the Ukraine to Kazakhstan, is working in the Budyonny Machine and Tractor Station in the province of Western Kazakhstan. This year the team overfulfilled its annual plan of work by 1,700 hectares, effecting an economy of 12 tons of gasoline. In addition the members of the team contributed four hundred work-day units to the fund in aid of the heroic defenders of Stalingrad and 6,000 roubles towards the building of a tank column called "For the Soviet Ukraine."

Women collective farmers fully realize that it is their duty to run the collective farm, or, as is usually said, "to lead the farm." Even women burdened with big families (five to seven children) have earned 265 to 310 work-day units.

The women in the countryside have now undertaken jobs which for ages have been considered the monopoly of men, as, for example, ploughing (with horse-drawn plough) and hay mowing. They themselves relate how in order to avoid people poking fun at them they would make for the grassy forest glades on the quiet to practise hay mowing.

In the cattle-breeding districts the farms are completely in charge of women.

The heroic work of Soviet women in all branches of agriculture accounts to a great extent for the fact that the Red Army and the people in the rear are well supplied with food products, despite the fact that a number of agricultural regions of the U.S.S.R. are temporarily under the fascist yoke.

Women intellectuals do not lag behind women workers and peasants.

From the very beginning of the war all Soviet theatres organized special brigades which toured the front. There outstanding singers, actresses, dancers, etc., women as well as men, perform for the Red Army forces, bringing cheer to and inspiring the men who are fighting for their country with unparalleled heroism. Let us mention at random some of their names, as, for example, the opera singers Barsova and Alexandrovskaya, the actresses Korchagina-Alexandrovskaya and Tarassova.

There is not a field of art where women are not working for the front.

There are the sculptresses Vera Mukhina, Maria Rydziunskaya, Sarah

Lebedeva, and many others whose works are on display at the exhibition "The Patriotic War," organized in the Tretyakov Picture Galleries.

During the war Soviet women writers, Marietta Shaginyan, Lidia Seifullina, Anna Karavayeva, Vera Ketlinskaya, Wanda Wasilewska, Yelena Kononenko and many others, produced a number of short stories, sketches and novels, familiarizing the Soviet reader with the front and rear, a single, united camp in the Great Patriotic War.

Vera Inber and Yelena Ryvina have dedicated poems to war-time Leningrad, while *To the Memory of the Brave*, a volume of verse by Margarita Aliger, belongs to the best works of this talented young poetess.

Woman of Moscow, a play dedicated by the playwright V. Gussev to Moscow women, is presented by the Moscow Drama Theatre. The famous composer Dzerzhinsky has also dedicated to women his new opera *Nadezhda Svetlova*.

Soviet women in the rear do not limit their activities to work in production. They bestow real motherly care and attention on the families of Red Army men and commanders, children of refugees, and those orphans who were brought to the interior after having lost their parents. Particularly great work in this respect has been carried out by women workers of the "Bogatyr" Rubber Factory in Moscow, who adopted children brought from temporarily occupied regions of the U.S.S.R. No less important work was accomplished by women of Uzbekistan, and particularly in the Uzbek capital of Tashkent.

Direct care for the men fighting on the fronts of the Patriotic War is expressed in the endless stream of gifts sent to the front in connection with May 1st, the October Anniversary, New Year and Red Army Day.

There are hundreds of thousands of women donors among all sections of the population. Frequently a wounded fighter undergoing a blood transfusion receives also a note from the donor, whereupon an exchange of stirring messages follows between patient and donor.

Intrepid parachutists Galya Metlayeva (left) and Zhenya Leonova, both Order bearers

But Soviet women are also striving to take part in the war directly at the front.

The number of nurses, nurses' aides and Red Cross instructors is very great and is steadily growing. It would require pages to list all the women who have won distinction in service. We will therefore mention but a few. There is the sixteen-year-old heroine, a volunteer Red Cross nurse, Maria Panchenko, who in the thick of the fighting saved two hundred wounded Red Army men and commanders, bringing them, together with their weapons, from the forefront of the battle to places of safety. There is seventeen-year-old Tamara Kalnin, who was caught in a raid while evacuating fifteen wounded. She removed all the men from the burning ambulance and saved their lives. There is the nurse's aide Ludmila Tomilina, who saved the wounded men when an ambulance plane carrying them to the rear was set on fire by an enemy bomb.

Soviet women are fighting in the ranks of the Red Army as rank-and-filers, following in the footsteps of the Kalmyk girl Shapsukova who fought in the First Cavalry Army. The Kabardinian girl Salisat is now fighting along with the Circassian horsemen. She is a brilliant scout in the partisan detachments in the North Caucasus, which are waging a daily struggle against the fascist invaders.

The whole world now has heard the name of Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, known as the partisan girl "Tanya," who died at the hands of the fascist barbarians in December, 1941, during the heroic defence of Moscow. No less famous is the name of Liza Chaikina, a young partisan girl who fell into the hands of the fascists, and who despite monstrous torture refused to give any information to her executioners. The Soviet people revere the memory of Alexandra Dreiman, a middle-aged woman partisan who perished at the hands of the villains and sacrificed her baby son rather than divulge the whereabouts of the partisans.

Along with partisans we can name remarkable Soviet women snipers such as the now world-famous Ludmila Pavlichenko and Nina Onilova who died heroically fighting for Sevastopol.

Our famous aviatrice Valentina Grizodubova known for her record non-stop flight, continues to fly as war pilot along with the younger generation of aviatrices as, for example, the fighter-pilot Khomyakova.

The war has not curtailed the endeavours of our women scientists but, on the contrary, has spurred them on. The physiologist Lina Stern, member of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., has supplied Red Army doctors with a number of new serums which help to save the lives of many thousands of Red Army men and commanders.

The participation of women in the functions of government has acquired particular importance during the war. There are 1,700 women deputies in the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. and in the Supreme Soviets of the Union and Autonomous Republics. Work in local organs of Soviet power, in village Soviets, has become far more complex and difficult, as there are fewer people to do the work and those that are there bear a greater responsibility. Suffice it to point out that it is the duty of the village Soviets to provide living quarters for numerous refugees from the temporarily occupied regions. They must be provided with work, helped to place their children in creches. Numerous children's homes have to be adequately staffed and provided with sufficient fuel and food products. Then there is the care of the families of Red Army men and commanders. The bulk of this work rests on the shoulders of chairmen of rural Soviets, among whom there are more than 500,000 women. And we must give credit to these women, for they have coped with the increase in cultivated area, assured the timely harvesting of the crops and punctual deliveries to the State.

Wherein lies the strength of Soviet women? It lies in their devotion to the Soviet Government, the very Soviet Government which from the very first day of its existence, under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin, has been showing special care to women. This Soviet Government has given women equal rights with men, given them the right to education, rest and leisure, opened up unlimited possibilities for their mental development, thrown open to them the doors of factories, universities and scientific institutes. During the twenty-five years of Soviet Power, Soviet women, together with the finest people of the country, have striven to make their country prosperous and cultured.

A Soviet mother says to her son in the Red Army: "Go and defend everything that has been won by us. Filled with the wrath of my country, I bless you, my son."

Panfilova, the mother of two Red Army men, one of whom died fighting against the Hitler bandits, wrote to her son at the front:

"I am an old woman, but I would rather die than go down on my knees before the monsters."

An old mother who lost her only son in the war wrote to his comrades-in-arms:

"I am the mother of Commander Ismayev who was killed in action. My only son died defending his country. I am proud of my son. I have lost my only son, but I am not alone. I have many sons, and all of them are defending the country. You are my sons. I send you my motherly greetings. . . My dears, please write me a few words. I will consider it a letter from my sons.

Your mother."

With such examples before our eyes we can well understand the feelings of the famous American actress Catherine Hepburn who said: "Soviet women today are putting their heart and soul into the struggle because they love their country which has given them freedom. They are an example to American women."

And we will say that a people with such women, such mothers can never be conquered. For they possess the power, the vitality which vanquishes death, and cannot but triumph over the fascist hordes. Together with their allies they will lead the world to liberation from the yoke of mankind's vilest and bitterest enemy.

HELEN STASSOVA

From the series "The Defence of Leningrad." Woodcut by V. Serov

BELLES-LETTRES

WANDA WASILEWSKA

THE RAINBOW

Wanda Wasilewska, the gifted Polish writer whose works we have introduced to our readers through the pages of this magazine, has been living in the Soviet Union since 1939.

Before the Hitlerites' attack on the Soviet Union, the author, who was in love with the "gold-bearing Ukrainian land," dreamed of describing the prosperous and peaceful life of the collective farms. But the fields of the Ukraine were fated to become fields of battle. Wasilewska's talent permitted her to paint with a broad, free brush the tragic and impressive life of the people in war-time. Her heroes and heroines are those same peasant women and girls, those curly-headed lads and children, but what changes have taken place in both the people and the scene! The hospitable Ukrainian woods have become the refuge of partisans, the dread enemy of the invader. Quiet peasant huts are now headquarters from which the struggle against this foreign invasion is directed.

Not to the big battle-fields did Wanda Wasilewska go in search of heroes for her new book *The Rainbow*. She gives us a picture of an average Ukrainian village under the German yoke. Here are ordinary everyday Soviet people, brave and strong in the consciousness of their own rightness. In contrast to them we have the Germans, the usual samples of the brutish hitlerite creature; people versus Hitlerites, fighting men versus hangmen; collective farmers' children whom the war has torn from their books and games and taught to look fearlessly into the eyes of death, into eyes still more dreadful, the cold, pale eyes of the German officer. Captain Kurt Werner sends a bullet into a newborn infant in order to drag a confession from its mother, who is a partisan. But Werner, commandant though he is of the village seized by the Germans, is powerless, and he himself comes to acknowledge this. He knows that in Russia partisans lurk not only in the depths of the woods. He is conscious of eyes watching him with smouldering hatred from behind every house, every frosted window-pane.

The secret of their adversaries' strength and steadfastness is beyond the Hitlerites' understanding. What can Werner understand of the silence of the woman-partisan, whose spirit is unbroken despite the most monstrous moral and physical torture? Still more incomprehensible to him are the things she says when she is questioned. She is a mother, yes. And this is her only child. But she has many sons: they used to call her mother, the partisans in the wood, and she cannot betray those people of the woods, no, not even if she could bring herself to believe the Hitlerite who promises to spare the life of her first-born. This woman is, as it were, the embodiment of motherland, to whom all her sons, both near and far, all who do battle for her freedom, are equally dear.

Infuriated by the heroic resistance of the Soviet villagers, the Germans take several old people and women hostages. These are to be killed unless the village gives up its grain to the German army. Both the hostages and their fellow-villagers remain unmoved.

The strength of the peasant nature has often been portrayed in literature, but what Wanda Wasilewska has to say of it in no way resembles the old epic narratives of the peasant's fortitude, his strong attachment to the earth and its fruits.

"'No one will give them the grain no matter what happens,' said Eudokim. . . The grain had been carefully hidden away. It was buried in pits out in the fields, under earth frozen hard as iron. Deep down in the earth lay the golden wheat, the barley, all that the peasants had not had time to give the Red Army, all that remained of the golden, inexhaustible, increadibly lavish harvest. . . The golden wheat that lay buried was no mere grain that yielded bread for the village. One might deny one's self bread for the sake of life. But what lay in the earth was the secret, golden heart of the country, hidden where the greedy eye of the German could not discover it. . . Giving up grain meant giving bread to feed the German army. . . meant striking at the hearts of those who in frost and blizzard were fighting with the highest self-abnegation against the enemy. . . Giving up grain meant renouncing one's country. . . Betraying all those who fought for the freedom of men and who had given their heart's blood for this freedom."

It was for this that people faced torture and death.

Nature, friendly to man and in tune with his joys and sorrows, has often been represented in literature. But the emotion of Olyona Kostyuk as she watches her child's body borne away on the wave to the sea that wash her native

Cover of Wanda Wasilewska's "The Rainbow"

shores, has nothing in common with an elemental, romantic identification with nature. This emotion is, again, the sense of an indivisible unity with the country that bore her. "Olyona knew, as well as if her eyes could see through snow and ice, that the familiar old river was bearing the little form carefully, caressingly away, caring for it like a mother, wrapping it close in a gentle, tender wave, washing away the blood, the marks where the powder scorched it, the touch of the Germans' paws. It was her own river, the pure, clear water of her own land."

The partisans roaming the woods feel the same. "There had been a blizzard yesterday and the day before as well, but what was a blizzard to them? They would be shown paths and byways; it was their own country, after all."

Only a liberated land and a liberated people can enter into a friendship such as this, and then the "golden heart of the country" does in very truth beat in unison with the heart of man. Herein lies the secret of the strength of Wanda Wasilewska's heroes. Werner cannot understand this, any more than the German army that occupied the Ukraine in 1918 could understand it. This is not the first time that the Ukrainian land is fighting the invader. A peasant who has been imprisoned with the other hostages in the German headquarters, recalls the old Ukraine he knew; younger men recall the Civil War. And the pages turned thus accidentally in the chronicles of this people are filled with songs of freedom, with the proud spirit of the Ukrainian people. True, neither Russian, Ukrainian nor Byelorussian has ever had a foe more vindictive than the Hitlerites. But neither has there ever been an epoch in history when the strength of the people was so great, when their faith in themselves mounted so high. Trodden down by the blood-stained boot of the Hitlerite, the thoughts of the Ukrainian village return to the peaceful life and happiness it once knew; and it feels confident that this happiness will be won back some day.

"We'll roll up our sleeves and start building houses all over again. We'll sow the earth with wheat till the fields that stretch further than the eye can reach will sing again. . . We'll cover all this blood-soaked soil with the gold of wheat, with the sunshine of sunflowers, with the glad laughing whiteness of orchards in blossom. . . So that never a trace of the German foot will remain on the banks of the rivers flowing into the distant Black Sea."

As you listen to the countryman's thoughts that remind you of old Ukrainian songs, mournful, yet with an undercurrent of hopefulness, you begin to understand whence comes the image of the rainbow, which sheds its light over Wasilewska's tragic tale. Like the rainbow that suddenly appears in the sky over the village one frosty day in the winter of 1941, glowing through the ice-clear air, so does the belief in the approach of the great day of liberation glow in the hearts of the people.

Calmest of all is the author's voice when she speaks of the enemy; calm as the Ukrainian peasants who dare, though the German headquarters is only a couple of paces away, to assemble in judgement on those who have betrayed their country. Judges must look calmly into the accused's face to discern falsehood, vice, crime. The sniper must look calmly into the enemy's face, that his aim may be truer. This does not hinder men from hating; it helps to embody hatred in action. Such is the calm of hatred in Wasilewska's book, in her drawing of the enemy. She uses her colours with no sparing hand when she paints the German captain Werner, this thick-headed, but efficient beast, who contrives to conceal his dread of retribution. But the greater the Hitlerites' dread, the more terrible it becomes. Hideous crimes are described here. But they do not strike us as incredible; on the contrary, they pale by comparison with the new punishments, the new tortures, of which we read in Soviet daily papers. After Wasilewska's book appeared, newspapers informed us that in the Ukraine Germans were forcing pregnant women to work on building fortifications until the very day

of their confinement; and that their infants were thrown into the Dnieper as soon as they were born. Even that experienced child-murderer Captain Werner might have thought enviously of this new form of his own speciality. German "technique" never stands still.

The vision of the rainbow did not prove a false hope to the tormented Ukrainian villagers; after this symbolic token of liberation had been seen in the skies, a real herald appeared in the shape of a Soviet aeroplane. A few hours later the long and stubborn battle began, and after this came a joyous meeting.

The reader learns what heroic poems are concealed behind the dry, curt statements of the Soviet Information Bureau's communiqués regarding the liberation of this or that "populated place." For the liberation of any populated place represents the triumph of superhuman persistence, the uproar of tanks, the hurricane and flood of fire, the fearlessness of fighters, women, children; their unforgettable joy in meetings with Red Army men, with those of whom people dreamed during the long, dreary nights under the German yoke. It means the liberation of man, of labour, the rebirth of song and love.

"For a whole month lips had been sealed, for a whole month no song had burst from them. Houses were silent, roads were silent, gardens were silent. Now everyone was free to sing again. And girls sang, all over the village, all over the distant, snow-clad plains. . . The traces of the night battle were hastily cleared away. . . Women scoured the German blood from their floors, spitting in disgust as they did so. 'There mustn't be a sign of them left by this evening,' said one, and the rest took up the suggestion eagerly. Their dearest wish was merely this: that before the sun went down that evening there shouldn't be a trace of the Germans' thirty-day occupation of the village."

This rejoicing was an interval between battles. It signified that a new contingent of Soviet people, tempered by the sufferings they had endured under the German yoke, had joined the ranks of the fighters.

Wanda Wasilewska's new tale is a fine contribution not only to Soviet literature but to international anti-hitlerite literature in general. The nations who have entered the war against Hitlerism appear in the great forum of history where the true countenance of the embattled nation, their valour, their history, is plain to the whole world. To record these terrible and significant years is the duty of anti-hitlerite authors. In *The Rainbow* Wanda Wasilewska has performed this duty with a power and ability all her own.

BORIS PESSIS

FRAGMENTS FROM THE NOVEL

There was a road running west to east and another running north to south, and at their intersection stood the hill over which the village sprawled. Low houses huddled by the wayside here and formed a sort of crossroads. The middle of the little square was graced by a bell-tower. Below, at the foot of the hill, wound the river, still under ice and snow, with here and there a dark patch yawning in the chill blue surface where a hole had been broken to get at the black, living flow.

From a nearby house came a woman, balancing a pail-yoke on her shoulders. The two buckets swung rhythmically to her slow steps. She went down the slope cautiously, for the track was slippery. The sun's rays, reflected from the snowdrifts, dazzled her eyes, and made her blink. When she reached the water's edge, she set down the two buckets by the hole, and looked about her. There was no one in sight; no sign of life appeared in the houses sunk deep in their soft featherbed of snow. The woman lingered a minute or so, then, leaving the buckets where they were, went slowly along the river bank, glancing uneasily at the village up above.

The river's course turned into a deeper gully, overgrown with scrub. Branches and twigs hardly showed beneath the deep pall of snow. A narrow, scarcely noticeable path led through the thickets. The woman followed it, making her way with some difficulty, for the branches were stiff and frozen and the upper ones lashed her face. She pushed them aside with her hands; they were sharp and brittle, covered with a coating of ice under the light, feathery snow.

The track ended abruptly, and the woman paused, staring ahead with eyes fixed and glassy.

The ground here was undulating, broken by fissures, low hillocks, narrow gullies. Here and there grew

a solitary bush. But it was not at the snow-covered hillocks, not at the bushes with their few pendant scarlet drops of late rose-hips that the woman was staring.

Here and there some vague dark shapes bulged under the snow. A bundle of rags stuck out from a cleft in the frozen ground. Broken metal, rusty twisted iron scarred the delicate blue of the snow.

A couple of steps or so, and she dropped slowly on her knees. He was lying there stiff and tense as a taut violin string, yet even so he looked smaller, much smaller than when he was alive. The face seemed carved of black wood. Her eyes flitted over that face, a face that was familiar down to the last little trait and yet somehow strange to her. The lips were frozen stiff, the nose looked long and pinched, the lids drooped over the dead eyes. There was a stony serenity about this face. Just at the temple a round hole gaped, its edge touched with a thread of clotted blood, unnaturally bright, a bloody emblem on a black ground.

He had not died immediately of his wound; that was clear. He had still been alive when they stripped the uniform from him; that was clear, too. Yes, he had been alive or at least still warm. It was not the hand of death, but the hand of the marauder that had straightened his legs, stretched the arms straight down by his sides. The day of the battle, the day that he had died, there had been a terrible frost that seized the slain in its clutches and turned their bodies to stone. No, they couldn't have stripped the clothes from a dead man. But they had taken everything, except his tunic. They had taken his boots, his trousers, even the strips of cloth he wrapped around his feet inside his boots. The blue drawers seemed part of his body: like something chalked on wood with dolly-blue. The skin was indistinguishable from the material. The soles of his bare feet were, unlike the skin of his blackened face, white with an unnatural, inhuman whiteness, the dead whiteness of plaster. One foot had cracked with the frost, the dead flesh had detached itself from the bone in the form of a separate sole, and through the split the bone could be seen.

Very cautiously the woman stretched out a hand and touched the dead shoulder, feeling the rough cloth of the tunic and through it the rigidity of stone.

"Sonny!"

She did not weep. The tearless eyes only gazed, saw, drank in the sight: her son's face, black as iron; the round hole in the tempel, the split foot and that single token of his death-agony, the fingers curled like claws, stiffened by a sudden convulsive effort, reaching out to clutch the snow.

Softly the woman brushed away the wind-blown snow from the dark hair that fell back from his brow. One lock still lay on his forehead. She did not like to touch it because it was stuck to the edge of the bullet-hole with clotted blood.

Over and over again she had wanted to put back that lock of hair. But she had been afraid to smooth it for fear of hurting the dead man, irritating his wound.

"Sonny!"

The parched lips whispered that one word mechanically, as though he could hear, as though he could raise those heavy blackened eyelids and look at her again with those dear grey eyes.

She remained motionless, her eyes fixed on the black face. She did not feel the keenness of the frost, or the numbness in her knees. She was looking at him.

From the solitary tree over the gully-edge rose a raven. With a ponderous flapping of wings the bird circled once and settled on the bundle of rags under the bush. Then with bent head it peered closely at its prey. Rusty bloodstains had soaked through the bullet-riddled cloth. For a moment the bird remained motionless, as though considering something. Then it struck with its beak, and the tap echoed hollowly. The

frost had done its work. All that had been left here a month ago was turned to stone.

The woman started out of her deathlike immobility.

"Shoo!"

The raven rose heavily, only to alight a few paces away on the human figure half-concealed in snowdrifts.

"Shoo!"

She picked up a frozen lump of snow and aimed it at the bird. It hopped away, then flew lazily to its former perch on the tree. The woman got up from her knees, sighed heavily as she took one last look at her son, then turned back to the path.

Stopping over the waterhole, she filled her buckets and very slowly, bending under their weight, climbed the hill. By this time the sun was higher, though the frost was as keen as ever. The snow looked blue, and she could not tell whether that was really its colour or whether it was her eyes that could still see the blue of the material frozen to the flesh on the dreadful rigid plaster-white legs of her son.

Somewhere in the distance voices rang out. In the clear, frosty air, in the dead silence of that icy night, every sound carried with startling distinctness. Voices, angry shouts could be distinguished now. Fedossya slipped down from where she was sleeping on the stove-shelf, went over to the window and scraped at the frosted pane. The thick layer of hoar-frost crumbled like snow. Then she breathed on it and made a little, clear peep-hole through which she could watch what was going on in the street. The glass misted ever again at once, she had to keep breathing on it and wiping it with the end of her kerchief. She could catch a glimpse of the steer, right up to the square, to the house which had been the village Soviet, and stood out against the dark mass of a barn further on.

It was as bright as day. The moonlight transformed the world into a slab of blue ice. Fedossya could see as plainly as in the daytime a naked woman running down the road from the square. No, she was not running; her body was bent forward, and she was taking short steps with evident effort, rolling, as it were, from one foot to the other. Her distended belly looked enormous in the moonlight.

Behind her came a soldier. His bayonet gleamed in the moonlight. Whenever the woman faltered a moment, the sting of his bayonet shot forward and pricked her in the back. The soldier gave a shout, his two comrades bawled some order at the woman, and with a great effort, bent in two, she broke into a feeble run. Fifty yards, then the soldier forced his victim to turn; fifty yards back again. Again and again. The hangmen laughed. The wild raucous laughter reached the ears of the watcher at the window.

Fedossya's fingers gripped the window-frame hard as she stared and stared. So that was the kind of thing that was going on while the officer was snoring here with his slut. The soldiers were no doubt carrying out his orders: he could sleep in peace.

There she was, Olyona Kostyuk. In days gone by they had toiled together in the same field for the landowner. They had both trembled with dread of the steward's threatening lash and with still greater dread of the steward's overtures. And they had wept together over the dreary, hopeless lot of a farm-hand.

Later, they had worked together on the collective farm and rejoiced in the growing wheat and the increasing milk-yield of the farm cows and the cheerful brightness of the new life that smiled at them.

And now Olyona had come to this: fifty yards forward, fifty yards back, naked, barefoot in the frozen snow, within a day or two of her confinement. Soldiers' ribald laughter, and the prick of the bayonet goading her on.

Fedossya shed no tears, uttered no cry. For black blood was cletted at her heart. It could not be other-

wise, while they were here. It seemed as though they were anxious to show that their brutality knew no bounds. She watched Olyona without sympathy. No, there was no place for pity here. It seemed to Fedossya that she herself was tramping through the snow, naked, at the mercy of brutal soldiers and their mockery. It was her feet that the frozen snow wounded, her back that the steel goad pricked. It was not Olyona Kostyuk, but the whole village that fell face downwards in the snow, and got heavily to its feet under the blows of the rifle-butts. It was not from Olyona Kostyuk's feet that the blood oozed, crimsoning the brittle snow, but from the whole village, whose life-blood was draining away under the German fist, under the German heel, under the German marauders' yoke.

Fedossya stared grimly through the tiny peep-hole in the window pane. Yes, that was as it should be: with bayonet and iron fists the German soldier was reaching the peasant to know him for what he was. He had no idea that he was teaching people still another thing: what the Soviet power was. And that in any village where German rule left its traces, even for a day, in tears and blood, there would never, from generation to generation, be any people who were dissatisfied, lazy, or indifferent to Soviet rule. She remembered the women's arguments, the old and the new; life itself had supplied the answers, life itself had taught them a terrible, the most terrible lesson of all.

Olyona fell again, scrambled to her feet once more. Where did she find the strength to do it? Fedossya knew. She knew. She felt that Olyona's heart, too, was clotted with the black blood of that fierce hatred that gave her strength.

Behind the frozen window-panes of every house, village-folk were standing, watching through peep-holes made by their breath. With Olyona they ran through the snow, with Olyona they stumbled and fell, and rose to their feet, stung by the cold steel and the savage ribald laughter that tore at their vitals.

Fedossya poured the dirty water into the buckets and went to throw it out. The wind struck her full in the face, the sentry looked round, but seeing the buckets in her hands, said nothing. She had to go round the house to the dunghill behind the cowshed. As the water sloshed out, she heard a penetrating whisper:

"Mother!"

She started, staggered and dropped the bucket. The snow gave a faint lightness to the night, and now she saw a figure silhouetted against the drifts in the yard. The cap was familiar to her. She caught her breath.

"Who's there?" she whispered, though she knew only too well. With a moan she dropped on her knees, stretched out her arms, felt the rough army coat and the leather belt. She could make out clearly now the five-pointed star embedded in the grey fur of the cap. Sobs rose to her throat and choked her. The stranger, a Red Army man, started back in fright.

"What's up, woman, what ails you?"

"It's you, it's you, it's really you?" came a choking frantic whisper. It seemed to her it was impossible, she must be dreaming. Her heart beat fast with happiness.

"It's you, it's you. . ."

He stooped and shook her by the shoulder. In the faint light reflected from the snow he could see a radiant, smiling face bathed in tears.

"What ails you?"

"Nothing, nothing at all!" Fedossya strove with all her might to keep back the welling tears, and control her agitation. The thought of the sentry flashed through her mind, and she seized the man by the sleeve.

"I've got Germans in the house! There are Germans in the village."

"I know. I'd like to talk to you, mother. Do you belong to these parts?"

"Yes, of course I do, of course. . ."

"I've got to find out from you how things are. . ."

"Listen, sonny: there's a sentry outside my house, and if I'm missing for long, he'll come after me. You wait here, while I run back to the house. There's a way of getting out without being noticed, and I'll be back in no time. You go and hide in the barn behind the cowshed, there's some straw in there, it's not so draughty as this spot."

At that he bent and peered into her face with suddenly awakened suspicion. She understood what it was.

"What's up, sonny? I'm a local woman all right, from our collective farm... I've a son, a Red Army man, lying there in the gully... It's a month now he's been lying there, and they won't give me a chance to bury him, the dogs... And stripped him of everything, too."

It was not so much what she said as the intonation that carried such conviction: the young man felt ashamed.

"You know how it is, mother, you meet all sorts..."

"Well, you go to the barn, I'll be back in a minute..."

With trembling hands Fedossya picked up the buckets and went towards the house. As she passed the sentry she could hardly choke down a nervous laugh. "Stamp, tramp, strut, march up and down as you like," she thought, "but our men are in the village already! Over there behind the cowshed there's a Red Army man standing, while you keep watch over the officer's slut. Do your sentry-go, keep your watch, there'll soon be an end of you..."

Very carefully she closed the door into the passage, and dragged out the bench from the kitchen wall, as though she was getting ready to sleep on it. The snores of the German came from the inner room. She slipped stealthily into the passage. Up in the attic there was a spot where a plank could be lifted out. Squeezing through the gap, she began to slide cautiously down the corner of the house wall. Her long skirt hindered her, and she thought suddenly that it was a funny state of things when an old woman had to climb down her own wall like a tomcat. It made her laugh inwardly. The night wind rustled ln the thatched roof, and the sentry on the other side of the house could hear nothing. When she reached the ground, she stood a moment, listening; her own heart was thumping loudly. But the sentry had evidently no suspicion of what was going on. This back wall was a blank one, and he was tramping up and down under the windows in the front. And — why had she never thought of it before? — you could get into the house this way. It was a happy thought.

Stepping softly as a cat, she reached the little barn, then turned cold all over. There was nobody here. The barn was empty. Could it have been a dream, born of longing and anguish? No, surely it couldn't have been just a dream! . .

"Where are you?" she asked in a cautious whisper.

There was a stir from the heap of straw. She brightened up at once. Of course, he was here. And not alone, either. There were three of them, three—she said to herself delightedly as she caught sight of the other two silhouettes. They all squatted down by the barndoor. Fedossya sat down beside them.

"We've been waiting and waiting for you. We were on the lookout for you day and night," she whispered, stroking the sleeve of the army coat. "Oh, if you only knew how I've been waiting for you!"

"That'll do, mother, we've got to talk. . ."

"Yes, come on, let's talk things over. . . but aren't you hungry?" she suddenly broke off to say.

The men laughed.

"No, we aren't hungry. . . We didn't come here for something to eat."

"Well, then; tell me what's to be done?"

"You're from this village, are you?"

"Of course, I am! Where else would I be from?" said Fedossya in surprise. "I belong here, I was born and bred in this village."

"Well, we've got to find out a lot of things. . . whereabouts these Germans are, and what they've got, and so on. . ."

Clasping her hands suddenly, she implored:

"Are our folks marching on the village?"

"Sure as fate they are. Only we've got to find out things first."

"Wait. . ." she pressed her hands hard on her knees. "Let me see. . . This is a biggish village, you know, we've three hundred houses. It stands at the crossing of two roads. There's a sort of a square where the church used to stand, now there are just the ruins."

"Hold on, mother."

They got out a map and bent over it, shielding it with their overcoats while they turned the flashlight on it.

"Yes, here it is, at the crossing of two roads, in the middle of the square."

"And by the church they've set up their guns."

"About how many?"

Fedossya thought for a moment.

"Just a minute. . . One, two. . . three. . . four. . . Yes, there are four altogether. On the right of the church a little way off there's a big house. It used to be the village Soviet, now it's their staff headquarters. . . Then there's the jail, they've got five hostages in it just now."

"Where are the rest of the Germans?"

"They're nearer the square, in every house, you might say. Here on the outskirts where my house is, there aren't so many, but still there are some. They've more guns standing under the limes as you go out of the village, but they're smaller. . ."

"Perhaps they're anti-aircraft guns?"

"Maybe, who can tell. . . They stand pointing upwards, they have long thin muzzles. . ."

"Is that so? And did you see any machine-guns?"

"Oh yes, they've got those as well. But they're all as you come in from the other end of the village; you can go straight from here and then turn to your left. They've knocked holes in the house walls that side, and there's a machine-gun in every hole."

A Red Army man bent over the map and made crosses and circles on it.

"They've thrown the people out of those houses and taken them for themselves. Wait now, how many would that be? One, two,—yes, five. They're in five of the houses, and then in another, that's as you go from here to the square. . ."

"Are there many Germans?"

"It's really hard to tell. . . They come and go. Only this captain has been here all the time. . . People say there must be about two hundred of them."

"Are there many sentries?"

"Yes, plenty of them hanging about. There's one just in front of my hut. At night they're scared, and don't go far afield; and they usually walk about in pairs. They're much boldee in daylight, but at night they arr scared, although there's this order of theirs that nobody must go out after dark. And if somebody goes out, the sentries needn't ask who it is: they simply fire."

"Are there any bridges along the road?"

"Bridges? No. . . it's just an ordinary road."

"Any woods?"

"No, there aren't any woods round here. The only trees are in the gardens, and even these have nearly all been cut down for fuel by those swine. There are a few limes in the square at the crossroads. But no woods anywhere, we're in a bare plain. There are some bushes in the gully, and that's all. We're in a bad way for fuel, too, we burn cow-dung."

She glanced around.

"What's up?"

"I'll just have a look out, and see if the sentry hasn't taken it into his

head to come nosing around to watch what's going on in the yard."

She went quietly out and stood listening. The wind moaned drearily in the gully and rustled the straw of the roof. Whenever it dropped for a moment, the heavy measured tread of the sentry, the crunch of the hard snow under his boots could be heard. Fedossya returned to the barn.

"It's all right, he's just trotting up and down as usual. . ."

The men folded up their map.

"Well, we've got to be moving, mother. Good-bye, and thanks a lot."

"What's there to thank me for? My Vassya was in the Red Army, too. . . Just here outside the village they killed him. . ."

The flashlight went out, leaving them in darkness.

"When can we expect you?"

"We'll see. It depends on what the commander decides and whether there's a decent chance that it may come off. . ."

"Why shouldn't it come off? Only please hurry! It's high time. . . a whole month we've been waiting, wearing our eyes out, watching for you."

"It's not so simple, mother."

"I know it isn't, but it isn't so easy for us either. . . Have a try, boys, make up your minds, and do it properly this time."

Suddenly a thought struck her.

"Wait! There's another thing. . ."

"What's that?"

"Their officer, commander or something, is in my house. . . And there's nobody around, only the sentry in front. The officer's sleeping as sound as the dead with that slut of his. You could kill the sentry, or even that wouldn't be necessary, I can let you into the house by the roof, without making a sound. You'll catch him as easily as a partridge."

The eyes of the youngest man lit up.

"Well, what about it, boys?"

"Half-a-minute. Let's think."

"What's there to think about? Just drag the swine out by the neck; there's nothing to it."

"That's always the way with a silly thing: there's nothing to it. Supposing you finish him off, what next? In the morning there'll be a hue-and-cry raised, they'll send word to headquarters, and there'll be such a crowd sent down here, you'll never be able to manage them."

"There's something in that, of course."

"It wouldn't be a bad idea to do a bit of scouting here. They're settled in nice and quiet, snug as a bug in a rug. You see yourself, only one sentry's guarding the captain. Now if you give them a fright, you'll spoil everything."

"I just wanted to drag that Hun out to. . ."

"Wait, you can do that another time. And now, let's go home."

"Where is this home of yours?" Fedossya asked curiously.

"Oh, we only call it home, mother. Our homes are a long way off, and while the war's on, our unit is our home. But you'd better tell us how to get back. When we were coming here, we were nearly drowned in snowdrifts. . ."

"I'll show you: here you go straight into the gully and follow the stream, follow the stream all the time. Only there's a lot of our lads lying there unburied, go carefully. The river will lead you out to level ground and the villages of Okhaby and Zelentsy; only there are Germans in them too."

"We know that. The main thing is, are we likely to bump into anybody around here?"

"You don't need to worry about that. The only sentry's outside my house, there's nobody else. Go quietly now, and every time the wind dies down, stop, because the snow's hard and crunches, and the Hun may hear you."

Three crouching shadows followed her, stopping whenever she did.

"Now, here's the gully; go straight down into it, but be very careful, it's slippery."

"Good-bye, mother. Thanks for everything, you're the right sort."

"Good luck to you, dear lads! Only hurry back again to us, for God's sake!"

"Oh, we'll do our best, you may be sure. Go on home now, it's terribly cold."

"It doesn't matter. I'm used to it."

Fedossya stood on the edge of the gully and looked down at them. They were going quickly along the path; the white cloaks that enveloped them made them difficult to distinguish against the snow. When at last they had melted into the gloom, vanished in the murky night, Fedossya turned her footsteps slowly homewards. It had seemed to her like an escape from prison; she breathed freely, and now of her own free will she was going back to her prison. The dark outline of her home filled her with hatred, for it was the house in which a German was sleeping with his slut, the house she must enter to hear his hateful snoring.

Yes, he was still snoring, emitting a curious whistle through his nose; the woman beside him muttered in her sleep. Fedossya gave a little chuckle, gloating in anticipation. "There'll soon be an end of you! Wait till the Red Army men come straight into the room and drag you of bed."

Would she hear them creeping up to the house, or would she only wake when they entered the house? No. She knew that now she would never fall asleep, that there was no slumber for her until they came, until her village was free.

The snow crunched under the sentry's footsteps, and Werner whistled through his nose. It was all as it had been yesterday and the day before yesterday. Yet now everything was different. For the first time in a month, in fact since the moment Vassya had been killed, she felt her heart rejoice. It was filled with a joy that burned with light and warmth, like a high, strong flame. Fedossya had to press her fingers hard against her mouth to keep from shouting this tremendous joy to the whole world. She alone knew it, no one else in the whole village guessed it. She alone knew that now they need not wait as they had been waiting, with unshaked faith but with no idea of how long it would last. Now she could calculate how soon it would happen: today, tomorrow, the day after tomorrow? How far would the three Red Army men have to go before they reached their unit? How long would it take their unit to get to the village? A day, two days, three? It could not last more than three days now, she knew; she felt it couldn't. Surely nothing so cruel, so stupid could happen as that the five hostages at the commandant's should be killed.

Werner had fixed three days as the limit. Now it suddenly seemed to her that these three days had nothing to do with the hostages. These must be the three days during which the black chasm would yawn before the Germans. And their glance would meet the steady, implacable gaze of the Red Army men, and would read in their eyes inevitable death.

Three hundred houses there were in this village, and in every house, except those from which the Germans had driven the tenants into the snow, lived tormented people who longed, waited, wept, comforting themselves with steadfast hope, with magic words that gave them strength: our people will come. She alone, out of the whole village, knew for certain that not only would they come, she had never doubted it, but that they were already on their way. That an inexorable sentence had been passed on the German gang. Olyona had not lived to see it, but those five in the commandant's would. Surely they would live to see it...

Fedossya Kravchuk woke with a start as though someone had shaken her. She sat on the edge of the bed, her heart beating as though it would burst through her breast. She gasped for air and strained her ears for the slightest sound.

What had awakened her? And when had she fallen asleep? She had thought

she could never drop off to sleep at all, then all of a sudden she had fallen into a sound slumber. She had been rudely torn from this deep sleep by something she could not understand. What was it?

It certainly wasn't a knock, because dead silence reigned. The stillness of the night was unbroken even by the German's snoring: evidently Werner had stayed late at headquarters, as so often happened, and had not come back yet. Still, she hadn't awakened of her own accord; something had disturbed her, broken her sleep all of a sudden. That must be why her terrified heart was thumping so hard.

She did not lie down again but sat listening intently. There was dead silence outside the windows, too. The wind had dropped since evening. It was a clear, fine night again. A moon in a rainbow halo was sailing through the skies, and the shadow of the window frame lay black and very distinct on the floor. The pot of geraniums on the window sill was a black silhouette against the hoar-frosted pan.

Suddenly there was a slight stir outside the window; a sound like a stifled moan, a hoarse cry caught in the throat before it could escape. Barefoot, Fedossya darted across the floor and reached the passage in an instant. Her trembling fingers sought the bolt, but it was not shot. So Werner hadn't come back yet, he never forgot to make the door fast behind him.

She opened the gate. Black shadows flitted across the moonlight.

"Who's there?"

It was not she who asked the question. She had known who was there, known from the very first instant when she had started from her sleep and held her furiously beating heart.

"It's the woman of the house," she replied in a whisper. "Sh-sh, boys, he isn't here. . ."

They were in the passage already, and she recognized the little scout.

"He hasn't come back yet, so he must be in theoffice."

"Then there's no point in our coming in. Let's go to the commandant's, boys!"

"Wait," Fedossya stopped them in a fever of anxiety. "She's here anyway."

"Who? Who's she?" the commander asked hastily.

"The German's woman."

"Oh, we can't be bothered with women just now. Wait till morning, then we'll see what's to be done with the German woman."

"She isn't a German. She's one of us," said Fedossya harshly.

"Oho! That's different! Where is she?"

"She's asleep in there."

The lieutenant made a grimace of annoyance.

"Well, let's have a look at her. Can you give us a light of any kind?"

"The sentry'll see it."

"The sentry's done for already, mother."

"Oh, that's all right then, I'll light the lamp."

With shaking hands she groped for the matches. They had come, they had come, she hadn't waited in vain!

The little scout handed her a box of matches. She lit the lamp and turned up the wick.

"There are five of our folks hostages and locked up at headquarters. . ."

"Don't worry, mother, we've got people there already. They won't let anyone slip through their fingers. We wanted to put the commandant quietly out the way without any fuss."

"It can't be helped. He hasn't been here today. They must have some specially urgent work to do."

Very cautiously, fearful of its creaking, she opened the door. The men followed her, trying to make no noise with their heavy boots. She held the lamp high, so that the light would fall on the bed.

Pussya awoke, and thinking that it was Kurt, muttered something sleepily. But no one replied, and she turned, throwing back the tousled hair from her face.

With a sudden movement the lieutenant snatched the lamp from the woman's hand and strode forward.

"Who's this?" he demanded in a terrible voice.

"The commandant's wench, she's from these parts," Fedossya explained, wondering at his tone.

Pussya was staring transfixed, her eyes round and horror-stricken, at the man with the lamp. The pale-blue nightgown slipped off her shoulders, exposing the small breasts. She drew up her feet under her and with a slight, almost imperceptible subconscious movement kept edging away towards the far corner of the bed, as though she wanted to hide, to get out of sight and vanish into a crack in the wall. The lieutenant suddenly began to tremble. In the lamp-light, the woman's polished fingernails gleamed, and for an instant the triangular teeth flashed between lips as white as paper.

"Seryozha. . ."

The whisper was no louder than the rustle of wind in the leaves, but Sergei heard, or rather read, his name by the movement of her lips. He was trembling. Pussya raised her hand as though to defend herself. a small frail hand with pointed nails that seemed to have been dipped in blood. There was indescribable horror in her round eyes. The bed looked enormous, she crouching in one corner of it looked like a little doll with uncovered breast showing from under the blue silk, and tiny feet peeping from under the hem of her nightgown.

From somewhere outside came a shot.

"It's at headquarters," said Fedossya.

But at that very moment shots rang out from another side, then a third side. There was firing everywhere.

Sergei raised his revolver, stared back without the quiver of an eyelash into the black eyes he knew so well. Then came the click of the revolver. A convulsive shudder ran through the woman on the bed. Her lips parted, showing a gleam of white sharp triangular teeth. The round eyes dilated, then grew glassy and fixed.

"Come on to headquarters!" Sergei commanded, and, stumbling over the threshold and the buckets, they all rushed out into the silvery street, sparkling in the moonlight.

Fighting was going on in the village. The first shot they had heard in the house had been fired by Zavyas, who was in the detachment detailed to capture the enemy battery.

While Sergei and his man had been stealing up to Fedossya's house to take the commandant while he was asleep, the others had crept through the snow up the slope of the hill towards the church. Indistinguishable in their white coats, they had crept up, keeping in the shadow of the houses and stealing through ditches. Ahead, straining his eyes, crept Sergeant Serdyuk. Thus they had all reached the battery in safety. The black muzzles stood out clearly against the snow and the sky, silent, monstrous jaws high above the heads of the creeping men. Three German soldiers were sitting by the guns. A sentry was tramping up and down with measured tread the whole length of the battery. The snow crunched under his boots.

Holding his breath, Serdyuk waited. Just at the ditch the sentry turned. The sergeant looked at the German's narrow back and the bayonet sticking up over his head. He climbed noiselessly out of the ditch and sprang upon the sentry. They both rolled over in the snow. Serdyuk got a grip on his enemy's throat before he could utter a groan. But the gun crew had already noticed their comrade's disappearance.

"Hey, there, Hans!" one of them called anxiously. And as luck would have it, one of the Red Army men stepped incautiously on a dry twig. It emitted a loud report. Without waiting for orders, the battery raised their rifles. Then it was that Zavyas

could contain himself no longer but fired at the nearest one. The German fell flat. What followed happened so quickly that they themselves were astounded; soon there was no one left at the guns, and the battery was in their hands. At the same time shots rang out from the side of the road, where, according to plan, the German headquarters was supposed to be.

"Run, boys!" Serdyuk cried, but at that same moment black shadows loomed before them.

The Germans, evidently guessing that the attacking force was very small, were running forward at their full height, without troubling to crouch down. There was a burst of firing, and Serdyuk fell on his knees as a stab of pain went through his right leg.

"What's happened?"

"Nothing, nothing at all! Now go for the enemy, boys! Let him have it!"

One of the men fell as he ran, but it did not check the others. They were all armed with tommy-guns; the bursts merged in the sustained uproar.

"Lie down, boys, fire from the ground!"

They fell to their guns, aiming at the dark figures silhouetted plainly, unmistakably, against the snow. Serdyuk took very careful aim, so as not to waste a cartridge. Suddenly he felt a strange and dreadful chill in his face and thought it must be from the rifle butt. Forehead and nose were freezing, his cheeks had turned numb and stiff.

Happening to glance down as he was loading his automatic, he saw a big, dark puddle spreading below.

"Kill 'em, boys! Send a whole volley into them!"

This puddle he was kneeling in, where could it have come from? His breeches were soaked at the knees, and that was strange in a hard frost like this. It looked as though somebody had poured out water here.

Now the Germans were on the other side of the square, lying in the ditch. Shooting was steady and unintermittent. Serdyuk peered out over the snowdrift that afforded cover for his face. He took in the situation. Firing like this, from behind guns into a ditch and from a ditch at guns, could go indefinitely. Shots rang out all over the village, and goodness only knew how things were going on there. He had five men, and he himself could be very useful there too.

"Well, boys, how long are we going to mess about with them? Hurrah! For country and for Stalin!"

They all jumped up together, crouching as they ran. They burst into an uproar of automatic-rifle and machine-gun fire, thrusting out their bayonets like stings. In a few bounds they had reached the ditch and descended on the startled and bewildered Germans. They came down at full tilt, struck straight from the shoulder. The roadside ditch was silenced. Bodies of Germans looked like dark patches on the snow, strangely small, huddled, pitiful.

"Where shall we go next?" Zavyas asked breathlessly.

But Serdyuk did not reply. They looked round in astonishment.

"Comrade Serdyuk, where are you?"

"What's happened?" pale-eyed Alexei asked suspiciously; he was Serdyuk's greatest friend.

"But was he running with us or not?"

"You're crazy! Of course he was with us!"

"Then where could he have got to?"

"He's here, he's lying here!" Vanya, the youngest, called breathlessly.

Alexei rushed off.

Serdyuk was lying halfway between the guns and the ditch; his arms were flung wide, one hand still gripped his rifle.

"What's happened?" Vanya asked in a muffled whisper.

Alexei looked down at the snow.

Clear in the moonlight he saw the dark pool of blood and the bloody

tracks that led from the gun to the spot where their fallen comrade lay.

"Where did they hit him?"

Alexei pointed without speaking; the foot and part of the shin lay almost at right angles to the rest of the leg. The snow around the spot was a black pool.

"They hit him in the leg, cut it straight off as if with a knife."

"Look at that—and what could he have run here on?"

"There's no time to look now. Come on to the headquarters, boys, things seem pretty lively there."

They dashed off after Alexei. The frost was keen as a knife and stifled one's very breath.

They were buried in the little square by the church. Those who had died that night, with those who had lain for a month in the snow of the gully.

Fedossya Kravchuk helped to carry out her son's body. She held the motionless, curiously light head, feeling the soft hair fall through her fingers. Without a pang, without bitterness, she looked down into the black face that appeared to be carved out of wood. So Vassya had come to decent burial, after all. The hands of his brother-fighters dug him out of the snow, brothers were laying him in the common grave.

The sledges moved slowly down the steep slope of the gully. Fedossya walked alongside, supporting her son's body so that it would not slip off into the snow. There was motherly tenderness in the movements with which she carefully arranged the bodies of the strangers lying alongside her Vassya.

"The girl's to be buried with them," Shalov instructed them. "She died in battle like a soldier."

"She isn't a girl, she's a woman already. She has a husband in the army," Malyuk's wife remarked. Yet, when Malasha's body was brought in, she thought she must have been mistaken. It was a young girl who lay there in the snow. She looked now as Malyuk's wife remembered her a year ago, before that gay and noisy wedding.

"She was a beauty," one of the Red Army men said softly.

Yes, it was the body of Malasha, she who had been the village beauty. The shadow of the long dark lashes lay on her cheek. The hair flowed in soft waves about the face. Like swallow's wings the black brows stood out against the pure, smooth brow. But the face was frozen in a smile of suffering, a smile from which one could not tear oneself away.

Carefully they took down the body of Levonyuk from the gallows. His mother, who was pregnant and already felt the first throes, refused to stay at home. She held out her arms and cautiously received the black, frozen body of the son who had been swinging in snow and blizzard for the past month.

"Gently, gently there," she warned them, as though he could still feel and be hurt by their touch.

The girls helped her. He was very light, he weighed almost nothing, and the sixteen-year-old face was a child's, carved out of wood.

They dug a grave, a wide and roomy grave, and laid the dead side by side: the black, stiff bodies of those who had been killed a month before, the mutilated remains of Sergei Rachenko and of Serdyuk, who looked as though he had fallen asleep, the young rifleman who had been killed at the German headquarters, and Malasha. Shalov spoke on behalf of all the comrades. Stern, simple, the words carried far in the clear still air, and were borne to the glassy sky with its rainbow belt.

The whole village, women, old people, children, stood around the open grave, listening, staring down at the men of the Red Army lying side by side and Malasha. No one wept. They stood there, grim, bareheaded. Fedossya Kravchuk committed the remains of her only son to his native soil. Old Sharikha committed the body of her daughter to her native soil. The rest were strangers, but i

seemed to the watchers at the graveside that these were their own sons, their husbands, their brothers lying there in the grave.

That day there was none nearer to them than the fallen, who lay staring up with dead faces into the sky. These were the men of the Red Army. Their army.

"Their country will never forget them," said Shalov, and his voice shook.

Aye, they knew that, knew that they would never be able to forget. That their memories would retain forever the faces of the fallen as they looked the day they had been consigned to the earth. Here in a common grave were united those who had perished as they retired under hurricane fire from the village, and those who had come to free the village and had torn it from the enemy's hands.

Their gaze was steady and quiet. Well, this was war. In blood, fire and steel it had descended upon the village. But all these were strong in the unshakable belief that had supported the village through its darkest, its most terrible days. The belief that the deliverers would come, that they would have the last word.

Shalov stooped, picked up a clod of frozen earth and dropped it into the grave. Then, one after the other, they all bent to throw a handful of soil into the pit. Let the dead sleep soundly in the grave. Let them feel their native earth, their liberated native earth, over their very hearts.

"Now you throw some in too, Nyura," said a mother to her two-year-old daughter.

The child took a handful of earth and flung it cautiously down. The baby hands scooped the dark soil from under the snow and pushed it over the edge of the pit. The army men set to work with their spades. At last the pit was filled and level with the ground, they made a mound over it.

"When spring comes, we'll plant it with flowers," said Malyuk's wife.

"Green grass we'll sow on it," Frossya added, "and everyone will bring some plants for it."

Slowly they turned away and dispersed. There was no grief in the hearts, but an uplifting solemnity. Their dead had perished for their land. As in bygone days, nineteen-eighteen for instance, everybody remembered that. Had few died then from their village? That was the way things went, the land had to be defended with the blood and the lives of those who had been born and bred on it. That was plain and simple enough.

. . . Suddenly, through the air that resounded with song, through the pure, clear azure, burst a reverberating volley, and the song was silenced, beaten to earth. The children playing outside the houses stood turned to stone.

"What was that?"

It came again, deafening, booming. The whole sky was filled with the cannonade.

"Those are big guns. . ."

"It's at Okhaby, over yonder."

"It's at Zelentsy."

"Is it our men shooting?"

They listened. The artillery cannonade thundered, died away in a long reverberating echo. The people were silent awhile. Then. . .

"What's going on there?"

"It's a battle."

"Those are our guns surely. Yes, they're ours. . ."

"How is it you suddenly know so much about artillery?"

"I can judge by the direction the sound is coming from that it's ours."

They stared at the Red Army men, trying to read their faces, but the faces were untroubled.

"Yes, they're our guns, we've got to widen the wedge."

"The wedge? What wedge?"

"Well, we pushed through here, but the Germans are behind us and on every side."

"There you are, I said from the first it was the wedge?" cried Terpelikha, brightening up.

"You never said anything of the kind."

"What are you talking about? If you didn't hear me, well, you needn't think you're so smart. I said straight away it was the wedge. . . Everybody can understand that, we all know the Germans are still in Okhaby."

"Now just watch'em run!"

"You mean they'll run here?" Olga Palanchuk cried in sudden fright.

"And what if they do?" it was Terpelikha who spoke again, setting her arms akimbo. "We'll be ready to meet them when they come, you can be sure! We'll meet them all right!"

"Why should they trail off here? There's another road running straight to the west."

"If any of them do get away alive. . ."

They stood listening. Somewhere in the distance a battle was going on, guns were booming. The wedge driven into the German positions was being widened.

Lieutenant Shalov was interrogating the German prisoners, who stood before him in the warm room, shivering, trembling with a hardly perceptible nervous tremor. He looked at them; they were lean, ragged, covered with abscesses and stinking running sores. It was warm in the room, and the lice made them itch till it was unbearable. They scratched themselves furtively, without taking their eyes off the commander. Only five men remained of all Captain Werner's garrison.

"They ought to be sent to the rear, what are we to do with them here?" Shalov said in a decided tone.

"Why send them anywhere?" a stocky young fellow said with a look of disgust. "Deal with them on the spot, Comrade Lieutenant."

"What are you talking about?"

"It's a pity to waste an escort on them, wearing our men out, trailing through the snow with them."

"Send the sergeant to me," Shalov ordered, without attempting to argue the matter.

He went into the passage for a breath of air. After a whole hour in the same room as the prisoners, he felt as though his own body were crawling with lice, as though something of their dirt contaminated him, as though the very uniform he wore was impregnated with the abominable odour of bodies long unwashed, covered with sores.

He took a deep breath of the frosty air. The blue sky laughed with dancing sunlight, sparkled with a hard and persistent frost. From the distant houses came the sound of people singing. Shalov listened eagerly to the melodious tune, a tender, catchy, audacious air bred by the wind of the distant plains, by the turmoil of stormy waters rushing down to the sea, by vast free spaces. It held the faraway echo of the Cossack war-cry across the Dnieper Rapids, the yearning of valiant youth in Turkish captivity, the thud of hooves over distant highways. Girls were singing, and it seemed the whole village had burst into song, looking up at the dazzling golden sun in the frosty sky.

The Red Army men led out the prisoners. Immediately a crowd gathered. Under the eyes of the village women the Germans recoiled, hunched their shoulders up to their ears and shivered with cold.

"Sending them away, are you?" Terpilikha demanded in a hostile tone.

"Yes, I'm sending them to headquarters," Shalov replied, giving the handful of Germans in torn green army greatcoats a last look over.

"There he is, there's the one who hanged young Levonyuk!" Pelcharikha suddenly screamed.

The women made a rush forward.

"Which one? Which of them was it?"

"That one over there, the red-haired fellow. Look! Everybody saw him then, I'm sure! That tall fellow!" the woman shouted.

"She's right, that's the one!"

The crowd closed in around the

prisoners. The women pushed forward, pointing at the tall German whose red locks escaped from under his cap. He understood that it was of him they were talking and shrank back behind his comrades.

"Look at him, trying to hide! Comrade Lieutenant, there's the German who hanged that young man, Levonyuk!"

"He wasn't a young man, he wasn't more than sixteen. It was just a child he hanged, the brute!"

"Yes, girls, why are we wasting all this time talking! Let's deal with him ourselves!" Terpilikha commanded them.

The Red Army men glanced dubiously about them.

"Hold on, now, what do you think you're doing!" Shalov remonstrated angrily. "Move off, I tell you!"

"He won't get away from here alive, Comrade Lieutenant! We'll finish him off for you, and everything will be in proper order," Terpilikha insisted.

The German evidently realized what was afoot. He shook all over, his teeth chattered.

"I'll have you know that I'm responsible for order here, not you," Shalov said sternly.

Then Fedossya Kravchuk stepped out from the crowd.

"Horpina, this doesn't concern you. Why are you interfering with other people's business? You wanted to have some more slaughter here, did you, as though there weren't enough dead already? You think, I suppose, there aren't any judges cleverer than you?"

Terpilikha recoiled a step or two, staring in amazement at Fedossya, utterly failing to understand what she wanted.

"You want to kill this German, do you? You want to let him die an easy death? A minute or two, and it would all be over for him, eh? So he would only have to pay two minutes' suffering for young Levonyuk, for our children and all the people who've been killed? No, let him live, I say, let him await his own doom, let him drink the cup to the very dregs, to the last drop! Let him go back to his own country and see how they all have to pay for everything, every single thing! And not for Levonyuk alone!"

"She's right," said Pelcharikha.

"Good for you, Fedossya!" the others agreed.

"And I'll tell you one thing, Horpina: if any of them dies now, he will be getting of very lightly indeed. Let him live, I say, let him see their troops falling back, running for dear life, dying of starvation, strewing the steppe with their bones, let them live to see how from behind every bush, from every little wood folks will spring out on them with pitchforks and axes! And how they'll die in the ditches and gutters without anyone to give them even a drop of water to drink. Let him live to see the day when their towns and villages are scattered to the winds and nothing but ashes and nettles are left on the places where they stood. Let him wait to see the day when his own wife curses him and his own children deny him! And you wanted to give him an easy death, did you? Old as you are, Horpina, you're foolish. It's easy enough to die; let him live, let him live a hundred years if it comes to that! May he pray for death to come, and may it not come to him, let even death turn away from this German carrion!"

She choked on her words and was silent, speaking, pressing her hands to her heart.

"That's the truth, Fedossya," Pelcharikha cried, coming to her support. The circle of women broke.

Two Red Army men led the prisoners out on to the road. Terpilikha stood staring after them.

"A-aye!" she made a despairing gesture. "To look at you, women, anybody would think you were fierce, but it soon passes off with you!"

"And what do you think: do you mean to say Fedossya Kravchuk isn't fierce?"

"I can't understand what she means, the way she talks. I talk my own way, plain and straight."

She broke off suddenly and stood still, listening.

"It may be only my fancy, but haven't they stopped shooting?"

Puzyrikha stood listening, too.

"That's right, they've quietened down. But we were kicking up such a row here over those prisoners, we didn't notice."

"I wonder why they've stopped? Is the battle over or what? We've got to find out. But who would know?"

"The commander knows, very likely."

But the sudden silence that had fallen on that far black line where the forest began, had been noticed by others besides the village women. Shalov ran in every minute to the room where the man on duty never left the telephone.

"Ring, I tell you, ring! Don't they answer you?"

"There isn't a sound."

"Send someone to the line to see if it's damaged anywhere. And you—keep ringing. . ."

At long last the telephone rang. The Red Army man scribbled something rapidly.

"Well, what do they say?"

"We've taken Okhaby and Zelentsy."

Shalov went out into the street. The first person he set eyes on was Terpilikha.

"We've taken Okhaby and Zelentsy!"

She threw up her hands and clasped them.

"And that's why it's gone so quiet all of a sudden?"

"That's why."

She picked up her skirts and ran off after Puzyrikha.

"You know what, Natalka? We've taken Okhaby and Zelentsy! The lieutenant himself has just told me. . . As soon as the telephone rang, he came out and said to me: we've taken Okhaby and Zelentsy, he says."

"Taken them, you say?" Puzyrikha repeated in a high, ringing voice.

"I told you straight away, as soon as it quietened down: I said it looks like the battle's over, didn't I?"

"Yes, but you couldn't tell how it had finished."

"How could I help knowing? How else could it end? We chased the Germans and widened the wedge, that's all. Can't you understand?"

"Humph! You got to know an awful lot about warfare all of a sudden."

The telephone kept ringing and ringing. Shalov bawled into the receiver:

"Where? In what direction?"

The village was in a turmoil of excitement. Red Army men hurried in from every point.

"Where are you going?" the women asked excitedly.

"We've got orders to move on further."

"But where?"

"Westward, mother."

The women were alarmed. It sounded unlikely. Fedossya Kravchuk went up to the lieutenant.

"You aren't really going? The soup's nearly ready, and you haven't had a proper meal. . ."

"Never mind, mother. We aren't starving. The order has come for us to advance. Let the next man eat my soup, there's another unit coming up, they'll be garrisoned here. You can treat them instead of us."

The men were in a fever to be gone; they left their spoons in the soup, their half-eaten hunks of bread.

"I say, boys, you might have stayed another day or so with us," the women sighed.

"Thanks! We haven't time now. But there are more coming, and we have to be going. People are waiting for us over there."

"Of course they are," the women sighed again. They went out into the street while the men were lining up. Old and young poured out to see them off. Women sighed heavily. Some wept. Sonka Liman flung her arms around the neck of a youthful

Red Army man and clung to him tearfully.

"There's Sonka for you! Found someone for herself already," the women remarked, laughing.

"And a nice-looking young fellow, too. Look at his eye-brows!"

Now Lieutenant Shalov came hurrying out of the house. The detachment was already lined up.

"Forward—march!"

"Good-bye! Good luck! Come back safe! Fight for all you're worth, boys!" came from the crowd.

The snow crunched under the feet of the marching men. By the roadside scampered the village children, the little boys trying hard to fall into step with the ranks, the women picking up their long skirts and scurrying along.

Unhurriedly, the men tramped to a low hill and here came to a halt.

Far, far to the west stretched the dazzling snowy plain. Against the clear sky lay a narrow bar of smoke where unhappy Levanyovka, the village the Germans had set fire to from four points, was still burning. The fire had died down more than once already, but had flared up again and again in the ruins, and veiled the pure azure of the sky with dark smoke.

From the hill Lieutenant Shalov looked westward. Before him lay the snowy plain, the boundless lands of the Ukrainian steppe, under the German yoke. Westward it stretched, this Ukraine all in blood and flame, with the song stifled on her lips, her bosom trampled under the German boot, crushed, defiled, in chains. But undismayed, inflexible, struggling still.

And now he saw, flung across the sky like a clear shining pathway, a rainbow, a vivid streak shot with light, quivering with colour like down blown from flowers, with the delicate bloom of the wild rose petal and the crimson garden beauty, with the pale lilac deepening to the hue of the wood violet. It flamed with the gold of sunflower petals and vibrated with the tremulous green of half-opened birch leaves. And it all shone with a clear and tender lustre. The rainbow spanned the sky from east to west, binding earth and sky with a blazing riband.

Shalov turned to his men:

"Forward—march!"

With a long, rhythmic, even stride they followed him. The people who had come to see them off remained on the hill. They were silent. The detachment was moving along the road that led away, into the limitless distance of the dazzling white plain, into the glory of the rainbow.

The Red Army men were marching away to where wisps of smoke still showed the site of burned Levanyovka, to villages nestling in high snowdrifts. Gripping their rifles, they marched into Ukrainian land, trampled, strangled under the German yoke. Invincible, inflexible, struggling still.

The people were silent, straining their eyes till the tears came to catch the last, the very last glimpse of them. Till the detachment of men faded and vanished in the blue distance, in the snow-white immensity, in the embracing splendour of the rainbow.

ALEXANDER FADEYEV

NAMED AFTER KIROV

This story was told us by Muzheinik, a veteran worker of the Putilov Plant which holds a prominent place in Russian history and is now more commonly known as the Kirov Works.

"It is said that the peasant is attached to the land, to his native place. This, of course, is true. But let me tell you," said Muzheinik, "you will find that no one is so attached to his factory, to his job, as we Soviet workers are. I have been at the plant since 1914, having started work at an early age. My father worked here and other Muzheiniks, too, and I will never leave the plant, unless, of course, the government fires me. Do you know the number of men that we, Kirov workers, have given the People's Guards, when the Germans approached Leningrad? A whole division! Many of our men laid down their lives, but even today there is many a unit in the army, where we, Kirovites, are in the majority. . ."

The story told by Muzheinik was merely one chapter in the great history of the Leningrad People's Guards. It was those very Leningrad People's Guards who met the onslaught on the city and at the most decisive moment blocked the enemy's path. The German troops, armed to the teeth with first-class equipment, backed by decades of preparation for war and with two years' experience in fighting in Western Europe and in the Balkans — this army was checked by the People's Guards composed of Leningrad workers, office employees and intellectuals. And not only checked. After sustaining unparalleled losses in men and equipment, it was compelled to dig in, and was even pressed back on certain sectors of the front. This is a historic fact which cannot be concealed and which will compel the admiration and homage of future generations.

"So we sent our men to the People's Guards," continued Muzheinik, "and we said to ourselves that should the enemy break into the city and isolate our works we would still not give up. We would organize a semicircular defence. We then fortified our district so as to be able to defend ourselves should the need arise. In addition to the People's Guards we also formed workers' battalions. Whatever happens, we figured, we, Kirovites, won't leave our plant. . . Sometimes one stops to think how many Kirovites there are? Our number is far greater than the plant payroll shows. Here, beyond the Narva District, there are whole generations of Kirov-Putilov workers. We all make our living from the works and belong to one family as it were. Think of it: we have given so many men to the People's Guards, and yet the plant is working. We evacuated all our equipment and the bulk of the workers far into the interior, and yet the plant is working."

"No doubt, the workers did not want to leave their native city and go to the rear?" I asked. "Besides, several thousand of them were evacuated by plane. So they could take along very few of their personal belongings?"

"Well, there were all sorts of reactions," said Muzheinik with a smile. "But I will say this: the people did not need much coaxing. Do you want to know why? Because the Kirov workers know that neither Leningrad nor the plant will ever be under the Germans, and, whatever happens, Kirov workers will be brought back to their native place. Actually we are evacuating some people even now— the children, the aged and the sick. When they object, we tell them: 'Never fear, you will come back as soon as possible. The plant has stood here, is still standing and will continue to stand, " said Muzheinik with profound inner conviction. "And again

we say: 'You are going to our own people for, after all, there too are plenty of Kirovites. We are all of one stock. . .' And we who stay here are proud of the fact that there, in the rear, our boys are not only producing to capacity, they even produce twice and three times more than they did here. We are proud of them and we envy them. Look at it, see this shop? A real colossus! And yet it is empty, idle," he said bitterly. "And do you know what kind of a shop it is? It's the turbine department. It was there that I began work in 1914. . . Think how strong it is: there they are, pounding away at it full blast, and the shop stands!" said Muzheinik proudly and sighed.

It was told by Muzheinik to us, a group of writers. Most of us were in army uniform when we were visiting the plant. It is a great city in itself, its blocks stretching over a vast territory. This veteran of the Russian working class presented a majestic and tragic spectacle. During the blockade it was constantly raided by enemy aircraft, thousands of shells dropped on its premises. It stood there covered with wounds and scars. But it stood and fought back. It seemed as if the plant were standing in the second line of the front, but a line of such great importance that the whole of the enemy's fire was directed against it.

Surrounded by fortifications, the plant was spick and span. Numerous shops were scattered over the plant site, some of them idle, some functioning. And everywhere the eye met signs of destruction, broken walls and roofs, windows with shattered panes, shell holes in the ground, walls scarred by shell splinters. But smoke rose above the plant, indicating that work was in progress. True, it was not the full-blooded life of the past. But the plant continued to work as one of the biggest war plants with thousands of workers. And the hum of machines, the roar of furnaces, the clatter of rolling mills and rattle of the tiny locomotive moving along the factory railway was the sweetest music to our ears.

The pig-iron foundry, one of the most powerful shops of the plant, bears the traces of numerous hits by heavy shells, both old marks and recent ones. But this powerful shop continues to work day and night.

On one occasion the shop caught fire. Without stopping the work, Konstantin Skobnikov, the 43-year-old director of the shop, rushed out with a group of workers to fight the fire. With the agility of a youngster he climbed onto the roof, followed by the others. They worked on, forgetting their own existence, losing all sense of time. When the danger was averted, Skobnikov saw that his hands were bruised and bloodstained, and realized that his face was burned.

"But, don't you see, I was one of the builders of this shop!" exclaimed Skobnikov with a smile on his clever, energetic, sun-tanned face. "You might say this is my own shop. Yes, I built it twelve years ago and have been working here ever since. You might say, the best years of my adult life have been spent here."

"And do you remember, Konstantin Mikhailovich, how we cleaned it in the spring?" asked an old, grey-headed foreman of the shop who accompanied us on our trip of inspection.

"You should have seen all the rubbish," laughed Sknobnikov, "everywhere, in the shop and around it. And everything frozen stiff; horrible! I admit now that when we began the job there was some doubt in my mind as to whether we could really cope with it. We cleaned out loads of rubbish!"

"Does that mean that the shop had been idle for some time?" I asked.

"Yes, it had. There was a time when I alone lived in the shop."

"In the shop?" we asked, surprised.

"Yes, I live right here. My family had been evacuated. During the winter I had this little potbellied stove to keep me warm. The shop was quiet, you could hear the howling wind.

Leningrad in the Patriotic War. Men of the X. workers' detachment of the Frunze District, on patrol

Snow fell through the broken windows, everything was hoary with frost, at times it seemed that my shop would never again come to life."

"And what did you do all those long days and nights?"

"I had my hands full during the day, there was plenty of work to be found in Leningrad; but in the evenings I was alone in the shop, thinking, reading."

"And what were you thinking about, or reading?"

"There was much to think about," said Skobnikov gravely. "In those trying days you got to know people. Never perhaps have people seen so much human greatness or, on the other hand, such depths of moral degradation. . . I remember how in December the shop kept on working despite the terrible cold and hunger. We had a remarkable old man, his job was mixing the sand for moulding, and a great master of his trade he was, one of those old craftsmen who work like artists without knowing themselves how they do it. That's the kind he was. He was unexcelled in his work. Asked how he calculated the amount of sand for mixing, he invariably replied: 'I have no specified amount. I just feel with my hands how much I have to add.' Usually people say of such craftsmen that they 'know the secret,' but the secret is in their hands. Since we could not bring sand from other parts, we had to use sand found in the Leningrad suburbs. 'No good,' said everybody. And true enough, no one who tried was able to get results. But he did. . . Well, this man began to grow weaker and weaker. We saw him change from day to day, but he kept on working, and training his old woman, teaching her how to prepare the sand. He could always be seen instructing her, showing her how and making her do it herself. 'Oh, how hard it is to get you to understand!' he would burst out impatiently, only to calm down again and continue his instructions. One day a young lad burst into the shop crying: 'He is calling for you. . .' I knew at once who was calling me. I went there and found him lying on the very sand that he could mix so well. Standing by his side was his

old woman, but she was not crying. There were also other old workers. He was completely exhausted. 'Listen, Konstantin Mikhailovich,' he said, 'I am dying. . . My old woman here will take my place. . .' And he turned to her again, continuing his instructions, for fear she would forget something, and making her repeat them. . . She listened attentively, repeating his instructions. 'I'll remember, don't worry,' she said. But there were no tears. A casual observer might have wept looking at this picture, but it is truly said that the eyes of the Leningrad workers have been frozen dry of tears. And so he continued instructing her and, pausing in the middle of a phrase, he suddenly died. . . That's the kind of things we have seen. On the other hand, some degenerated to such an extent that they could steal a piece of bread from a comrade. . ." He paused. "And what did I read?" he went on after a moment's silence. "I read Balzac and Stendhal, learning much from them about human nature."

Konstantin Skobnikov, the son of a locomotive engineer, graduated from high school in 1917 and from the Institute of Technology in 1925. He is a well educated engineer with considerable practical experience. He told us about the resourcefulness, the ingenuity an engineer needs in Leningrad conditions. with the lack of many materials without which production seemed impossible according to old concepts. How were the stoves in the steam-power shop to be adapted for the use of either coal or firewood, whatever kind of fuel happened to be available at the moment? How was pig iron to be produced without coke? Where to find substitutes for vegetable oils? These are the most elementary of a host of big and small questions solved by Leningrad engineers and executive workers.

I had the opportunity of seeing the work of many Leningrad executives. They were uncommon people. It is true that the war has taught our executives to enforce the most stringent economy, but from the viewpoint of the Leningrad executive, much achieved in this respect in other parts of the country seems the most exorbitant waste. Leningradites are the most economical, the most calculating and resourceful managers in our country.

Tens of thousands of shells fell on the territory of the Kirov Works, but the plant continues to produce a rich assortment of the most varied types of modern armaments and munitions, from mines and shells to tanks.

Women play a most important role in production. There is not a job, from the most physically arduous to the most complex, that Leningrad women have not mastered.

In Skobnikov's department we watched the work of Rumyantseva, a young girl in charge of a moulding brigade and famous throughout the plant for her skill. She had never worked in production before coming to the plant, and learned her trade literally in three weeks' time. And now, while talking to us, she did not pause for a moment in her work, her skilful little hands working efficiently, quickly; and there was a certain ease in her movements as if she were dancing near her moulds.

"We will not be found wanting, comrade soldiers," she said, her eyes sparkling merrily as we complimented her on her work, "we won't lag behind, it's up to you now to send the Germans scurrying back from Leningrad as soon as possible."

I have already mentioned that many of our group were in uniform. Looking at us, Rumyantseva smiled slyly and said:

"Not that we don't like you; indeed, we all love you very much, but you are far too close to us. The farther you move away from us, the more we shall like you. . ."

The women workers burst into peals of laughter, and we, I admit, were a bit embarrassed.

Just as efficient were two other

young girls, Lokhina and Zaberikhina, splendid knob makers, competing with each other for higher output. A few weeks ago they came to the works without any previous experience and were now exceeding quota four to five times.

In one of the departments, under the black dome, we found a group of women behind a giant grinder making mines. Sparks flew all around, and behind them were piles of mines, still warm. I paused near one of these women. From where I stood I could see her profile. She was wrapped in a dark shawl, and I could not make out her age. With hands draped in huge gloves she turned to a pile of mines on the floor, and lifting one, she pressed it with her body against the swiftly revolving wheel. A shower of sparks burst around her. This was the initial crude turning of the mines before they were handed over to the machine department. Taking no notice of me, she continued to lift mine after mine, pressing them with her body against the wheel. To hold this mine against the revolving wheel needed such a tremendous effort that her whole body seemed to be shaken.

This was a hard job, a man's job. I was determined to see the face of the woman, and stood there until she turned around and looked at me. She looked about forty years old, her face, unusually beautiful, with fine severe features, was an inspired one.

"Is it very hard?" I asked.

"Yes, it was very hard in the beginning," she replied, picking up a mine and pressing it against the revolving wheel, which gave off flying sparks.

"Where's your husband?" I asked in one of those fleeting intervals while she was putting away one mine and picking up another.

"Died last winter."

I did not press my questions, for it was clear how he died.

"Any children?"

"Yes. One of my girls is at school, the other, the little one, here at the factory kindergarten, and my son at the front. . ."

Women of Leningrad! Will words ever be found to express the full grandeur of your toil, of your devotion to country, to the city, to the army, to labour, to the family; will words ever describe your matchless courage! Everything everywhere bears the trace of your beautiful, skilful, loyal hand. You run the factory machine, you keep vigil by the beds of the wounded, you stand on guard on observation posts, you work in the office, the school, the kindergarten, the creche, you drive automobiles, work at the peat bog, fell trees in the forest, unload barges on the pier; you wear the overalls of a worker, the uniform of a militiaman, of the anti-aircraft defence fighter, the railwayman, the army doctor and telegraph operator. Your voice is broadcast over the ether, your hands are cultivating gardens in all the suburbs of Leningrad, in all its parks, squares and waste spaces. It is you who guard the integrity and cleanliness of the buildings, who bring up orphans, you who bear the full brunt of domestic problems in the beleaguered city. And with your cheerful smiles you brighten the life of Leningrad like a ray of sunshine.

And how many of you, splendid daughters of Leningrad, are to be found in the fighting lines as nurses, aides and political instructors of the Red Cross services? I remember how shyly Olga Makkaveiskaya, Red Cross instructor at one of the sectors of the Leningrad front, showed me her Komsomol membership card pierced by a bullet. She was wounded by a bullet in the chest. Bloodstains could be seen on the side of the card. Recovering from her wounds, Olga returned to her beloved company of tommy-gunners. Her membership dues' receipt were neatly recorded on the bullet-pierced and bloodstained Komsomol card. "Now I have another," she said, smiling her shy sweet smile, displaying a brand new Party membership card.

The Kirov Works has always been and remains the pride of Leningrad. Just as in days gone by it continues

to publish its own printed newspaper. Its editor is Alexei Solovyov, a worker at the plant and the favourite poet there. The paper is called *For Valiant Labour*. But more than in any other part of the country, valiant labour in Leningrad means valour in battle.

The Kirov workers live and fight at the front. They live in their homes as if they were dug-outs, and not very reliable ones at that, and go to work as if going to the firing line.

Half an hour before our visit to the plant, an artillery shell exploded there killing six welders. Like the men at the front, the Kirov workers have grown accustomed to danger: they work, joke, go about their personal affairs. But on their faces, just as on those of the men at the front, there is a certain barely perceptible wrinkle, caused by the subconscious realization of constant danger. It is a wrinkle of courage, stern and at the same time mockingly-defiant, sterner on the faces of older people, and more defiant on the faces of young ones.

In the department where tank engines are assembled, and which is directed by that splendid engineer Starostenko, a man of unlimited resource, we met young brigade leader Yevstigneyev. This is the story we learned about him.

Yevstigneyev once spent three days and three nights at a stretch in the shop, fulfilling an order for the front. This was at the time when food was scarce, and his strength began to give way.

"You ought to rest a bit," his comrades insisted unanimously.

The lad went into a fury and flatly refused to leave his bench.

"While I am brigade leader, I am master here and not you," he burst out. "It's your business to carry out orders, to work. . ."

But the simple tools no longer obeyed his hand, and he finally had to cease work.

"How could it have happened?" he argued with himself, lying at home in his bed. "I, a young man like this, and suddenly getting sick!"

In the evening his comrades came to visit him:

"See what they have written about you," said the youngest of them, a mechanic, handing a newspaper to Yevstigneyev.

Yevstigneyev pushed away the paper, but as soon as the door closed behind the boys, he looked at the paper to see what they had written about him. An article in the paper said that his brigade was the best in the plant. He got dressed and, staggering with weakness, he went to the works. He was almost thrown out of the shop by force.

"I won't allow him to work with a sick leave certificate," resolutely declared the chief of his department.

"Please, comrade Starostenko," pleaded Yevstigneyev, "I will not work, I will just look around a bit," said Yevstigneyev quietly.

And thus for a whole week the sick and as yet very feeble lad came every day to "look around." On the 26th of the month his brigade fulfilled the month's programme four days ahead of schedule.

If I were asked what is the paramount feeling of the Kirov workers, I would reply without hesitation: the desire for revenge. There are a great number of people among them who have lost relatives at the front, and an even greater number who have lost friends and relatives as result of the hardships and privations caused by the blockade. The Kirov workers are well aware who is responsible for those privations. From the factory roofs they can see the enemy with the naked eye, and they regard them with hatred, a hatred deeply ingrained, personal, deadly. Sometimes, it may seem like exaggeration to say that one can avenge by working. Nevertheless, it is true that hundreds and thousands of Kirov workers, who in the most difficult conditions exceed their scheduled norms of output two, three, four and five times,—yes, these men not only understand

with their mind, but feel with every nerve and muscle that everything they make at the Kirov Works is made for the extermination of the Huns.

The workers of the Kirov Plant invited us to organize a literary evening. The evening was arranged with the assistance of the Leningrad poets Nicholas Tikhonov, Alexander Prokofyev and myself.

In the basement of one of the buildings, under the concrete floor, we found a hall used for meetings and performances, with a stage and side-scenes. The hall, accommodating 700, could not, of course, hold all who wished to be present. The audience crowded all the aisles, and the outside door had to be locked; and throughout the evening people were banging on the door asking for admission, although at that time the German guns had just began to shell the factory.

Nicholas Tikhonov read his poem *Kirov Is with Us*. Its plot is as follows: Kirov, the leader and hero of Leningrad's workers, murdered by a vile enemy of the people on December 1st, 1934, is walking through the city on a black, frosty, heavily charged Leningrad night during the blockade.

The power of this poem, beautiful in itself, was all the greater when I thought that it was written by Nicholas Tikhonov during that hard winter, in his cold apartment, by the dim light of a tiny lamp, and that now he himself was reciting it to the Kirov workers in the basement of one of the factory buildings, at a moment when the plant was being heavily shelled. People listened in deep silence. There was something grim and at the same time touching in the faces of the listeners.

In the poem there is a stanza where Kirov is seen passing by the plant which bears his name. When Tikhonov read these lines, tears rolled down the brave faces of the Kirov workers. Both men and women wept. Tikhonov himself was deeply moved. When he finished, the author received a stormy ovation and was recalled an endless number of times.

Accompanied by groups of young workers, we passed through the vast premises of the plant to the main entrance where a car was waiting for us. This was in the middle of May, just as the white nights of Leningrad are about to begin. It was about 9 in the evening, yet the sun had not yet set. The gigantic factory blocks, scarred and wounded, seemed even more magnificent in the red glow of the evening sunset. At every step one trod on shrapnel: the whole area was littered with it. The young people accompanying us asked about their favourite writers and poets. They joked and laughed merrily. And through the windows came the hum of work which seemed solemn at this evening hour.

In front of the entrance to the plant stands a big monument to Kirov. Kirov is portrayed as the peoples of the U.S.S.R. have seen him time and again on the platform. A leather cap on his head, he stands on his strong, firm legs, his arm stretched forward in the free, appealing gesture of a speaker, and there is a brave confident smile on his strong, broad Russian face. The open folds of his coat were riddled with bullets, which had also scarred the whole statue. But he stood there with his hand stretched forward, giving the call to battle, with the confident and charming smile of a powerful and simple man. He could not be killed today, just as he was not killed on December 1st, 1934, for Kirov, like the cause that he fought for, lives on.

General Orlenko and His People

It will be to no purpose if you scan the rolls where the names of the men who have the rank of general are recorded for the name of General Orlenko: there is no such name there.

This name came into being amidst the woods and steppes of the Ukraine, in the villages, where, stiff with fright, Germans take cover in trenches from general Orlenko's partisans; among the ravines whither Hungarian and other harpies who ravage the splendid Ukrainian land scuttle from the highroads to save their bacon.

This name of the Ukrainian eagle[1] has been bestowed on a Ukrainian operative who remained in his own countryside during the German invasion. Military art had not been in his line at all, his had been an entirely different trade, but for all that, the Ukrainian people call him general, thus centering on him all the love they bear to the Red Army!

It happened that, on the eve of the year 1942, in General Orlenko's partisan detachment there appeared a radio-set. Until then the partisans had been unable to procure a radio-set, though they looked for one high and low. Why, the radio means direct communication with the Red Army, it means the possibility of learning what is going on at the front. The detachment had been keeping to the woods for about five months. For the last three months they had had neither salt nor bread; having captured a Hungarian drove of horses, horseflesh had been their invariable diet.

The German leaflets asserted that Moscow had long since been seized, that Hitler's troops had crossed the Volga. It goes without saying that the partisans did not believe a word of this; yet how very good it would have been to know the truth!

And then the impossible happened. The detachment got a radio-set and three more partisans into the bargain. These had belonged to a larger body, about seven men strong; now those of it who remained above ground wanted to join General Orlenko.

The general locked the radio-operators in a cottage and set a sentry by the door so that they would not be disturbed; he said: "I won't let you out until you get into communication with comrade Hroushchov![1]"

Minutes pass. . . Hours fly by. . . The New Year is drawing nearer and nearer. On learning that the general contemplates a connection with Hroushchov, peasants from the neighbouring villages keep coming hotfoot. The partisans have procured some vodka for the treat: they want to convey that the Soviet armies are right as a rivet, that the Germans have not captured Moscow, that the radio-operators will get in touch with comrade Hroushchov.

Now, picture to yourself those snow-laden forests; the narrow roads; German armoured cars poking about along the highway; the frozen corpses of the hanged rattling as they knocked against the mile-posts; the graves of martyrs; and the dirge-like wail that seems to be heard all over the Ukraine. And in the wood, in a little hut, a bunch of partisans, all aglow with expectancy. In other huts more partisans are spreading the tables for the reception, and the partisans' hearts ache with hope. They have confidence

[1] Eagle in Ukrainian is "orel." Hence the general's name Orlenko.

[1] Secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine.

in their general, it is not for nothing that they have followed him in the fight for five months! They just love his thickset frame, his keen eyes and black, trimmed moustache, and the very scar on his forehead.

The general is pacing round the radio-operators' hut. At a little distance, groups of villagers are talking, intently watching the general.

"You'll hear Hroushchov all right, I warrant it," says the general with assurance. "I'll bet my generalship on it."

And he smiles. All round him stretches the snow, and the deep-blue Ukrainian sky with its magic stars like in Gogol's stories. And all about him is confidence and strength.

Hours pass. There are just a few minutes left till the New Year, 1942. What is that year going to bring with it? What fortune or what sorrow?

All of a sudden the door flung open and a partisan shouted from the threshold:

"Hroushchov speaking!"

Instantly the cottage was crammed with people. The beaming general stood at the table. The radio-set was rather a one horse affair, but Hroushchov's voice could be distinctly heard, wishing a happy New Year to the Ukrainian people, to the partisans and, in particular, to general Orlenko's detachment! The Soviet armies stand firm, the enemy will be overwhelmed. . .

"Victory shall be ours!" the partisans respond.

And the tears come into their eyes when they once more hear the voice of Hroushchov:

"Long live the Soviet Ukraine!"

The peasants, who had come to hear Hroushchov speak, decided to join the partisans till victory was won.

Several men enter the room. One of them has the golden star of Hero of the Soviet Union. But I should have known as well without the star: that thickset, big-faced man, with a scar on his forehead, with a well-trimmed black moustache.

That is "General Orlenko." With great difficulty he got over the front-line to return in a few days' time to the Ukraine, there to tell what he has seen with his own eyes in the Red Army and in Russia.

The conversation between us is hurried and random as if we were to part at a moment's notice. We talk now of Moscow and now of the Ukraine, or of Middle Asia, and then skip incidentally onto painting, and the theatre, and the cinema; and then, again, to the companions with whom the general has come here.

An armchair has strayed somehow into the room and stands near the table. Though it's a man-sized thing, its seating capacity is rather inadequate for two. Yet two have contrived to make themselves comfortable in it. They are a fair-haired young man and his wife. She has come all the way to see him. He is speaking to me. His face is thoughtful, his eyes full of tenderness. His hand rests on his wife's shoulder, fingering the beads of her necklace. He has had concussion, and his head is bandaged. He is Alexander Balabay, formerly a teacher, graduated from the Gogol Pedagogical Institute in Nezhin. We talk of Nezhin, I was there many years ago. . .

Orlenko interrupts me.

"How many people would you suppose this man to have killed?" he indicates Balabay.

I look at the thoughtful, delicate face and venture:

"Such a man can't kill anybody in cold blood, but when in real anger he'd lay out half a dozen, if it comes to that."

"Just so!" confirms the general exultently. "But the fact is he is often angry. He has killed sixty-three Germans, sixteen of them with his knife. See what it means? With nothing but his knife!"

Well, the meaning is not hard to grasp. I know what kind of weapon a knife makes, and how inadequate it is when fighting against the huge German forces armed with up-to-date

technique. One has not only to be brave, but also to be shrewd, clever and resourceful.

Meanwhile, the general goes on:

"We've seen the film here, *Partisans*. You have not seen it yet? But you should. An interesting film; though, to a partisan's mind, not without shortcomings. For instance, there are not enough young people in it. As a rule, our partisans are young men. I, for one, am the oldest among them. And how old would you think me to be?"

I take a good look at his face. Anxiety, care and sorrow have certainly made him look older than his years. Probably he's not more than forty-five?

"Thirty-eight! And how could we do without young men? One must be wiry. Besides, we had to live on horse-flesh for three months." He laughed. "My, we were about as sick of it as of the Germans themselves."

Each time he utters the word "German," hate flashes in his face like lightning.

Suppressing his hate for the moment, he resumes quietly:

"What will you have? Sometimes we had to retreat; but we retreated without losing our dignity. This summer the 'führer' gave the word to install 'order' in the Ukraine, that is, to make a clean sweep of the partisans. To attain this 'order,' he appointed, besides the police, ten German divisions, all complete with aircraft, tanks, mine-throwers, trench-mortars, guns. Two of those ten fell to my share. 'Divisions for keeping order,' that's what they were named."

He put his small but surprisingly strong hand on my knee and continued:

"They've harassed us enough, those two divisions. But we repaid it them in coin. We circled and redoubled on our tracks up hill and down, and worried the German brute so it began to gasp for breath. . ."

He turned to one of the military men that were present in the room:

"Now, you say the commander must not be let to the fore in the fight. And it's all right, mind you. But here's what we had to cope with, one fine day. We were being chased by the Germans, by those 'order divisions.' Well. Once there come a handful of men to me from another detachment, men I didn't even know. Faces troubled. 'Scared, aren't you?' 'Why, Comrade General,' they say, 'we're surrounded!' 'You noodles! We are always surrounded. . . Only at times the circle slackens a bit, at times it gets closer. We're in the rear of the German army, aren't we? It's our ideas that can't be sur rounded!' But I see the men are rattled. Or simply fagged out? If so, one must take psychology into account. Surrounded, are we? Well, we'll break through. Yet, how?"

He put his hot hand on the soldier's knee and said, looking him in the face:

"The commanders and political instructors took up tommy-guns and formed the van. We were up to the waist in snow. What of it? Just an opportunity to show how to start an offensive in snow like that. I put the rankers in the rear and gave an artillery volley. Our artillery isn't half bad, and I didn't grudge the Germans the shells. We broke the circle on a stretch two kilometres long and poured into the breach. And a regular downpour it was. What a surprise for the Germans! The upshot of their surprise was that we had one man killed and one wounded while the Germans left, roughly speaking, 490 corpses; and there were a lot of trophies. The divisions made themselves scarce. We were busy for days collecting and taking stock of the trophies. . ."

"Did you take any prisoners?"

"Prisoners? Well, from time to time we managed to get a 'tongue' [1]. But, as a rule, when the Germans smell there's danger in the offing,

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[1] A "tongue" means a prisoner taken to get information from.

they much prefer to take to their heels. I've got two Frenchmen in my safe keeping, though. Isn't like 1812, ha, ha?"

"How so—Frenchmen?"

"Well, I can't help their being French, can I? Laval's rabble, probably. Couldn't think of anything for them to do, at first. However, I ordered, at last, to make them swineherds. We've got a herd of our own. Well, as swineherds they're passable."

He heaved a sigh.

"The Ukraine has much to endure. But it is seething with revolt, and the enemy shall get it back in full, that he shall. There have been many towns and villages that rose in rebellion, and sometimes we had a hand in it: what with circling and doubling we covered over three thousand kilometres. But among all the many examples of the hatred the Ukrainians bear, I've witnessed one that's really amazing. The peasants were ordered by the Germans to pick out men for their police and village elder. The villagers replied: 'We didn't call you in, and don't want to have anything to do with you.' 'You shall elect them!' 'We wont.' 'We'll burn the village down!' 'We will not take part in your elections.' Well, the Germans did burn the village down. Then they drove the peasants together once more. 'Elect them!' 'We won't.' Every tenth man was hanged.

"The peasants were gathered again. And again they refused. 'We'll throw your children into the flames.' 'We never called you in, and we don't want you.' The Germans threw the kids into the fire, and left the place. It was too late when we learned about their atrocities. When we burst into the village, there was nothing to see but ruins, corpses and smoke.

"I must confess, we wept as we rode along.

"And then we see an old woman making for us from among the ruins, and there's something she's carrying, a bundle or such like. She comes up.

"'What is it you're carrying, granny?'

"And she says:

"'All my people are killed. I'm the only one left. I'd rather die, but then I wanted to meet you, for I've heard you have to smoke the oaklet.'

"We really had some difficulties in getting tobacco and were reduced to smoking the 'oaklets,' that is, in plain Russian, oaktree leaves.

"'It's true,' we say, 'we smoke the oaklet. But what has this to do with you?'

"'It has,' the woman says, 'for the villagers appointed me to deliver you this tobacco. And there's more of it, too. Our men have kept it from the Germans. . . they told me to deliver it. They are all of them dead now, our villagers. . . They trusted it to me to hand you this tobacco, so as you shouldn't have to smoke that nasty oaklet. . .'

"She unfolds her bundle. It's tobacco, good tobacco, well seasoned, yellow: and there's more of it too, hidden away in a pit, so that it lasted us a long time! . ."

All present in the room, moved by the narration, fell silent.

The general lit a cigarette; and it seemed to us as if it were made of the selfsame honey-hued tobacco the old Ukrainian had presented him with.

General Orlenko with his fellow-champions has traversed three thousand kilometres of Ukrainian land. And the further he went, the more his detachment grew. At present he has got whole batteries of guns, including heavy artillery, instead of the few machine-guns he once had; at present he has got everything that's wanted for dealing the Germans a heavy blow, and last, but not least, he has got people's love and the name that the people has conferred on him—Orel.

It happened that the partisans had some wheat they wanted to have

ground. They sent it to the mill. But the villagers refused to grind it: "We have no notion of who and what you are, and we've been told by the Germans not to grind any wheat for strangers. . ." Well, this reached Orlenko's ears. He came to the village and summoned all the peasants to a meeting. They came. And Orlenko stepped forward and spoke:

"I'm the man called General Orlenko. The Germans have offered a reward for my head: one hundred diessiatinas of land, to chose whether you like it, and fifty head of cattle; and my photos are on every post. However, I have not been split on yet. Why so? Well, simply because the price is too low. In our region we had three million diessiatinas, our budget reached the sum of a few milliards, and that region, look, stock and barrel, belonged to me and to you. Why, then should one exchange a whole region, free and thriving, for German captivity? Who'd be fool enough to consent?"

The villagers burst out laughing and said:

"Why didn't your men tell us they were from General Orlenko? Sure, we would have ground that wheat. . . all right."

And, indeed, they ground it; there is some talk that, as a matter of fact, not content with making the flour, they made away with those very Germans who had forbidden them to grind wheat for strangers.

A few days passed.

Once more I met General Orlenko. In a padded jacket, padded breeches and felt boots, looking trim and joyful, and yet very grave, he said:

"I'm going back to the Ukraine. Thanks for your hospitality. I believe that soon you'll be able to come there by train, to visit us. I can't guarantee that all the towns will be rebuilt, but we're sure to meet in a large Ukrainian city, in a good big house. Whatever happens, sure as a gun, victory shall be ours!"

VSEVOLOD IVANOV

Partisan Karp Makodzeba's Letter to General von Leer

"Listen here, you noodle. You don't offer half enough for my head. A beggarly ten thousand marks,—d'you call that a price? On my collective farm an English thoroughbred stallion alone is worth fifteen thousand in gold. And for me you're offering ten paper ones. That Hitler of yours, he won't go broke if he pays a hundred thousand. Hang him! He's used to getting his living without barking his shins. As to you, you're a duffer yourself, though a general, and though a cocky fighter, yet a dock-tailed one, you're a blockhead in spite of your learning. . .

I, Karp Makodzeba, declare war on you, General von Leer. And when you peg out, I'll declare war on any Hitlerite who's going to come in your stead. Make a note of it. I'm not talking through my hat. I mean what I say. And my sons are chips off the old block; if they get you, don't you cry quits—you shan't give them the slip. And my sons-in-law are a good match for my daughters. I gave my blessing to all of them when they went to the front, five sons and two sons-in-law; see how wealthy I am! And my children are not half bad: when on horseback, you can't unhorse them, nor untank them when in a tank. On a plane they're eagles, and they're devils in a fight.

A piffling ten thousand marks! Isn't your master a bit stingy? Maybe

you'll add something? Cheap meat makes poor broth, don't you know? I'm not a general, though you do me the honour of calling me "General Makodzeba" in your bill. My rank is much higher. I'm the people. Have you grasped at last that you've made rather an ass of yourself? How can you buy a people?

But if it comes to that, it may be there's something of a general about me. When we seized your staff, and you had jumped out of the window in your drawers, it was quite a treat for me to peruse your plans and to throw them into the dust-bin afterwards. And your full dress uniform, with the iron cross on its breast, my partisans arrayed a scarecrow in it to keep the birds off the cucumbers in the kitchen-garden.

But it's for your maps I feel really grateful to you. Thanks awfully for your ticks and notes telling me all the whereabouts and the names of things, and where the aerodrome is. We have already managed to make ourselves at home there, as you yourself are aware.

Eleven brand-new planes, as if they had never existed! And eight tanks burnt up, is it nothing? D'you call that a flea-bite? And sixty-five tanks lying upside down? And one hundred and seven motor-bikes? And what happened to the combustibles, still green in your memory? And those two hundred cars? And five bridges? And all those guns, horses and mines?

And after all that you think I'm only worth ten thousand?

General von Leer, I'm the Ukrainian people. Your Hitler dreams of exterminating me, of sweeping me right off the map for the fascist rabble, this plague of the twentieth century, to defile my land!

Never! Nothing in heaven or earth will ever tear me from my own land. You may crush me with tanks, you may bury me alive, you may twist every little bone in my body and tear asunder my every nerve, yet I'll rise again and walk all over my land, and I'll live and till the soil, and sing my songs!

I, Karp Makodzeba, declare you to be an outlaw. The hand that will give you water to drink, may it wither; the eyes that will take pity on you, may they go blind. To punish me, you have hanged fifty guiltless people. To punish you, I shall hang a hundred fascists in Germany and you with them. Wherever you meet my men, a dog's death is in store for you.

Tell your Hitler, it is very painful to us to destroy socialist property. We weep bitter tears when destroying what we have created with our own hands. We cherished the Dnieper Electric Power Station as if it were our dear child. It stood like an emblem of our strength and our glory; and now it is no more. They are roaring, the mighty rapids, they are roaring wildly again. But we knew we had to do it. A new Dnieper Power Station will rise, even more powerful, even more beautiful, after our victory. And the Great Land of the Soviets will be proud of us, of her own children.

Don't expect mercy from us. No one will get it. It's a fearful bed you've made for yourselves. Not a single day of peace will you have, not a single peaceful night until we have rooted up all the evil you have sown on earth. Don't call for mercy. There will be none for you.

Karp Makodzeba.

Rendered by YURI YANOVSKY

53 Heroes Tortured to Death by the Germans

A small note-book was found among the papers and documents delivered to the unit headquarters from the battle-field. On its pages, under separate columns the abstracts of the following lectures for our soldiers were written in a small, painstaking handwriting: "Have you killed a German today?" "The struggle of the Yugoslav partisans," "About the second front."

One of the last abstracts deals with "Fascist captivity."

A reference to Sholokhov's *Hate* and to a tragical event in an anti-tank trench were mentioned in those notes. The abstract wound up with Dolores Ibarruri's famous saying: "It is better to die on your feet than to live on your knees."

These words the author of the abstract referred to that tragedy in an anti-tank trench. The abstract in itself did not contain any other facts which could throw light on that event than a few names of some guardists who had died the death of heroes.

Only later did we learn the details of the tragic events which took place in an anti-tank trench on the sector of the triple-island-crossing over the Don.

By a carefully prepared attack, the N. guardist unit rushed the enemy and dislodged him from his positions, forced him across the river and cleared the eastern bank of the Don on a narrow sector. In retreating, the enemy abandoned arms and munitions and left many marks of his revolting crimes. On their advance, Senior Sergeant of the Guard Mikhailov and guardists Nechayev and Zhidkov examined the anti-tank trench which the Germans had abandoned. The three guardists had advanced a few metres when they came upon a horrible sight. The dead bodies of fifty-three Soviet warriors lay in the trench. The bodies were frightfully mutilated and bore the marks of beastly, protracting tortures. The coats of the tortured Red Army men and commanders were thrown in a heap and chopped about with an axe. The boots were removed, placed in a row, and five-pointed stars were cut out on the toe-caps.

This sector of Soviet soil was held by the Germans no more than a few days. Advancing with superior forces, the Germans crossed the Don and wedged into our positions. Seriously wounded men and commanders remained behind on the various sectors of the battle-front, our retreating men having been unable to evacuate them. The Germans dragged the seriously wounded into an anti-tank trench, and there they held a cannibal orgy over them.

The Germans began by questioning the wounded, but the latter refused to answer. To an officer's question: "Where is your unit headquarters stationed?" Junior Lieutenant Nicholas Marchenko replied: "Not far from here, but you'll never get there, so don't ask." For this they cut off Marchenko's ear. The questioning went on, but he made no reply. Then they gouged out one of his eyes. Marchenko shouted: "Scoundrels!" They put out his other eye, and in a bestial frenzy the sadists drove their bayonets and knives five times through the hero's chest.

Each one of the men and commanders whom the Germans questioned acted like Nicholas Marchenko. Red Army man Nicholas Mussashvili, whom the officer tried to question in an ingratiatingly-polite manner, replied:

"I do not sell my country."

For this they broke Mussashvili's legs, put his eyes out and sliced his chest with bayonets and knives.

In their attempt to get some information from Sergeant Pavlov, the

Germans cut off the fingers of his right hand, one at a time. The sergeant kept silent. Then they cut his ears off. Bleeding profusely, he shouted:

"The day of reckoning will come!"

Sergeant Pavlov died like a hero.

Among the fifty-three sons of the great fatherland the Germans were unable to find a single traitor, neither did they find a coward!

In their mad fury the Germans held a savage orgy over each of the wounded. The dead body of every warrior who had died like a hero in the anti-tank trench, bore the marks of refined, sadistic mockery. Almost all of them had their legs broken, their ears cut off and their skulls broken in. Some of the bodies were literally cut up into pieces. Two of the martyred heroes were tied to a tree and their heads broken by some blunt instrument. Several dead bodies were found with their undershirts and tunics pulled up and tied over their heads.

Our troops which had won back this sector of Soviet soil buried with military honours in a common grave the dead bodies of these men and commanders of the Red Army who had died like heroes and who had set an example of staunchness and courage.

After the funeral, meetings were held on different parts of the front. The men and the commanders of the guardist unit swore to their fatherland to avenge the cruel death of their comrades.

And they are carrying out their pledge! Lieutenant Potulakhi's battery destroyed during the next few days four enemy batteries, demolished the headquarters of a German unit and annihilated some seventy Hitlerites. Lieutenant Drozdach's trench-mortar battery destroyed six trucks with the infantry it was transporting, and silenced six firing points, four trench mortars and one six-barrel mortar. Red Army man Balashov killed twenty-two Germans in a few days.

In the note-book of the unknown propagandist who told the story of the tragedy in the anti-tank trench, we read the following:

"No matter how beastly the enemy, no matter how vile his treatment of the people in the occupied Soviet territories, no matter how much he may mock our wounded, his fate is sealed. He will be beaten! The beginning of his debacle must be made here, at Stalingrad. We shall repay him for the martyrdom of our comrades. We shall not forget the tragedy in the anti-tank trench, just as we shall not forget the thousands of other crimes committed by him."

L. KUDREVATYKH

To the north-west of Stalingrad.

The Iron Hoop

Through the windows of the hospital she can see the Caucasian mountain range. She lays on the window sill her little hands maimed with fire and iron, and gazes intently at the mountain tops that breathe peace in their stately beauty. She looks to the North. Over there, beyond the mountains stretches the vast expanse of the Don steppe, and her own native village, Orekhovo, is right there, on the Donets.

Nadya remembers quite distinctly: it was a hoop, a folding hoop made of iron, that's what it was. Slowly, leisurely, the officer raised the flap of his black coat, and with a yawn took out of his trouser pocket a small iron ring. He tossed it up in the air, and the iron tinkled softly. The hoop could be extended at will like a toy. But it was an instrument of torture.

Nadya's father did not escape beyond the Don. He remained there, armed, to defend his native soil. He organized a partisan detachment elusive as the very winds of the Don

steppe. It was a struggle for life between him and the Germans. His detachment moved in roundabout ways over the steppe, it lurked in ravines and unexpectedly swooped on the enemy like a hurricane, only to scatter soon after and vanish into thin air.

Once on a pitch-dark night Father knocked at the door. He came in. With wonder he looked at the familiar walls of the hut, at its white, slightly chipped ceiling; lovingly he drew to him Zoya, Raya and Nadya. He asked them to read him something aloud. Opening a book at random, Nadya with her clear young voice started reading Pushkin's *Tale of the Fisherman and the Little Fish*. He sat there, with his eyes closed, and listened intently, enjoying the pure Russian of the great writer.

Father went away. And the next day a German punitive expedition raided the village. They evidently came with the purpose of razing rebellious Orekhovo to the ground. They poured an incendiary liquid over the clay walls and the thatched roofs of the houses, and set fire to them. First it was Starodubov's hut that caught fire, next came Fessenko's. Then they burnt the neighbouring hut where Nadya's little girl friend Lyuba lived. The crimson flames rushed up skywards quite near Nadya's house. Like a broodhen, Mother gathered her little ones around her. The glow of the fires outside crawled over the earthen floor. Somebody thumped on the door, the trampling of heavy boots was heard, and two German soldiers burst into the dimly lit hut. Groping their way in the dark like blind men, they stretched out their hands and seized hold of Nadya.

The blazing sunset looked like a great mass of clotted blood. The fire was devouring the uneven thatch of the roof. The low sky seemed suddenly to waver, to sink, to move on towards Nadya and to fall at her feet. She saw a gibbet: on a beam tween two tall plane-trees, Lyuba's father and mother were hanging. And Lyuba herself, as if struck dumb by the dreadful sight, knelt close by, staring at the gallows with a fixed gaze. Her dead father was clenching his fists, the wind was tearing at her mother's golden hair. The officer in the black coat watched Nadya. His plump hands with clean square nails reached out towards Nadya's slender neck. She started back from him. He patted her cheek and said:

"Ah, colossal! Here's a nice little girl!"

And he uttered a short chuckle which sounded as if iron was grating in his throat. He stood with his arms akimbo and spoke insinuatingly:

"Colossal! The little girl will think hard and tell us where the partisans are."

Nadya stood before him, afraid to look in the direction where her father had gone. Her pale lips kept whispering: "daddy, daddy..." But she checked herself in time, the officer, she thought, would hear, and she grew silent. The officer extended the little pieces of iron and tried on the hoop. Nadya did not grasp what he was doing that for, and what would follow next. The touch of the cool iron even seemed to calm her. The iron ring encircled her hair, her ears, her cheeks and chin.

The German laughed and said something to his soldiers who were fussing over the bonfire near-by. He stood there, his legs in their smart tall straight-topped boots set wide apart. Pressing his hands against his black-coated thighs and enjoying the sight of the little girl with the iron ring, he ejaculated in a brusque jerky voice, emphasizing each word:

"You will say where papa is. You will tell me how many partisans he has. You will say where they are hiding, in the forest or in the village. Speak!"

Nadya remembered her father once saying to her: "Little daughter! The

12-year-old Nadya who was mutilated by the nazi brutes. This picture was taken of Nadya in the hospital

fiercest dog gets afraid when a man stares at it straight in the eyes." And so Nadya now fixed her eyes on the officer in the black coat. He was so much taller than she was. His huge black figure towered above her mountain-like. She shook her head slowly.

"I know nothing."

Her thin quivering little voice exasperated the officer. One of the soldiers, a stout fellow in a sweater, tore the hoop from off her head and threw it into the fire. Nadya kept silent. Her heart was numb. The soldiers were feeding the bonfire. At the officer's shout the fat soldier in the sweater came up wheezing and holding the red-hot iron hoop with a pair of tongs. The officer took the tongs from him. Nadya stood before him in her unbuttoned faded short little overcoat, a thin twelve-year-old Russian girl with two pigtails down her back. He put the red-hot iron hoop round her head. She screamed with sheer terror. The officer bent down over her to hear what she would have to tell. She saw his eyes in which the light of the surrounding fires was reflected, and something seemed to strike her very soul. Gasping, in a loud whisper, she could repeat but one word: "Nothing." And slowly she shook her head held tight in the red-hot iron hoop.

She trembled all over with terror and anguish when she heard behind her her mother's stifled shrieks. Zoya was moaning. And so was Raya. For a moment she even forgot about the iron ring which seemed to have driven a lot of nails into her neck, ears, cheeks and head. In this poor head of hers the humming of thousands of bumble-bees resounded. But she had held out against the first, the most dreadful moments of the torture, and now nothing could break her. She thought of her father. Her very grief braced her up. All that she had imbibed from her Cossack mother, from her miner-father, from the age-old plane-tree whose leaves were now rustling in the twilight, from her own wide hilly steppe, from the sky that spread above her, from the quick-running Donets with its gentle banks, all this seemed now to rise up in her proud little soul. She pressed her lips so tight together that they grew white.

With his eyes fixed on Nadya the officer stretched out his hand behind his back. The soldier in the sweater put into this hand an iron rod, one end of which was heated red-hot. The officer ordered Nadya to hold out her hands. She did so. Then he struck at the ink-stained fingers on her right hand, and after every stroke he glanced at her and ordered: "Speak." And he beat her again, finger after finger, until all her hand was mutilated. Then he began to maim the fingers of the left hand.

Darting aside with an instinctive movement, Nadya broke loose and

ran for life, away from the bonfire, away from the gallows, the soldiers, the black officer. She ran alongside the huts, pressing her disfigured hands against her breast. She ran with the iron hoop round her head, seeing nothing, hearing nothing. She was shot at. Something scorched her leg. She stumbled and in a faint fell down on the cold dust of the village road.

Neither shots nor shouts could rouse her. Someone bent down to her and lifted her up in his arms. A very familiar voice whispered: "Little daughter!.." The partisans took off the hoop. On horseback she was taken away to the forest, and from there further away, across the line of the front. And everywhere the sight of little Nadya, disfigured by the tortures and gravely wounded, left a deep mark on the souls of men.

Nadya was transferred to Georgia in an ambulance-train. Both the slightly and the seriously wounded were very considerate to the little girl whose story moved them deeply. Some of her fellow countrymen, Cossacks from the Don, lay in the same ambulance carriage. Softly they would sing Cossack songs that were to remind Nadya of the steppes where feather-grass grows, of the smoke that curls above the roofs of the huts, of the deep blue of the sky and the silvery grey of the reeds. Half-unconscious, she tossed about on her bunk with wide-open eyes, and stubbornly she kept repeating: "I'll say nothing. Nothing." The Cossacks, proud of her staunchness, would whisper to one another: "That's true Cossack blood!"

It was a miracle that Nadya remained alive. In the record of her case at the hospital I read as follows: "Fingers in a state of flexion, cramped. On face and neck a large continuous scar." Those are her physical sufferings. The torments of her heart will be entered in the annals of our struggle against the nazis who with the stolid cruelty of hangmen torture and try to exterminate our pride, our hope, our future, our young generation.

A deep scar has been left on the heart of this Russian child, proud, honest and daring. Her face is disfigured by the German iron hoop, but, pure as a tear, the flame of hatred burns in her eyes. Those eyes call for vengeance.

B. GALIN

Uzbekistan in War-Time

The camp-fire glows faintly. Under the ash, a lilac-coloured light flickers over the dying coals. The autumn night is chilly. From the misty surface of the Volga, gliding past with a silken sheen, comes the sharp freshness of the first autumn frosts. Over the river is borne the fluctuating roar of gun-fire. At the camp-fire, his legs doubled up beneath him, sits a young Uzbek Red Army man; he is swaying rhythmically as he sings to himself a quiet, monotonous song.

In the morning, the young soldier had fought along with his friends, Russians, Ukrainians and Byelorussians, driving the Germans out of a Russian village. He had seen the ruins there, the charred remains of houses. He had seen the haggard and harassed old men, women and children. He had seen the tears of happiness well up in their dulled eyes when they saw the Red Army men.

The Uzbek sat at the fire and dozed. He dreamed of golden sunshine and poplars, of a little path among the grape-vines. Up the path comes a black-eyed girl, also singing a song about her fatherland: "My fair Uzbekistan, excellent is thy soil, pink the peach-blossom in thy gardens as the cheeks of my beloved, thy rivers wind in the ravines like

her black tresses. Never and nowhere shall I forget thee. No matter where I be, I shall recall in my dreams the sweet scent of my native soil." In his sleep the soldier smiled at the song and the girl.

Abundant is the ancient soil of Uzbekistan. Beneath a piercingly blue sky, for three hundred days in the year unsullied by a single cloud, in the fruitful valleys there lies a layer a hundred-yard deep of rich, fertile loess. So prolific is the soil that, so the legend goes, a dry branch thrust into it puts forth shoots.

Torrents of greenish water rush impetuously down the ravines, roaring and clattering, and from them irrigation canals, *aryks*, branch off in all directions, bringing grateful moisture to fields and gardens. From olden times the Uzbeks have known no rivals in the construction of irrigation systems. A network of aryks covers the country like a web. The aryks run burling along, in the earth, under the earth, above the earth, in furrows and in pipes, and sometimes it seems that the water is flowing not down the slopes of the hills, but up them, in defiance of the laws of nature.

Deep in the mountains countless treasures lie hidden. In folds of the earth are concealed iron and oil, copper and coal, gold and lapis-lazuli, asbestos and radium, zinc, lead, ozocerite, coloured marbles, sulphur, very rare metals and minerals. The ever-green forests of Ferghana are full of valuable kinds of trees. The walnut "burl" of Ferghana is world-famous, it is the best material for pipes and expensive furniture. Pomegranates and pistachios, hazel and walnut trees clothe the slopes. There are no fruits sweeter or more aromatic than the fruits of Uzbekistan gardens. In autumn you cannot tear your eyes away from the heavy bunches of grapes hanging from the vines, luscious, and covered with a tender dove-grey bloom.

The full, plump Bokhara wheat lies on the palm like grains of gold. In the water-flooded rice fields ripens pinkish, transparent rice, and cotton lies in the barns of the collective farms like mountains of fluffy warm snow, cotton, which clothes our whole country, cotton which thunders from the muzzles of our guns and rifles, bearing death to the enemy. Like great silvery pearls heaps of cocoons sleep in their baskets, from whose fine thread the busy hands of Uzbek women weave brilliant-coloured silks.

Rich is the soil of Uzbekistan. And its people too are wonderful, a people of toilers, architects and poets.

Nobody who has ever been in Samarkand will forget this town with its palaces and mosques, the enchanting airy span of its arches amid the cool greenery of the plane trees, the patterns on the tiles, gay and many-coloured as a peacock's feather, as fanciful and intricate as the metres of the great Uzbek bard Alisher Navoi. The wayfarer looks with emotion at the ruins of a tower from the top of which five hundred years ago the Uzbekian khan and learned astronomer Uloug-bek nightly watched the movement of the stars. And right up to the present day astronomers in their observatories compare the movement of the stars with the tables, now mouldering away, compiled by Uloug-bek.

The Uzbek people cherish in their hearts a high canon of art; in some far mountain village the traveller stops in amazed delight before a carved door in a clay fence, into whose wood a beautiful decorative design has been cut by the hand of some ancient unknown master. The wood is cracked with age, for centuries worms and weather have eaten into it, but the design remains in all its unfading loveliness.

The Uzbek people have seen hard days in their time, days full of trial and misfortune. These peaceful labourers of the fields have more than once experienced the devastating in-

vasions of nomads, and Uzbek blood has flowed over the fields and mingled with the water of the aryks. Their houses were burned down and destroyed, hordes of mounted foes trampled the crops into the earth, drove into slavery those who had survived the battles. But with inexhaustible patience and industry, the Uzbeks healed the deep wounds of their country, repaired the damage done. Neither wars nor the terrible Asiatic droughts, nor epidemics, nor the tyranny of conquerors, could break the Uzbek people's will to live. They have risen superior to all reverses, and after crushing disasters the new-born land has bloomed again.

Uzbekistan has changed so much under Soviet rule as to be unrecognizable. The people carefully preserve and cherish the prosperity they have won, remembering the words of the poet: "Whoever has once held in his hands the rose of freedom and known its fragrance, will never let fall so much as one of its petals."

The emancipated people brought back life to barren fields, won back from the desert new stretches of fertile land. By an heroic feat of labour, dedicated to their leader and teacher, Joseph Stalin, the Great Ferghana Canal was brought into being. Hundreds of thousands of people took part in the building of the canal, the local people joining in the work at each successive stage. Hundreds of thousands of *ketmenies* (heavy hoes) blasted away the dry clay. The dust whirled up like smoke from a battle-field. And in truth it was a real battle, waged by the people against nature. Side by side, shoulder to shoulder, the old experienced canal-digger and the young university girl-student, the secretary of the party committee and the "people's artist," dug up the earth, opening the way for the life-giving water. The canal became an affair in which the whole people shared. In the evenings, after hours of hard work, on an open platform above the sloping side of the canal, to the lingering strains of enormously long pipes *karnai*, as a reward for their labours the silvery notes of the voice of Halima Nassyrova woul float out. Or the famous dancer Tamara Hanum, flashing with brilliant-coloured silks, would whirl in the fire dance.

Every day Uzbekistan bloomed ever happier and more prosperous within the friendly family of Soviet peoples.

But in the West a storm suddenly broke. On the distant border, three thousand miles from Uzbek soil, guns thundered, the engines of enemy planes and tanks droned and roared, blood was spilt. The enemy burst into our country, invaded it in the base and stupid hope that he would find dissention in the Soviet family, enmity among the Soviet peoples, and that this would play into the hands of the German murderers.

And just as they had rallied to the workaday exploit of the building of the canal, so now the Uzbek people, burning with anger and hatred, rose as one man to repulse the enemy. The dashing Uzbek horsemen and soldiers are valiant and fearless fighters in the ranks of the Red Army, and do their full share in exterminating the German blackguards.

But not only in encounters on the battle-field have the Uzbek people shown their devotion to the working people's homeland. Having themselves experienced years of tyranny and oppressioon, years of banishment and slavery, they opened wide their brotherly arms to Soviet people who had lost their homes and been forced to fly from their native towns and villages before the onslaught of the hitlerite beasts.

Uzbeks have always loved children tenderly. According to old sayings, children in Uzbekistan are the blessing of fortune, and Uzbek families are always numerous and friendly. And when the trains and

lorries began to set down in the towns of Uzbekistan thousands of children who had lost their parents, and in whose eyes lurked the horror of what they had been through, the Uzbek people took the little orphans lovingly to their hearts. Led by the Uzbek women, the movement developed spontaneously. In all the towns of Uzbekistan, in the children's welfare departments of the People's Commissariat of Education, strings of people appeared asking to be allowed to adopt children. Old men and young people, workers and collective farmers, vied with one another in securing orphaned children. And the feelings of the Uzbek people are best expressed in the words of a woman tramway-worker of Tashkent, Apassova, who said to the representative of the People's Commissariat of Education, as she wiped away her tears: "Please, sister, give me a little girl with blue eyes, and I will love her as my own, and so I'll be doing something to show my gratitude to the Soviet government for all that it has done for me, a poor Uzbek woman."

And Uzbekistan gave refuge on her fertile, hospitable soil not only to children. The trains unloaded at the stations people and machines. From the Ukraine, from Byelorussia, came whole works and factories, transferred from the danger zone to places far from the front. It was necessary to bring to life the silent machinery, set beating again the stilled hearts of the factories and plants, so that the front should not feel an instant's interruption in supplies, or the men be deprived of arms.

People had to set to work on a strenuous and difficult task. There were no buildings on Uzbek soil suitable for housing the anvils on which weapons are forged. Lathes and aggregates were deposited on the bare ground, on waste land set aside for evacuated enterprises. It was necessary without delay to build, build and build; to build stubbornly, unceasingly, without stopping for sleep or rest.

The lathes started work while still in the open as soon as electric current could be supplied. And meanwhile the engineers were planning the buildings for the future shops.

There weren't enough building materials, and substitutes made of local raw materials had to be used. There wasn't enough fuel, so miners worked double shifts to produce the amount needed. There were no working overalls, the Uzbek women in their villages hastily ran up warm, padded work-clothes.

The Uzbek people knew that every second was precious, that delay would mean death. And people worked regardless of the whims of the weather or of working conditions.

The old factory workers cannot praise too highly the work of their pupils, the Uzbek girls. Their deft, nimble hands manage to produce the most intricate details faultlessly; defective goods are almost unknown. Persistence, industry, native shrewdness, the inherent eastern flexibility and lightness of touch enable them to master any working process, and on the honour boards of the war industries more and more frequently do the names of Uzbek youths and girls appear, never to disappear again.

In their brown hands the work goes forward with a will, and from the lathes there flows an endless stream of weapons for those who at the front are turning those weapons against the foe, who are giving to the struggle with the enemy all their strength and even life itself.

BORIS LAVRENYOV

A Visitor from the Front

The commander of the tank unit came into the ante-room. While the janitor was calling up brigade-leader Savotina on the telephone, the commander glanced absent-mindedly at the addresses of the letters set out behind the glass of the letter case. One postcard the postman had negligently stuck in with its written side showing. "Dear girls," the commander read, "I shall never forget how we were all pals together at the factory, and how we worked together. Now at the front I also remember you. . ."

"Who wanted Savotina?" asked the janitor.

The commander quickly turned, but was unable to pick out the brigade-leader among the several girls standing before him.

"This is Savotina," someone prompted, pointing to a rather short, well-built girl in a dark-coloured jumper. Savotina stepped forward diffidently.

"Don't you recognize me?" asked the commander, and at once smiled at his own question. "Or rather, can't you guess? Why, we and your brigade have been exchanging letters for almost a year. Now I'm in Moscow, and I decided to drop in.The boys asked me to have a look and see how you're carrying out your obligations."

"How we're carrying them out?" Savotina repeated; before answering she was perhaps wondering whether they were really fulfilling their obligations in this unusual competition between the girls of this garment factory and the men of one of the Red Army units. Then she said in a low but firm voice: "We're carrying them out not so badly. Come along and have a look!"

From the letters which passed regularly between the shop and the front, the men knew that "their" brigade of the garment factory No. 16, already decorated for former achievements, had now taken second place in Moscow in a competition of brigades working for the front; that this brigade had received a certificate of honour; that more than once already had the factory been awarded the monthly Trade Union banner in the Socialist Competition; they knew that the factory as a whole had kept the Red Banner of the State Committee of Defence for the last three months; knew too how this banner-bearing shop had reached very high figures of output, that many of the workers were "two-hundred-percenters," that they fulfilled their plan on the average not less than 170 per cent; they also knew how the girls spent their leisure, how they worked in small groups, what they read, who made friends with whom, and how they helped each other.

And so the commander eagerly agreed to visit the shop, and followed Savotina down the wide, well-lit corridor.

A tall girl in a padded jacket was standing near the entrance to Savotina's shop.

"Marussya," she said, "today the fire-fighting brigade is having a meeting. I think I'll stay. Is that all right?"

"Let me introduce you," said Savotina, "this is our Clava, our engine-operator."

"Are you a fire-fighter too?" asked the commander.

"She's the commander of our fire-fighters," Savotina answered on Clava's behalf; "and I can recommend her too as a fine worker on her own job. Clava, tell about your fire-brigade work."

"What is there to tell?" said Clava Makarova. "We kept watch over the building and put out incendiary bombs. That's all!"

What she did not tell was how she had gone straight to the shop after sleepless nights and worked on till the following night, when again the wail of the sirens had called her back

to the roof. She was too shy to say how on just those days she had worked specially well, that each month, as before the war, she received a prize, that she had gone on training thirty-two unskilled woman workers. This was everyday routine, quite ordinary and unremarkable, and to Clava, who could not have lived in any other way, it all seemed quite commonplace.

"It's the break now," said Savotina to her visitor. "What luck for the girls!"

And the girls were glad, but the break came to an end, and all twenty-three of them hurried away to their places. Only the "two-hundred-per-center" Lida Goryacheva, the "first hand" in the brigade, could not contain herself and cried with all the fervour of her sixteen years:

"Oh, Maria Yegorovna, we've just got a letter from Marussya Zimina, a perfectly grand one! Quick, read it out!"

Savotina smiled and took the post-card.

"Marussya Zimina is one of our Stakhanovites," she explained to the commander, "she went to the front not long ago as a volunteer, a nurse. Four of our brigade have gone to the front. Every letter we get from them causes great rejoicing here. And we are specially proud of Marussya: she got the Order of the Red Banner for courage."

"Quite a short time ago," Savotina began again, with a friendly glance at Goryacheva, "that girl found it hard to submit to the strict discipline established long ago in this shop, and even decided to leave work. In those days those fingers of hers, so quick and clever now, often turned out spoiled goods. But that was only half the trouble. We've had even worse people who've made good in the end. What was much worse, Lida would spoil and hold up the work of the whole unit and just didn't turn a hair. After a day's bad work she was as happy as a lark, and it didn't worry her in the least to find opposite her name on the competition board: "caused the breakdown of the hourly competition." To Polyanskaya, the chief of shop No. 2, she would swear time and again that she would reform, but with the same youthful irresponsibility she forgot all about it the next day. One evening the girls were coming back from the cinema where they had seen Gorky's *Childhood*. Polyanskaya, who was with them, called Goryacheva up to her. 'Lida,' she said, when the girl came running cheerfully up, 'you've seen what a hard struggle he had? And what about you? Just you think, and think hard: have you the right, especially at a time like this, to work the way you do? No, I don't want any more promises. Just think things out for yourself, and I shall see from your work whether you've understood anything. It's one of those things you've got to find out for oneself, nobody can do it for you!' And now Lida, far from being a hindrance in the smooth, precise rhythm of this war-time work, has become an active promoter of our new methods,—methods born of enthusiasm, methods which are continually improving thanks to this stubborn Stakhanovite spirit.

The idea of a daily increase of socialist obligations arose almost simultaneously in the four best brigades led by communist foremen. After the daily obligations taken upon themselves by the brigade have been discussed, the foreman immediately shares out the work among the workers and divides it up into hourly portions. The competition becomes, so to speak, hourly.

Every hour the foreman goes round the brigade and tells each girl how she stands in the hourly competition; he lets them know whether they have fulfilled or overfulfilled their plan, or perhaps have failed to reach the mark, and what measures should be taken to catch up."

The commander stood to one side and with Savotina's help made out what was going on in the shop. He saw how Lida Goryacheva, the first

link in the chain, sewed up the upper and lower plackets with swift, sure movements; he saw how she passed on the tunic to her former teacher, Clava Makarova, for whom she is now invariably too fast; how in doing so she made an almost imperceptible movement which economized a fraction of a second and then a whole second on the operation; he saw Makarova involuntarily speed up her rhythm, also saving a precicus second as she sewed; he saw how Kochkina took up the new rhythm, as she ran up the sides of the garment with a speed hitherto unknown to her. Kochkina, who sewed up the sides, stood alongside Getmanova, who was competing with her, and continually hurried her on, so as not to be left empty-handed herself. Having sewn on the collar, Getmanova passed the tunics on to Petrova who sewed on the sleeves and was in her turn impatiently awaited by her neighbour Pankratova who finished off the seams at the arm-holes and hemmed up the cuffs. From here the tunic, having acquired sleeves and collar, went on to the next machinist, Gudakova, and from her, now quite finished and exactly the same as the thing the commander himself was wearing, it passed to the ironer.

The commander could not take his eyes off the bent, flushed faces, the rapid fingers and precise movements; he watched them with an interest he would not have thought possible in himself. And only when on the competition results board Savotina wrote the figure 35, the commander realized that he had spent a whole hour in the shop. As he saw this figure, he gave a little sigh of pleasure, as though he had worked along with the brigade and had been afraid that the assignment would not be fulfilled. "There now!" he said to himself. "There's work for you! It's real front-line style, and no mistake about it!"

Savotina came up to the visitor to take him back. As he left, he glanced at the "first hand," at Lida Goryacheva, who had started a new hourly competition, and the girl, catching his eye, gave him a friendly childish smile.

In the ante-room the commander mechanically glanced at the letter-box. The postcard with the writing showing was no longer there: the red-banner brigade would be reading it aloud in the next interval. The commander gave Savotina a hearty and respectful handshake.

"Thirty-five tunics an hour," he said thoughtfully, "the boys will be pleased with that, mighty pleased! Of course, we knew we were competing with pretty good workers, but upon my word, we never imagined you were all such splendid girls!"

N. ZHARKOVA

The Blue Coat

In a smooth and unhurried gesture the girl raises her hand. And all at once, the street that she controls comes to a standstill. Stop! Then after a pause of two or three seconds, another flow of traffic emerges from the side-streets, to be stopped in turn by an easy upward wave of the hand, giving way to the former stream.

The girl in the middle of the crossing is like the skilful conductor of a big orchestra.

There are a lot of them in the capital now, those girls in blue coats. They have come to the Metropolitan Militia Stations to replace some of the militiamen gone to the front. Day in, day out, in sunshine and in the gloom of the blackout, they stand guard preserving peace and order in their beloved city.

An autumn night has fallen. The squares and streets of the capital are plunged in darkness. The barrage balloons have risen and, motionless, stand sentry somewhere in the starlit sky. The torrent of traffic is abating. Motor cars, gliding by with their dimmed blue headlights, become few and far between.

In one of the dark porches appears the pinkish glimmer of a lonely flashlight: a night patrol is examining the night-permit of a belated pedestrian. Moscow is turning in. From high above comes the soft humming of some night fighter-planes on patrol: the enemy must not pass either by land or air.

That night everything was going on very much as usual. Anya Lapshina was on point duty. In several months of service what she had not learnt about the locality and all its peculiarities was not worth knowing. The girl was peering into the darkness; like sensitive feelers, her eyes took stock of the infrequent passers-by, her ears strained with listening to the silence.

At the outbreak of war she, then a seamstress employed by a dressmaking establishment, declared her readiness to join the army. By and by, after her dear friend Vladimir had been killed in action, that readiness had grown into yearning, a burning desire to go to the front, to avenge him. Her face was rather pale, her eyes dry.

"I am twenty-two," she said. "I'm by way of being a sportswoman, and a pretty good shot, too."

She was put on the staff of the Moscow Militia. Women were wanted there, so she did not argue. She graduated from the Militia school with no marks other than excellent.

One night, it was rather late, a man with officer's tabs came up to Anya.

"How do you do?" he accosted her, raising his hand in salute.

"How do you do?" she replied drily. "I'm attending to you."

"Why this official tone? I bet my boots you're feeling bored to death now, aren't you, miss?"

"I'm not a miss, I'm a militiaman. What is it you want?"

"My holy aunt, what a serious-minded young lady! Got a light? I provide the cigarettes, and you the matches. Is it a deal?"

"I don't smoke. Move along, citizen, you can't stand about here."

With a vicious kick, the "officer" sent the girl flying to the ground, and stopped her mouth. In her fall she smashed her elbow on the paving-stones. Faint and dizzy with the searing pain, she drove her teeth into the man's wrist. He gave a low cry and wrenched it free.

Anya's attempt to call for help did not succeed; she was being strangled.

Young women who enrolled in the Moscow Militia

She felt the man's hand fumble with her pistol case, trying to pull out the weapon, while his other hand tightened round her throat, getting a firm grip on it.

Straining every nerve, gathering up what little was left of her strength, Anya used her uninjured hand to do a trick she had learnt at the Militia school. A moment later she was free; with a groan the "officer" had fallen and lay on his side; another second, and the ugly-looking muzzle of Anya's pistol was pressed close to his chest.

Night is almost over. A hazy dawn is spreading over the city. Fresh detachments of girls in blue take up their duties. Section Commissioner Pasha Konkova is in a hurry to get to the district entrusted to her. Eleven members of the aid-brigade, enrolled and trained for militia-work by Konkova, will report to her on all the happenings of the night, how the black-out rules were being observed. Three of the best social workers, all of them house-wives, will betake themselves to the militia-station for their turn in the children's room.

In this section everyone knows Pasha Konkova. Her advice is asked both in public and private affairs, family secrets are confided to her.

"What is your opinion, Praskovya Dementyevna," asks an elderly house-manager, using her full name and patronymic: "What would be the best place for storing firewood?"

She listens to everybody, and no one seeking her advice goes without getting it.

Meanwhile, in the squares and streets of the capital the red, green and yellow lights start on their daily round of blinking. The girls in navy blue uniforms keep watch at the crossroads.

This new day, tense and throbbing with life, will also draw to a close.

The girl militiamen of the first section of the underground guard will meet in the tidy hall of their hostel. The squad Political Instructor Valentina Yelisseyeva is to read Stalin's report and Order of the Day and to tell some episodes of front-line life.

Valya finds a lot of ready listeners. She was the first to join the service; she has come to love it dearly and has contrived to impart this love to the other girls. This squad has an excellent record, its fighters are young, healthy, high-spirited and well disciplined. Following the political instructor's example, all of them are blood-donors; some of them have given their blood to wounded Red Army men twelve times.

The other day, girl militiamen had a meet for the first summing-up of their activities; Major Kozhin, chief of the Political Department of Moscow Militia, reported there on many instances of their honest and selfless service.

There are many girls in the service as efficient as militiaman Anya Lapshina, Section Commissioner Pasha Konkova, Political Instructor Valentina Yelisseyeva.

The girls have matured and hardened, like steel, in service. Many of them have been appointed to highly responsible posts.

V. GUBARYOV

I Meet Gorky

August, 1934. The first Congress of Soviet writers in the Great Hall of the Moscow House of Trade Unions. Six hundred delegates, some sixty foreign guests and the audience of many hundreds resumed their seats after a long and stormy ovation in which they expressed their love of the writer, their gratitude to the hero.

He had just come from the country. I was introduced to him in an adjacent room, a few minutes before the opening of the Congress. I do not speak Russian; he does not know my language. There were a few other foreigners present besides myself. It was merely a formal interview, yet I came away from it with a vivid picture of Gorky. I now mentally compare this picture with that of Gorky the orator, as he stood on the platform, dominating the assembly.

How well I know his face! Unlike most men, his portraits really do justice to him. He is among the few people who enjoy the privilege of always being themselves, whose features are never distorted by embarrassment or shyness, by grimaces of affected modesty or self-importance.

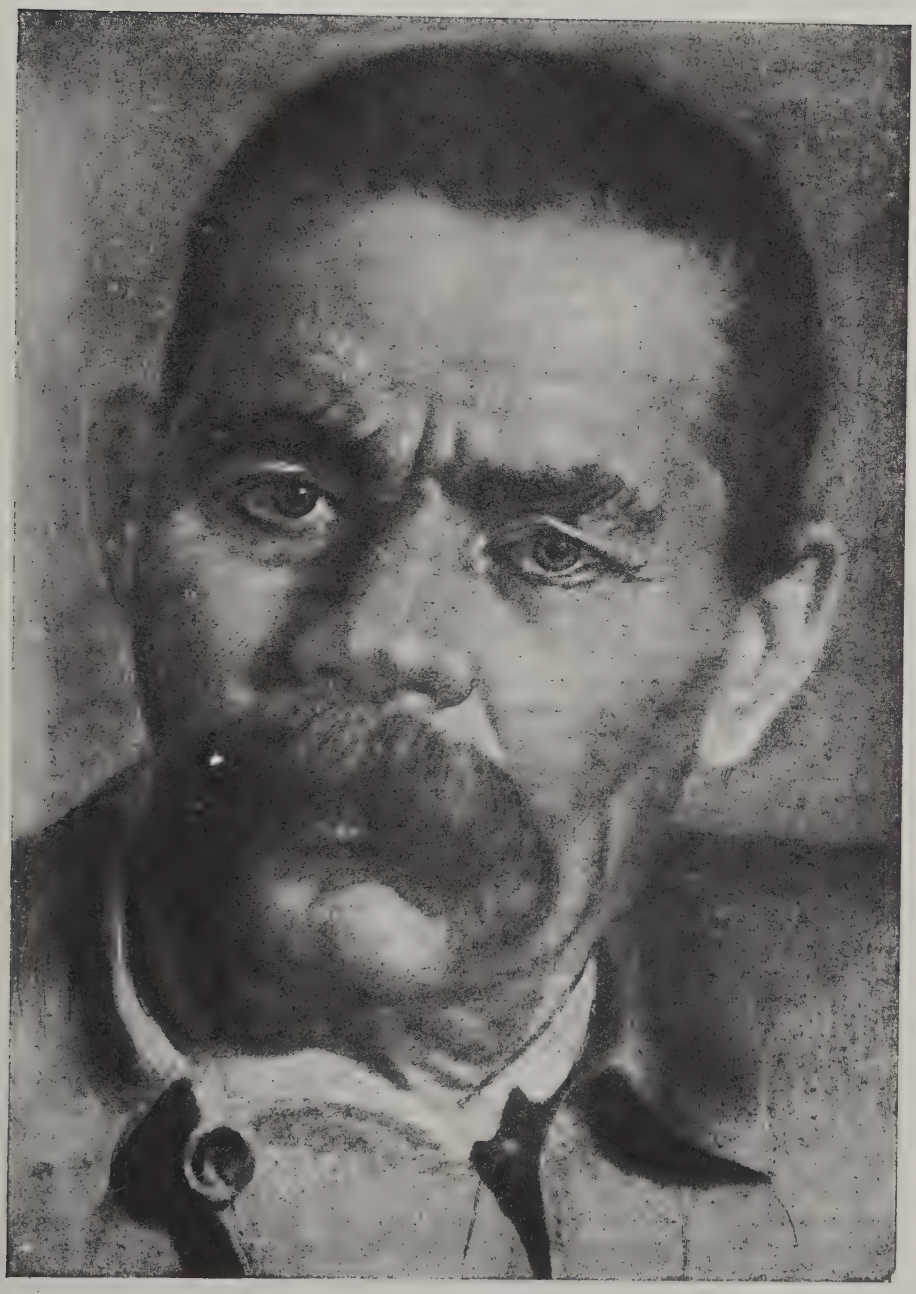
Incidentally "privilege" is hardly the right word. In men like Gorky or Whitman privileges are not inherent. Rather are they the fruits of victory—the victory of pride over humiliation, the victory of the free man over the slave, the victory of greatness over human insignificance.

His whole body seems to say: "Why should I dissemble? This is how I am made, this is how I live in the society of men who are my equals, in my native environment. You must accept me as I am or reject me altogether: my outward appearance and my inner self, the horse and the rider too."

So it is that disregard of self eventually becomes synonymous with supreme loyalty to oneself; and by lack of concern for outward appearance one stamps one's likeness indelibly in the minds of men.

. . . I gaze at him with all my eyes. This man, fragile, long sapped by illhealth and now stricken by age, is nevertheless the embodiment of invincible strength. He might be curved out of a secular oak. Thick hair, the heavy moustache of a Paris workman, an impudent nose, shining, roguish eyes, a swarthy skin, powerful frame, tall, broad shouldered—it was patently obvious that his whole being radiated a great love for labour.

This is no place to recall his speech; in any case I have already dealt with it elsewhere. I shall say only that his speech remains a literary chart-



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er of socialist culture not only in the pages of books but also in our minds.[1] That day Gorky sealed a pact between society and the artist.

Here I shall deal only with some characteristics of his which taught me as much about him as did his books.

His independent spirit and strong personality were immediately obvious. He had just begun to speak when the camera arc lamps were switched on and dazzled him. He stopped and in tones of pretended anger, in which one distinctly caught not only a bantering but also a commanding note, cried: "Put out those candles! Put out those candles!"

This spontaneous outburst which so vividly expressed his native humour brought down the house. Gorky chuckled, grumbled and would not begin his speech till the luckless cameramen had given in.

His speech was interrupted by a fit of coughing, and suddenly he looked ill and weak. One of the presidium members went up to him. Instead of the one voice amplified by the microphone and dominating the vast hall there was a chorus of whispering as if in a sick-room. A murmur of anxiety passed through the hall. And then somebody made the announcement that Gorky asked the audience not to smoke.

A few days later Gorky invited the foreigners who attended the Congress to his country home. It was a strange afternoon we spent there. I remember his fine slightly austere courtesy. It was clear that he was very tired. We sat around a long table, and he invited us to ask questions.

In seventeen years of the Revolution you Soviet citizens have learned how to "play this game." You do it easily and efficiently. But we people of the West have been trained for centuries in social conventions and bourgeois cautiousness. And here suddenly we were invited to express ourselves directly and frankly; no wonder we got ourselves entangled in this freedom like schoolboys in greatcoats. . .

It was a nice muddle. Panting and puffing, we squeezed out stray questions, and those present hardly have gathered from these questions that we represented the flower of Western intelligentsia.

A certain English lady, who well-nigh exhausted our host's patience, broke the record for idle curiosity. I admired his self-control. He looked at us like an old recluse might at a litter of harmless but very tiresome puppies.

Suddenly the door opened, and I saw Gorky's face brighten. As for us we were simply dumbfounded. It appears our host had a "surprise" in store for us. The leaders of the Soviet government entered the room. You can easily imagine our excitement at this unexpected meeting.

Soon we were all sitting at a big horseshoe table with the great writer himself presiding; to the right of him sat V. M. Molotov.

This congress of writers was by no means a congress of old men. I, for instance, was the oldest of the French delegation, and it was thanks to this that I was given the honour of sitting opposite Gorky and Molotov.

Owing to the wretched language difficulty our only exchanges were cordial smiles. What I remember best was the sadness of our host. A great sorrow had just befallen him. He kept himself in hand and tried to appear cheerful, but the moment he permitted himself to drop out the conversation a wave of grief and weariness swept over his features. I was sitting very close to him and saw how his face changed. I was filled with esteem, pity and tenderness for the man. His sorrow was in such

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[1] Listening to this speech of fundamental importance I thought of Jaurès. And I again thought of him when I reread it at my leisure. The astonishment its sweeping, truly revolutionary theses would have evoked in the bourgeois humanist embodied in this tribune of the French socialists! And the blow they would have dealt his cult of academic evaluations! I often imagined to myself a dialogue between these two men. . .

sharp, intolerable contrast to the courtesy of the hospitable host and the vigorous expression habitual to his face. At moments I thought King Lear was sitting opposite me. But how far he was from all affectation! With what dignity and simplicity this unfortunate father bore himself!

We did not notice him leave the room. He tendered his apologies, and we were told that it was bad for him to tire himself.

I never saw him again. But I shall always remember him the way I saw him that evening: so distant, so reticent, and yet so near, so human!

JEAN-RICHARD BLOCH

Truth Versus Falsehood

If we would seek a concise but exhaustive answer to the question: "By what means did German fascism attain power?", we should say: "By terror and falsehood."

It is common knowledge that Hitler makes use of the slogans of other political parties with all the dexterity of a clown. He borrows freely from political programmes, from those of the socialist parties among others, everything that can help him to gain power. This includes the false promise of reforms addressed to the masses of the people, on the basis of which the nazis impudently call themselves socialists. "Crows decked in peacocks' feathers," J. V. Stalin says of them; that is exactly what these political charlatans and demagogues really are.

A series of books in German, recently issued by the publishing house "Verlag für fremdsprachige Literatur," sets out to tell the truth about the Hitlerites; to expose their lies and crimes. This task of fighting nazi falsehood, of exposing the hitlerite "ideology" and tactics, the series solves in two ways: through the medium of belles-lettres and journalism, and by the use of documents, the language of facts and figures.

Johannes Becher, the outstanding anti-fascist lyrical poet, says in his *Ballad of the Mountain of Lies* (*Germany Calls*):

Once there was a great, tall mountain of lies
Raised by a lying dwarf before our eyes.

Becher's satire, his verses full of hatred toward the fascist oppressors, full of grief and shame for his people (the poems: *Inscriptions on the Crosses of German Soldiers in the East, Gifts from Russia, Portrait of Sergeant-Major Xaver K. Killed near Gomel*, and others), express his immediate reaction to the present war with fascism. His collection of war poems combines an intimate lyrical tone with agitational content. This gives an especial originality and appeal to the poem *May 1st, 1942. To the German Soldiers.*

The German anti-fascist writers exiled by Hitler, who have acquired a new fatherland in the U.S.S.R., naturally could not escape the influence of Russian culture. This is felt in Becher's poems, and frankly admitted by the combination of epigraphs from Goethe and Mayakovsky in E. Weinert's collection of verse *To the German Soldiers*:

What is your duty?
What the day demands.
Goethe.

Both song
And verse
Are bomb and banner!
Mayakovsky.

Both epigraphs refer to the poet's mission as fighter and agitator; to carry out this mission is the aim of Weinert's collection. Everything here without exception, both satire and pathos, "serves but one purpose:

to expose the enemy through the medium of literature, to show what fascism means and what democracy is, to persuade the German soldiers, who have been lured into a bloody and unjust war, to refuse to fight for Hitler."

Weinert employs various methods in his poetry. For instance, the entire collection *Stalin Is Speaking* (the same publishing house) is an example of political polemics. It consists of six poems, including an introductory one, each of which has as epigraph a quotation from Stalin's speech of February 23rd, 1942. With characteristic poetical temperament and political keenness and in accessible form, Weinert brings Stalin's ideas home to his audience. Thus, in the first poem (one of the strongest in the collection) he expounds Stalin's observation to the effect that the Red Army is waging a just war, in contradistinction to the German forces.

Friedrich Wolf's collection *Seven Fighters for Moscow* is dedicated to the battle for Moscow. In a series of sketches Wolf gives the portraits of typical Soviet citizens: doctors, old workers, young commanders, nurses, political workers, all characterized by patriotism, loyalty to their people and radiant optimism.

While F. Wolf presents a series of portraits of heroic defenders of Moscow, Theodore Plivier, in his collection *The Hedgehog*, depicts another aspect of the same period: the winter of 1941, somewhere near Moscow. Plivier gives most graphic descriptions of the enemy, the hitlertie soldiers. The collection consists of miniature satirical sketches, each based on letters to soldiers from the German rear. These letters and the addressees' reactions to them disclose the ethical and psychological features of each character.

In *Short Stories from Hitlerite Germany* Willy Bredel depicts the same world, only located in the rear of fascist Germany. The heroes of his stories, hitlerite proselytes and

Cover of the pamphlet "Crows Decked in Peacocks' Feathers," drawn by Kukryniksy

philistines, like "Malvin's widow," the aviator Kammberger (*Home on Furlough*), the janitor in the story *Blockwart*, are all doomed people.

Taken as a whole, the work of the anti-fascist German writers answers its purpose: to expose German fascism, that "crow decked in peacock's feathers," to strike it a blow with the weapon of belles-lettres.

The same series also includes journalistic works, such as the pamphlets *Crows Decked in Peacocks' Feathers*, and *The National Mask of the Hitlerite Imperialists*.

Both pamphlets consistently and methodically tear from the nazis their plundered "ideological" plumage, the finery of "German socialism," exposing Hitler's demagogical lies point by point.

The pamphlet *Crows Decked in Peacocks' Feathers* shows who won as a result of Hitler's coming to

power: the real bosses in the Third Empire are the representatives of the war and chemical industries, the industrial and financial magnates. The hitlerite leaders themselves have profited by the war: it is they who are the profiteers and cannon-kings.

The pamphlet *The National Mask of the Hitlerite Imperialists* presents another aspect of the "crow decked in peacock's feathers." It has for its main thesis the words of Stalin: "The hitlerite party is a party of imperialists, and of the most rapacious and predatory imperialists in the world at that" (Speech of November 6th, 1941). The pamphlet shows that the German fascists have no right to call themselves a national party, since they do not defend the interests of the nation and the people, but hiding behind a "national mask" are guided by the predatory interests of the German imperialists. Here, too, they make use of lies as a weapon to involve the masses of the people in their crimes. Such is the lie about the "national catastrophe," the revolution in November, 1918, that is depicted as having sapped the strength of Germany and forced it to accept Versailles; such is the lie about "Lebensraum," which serves as imperialist propaganda, as does the lie about "higher" races. The pamphlet disproves this triple lie by a number of quotations from the observations of various statesmen, including men like Ludendorff, who can scarcely be considered radical or democratic, as well as by figures, documents and facts.

The pamphlet shows in an interesting manner how the Versailles system, by calling forth a concentration of German capital, served to enrich the German imperialists and prepared the ground for the militarization of Germany by Hitler. It was this "inner Versailles," according to the pamphlet, which did the German people the greater harm. On this point hitlerite propaganda is silent, lying instead about the necessity of a war against the consequences of Versailles, lying about "Lebensraum" and "higher" races. The living space (elbow room) that the German fascists, a party of imperialists, are shouting about, is by no means any and every territory that offers: "They want a special living space, one richly furnished with raw materials," the pamphlet observes wittily. As to the twaddle about higher and lower races, the pamphlet points to the example of a socialist State, the U.S.S.R., where "nationalities considered inferior by tsarism" are experiencing a great cultural upheaval and taking equal part in socialist construction. This example from real life, this historically concrete fact renders all the false inhuman fascist twaddle worthless.

Whereas the first two pamphlets show what the system of fascist dictatorship really is, the pamphlet *What Is the Soviet System?* gives an answer to the question as to how the people's rule is realized in the U.S.S.R. It sets forth the principles of the Soviet constitution and the basis of the economy of the socialist country, prefacing this by several remarks on the origin of the Soviet State, the struggle of the peoples of former tsarist Russia for their rights, the establishment of Soviet democracy.

The note of V. M. Molotov, People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs, informed the whole world of the methods by which the hitlerite army wages war. This document has just been put out in German by the same publishing house.

The same publishing house has also issued a collection of speeches by J. V. Stalin under the general title *J. Stalin on the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union.*

To summarize: the series undeniably provides strong and miscellaneous weapons for fighting hitlerite falsehood with truth, for waging war against fascist "ideology."

N. NADEZHDINA

CAPTAIN MAYNE REID

(1818—1943)

In 1840 a small sailing boat crossed the Atlantic Ocean. On its spray-swept deck stood a young man with burning fearless eyes. It was the twenty-two-year-old son of an Irish clergyman, Thomas Mayne Reid. Thus started a romantic life in which one adventure was followed by another, in which the merchant's purse was exchanged for the school-master pointer, the hunter's carabine for the journalist's pen. . .

Glimpses of Mayne Reid's stormy biography are to be found scattered throughout the thousands of pages of his works. Two great countries, Great Britain and America, became closely bound up with the novelist's destiny. Born in Great Britain, he spent his childhood and youth there; in America he hunted, travelled and fought. His first novel, which took the public by storm, was published in England in 1850. But it was in America that the author experienced the events described in the book. In England he set out to be not only a writer but also a politician, publisher and businessman. Meeting with failure he returned to America for the second time. There he found his old friends, everything there reminded him of his brilliant youth. Falling ill, however, he hastened to return to England where he remained until the end of his life.

The old portraits of Mayne Reid show us a bold, energetic and noble face. And such in fact he was. He went to America in quest of riches, but it was not of money that he thought when he bravely fought at the walls of Vera-Cruz, leading his volunteers to storm Chapultepec.

In 1848, when he returned to Europe with plans for a novel ready in his mind, it was not a writer's fame that he sought: he was hastening with a group of volunteers to the assistance of the insurgent revolutionaries of Bavaria and Hungary. It is with good reason, therefore, that among the persons invited to a meeting held a few years later in London in honour of the revolutionary events of 1848 we find alongside the names of Karl Marx, Herzen and Victor Hugo that of Captain Mayne Reid.

He was already an acclaimed novelist at the time, his books were read with delight by the younger generation.

In Russia Mayne Reid's novels first appeared in the 60's of the last century and immediately won the recognition of the young Russian reader. The press, too, was not slow in responding to their appearance. The teachers' magazine *The Teacher* (1864-1865) carried detailed and favourable reviews: ". . . From Mayne Reid one may learn a great deal, without effort and with better success than from any history book, about zoology and the nature of a country." The Petersburg paper *Golos* wrote: "Even if our literature were annually enriched with a dozen good children's books, the publication of Mayne Reid's trapper stories would still be welcome news" (1865, No. 26).

Mayne Reid has left a great literary heritage, approximately 60 volumes, works dictated by a passionate heart and written sometimes perhaps by an overhasty pen.

Mayne Reid's works follow two main lines. One of them is the novel with tense dramatic situations, breath-taking plots, romantic or heroic intrigues. Such for instance are *The Headless Horseman*, *The Quadroon*, *The Flag of Distress*, *Oleola the Seminole*. The fate of the bold and gallant heroes

Covers of Mayne Reid's "The Rifle Rangers," "The Boy Hunters" and "The Forest Exiles" printed in the Soviet Union

unfolded in these pages hold the reader spell-bound.

The second and most probably the essential type of work done by Mayne Reid is his "informative genre." Here the skill and merits of the author are indisputable. His books of this nature are literally saturated with hunting, zoological, botanical and ethnographical descriptions. An endless panorama of the wonderful phenomena of nature unfold before the reader. The plot in these books plays a purely subordinate role.

The great educational significance of Mayne Reid's popular-science stories is recognized by men of science. Russian professor of zoology A. M. Nikolsky stated frankly: "I am indebted to Mayne Reid for the general trend of my activity and the fact that I am a professor of zoology." Mayne Reid's merits as a writer of popular science are highly estimated by the eminent Russian zoologist and geographer, the student of the fauna of the Caucasus, K. A. Satunin (1863—1915). He wrote: "Mayne Reid is above all a zoologist. . . I am indebted to him for the fact I now deliver lectures on zoology and work in this sphere" (*Natural Science and Geography*, 1912, No. 11).

Another group of Mayne Reid's works that should be mentioned is his original "Robinson stories." Man dependent on his own resources was always a subject that strongly attracted Mayne Reid (*The Desert Home*, *The Boy Tar*, *The Ocean Waifs*). The important thing was not the surroundings, whether a vast uninhabited desert or the cramped hold of a ship. What was important was that it depended upon the person himself, upon his good cheer and the firmness of his will to save himself. Mayne Reid returns to this subject time and again (for instance, the short vivid story *Caught in a Tree*).

N. Alakrinsky's illustration for "The Boy Hunters"

Mayne Reid's works have been known to the Russian reader some eighty years now. He is loved and appreciated by the Soviet youth. A number of his finest works have been published in the U.S.S.R. in several different editions. New translations of his complete works were printed in 1929—30. A few years later (1938) a special children's edition of *The Headless Horseman* and *The Boy Tar* were printed by the "School Library."

What attracts the Soviet reader to Mayne Reid's heroes?

The unquenchable passion for adventure...

"I had traversed the continent from north to south and crossed it from sea to sea," says Captain Haller in *The Rifle Rangers*. "My foot had pressed the summits of the Andes, and climbed the Cordilleras. . . I had steamed down the Mississipi, and sculled it up the Orinoco. I had hunted buffaloes with the Pawnees of the Platte. . . I had eaten raw meat with the trappers of the Rocky Mountains, and roast monkey among the Mosquito Indians. . . The spirit of adventure—its thirst—is within me slakeless."

Nobility of heart, the will for freedom. . .

"To the poor slave, or even to the poor taxed subject, peace is no peace, but a constant and systematized strength, often more pernicious in its effects than even the anarchy of open war," exclaims Mayne Reid in *The Forest Exiles*.

Courage, fearlessness, contempt for death...

"A devilish nate shot that, I don't care who fired it," calmly says one of Mayne Reid's heroes, just after his son was pierced with a bullet. "An inch of a miss—good as a mile" (*The Rifle Rangers*).

That is why the youth love Mayne Reid. That is why he figures in their world as a real companion and friend. Some of his literary methods may seem old-fashioned and naive, but the all important thing is that the ideas and sentiments of his heroes retain their freshness and vitality today, in these grim times of the world war, when all honest people are waging a struggle against the same evil and violence that aroused the indignation of the honest heart of Mayne Reid.

SERGEI BOGOMAZOV

CURRENT PUBLICATIONS

THE NEWSPAPER JOINS IN THE BATTLE

The importance of the part played by propaganda in this war is indisputable and universally recognized. The former world war already revealed the importance of propaganda in war-time. Next to the military, economic and diplomatic fronts an ever-growing importance is assigned to the fourth front, the war fought by means of the press, the radio and the different forms of art.

In this second world war, propaganda is used on a much larger scale.

The Red Army has a large number of printed newspapers.

In addition to the four central newspapers, with an enormous circulation, *The Red Star*, *The Red Navy*, *The Stalin Hawk* and *The Universal Military Training Paper*, each army, each front and each division has its printed paper.

In the regions temporarily occupied by the enemy, a great number of newspapers is printed by the larger partisan groups. Papers are also published for the population of the regions temporarily held by the Germans. These papers appear in the Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Lituanian, Latvian and Estonian languages.

But it is the so-called *Fighting Leaflets*, published by the smaller units of the Red Army, mostly by platoons, which are the most original organs of militant propaganda. These handwritten papers play a most important part in raising the men's fighting power and in inculcating a feeling of holy hatred for the enemy.

The collection under review[1] contains articles and stories about the activity of several army, navy and division papers and of papers issued by partisans in the enemy's rear. They represent something like a summary of the activity of the press at the front. As a rule, these articles and notes are written by the editors of the papers concerned.

As for the *Fighting Leaflets*, the volume contains only one short note by Fedossov on the company's *Fighting Leaflet*.

A characteristic feature of the division newspapers, and especially of the smaller military units, is the fact they are written, composed and even published at the front, under the fire of enemy shells.

Another characteristic feature is the fact that these Red Army papers, as a rule, are written by the soldiers and junior officers themselves. The permanent staff of the newspapers is employed not so much in writing as in subediting the copy which soldiers and officers send in.

In this way the readers take an active share in the development and life of their paper.

In addition to its role of organizer and propagandist, the paper undertakes to collect and disseminate the fighting experience of entire units as well as of outstanding individual soldiers, and thus helps in the millitary education of the Red Army men.

The volume opens with an exhaustive article by T. Mironov "The Newspaper as Organizer of the Red Army Masses," based on the concrete example of the activity of the newspaper *Red Army Pravda* published on the Western front.

Early in October, 1941, the German hordes launched an offensive against Moscow from Vyazma and tried to break through our defences. After some severe fighting the enemy succeeded in pushing back our Red Army units; the latter retreated eastward, fighting for every inch of ground,

[1] *The Newspaper Joins in the Battle*, Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1942.

wearing down the enemy and dealing him some hard blows.

During those painful days, *Red Army Pravda* every day, in every issue, appealed to officers and men for organization, steadiness and firmness. It mobilized the soldiers' will-power, giving them new heart and confidence in their strength. From day to day it emphasized that this was a matter of life or death to the people, and that the people must not die. And so that the people might live on, it was imperative to stop the enemy, to win.

The newspaper stressed that the fate of Moscow, the fate of the capital depended not only on the conduct of the various military units in the field, but also on the behaviour of each individual soldier in each battle. Daily and persistently the paper impressed on its readers this personal responsibility of every soldier.

The editors tried to participate directly in the great battle for Moscow. The most important contributors were sent as representatives among the various units. A group of three or four was formed to go to the hottest sector of the front. This enabled the editors to keep in immediate touch with the men and junior officers. These occupied a leading place in the paper. As a rule, the copy for the front newspaper was written in the trench, the dug-out, at the tank or gun, right in the firing-line.

An idea of the conditions under which the editorial workers at the front frequently have to work, is given in the brief lines of the diary of the editor of the Sevastopol newspaper *Black Sea Sailor*, P. Mussyakov, entitled "Grim Days."

The newspaper *Let's Crush the Enemy* carried out an interesting experiment in teaching the individual soldier how to act in the field. In an article "The Newspaper Educates the Soldier," the editor Altman stresses that problem. This paper was founded on October 14th, 1941, and on October 16th its staff were already on the job, working in the advance positions of the Western front.

The press at the front

This newspaper undertook to strengthen the spirit of self-denial and courage in each individual soldier, to teach him the art of war by concrete examples, to encourage cunning and a quick wit.

Altman points out that the paper did not immediately find the right way of setting the task. For instance, in the first issues there was a section entitled "Advice to the Soldier." Here they published various instructive articles, such as "The Care of Weapons," "How to Fight German Tanks" and "Learn to Maintain an Accurate Fire from Your Automatic Rifle and Machine-gun." But these general articles were soon replaced by others which popularized the experience gained by individual soldiers and units, and in addition the men who showed outstanding skill in handling their weapons were themselves made to write these articles.

A start was made with an article by Red Army man Fomin, called "How I Destroyed Four Tanks." In plain language this gallant soldier told his comrades how during a night battle he destroyed four fascist tanks with anti-tank grenades and bottles with inflammatory liquid. This article aroused great interest among the soldiers, and after reading it many profited by the author's experience, after which they, in turn, began to share their experience with their comrades in the pages of the newspaper.

In order to teach soldiers how to behave under different battle conditions, the paper soon introduced a special section entitled "How We Trick the Enemy." Its aim was to show the inventiveness and presence of mind of our soldiers and how to outwit the enemy in battle.

This section did not appear full-fledged, but was introduced gradually, as the soldiers gained fighting experience in battle with the Germans. The section acquired special importance when fresh reserves kept on arriving in the unit, and when it became evident that the new men had to be trained on the experience gained by the veterans. In articles and stories published in this section, men and officers shared with their comrades their experience, their technique and methods they used in fighting the enemy.

In addition to this, it became necessary also to describe the tactics used by the enemy, so as to enable our soldiers to see through his tricks. A new section appeared in the paper, entitled "What Is the Enemy up to?" In this section men and officers write articles and stories on the tactics used by the Germans.

The Red Army newspapers try to cover the soldier's entire life. They discuss not only military experience and technical questions but matters of every-day life as well. In addition to problems of camouflage, how to fight tanks and reconnoiter, how to use military stratagems, etc., the newspapers devote much space to such matters as baths and rest, and to such "trifles" as needles, thread, buttons and tooth-brushes. These articles and notes on the numerous problems of every-day life, which determine the soldier's fitness, enjoyed great popularity among the Red Army men. A special section, under the title of "Every-day Needs at the Front," was devoted to these problems in the newspaper *Let's Crush the Enemy*. Of these the author writes as follows:

"The cook and the driver, the chauffeur and the warehouse worker, the harmonica-player and the worker of the bath-and-laundry unit, the tailor and the shoemaker, the postman in the front-line and the one who carries thermos dishes under shell fire, our paper wrote about all of them. Such material helps to improve the daily routine at the front."

The newspaper *Let's Crush the Enemy* once made an interesting enquiry. While in the front-line, the editor asked the men:

"What do you read first in our paper?"

One of the men replied:

"The letters in which Red Army men tell how they killed the enemy."

Another said:

"The reports of the Information Bureau."

And several others replied:

"The left corner of the fourth page." (This is the "Front Humour" section.)

This is significant. The average Red Army man enjoys a funny story about the enemy; he likes a wisecrack. The men love to read "chastushki"[1], verses, stories, and jokes about the fascists, and spend much time over the caricatures printed in the "Front Humour" section.

A small note entitled "The Company's Fighting Paper," by the editor of the *Fighting Leaflet*, Sergeant N. Fedossov, is of special interest. In it the author tells how in practice the small unit Red Army press is published during a tank battle.

"The company was engaged in a hot fight with the fascists. With their fire and caterpillars our tanks were crushing the enemy gun emplacements, destroying his fortifications, dug-outs and men. Although everyone was frantically busy, we were bringing out our *Fighting Leaflet*.

Mirgorodsky, a mechanic and driver, availed himself of a free moment and on a slip of paper torn from a notebook wrote a brief note on the bravery of the tank-commander Vlassov.

As soon as there was a momentary pause in the fighting, notes for the *Fighting Leaflet* were received from other tankmen as well.

This copy was subedited on the spot, and war correspondent Yefimenko made some headlines and drew some anti-German caricatures. The leaflet was ready and made the rounds of the unit. It was passed from tank to tank."

The general subject matter of the *Leaflet* is usually planned several numbers ahead. For instance, one of the copies of the *Fighting Leaflet* was wholly devoted to the problem of preparing for anti-gas defence. This theme had been taken straight from life: in the gas-mask cases of tankmen Bulyuk and Ovchinnikov were found such foreign objects as spoons, handkerchiefs and pencils; this provided material for a copy of the *Fighting Leaflet*.

Experience shows that to be successful each copy must have a central idea. Without this, it will not attract attention.

The *Fighting Leaflet* does not refrain from cartoons and caricatures about the comrades' shortcomings. As the author states: "The war correspondents do not pass over any shortcomings in the work of their comrades. We live together like friends and respect each other, knowing that everyone of us gives all his strength to the common cause, but if a comrade makes a mistake, he is criticized and helped to correct his error."

An article by Lifshits, entitled "The Press of a Besieged City," published in the Odessa papers *Black Sea Commune* and *Bolshevist Banner*, is an example of the important part played by the press in a beleaguered town.

Of great interest is Kopalin's article entitled "The Newspaper of a Partisan Country," and one by Trofimov, "The Partisan's Bolshevist Word."

These articles show how by means of concrete examples the press is able to instill a fighting spirit into the population in enemy-occupied localities. Following Stalin's order to create impossible conditions for the enemy in the regions held by him temporarily, the newspapers systematically mobilize the population for the active struggle against the invaders and put clear tasks before the population.

When the German commandant of village Z. issued an order for the collection of warm clothing, the partisans published a small leaflet which a few hours later appeared next to the German commandant's order. The leaflet was brief:

"Comrade, read our partisan advice and pass it on to others: do not give any warm things to the fascist dogs.

[1] Satirical or comic doggerel verses.

Newspapers being distributed to the men at the front-lines

Hide them from the Hitlerites. Let the fascist scoundrels freeze."

As a result not a single warm garment was collected in that particular village.

In January, 1942, the German command issued an order to four village Soviets to send a hundred horses to a neighbouring village within three days.

Immediately the collective farmers of these village Soviets were handed a leaflet issued by the partisan detachment, advising them to drive the horses into woods at night, so as not to fulfil the order of the German command. That night the collective farmers drove several dozen horses into the woods and handed them over to the partisans.

In another region, which the author rightly calls Partisan Country, the united partisan detachments publish a paper *Commune*. This paper not only reflects the struggle against the German occupationists of the partisans and the people themselves, but also prints definite orders and instructions issued by the partisans.

When the German command of a certain region in Partisan Country ordered the changing of the railway gauge, so as to facilitate the transportation of their troops, the editors of the partisan newspaper *Commune* published an editorial entitled "No Change in the Railway Gauge." It called upon the population to sabotage the rebuilding of the railway and to try to deprive the enemy of every means of transport: "It is better to burn the sleigh and drive away the horses than to allow the enemy to transport soldiers, food and munitions." The paper advised the destruction of the fascists' henchmen on the spot, if the latter schould try to force the population to work on the railway; it also advised people to bring to the partisans' knowledge any such facts.

Step by step the paper enumerated the atrocities and ill-treatment which the population had suffered at the hands of the Germans in the occupied areas, thus fanning hatred against the fascists.

The paper stresses outstanding cases of Soviet patriotism, courage and self-sacrifice, and thus stimulates the spirit of active resistance.

Thus, for instance, the paper gave

wide prominence to the outstanding heroic deed of a collective farmer, Mikhail Semyonov. In an article entitled "Like Ivan Sussanin," the paper writes:

"After an orgy of brutality in the village of M., the fascists had to go to the next village. The German invaders took Mikhail Semyonov along to serve them as guide to the next village.

He reacted like a real patriot, just as Ivan Sussanin did many years ago. Knowing the road perfectly, Semyonov led the fascists through the woods all night, and by morning he had them far from their objective. . ."

As he was being murdered by the Germans, Semyonov cried:

"And so you believed that a Russian would help you, you swine?"

The collected volume contains much interesting and useful material on how the press works in war conditions and how it can be used as a weapon in the struggle against the enemy. This experience may also be of great value to other countries fighting against fascist invaders.

VLADIMIR ZALEZHSKY

THE FRENCH EDITION OF "INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE" IN 1942

In 1942 the State Literary Publishing House printed in full all twelve issues of the French edition of *International Literature*. This fact deserves mention inasmuch as it is indicative of the scope of publications in the U.S.S.R., which has stood all the tests of war-time, and of the firm ties between Soviet literature and art and its French readers, French either by nationality or culture.

In 1942, as in preceding years, *La Littérature Internationale* reflected cultural life *in* the Soviet Union and abroad. But in 1942 the cultural life of the world became so deeply involved in the world war that the entire material of the magazine reflects all various aspects of the war. This is but natural and could not be otherwise, for the very reason that such is the demand of the reader himself. To what extent did the magazine succeed in satisfying this demand?

Let us examine the material from two points of view.

From the very first days of the war, Soviet writers have been taking an active part in the defence of the fatherland against the hitlerite scoundrels. It suffices to say that more than nine hundred writers are at the front writing sketches, poems, stories, narratives and even novels about the Patriotic War. At the beginning sketches and lyrical poems were predominant; later Soviet literature contributed a number of illuminating stories and narratives, part of them devoted to the front, the rest to the rear, to the Soviet plant, collective-farm village, the intelligentsia, juveniles and children.

Of the stories carried by *International Literature*, *Russians Don't Surrender* (Nos. 1-2, 3-4), written by the late A. Polyakov [1], brilliant war correspondent of the *Red Star*, should be particularly mentioned.

Every issue of the magazine carries a special section, "Front and Rear," which abounds in factual and narrative material showing the characteristic heroes and characteristic phenomena of the Soviet front and Soviet rear: stories about the young Soviet heroine Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, about partisans, about the defence of Leningrad, episodes at the front, front-line stories by V. Grossman, C. Paustovsky, K. Gorbunov, sea stories by V. Vishnevsky and many others.

All these stories, despite diversity of material and style, have one merit in common: they contain a wealth of documentary information. The western reader, who eagerly seizes upon the least information that throws light on the "Russian miracle," on the unexampled victorious resistance of the Land of the Soviets in its single-handed fight against the hitlerite war machine which has mobilized the resources of practically the whole of Europe, will find a rich harvest in these sketches and stories.

Let us pass over to fiction.

Here it should be noted that war-time Soviet poetry is poorly represented in the magazine. Of the poems printed, I wish to draw attention to C. Simonov's *Wait for Me* which has won the hearts of Soviet readers by its warmth and present-day appeal. The translator P. Luquet has, to a considerable extent, succeeded in retaining the warmth of this short poem, which expresses the sadness and hopes of millions and

[1] This volume is well known to the English reader since it has appeared in England.

millions who are waiting for the return of their dear ones from the front.

Literature reflecting life at the front is represented by a number of interesting works from the pen of leading Soviet writers. I shall mention but three names:

Leonid Sobolev—the story *His Bride* in which a wounded tankman who has temporarily lost his sight draws a beautiful picture in his imagination of the nurse tending him; not to shatter his dream, his bride, a modest, sympathetic but rather plain girl, leaves the hospital on the eve of his recovery; his story *The Blue Scarf* which relates how an airman comes upon the dead body of a young woman with a blue scarf, killed on the seashore by a German bomber. The airman takes the scarf as a talisman in coming battles, in which he vows to deal ruthlessly with the foul enemy. *The Nightingale* is a war episode from the Southern front; *Leonard the Barber* tells the story of Leonard the barber, a violinist, the favourite of the Odessa sailors, who behaved like a hero during an air raid over Odessa, but as a result of which, alas, the barber and musician lost both arms. These stories are printed in Nos. 5-6, 7-8.

V. Grossman's *The People Is Immortal*, an outstanding war novel, several chapters of which are printed in No. 12 of *International Literature*, giving the reader a good idea of the merits of this work which is based on army life in the storm and stress of the front-lines.

C. Simonov's *Russians*, big sections of which are given in No. 11, is at present being staged with great success in a number of theatres of the U.S.S.R.

On the whole it can be said that the people and events at the Soviet front have been richly reflected on the pages of the magazine, both in the afore-mentioned material as well as in much else not dealt with due to lack of space.

In the sections "Books and Portraits," "Art News" and "Notes on the Soviet Union," the reader will find valuable information about new books, the theatre, about exhibitions of paintings, about new musical compositions in the Soviet Union.

A few words about foreign subjects in the magazine.

Here note should be made first of all of the excerpts from the novel *The Fall of Paris* by Ilya Ehrenburg, the Soviet writer who spent a considerable part of his life in France and witnessed the "fall of Paris" and the events which paved the way for it. His book is of exceptional interest to those who want to grasp and understand the historical drama that France is experiencing (*La Littérature Internationale*, No. 3-4).

Of the works of western writers printed in the magazine in full or in part, the following are of interest: Ray Millholland's *Six o'Clock Whistle*, an interesting story about the mobilization of the U.S.A.'s industry for war needs; Jean-Richard Bloch's *Search in Paris*, a graphic dialogue scene dealing with the first period of the occupation of Paris; vivid poems of the Spanish poet Garcia Lorca, translated by Marina Tsvetayeva (*The Road*, *Six Strings*, *The Ballad of Three Rivers*, *The Ballad of the Sea*); C. M. Arconada's *Under the Sky of Madrid*, a story about the adventures of three homeless waifs during the siege of Madrid; Bernard Doret's *Hostage*, translated from English, a narrative about life in occupied France telling the story of an intellectual who thought that he was not "a man of politics," but he was among the hostages taken, and he became conscious of his civic duty. And finally No. 12 of the magazine carries big sections from the novel of the American writer Maurice Hindus *To Sing with the Angels*. The author takes us to Czechoslovakia occupied by hitlerite bandits. The scene unfolds in an small village situated near Brno. The author did not have to draw on his imagination to depict the horrible picture of the "new order" in Europe as reflected in the fate of the inhabitants of Liptowice.

Life in the West is also dealt with in part of the material in the sections "Books," "Art" and "Current News."

The reader of *La Littérature Internationale* can note with satisfaction that the magazine in its different sections has responded to the most important events of the past year (1942).

The heroic struggle of the Red Army and the whole Soviet people against the Hitlerites, the smouldering but growing resistance of the peoples of the occupied countries in Europe, the outstanding events in world culture in its struggle against the destroyer of cultural treasures, fascism,— all this has been reflected in the pages of *La Littérature Internationale*, magazine which mobilizes the reader to struggle against the enemy of mankind.

LEO SOBOLEV

THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR AS PORTRAYED BY RUSSIAN PAINTERS

The All-Union Art Exhibition in the Tretyakov Gallery is no ordinary exhibition where one seeks delight in art, where one is captivated by mastery of stroke and design, where the spectator merely contemplates. This is an exhibition born of battle and calling to battle. Hatred of the enemy inspired the painters; love of country guided their brushes.

War is in all the pictures. One feels it even in the paintings which contain neither smoke nor flame, neither soldiers nor corpses, only snow and forest, only the quiet of musing Russian plain. One contemplates the native landscape with a new feeling; it has become especially precious and beloved now that the despicable enemy is reaching for it, to destroy, burn, pollute all this Russian beauty.

The enemy is on Soviet land. Night envelops the ancient Russian city in the picture by Kulikov. Black ruins of houses stand out against the dull white of the snow. A red glow imparts an ominous effect to the whole. But the most sinister thing in the picture is the German sentry. There is no one else here, all movement is arrested, all is silent. The people are hiding in their houses. Horror and hate pervade the entire composition.

Portrait of A. Yumashev by P. Konchalovsky

A field. There are no trenches or machine-guns in it, no fortifications or troops. A peaceful Russian field. But a shepherd lad is lying in it, a dog is whimpering near his murdered little master, while a German villain is disappearing in the distance. He has done his dirty deed, killed a Russian boy, and can now boast to the fascist beasts of his "exploit" done in obedience to Hitler's order to kill all Russians. Such is the picture by Plastov.

One of the strongest pictures in the exhibition—spectators linger long before it, move off and return once more—portrays the last moments of Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya (Tanya). The artists Kuprianov, Krylov and Sokolov (the "Kukryniksy") have drawn their work with all the exactness of a legal accusative and all the expressiveness of great mastery. The Germans have rounded up everyone remaining in the village to witness the execution of the fearless girl. Russian women stand about the gallows; behind them are Germans with tommy-guns. The hangman shoves the box from under Zoya's feet, the noose draws tight on her neck. She shouts out her last words, calling for struggle and vengeance. The Russian people stand with bowed heads. A little girl presses close to her mother's feet in horror. Sorrow and grief are in the emaciated faces. It is a terrible moment, a terrible scene. The Germans contemplate the scene with dull impassivity and animal-like curiosity. The officer's face expresses cold, arrogant repugnance. Two of the Germans are taking snapshots to send to Germany where their wives and fiancées will enjoy seeing how Russian girls are hanged.

Pictures by Gaponenko, Reshetnikov and Serov portray the Germans as chastiers and executioners having in their power the Soviet people in the temporarily occupied regions.

There they go, these Soviet people, our brothers and sisters, along a wide muddy road, dragging their feet with difficulty. They are being driven into slavery. They have been torn from their native environment, plundered of all they possessed, depri-

ved of their human dignity. Germans are convoying the column. In the front rank is an aged man, bent under the burden of shame and degradation. He was an esteemed citizen, his old age was honoured, he lived in peace. Now he has been transformed into a beast; he is being driven, dares not slacken his pace, may not straighten his back. In the same row with the old man is a tall woman with a beautiful Slav face. Her hair is streaming in the wind. A child is in her arms. She was, perhaps, the belle of her collective farm, a strong, proud woman. Now she is a slave, and her child the son of a slave, a tiny mite, but already a slave. She walks with head held high, not a tear on her face, not a sign of fear. Her wide-open eyes stare sternly ahead into the distance. No, this is not the kind that gives in, that submits and becomes reconciled to her lot. She walks on with vengeance in her eyes. She will avenge, her entire bearing cries for vengeance. Such is the picture by Ryazhsky.

The defeat of the Germans near Moscow in the winter of 1941 is portrayed in many of the pictures. The small painting by Denissovsky is interesting and suggestive in conception. In a wooden-walled village hut, at a rough table with a kerosene lamp on it, sits Stalin. Alongside him are generals. A commander in a sheepskin jacket, his head in bandages, is making a report. The great strategist of the Patriotic War is at the front putting through his historical plan for defeating the Germans.

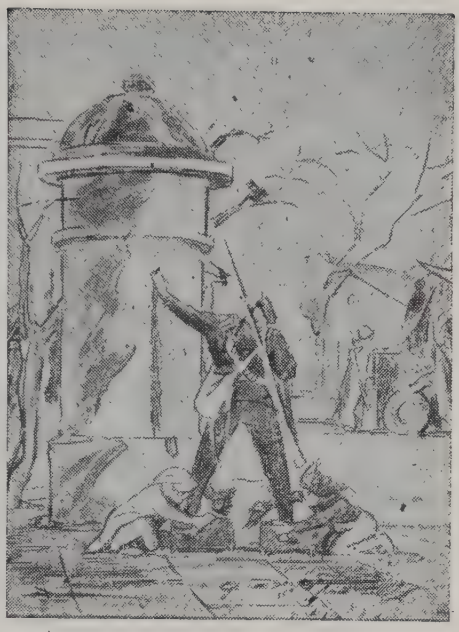
The defeat itself is depicted on a large panel, the collective work of Malkov, Sokolov-Skalya, Yakovlev and Shukhmin. The painter Mochalsky was inspired by the feat of the twenty-eight guardsmen. Enormous tanks advance mercilessly on a handful of daring, fearless patriots. They are ready to meet the German monsters. A huge mass of metal, raging flames versus men. The men are stronger, being Soviet men.

Battle episodes near the Streletskaya Settlement are depicted by Yakovlev; in the city of Kalinin, by the artist Modorov; in Kaluga, by Tarkhov.

In those days Moscow was the front, and many of the artists lovingly portray the appearance of this front-line, war-time Moscow. Those times will not be repeated, so that the pictures have all the significance of artistic historical documents. They give not only the external appearance of the city but the life of those remarkable days as well.

We see this Moscow in the paintings and etudes of Kuznetsov-Volzhsky, Deineka, Pimenov. Tanks pass along the Leningrad highway (picture by Nissky); barricades and steel spikes block a street (Kuznetsov-Volzhsky). A severe frost has covered wires, the Kremlin walls, with rime, transforming Moscow into an enchanted city.

And here we have Moscow men and women. In Konchalovsky's picture delightful



Time Is Precious. From L. Soifertis' sketches of Sevastopol

girls stop soldiers to ask where blood can be given. The street on the outskirts of Moscow is well done, as are the girls in the bitter Russian frost. Everything breathes of strength and cheerfulness: the strong well-built people, the smiles, the energy and life pervading the whole picture.

The heroic defence of Sevastopol forms the subject of the large panorama-type picture by Khristenko, Meshkov and Finogenov, and of paintings by Bubnov and Khvostenko. The Baltic is well rendered in the picture by Kraynev.

In this terrible historic year the artist's thoughts turn to the past, evoking the memory of courageous figures of his great ancestors, the defenders of Russia's honour. The historical section of the exhibition is represented by pictures interestingly conceived and executed.

Paintings by Truzo and Serov portray the "Ice-Field Slaughter." The picture by Korin, showing Alexander Nevsky, is well done. The brave, intelligent soldier and outstanding Russian statesman is portrayed at full length in strong, severe, energetic colours. His body expresses power; his face, intelligence, talent, nobility.

The picture by Sokolov-Skalya is conceived in the style of a great historical canvas. It depicts the triumphant entry of Ivan the Fourth into the subjugated Livonian fortress of Kokenhausen, or Kukeinos, as it was then called in Russian. The tsar enters the gates of the fortress, greeted by the low bows of the Germans. They are forced to acknowledge the superiority of Russian arms. Gone is their arrogant pride!

The Cattle Herd Returns. Painting by A. Laptev

Execution. Drawing by D. Shmarinov

Red Army Cavalry in Zagorsk. Painting by A. Deineka

Battle for a Firing Line. Painting by V. Odintsov

There are many pictures of the period of 1917 and the civil war. On a large canvas by Vanetsian, a bolshevik agitator is reading soldiers the newspaper *Trench Pravda*. The soldiers listen attentively, deeply moved by the articles of Lenin and Stalin. The bolshevik truth about the war drops like seeds into their hearts, later to sprout up into the beginnings of the Red Army.

In the picture by Bubnov we see soldiers and sailors of the civil war period enjoying a moment's rest. A young sailor is spiritedly dancing "Yablochko" (The apple) to the accompaniment of an accordeon; the stern faces of his comrades are wreathed in smiles. It may be that they will soon go into battle; meanwhile they are carried away by the high spirits of the merry-hearted fellow.

The graphic arts and sculpture demand separate consideration. Portrait painting is richly represented; there are excellent works by Konchalovsky, Gerassimov, Efanov, Mashkov, Korin and others. Most of them are portraits of heroes of the Patriotic War, of Red Army and Navy commanders. It is a rich, interesting gallery of faces and characters; taken as a whole, it is a collective portrait of the Soviet citizen, whose principal features are strength and spirituality. It shows a man of creative work and struggle.

The war has not curtailed the creative work of Soviet painters. All genres demand the patriotic service of art. The exhibition contains seemingly quite peaceful themes; groves and birches (Baksheyev); a nook in a country-house, a posthumous etude by Nesterov; "Tchaikovsky's House in Klin," a small painting by Petrovichev.

But this is all our country! Our heroic fighters are fiercely battling for every inch of native land. When an artist, moved by love of country and implacable hatred of the enemy, portrays this inch of land, he is doing his great patriotic work.

DAVID ZASLAVSKY

THE DEFENCE POSTER IN UZBEKISTAN

In the annals of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people against the hitlerite hordes, a living chapter will be formed by the poster imbued as it is with popular hatred, with wrath and with a grim spirit of struggle. The poster is a very effective form of art, combining as it does the plastic image and the living word; it is a mighty weapon for the ideological arming of the masses.

In the June days of 1941, the streets of Soviet towns suddenly broke out into many coloured posters: the walls, even the stones, seemed to speak. In arresting language the poster announced the threatening danger, roused the people and inspired them to heroic deeds in the struggle with the hated enemy.

. . . A year of war has passed. And the poster, with its vigorous militant art, is on duty, in the line of fire.

Made famous by its first champion Vladimir Mayakovsky, conveying its message "with splashes of colour and the ring of slogans," the art of the propaganda "windows" still continues to carry on its great work.

The art of the poster in Uzbekistan has attained a high level. From the very first days of the war, large numbers of Uzbek artists and writers threw themselves enthusiastically into the work of making defence posters. The type of subject used grew more varied from day to day, and at the same time the poster-painters themselves got a better grip on their art. Soon the first "UzTAG Window," by the artists G. Karlov and V. Kaydalov, called upon the rear to aid the front:

Cotton, comrades, more and more,
Cotton to bind our brave men's hurts,
To blow our foes up, cotton galore!
Cotton f'r our soldiers' coats and shirts!

The first posters published by the Uzbekistan State Publishing House, in which the artists S. Malt and K. Cheprakov glorify labour, sound the same note.

In a vigorous composition, impressively monumental and at the same time simple in form, N. Kashina represents a worker

with a rifle and a woman-worker who has taken his place in the rear:

The country calls for fighting men,
Wives and sweethearts, to the factory then!

A spirit of heroic labour, helping the front to crush and destroy the enemy, has pervaded the great majority of the defence posters of Uzbekistan from the beginning of the war up to the present day, when the workers of the country have gained a new victory by building in an extraordinarily short time the first section of the Northern Tashkent Canal. The builders of the canal at work on the route have been depicted in the vivid and striking posters of V. Rozhdestvensky, N. Kashina and K. Kozlova.

The creation in Uzbekistan of a huge industrial centre, a base of ferrous metallurgy, the friendship of peoples, care for evacuated children, all find vivid expression in the posters by B. Zhukov and B. Hamdami, an artist possessed of great penetration and the power of conveying profound experiences of the human heart. In drawings sensitively outlined, giving the impression of bas-relief, the artist conveys striking instances of everyday heroism, catching poses and facial expressions very happily. One long remembers his poster dedicated to an Uzbek division: "An old man gives his son a farewell blessing, exhorting him to deeds of valour."

B. Zhukov devotes his poster to heroic Leningrad, to the people of this hero-city, sketching in sharp, vigorous outlines its courageous and daring defenders. V. Ufimtsev and V. Rozhdestvensky devote their "windows" to the defeat of the Germans at Moscow.

A series of posters by B. Zhukov shows the brutalities committed by the fascists and the partisans' revenge. Here is a huge poster depicting a Red Army man bending over the dead body of a child, a victim of the fascist murderers. His hand, gripping a rifle, is raised on high. Beneath the poster is written: "We shall avenge!" Here are exploits of the national heroes of Kuchkar, Turdyev and Aliev, placards showing Uzbek and Russian Red Army men fighting with the German invaders.

One of the biographers of the famous Spanish artist Goya said that in a hall of the Madrid museum he saw one of his sketches depicting the struggle of the people with the interventionists, "drawn as though with the fist." The same can be said of many of the posters produced in Uzbekistan, where hatred for the enemy makes itself felt in every touch of the pencil, in every stroke of the brush. And it can be fully applied too to those posters where hatred and scorn of the enemy are refined by the sharp edge of satire.

A number of interesting satirical posters have been made by the well-known master of caricature D. Moor, N. Kogout, Y. Reznikov in collaboration with the poets Y. Galitsky, S. Gorodetsky, M. Golodny, Dolev and M. Pustynin, Sheikhzade, Lavrov and Umari. In effect it forms a history of the Great Patriotic War in caricatures, with clever malice unmasking the hitlerite marauders.

About 350 posters have been made during the year of war. The figure is imposing, especially if we add to it the thirty posters published by the Uzbek State Publishing House.

LEO VARSHAVSKY

NEWS AND VIEWS

Leading representatives of Soviet art and literature took their seats on the platform at the anti-fascist meeting held in the Hall of Columns of the House of Trade Unions, Moscow. Opening the meeting, the writer Alexei Tolstoy said: "We have met in Moscow today to tell our friends all over the world about our work, our thoughts and feelings, about our unshaken will to fight and be victorious. . . Our art flashes like a sword over the enemy's head."

"I am an Ukrainian, a son of my people," said the poet Mikola Bazhan at the meeting. "The Ukrainian people, bled white, robbed and tortured by the greedy German ruffians, have never before been so firm and unbending in their hatred for the oppressors and in their love for freedom. . ."

Film producer I. Pyryev called upon his comrades-in-art, poets, writers, painters, actors, producers, to double, to treble, to increase tenfold their creative efforts. "Soviet art is a fighting weapon that strengthens the power of the people and their army in the grim struggle against the hitlerite invaders, who are destined to an ignominious doom."

The art director of the Maly Theatre I. Sudakov told of the performances given by the theatre's front-line brigades, composed of the Maly's finest actors.

The speeches of architect V. Vesnin and painter A. Gerassimov expressed deep indignation at the destruction by the Germans of works and monuments of great cultural value. "On my way to the New-Jerusalem Monastry which I know so well," said V. Vesnin, "the sight that met my eyes even from a distance filled my heart with pain and horror: the dome of the wonderful cathedral, this unique monument of Russian architecture, was gone. Its beautiful chapel had crumbled from an explosion, its priceless majolica was reduced to a heep of debris, nothing but ruins were left of the building."

"Hitlerism is the enemy of art," stated composer D. Shostakovich. "It brings mankind slavery, hunger and death. And art cannot exist where there is human bondage, where human dignity is trampled underfoot, where man is enslaved. . . Today, when the Red Army is routing the Hitlerites at Stalingrad and the armies of our Allies are scoring victories in Africa, the musicians of the world must unite and render every possible assistance to inflict the final blow on Hitler."

People's Artist of the U.S.S.R. V. Barsova related how 4,000 actresses have taken part in concerts and plays at the front. The Byelorussian singer L. Alexandrovskaya spoke of the exploits of Byelorussian actors, many of whom are now in the ranks of the Red Army or with the partisans.

A moving speech was made by the famous film star N. Cherkassov. A Leningradite himself, he spoke with particular warmth of the young actors of Leningrad who with arms in hand are fighting at the front or in the ranks of the partisans.

M. B. Khrapchenko, Chairman of the Board of Arts of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., called upon all art workers to "sharpen their weapons so as to smite the enemy still more effectively."

The meeting received numerous telegrams of greetings from representatives of American and English art. Greetings were sent by the English writer J. B. Priestley, the American actor and producer Orson Welles, the British public man Dale, the American cartoonist Fred Ellis, the American writer Michael Gold, the American sculptor Paul Manship. One of the telegrams of greetings was signed by the director of the British Museum John Foredyke, the director of the National Gallery Sir Kenneth Clark, the director of the Victoria and Albert Museum Sir Eric Maclagan, and the director of the Tait Gallery Dr. John Rothenstein.

The meeting issued an appeal to the art circles of all the freedom-loving countries. "The participants of the anti-fascist meeting," states the appeal, "call upon the artists of all freedom-loving countries to take their places in the front-ranks of the fighters against fascism, to help the people and the armies of their countries in the fight, to apply their art to swell the ranks of fighters and thus hasten our common victory."

Eugene Petrov's small book *Moscow Is Behind Us*, published by the *Pravda* Publishing House, poignantly reminds the reader of the author whose premature death came as a shock. The book contains the author's articles, front dispatches and sketches written during the war.

In his posthumous book we see the writer as a passionate patriot, a contemplative and observant artist armed with the fighting pen of the war correspondent. Despite the fact that the articles in the book were written more than a year ago, they are read with lively interest. The theme of the book in brief is: the Red Army has routed the Germans at Moscow and is driving them westwards; moving in the wake of the Red Army units is the journalist Eugene Petrov, who jots down everything he sees and hears in his notebook. His notes are written in an extremely simple form and are restrained in style. Facts, facts and facts, such is their

essence. These facts were written by a man with a warm heart, a man supremely devoted to his fatherland, his people, and who with all his soul hated the enemy whose bloody crimes he witnessed.

The heroine of B. Alexandrov's new operetta, *The Girl from Barcelona*, is a young Spaniard, Marianna, who has found her second home in the Soviet Union. The audience sees her as a brigade leader on a big poultry farm where Russians and Ukrainians are her friends. She becomes part of the close-knit harmonious working family. The farm falls into the hands of the Germans. Its members make for the forest to join the partisans. Marianna remains behind, deciding to play a dangerous game with the enemy. She goes through many trying experiences. Her close friend suspects her of treachery; a traitor and spy betrays her to the fascists. But clever and resourceful Marianna adroitly deceives the Hitlerites. She remains loyal to her Russian friends. The closing scene shows Soviet Cossacks driving the Germans to the West with the help of the partisans. This, in short, is the theme of the operetta, pungent and in keeping with the times.

The authors of the libretto and the music have succeeded in presenting this highly important patriotic subject in a simple and veracious form. They have succeeded in treating a political theme without sacrificing the specific features of an operetta. Operetta is a light, gay form of art, and such it remains in the new play *The Girl from Barcelona*. A number of comical tricks, the disguises, successful puns, the scene where a Cossack and a gunner dressed as women saunter among the slow-witted fascists, the farmer Pcholka dressed in a German uniform, all these personnages and scenes keep the audience hilarious. This is particularly true when it is born in mind that the cast includes the popular Soviet operetta stars G. Yaron, V. Volodin, S. Anikeyev. S. Vermel is cast as Marianna. Happily combining a very fine voice with good acting, she ably portrays the young woman engaged in a subtle game with the German invaders.

Poets have dedicated their verse to the heroine on the battle-field, she has come to life in stories and sketches, has inspired artists and sculptors, is the subject of operas and songs. To the composite portrait of this great and wonderful type of woman, *The Girl from Barcelona* makes her own small but special and original contribution.

Artillery men are very proud of their profession which calls for great attention and precision. Mortar crews consider that their work is the most important. Tommy- and machine-gunners have their own opinion: they are positive that not a single battle worth the name can be fought without them... All these four professions have been mastered by the young Leningrad girl Vera Lebedeva, only recently turned 21. A tommy-gunner and machine-gunner, she can also handle a mortar and artillery-gun. Vera Lebedeva, who has been decorated twice with Government orders, commands a battery.

The inseparable chums Tatyana Kondratyeva and Olga Lukashenko, who formerly worked in one of Leningrad's big plants, are now snipers. In action in the front-lines they are daily adding to their score of enemies picked off.

The Leningrad worker Anna Grigoryeva is now a nurse at the front. Under shell fire she crawls up to the wounded, tenderly dresses their wounds and then carries them out of the zone of fire. When, on one occasion, she was attacked by a fascist officer who tried to strangle her, the brave girl, skilfully using her knife, made short shrift of him. . .

The friends of these heroines working in the rear are not lagging behind in their field of work. Vera Lebedeva has acquired four army professions. The woman worker Sokolova can claim to have done the same on the home front. She is a presser, nickel plater, purveyor and extruder-operator. No matter which of the jobs she happens to be handling, she doubles her production quota in every case. Leningrad women in the rear are turning their city into a fortress which is staunchly defended by Leningrad women at the front.

It is therefore not surprising that whenever Soviet citizens hear the words: "She is from Leningrad," their eyes light up with a particular warmth and love.

Recently the Soviet press commented on the 150th anniversary of the death of one of the outstanding Russian satirists of the second half of the eighteenth century, Denis Ivanovich Fonvizin, the author of the satirical comedies *The Minor* and *The Brigadier*.

Fonvizin's works place him in the same rank with such outstanding men as Radishchev and Novikov, his contemporaries, and associate him with the great progressive figures of later Russian literature, Griboyedov, Pushkin and Lermontov. Fonvizin's work is an example of the writer's selflessness in serving the interests of his people.

Fonvizin strove to show Russian society the bright sides of progressive life at home which were overlooked by people who bowed to everything foreign.

In his "Letters" the writer makes many critical remarks about Germany of those days. "The distinguished cattle, inflated with the sense of their own importance, scorn their subordinates," is how the author of *The Minor* comments on the German upper class. Comparing his native land with Germany, he draws the following conclusion: "Generally speaking I can assert with impartiality that from

St. Petersburg to Nürenberg the scales weigh heavily on the side of our country: in our country everything is better, we are more truly human than the Germans."

Appreciation of his country permeates the comedy *The Brigadier*. In this comedy Fonvizin proved himself one of the founders of Russian drama. *The Brigadier* portrays the negative side of the life led by the Russian nobility. The son of the Brigadier, Ivanushka, is contemptuous of everything Russian. A Russian patriot who could fully escribe to the words of the great Russian general A. V. Suvorov: "I am proud to be a Russian," Fonvizin bitingly ridiculed and ruthlessly lashed out at people like Ivanushka.

The comedy *The Minor* was in the real sense of the word a triumph of Russian literature and the stage, and met with sweeping success. In this comedy Fonvizin flayed with all the power of his satirical talent the ignorance of the noblemen of the Prostakov and Skotinin type.

The comedy has become part of the Russian theatre's repertoire as a model of classical comedy.

Fonvizin's love for Russia, her people, education, for the Russian language, was reflected in his *Attempt of a Russian Synonymicon*, in *Appeal of Russian Writers to the Russian Minerva*. In 1783 Fonvizin printed an article in the magazine *The Russian Booklover's Companion* in the form of questions in which he touched upon certain important aspects of State and social life in Russia.

The State Publishing House of Music has published a volume of English songs selected and translated by Professor N. G. Raisky of the Moscow Conservatory. The texts of the songs are given both in Russian and English. The volume has evoked lively interest in Soviet musical circles, and many of the songs in them are already being sung at concerts and broadcast.

The programme of musical evenings being prepared by the Sverdlovsk Philharmonic is devoted to Anglo-American music and songs, old war and partisans' songs of the American-Spanish war, songs of the American soldiers who fought in France in 1918—1919, the songs of cowboys and settlers.

The Scotch folk songs, particularly those set to the words of the national bard Burns, are of particular interest. The music of the Scottish song *Macpherson's Farewell* is beautiful.

The programme drawn up by producer Georgi Geioli also includes Welsh, Yorkshire and Irish folk songs, excerpts from English operas and operettas by the composers Sullivan (*The Mikado, Iolanthe, The Pirates of Penzance, The Rose of Persia*), Jones (*The Geisha*), Monckton (*The Beautiful Lady, The King from Cadonia*), and also excerpts from the American operettas of Snutcard, Friml, Kerker, etc.

Since the outbreak of the war the Kirov Urals Industrial Institute, the biggest scientific research centre in the Urals, has graduated more than a thousand young engineers of ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy, chemical industry, machine-building and construction. Three thousand two hundred and twenty students are at present studying in its seven faculties, in addition to seven hundred in the Urals Polytechnicum.

The Institute has a teaching personnel of four hundred specialists. Sixty professors and doctors of science and more than a hundred assistant professors and candidates of science staff the fifty-four chairs.

The Institute's scientific workers are also engaged in numerous assignments for defence enterprises. One hundred and seventy scientific research works on various subjects were written in the past year. Many of the results have been applied directly at the front. The House of Technology has since the beginning of the war answered the scientific needs of more than three hundred Urals plants and constructions, issued a hundred and ten leaflets dealing with technology, and prepared approximately the same number for publication.

A group of chemical workers under Assistant-Professor B. G. Perets has rendered considerable assistance to the Red Army. Specialists in metallurgy headed by Professor M. L. Shakhray have elaborated several technological methods for arms production, etc.

Since the beginning of the war fifteen monographs have been written and sent to press, forty dissertations defended in the Institute's Council of Scientists.

The student body are doing their share in industry and agriculture. Some five hundred students are blood-donors. One thousand two hundred and fifty students took part in last year's ski run.

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