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THE STALIN PRIZES FOR 1942

The Stalin Prizes awarded for work of outstanding merit in science, technology, art and literature were inaugurated by the Soviet Government in 1939 in honour of Joseph Stalin's sixtieth birthday.

Since then these annual prizes have become a part of the cultural life of the Soviet Union, a tradition and an occasion for general rejoicing. Far from interfering with this tradition, the war has given it a special significance. Literature and art have their own place in the common cause. Now the Stalin awards bear witness to the patriotic and creative enthusiasm of the Soviet people in war-time.

The prizes this spring "for works of outstanding merit in art and literature produced in 1942" were awarded to well-known Soviet poets, writers, playwrights, artists, composers, singers, scenario writers, producers, actors and cameramen, to both young and old, to Russians, Ukrainians, Georgians, Armenians, Azerbaidjanians and Uzbeks.

This year the Government has introduced certain very important amendments in the regulations concerning the Stalin Prizes: in music, for example, the field has been considerably extended; prizes are awarded for instrumental music, the shorter forms of composition and concert performances.

In addition to this, it was decided to award prizes not only to those whose work was done this year but also for work done in the course of many years.

In all 95 awards were made in art and literature for the year 1942.

Alexei Tolstoy's trilogy *The Road to Calvary* and Wanda Wasilewska's tale *The Rainbow* won the first prizes. Second prizes were awarded to Leonid Sobolev for his volume of nautical tales *Sailor's Heart* and to an old collector of Ural folk tales P. Bazhov for his *Malachite Casket*.

First prize for poetry was adjudged to a Ukrainian poet M. Rylsky for three volumes of verse and a long poem and to the Russian M. Issakovsky, the author of popular songs. A poem *Zoe* on the subject of the Soviet girl-partisan Zoe Kosmodemyanskaya, who died a heroic death in the struggle against the German invaders, won for its author, Margaret Aliger, second prize.

Two prominent Soviet playwrights received first prizes: Alexander Korneichuk for his play *The Front*, and Leonid Leonov for his *Invasion*. Constantine Simonov's *Russians* was awarded a second prize. All three plays, which have had a tremendous success at the best Soviet theatres, are woven around episodes and heroes of the Great Patriotic War.

Particular interest is aroused by the awarding of Stalin Prizes to the men who made the documentary newsreels *Stalingrad*, *Leningrad in the Struggle*, *The Men of the Black Sea Fleet*, and the *Movie Magazine* series. This called not only for a very high standard of artistic and technical skill, but also for courage, coolness and presence of mind in the case of both producer and cameramen; practically every shot was made during fierce fighting.

Prizes have been awarded for many years of fruitful creative work to two of the older generation of writers,

Alexander Serafimovich and Vikenti Veressayev; to prominent stage people: the late Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko, Olga Knipper-Chekhova, Ivan Moskvin and Vassili Kachalov; to well-known artists, among whom are Constantine Yuon, Peter Konchalovsky, Ivan Pavlov, Vassili Baksheyev and Eugene Lanceré.

The list of honours includes names which are dear to the heart of every Soviet citizen and are part of the history of the cultural development of the U.S.S.R.

The winners of the Stalin Prizes have shown their talent and skill in fields that differ very widely. Yet they have one feature in common: a creative impulse of amazing power. It springs from the nobility and greatness of the tasks that confront the people, all the people, during this war which they are waging for their country. For these tasks are: the defence of their native land; the defence of man from the nazi beasts; the struggle for freedom and justice for all mankind.

HOW THE TRILOGY "THE ROAD TO CALVARY" WAS WRITTEN

(An interview with the author Alexei Tolstoy)

The last page of *Frowning Morn*, the third and last volume of my trilogy *The Road to Calvary* for which I was awarded one of the Stalin first Prizes, was written on June 22nd, 1941, the day that war was declared.

The trilogy gives a picture of life in Russia on the eve of and during the World War of 1914—1918 and the subsequent Civil War. But I put the finishing touches to it only six months ago. This book, which I regard as my principal work, has thus been written over a period of twenty years.

The first part, *The Sisters*, was begun in the middle of July, 1919, and completed by the autumn of 1921. I did not think then that it would develop into a trilogy. But while I was working on it, events were developing in Russia, and it gradually became clear that the book could not be ended here, that it was the beginning of a long epic work.

A great deal had to be seen, learned and experienced, before I could begin on the second volume, *1918*. The usual process known as collecting material was inapplicable in this preparatory work, because in addition to documents, books, contact with those who had taken part in the Civil War, and visits to the places where the scenes were laid: Tsaritsyn, the River Sal steppes, Krasnodar, and the Kuban, there was another thing that had to be done, the main thing, which was to define my own attitude to my material. In other words, it all had to be lived through, thought over, and felt anew. I began work on the second book in 1927 and finished it in eighteen months' time. That was the reason why I had to resort to a special form: I was writing at one and the same time a tale called *Bread* which describes the campaign fought by Voroshilov's army, and Stalin's defence of Tsaritsyn. Work on the third volume of the trilogy, *Frowning Morn*, was only begun in 1939.

Following the completion of *1918*, I wrote two parts of my historical novel *Peter the Great*. So, in 1939, I was confronted with a problem: which of my two unfinished trilogies ought I to finish: *Peter the Great* or *The Road to Calvary*? It was perfectly clear, by that time, that another world war was inevitable. It was equally clear that after this second world war I could not return to the epoch of the Civil War, which would have receded too far into the background. The third part of *Peter the Great* could, however, be written later; that is what I am

doing. I shall begin work on it this summer with a view to completing the trilogy.

The theme of *The Road to Calvary* may be defined as a country lost and found again. Just before and during the first World War, national feeling was somewhat weakened among the intelligentsia. And it was only in the course of twenty-five years of the new life, and particularly when we were on the verge of the second World War, that the sense of a bond, the indivisible bond with our native soil, was felt with unusual intensity. Through profound suffering, through struggle, we had reached this national consciousness. Never for perhaps a whole century has the feeling been so deep, so keen, as now. But I could not have understood all this in 1927, when I wrote *1918*.

The Road to Calvary is the path that the author's own conscience followed through suffering, hope, elation, depression, despondency and exaltation—the sense of the stupendous epoch that opened on the eve of the first World War and closed with the first day of the second World War.

OUR ART IS INSEPARABLE FROM THE PEOPLE

At moments like these my thoughts turn to our leader and teacher, to the genius who is the captain of our forces, Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin, whose paternal care and consideration have filled me with the sense that my life has not been lived in vain, that a very high value has been set upon my modest labours.

The treasures of Russian national culture are lasting, they are not to be destroyed or even shaken. It is impossible to do so because the people, the intelligentsia, are moved by the desire to preserve the great achievements of Russian culture in all their strength and beauty. In no other country does art receive such whole-hearted recognition, in no other country is it surrounded with such love and care as here. The theatre, music, literature and visual art are inseparable from the many-faceted life of the people.

They are not to be separated now when a fierce struggle is being waged with those who persecute all the best that has been created by progressive mankind and its vanguard, the U.S.S.R. Our strength lies in unity, in a noble patriotism, in our determination to carry on the struggle against fascism to the very end. In this struggle we whose work is art are not behindhand. We do not drudge our powers to help our people to win the ultimate victory.

A. YABLOCHKINA,
People's Artist of the U.S.S.R.

CAMERAMEN AT THE FRONT

At the front cameramen are on the closest terms with the Red Army men. We undertake together the heaviest marches, storm the German pillboxes, cross rivers under enemy bombardment and participate in street-fighting.

The little Aimo camera attached to the cameramen's wrist by a leather strap is the weapon of a soldier. Through its eye we have to see and record with absolute exactitude historic episodes in the Great Patriotic War.

I once went with a party of cameramen to film the Red Army's capture of Abganerovo, near Stalingrad. At that moment we learned that a number of enemy tanks had broken through to the station. The nazis started to bomb it, but, completely oblivious of this danger, our cameramen went on with their job.

Many of our newsreel-men displayed great coolness and courage while we were filming *Moscow Strikes Back* and *Stalingrad*. Theodore Bunimovich, for example, went into attack under trench-mortar fire with the front-line riflemen. Ivan Belyakov took some shots of the *Stalingrad* film from the air. Cameraman Valentine Orlyankin (also known as a moutain climber) made frequent crossings of the Volga under incessant enemy fire, and took part in practically all the attacks on Stalingrad houses occupied by the

enemy. Sofyin, another newsreel-man, was generally to be found where the fighting was hottest in the streets. Vakar and Ibrahimov invariably accompanied pilots and filmed several air-battles.

The award of the Stalin Prize coincided with my receiving a new assignment: in a few days' time I am going to the front to make a documentary film, and on this new job I shall try to prove myself worthy of the high honour the government has conferred upon me.

L. VARLAMOV.
producer of the film Stalingrad

THE TRIUMPH OF HUMANISM

The adjudging of the Stalin Prizes at a time when decisive battles are being fought against the German-fascist invaders is an excellent illustration of the might of the Soviet State and of our confidence in our country's splendid future.

Our people have shown that while they are beating their enemies they can still go on building up progressive culture. This decree concerning the Stalin Prizes is a triumph of humanism, a conclusive proof of our people's great gifts.

I look upon the Stalin Prize which I have been awarded as a great obligation laid upon me by my country.

VASSILI YAKOVLEV,
artist

A GREAT FORCE

Soviet art may well be proud, for it has not only continued to develop during days of great trial, but has become a mighty cultural force, proving to the whole world the greatness of the peoples of the U.S.S.R., their unwavering and formidable staunchness.

Some prominent composers and musicians are among the Stalin Prize-winners for this year. The people's fighting spirit has proved an inexhaustible source of inspiration to Soviet musicians, whose art in our country continues to flourish. We are happy to be living and working for creative improvement at a time when a new world is being built, in the years of the great struggle for the sacred rights of mankind, rights that have been encroached upon by the fascist barbarians.

B. ASSAFYEV,
People's Artist of the R.S.F.S.R.

THE GREAT HAPPINESS OF RECEIVING PUBLIC RECOGNITION

Before the Revolution a whole group of writers existed: among them were names of world-wide fame and names of moderate fame, and names of writers who had no claim to greatness, but were nevertheless honest writers; and all of them worked to the best of their powers for the people's happiness. Now, when I look around me, they have almost all been swept away by the inexorable hand of time. Few of the older generation remain. We have lived through hard times, Vikenti Vikentievich Veressayev[1] and I; there were the years under tsarism, when we were down-trodden, when the heavy boot was on our throat, stifling the best, the purest of our young impulses.

A great happiness has come to us; our years of work have been accorded the highest appreciation: public recognition.

A. SERAFIMOVICH,
author of The Iron Flood

MY DUTY TO MY COUNTRY

With the feeling of joy comes the sense of responsibility: how shall I justify the honour the government has conferred upon me, how shall I show my gratitude to the Soviet people?

Involuntarily, one looks back into the past. I owe everything, absolutely everything to my country. Her wide, free spaces, the indescribable beauty of her landscape, her wise, honest, brave people—there lies the source of the artist's inspiration. The Soviet regime opened a new path to the Rus-

[1] Veressayev, one of the oldest of the Russian writers now living, is widely known for his books *A Doctor's Diary*, *Pushkin in Real Life* and other works.

sian actor, gave him the opportunity to serve his people to the full measure of his abilities. I gained much from my meetings with Constantine Stanislavsky, from nearly forty-five years' work in the Moscow Art Theatre, and creative association with that great master of the Soviet stage, Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko.

One must consider the idea behind the adjudging of the Stalin Prizes. Everybody is busy with the war; the Red Army is fighting gallantly against the nazi marauders and murderers who have invaded our Russian land; Russian people are shedding their blood on the battle-field and winning glory. And it is in days like these that the country is singling out men and women who are considered as the best representatives of Soviet art, rewarding them generously for their self-sacrificing work, for their craftsmanship, and doing them great honour. This means that in our country art serves the people loyally and unselfishly, that it has benefited them in their great struggle.

In war-time each of us knows but one duty, acknowledges but one calling, and we devote all our powers and gifts to the public cause of defending our passionately-loved mother country.

IVAN MOSKVIN,
People's Artist of the U.S.S.R.

GOING INTO BATTLE WITH A SONG

Sea-songs, both lyric and heroic, have always held a fascination for me, and I have done a great deal of work in this field. From olden times seamen have been renowned for their courage, their ability to preserve a cheerful spirit at the most trying and dangerous moments, and never to let themselves get downhearted or give way to despair. It was this tradition that inspired me in my work.

The patriotic impulse of the Soviet people, the courage and staunchness of the soldiers and sailors who are dealing the enemy devastating blows, is imparted to us composers. And we help the struggle with a weapon of our own, our art, and are ready to devote ourselves to it heart and soul.

The Patriotic War has yielded splendid material for many musical works. Three songs: *Putting out to Sea*, *Play My Concertina* and the *Song of Revenge* have been thought worthy of the Stalin second Prize.

When the Germans opened their attack on Leningrad, I participated with thousands of others in the city's defence. It happened that once, after a hard spell of work unloading vessels with cargo for the front, we were returning from the port. It was a beautiful Leningrad autumn evening, and as I passed a ship, the strains of a concertina came over the water. Song never deserted the marines who were defending Leningrad; they went into battle with it, they won their victories with it. This thought served as the theme of a song about sailors. *Putting out to Sea* was the outcome of working with a Leningrad poet, Alexander Churkin. The first time I sang this song was in a dug-out on the Kalinin front, where it received a warm welcome. It found its way to the hearts of Red Army and Red Navy men and became popular on board ship and in the units of the marines.

During the war I wrote *Play My Concertina* and the *Song of Revenge*. *The Sea Campaign Song* was written especially for the Central Ensemble of Red Navy songs and dances. A few days ago I composed another sea-song: *What Are You Pining for, Sailor?* The words were written by the poet Lebedev-Kumach, a Stalin Prize-winner.

The winning of the Stalin Prize is a tremendous stimulus to further creative work, and I am now going to compose music and songs with greater energy than ever, and work without a moment's rest.

V. SOLOVYOV-SEDOY

AN ARDENT FIGHTER AGAINST FASCISM

From the day he first set out on the literary path, Alexei Maximovich Gorky, the great Russian writer, took up the fight against the dark forces crushing the Russian people. All his creative life was devoted to the fight for a human being freed from century-old prejudices, a human being who would illuminate the face of world with his free, joyous labour.

Gorky wandered the length and breadth of our vast land. He knew intimately the life of the peasant, the worker, the office worker, the intellectual. He saw the whole harsh picture of oppression of man by man, and once and for all time learned to loathe the power of gold and the whip. In his works, he created a whole picture gallery of immortal figures, and his books, read by people of all lands, were impregnated with the ardour of the struggle, with hot words of protest against the oppression of man. In his novel *Mother*, a book for workers the world over, he created an unforgettable figure of the working mother.

When the October Revolution was victorious, when the construction of the new, Soviet land expanded and developed with every year, man also became changed and transformed. Fresh talent came to light among the people, industry grew, towns flourished. And with an eager, ardent love Gorky watched all this growth of our people. They used to write to him from all parts of the Soviet Union, telling him of their aspirations, of their achievements. And moved with a great joy, he said at this time: "How interesting people are, how life throbs and glows in them! Splendid!"

But knowing Europe as he did, he could not but be aware of the rise at that time of the turbid, foul wave of fascism, striving to crush to bits all that we have built up in the Soviet Union with such enthusiasm and toil, with our sweat and blood, for the joy of humanity.

The great State of reason and thought grew and developed, as did the great worker of this land. And Gorky, rejoicing, wrote in one of his articles:

"This is my joy and pride—the new Russian man, the builder of the new State.

"It is to this ordinary yet great man, to be found in all the remote corners of the country, in factories, villages, in the vast steppes and the Siberian taiga, in the mountains of the Caucasus and the northern tundra, to this often lonely man, working among people who still barely understand him, to the worker for his State, who modestly fulfils tasks apparently insignificant, but actually of tremendous historical importance,—it is to him that I extend my sincere greetings.

"Comrade! Know and realize that you are the most necessary person on earth. Doing your small part, you have started the creation of a really new world."

It was at this very time that the filthy, blood-stained paws of fascism reached out towards European civilization in order to destroy it, to convert the people of all countries into submissive, mute slaves of the German imperialists, who had let loose their gang of butchers, headed by Hitler, to blight humanity. Gorky realized the full horror of the danger which fascism was bringing the world. In a speech against fascism, he said:

"We are entering the epoch. . . of the downfall of all sanguinary attempts to return to medieval feudalism by way of fascism.

"We are the judges of a world condemned to destruction, we are the people who support real humanism, the humanism of the force summoned by history to liberate the whole world from envy, from bribery, from all the disfigurements which have deformed the people of toil throughout the centuries."

He realized that the fascists would drag the whole world into a fearful war. He pictured the destruction. He said that just as in the recent past the iron hand of war recked nothing of cultural treasures and repositories, it was quite possible that in a future war the British Museum, the Louvre, the Capitol and innumerable museums of ancient capitals would be shattered into dust and rubble. And obviously, together with the millions of the strongest, healthiest workers and peasants, thousands of transmitters of intellectual energy, "masters of culture," would also be annihilated. . . How many towns, factories and plants would be left in dust and ruins! How many splendid ships would be sunk, how much land ravaged! And how many children slaughtered!

Gorky took up the fight against fascism with all the flaming strength of his pen, the fight against the degenerates of history, raging in the consciousness of their inevitable destruction. He flayed and exposed fascism's blood-thirsty plot against freedom-loving mankind. He wrote that the fascists were arming "adolescents and youths not only with revolvers, but with the race prejudice, they are imbuing youth with social cynicism, a sadist passion for murder and destruction. . ." He said that in choosing an adventurer as their chief, in resorting to terror as the only means of defending themselves, the petty hucksters had declared fascism to be their only salvation, that is to say, the organization of the dregs of humanity into a bandit army.

Who could withstand their invasions and plunder? In the whole of Europe's tragic history, Gorky wrote, the Red Army is really the army of the people, formed not for attack but for defence. "The Red Army man is a citizen of his country, he is its master, its protector and the builder of its future."

The whole world saw the blows which the Red Army has dealt and still continues to deal Hitler's black hordes in the life and death struggle which we are waging for the freedom and independence of our country.

We remember the words of our great Russian writer Gorky, that "if the enemy does not surrender, he must be destroyed." Today this has become the law guiding our lives. These words light our way in these harsh days in our fight to win victory. We are grinding down the enemy's manpower, his war machine. We know that if Gorky were alive today, his powerful pen would be turned against fascism, exposing it, stripping it of its pretences, dealing it stinging blows, exposing in all their loathsome hideousness those brigands ravaging our land, brigands who have made of nearly the whole of Europe a prison, a place of penal servitude.

The fascists feared Gorky's just, scathing words. On their barbarous fires they burned his books, for they knew that every page flayed them, scorched them, exposed them as blood-thirsty murderers and parasites. Fascism stretched out its blood-stained talons against Gorky's very life. The Hitlerites ordered their agents of the "fifth column" which we have destroyed to kill Gorky. They thought that by killing Gorky they would kill his words! But Gorky's words are immortal, they are inspiring people in battle and in toil, they ring out with all the force of living truth. They sound like a tocsin, his words, his mighty creations. And on the seventy-fifth anniversary of his birth, the command rings out along all the front:

"Against the enemy of the Russian people, of the Russian culture, of Russian tongue, in the name of the approaching victory, in the name of the triumph of justice, fire!"

NICHOLAS TIKHONOV

For notes on how the 75th anniversary of the birth of Maxim Gorky was observed in the Soviet Union, see page 79.

THE URALS

Never before in the history of Russia have the Urals played the role that they have during the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people against hitlerite Germany. Never before have their natural resources, together with the natural resources of Siberia, exerted such a decisive influence on the course of a world war as in the war of 1941—1942.

Remember how Lenin characterized the pre-revolutionary Urals in his remarkable book *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*: "Low productivity of labour, backward technique, low wage-scale, predominance of hand manufacture, primitive and rapaciously barbarian exploitation of the natural resources of the region, monopolies, restriction of competition, immurement and isolation from the general commercial-industrial trend of the times—such is the general picture of the Urals."

The October Revolution and the years of socialist construction have changed fundamentally the economy and the entire basis of life of the Urals. As you approach, for instance, Nizhny Tagil, which during the war alone has grown to three times its size, you see huge factories, equipped with modern technique, while huddled against a nearby mountain is one of the small factories of old. Around it hums a new life: immense factory buildings, new dwellings, first-class technique. During the war new people have arrived here from all parts of our country, bringing with them new methods of work, all-round experience, their own culture. The Urals of old described by Lenin have given place to a young, new region, preserving, however, their wide experience, their skilled men, people who love their stony mountains, far-flung forest-lands, and stern natural surroundings.

Soviet power transformed the Urals; only under the Soviet power, under the influence of the radical change in relations between people, on the one hand, and between men and nature, on the other, was the immense tempestuous growth of the Urals of our time made possible. The three Stalin five-year-plans and Stalin's personal solicitude for the full all-round development of the Urals brought about the unprecedented flourishing of their productive forces.

It was this alone that in the months of the fierce bloody war against a most treacherous vicious enemy made possible that rapid increase in the strength of the Urals which, together with the increase in the strength of other regions of the U.S.S.R., to a considerable degree determined and determines the success of this war. The Urals have become the main arsenal, the main smithy of the Land of Soviets.

That is why the Urals attract the special attention of the government. The Urals are capable of giving more than they do both in war-time and after the war. It is, therefore, the duty of all the enterprises of the Urals to realize their great responsibility to their native land and to strive in all their work to raise the level of the industrial and general culture of their region to that of the country's most advanced centres, to the level of the problems facing them.

Take a glance at a geological map of the Urals. This iron range, this iron backbone of our great land stretches over approximately four thousand kilometres. On the north of the continent its spurs merge with the Pae-Khoi range and, through the Kara Sea, with the Islands of Novaya Zemlya; its mountains, surrounded by Arctic waters, conceal riches still unknown, still untouched by the hand of man. On the south, the spurs of the Urals, now hiding under the wide spaces of the Kazakhstan steppes, now under the sands of Kara-Kum, merge in Central Asia with the highest mountain ranges of the Himalayas. It is doubtful if any other region on the

earth can boast of such varied mineral resources as the Urals, where almost the entire periodic system of Mendeleyev is represented.

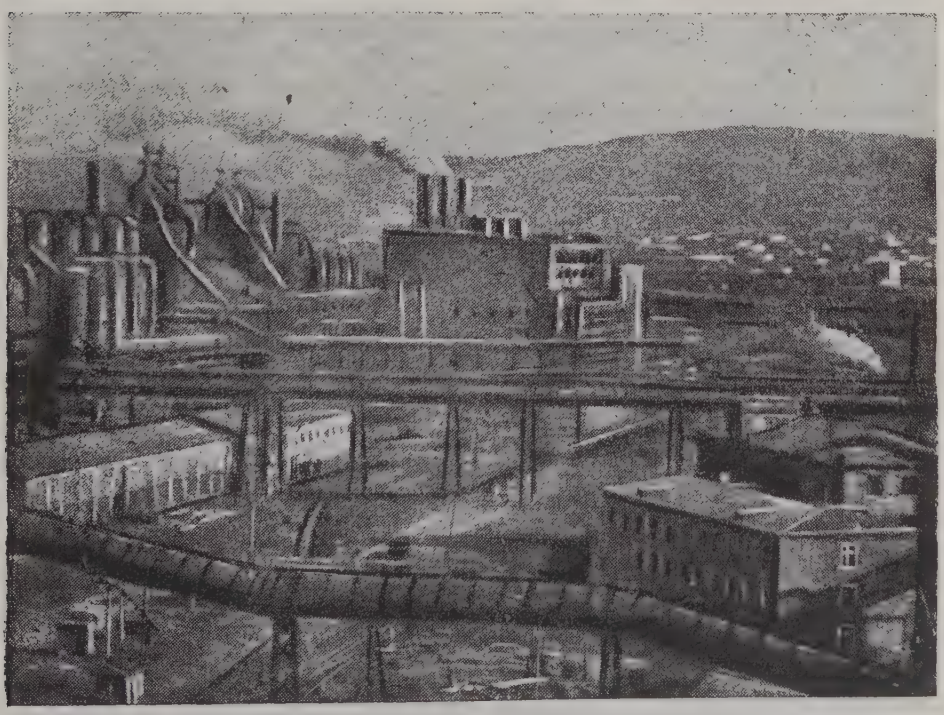
It is especially important to mention the increase in our knowledge of the Urals brought about by the geological exploration work of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. Besides refuting wreckers' theories about the "exhaustion" of the deposits of iron and other ores and of Urals' coal, these explorations have proved that the Urals contain enormous, hitherto untouched, deposits of iron, copper, nickel, chromium, manganese and other ores, huge deposits of magnesium salts, of bauxites for the production of aluminium, rare elements, asbestos, talc, graphite, building materials, coal, peat, oil and other natural resources. Before these investigations were carried out, our knowledge of the Urals and its treasures was far scantier!

It was concerning these treasures of the Urals that Stalin said in 1931: "Take the Urals, for example, which represent a combination of wealth that cannot be found in any other country. Ore, coal, oil, grain—what is there not in the Urals?"

In order to accelerate the development of the country's productive forces, the XVIIIth Congress of the Communist Party set important tasks with regard to the Urals:

"The *coal* and *oil* industries must be greatly expanded, as they constitute the fuel base for the whole economic development of the country. Coal mining is to be developed to the level necessary to meet all current requirements of the country and to ensure the accumulation of reserves by economic organizations and the State."

The third five-year plan provided for an increase of 310% in the coal output of the Urals. In this plan, it was proposed to create a "Second Baku," a new powerful oil base between the Urals and the Volga. The plan called for the building of new iron and steel plants to be supplied



The huge open-hearth furnace which has commenced production in Magnitogorsk

Miners of the Red Guard pit, Sverdlovsk region, who systematically overfulfil their quota

with high-grade Bakal and Khalila iron ores. The output of manganese in the Urals was to be sufficient to supply the iron and steel industry without transporting it from the south. The production of nickel and copper were to be greatly enlarged; huge new plants of non-ferrous metals were to be constructed: the Central-Urals combinats, the Urals aluminium plant, and others.

In all this was to be seen the prudence and foresight of Stalin. If these problems had not been solved, the temporary loss of the Ukraine would have left the country to a great extent unarmed. These tasks being completed made it possible for the Urals to place their entire industry swiftly on a war footing, and just as swiftly to raise considerably the production of arms and munitions, to receive hundreds of new factories onto its territory, to include them in the production plan, and to construct scores of new factories, thereby replacing the considerable losses suffered by the country in the evacuation of enterprises from the regions occupied or menaced by the enemy. The industry of the Urals as a whole has grown almost threefold during the war, while individual enterprises have increased production seven and a half times.

When travelling at night through the Urals, you see the numerous fires of their open-hearth furnaces, their copper-smelting, chemical and other plants, the many trains leaving the Urals for the front with arms and munitions, with steel of all kinds and trade-marks, with armour plates and girders, or simply metal bars, with coal and chemicals, you joyously feel what a great force lies here in these mountains and how much more radiant and flourishing is the future awaiting them.

There is no doubt that the far reaches of the Northern Urals with their wealth of iron, manganese and other ores, with the pearl spar of the Kara Sea shores, and the supplies of northern oil and coking coal in the Pechora region and other unexplored and unexploited regions of the Urals, will in the coming years give up the treasures in their depths to our socialist fatherland. The eastern slopes of the Urals with their deposits of coals, fire-proof clays and quartz sands, their deposits of bauxites for the development of the aluminium industry, represent the newer and ever newer treasures of the growing, developing Urals.

The Orsk district with its nickel ores, its malachite and jasper hills, is today already becoming a region with a powerful non-ferrous metal industry. Magnetic Mountain contains vast deposits of excellent iron ore. The slopes of the Western Urals are beginning to be exploited more. The oil deposits of the Urals, for the exploration and exploitation of which Stalin has done so much, promise a rich future for this branch of industry. Concealed in the depths of the Urals are world supplies of radium.

The significance of the Urals, so great in war-time, will not diminish after the war is over. Their powerful growing industry, their countless treasures, the energy of their people will

all be directed towards reconstructing the country; they will provide metal and machines, building and other materials for the rapid reconstruction of the economy of the regions and districts at present temporarily occupied by the enemy.

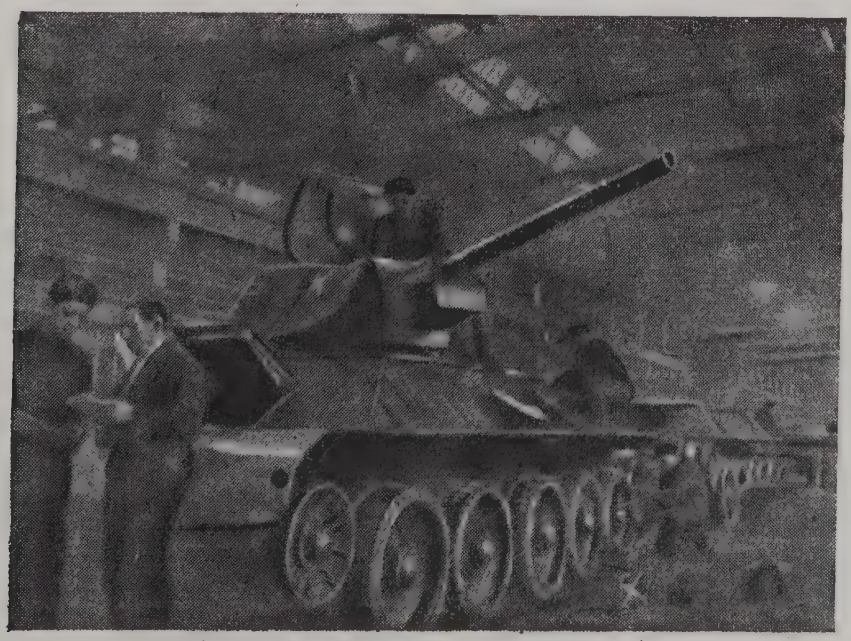
It would be a mistake to lose sight of the fact that the Urals possess, in addition, a rich agricultural base with fertile plough-lands and meadows, with dense forests rich in fur-bearing game, and rivers teeming with fish. The Urals have everything for the full development of their potential forces.

The people of the Urals! History has placed them in a stern school of toil and struggle. Nature did not coddle them; she hardened them. In the first period of the Soviet power the Urals experienced all the horrors of intervention and the temporary reign of Kolchak. The hills and valleys of the Urals were abundantly watered by the tears and blood of workers and peasants. The mines of Kizel were turned into a grave into which the workers were thrown by the followers of Kolchak. Punitive detachments left bloody traces in their wake. But the toilers of the Urals rose to struggle and helped the Red Army smash the enemy.

When on June 22nd, 1941, the storm of war broke out, the men of the Urals proved to be just such staunch defenders of their country as the Siberians and other fighters of the Red Army. The Ural and Siberian riflemen won well-deserved fame. In the first world war the German armies had experienced the force of their bayonet charges, their steadfastness and accurate markmanship. To this was added now a fiercer hatred of the enemy, who so shamelessly and treacherously fell upon our country; to this were added the magnificent weapons forged in the plants of the Urals. How many splendid divisions the people of the Urals have formed and are forming, equipping them with everything needed for war from their powerful arsenal!

In the town of Molotov a fighting song of the men of the Urals was born:

The Ural men to battle are advancing
With song on lips; they do not fear to die.
Their burnished bayonets are brightly glancing;
Before their charge the hordes of fascists fly.



Urals tank plant daily returns repaired machines back to the front

But today the people of the Urals are not only those born and bred there.

Leningradites and Moscovites, gunsmiths of Tula, men of the Donbass and the Baltic region, all have brought here their great culture of labour, experience in production, and fierce hatred of the enemy that has defiled and soaked our native land in blood. *The Song of the Old Miner* by Vassili Khmara (music by George Fardi) has become very popular in the Urals:

My native Donbass have I left for a time
And given a father's command:
Let my sons fight bravely in the front-line
And with honour defend their land.

To the Urals I came not seeking for rest,
Not pleasure or profit to hunt.
'Twas the "Narkom" send me to dig up coal
And weapons to forge for the front.

To the Urals came Semivoloss, the well-known drilling-machine operator of Krivoy Rog, and Bossyi of Leningrad, and Sorokovoy of Dniepropetrovsk, bringing with them their high culture of labour, their improved methods of work. And alongside them work men of the Urals, known to the whole country: the drilling-machine operator Yankin, and the miner Zavertailo, the well-known Ural steel-smelters Valeyev and Bazetov, and the building-worker Shalayev who initiated a new movement of "Shalayevites," masters of high-speed construction work. Thousands of experienced engineers and technicians have come here during the war. The Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. is in its second year of work here; it has enriched the whole country and the people of the Urals in particular by its scientific works, its geological explorations and direct assistance to the enterprises of the region. Take electrical welding as an example of this assistance of the members of the Academy. Before the war electrical welding demanded a considerable number of trained welders. At present, by the method of Member of the Academy Paton, a young boy, fresh from a trade school, can do the work of five or six experienced electrical welders, the quality of the work being incomparably higher.

It is the task of the enterprises and industrial leaders of the Urals to make this advanced culture of labour, these progressive methods the property of all the toilers of their region, to raise the culture of labour of all enterprises, all branches of economy of the Urals to the cultural level of these foremost people.

All the conditions necessary for this exist in the Urals: natural riches and people, up-to-date technique and the culture of the country. It is a remarkable occurrence that in Sverdlovsk, the once dusty, provincial town of Yekaterinburg, lying beyond the boundary post with the inscription "Europe—Asia," for the second time since the war the session of the Academy of Sciences has taken place; at its last session this fighting staff of advanced science summed up the work accomplished in the twenty-five years of existence of the Soviet State, the rich achievements of science in the U.S.S.R. during a quarter of a century. There is sufficient material for pride, for summing up!

Tens of institutes and higher technical schools, scientific-research institutions, first-class theatres have moved to the Urals in war-time and are now carrying on great creative work there. The Leningrad S. M. Kirov Theatre of Opera and Ballet, for instance, has created during the war a truly national, colourful, impressive opera entitled *Yemelyan Pugachov* (V. Kamensky is the author; Marian Koval, the composer; A. M. Pazovsky, the conductor; Fedorovsky, the artist). The same theatre has produced a most interesting ballet *Gayane*, music by A. I. Khachaturyan. The Moscow Theatre of Satire, the Leningrad Theatre of the Young Spectator, the Ukrainian Theatre of Music, Drama and Comedy, and a number of other large theatre troupes present an excellent school for art workers of the Urals.

The bolsheviks of the Urals have glorious fighting traditions. The Urals have undeniably merited the country's recognition. But it would be dangerous and harmful to close one's eyes to the many shortcomings still present in the work of Urals' enterprises, not to see what a great deal they still must do to bring this region up to the level of the enterprises in the capital; this is their task at present. It would be most dangerous to sit back calmly, basking in the glory of the achievements already attained. The tempestuous growth of the Urals is proceeding far less smoothly than it might, were the cultural level of all the work higher.

The Urals possess all the factors necessary for a fully-fledged development of their power economy, yet this branch of the economy is lagging behind. New, large power stations are now being constructed in the Urals. We are confident that the programme of this construction will be carried out on time. But the Urals still have the possibility of considerably expanding their power base by making use of the natural resources and power of their mountain streams, by utilizing the dams of some of the old plants.

The transport of the Urals is at present in some disproportion to its load, which has increased two to three times. It needs extending and more efficient work. It stands in need of assistance.

House-building in the Urals is lagging behind the growth of industry and population. Molotov, Sverdlovsk, Chelyabinsk, Zlatoust, Nizhny Tagil, Magnitogorsk, Serov and a number of other towns demand large-scale serious work in public improvements and house-building. Questions of the city economy, especially water supply, the state of the public service institutions and organizations, are being brought to the foreground. This economy is still very backward.

The education of new trained workers is an important question for the rapidly growing Urals. Our young people constitute wonderful material for this. We all know how conscientiously our young people work. Wherever one meets them, on the most responsible sections of the job, one finds them studying, perseveringly working hard. It is the duty of the enterprises of the Urals to display unfailing solicitude for the young people, raising their cultural level and improving their living conditions, for in them lies our entire future.

The Urals are developing rapidly. This numerical growth alone already demands a leadership of a new kind, a broader outlook in the leading men, a higher cultural level of work of all the enterprises of the Urals. Press and radio, libraries and village reading-rooms, theatres and cinemas, all these ways and means of educating the masses must improve the quality of their work.

The leading men of the Urals will be able to cope with these problems, if they fully realize the tremendous significance of their work, if they succeed in settling all branches of the work on a level with the tasks before them. The more attention they devote to raising the level of the leading men themselves and of the intellectuals, the easier will they find these tasks.

The powerful and patriotic outburst which has swept the country in these days of the commencing offensive of the Red Army must be maintained by every means. Like a breath of hot wind, this burst of feeling sweeps over the Land of the Soviets, instilling Soviet people with the desire to offer up everything for the defeat of the enemy. The Urals have already done quite a bit towards this, but they can do far more. They have received much towards this end. But from those who receive much, much is demanded in return. Let the people of the Urals constantly bear in mind that the country values their labour, and that its faith in the Urals is as firm as the mountains themselves.

YEMELYAN YAROSLAVSKY

Some of the best miners of the Stalin pit, Kuznetsk basin, who have been decorated for their excellent work

THE PEOPLE OF THE URALS

At one of the works in the Urals, in the munition shop, there hangs a simple, one-colour placard:

"Panya Karpova, you've kept your word."

The placard is put up just above a working bench. You cannot help glancing over with curiosity: what is she like, this Panya Karpova, who has kept her word? And you see a slender fair-haired girl, with firmly compressed lips and puckered eyebrows, silently and ceaselessly repeating the same movements. She makes mine-rods, then she gives them a final light caressing pat to take off the superfluous clay and puts them down into the cradle of the conveyor gliding past her. A second, a turn; another second, another turn; and, one after the other, the little pyramids of sand are slipping away... It is obvious that Panya Karpova is keeping her word, and will go on doing so.

But there is something else which strikes you in this slip of a girl as you see her easy, untiring movements, her look of earnest concentration; that something is the will-power that has enabled her to stand by her word, the will-power that can neither be measured nor calculated but which is infectious and keeps all those around her in a state of excitement. Panya Karpova is the personification of that beautiful, sublime patriotic impulse, which is the motive power among the people of the Urals, in the mines and in the field, in the workshops and in the laboratories. The simplest motion, repeated for the thousandth time, that seems to be performed quite mechanically, has an additional meaning and heart put into it. You feel as if a warm, translucent wave of renunciation and love were flowing into it; it's for our country, it's for you, our own dear brother and comrade at the front!

That is why, visiting the Urals factories, seeing people toiling in the fields or entering scientists' laboratories, one feels not only pride but also a sort of exaltation: love, so poignant that it brings tears to one's eyes, for the ordinary Soviet man; faith in our people giving away their very souls for the mother-country; and the longing to speak about them, to tell their stories so as to make them stand out and be seen not only through the figures of a plan carried out or a promise kept, but in this uncalculated, immeasurable self-denial of theirs.

It was in November, when the blizzards were heavy, that a famous old factory was evacuated to the Urals. There was an excellent foreman there, one Grigori Yegorov, a stocky young fellow, round-faced and merry-eyed. Well, no sooner had Yegorov stepped out of the railway carriage than he was sent to a neighbouring town to demonstrate to the workers of another factory a hydraulic press of a kind new to them. While he was doing this, his comrades, starting work in the new place, snapped up all the best workers available. A very difficult shift, mere greenhorns, fell to Yegorov's lot. But there was a rush on, the factory just had to be put in working order at the shortest possible notice.

The People's Commissar censured the foreman before everyone in the shop.

"What does it mean, Yegorov? At home you used to be as brisk as any about your work, and here you seem to be driving a hearse."

The foreman answered the People's Commissar: "Wait a bit," but received the stern reply: "The front can't wait."

There was a conference, and he was to report. He had, however, nothing but failure to report, and they gave it him hot. On leaving the conference Yegorov looked very agitated, and his face was flushed. This is how he tells about those days:

"I made up my mind not to leave the workshop at all, to train my shift thoroughly. I would work as foreman for twelve hours and then eight more at the machine-tools with the novices. Well, you know the way it's done: you put your hand over the boy's and so make him understand what he's expected to do. His fingers feel under mine where he must press and where just give a touch, and how much strength to put in, and when to pull or to turn. As soon as I see the fellow has got the hang of it, has found his working-hands so to speak, I call some boys that are really green: let him instruct those who know even less. He teaches them, and so learns a lot more himself, and acquires the real skill. As to our working conditions, well, there was next to no roof over the shop, the coolant got frozen, even our wollen mittens stuck stiffly to our hands. The front needed our stuff. Stalin spoke to us over the telephone. And before very long my shift took one of the first places. . ."

Four men in Yegorov's shift received bonuses, Yegorov himself was awarded the Order of Lenin.

There seems to be nothing out of the ordinary in this simple story, a man merely did his level best and pulled through. But in Yegorov's case there is the new quality which the Patriotic War has infused into our labours.

Why was Yegorov, a good foreman, grilled at the conference? As the saying goes, he was in the wrong without having done wrong. He was sent to another factory without having had time to engage a good shift for himself; the man was not to blame that he had nobody but raw, unskilled workers to deal with. In pre-war times, a foreman in Yegorov's situation would have mentioned the extenuating circumstances, and nobody would have blamed him, for it would have been unfair. But now, in war-time, it never entered Yegorov's head to think of the fairness or unfairness of it. It

never entered his head because at present there exists but one kind of justice: factories must produce their goods, the front must get munitions. And so Yegorov, when accepting all the reproaches heaped on him, did not judge himself according to detached unprejudiced standards, he passed judgement on himself on this higher standard of love of country. When a woman's child is ill, she will not comfort herself with the idea that she is not to blame: her heart, bleeding for the sick baby, cannot seek relief in thinking she has done everything she could and is not to blame.

Wherever you go, you observe in all our factories, in all men and women of the Urals this motherly, affectionate, "unobjective" attitude towards their work, which overrides all obstacles and refuses even to mention them in self-justification.

This is a factor of the greatest significance, and very characteristic of our times.

The war has brought another change: the job of the foreman (this junior commander of industry) has been revolutionized. Only a short time ago there were people who thought that the organizing role of the foreman in the shops consisted merely in giving orders, criticizing and supervising, and that all this was done without stepping down from his foreman's platform.

The whole country, and even the world, know the name of Dmitri Bossyi who has given a fabulously high output at his miller and started the movement of the "one-thousand percenters." But few people know the pre-war biography of this man.

Dmitri Bossyi worked at a factory in Leningrad: there he was always inventing or improving something or other, using his wits and his ingenuity, and galvanizing the whole shop. The man couldn't endure slow-tempo work. He was always the first to arrive at the shop; then he would inspect every machine-tool, see if anything was wrong and start repairing and adjusting the thing on the spot. When a worker needed some tool, Bossyi would fetch it himself without waiting for anybody to do it, though the shop had a man specially appointed for this kind of work. And Leites was displeased. He upbraided Bossyi perpetually: "Why the deuce do you always butt in on other people's business? You're no use as a foreman, you're a job-setter."

And then the war plunged him right into the heart of the Urals and set before his plant problems of immense consequence, problems of providing the front with munitions. And Bossyi, who had been reproved for his versatility, for taking interest in too many things in the shop, which presumably interfered with his climbing the ladder to the foreman's post, that same Bossyi turned out a brilliant foreman, the creator and organizer of a great tide of industrial enthusiasm among thousands of workers, and his former "defects," his system of getting at everything himself, of trying every machine with his own hands and of helping those who were behindhand with their work by showing them how instead of reproving them, his marvellous knowledge of the miller, all these qualities stood him in good stead and proved to be part and parcel of a foreman's duties.

This trait to know how best to organize the industrial forces of a brigade, a shift or a shop by an accurate knowledge of every bench, every machine and every worker in the shop, has brought to the fore many a master in industry, who gives his orders not from a commander's tower, so to speak, but from the level of the machine-tools; who doesn't leave his plant for weeks together, who instructs "by putting his hands on the tyro's hands," that is, passing his experience on in the quickest possible way, not in words, not in orders, not criticizing or theorizing, but by actual, practical demonstra-

tion, by contact of his skilled hands with unsteady, unpractised hands.

At the Uralmachine plant there is a young foreman, foundry-man Ivanov. He's known far and wide as an excellent organizer: whatever he's entrusted with will be accomplished without fail. When asked: "How do you attain such a good organization of labour in your shop?" he replies: "I know every bench in it; I know the way each of the machines works, its strong points and weak points; I know when and why there may be a hitch in its work, and when to keep an eye on it. I also know every worker in the shop: his likes and dislikes, what he has a turn for and what he's weak in." When given an order for the front, he mentally inspects his little army, appoints everybody and everything to his or its place. He will never give a worker a job he is not fited for, neither will he let anybody waste a second. All will be working their hardest, every instrument in the orchestra will be playing its part.

The Founder. Graduation sculpture by P. Shaposhnikov

The disposition of troops arranged, the battle-field prepared, foreman Ivanov will take his own place there, that of a leading industrial worker; that is, he will be able, if needed, to perform any operation in place of any worker, and to perform it so as to make it an object-lesson. The number of such foremen at our factories is growing daily. Not only the proper organization of labour, but the question of drilling new cadres of workers is being settled by them.

Pavel Spekhov is another well-known man from the Uralmachine plant. He has not set any wonderful records, but his name has become a household word among us in the Urals, and is mentioned with both love and respect. Pavel Spekhov is a man who has set himself the task of imparting everything he knows, all his experience to new or backward workers. Such men as Spekhov spur on unskilled masses of workers to carry out the programme of work. What they are doing is of importance to the State.

The Urals show us an uncommon kind of woman worker. For years the Ural housewife stood by her kitchen-stove, being in her little workshop an accountant, a clerk, a cashier, a buyer, a purveyer, a cook, an odd-job man, a steward, a charwoman, a designer, as well as the director, all rolled into one. Performing all these manifold duties single-handed, she never received any wages, sometimes not even a word of gratitude.

It went without saying that this diversified work was as old as the hills and as common-place as nature itself, that a housewife was expected to do it as a matter of course, such being her "preordained" lot, and that such petty, prosaic, inconspicuous duties called for no special talents or accomplishments.

But let us take a look at the splendid motor-department of this tank producing plant. It is a Leningrad plant, but the motor-shop has been

brought from Kharkov. And, along with their merry disposition and energy, the Kharkovites brought their language: all the posters, mottoes and wall-newspapers were in their warm, heart-reaching, caressing tongue. In this department, where the highest precision of work is indispensable, stand machines which are, to use their operators' expression, "the most intelligent machines in the world," delicate things that need constant care and clever handling. But these machines were lifeless then, for the plant was short-handed. And where could one look for men? What was to be done?

"Do you know who came to the rescue? The Urals housewife!" that's what Margolis, the assistant shop-manager, will tell you. "They came here right from their kitchen-stoves. And I tell you, they've done wonders! First, they've got a way with them in dealing with the lathes. Our machines, you might say, ate out of their hands, as if they were tame things. These women were so careful, attentive, tidy, they wouldn't allow a speck of dust on our beauties. Secondly, they proved capable of concentrating on several operations at once: women like these will look after two things at once, and even a third will not escape their eyes. Thirdly, they are thrifty: they economize on materials, on oil, on the instruments; they'll never think of throwing away even a shaving, while as to damaging something a housewife will neither do it herself nor let others do it. Fourthly, they've got a sense of time; a housewife's movements are so well coordinated! And then, last but not least, she loves her work. You've got to drive her away when the shift is over, she always contrives to be the last to leave and the first to come."

Margolis is no exception, other shop managers at scores of factories in the Urals tell the same. The housewife has accumulated during the long years of her chill obscure labour a great store of labour, sense of time and thrifty habits with material. This stands her in good stead now, and is of great use to the country. But while formerly the housewife drudged only to meet the needs of her own family, and the results of her work vanishing almost as soon as they were produced, leaving behind nothing but the additional job of washing up, now that she has begun to produce something real, substantial, ponderable, something to be used at the front and play its part in the defence of the country, something that is to live a long and useful life, the housewife has blossomed out into a wonderful worker, avid for work and happy because her labour is the labour of her people.

MARIETTE SHAGINYAN

SVERDLOVSK

Stepping off the Sverdlovsk station, one is struck by a peculiar ease of breathing. Perhaps it is due to the fact that one is in mountaineous territory, although the tops of the mountains have been levelled with the ground in the course of the millions of years which have swept over the ancient Urals; perhaps it is due to the fact that one has penetrated far into the continent, a long distance away from seas and oceans, into the zone of the so-called continental climate. Be that as it may owing to the great height above sea-level, the unusual dryness of the air or to some other reason, the fact is that one breathes easily and fells well in Sverdlovsk. It even becomes a habit to open the window in the morning and breathe in the silver of the light snow-flakes with the dry stream of frosty air.

The sky is another thing you cannot help noticing in Sverdlovsk. Ordinarily one notices it as a mere background for the city buildings, but here the sky lives a life

of its own. Looking up you see nothing but sky, and inevitably you say to your neighbour: "Look, what a sky!" Imagine a piece of muslin stretched over the abyss. The Urals sky is close to the Pole; in the winter you feel it in eternal darkness and the northern lights; in the summer, in the endless day and permanent light. This nearness to the Pole is constantly felt in the strange lines, strips and patterns spread over the sky in every conceivable colour, pink, yellow, violet and green light, thin but amazingly vivid.

Sverdlovsk is two towns in one. Formerly called Yekaterinburg, it was a town of wooden peasant houses with carvings and tall gates, the work of famous Vyatka carpenters; of heavy, clumsy single-pattern monasteries and cathedrals and the private homes of avaricious adventurers, large and small, who had grown rich on Urals gold; these are types so well described in the novels of Mamin-Sibiryak.

The new, Soviet Sverdlovsk, is a city which grew out of the Stalin five-year plans. It was built not house by house, but by entire areas at a time. The huge buildings of the various People's Commissariats; the mighty, semi-circular tower of the "Dynamo," as large as a gas-holder; the slender spire rising over the pavilion of the Red Army House, all these are parts of large building areas designed as a whole. And next to this industrial style there is the monumental building of the Industrial Institute in classic style. It is situated so cleverly that it appears to close up the end of the main street, yet it takes a long time to walk up to it, for as you advance the building seems to recede into the background and to turn away from you. This is one of the illusions in perspective you have at Sverdlovsk, where everything seems to be quite close, because you measure distances by the tops of the gigantic buildings, and once you start walking you feel the road will never end.

Mounting the turret of a tank at a Urals factory

The soil of the Urals is not plain earth; the cities stand on gold and platinum. Just scratch and wash some of it, and on the bottom of the pan you will catch a glimpse of something glistening like gold dust. This is the gold dust which turned the heads of the people of Yekaterinburg fifty years ago. The town is rich in legends, like the following:

A peasant was out partridge-shooting in the woods. For some reason he needed a piece of bark, and started to pull some off a tree stump. Suddenly he saw on the bark a pile of green stones growing like mushrooms. These green stones turned out to be the first emeralds, and the place, the first emerald mine.

On another occasion a girl was passing through a field; bending down she picked up a yellow chunk weighing ten pounds. When she brought it home, it was found to be a nugget of pure gold.

Now and then a snow-storm will sweep over our city. To realize what it is like one must experience it

oneself. The wind reaches such violence that it batters a grown-up man about like a helpless child. The snow covers you with its fur, as if an enormous white shepherd dog had placed its paws on your shoulders. The snow sweeps all around you, but you feel well. Numerous posters and advertisements look down at you from the walls; various scientific conferences are held in the city; a ten-day festival of Urals Art has just come to a close. Members of the Academy are leaving for their homes after the jubilee session of the Academy of Sciences. Mathematicians, historians, teachers and physicists, all the professors of the numerous Sverdlovsk universities, have reported on their subjects. One feels as never before that Sverdlovsk is the centre of the Urals.

In the Urals the Stalin five-year-plans have created an outlet both for the energy of man and the wealth of the subsoil.

In the streets of Sverdlovsk, in hospital wards and at scientific conferences you often meet a man with a flowing white beard, amber-coloured eyes and soft, low voice. Everybody is very glad to meet him, the soldiers love to listen to him, and every factory worker knows that this is Pavel Petrovich Bazhov, the story-teller of the Urals and an old writer. All his life he has been writing a single book. This book was published long ago, but it can be continued endlessly. Its title is *The Malachite Casket*, a collection of Urals fairy tales about ore and minerals, about the people who toiled in mines bringing up the ore for their master and factory-owner, about the mysterious woman who owned the Copper Mountain and who personified the living soul of the earth, and about her attitude to the people. There is nothing more Russian than this Urals book, which has preserved all the peculiarities of the Urals dialect. It is Russian because it shows how the pure, conscientious spirit of the people soared triumphant over the temptations of greed and easily-won wealth, how toil and the knowledge needed to apply human craftsmanship to ore and stone, help in overcoming dark passions, the desire for easy prey and the pleasure of getting rich; how man does not perish even under the most terrible conditions, but knows how to place his own dignity above them. One may wonder what there could be in common between our grim times and a fairy tale? Where is the bridge which connects the strenuous work in factories, the sleepless nights spent in fulfilling war orders and these simple, gentle tales of a Urals story-teller?

There are popular movements, which at once become history tinged with the spirit of fairy tale. A year ago such a movement swept the workers of the Urals. On the eve of New Year a letter was sent to Stalin by the workers of the factories, the shops and the offices of industrial concerns. The grey Urals took up the work of defence. Hardy, strong men of the Urals, young and old, old women and girls, stepped up to put their signatures to the letter. The Urals promised to overfulfil the year's programme, to give more than had been asked. Those who saw the faces of the people bent over the New Year's letter, the faces of people whose thoughts went out to the man who had opened such wide vistas before their country; those who saw these faces must have thought of the wise, conscientious folk spirit of Bazhov's fairy tales. They were the skilled craftsmen, the wonder-working labourers with the honest open hearts, of whom the old man with his flowing beard had told us in his book; the same people who have won liberty and grown still stronger.

A short time ago foundryman Boytsov came into his foundry some time before his shift began. And suddenly the loud-speaker carried the voice of the invisible announcer through the foundry, telling the world about our offensive on the Stalingrad front. Boytsov listened intently, all the while

thinking hard. . . During these few remaining minutes he was thinking over a certain detail, a proposal he was going to make and over which he had been struggling a long time; and now a sudden light burst upon him. That night Boytsov solved his own problem, and instead of the 19 parts which constituted his programme, he prepared 207. Boytsov is a man of the Urals. Dmitri Bossyi from Leningrad, Ivan Zavertailo from the Ukraine and Michael Popov from Smolensk, all of them became men of the Urals. In eighteen months of war the people created a new style of work and named it the Urals style.

Let us imagine that the war is over and the enemy destroyed. The Land of the Soviets is cleared of the invader and a gigantic invisible parade, the parade of the history and the conscience of men and cities is held. They report on what they did for victory. Where will our city stand then? What will it be able to boast of?

Sverdlovsk is the heart of our defence industry. Though thousands of kilometres from the front, Sverdlovsk could say that, as the people of Leningrad put it, its street cars "go to the front," because, should it lessen its efforts and produce less instead of more, the front would remind it of its duty at once. That is why everything that happens in our city, the events of the day, the coming and going of trains, the noise of the rotary press in the printers', the rise of the curtain in the theatre, the call of the telephone and the turning of the electric light switch when leaving the room, all this is linked by thousands of different threads to matters of industry, economy, orders for the front, production records and everything connected with national defence. Those who do not stand at the lathes, help those who do. Our city is responsible not only for itself, it embodies the work of the entire district, of the entire Urals. When a scientist or engineer needs some information on the general economy of

Sabik Mukhamedov, the best pupil of a Urals factory school

the Urals, or is engaged on some Urals problem, he has to go to Sverdlovsk: there are the scientific institutions and the People's Commissariats, archives and scientists' conferences. The Sverdlovsk District Party Committee has appealed to local intellectuals: "Scientists, teachers, physicians and art workers! Place all your knowledge and experience at the service of industry and agriculture." And physicians, teachers, actors and writers do their bit in industry and agriculture. In field camps and at collective farms plays on subjects of local interest are given; in factory-clubs plays are given which have been written right there, using the living material of some workers' shift.

The movement of the "hundred- and thousand-unit producers," the steady stream of inventions and ideas, the work of great scientists is a leap into the future, into the coming technique. Great events are taking place before the eyes of our generation. It was during the war that the milling machine became introduced and applied to such an enormous extent in the Urals. American cold metal presses are used in large numbers. The engineers have revised and improved many designs, replacing parts formerly made on a lathe by lighter stamped parts. The latest advance in foundry technique is the use of steel moulds instead of the former earth ones. Many engineers will tell you that much of what they had been thinking long ago, without daring to put it into practice, has now, in war-time, been applied by them in technology. We have begun to build fast and smoothly. We have learned to measure time by seconds. It is in Sverdlovsk, more than anywhere else, that one realizes the remarkable fact that the Soviet worker never ceases to be a creator, no matter what the conditions, no matter if he is in mortal danger.

In this workers' city of Sverdlovsk the breath of life is victory, that is why one breathes so easily here!

MARIETTE SHAGINYAN

THE BATTLE OF THE NEVA

It was night, the night of January 11th. . . Troops were marching along the snow-covered roads, endless columns of them, looming into sight and disappearing again in the darkness of the forest. Motorized columns passed swiftly by. Long-range artillery were taking up their positions along a front stretching from Lake Ladoga to Leningrad, their muzzles directed towards Schlüsselburg, Moskovskaya Dubrovka, Sinyavino. . . Somewhere in the distance flashes could be seen. Liaison officers hurried hither and thither with last-minute instructions.

Early in the morning the gunners of the Baltic fleet received their orders to attack. It was cold and dark. The faint light of a kerosene lamp showed young ardent faces. A few words were said. . . "The city of Lenin is waiting for us. . . It has a right to expect a blow which will send the German blockade to the devil and sweep the very smell of the Germans from the whole area."

The gunners had a highly important job ahead of them. The complicated network of defences, all these blockhouses, pillboxes, trenches, fortifications and batteries which the German engineers had thrown up around Leningrad, had to be smashed! Hundreds of the Baltic gunners were also detailed to the ranks of the infantry Guards. On the aerodromes pilots were making their last preparations. In this historic battle the men of the Baltic fought on every sector, and fought after a fashion that will leave an everlasting memory.

Divisions are drawn up in position, waiting. Everything is quiet, nothing to be seen. But hundreds

Leningrad today: Vorovsky square

and hundreds of guns ... been skilfully brought up, and are waiting their moment. Morning breaks. All eyes are fixed on the minute hand: "Now. . . now. . ." Nine-thirty. The overture of the artillery thunders forth. Artillery, the "god of war," a terrible and mighty god. This devastating avalanche of metal from Leningrad, from our country, is a sign and a token for Hitler of what it means to fight the Soviet Union.

Guns of all calibre were joining in the music, from small ones barking away to the giants which sent over shells more powerful than ton bombs.

The horizon was shrouded in smoke, observers bored into that menacing barrier continually pierced with the flashes of explosions, while geysers of smoke and soil rose continually, and the terrible racket never ceased for a moment.

The guns were already scorching to the touch. The paint on them blistered, began to burn. The white camouflage paint slowly blackened, and a hot, scorched smell arose. The gunners worked without slackening speed, hundreds of tons of metal passing through their hands, every thought concentrated on the job of aiming and firing. Despite the sharp frost, men were drenched with perspiration, they threw off their padded jackets, revealing the familiar striped jersey and muscular bodies of the marines.

A new note was added to the hell's orchestra as the Germans replied. Gradually the snow blackened from the smoke of the barrage.

Bombers and stormers were roaring through the skies, coming over in waves, like an efficiently working conveyor, diving right over the German positions. Furious fighting was raging everywhere, while whole German support points disappeared. On several sectors the Huns, deafened and stupefied, were running to their second defence lines. But the artillery ferretted them out there too.

. . . At the hour set the infantry went over the top. On our sector, the initial position was a famous line on the Neva held by Baltic marines, all of whom had been decorated for valour. This position was

a reminder of the doggedness and ready courage exhibited by these men in the autumn, when they captured a German strong point, when the marines rushed headlong into the midst of the German trenches with the sailors' striped jersey flying from their bayonets, and held the position for the whole winter, despite all the enemy's frantic endeavours to recover it.

And it was here, on this sector, that our thrust began. How they drove ahead, these Leningrad regiments, if you could only have seen it! Over the ice, through the thick of the explosions, straight for the enemy they advanced, and the frosty air rang with the cry: "For Leningrad!" With grenade and bayonet they drove at the desperately resisting Huns. The army artillery and the naval gunners shifted their fire, the hail of molten metal sped further into the enemy rear.

But in modern warfare a battle is not decided by one blow. Fighting continued to rage; the Neva villages, the power stations, the peat-loading sidings had all been converted into fortifications of all kinds by the Germans.

The batteries would go over to aimed fire, then once more launch a furious barrage. Tarassov's battery roared and thundered, Potekhin's, Zhuk's, Barbakadze's, Lezatov's, Simakin's; it would be impossible to name them all. Everybody was taking a hand in the work, wounded, girl telephonists, cooks. Nobody shirked. This was the battle for Leningrad, for their own city which had suffered so much... And in this intense fighting, people summoned up their last ounce of energy, strength and will.

Night had passed, morning had broken, a cold morning with seventeen degrees centigrade of frost. Everyone was exhausted with the continual strain, the tension, the firing, but no one thought of rest. And the people of Leningrad, these gallant men and women workers, engineers and technicians working in the war factories, kept us supplied with fresh munitions. They had been rushed up to the batteries during the night, we felt no lack of shells.

Day after day the fighting continued. One after another, by the dozen, the enemy support points were smashed, destroyed. Throughout the long nights, very lights soared over the Neva and hung there, slowly dying out. Ski troops swooped into the attack from the lake. The German defence was beginning to crack, to crumble.

Slowly, with an indescribably deadly, relentless persistence, the men of Leningrad pushed ahead, further and further, while the artillery continued its devastating work.

Wounded infantrymen were brought in from the Neva, heroes of that break through.

"Where are the marines?" asked one major. He looked long at their smoke-lackened faces, streaked with perspiration. Then he embraced them.

"You gave them hell all right, you devils! And how you gave it them!" he said.

News kept coming in from the observation posts. Our men storming Schlüsselburg. Strong points taken. Prisoners coming in.

The artillery fire shifted still deeper into the enemy rear. Sappers and railwaymen were moving up along the railway track. The Germans tried to answer back, mounted batteries to cover the railway, but our guns swept them from their positions. Fires raged in the German rear, more and more of them. Our night bombers zoomed overhead, so low that they almost brushed the tops of the telegraph poles: the Germans must be harrassed continually, not given a moment's breathing space to recuperate. Reserves were being brought up from a forward station in the German rear. Concentrated artillery fire found them out, and the earth was strewn with hundreds of enemy dead. The Baltic

marine gunners were beating all records.

The scope of the battle continued to grow and extend. And from company to company, from battery to battery, the word flashed round: "We've broken through, we've joined up!"

There is still much to be told about that battle. There will be time for that later. Now, the fight goes on. And in their joy, the Leningrad people's first thought is for the front. How to help it today? What to do for our men? What can they give, these fighting men who are pushing their way through swamp and forest, up to the waist in snow, under fire?

We shall help the front in every way we possibly can. We shall smash the enemy, send him rolling head over heels, drive him back, drive him to his death, stamp him into the earth, again and yet again. The people of Leningrad have strength enough, determination enough! We shall call Hitler to account for everything. The reckoning has only just begun!

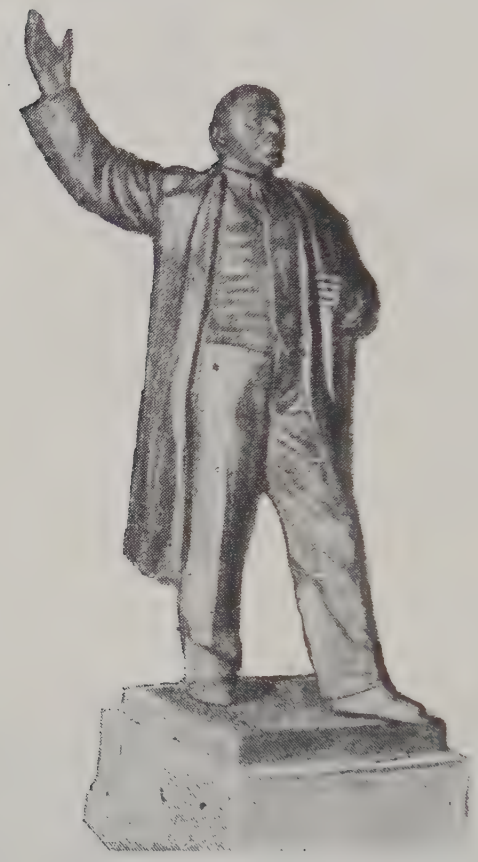
VSEVOLOD VISHNEVSKY

Leningrad front.

The Neva in the days of war

V. I. LENIN

22/IV 1870 — 21/I 1924



Sculpture by M. Schwarts

THE SUN-STONE

You might go all over the world and never find another such place as our Ilmen for stones. There's no denying it, for it's written down in every tongue under the sun. Covetous and given to bragging as the Germans are, even among them there were folks who had to admit that there were stones from all over the earth in the mountains of Ilmen.

Naturally, a spot like this wouldn't slip past Lenin's eye. And in 1920 these parts were declared by a special decree, written by Lenin himself, a government preserve. That meant that prospectors and wasters and the like would be taken by the scruff of the neck and the mountains preserved for what they call science, or barning, anyhow—for the times to come.

It looked plain and straightforward. As everybody knows, Lenin had an eye that saw what was going on under the ground, never mind on top of it. Naturally, he knew

what was going on in the mountains. The only thing was, our old miners hadn't much faith in it; no such thing could ever be, they said. The war was at its height just then. Comrade Stalin had his work cut out hurrying from one front to another, and here all of a sudden this business of the stones came up. They tell the story this way:

It was about two men, brothers by trade: Maxim Vakhonya, and Sadyk Uzeyev who went by the name of Sandugach. One was a Russian, the other from Bashkir stock, and one thing had kept them together from the time they were youngsters: they'd been up and down the gold-fields and mines since they could remember. They'd always been like that, folks said, the greatest pals; it was a fair wonder to see them. It wasn't as if they were anything alike, at any rate, to look at. Vakhonya was burly, with a beard coming down, his belly, shoulders on him you'd think were props, a fist that was a sight to terrify anyone, legs you might see on bear, and a rumbling voice that seemed to come from his boots. It wanted just a murmur of his to send the flies half-a-yard off. Though God knows he was a mild creature by nature, I might go so far as to say he was meek. If anyone made themselves a nuisance when he was tipsy, he'd say no more than:

"Clear out while the going's good, my laddie, else I might up with my fist and clip you one without thinking."

Sadyk was but a puny fellow, and then at that, with a matter of about seven hairs for a beard, and those not in their proper place, even. Yet he had a power of muscle and was a first-rate miner. Which shows that you never can judge; a man may be nothing to look at, till it comes to work. Sadyk liked his bit of fun, he was always ready for a dance and a song. And a great kouraya[1]-player into the bargain. No wonder they called him Sandugach: it means nightingale in our parts.

So life threw Maxim and Sadyk in with each other on the same road. They weren't always working to put money in the government's and the owner's pockets. There were times when they got their share of pay-dirt. But it soon burned a hole in their pockets: as everybody knows, there was only one way to happiness for the old-time gold-digger: he went on the spree till it was all gone, then it was back to work again. But these two usually looked for a fresh place, where things might be livelier.

Neither of them were family men, so there was nothing to keep them in one spot. They put their few bits of things together, slung their knapsacks on their backs, took their tools with them and were off on the long trail.

"Let's go and look for some place where folks are well-off," you'd hear Vakhonya boom in his great voice.

Sadyk would march along cheerily with:

"Step out, Maximka, step out! Pay-dirt sticks to your hands in a new place, that everybody knows, and precious stones just get into your beard, you'll see that beard of yours weighing a whole stone of stones one of these days."

"It'd be more than they could do in yours, anyway—I bet you couldn't keep one in it," Vakhonya would say with a laugh that'd make you think of wood-goblins: "Ho-ho-ho!"

After this fashion they lived, these two brothers by trade. Up and down the mines and gold-fields of the country they went: they saw the good day and the bad day; and it crippled both of them. Sadyk lost the sight of one eye at work, and Vakhonya got so hard of hearing in one ear, it was no use to him at all.

They'd been to Ilmen mountains many a time, of course. They slaved in Andryusha Lobachov's mines, and whenever he went on the spree, they

[1] Kouraya is a very long horn.

left him for Gologuzov. Many a thousand did they put in Gologuzov's pockets. Not to mention Mrs. Pavelikha's: that hussy got a heap of precious stones out of them. That was where Sadyk lost his eye.

The two old mates happened to be in these parts when the Civil War started. They were working at Kochkar for Podvinchikha then, and as miners will, they took their guns and went to fight for the Soviets. The time came when Kolchak was driven to Siberia, and then the man who was in charge of the political part up and said to them:

"Well, the Soviet government thanks you old fellows heartily, but now, knowing that you've been disabled in your work in the bowels of the earth, you'd do better on the labour-front. Particularly since one of you having a blind eye and the other being deaf, it kind of spoils the look of the ranks."

The old miners took it a bit hard, but what could they do about it? After all, the man was right, they thought they ought to be going to have a look what was doing in the goldfields. First place they started for was Ilmen, and there they found a sight of folks, the worst kind of wasters, the kind that thought of nothing but money-getting: they'd ruin the whole mine in a minute if they thought they were going to get anything out of it. And behind all this rabble stood the trader; only, of course, he didn't show himself much nowadays. So off they went to Kochkar, to Bishkil. But it was the same everywhere, and the old fellows were at their wits' end, wondering what they were to do. They went to Mias, to Zlatoust, poked about and asked this one and that one, but they couldn't get any sense out of anyone.

"This is no time for that sort of thing," they were told, "besides the head office looks after that."

Just to try and find out about this head office business was enough to make their heads go round: there was one, it seemed, that dealt with copper, another with gold, a third with stones. And what was to be done, when there was everything under the sun in the Ilmen mountains? So anyhow the old men made up their minds.

"We'll go right to Comrade Lenin himself if it comes to that. He'll find time for us, never mind."

They got ready for the road, and as they were doing that they started an argument about one thing and came near to falling out. Vakhonya said they ought to take only precious stones with them, the kind people use for cutting. And some gold-dust as well. But Sadyk had a notion they ought to take a sample of every stone because of this science they'd heard about.

They argued and argued, and at last they came to an agreement that each should do as he thought fit and fill his own sack.

Vakhonya went in strongly for those he liked best and even went to Kochkar to get some blue stones and pink topazes. A bit of gold-dust, too, he took. A neat little bag it was he made up for himself, all of these semi-precious stones. But Sadyk went and filled a sack he was hardly able to lift, mostly with stones that none but a man who was well up in such things would even pick off the road. Vakhonya roared laughing when he saw it:

"Ho-ho-ho! Give you a chance, and you fetch a whole mountain in a sack. As much as to say: here you are, Comrade Lenin, pick out what you think will come in useful and what you think won't."

This upset Sadyk, and he said crossly:

"You must be terrible thick-head, Maxim, if you think that way of Dad Lenin. Science is what he goes in for, he doesn't care a hang about the market-price of stones."

So they started for Moscow. Naturally, they couldn't get there without accidents. Vakhonya got left behind at one station, and though Sadyk had fallen out with him and was feeling

vexed at heart, still he grew very downhearted without his old mate, even to the point of ailing a bit. When all was said and done, they'd always been together, and now here was this big job before them, and they were parted. It was enough to upset anyone. Not to mention the minding and carrying of two heavy sacks, which was no joke for one person. There were folks, he had heard, who went about asking if it wasn't salt you were taking, to sell dear where it was scarce. And if you showed them these stones, they'd want to know this and that, and the why and wherefore of everything, and whether it was for your own profit or for a museum, and God knows what. A bothersome business, anyhow.

Vakhonya somehow managed to catch up with the train, just as it was getting near Moscow, and those two were so delighted to see one another that they set all the passengers laughing till they were fit to split, what with their kissing and embracing of each other; it was a fair treat to watch. Then they started arguing again about the stones (only they were a good deal milder with each other this time, and dind't quarrel), wondering which sack to take. As they were getting near Moscow, Vakhonya up and said:

"I'll take your sack for you, it's handier-like for me and it won't look so funny. You're smaller than me, you should have the smaller sack."

They spent the first night on the station, as you might expect, and started out next morning to look for Comrade Lenin. They soon found him and marched straight in with their sacks on their shoulders. Naturally, they were asked what they wanted, who they were and all the rest of it, and Sadyk up and said in his queer Russian:

"We want for Dad Lenin to see our stones."

"We come from rich parts that ought by right to be saved from wasters and rogues," Vakhonya explained. "But we couldn't make head or tail of things out there, so we've come here and we want to see Comrade Lenin without fail."

They were taken to see Lenin. They explained the ins-and-outs of it all to him, hurrying each other, interrupting each other till you couldn't hear one or the other. Lenin listened for some time and then he stopped them:

"Look here, friends, supposing only one of you speaks at a time. So far as I can see, it's a matter of State importance, and it's got to be understood."

At this Vakhonya—and God knows where he got the nerve to do it—started to set out all his most precious stones and booming about them: this is from such-and-such a quarry, that's from place called so-and-so; and how much they were worth in roubles.

Lenin asks all of a sudden:

"What are these stones used for?"

"Mostly for ornament," Vakhonya explained, "set in rings, earrings, necklaces and the like."

Lenin looked at them, admired them a little and sat thinking. Then he said: "They can wait."

Now it was Sadyk's turn. He undid his sack, and emptied his stones on the desk, gabbling:

"Amazon-stone, Columbite-stone, Labrador-stone!"

Lenin was surprised.

"Why," he said, "you've got stones from different countries here."

"That's right, Dad Lenin! That's true for you! Stones came running from all ends of the earth. Stone-brain, too, we're got. And in Eremeyev quarry there's sun-stone."

Here Lenin seemed he couldn't help smiling, and he said:

"We can manage without the stone-brain, perhaps. You don't need to go to the mountains to find plenty of them. But the sun-stone would come in handy. Cheerful kind of thing to live with."

When Sadyk heard him talk like that, he tried harder than ever.

"Why's our stone good, Dad Lenin? It's because the sun warms it well. And I'll tell you for why: because just

at this very spot the mountains take a turn and open out into the plain."

"Now that," said Lenin, "is dearest of all, that the mountain have turned to the sun and don't bar the way out to the plain."

Then Lenin telephoned to someone and bade them write down the names of all the stones, and draw up a strict decree to stop wasters and rogues doing as they liked and to declare the place a government preserve. Then he got to his feet and said:

"Many thanks, old comrades, for taking all this trouble. This is a big thing you've done. A thing that concerns the State." And he went and shook hands with them, mind you.

You'll guess, I think, that these two were standing half-dazed. The tears shone like dew on Vakhonya's beard, while Sadyk could only waggle his miserable little beard, and keep saying:

"Aye, Dad Lenin, Dad Lenin!"

There and then Lenin wrote a note saying that the old men were to get a pension and be put as watchmen at the State preserve.

Only our old men somehow never got back. You remember what travelling was like those days. You started off somewhere, never knowing where you'd end up. That was the way with Vakhonya and Sadyk: they were taken one place and turned up somewhere quite different. The war must have been on in those parts, and although one had lost his hearing in one ear and the other his sight in one eye, they both went and started fighting all over again.

From that day to this, they have never been heard tell of. But the order regarding the preserve soon reached these parts. Now this same government preserve is called after Lenin.

PAVEL BAZHOV

AT THE RED WALL

What was Russia to me in 1915 when together with other children I played at war beneath the glass roof of a patio brightly illumined by the rays of the Cadiz sun? An endless snowy plain, soaked in blood and overrun by countless hordes of Cossacks. In 1917, when I came to Madrid, Russia had lost its outlines for me, had disappeared from my horizon.

Only later, in 1930, at the time of the fall of the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, did it reappear before me in all its present grandeur, but this time under its new true name: the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

From the window of the New Moscow Hotel where I am staying I see the red capital and, dividing it, the Moscow River half-frozen. Children are sliding down the steep slopes of its banks on sleds. From afar they look like little black balls.

The Cathedral of Vassili the Blessed, with its many domes resembling bishops' mitres suspended in the air, rises above the houses as if desirous of reaching with its crosses the level of the Kremlin towers. On one of these towers, surrounded by red flags, a golden eagle, emblem of the tsars' power, still spreads its wings. Opposite it and as faded and pitiful, rises the cross of Vassili the Blessed, the symbol of the church, ally of the eagle.

Along the river stretches the Red Kremlin wall; from my window I can't see where it ends. Protected by walls, surrounded by the ancient cathedrals with their golden domes, rises the building of the Central Executive Committee, built in neo-classical style. Who in Europe dares to say that the Russians tear down crosses and recast the gold of the domes? The Soviet power is stronger than the ancient symbols of tsarist Russia. It needs not fear them. It lets them be. I see them from the window; but they seem to be dead.

We leave the hotel. The crowds overflow the streets of Moscow in an endless stream. We are informed that Moscow formerly had less than a million population, whereas at present it has about three million. We certainly see this; it is felt by our shoulders and feet which make their way ahead with difficulty. Along the pavement walk people of all the nationalities inhabiting this boundless country. Here are Eskimos in reindeer coats; peasants in sheepskin coats and fur caps, from afar they seem to be carrying live shaggy lambs on their heads, Tadjiks, Uzbeks, Georgians in felt cloaks and fur caps; women in astrakhan coats; workers, Red Army men with children in their arms; brisk, loquacious little old women, their faces resembling those of Spanish women. I hear: "Lenin! Lenin!" We are on the Red Square. Near the very middle of the Kremlin wall stands a severe, red-black truncated pyramid. Short dark lines, and two motionless Red Army men with bayonets at attention guard it. Treading down the frozen snow, people have formed a long queue. They are waiting for the Kremlin clock to strike three. Over the entrance to the tomb are five golden letters: LENIN . . Lenin! And I recall the verses of Vera Inber:

For five nights Moscow stayed awake,
Because he'd gone to sleep. . .

Even after his death the emancipated peoples are drawn to Lenin from afar, come to look at him, to pay homage to him and then to resurrect him in their songs, mingling his name with the new themes suggested by life: they sing of Lenin, of tractors, of electrification, of factories and plants. Poems and stories about Lenin are sung and related in the Far North among the Ostyaks and Lamuts, in Central Asia among the Turkmenians, Tadjiks, Uzbeks, in the Caucasian mountains among the Ossetians and Khevsurs. Their authors, often blind, illiterate minstrels, are greatly revered by the population and pay with songs for the hospitality accorded them.

Lenin. . . Perhaps among the people gathered at the entrance to your tomb, today stands a new Hafiz, one of those who glorify your name on the roads and in the new-born collective farms of the East.

RAFAEL ALBERTI

LENIN'S FURNISHED ROOM

In the days of his emigration in Switzerland Lenin lived in Zurich between the house where Gottfried Keller was born, and the monument of Charlemagne in Gothic style.

Spiegelgasse, winding uphill, is so narrow that even a hand cart can't squeeze its way through. At first it seems as if it were going to reach the top of Mount Zurichberg, but halfway up it begins to descend, without opening before the windows of its houses the view on the waves of Lake Limat, on its endless mirror-like expanse and on the bluish-green woods covering the mountains.

No tourists live here, no travellers seeking pleasure. Only small handicraftsmen workers make their home in this place. Here lived Vladimir Ulyanov whom his comrades of the fraction esteemed; whom his antagonists hated for his firmness and implacability, calling him a dreamer occupied in figuring out all the details of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as if the Romanovs would agree to renounce their throne to suit this emigrant, and evacuate the Kremlin for a Zurich shoemaker's tenant.

Yes, Herr Kammerer is a shoemaker. I made his acquaintance on entering his shop in Spiegelgasse to have my boots repaired. He priced his work at eighty centimes. I took off the boots and he began to draw them on to the last. A conversation started, which it was easy to switch on to the tenant who had lived upstairs,

on the second floor of his house on 14 Spiegelgasse, near the shoeshop, during the eighteen months from the beginning of 1916 to April, 1917. At that time Herr Kammerer was getting ready to move to a new apartment on Kulmanstrasse, where a small room was reserved for Herr and Frau Ulyanov.

"But, unfortunately, nothing came of it," said the shoemaker. "On April 8th, 1917, Ulyanov announced that he had to leave immediately. I asked him: 'Why do you want to leave now? The room is paid for up to the first of May.' To this he replied that he had pressing affairs in Russia. Well, I shook my head; after all, it's no joke to lose money for half a month's rent, especially when extra money is scarce, as was usual with Ulyanov. What a tenant Ulyanov was! Good heavens, how satisfied I was with him! He paid me twenty-eight francs a month for the room; that was enough during the war; now it would be more expensive: thirty-five—forty francs at least. There was very little bother with them. They had the use of the kitchen. Frau Ulyanov would cook the dinner, and they were continually drinking tea. Day after day Ulyanov would sit at the table, reading books and newspapers and writing till late into the night. Good heavens! How many books and newspapers he used to receive! Do you see that corner? Every day it used to be full of books and newspapers, and Ulyanov would come for them himself, so that the postman shouldn't have to climb the stairs so often. Some of the letters were addressed to Lenin. I asked Frau Ulyanov what that meant. She explained to me: 'We are Russian emigrants, and that is a literary name.' 'Well,' I said, 'that's none of my business. You're registered at police headquarters, and the rest doesn't concern me!' "

Herr Kammerer stands on a stool and knocks away at the heel of my boot with a hammer, while his youngest son sits nearby, working with an awl.

"After their departure I burnt a pile of newspapers and printed stuff; I simply couldn't take them along to the new apartment. I swear, it never occurred to me that he'd become such a great man in Russia.

"I wished him luck on leaving and said: 'I hope, Herr Ulyanov, that in Russia you won't have to work so hard as here.' He answered thoughtfully: 'I think, Herr Kammerer, that in Petrograd I'll have even more work.' 'Really!' I said. 'Why, you won't be able to write more than you did here. Will you find a room right away in Russia? They have a great shortage of apartments there.' 'A room, at any rate, I'll get,' Ulyanov answered. 'As to it being as quiet as here, Herr Kammerer, that I don't know yet.' Immediately after that he left."

To add force to his words Herr Kammerer bangs with his hammer at the patch now decorating my boot, takes the money and as I draw it on points to the neighbouring house: "Do you see the window up there? That was the Ulyanov's room. An upholsterer, Stocker, lives there now."

Crumbling plaster on the house-front; downstairs a tavern "Zum Jakobsbrunnen." A steep wooden staircase. Frau Stocker conducts me into the room that Herr Kammerer had let to Lenin. A low-ceilinged room, the upraised hand reaches the ceiling; a small room three metres wide, almost four-five metres long. To the right near the door is an iron stove with a pipe stretching the length of the room. Near the window stands a dresser built into the wall. The wide bed and the sacred pictures on the walls are the property of the new tenants. Nevertheless, the arrangement of the furniture is probably the same as it was then. Where the table stands now, there must have been a table before; there is simply no other place to put it. Yes, in this dilapidated little room of the poor, costing twenty-eight francs a month, stood a table, at which, in the dim light of the narrow street, the great emigrant used to sit.

EGON ERWIN KISCH

ANNE KARAVAYEVA

THE GREEN BURR

Every feature shone in Matvei Temlyakov's high-cheekboned face, the rusty-ruddy face of a smith, as he bounded up the stairs to his rooms and flung open the door with a crash.

"Katya, Katenka!" he called in his rollicking, jovial bass.

"She isn't home just now!" came a gentle feminine voice from the bath-room.

"A-aw!" the smith exclaimed, disappointed and vexed. "I hurried home on purpose, and now she's out!"

He glanced into the bath-room as he passed to speak to his neighbour, Maria Sergeyevna Sakulenko, wife of a smith evacuated from the Dniepropetrovsk district. She was busy bathing her black-eyed twins, Ivass and Vassilko.

"Where's Katya gone?" Temlyakov asked.

"Shopping, of course," his neighbour replied in her soft, sing-song voice. Then she suddenly smiled: "I see you haven't even had time to wash yourself properly yet, Matvei Petrovich."

"You're right, upon my word!" the smith laughed. "I was in such a hurry to get home today!"

He went up to the mirror over the washbasin and, baring his large white teeth that were like two even rows of haricot beans, smiled at his own reflection. Then he soaped his face lavishly, and, thrusting his head under the cool, pleasantly-threshing stream, puffed and gasped with enjoyment.

"Br-r-r! That's grand!"

"Ah, Matvei Petrovich, you've pulled down Katenka's dressing-gown along with the towel, she'll give it to you!" Maria Sergeyevna said slyly.

"Oho! Look what I've done!" the smith exclaimed in embarrassment, clumsily picking up a bathrobe striped in rainbow hues.

"Yes, you'll catch it from her," the woman kept on, teasingly. "She's got a hot temper."

"Yes, but it's soon over with her. Ah, you don't know my Katya properly yet, Maria Sergeyevna!"

"I know one thing though: it's a pleasure to see you together, it makes the heart glad, I declare."

"Oh, yes, Maria Sergeyevna, we have a grand time together, I can tell you! Sometimes, it even lies a bit heavy on my conscience to think there's a war like this going on and the whole country's living through such an anxious time, we're working and imitating the soldiers, and then when you come home tired from work it's as though there's a singing bird waiting to meet you, such a bonny bird, such a songster, ah, I tell you, you can't keep the heart from throbbing then even though it's got a weight of stone on it!" And the smith, as he went to hang up the bathrobe, stroked it stealthily.

"Well, well, love and goodwill aren't stolen goods, there's no need to hide them. And then you're such a healthy couple, God give you long life!" the woman returned with an involuntary sigh. She herself was

ailing and always haunted by the fear that she would not live to rear her twins, Ivass and Vassilko.

After a vigorous rub with a towel, the smith cast another searching glance at his reflection in the mirror. The face with its prominent cheek-bones, its rust-red skin, turned-up nose and small greenish-brown eyes looked back at him mockingly.

"M-yes! Not much of a facade, that, my lad!" he thought to himself with cheerful irony.

"There's one thing I always regret, Maria Sergeyevna, and that is that I'm twelve years older than my Katerina," Matvei said with a sigh, for the happiness that today, of all days, swelled his breast, cost him a real twinge of conscience. "When I buried my first wife, I made up my mind I'd never marry again. And here I am, two years married!" He spread out his hands with a gesture of complete bewilderment and smiled happily. "My Katerina met me and married me. She chose me, she wasn't to be attracted by any man of her own age."

"'Tisn't because they're good that they're dear, Matvei Petrovich, they're good because they're dear."

"That's true. And you know why she chose me?" He thrust out his broad chest. "She chose me for my skill, because I was first and foremost in the workshop and always did my job like an artist. You mustn't think that smiths can't be artists at their jobs, too. Katya can appreciate people like that: she's one of the Lossyevs, you know. That was a famous family, an ancestor of theirs worked in olden times for the Demidovs, he was one of the best men in their works. Yes, theirs is a good old Urals family, a proud family, I can tell you!"

As he entered the room, the first thing Matvei's eyes rested on was the big picture of his wife. He had ordered it shortly after their marriage, because he had wanted her to be with him always. She looked down at him now, her strongly-marked, sickle-shaped brows slightly raised. She smiled as though at some secret of her own, biting her underlip a little. The smith winked at the portrait and exclaimed: "Heigh-ho! What a day it is today, Katenka!" and opened the door of the wardrobe.

He put on his best suit, and was in the middle of torturing himself fumbling with a collar and tie when Katia entered the room.

"What are you all dressed up for?" she exclaimed in surprise, and the sickle-shaped dark chestnut eyebrows went up in surprise. Then, suddenly guessing why, she gave a glad cry:

"So it's today! You're going for the banner today, are you?"

"That's it, the challenge banner of the Eighth Guards' Division," Matvei was beginning in an important tone, when she made a rush at him, and, flinging her arms around his neck, clung to him happily.

"What a grand fellow you are, to be sure, my own dear Matveyushko!"

The smith, forgetting that he was wearing a freshly pressed suit, the work of Katya's own hands, clasped his wife to his breast and strode about the room with her in his arms, tossing her lightly like a soft, warm kitten.

"When have we to go?" she asked, smiling and blinking.

"Well, I never! I clean forgot!" he exclaimed with a start. "I've got to go right now, there's my speech to prepare. You know I have to make a speech after the director presents me with the banner."

"Here, let me tie your tie for you!" And the blue silk rustled between her fingers as with a severely-solemn face she tied it under the smith's firm chin, which had been shaven till it shone.

It was getting on for one o'clock when they returned home that night.

"O-oh!" sighed Katya drawing a deep breath of satisfaction as, resting her head on her husband's shoulder, she glanced down at the lights of the works. Far below, they spread

like a sea, a powerful scattered radiance, illuminating the autumn night with a golden glow before which the very stars paled.

"There's our plant," said Matvei fondly.

The steep glass roof of the forge shop glowed with light like the ridge of a diamond range. How well Matvei remembered the sooty old smithy that, fifteen years ago, stood where this beauty now stood. And he remembered himself, a long, lanky young lad from a backwoods village. At first he had been a labourer, a tracklayer on the branch line. There was only one tool he knew in those days, the hammer. How he had envied every smith, and how happy he had been when they took him into the forge shop! He had shod the draught-horses belonging to the works, made hoops, hooks, axes. What had he in those days save a muscular strength like a bear's? And now? He couldn't imagine himself working without plans and drawings. After all he was making parts for heavy tanks, it was no joke.

"Matvei!" the drowsy voice of his wife broke in upon the train of memories. "That nice bit about the banner, did you make it up beforehand or did it just come to you on the stage?"

"Why, did I say anything special?"

"That: you'll carry the banner till the war's over."

"No, I didn't say that exactly, Katya. It was: 'I'll try to carry the banner.'"

"Well, it would have been better the way I put it."

"It would be better if you went off to sleep, you little worry!"

Next day she informed him:

"Look, I've started an album all about you and your doings. What do you think of it?"

Matvei looked at the home-made album with its decorations in coloured crayons. On the first page there was a clipping from the plant's newspaper on the subject of yesterday's affair.

"Well, what do you think of it?" she persisted. She was standing in the middle of the room with her hands behind her back. She rocked gently to and fro on her heels, a sure sign that she was highly delighted. Her dark eyes with their outline of thick black lashes sparkled with triumph.

"See what a lovely frame I've made around the clipping. Pretty, isn't it? Now it looks as though we've got something like our own 'grandad's cherished rouble.' Do you remember that first time you came and I showed you an old, old rouble?"

"Oh, don't I indeed? It was kept in that metal-bound casket. Only I thought you were just telling me a yarn that time."

"It was no yarn at all, but gospel truth," she assured him.

He made no attempt to argue the point, but only asked meekly:

"How did that rouble happen to come into your family?"

"It was given to Andrei Lossyev by Peter the Great, and so it's been handed down from generation to generation. The tsar once came to the Urals to have a look at his works and see what kind of workmen he had. So he went into the smithy, and there was Andrei Lossyev at the forge. And the tsar said to him: 'Now show us what you're made of, master.' Andrei Lossyev was none of your shy, timid folks; he went on with his job and made the sparks fly and the iron ring. And the tsar said to him again: 'Show us what you're made of, master.' Then Lossyev turned on him and said: 'There's a noodle without a grain of sense for you! Can't you see the way I work? You can tell a man from his work, don't you know that? Know that as a man's work is, so will the man himself be!' Then the tsar laughed and said: 'Many thanks for the lesson, smith!' and looked at the job Andrei was doing. And so well did Andrei Lossyev do his work that Peter was astonished and said: 'I swear I've never seen the like of

these workmen even in foreign parts. Then he took a rouble from his purse and gave it to Andrei, saying: 'Take this, old man, and keep it in memory of me.' Yes, we Lossyevs have been accustomed to taking pride in ourselves."

Lovingly she patted the first page of her album, then sighed dreamily:

"It's a pity you can't buy velvet these days, I'd love to have this bound in velvet."

"Oh, now I think you're going too far. There's no point in making all that to-do about it, "Matvei protested. "I don't see anything special in what I've done,"

"Don't object, don't say a word!" Katya interrupted. "I know what I'm doing."

She took up the idea of her album with the same obstinacy that she put into all her amusements. She hunted through the newspapers, with the keenness of a hunter not to be turned from the trail, for every line or mention of her husband's name, but cut out bits and pasted them in the album, decorating every page lavishly with drawings of banners, garlands, bouquets of flowers.

"Doesn't it come out lovely, Matvei?"

"M-yes, it's not bad; only I can't see what it's all for. What's the point of all the decorations, Katenka? Work is just work, when all's said and done."

"Don't raise objections, I tell you!"

Once she had two clippings from the leading Moscow papers to show him.

"Now, what do you say to that?" she asked, rocking on her heels and biting her lips to control the smile of triumph that hovered over them. "Is that just ordinary—work's just work, when all's said and done? You think maybe that any and every brigade in Moscow gets praise, do you?"

"I know there's no putting you down!" was all the smith found to say.

A fortnight passed.

Once he brought home a stranger.

"Katya, this comrade is correspondent for the *Metallurgy* newspaper, and he wants to write about my brigade's work. Put on the samovar for us, will you?"

"I'll be only too glad," said Katya, beaming. "My hushand has plenty to tell you."

The conversation that followed was an animated one. Towards its close the correspondent inquired:

"Tell me, Comrade Temlyakov, how long do you hope to keep this challenge banner in your brigade?"

"He's told you already, till the end of the war," Katya put in, unable to contain herself any longer. Until the war's over, he promised."

The correspondent smiled and nodded condescendingly in her direction, but made no attempt to contradict her. "He'd better not contradict me either!" she said to herself, turning away sharply in indignation from the correspondent's round spectacles that seemed to irradiate scepticism. The question was tactless and ouh of place in her opinion; she gave her husband an encouraging glance, and even tapped her foot softly, thinking: "Give him his answer, put him in his place, do!"

But Matvei was staring steadily out of the window at the endless autumn downpour, and appeared to be in a profound reverie..

"Well, you've set me thinking, comrade," he muttered, rubbing his powerful copper-red neck. "I hadn't been thinking much about it, but now . . ."

"What is there to think about? I don't understand you," Katya broke in again, but this time Matvei very firmly waved aside her objections and repeated:

"You want to know if I hope to keep the banner in my brigade for a long while?"

He rubbed his neck thoughtfully again, was silent a moment and then said in a determined tone:

"No, I don't hope to keep it."

"What!" Katya cried. She thought she could not have heard aright.

"Do you realize what you're talking about, Matvei?"

And, springing up from her chair, she dashed through the room like a whirlwind. Then with a wrathful laugh she added:

"He's got mixed up about something, comrade. Yes, of course, that's it, he's mixing things up."

"Oh, no, excuse me, I understood Comrade Temlyakov perfectly, I'm sure." And the correspondent, with a little shrug, turned a new page. "No, I'd be very interested indeed, Comrade Temlyakov, to know why you think so?"

"He's delighted to have tripped Matvei up!" Katya thought dejectedly.

"You wouldn't make a serious statement like this without very good reason; thoughts like these don't occur just like that; do they, Comrade Temlyakov?"

"There is a reason for them, that goes without saying," Matvei replied, the tense, grave look still on his face. "I seem to see it particularly clearly now. It's like this: a few days ago Nikifor Sakulenko challenged me to compete with him, chiefly on account of the fact that our two brigades were ordered to turn out a new part. It was rather a tricky little detail, and the task set by the plan had been increased. We made a grand start, but then I started to lag behind. I wanted to make up for lost time tonight, and lagged behind again."

Katya dropped weakly down on the couch beside her husband. Her own good sense prompted her not to betray her feelings before a stranger ("who knows but he might even make a note of that too!"). She forced herself to keep still, though she was trembling as agitated as one who puts off in an unseaworthy craft which, having broken away from the shore, is tossed at the mercy of the waves and driven further and further into the dark and stormy void. Every word of Matvei's lashed her like an icy blast, her heart was hot and aching within her. And there was the cherished album hanging on the wall above Matvei's work-table, gay as a bouquet, ah, but a dusty bouquet of withered flowers that no one needed now.

"Sakulenko has more experience than I have: he was in some splendid works down south, where everything was the last word in technique. We hadn't anything like it in the Urals at that time. Well, and then he's much sounder than I am, knows heaps more. For instance, he's got his mathematics at the tips of his fingers and understands every little thing in plans, he has a fine grasp of everything."

"Yes, that can't help but have an effect on his work at the critical moment, Comrade Temlyakov."

"Of course, it's bound to have . . . Naturally, we try to make up for what we've missed, but it wouldn't do for us to cheat orselves in this Stakhanov movement. And I have reason to think that our brigade may have to hand over the banner to others."

Hardly nad the door closed behind the correspondent when Katya, pale and furious, turned on Matvei.

"What's going on, I want to know? You must be crazy! To think of giving up the banner, the banner!"

"Wait a minute, Katya, listen, I'll explain . . ."

"I don't want to know anything. I can see well enough how it's going to be: there'll be an article in the paper all about you and that you don't even hope to keep the banner. And then I'll have to . . ." Her face seemed all of a sudden to crumple in agony, and tears of wounded self-respect started from her eyes. "And then I'll have to . . . to . . . paste this disgraceful item about you in. . . in my album. No, no, I'd rather. . . I'd rather . . ."

Blinking away her tears, she suddenly tore the gay album from the wall, and started to tear it to pieces as though enjoying the work of destruction.

"There's my album for you, there's my cherished album! Fool that J was to believe in you! All the while you

were ready for backsliding, ready to give way before other people's tricks!"

"Stop! Wait! What tricks? What are you talking about?" Matvei tried to catch her by the arm, but with flaming face she tore herself from his grasp and ran hither and thither, muttering desperately:

"Sakulenko, he's behaving in a downright blackguard way, wants to snatch the banner from you and get you out of his way. . ."

"Sh-sh! You're like a madwoman! Maria Sergeyevna's at home!" he protested in a horrified tone.

"Oh, it doesn't matter to me any more now! Such rotten behaviour! That's all the thanks we get for our kindness to him and all his family, that's how he's repaid us for our sympathy!"

"Katya, Katya! Maria Sergeyevna will hear you. . ."

"They came here when they were evacuated, and we took them in, treated like our own people, washed them, warmed them. . ."

"For goodness' sake, hold your tongue, Katya, else I'll run right out of the house this minute. . ."

"Eh? What do I care! . . We were kind to their children, we never said a word of reproach to them for all the trouble they caused us, we felt for them in their misfortunes; poor creatures, we said, they've lost their home and all their belongings. . . And this is the way they repaid us for our kindness. . ."

"Ka-te-rina!"

"Yes, yes, yes!" she repeated, now beside herself with rage.

The door was suddenly flung open, and Maria Sergeyevna Sakulenko came in quickly without the usual preliminary knock. Her face was suffused with a blotchy flush, her lips twitched convulsively, trembled with the pain and indignation she was feeling.

"Yes, we've lost everything, that's true, but we, we're honest folks, and we want nothing from you or anyone. . . and I won't allow anyone to disgrace us. . . especially you, a green burr like you!"

Her voice broke, and with a gesture of despair she left the room almost at a run.

"Hmph! To think of her saying that, as if we hadn't stood enough already," Katya said and heaved a sigh. With her head flung back, she was standing pressing her fingers into the window frame and for a moment froze in that haughty and uncomfortable pose. Matvei glanced out of the window at the darkness spreading over the lowering sky, at the slanting needles of rain that lashed the window panes, and suddenly clutched his head in despair.

"Katya, what have you done!"

In the room on the other side of the wall, the Sakulenko's home, there was a sound as though something had burst; it was Maria Sergeyevna's stifled weeping.

"Now look what you've done!" the smith exclaimed completely at a loss. "Here's a nice mess, enough to drive a man out of the house, I declare!"

He had no idea what he ought to do now with the two women; nothing like this had happened to him before. He felt quite helpless, a condition which for him was so unnatural and so upsetting that he found it impossible to stay at home. Hunching his shoulders up to his ears, he went out into the corridor, very quietly threw his coat around him, then noiselessly opened the door leading on to the landing.

"Whe-ew!" he sighed with relief as he went downstairs.

"Hell, what's all this, Matvei Petrovich?" called a familiar voice from below. Nikifor Sakulenko, large, solid, bulky, a welcoming smile lighting up his broad face, was climbing the stairs.

"Wait, don't be in a hurry to get home," the smith warned him in his gloomiest tone.

"Why, what's happened? Is it Masha? The children?" Sakulenko demanded in a fright.

"No, they're all fine. But come along out, and I'll tell you all about it."

"Just a minute, lad! Where are

we going? It's a night, you wouldn't put a dog out. Look at the rain. . ."

But the smith would not be denied, he dragged his comrade after him in spite of his protests. They went into the club reading-room, which was empty. It was very quiet save for the rain lashing the windows in fury, gurgling and tumbling like a cataract in the pipes.

"Here, let's sit down," Sakulenko said good-humouredly, turning on the table-lamp. It shed a wan light from under its green shade, and the corners of the room remained in dusk. It suddenly crossed the smith's mind that Katya was probably sitting on the couch, crying her heart out in the dark, and forgetting to turn on the light. How bitter and upset she would feel that he had run away and left her all alone!

He sighed heavily and, with a glum, frowning face, turned to Sakulenko and told him what had happened.

"Well, and what of it? What's the moral we're supposed to draw from all this?" Sakulenko said calmly when the tale was told. "We're working, so far as I know, for the State first and foremost, and not because our wives take a pride and pleasure in it. No matter who may be annoyed with me, I'm not going to do worse work than I'm capable of, no, not for anybody. And besides, what a crazy idea, to work worse or do less than you can these days, during the war! You've got to do your very best, and as much as you possibly can. It's downright dishonest to want anything different. What do you think?"

"That's right, of course.

"Well, if it is, then let's go nome, and talk the thing over round the samovar," Sakulenko declared cheerfully, turning off the lamp with obvious satisfaction.

But at home neither had a chance to talk the thing over. The rooms were plunged in glum and watchful silence. Not a sound came from Sakulenko's room, except for Maria Sergeyevna's occasional: "Hush you tiresome brats!" at the twins.

It was dark in the Temlyakov's too.

"Now, you see," Matvei whispered, "she's gone and told her husband everything, and he's mortally offended. Fancy putting me in such a position with a comrade!"

Katya burst into tears.

"You don't know how I suffered all through you!"

"Did I ask you to do it? Did I now?"

It was their first quarrel, and since it had to be carried on in whispers it was all the more bitter and wrathful. Then the kettle boiled over. Swallowing her tears, Katya laid the table, but refused to eat anything. So the smith, fearful of making a clatter with his spoon, drank tea alone, in tasteless sips.

After a while they made it up and sat down on the couch together for half-an-hour. The movement of her shoulder as she leaned against him, told Matvei that Katya hadn't "cooled down" yet. Her full lips and small chin round as the fruit known as "Paradise" apples, still quivered like a child's. Matvei was vexed and at the same time sorry for her. "So young, and so proud!" He no longer wanted to either thwart or comfort her; just now she was suffering because of him, and it was best to let her have her say out. "Let her get it off her chest, and then she'll feel easier," and pitying her more than ever, he stroked her hot neck, saying soothingly;

"Now, now!"

"You with your 'now, now!' " she suddenly burst out again in an excited whisper. "Fifteen years, fifteen years you've been at the works, and then somebody new comes along and you're ready to step aside and give way to him. You, Matvei Temlyakov, are ready to hand over the challenge banner right before the November holidays. . And when you've done that, then there's no more life for us. 'Matvei Temlyakov? Let's see, isn't that the fellow they took the banner from?' people will say. 'Katerina Temlyakova? Oh yes, it was her husband who had a big name once as a smith,

till Sakulenko came and won it away from him!' That's what they will say, I can hear them."

"Well, you've certainly said plenty, Katya, blurted it all out. Your head's in a whirl, and so are all your ideas. When you wake up tomorrow morning and the fever's passed, you'll talk differently, I know," Matvei said, endeavouring to soothe her.

She was fast asleep, her sickle-shaped eyebrows raised in a worried expression while Matvei sat smoking by the window, staring down at the lights of the works.

The smith's own department glowed with sleepless fires, and the brilliant-studded ridge of its roof flung a proud challenge into the autumn night, to the chill wind and rain, to the dying beauty of nature, to all the disasters threatening men these troubled days. "I live, and my strength is mighty!" said the challenge. Was it so very long ago that Temlyakov the smith had been as ready to challenge each and all to battle at his five-ton hammer, confident that it was not for anyone to vanquish him? Need it have happened that with the advent of Sakulenko the fame of the invincible smith Matvei Temlyakov should be dimmed? He, Matvei, kept no production "secrets" in his pocket. He was ready and willing to show his methods of work to anyone who cared to know them. Sakulenko must be keeping something up his sleeve. One day he would display it as if it was a goodness knows what discovery, and there you were! he would get all the honour, he would get the banner!

Long did the smith toss and turn in his bed; everything annoyed, irritated him: the rain on the window panes, the nowling of the wind, the creak of the bed-springs, the footsteps in the next room, Sakulenko's room: what were they doing, tramping up and down so late at night?

So the smith lay awake all night, racking his brain, wondering whether he should brenk off the socialist competition he had taken on with Sakolenko.

"Supposing I do want to break off everything, and refuse to compete. . . But whoever heard of such a thing as a Stakhanovite throwing up a competition? Especially after it had started? Whatever will happen? I'll be disgraced before the whole shop. But that's not the end. It'll be all round the works. What a disgrace! 'Have you gone crazy, Matvei?' they'll ask, 'or been on the drunk?' No, there can't be any question of that! The competition between Sakulenko and me has got to go on."

"Hmph! A man can easily go to the dogs like this," he thought to himself in despair and dread, finding no satisfaction even in the decision he had taken.

"Well, what about it?" Katya asked.

"What about it?" he growled. "I'm going on with the competition, that's all about it."

The rain had ceased, but the clouds hung low and heavy like a huge shaggy fleece over houses and the bare trees in the little new garden. And the sense of secure and stable happiness that Matvei had, only a short while ago, been almost conscience-stricken about, seemed lost forever now among those tumbled, ragged clouds, wet trees and fog.

As he moved with the crowd through the entrance to the plant, Matvei's ear caught a scrap of conversation in two unfamiliar voices somewhere behind him. They were talking about Sakulenko.

"He's going to show us his method of forging a new tank part today."

"How do you know?"

"He said so himself when the shift was over yesterday. 'Come and have a look,' he said. And what's more, he promised to set a new record."

Here was something again that caused the smith no little embarrassment. So it appeared that Sakulenko wasn't keeping any secrets back at all, wasn't holding out on him, but like himself was ready to help others and show them anything they wanted to know:

While the forging was going on, Matvei noticed more than once that on the next section, opposite Sakulenko five-ton hammer, a little group had gathered. They were watching something intently, then speaking and gesticulating excitedly, as though marvelling at whatever it was.

"He must have thought of something new again. I'll have to go and have a look!" Matvei decided.

During the dinner-hour brigade-leaders and apprentices collected at Sakulenko's section.

Yielding to his usual curiosity about everything that concerned his work, Matvei pushed his way to the front.

"Well, let's see what all this is about!"

The crane brought up a red-hot ingot. Hardly had it stopped in front of the drop-hammer when the ingot was pulled on. Sparks were few, and the ingot glided submissively towards the never-cooling press. A nod from Sakulenko, and two pairs of tongs reached out and clutched its red-hot sides. Sakulenko strode over to the transparent, flaming bar and with a skilful movement lovered his black axe onto it and called out in masterful tones:

"Hammer!"

The hammer gave an "ugh!" and fell, driving axe into metal as though into soft butter.

"Tongs!" Sakulenko commanded, and two apprentices who had been expecting the order, turned the bar over on its side. He repeated the orders several times, and the apprentices alternately turned the bars quickly and efficiently.

"Corner! Corner!" he sang out. Now the bar, with a deep gush in it, lay at an angle with the flat black axe suspended over it. An excited exclamation rose from the crowd.

"That's a good idea! Formerly they used to cut the bar in two and then chip off the corner."

"Yes, and now this fellow chips off the corner of one while the other falls off itself from the first."

"It's a simple enough thing, boys!"

"Only just try to cut it off straight away at one go!"

Matvei watched the process intently, never taking his eyes off it for a moment. The five-ton hammer suddenly seemed to him small, mobile and as obedient as a dog. He ceased to hear its fall, so engrossed was he in what the people were doing. In the semicircle where Sakulenko stood ready with his axe, movement was rhythmic, regular as the rise and fall of waves, movements followed each other with a cheerful fury, followed unerringly as a shot fired at a target.

When Sakulenko's axe separated the two halves of the ingot cut at an angle, with as soft and elastic movement as though it were a layer of putty, the watchers gave a gasp of admiration:

"That's smart!"

So did Matvei, for everything that Sakulenko did reached his perception as penetratingly and withal as naturally as a current of fresh air pouring in at an open window. He felt closely and yet surprisingly easily, bound up with all that Sakulenko was doing at his five-ton hammer. He wanted to join that semicircle of hot and furious movement and tell them here and now all that he felt and thought, but just now the rhythm of that flame-like work could not be interrupted.

The cut ingot fell with a crash to the iron slabs of the floor. Only then did Sakulenko step back, and, easing his taut shoulders, pulled out a red bandana handkerchief and mopped his perspiring face. His glance rested for a moment on the two short-ended bars of metal to which he had given form and purpose. Matvei saw a touch of something like fatherliness in the glance, and smiled understandingly; he knew well that "what thine own hands have created is dear as thine own child."

The apprentices were already dragging up two new parts to the crane, which seized them and bore them aloft. Like a sudden shaft breaking

from a crimson-and-gold dawn, they touched the faces turned up to them with light, then soared further into the high-domed sooty shop.

"Now, then!" Sakulenko's penetrating voice broke the silence, and he clapped the leathern apron tied about his waist: "Dinner time, boys! Come on before the soup gets cold!"

They dispersed, exchanging opinions.

"A smart chap, that! And all he says is: the soup will be getting cold."

"Yes, and got through in five minutes."

"Do you mean to say it's only five minutes?"

"There's a clock right before your eyes, have a look."

"Comrades, he's kept his word, and set a new record."

"Count! That's fifty parts a shift."

"Temlyakov used to do forty-seven."

"Hey, Matvei, Sakulenko's left you behind!"

"That's true, so far! He has left me behind a bit," Matvei returned quietly.

"Why so far?"

"Ah, that's my business!" he replied, showing his broad white teeth in a smile.

"It looks as though this lad of ours has had an idea."

"Yes, maybe he hasn't faded out yet. That's the way!"

Matvei burst out laughing.

"Why should I fade out when things keep moving round so well?"

"What's that you're bragging about?" Katya's voice broke in. She was just coming out of the foundry with her brigade. Her face was smeared with some oily, earthy mixture that made her look much older, and there was wrathful irony in the glance she cast at her husband.

"So pleased with himself. . . for no reason that I can see!"

"The green burr!" crossed the smith's mind.

"Eh, Katya, you have a character, and no mistake about it!" He bent close to her, and glimpsed the anguish that lurked in her face, like a fish in the reedbed of a river bank.

"Oh, my love, you can't hide anything from me," he whispered. "The one who started this squabble is bound to be the first to suffer!"

And at the thought that it lay in his own hands to put an end to her suffering, the smith was seized with a boyish, mischievous joy.

"Katya, my dear, Katya, you don't know a thing yet!" And he embraced her tenderly, which aroused general amusement.

"You've gone crazy! I don't want to talk to you!" and flinging off his hand, she walked quickly ahead.

In the dining-room she sat down with her brigade at the table in the farthest corner, and never cast a glance in Matvei's direction.

The smith only stifled a good-natured laugh in his fist, and looked around for Sakulenko; he had to see him at once.

Sakulenko had just seated himself at a separate table and was shaking the pepper pot over a plate of steaming beetroot and cabbage soup.

"Phew! There's nothing in it!" he grumbled, looking about him for another. At that moment he saw the smith, who was standing looking down at him with a broad and disarming smile.

"That was a real smart thing you did, Nikifor Pavlych!" He sat down without waiting for an invitation, called the waitress and ordered dinner, adding: "Haven't you got anything nice and fizzy to drink, eh? Something to show what a good humour we're all in again? You've got soda water, have you? Fine! Let's have some of that."

"What are you looking so pleased with yourself about?" Sakulenko could not help saying.

"It's all you, comrade!"

"Ah, what they used to call a miracle in a sieve!"

"I was watching you while you were showing them your method," Matvei began with a confidential wink, "and I'll tell you straight that

in the first place you've certainly got the whole technological process organized; it was a treat to watch you, there was something to learn from that."

"Aha!" Sakulenko was evidently pleased with the compliment. "And what did you think?"

"That's just exactly what I did think!" Matvei retorted, shaking with soundless laughter. "And an idea occurred to me, a grand idea, I'll tell you. Ha-ha-ha!"

"Is that so? Well, that's pleasant, anyway," Sakulenko was restrained in his praise. "So I must have helped you a bit?"

"Sure, you helped me! That's what I came to thank you for; straight from the heart, I' can say, thanks, comrade!"

"Well, now that's nice to hear, boy," the other spoke with the greatest good humour. "And I must tell you that I'm glad, too."

"In general, you must understand," the smith began again. "It's an extraordinary thing: in a matter of five minutes a man's ideas sweep over such a space!"

"That's true," Sakulenko agreed, wiping his soft drooping moustache. "But what was the idea you were so pleased about?"

"I'll tell you!" Matvei promised solemnly. "Let's walk home together after the shift, and I'll show you the whole bag of tricks!"

When work was over for the day, Matvei scoured himself long and zealously, gasping and grunting happily in the shower-bath. Bluish fleeks of foam flew on every side, soap-bubbles on chest, elbows, palms, were shot with parti-coloured fires from the lights; the water swished, gurgled, sang sweetly as a nightingale, while its hot, slightly-smarting caress seemed to wash away with his weariness some dark and oppressive scum that had settled on his spirits.

"Oh-ho-ho! this is the life!" sang Matvei, dousing himself happily as he remembered having done in childhood.

Splashing through the black autumn puddles, they strode homeward, two strong men, lean, muscular Temlyakov, and bully Sakulenko with the drooping moustache.

"It was like this, you see," Temlyakov was explaining in his booming voice. "I saw how you had your men placed, how smoothly one slipped into another's place; it all went so easily that they needn't get so tired. I never gave much thought to that before, I must say. Mine were picked men, and that was all."

"And when you come to test them, you find each has his own particular knack of doing one particular thing. You've got to take into consideration the psychology of the man on the job," Sakulenko said in his ringing baritone voice. "Take your team now, and go over it bit by bit, pick 'em to pieces, so to speak."

So they went over each man in Temlyakov's brigade, and ended by placing nearly everyone on a different job.

"Why, that's an improvement, already, for a start," cried Matvei, rubbing his hands delightedly. "But the way you chipped off that corner! As clearly and boldly as though you were singing a song. . .. But there's just. . ." He gave a mysterious, self-satisfied chuckle and a shake of the head. "He-ho! But there are still one or two things something else that could be done. . . and how!"

"What do you mean?" Sakulenko turned on him. "What else could be done?"

They had reached the stairs by now and were climbing them. As Temlyakov turned the key in the lock, his face lit up with such a radiant smile that Sakulenko even started back.

"Stop tormenting me, lad!" he implored, as he was dragging off his wet coat.

"This way! Come along into my shack!" And with a broad gesture Matvei invited Sakulenko to sit down at his desk.

"Sit down, Nikifor Pavlovich!"

"All right, I'm sitting down. You've worn me out."

"Patience, Nikifor: people wait three years for promised things, you know. Have the goodness to cast your eye over this draft." And with a sweep of his hand he unrolled a big sheet of paper before Sakulenko's eyes.

"Do you recognize it, Comrade Sakulenko?"

"Why shouldn't I, when it's our own part? Wait, though, wait! What's this you've got here?"

Sakulenko hastily put on his round spectacles, and his big fleshy fingers ran over the draft excitedly.

"Look here. . . This corner of yours should be cut off at once, too, but not like mine, just the other way about."

"Yes, that's just the point. I thought of cutting off the small angle first of all and then the big, but I must admit I lost my nerve. I took fright thinking, supposing it doesn't turn out well and I ruin the metal; supposing the ingot goes back spoiled, a disgrace, into the furnace. . . And while I was pondering and testing it all, you started chipping off the angle and got ahead of me."

"Yes, but I feel somehow that your method's better than mine, Matvei," the other said thoughtfully.

"That just shows how things go round!" Matvei exclaimed with a delighted guffaw. "After I'd seen your method, I felt surer about mine!"

"And, as it turns out, yours is the bolder and better of the two."

"Ah, but it was you who paved the way to it, Nikifor Pavlovich! Phew! When I remember that I was nearly going to back out of competing with you!" The smith actually clutched his head at the thought. "It would be like giving up a bit of your soul!"

"Look here," Sakulenko began gravely. "All this domestic bickering and the like, it isn't worth bothering your head about, honestly. We've got both bees and gadflies in our minds, haven't we?"

"We'll kill the gadflies, and keep the bees and honey."

"Yes, and it couldn't be otherwise, Matvei, because we, the workers, are of the greatest importance, and there you are!" And Sakulenko, with a smile, laid his big, strong hands on the table, then raised them slowly to his bald and rounded head. "And there's another thing: our reason isn't to be bought."

"And you and I are going to help beat the cursed Germans with our minds as well as our strength!" Matvei concluded, laying his powerful, bony hands on the table. "Right now we're joining two minds, Nikifor Pavlovich. . . And you see how the combination turns out: I harnessed the horse, you pointed out the road. And now it seems, we can't see exactly where your work ends and mine begins, but is that necessary, after all?"

Matvei stood up, straightened himself proudly and, as though offering a tribute, a gift, he said:

"Since that's the case, Nikifor Pavlovich, would you care to accept my method?"

"I'd be very glad to, Matvei Petrovich, very glad indeed."

"Well, and as you're accepting it wouldn't it be the proper thing for us to calculate how many of these same tank parts we can turn out together over and above the number Sakulenko's turning out?"

"Oh, so you already want to start figuring, Matvei!"

So engrossed were they that neither noticed Katya's appearance in the doorway, nor saw the puzzled but proud expression as she raised her eyebrows. Something kept her silent.

The lamp shed a soft glow on the heads bent over the table, Sakulenko's thinning crown and Matvei's mop of strong, wiry light hair.

"You've soon made it up," she wanted to say, but again something held her back and she did not dare; the force uniting these two strong men was so mighty that even the boasted "Lossyev pride" was as a puny little bush before a grove of tall trees destined for a ship's timbers, trees that

could view the sky, and the sea, and faraway open spaces.

Eventually Katya made her presence known by a little cough and then said something quite different from what she had intended to say.

"You're working? Perhaps you'd like a cup of tea?"

"We wouldn't refuse it, I'm sure," Matvei replied in a preoccupied tone. "Only don't be long about it, Katenka."

"We've got to have a chat with a technologist," Sakulenko explained, raising his forefinger in a significant gesture. "We've got an important job on hand for the front."

It was late when Matvei, weary but pleased, returned home.

"Well, we've been at the technologist's, the head of the department, and talked everything over, down to the last little detail. All our plans have been approved, and generally speaking, the directors are taking a very lively interest in them. My dear, that means if every worker in our department, looking at our record and applying our method, turns out altogether another ten or fifteen per cent, a grand party of new heavy tanks will be rolling out through our gate every month, that is over and above all the plans! Now, what do you say to that, Katenka?"

Only now he noticed that his wife was sitting silent, huddled up in her shawl, in a corner of the couch.

"What's up? Feeling bad?"

"Supposing I am, what's that to you?" she retorted in a hollow voice, raising one eyebrow wearily. "You're never at home these days. You'd run to the end of the world with that Sakulenko of yours. . . You've no proper pride. . ."

The smith laughed soundlessly, then tenderly took the pale face with its quivering eyelashes, for she was still feeling hurt, between his hands.

"Oh, you Lossyevs, you Lossyevs! That's not the proper kind of pride, Katenka, you won't get very far with that. If it's all for yourself this pride, it's like chewing a very dry and tasteless thing, and never seeing anything."

"Oh, yes, that's what you say," she muttered, tossing her head back with an obvious effort. But lips and eyelashes quivered with a nervous tremor she could not control, and a light suddenly broke in on Matvei: his "green burr" had grown older these last few days. She was beaten already and could no longer fight.

Matvei smiled to himself. With sudden meekness, as though encouraging her and fearing her wrath, he said:

"I feel kind of chilly tonight. Shall we boil up a kettle for tea, Katenka, eh?"

Half an hour before the shift started Matvei took a last look at the area in front of the hammer, at the iron table on which large and small tongs, axe and a big compass were laid out in particular order. Mikhail Avtonomov, Temlyakov's right-hand man, said in his rich bass:

"Well, Matvei Petrovich, our fellows look ready for just anything. They say we aren't going to let anybody, even Sakulenko himself, get the better of us today!"

"Now, now, now! Bragging already!" Matvei said.

"Well, but what do you think, Matvei Petrovich? I'm talking business, I can tell you. We've gained a good deal of strength and experience in the autumn holiday competition. Take myself, for instance. You could hand over the brigade to me right now, and I'd manage it. Or supposing, for example, you were to fall sick, I could take over your job and I wouldn't disgrace myself at it either!"

"You don't say!" Matvei chuckled, looking at Mikhail as though he were seeing him for the first time. It wasn't so very long ago since this same Avtonomov had been just a lad with a mop of light hair, and had been called familiarly "Mishanya." And now he had shot up into a burly fellow with reddish curls falling over a clear brow, and shrewd

eyes with a humorous twinkle in them.

"It's a treat the way you've grown up and filled out!" the smith observed. "How old are you?"

"Getting on for twenty-four, Matvei Petrovich. Life keeps moving on, you know."

"Yes, life was moving on, all right," the smith thought to himself. At twenty-four he had only been looking up admiringly from below at other people's craftsmanship, while this sharp-eyed young fellow was ready to take charge of a brigade; at his age! He found himself capable of it!

"Oh, we'll show them today, Matvei Petrovich! I must say I like this idea of yours and Sakulenko's to do two ingots at one go."

"We'll try it out today."

"It's a grand idea, I'd say. There'll be more speed and better rhythm in our work this way," and Avtonomov nodded vigorously.

"Of course, every minute's precious in this job, same as it is in battle. Now, then, front-brigade, to your places!"

The forging today was swift and sure as blows struck in battle. The saving and turning of time into metal seemed almost tangible to Matvei.

"Sta-art!" he called out loud enough for everyone to hear. And the signal bell of the crane hastened to answer: "Ding-dong! Coming! Ready-oh!"

He noticed once or twice that dozens of eyes were watching him, that through the ringing and the clatter voices called out:

"Look at that! Temlyakov and Sakulenko want to go one better than themselves today!"

"Work goes like wildfire!"

"Giants fighting!"

And once it seemed to Matvei that among the faces glimpsed around his five-ton hammer there was a flash of white teeth that resembled Katya's smile. But he had no time for a proper look.

They saw her next morning when they emerged into the street together.

"What a long time you were! Where've you been?" she asked, and her eyes sparkled as she smiled at them.

Matvei and Sakulenko exchanged glances.

"Shall we tell her now or keep it as a surprise?"

"Oh, since you've said so much, you'll have to tell her the rest," Sakulenko advised, smiling. "She'll find out anyhow tomorrow, the eve of the holiday."

Matvei pressed his wife's arm, and led her along by the iron railing of the square.

"We're late, Katya, because we were kept in the committee. We've both beaten our previous records, see. Just imagine, our front-brigades have turned out fifty-five parts each. And no matter how we tried, we couldn't beat each other."

"In short, we've met our match in each other, and both turned out to be strong fellows," Sakulenko said, laughing.

"Yes, Katya, you can congratulate us straightaway. We're both getting the banner, as the foremost brigadiers in the department, and tomorrow we're to be presented with it. I'll stand here like this, and Sakulenko there." Going to the curbstone, Matvei gave a fair demonstration of their positions on the club platform next day. "Oh, come on over here, Nikifor Pavlovich!"

"Oh, look here, now," Sakulenko began bashfully. Then, drawing himself erect, involuntarily, he took his place beside Matvei.

"What do you think of it: make a nice picture, won't we?" Matvei demanded, marking with delight the flush of pleasure that rose in Katya's cheeks.

"Rehearsing, are you?" came a voice behind them. Matvei's right-hand man, Avtonomov, was coming towards them, his tall slim figure in its dark-blue, tightly-buttoned overcoat cleaving its way through the

clear bright blueness of the autumn morning. "Well, good luck!"

"Same to you, Misha! So long!" Matvei replied. He looked after Avtonomov's retreating figure thoughtfully, then said with a smile:

"That young fellow will go far. You'll see, he'll want to go one better than us before we've time to look around."

"He'll be given a brigade first, and then he'll start the attack, that's the way he'll do it," Sakulenko said judiciously.

"I don't want to hear of any such thing!" Katya said excitedly.

"Be a bit more grown-up, Katenka, be a bit more grown-up, my dear!" And, throwing his arm around her shoulders, Matvei led her away.

"This is life! The front requires something, and our hearts burn within us to give it. At our hammers we fight the fascists with all our might and open the way for others. And if none but Nikifor and I held the banner, it would mean that life was standing still. But is it really like that? Supposing I have to yield the banner to someone like, say, Mikhail Avtonomov, a lad I trained? And, on the basis of what I have taught him, he discovers something new?"

"We'll take this new thing he discovers, too, take a proper hold of it with the hands of craftsmen, and you'll see, we'll discover something else new," Sakulenko winked knowingly at Katya.

"That's how a new technical improvement is born, and with it more success, and the banner will come into my hands and into his again (he nodded in Sakulenko's direction), and so on without end, always moving ahead. That's how things keep moving, making a full turn every time."

Matvei broke off and stood still.

"Wait! Look, how lovely!" he exclaimed flinging out his arm.

Far, far away, half-veiled in the silvery smoke of the morning mists that had not yet melted, stretched the Urals, their sharp ridges gleaming blue like helmets of steel through the virgin woods. So they cleaved their way and marched on, towering over the limitless wastes like a mighty iron army, the spearheads of which were somewhere ahead in the radiant distances of the fine autumn weather, somewhere out of sight.

"What a distance they stretch, the mountains!" said Katya softly. "Right to the ocean!"

"And further on," Matvei added, "they're loftier still!"

BORIS LAVRENYOV

THE PETTY OFFICER'S PRESENT

His cheeks streaked with soot, blood and tears, the tank driver, leaning against the traverse in the trench, sobbed like a child. But the words accompanying his sobbing by no means sounded like childish prattle. He was heaping such choice expressions on the Germans that even the sailors standing round him in the trench grinned approvingly.

The tankman was excited and mad with rage. A German shell hitting the turret of his tank had killed the commander and gunner and set the machine itself ablaze. The driver barely managed to jump out. Enveloped in tongues of flame, he rolled on the ground so as to extinguish his burning clothes. Swearing at the top of his voice he began to run, zigzagging like a hare to dodge the bullets buzzing around him like a lot of angry bees. One of them stung his cheek, another grazed his ribs before he had time, panting with exhaustion and anger, to roll across the parapet and slide down into the trench occupied by the sailors.

The sailors bandaged his side, smeared iodine on the scratch on his

cheek. He submissively resigned himself to all these ministrations, looking at the Red Navy men with wide blue eyes and heaving chest.

"You people don't understand," he wailed looking round at the sailors. "What a tank, what a beauty! It was just like a living, palpitating thing. You'd rap it on the armour, and it would roar back in answer. I swear it was like a fleet-footed horse."

And once again, recalling his irreparable loss, the tankman heaped such abuse on the Germans that the sailors chuckled with delight. Just then the company commander, Senior Lieutenant Petrov, appeared on the scene. He had come from the command position to see who the tankman was.

"The lad is overwhelmed with grief," Klimenko considerately informed the commander in a whisper. "His comrades were killed and the tank burnt."

"But crying won't mend matters!" And Petrov glared disapprovingly at the tankman.

"Allow me to explain, Comrade Senior Lieutenant," came from Klimenko in a soft, persuasive tone, "that he is not shedding a woman's tears. It is more like those of a cavalryman."

"Cavalryman? What are you talking about?" And the senior lieutenant raised his faded eyebrows.

"Well, begging your pardon, I have read about it in books... For instance, when a Cossack losses his horse, he stands over it and cries out of sheer attachment to the living thing. To the tankman his tank is like a horse... In fact that is what he calls it, his horse."

Petrov suppressed a smile. Being very young, he liked to appear a hardened military chief and feared to lose his authority as an officer.

"You are talking a lot of nonsense, Comrade Petty Officer," he said in a peremptory tenor. "Take the tankman to the dug-out and let him sleep it off. In the evening direct him to his unit, otherwise they may think him killed or a deserter."

The senior lieutenant turned away and headed for the command position. The marines led the tankman away, and life in the trench went back to normal. Petty Officer Klimenko sat down to finish his breakfast interrupted by the appearance of the tankman. Munching his bread and slice of bacon, he fell into a brown study. He felt very sorry for the lad who took the loss of his tank so much to heart. Klimenko sympathised with him. Only recently he had gone through a similar experience when his ship went down. It's true he did not shed a single tear, but what then? Not all people are alike. But at night the petty officer would often dream about the destroyer "Stremitelny," bluish-grey like the sea's waves on a cloudy day, swift, powerful, her prow sending up a foamy white surf. Klimenko saw her in his mind's eye, and saw himself standing at the gun on her stern. He would wake up, his mouth dry. His heart ached for the ship now lying deep under the water, half buried in green, foul-smelling slime. The petty officer would clench his fists, and it was long before he dropped off to sleep again.

And the senior lieutenant was not justified in thinking that the tankman had behaved like a woman. His tears were good, angry, masculine tears.

The petty officer wanted to do something that would make the lad feel happy again and restore his equilibrium. But as he could think of nothing sensible, he sighed and out of habit carefully brushed the crumbs off his knees. True, after three months of life in the trenches his trousers had reached a state where no amount of care could restore their former naval smartness.

Klimenko stood up, stretched out his hand and carefully took up his sniper's rifle leaning against the traverse. He looked over the smooth grey barrel, the optical range finder. He looked into his knapsack and

saw he had plenty of bullets and also two "F-1" hand-grenades.

Klimenko slung the rifle across his shoulder. It was time for him to set out on his daily hunting expedition. He walked down the trench until he reached a narrow opening leading to no Man's Land, and began to crawl across it. There were now fewer bushes. Klimenko lay flat for a while before covering the last lap to the spot he had in mind. Ahead stretched a narrow gully through which ran the dry bed of a mountain stream and a bank sloping down towards it. Holding his breath, Klimenko began to roll down the slope. Suddenly he paused to listen. From beyond the gully came a sharp, crunching sound, like that of some heavy beast prowling. Klimenko quickly dropped behind a boulder. The snorting grew louder, and before long a German tank swaying with clumsy pompousness appeared from behind the bend. Klimenko swore under his breath. He clearly saw the black-white crosses on its smoky armour. The slender barrel of the tank's gun moved from side to side as if sniffing the air.

"The rat!" whispered the petty officer to himself. "It is trying to break into our lines."

For a second he regretted that his hands gripped only a rifle and not the gun on the "Stremitelny." God almighty! If only he could train a gun on that steel colossus, it would be a sight for the gods! In this case his rifle was practically useless. Fire at the apertures? . . The tank would get away.

It was drawing closer. Klimenko lay motionless, and suddenly his face slowly broke into a peculiar smile, strange for one in his position: there was more than a hint of audacity in it.

He felt for the handle of the knife on his belt, drew it out of its leather casing, ran its edge over the tip of his finger and put it back. The tank crept towards the boulder behind which crouched the petty officer. Klimenko flattened himself against the boulder, melting into its background like a lizzard warming in the sun. He kept his gaze fixed on the tank. Suddenly the hatch in the turret was flung back and a tankman looked out. His head, covered with a leather helmet resembling a football, slowly turned round on its long thin neck. What he saw evidently reassured him. He barked something to the men inside and disappeared slamming the hatch. Klimenko did not move until the squat rear of the tank, leaving behind a suffocating smell of petrol, passed him. And then, crouching like a cat, the petty officer, pressing his rifle to his left side, noiselessly rolled down, caught up with the tank and leaped on to its hot metallic back. He squatted next to the turret and pulled out his knife. His heart beat fast and furious. The tank, snorting and crushing pebbles under its caterpillars, continued on its way, completely unaware of the brazen sailor on its back. Klimenko waited. The hatch rattled and lifted. The petty officer rolled himself into a ball. With a clatter the hatch was thrown back and a German head emerged like a water goblin.

His amazed watery eyes encountered the Klimenko's murderous gaze. With a gasp the German thrust his hand to the lid of the hatch, but the blade of the knife had already sunk into his neck, under the strap of his helmet. The tankman gurgled and dropped. A cry of alarm issued from inside the tank. Not losing a second, Klimenko snatched a grenade from his knapsack, pulled out the pin and huried it into the tank, slamming down the hatch.

A dull thud set the tank atremble, and the petty officer lying flat on top felt the impact, it was as if something heavy had come down on him. The wave of the explosion ripped off the lid of the hatch, and a cloud of acrid smoke came gushing forth.

Afterwards a long drawn-out groan

was heard, and then all was silent. The petty officer quickly swung his legs over the edge of the hatch and jumped down. His feet struck something soft and pliant. It was dark and quiet inside the tank, and Klimenko caught the sound of something dripping. He realized that it was enemy blood dripping on the floor of the tank. Klimenko slid aside the armoured shield. His eyes were already accustomed to the semi-darkness and he saw the driver with his head slumped over the controls. Grabbing him by the collar, Klimenko hauled him out of his seat. The head of the German lolled helplessly. His eyes were closed.

"I wonder whether he has gone and died on me," was the thought which flashed through the petty officer's mind.

If so, it was just too bad. Klimenko had reckoned that the grenade would merely stun the driver, protected by his shield. True, he had captured the tank, but the petty officer had other plans and the death of the driver had upset them. Klimenko had not the slightest notion of how to handle this hulking thing. And he had to hurry, for it was possible that other Germans would be swooping down any minute from behind the gully.

The German lying on the controls suddenly stirred and groaned. Breathing heavily, he opened his eyes and looked at the sailor stupidly.

"Now, no monkey business!" yelled Klimenko. "Drive the tank to our positions, you snake!"

The German mumbled something and raised trembling hands.

"You skunk!" swore Klimenko. "What are you mumbling about? Start the tank going, or I'll thrash you within an inch of your life!"

But it was useless, the German did not understand a word he was saying. He continued to keep his eyes, stark with fear, fastened on the petty officer.

"He doesn't understand," fumed Klimenko. "How the devil am I going to make him see what I want?"

It was a pity to let this fish slip out of the net. What was to be done? He racked his brain, he tried for the necessary word.

"Now what is the word? . . This is a nice kettle of fish! . . And the political instructor had told us. . . Oh, I've got it! . . "

He thrust his leg through the hatch and prodded the German in the back.

"Vorwärts! Vorwärts! Damn your hide!" he barked, and the German, scared out of his wits, nodded his head:

"Vorwärts! . . Ich verstehe. . . I. . . I. . ."

"Of course, you and not me! Full steam ahead, you skunk, and no sabotage, otherwise you will get it good and proper in the neck!"

The German started the engine, and the tank leaped forward across the stone bed of the gully. Klimenko thrust his head through the hatch and looked out. The tank raced ahead, swaying like a storm-tossed vessel, and eventually reached open ground. Catching sight of the familiar strip of parapet, Klimenko let out a whoop of joy, and then suddenly dived down. Several bullets struck the armour, and the petty officer realized that the lads, knowing nothing of what had happened, thought it was the enemy attacking and naturally met him with a hail of fire. He snatched off his cap, placed it on his bayonet and gingerly thrust it through the hatch.

The bullets ceased to patter against the tank. Taking advantage of this, Klimenko lifted himself waist-high out of the hatch, waving his cap all the time and yelling:

"Hey, lads! Stop that racket, will you? It is me. . . Klimenko! Do you get that: Klimenko!"

The tank shot across the trench, and the petty officer again prodded the German.

"Kaput, Hans! Shut off the engine! We've arrived."

Loudly laughing, the sailors surrounded the tank. Klimenko crawled out on top, hauling the German by the collar. Sweating but with his face wreathed in smiles, the petty officer looked round at his friends and then jumped down.

"Take over this Hans, will you? . . He has proved to be quite sensible. His Adolf has not quite addled his brain."

Friendly hands caught hold of the petty officer and sent him somersaulting through the air.

"Stand back there! What's the matter?"

Released by his friends, Klimenko, hardly able to retain his balance, stood at attention.

"Comrade Senior Lieutenant, Petty Officer Klimenko returned from patrol duty on a captured tank."

"I fail to understand you," said Petrov. "Where did he get the tank?"

"But I brought it," suddenly said Klimenko in a low, abashed voice.

Petrov fixedly looked at him, went up to the tank, critically examined it, and his face broke into a boyish grin, completely effacing the mask of the stern officer.

"Amazing!" came from him. "Step in to see me a little later to report the details. In the meantime have a rest and tidy yourself."

Klimenko, following the glance of the senior lieutenant, looked down at his boots. They were blood-stained.

"Very good, Sir," he replied. But he continued to stand.

"Well, what is it?" asked Petrov, seeing that the petty officer was bursting to say something.

"You see. . . allow me, Comrade Senior Lieutenant, to give this old can to our tankman. It was for his sake that I bagged it. I was sorry for the lad. His tank meant so much to him. . ."

"Very well," replied the senior lieutenant, and his voice shook strangely.

"Hey, boys, where is the tankman?" yelled the overjoyed Klimenko.

The tankman was hauled out of the blindage, half asleep and in a daze. He blinked confusedly, looked at the tank, at Klimenko and the sailors. Slapping him on the shoulder, Klimenko affectionately said:

"Here you are, brother! I am giving it to you for nothing because we are comrades-in-arms. We give you a helping hand, and you do the same for us. It is a little dirty inside and needs a bit of cleaning up. Otherwise the thing's all right. Mount your horse, my lad, and go riding to your heart's content. . ."

And without waiting for an answer, he turned away with the air of a person who is rather bored with presenting tanks to people.

Cartoons by Polish Artists

RACE SHOWS!

Drawn by Z. Wasilewski

GERMANIA

Drawn by Z. Wasilewski

THE DREAM OF A CONTEMPORARY ASSUR-BANI-PAL

Drawn by Z. Wasilewski

A NAUGHTY BOY

The German information bureau has reported that "Soviet war prisoners captured by the German troops consist mainly of children or old men of over sixty."

Drawn by G. Lucki

These four cartoons reproduced from *"Nowe Widnocregi"*

Captain Molodchi from Voroshilovgrad

As a boy he had loved to read Jules Verne. But what child does not love Jules Verne?

As a boy he liked to take his toys to pieces to see how they worked. But there are many children who break toys to see how they work.

As a boy, he was keen on everything to do with aviation. But think of that time, in the middle of the past ten years. That was the time of the Papanin camp in the ice, of the hair-raising hops made by Chkalov, Gromov and Kokkinaki from Europe to America, the time when the fame of Serov, Molokov and Grizodubova rang through the world, when everybody was dazzled by the feats of Soviet aviation.

Somebody or other once said very aptly that the most enterprising person in the world is a boy. And indeed, boys are always enthusiastic exponents of the most advanced ideas of their time. At that time they were fired with the idea of flying. They jumped from the second floor on parachutes made from their mothers' sheets, they ran away and tried to get into flying-schools, leaving farewell letters on the window-sill full of lofty sentiment and misspelt words. They met in yards and sheds, evading the sharp eyes of the yard watchmen, and with fanatical persistence constructed gliders whose only drawback was that they never flew.

Sasha Molodchi, a dark-eyed Ukrainian lad, was like the rest. He spent all his time poring over model planes, he raced about the streets of Voroshilovgrad on aerosleds of his own construction, not without a secret wish to make an impression on one particular girl. He came down on a glider, somewhat to his own surprise, in the middle of the town square, hanging over the side and yelling: "Hi, you there with the car! Get out of the way, quick, before I come down on your head!" And it would be hard to tell which was the more scared of the two at that moment: the driver or the fifteen-year-old airman.

By no means all of these young air enthusiasts became pilots when they grew up. With the mercurial speed of youth they turned to other interests: Arctic travel, stamp collections, football, amateur dramatics.

But "Sasha the pilot," as the Voroshilovgrad children called Molodchi, still clung to the dreams of his boyhood. Like a gallant knight dominated by one idea. There was a stubborn streak to his character, a way of sticking doggedly to the path he had mapped out, striding along it with firm step, despite the gentleness of his manner. He was like the Ukraine itself, the combination of poetic mildness with an inflexibility that could fight for an idea. And his wish came true: Molodchi became an airman, like so many young people of our day.

But he stands out from many other young people of our day by having twice received the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, by being one of the best long-distance pilots, a Soviet ace, and a menace to Königsberg, Berlin, Budapest and Bucharest.

It would be only fair to admit that in his unit Molodchi is no exception. Indeed, he himself insists on that. It is hard to pick and choose among that brilliant unit for whom a combat flight to Berlin is an ordinary affair, whose losses during the war have not exceeded seven per thousand, a formation including such famous names

as that of Rubtsov, Krasnukhin, Garanin, Simonov, Polezhayev and many others.

Nevertheless, if you ask any of them, from commander to the ground crew, which is the best pilot, you will immediately be told: Molodchi.

If you seek to know what it is that makes him outstanding, it is not in his keen sight you will find it, his sure hands, or any reactions quicker than other men have; as far as those qualities are concerned, he is the same as the others. But there is one thing in which Molodchi is outstanding: in that inflexible persistence with which he pursues the aim he has set himself, which makes a man into something as inevitable and irresistible as natural phenomena, as lightning or a waterspout.

Take as an example a quite recent incident.

A bridge in an enemy-occupied town had to be bombed. The operation was a most important one, to disrupt the enemy's communication lines.

It was in very bad weather conditions that Molodchi and the other pilots took off, rain, clouds, frost and fog made it what is usually considered not flying weather at all.

Repeated raids brought no results, nobody could hit the bridge. It happens that way sometimes with bridges, not one of the airmen could blame himself for it. In general, to hit a bridge, a faint line drawn across a river, is considered one of the most ticklish jobs for an airman. And in this case there were additional difficulties: the bridge was a small one and had a double guard, its own anti-aircraft defence and that of the town.

In a word, the airmen had no reason to reproach themselves. This did not satisfy Molodchi. His conscience might be clear, but the bridge was still there.

That night Molodchi went to the commander. The weather was even worse for flying than before. One might have said that autumn was surpassing itself that night.

Major Molodchi of the Guards,

"Please allow me to take a plane out."

"Where?"

"To bomb the bridge."

He convinced the commander, and took off. It was three o'clock in the morning, the very darkest hour. Molodchi reckoned on reaching his target with the first streak of down. He flew blind at nine thousand feet. Even to reach his objective on such a night demanded a high level of flying skill.

On approaching the target, Molodchi swiftly lost height, flying at a hundred and fifty feet. He passed right over the heads of three German columns on their way to the bridge. Not one of the soldiers so much as looked up: it never entered anyone's head that a Russian plane could be there, in such weather.

Molodchi swooped still lower, he wanted to make quite certain that the job was done thoroughly. He wanted to cleave the bridge in two with a knock-out blow. He was flying even lower than the steam issuing from a locomotive, even low-

er than the tops of the telegraph poles. He flew so low that as he neared the bridge the navigator, Kulikov, shouted: "Higher!" fearing that the plane would hit the parapet.

The bombs hit their mark. Splendid! And then, at the other end of the bridge, a tall water tower, which they had not noticed previously, suddenly loomed up menacingly before the very nose of the plane.

This time the navigator said nothing at all. His voice caught in his throat. Death was staring them in the face, in a flash the whole of Molodchi's life seemed to pass before him. . . his childhood, the Voroshilovgrad streets, his sister's dolls that he had smashed to see how they were made, the melodious Ukrainian songs heard in the dusk under the flowering cherry trees, his old mother with her absurd but touching prayer: "Sasha, dear boy, try to fly low, or you'll be killed." You made a mistake, mother, you should have asked him to fly high, not low.

The very next second as all these thoughts flashed through his mind, Molodchi's plane tore like a meteor over the tower.

How had he done it? He had succeeded. He had succeeded in doing the right thing, the only thing, had tugged the joystick in that one second which remained.

"I was surprised myself to find that I'd done it," said Molodchi. "I acted first and thought afterwards."

It is this swift, automatic reaction that is the sign of a sure mastery of one's job. Knowledge that has become a reflex.

The German flack gunners opened furious fire, but none of the crew paid the slightest heed. They were beyond that. Throughout the homeward flight no one said a word; they landed in silence. But some time afterwards Kulikov, without a trace of his usual smile, said slowly:

"Sasha, what was that we did. . ."

In this episode, which is far from being the most exciting in Molodchi's life, the outstanding thing is the stubborn determination with which he went back to bomb that bridge. And this is characteristic of Molodchi. He was simply psychologically unable to leave the assignment unfulfilled, the job unfinished, the target whole, the Germans unscathed.

In ordinary daily life Sasha Molodchi is the jolliest fellow alive, full of songs and jokes, but when he has a job to do he is transformed into an embodied driving will, which knows no obstacles. This is the trait which his commander had in mind when he said:

"He is a hero who continues to earn the title afresh. . ."

It was this determination that at the age of fifteen won Molodchi first place in an all-Union competition for aeroplane modelling. Engrossed in miniature aviation with fretsaws, sticks, rubber bands and paper, he felt the urge to engage in real "grown-up" flying above the clouds.

When Molodchi took up gliding, he was so small that his feet could not reach the pedals, and special blocks had to be made for him. Nevertheless, within three months this Ukrainian lad became a gliding instructor. He might be short in the leg, but not in will-power.

Soon gliding ceased to satisfy Molodchi, and just as he had left model planes for gliding, now he longed for an engine, for an aeroplane.

But how in the world was he to get a plane? How?

Once more we see that unswerving determination of Molodchi's to reach the goal he had set himself. He expended all his eloquence, infected two other boys with his own confidence, and the three of them set out to make an aeroplane. Nobody helped them, the three lads were their own draughtsmen, their own factory.

The plane was built. The lads were delighted. It caused quite a sensation in the town, all the schoolchildren

came to see it, and many of the adults as well. The head-master himself came to see what it was that three of his eight-class pupils had been up to. The plane certainly was impressive: a real plane, all complete with fuselage and wings. Only it lacked an engine.

The head-master was impressed. He sent an engineer to examine the plane; who knows, if only an engine was installed, perhaps the thing would fly? The engineer overhauled the machine and asked for the blueprints and calculations. The lads had calculations all right, though they were limited to simple arithmetic. But blueprints?

"You can imagine what sort of blueprints we had," said Captain Molodchi, his eyes twinkling.

He has a particularly racy way of describing this episode of his childhood, which now seems to him so far off, though actually, if one reckons years, he is only twenty-two, one might say that his childhood was only just round the corner. But it's not the number of years that counts in life, but their content.

The long and short of it was the lads didn't get their engine. . .

Nothing had come of their own aeroplane. There was only one way left te become a pilot, and that was to grow up and at last to become one of the all-powerful race of adults.

But Sasha Molodchi, who could not stand leaving a job half done, was determined not to wait. And he actually succeeded in learning to fly a "U-2" at the local flying club.

Flying the machine he found pretty easy, his difficulty was with landing. Sasha was used to a glider, and could not make a three-point landing.

The day of the flying-school tests dawned. Sasha concentrated all his will, all his care, and made a perfect landing. But that wasn't all, he assisted his comrades in the air during their examinations. He would take his place in their planes as ballast in the second seat.

The "U-2" has dual controls, and as soon as the plane was in the air, the "ballast" in the second seat took the joystick and helped his friends, without the examiners on the ground being any the wiser.

He came through the theoretical part of his examination with flying colours. The longed-for doors of the flying-school were open before him.

Sasha commenced his military training. With enthusiasm he dived into aerodynamics, firing and storming tactics. And in 1937 he passed out of the school with top marks, a junior lieutenant at seventeen.

An airman's life is spent in continually perfecting his skill, just as aircraft themselves are continually being perfected. In the Soviet Union new improved types of planes were constantly being evolved, including the latest model of that time, the "SB" fast-bomber. Nowadays, compared with the modern "Ilyushin," this plane would seem antiquated and quaint, like the fashion plates of the past century with their crinolines. But at that time the "SB" was Molodchi's dream, he thrilled with longing when he saw it. He was given one, he exchanged his old "R-5" for the longed-for "SB" and soon learned to master it.

In 1940 the twenty-year-old Molodchi was already a chief pilot. He was regarded as a skilled airman, but all the same he had to continue learning, studying, mastering new and ever new branches of that encyclopedic knowledge which constitutes the art of flying.

Then came that unforgettable June day. The alert sounded, but that did not excite the airmen over much. They had known plenty of practice alerts in their time. But then something new came: orders to taxi the planes, to cover and camouflage them.

That was June 22nd, 1941. War!

Sasha's first thought was of combat flights against the enemy, of

air engagements, of smashing fascist columns, bases and towns. But Molodchi had to wait before he could go to the front. Much to his disgust, he was sent to an aircraft factory to learn a new type of plane. He learned it inside out. Now surely he could go to the front? No, not yet. He was sent to a special regiment for night flying, but still not to fight. Pilots from the civil air service poured into the regiment, including many who had a million kilometres to their credit, and Molodchi, with his comparatively small number of air-kilometres, was appointed instructor to them.

At the same time, he himself continued to study, he perfected himself in night and blind flying. And he was transferred to the fighting forces on the Western front. At last!

Still he was not on combat assignments. It was the old experienced fliers who were sent into battles, and the young ones were trained and trained again, until their skill attained the top pitch of perfection. They grumbled, they did not understand that all this was to make first-class airmen of them.

Molodchi sent in application after application, asking to be sent into battle. His commander sent for him, and Molodchi stood at attention for an hour, while the colonel gave him "a good dressing down," as he put it, for his impatience.

At long last, on September 18th, 1941 (nobody ever forgets the date of his first fighting assignment), Molodchi took off on his first combat flight. It was a day raid, and the job was not a particularly complicated one: to bomb the German garrison of a certain town. Molodchi and his whole crew set off as for a holiday excursion.

The weather was unusually bad, with a sharp wind and rain; visibility was almost nil. The plane was soon in the clouds, the first experience of the kind for Molodchi. The machine lost its bearings, and it was five minutes, before Molodchi was able to orientate himself. At last they left the clouds, and he began to search for the objective.

Down below a column of German soldiers were marching. From sheer inexperience Molodchi forgot to swoop and pepper them. The soldiers looked up, wondering who was so crazy as to be flying in such weather.

Here was the objective, a small town, and enemy troops on the square. The thing was to bomb them at once, but again inexperience told, and it was only by circling over a second time that Molodchi was able to release his load. The bombs dropped into the very thick of the enemy. It was Molodchi's first bombing. Down below explosions thundered, bodies lay about, men ran hither and thither in panic.

The flack gun put up a frenzied defence, guns, machine-guns, even mortars opened fire. It was Molodchi's baptism of fire.

"A wonderful sight," said Molodchi, "but terrible all the same, when you're not used to it. All the more so, when a shell landed on the plane. Luckily no one was hurt. Then the right engine gave out. From the shock."

The only thing to do was to get out of the range of fire. But how? Molodchi decided to go into a spin, pretending that the plane was completely out of control. It was his first battle manoeuvre, and it succeeded. The flack guns left him alone.

"And I'd probably have been falling still if the navigator hadn't yelled 'Ground!' at me. I straightened out and gained the clouds as quickly as I could. That trick saved us."

Thus ended Molodchi's first fight. The Germans had lost heavily, and the colonel congratulated him on his success.

Molodchi had taken the first step towards becoming an ace, he had shown that his skill could be relied upon. Each succeeding flight added to his experience. He worked out his favourite manoeuvres, such as approaching an objective from the right, and then making straight for

it, or keeping a reserve hundred kilometres speed for manoeuvering when bombing. Before approaching the target he would have everything worked out with the navigator: "Height so-and-so, speed so-and-so." When he was getting out of flack fire, he told the gunner-wireless operator, who had a better view of the explosions from his turret, to keep him informed of what was going on: "Comrade Commander, explosions to the right. . . a burst under us. . . Comrade Commander, slow down. . .", etc.

That is how an ace is made.

Soon Molodchi took off on his first night flight. It was so dark that the plane was invisible five paces away.

"Will you fly?" he was asked.

"Sure I shall," was the confident reply.

But as always when one attempts something new, untried for the first time, he was filled with pent-up excitement.

The plane took off. Yes, this night flying was something quite different. Nothing was to be seen. Where were they going? Sometimes it felt as though the plane was banking, going off its course, and one wanted to believe one's own sensations rather than the instruments on the dashboard.

The navigator indicated the course.

"Don't be in such a hurry," growled Molodchi. "We may be flying upside down for all I can tell."

But as usual, Molodchi soon found his bearings in the new conditions, banked slightly and set his plane on the course.

The plane was to get its bearings by a lake. But where is it? asked the crew, unaware that they were circling over the centre of it. Finally they made out the shore and dropped flares. The whole landscape was immediately as light as midday, and they could see six fascist oil trains below.

From 1,200 feet they dropped their bombs, and a regular tide of explosions followed. The tanks flared up. A pretty sight! Molodchi broke through the clouds, which glowed rosy-red below him. That meant that the tanks were blazing away merrily. A very pretty sight!

Molodchi's first night flight had gone off splendidly. That was how he became a night flier.

They say that airmen acquire some of a bird's senses, a keen eye, an instinct for direction, and so on. If this is so, then it applies only to day fliers, for night fliers see only the instruments on the dashboard. The first thing a night flier must learn is to distrust his sensations. Senses may deceive him, but instruments are sure.

Flying is a glorious sensation, comparable with nothing else in life. There is the deep-blue sky arching overhead so near that it seems one might almost touch it, the far-reaching horizon, the beauty of the earth spread out below, its forests, rivers, towns. But the night flier knows nothing of all this. The black cap of an inky darkness is pressed down over his eyes. He can see the sky only in the beams of the searchlights which seek his life, he sees the earth only by the flames of the fires he has lit. Darkness and fire, that is all he sees.

The night flier's job is the most difficult, and he prides himself on it.

Molodchi was already an experienced night flier when he thought of a way of increasing the effectiveness of night raids. His idea was to send a plane several minutes ahead of the air formation to drop flares. He himself offered to pilot such a plane.

His suggestion was accepted, and the formation set out. The target was a large railway junction. Molodchi's plane approached the objective, the others keeping a short distance away, awaiting their moment. Flares floated down from Molodchi's plane, right over the target. While he was about it, he added a

few high explosive bombs for good measure. The target stood out in sharp relief.

Suddenly the cabin was flooded with light. The machine had been caught in the beams of searchlight. Fragments of flack shells rattled on the plane like hail. Now was the time to keep his eyes glued to the instruments, one glance aside and he would be blinded by the searchlights and go hurtling down. Eyes on the dashboard! And with a skilled manoeuvre Molodchi tore himself out of the beam. He heaved a sigh of relief.

Then his ears caught a sound sweeter than any music: the sound of engines, our bombers coming to hit the target. Yet Molodchi was reluctant to leave. He still had bombs left. The flares were still burning, a shame to waste them, and the others were circling and dropping their missiles. Once again Molodchi swooped over his target and bombed it by the light which he himself had created.

Again he was caught in the rays of light, thirteen of them, and all types of flack guns switched their fire on him. Molodchi slipped out of them and got clean away.

The results of this first raid with the use of flares was astounding. The junction was blazing for a day. Nine tanks were smashed, and up to five hundred trucks with munitions, seven locomotives were put out of action, two dumps were burned down, and so on. No fewer than four hundred Germans were killed or wounded.

Molodchi's plane had been hit in sixty-three places, but no one was hurt. Molodchi crawled out of the cabin, soaked to the skin, and staggering from weariness, but highly pleased. And it was very pleasant for him to hear the other pilots, men usually sparing in their praise, saying:

"Well, that's something like. . ."

He went off to sleep, and slept for six hundred minutes, as pilots put it: in general, they like to have things exact.

After his raid, the use of flares was generally accepted throughout the regiment, which soon received the title of Guards.

And Molodchi himself was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. It was from his comrades that he learned of this honour, quite unexpectedly. He growled, and looked glum for perhaps the first time in his life.

"What's that for?" he mumbled. "I haven't done anything special."

And then, with youthful bravado which he still often assumed, he added:

"Well, all right, then, I've no objection. . ."

Molodchi's first flight "abroad" was to Königsberg. Up to then he had not participated in such long-distance flights.

The plane had been fitted up with extra petrol tanks. It was far from being an easy flight, and the difficulties began right from the start. It was hard to lift the overladen machine. After the take-off, weather difficulties began, there was a solid wall of clouds, up to a height of twenty-four thousand feet. Molodchi did not drop lower than five kilometres, because he wanted to avoid icing; at that height there was only snow, which drifted in through the cracks and stung Molodchi's face.

For about the first time in his life, the thought occurred to Molodchi: perhaps it would be better to turn back? The weather was simply fiendish. But his native obstinacy conquered, and he drove the thought from him.

The clouds did not break, and he continued to fly in them until he reached the vicinity of Königsberg, and here a stroke of sheer bad luck was awaiting Molodchi. The clouds hung thick over Königsberg as well. The city was completely hidden from view. There can be no more bitter disappointment for an airman than a hidden target.

But Molodchi's dogged and inventive mind found a bold and simple

way out. He started flying his plane here and there in the vicinity of the city, to draw the enemy's ground defences, and thereby establish the location of his target. Soon the crew saw flashes and black puffs of smoke in the clouds; the daring trick had come off, the German flack gunners were firing.

Molodchi immediately dashed into the very thick of the fire and dropped his bombs, renewing the attack again and again.

After giving the city all he had, Molodchi steered for home. The way back was just as difficult as the outward course had been.

"When I came out of the clouds," said Molodchi, "I felt as if I had been born anew."

Molodchi bombed Königsberg three times more after this. He has bombed Danzig as well, and then Budapest much further away. The weather then was not too good, a storm was blowing up. But the Danube was plainly visible, and buoys with flashing beacons were floating along it. Fires were blazing in the town, apparently they had already had a visit from our people. The hitlerite henchmen had evidently not expected that Soviet airmen would find their way there. There was not a searchlight to be seen, and the flack guns had a range of only nine hundred feet.

"Well," said Molodchi, "we came up quietly, as though we were training, dropped our bombs and turned for home."

For Bucharest, the next city which Molodchi visited, it was an even greater surprise. No doubt, Hitler's Rumanian lackeys had thought their capital sufficiently far away to be safe, for the town was brilliantly lit and a musical programme was being broadcast.

Molodchi's crew added a new note to the music with their bombs. Lights went out immediately, but the flack guns were silent. It was in the light of huge fires which they eft behind them in Bucharest that he Soviet aces made for home.

Most careful preparations were made for the first raid on Berlin. Time and fuel were calculated to a hair. Molodchi was keyed up by the thought of bombing the fascist capital; that is understandable, the thirst for vengeance on the hitlerite bandits fills the heart of every airman and is the source of many amazing exploits.

Molodchi was to fly a new machine, one which had not been used before, and for that reason his preparations were espècially careful.

It was a clear fine night when he left the runway. They flew over Stettin which was already blazing like a torch,—evidently some of our pilots had already been there,—and approached Berlin. It was plainly visible below them, that huge, grey, detested city. Everything was dark and quiet. Nobody had been there as yet.

Suddenly the searchlights stabbed the heavens, there were plenty of them over Berlin, passing Molodchi on from one beam to another, while the flack guns thundered from all three defence zones.

Fourteen never to be forgotten minutes Molodchi spent in the searchlight beams, under a barrage of fire. In the end, banking steeply he veered to the left and slipped away. Immediately the gleaming pencils of light disappeared, and the gunfire subsided.

The fascists wanted to be sure of getting the Soviet airman, and he wanted to be sure of hitting the fascists in the right spot. For this reason he did not drop his bombs at once, he had not yet found his targets, so he continued to circle over Berlin, searching for them.

There they were! And Molodchi's bombs hurtled down on the heads of the Berlin people.

The flack guns immediately gave tongue, and searchlights combed the skies. But Molodchi looked with satisfaction at the raging fires which he had started in Berlin, and made for home. All the way back he was

singing at the top of his voice: Ukrainian songs, of course

Up to the present, Molodchi has made about two hundred combat flights. Every night, and not only at night, this gallant son of the Ukraine takes off to smash German troops, the rear, the towns, bases and columns. He is developing, learning, perfecting his knowledge and skill like the Red Army in general, like Soviet aviation as a whole He has just been awarded his second Gold Star. On the day when the order was published, he was a captain. Now he is twice Hero of the Soviet Union and already a major.

One thought possesses him: to destroy the Germans every night without pause or let-up, to make them pay in full for the torture of his ravaged Ukraine.

LEO SLAVIN

Frenchmen

Dressed in sheepskin coats and felt boots, they walked over the snow. I started in surprise, when I heard them converse in French. These were mechanics of the Normandie Air Formation of Fighting France. They came here to fight in the Russian skies for French land.

The air formations of General de Gaulle's army are named after the French provinces. Thus, the "Bretagne" and "Alsace" groups are fighting in Africa, the "Ile de France" fights over the British Channel and the "Normandie" group on our front. The pilots and mechanics wear the coat of arms of Normandie, two lions, on their breasts. Normandie has been captured by the Germans; ancient Rouen is burned, and the emerald-green meadows trampled underfoot. But the soldiers of the Normandie are firmly confident that they will see a liberated Normandie. Some of them have come from London. Inscrutable indeed are the paths of men and peoples, for who would ever think that the road from Dover to Calais would pass through the fields of far-away Russia?

The "Normandie" formation is a bit of France. There are men from different provinces: there is the flaxen-haired son of Normandie, and the dusky Corsican, the pensive, reticent son of Bretagne and the impulsive Marseillais. There are natives of the land of the Basques, of Lorraine and of Paris. There are representatives of every section of society, of all walks of life: a worker, a student, a merchant-marine sailor, a young doctor, the son of a business-man, but recently fortune's favourite, and the son of a pauper. They have been united by one feeling: love of France. This love was awakened with unparalleled force in that bitter summer of 1940. Having touched the bottom and tasted the full measure of disgrace, France has again emerged. She has again entered battle. Some are fighting underground in France, other have become the soldiers of General de Gaulle.

It is not easy to get away from France. There is one pilot who lived in Normandie under the German rule. One night he made his way into the unoccupied zone of France. And from there. . . "In Spain I was arrested. Spent some time in prison. Escaped. . ."

Here are three friends, jestingly nicknamed "the three musketeers." They served with the Vichy air forces in Algiers. Then they decided to go over to General de Gaulle: to fly their fighter-planes to Gibraltar. But how were all three of them to fly? Supposing only one should get away, then the others would

have no chance, for they would be watched all the more. They made long and painstaking preparations. Finally, the happy day came and fortune favoured them. But here is a less fortunate pilot: instead of Gibraltar he landed in the Spanish city of La Linea, two kilometres from Gibraltar, and fell into the hands of the enemy. What of it,— he escaped from La Linea.

The doctor fled from France to Spain. He was arrested, and after many vicissitudes he was exiled to Portugal. There he was again arrested by the authorities who wanted to send him back to Spain. He tried to reach London. Instead he had to go to Cuba, from there to the United States and finally to recross the ocean to England. In order to get from Paris to London, he covered half the globe.

The epic story of the Marseillais is both pathetic and amusing. In the summer of 1941, General Dentz, commander of the Vichy troops in Syria, capitulated on condition that those officers and soldiers who did not want to join General de Gaulle would have the right to return to France. Ships were dispatched from Marseilles to bring back the followers of Pétain. Meantime at Marseilles people were racking their brains for a way to get aboard a ship sailing for Syria. The Marseillais yearned to walk through this door which to them seemed the door leading from prison to freedom. Students became stokers, an artist swore that he was an old salt, while a lithographer claimed to be an experienced ship's cook. When the ships docked at Beyrouth, the crews were not given shore leave. Men dived overboard and swam ashore. In vain did supporters of Vichy who embarked on those ships wait for stokers and sailors: the crews went off to join General de Gaulle.

There is a major who tramped all the way from Dagomea to Liberia, five hundred kilometres, through virgin forests. The sergeant left Bretagne for England in a small fishing boat. A storm broke out. But the sergeant was resolved on getting there, and he did.

Both their families are at home, languishing under the German yoke. That is why the Parisian understands the Ukrainian lieutenant at a glance. They have a common language: hatred. "Boche, Fritz," says the Parisian, and makes a gesture in the air with his hands as if choking someone. "That's the thing to do to him!" sights the Ukrainian approvingly.

There are among the Frenchmen people who had no idea of what our country was like. Prior to the catastrophe they had been reading profascist newspapers which, day in and day out, told them that Russia consisted of smokefilled huts and nationalized women. To their surprise they found big cities, factories, comfortable homes, families. They simply throw up their hands in dismay: "Think of it, how our newspapers lied! . ." There are others too, those who followed with admiration the peaceful progress of our country. They come from different social groups, from different parties, but to all of them Russia is a strong and brave ally. The Frenchmen know that the Soviet Union would like to see the rebirth of an independent and free France, and the pilots of the "Normandie" formation are happy that they "are finally fighting in a real war," to use the words of one lieutenant.

Here is a sergeant, formerly a Parisian printer, who fought the fascists in Spain. He has come to know the enemy very well: the enemy of France, the enemy of Spain, the enemy of Russia, the enemy of freedom, it is one and the same enemy.

"The Italians killed my brother," says the Corsican. "And we in Corsica know what vendetta means. I must avenge. I've been very lucky to get here. I will avenge. . ."

In one week, when the French army was in the field, the pilot Durand brought down four enemy planes. "There's a fifth Boche pining away

Captain P. Drouzhenko acquainting French airmen with route of their flight

for me. . ." he says. "I wish they'd hurry up and send me into battle."

Many idled away their time in Egypt and Syria, and they are eager to come to grips with the enemy. A captain from Lorraine who brought down 11 German aircraft, explains grimly: "We joined General de Gaulle to fight. And here we will have a chance to do it."

The airmen are pleased with the Soviet planes: they are far better than those they flew in Africa. The French pilots have quickly mastered our aeroplanes. As for the mechanics, they are happy: they discovered some resemblance between the Soviet engines and those which they had to handle in France.

Russia seems mysterious from afar. But the Frenchmen who came here felt at home at once. They had never seen felt boots before, but they never part with them now. Never before had they tasted "shchi," but they have now and they like it. They were afraid of Russian winter, but it's not as terrible as it would seem, and they go in for skiing. They have already learned many Russian words. "Bonjour," Russian children greet them from afar. . .

When the radio broadcasts news flashes, the Frenchmen listen in concerted silence, trying to make out the strange names, the unfamiliar words. But when the announcer says: "the Germans lost 175.000 soldiers and officers in killed," the Frenchmen smile: for the executioners of France have been destroyed. At such moments one can understand the real meaning of militant friendship. "Karasho! . . Karasho! . ." stammers the Frenchman, affectionately repeating this Russian word, and pressing the hand of our pilot.

ILYA EHRENBURG

Emsa Zenitnaya

Red Army men told me this story. It was quiet in the air, although, somewhere in the distance, with engines droning, some "Messerschmitts" would occasionally cross the sky. We sat by a gun and talked, recalling last year's battles, and speculating about the post-war appearance of the world.

"Life will be good when our Emsa grows up," said a sergeant with a medal on his breast, "only she won't know how she got such a strange name."

And he smiled warmly. There were many new soldiers and officers at the battery who knew nothing about Emsa, and the sergeant, rolling a big cigarette with a piece of newspaper, slowly told the following story:

"It was during August last year in Novgorod that this happened.

The enemy had approached the town. Dozens of 'Junkers' hung continuously in the air. Every second black bombs released from the plane fell whistling on the city, spreading fire and death in their wake. Our battery conducted a hurricane fire. It brought down several planes, but the enemy forces were tremendous, and we were unable to drive them away.

The Germans had already set fire to old Novgorod and broken into the western part of the city. Our troops were leaving for the right bank of the Volkhov river. At night, with the fires of burning buildings lighting the way, people who did not want to live under the yoke of Hitler swam across the river. Horses crossed the river, cows were driven across. Germans fired at the crossing, spattering bullets like peas, while splinters rattled threateningly.

Our battery was at the very bank of the river, shooting both at the enemy's planes and his firing points. The heads of our artillery men ached with the din and with exhaustion, and vague circles swam before their eyes. The anti-aircraft gunners shot down the turret from which a German machine-gun kept up continuous fire. However, the enemy succeeded in locating our battery, and the German trench-mortars opened fire upon it.

To save lives and equipment we had to change our location. Towards morning we were already in a new place, near the church, on the bank of the Volkhov. In the kitchen-gardens fresh shell craters gaped black, the air had a burnt smell from the flaming buildings, sparks flew out in sheaves, and clouds of black smoke rose. In one of the craters under a poplar tree with broken leaves and white wounds on its stately trunk, a fire was built to make breakfast. The tired Red Army men dozed by their gun.

Suddenly our cook Dvoretsky came to our position. He was an elderly, clumsy man, whom everybody called father, because of his age and experience and because of his warm, friendly attitude toward every Red Army man. For a while he stood undecided, but at last, awkwardly raising his hand to his cap, with a rather guilty smile, reported to the commander of the battery:

'Comrade Lieutenant, we've found a child, a very, very tiny one. It's lying there alone and crying. What shall we do with it?'

The Red Army men gathered round with interest, and Dvoretsky told his story. He had started the fire and begun to boil water for breakfast when he heard a child crying. At first he had paid no attention to it, it reminded him only of his own children, left at home in a small hamlet near Smolensk. But the baby continued to cry bitterly.

The cook began to look for it, and in one of the abandoned blindages found a tiny baby girl. Wrapped in an old blanket, she was blue with crying. She seemed not more than three or four months old. Dvoretsky, as carefully and delicately as his heavy and work-hardened hands allowed, picked up the baby, brought it to the camp kitchen and went to report to the commander of the battery.

But what are soldiers to do with a baby when there is fierce fighting going on? This is a question to which no answer can be found in army regulations. The baby was brought to the firing line. The tired faces of the Red Army men lit up with smiles at the sight of her. But where was the child's mother? Perhaps a bullet from a nazi brute had killed her somewhere nearby.

It was unanimously decided that henceforth the mother of the abandoned child be replaced by our battery, battery MSA of one of the anti-aircraft divisions.

While the question was being discussed, the tiny, helpless baby continued to cry in a voice already hoarse with strain, thrusting its minute fists into its mouth. Evidently the child was hungry. Guessing this, the reconnoissance officer, more accustomed to locating destroyed enemy planes than to taking care of babies, took his flask and set out in search of milk. He found a goat which seemed completely indifferent to warring humanity. It was peacefully roaming among the abandoned gardens and serenely eating cabbage. The commander caught the goat and with inexperienced hands milked it, filling the flask with fresh milk. Crouching under whistling bullets and shells, he brought the milk to the battery.

Dvoretsky took out of his pocket a bottle and a teat which he had taken with him from the blindage where the little girl had

been lying. This fatherly foresight of his considerably simplified matters. The battery daughter hungrily grasped the teat, and sucking loudly began to drink the milk.

Shura Fyodorova, a girl from Leningrad, worked in our battery as sanitary instructor. On this particular day she had many worries: there were some wounded at the battery. But to whom, if not to her, was the baby to be entrusted?

Half-jokingly, half in earnest, the battery commander said to her:

'I appoint you mother of our daughter. You will gain experience which will come in handy for you later on.'

And Shura began to take care of the child. But the other members of the unit were busy with quite different affairs: eighty more enemy bombers raided the town. The earth shook from bursting shells, the whole battery was covered with dust. Ammunition-carriers hardly had time to unpack the boxes of shells. During this time no one saw either Shura or the little girl, and, to tell the truth, nobody thought of them. They were noticed again only after the air attack had been repulsed. The frightened child began to cry uncontrollably. Shura was now crying too.

'I don't know what to do with her, she cries all the time and doesn't understand anything.'

The Red Army men decided to help Shura. They took turns in playing with the child, found milk for her, tore up several undershirts to make diapers.

The battery commander tried to get in touch with staff headquarters time and again, but the telephone connection kept on breaking. When finally connection was established, it was only to discover that staff headquarters were moving to a new place and it would therefore be impossible to get the child to them. For several days she remained at the battery amidst the thunderous bomb explosions and cannon fire. Here in this deathbearing whirlwind she seemed to symbolize the life of the future, and the stern Red Army men protected her with delicate care.

Everyone became accustomed to the daughter of the battery, and when Shura appeared at the firing line with the child in her arms, she would immediately be surrounded by the artillery men who asked:

'Well, how's our daughter?'

And when finally the opportunity came to send the child to the rear and to turn her over to a children's home, the Red Army men were sorry to part with her.

At last, when the truck stood puffing and throbbing at the battery, everybody gathered around to see the battery daughter off. A name had to be given her, so that trace of her should not be lost on the long front-line roads. After long discussions and arguments, a tall black-eyed fellow, who thus far had stood silently by, said:

'I propose, comrades, that we call her Emsa Zenitnaya[1], in honour of our battery MSA.'

Immediately everybody agreed.

We turned her over to a children's home in Valday. And in the registration book there she was put down as 'Emsa Zenitnaya.' I don't know where she is now, but I am confident that she is alive and that she will grow up and will live that good life for which we are fighting," the sergeant ended his story, relighting the cigarette which had long since gone out.

Lieutenant S. IVANOV

Comrade Editor, this story is a true one, though to some it may seem impossible. What I have written here, actually took place last year in Novgorod in our battery, part of the N. artillery regiment of the anti-aircraft defence. I work in this battery as commander of the firing platoon.

The incident of Emsa Zenitnaya is included in the history of the N. anti-aircraft division, which is kept in the anti-aircraft defence headquarters of the North-Western front. To our great regret, we don't know where our Emsa is at present.

A Soldier's Wife

They lived in peace and friendship. Of an evening when the moist and salty wind blew from the sea, they used to go out on the beach together and there stand and gaze into the distance, holding hands like children.

People who met them were sure to say: "What a happy couple!" At that time he was studying at the university where later on he gave his first lectures. She was a typist in one of the Naval offices. They had a little daughter, Irinka they called her. The three of them, man, wife and daughter, were a model of a happy Soviet family. Bereznyak, however, had a grief of his own. Through an accident in childhood he nearly lost the sight of his left eye. Bereznyak was greatly troubled by the thought that at a moment of national emergency he would have to keep out of the services. By sheer will-power he managed to get the better of his infirmity. He learnt to shoot from his left shoulder, and in the university shooting competitions he was never below the average. But nevertheless the doctors would not accept him. "Unfit," was their usual inexorable verdict. His wife took all her husband's troubles greatly to heart. When he at last succeeded in overturning

[1] Anti-aircraft guns are called in Russian *zenitki*.

the medical verdict and then in being nominated as a reserve military political instructor, there was great rejoicing in the Bereznyak family.

When war broke out, he was a political worker in the Red Army. Then the first thunder claps of the war storm crashed over sunny Odessa. The city experienced the terrifying days of siege. Women, children and old people were evacuated to the rear. Soon Bereznyak had to part with his family.

Well, he was not the only one to whom the war brought separation along with the call-up. Bereznyak saw his wife and Irinka safely installed on board a steamer, and then for a long time stood on the seashore following the ship with his eyes.

Having settled down in one of the towns in the rear, the wife and the daughter began to expect speedy and good news, but the postman would either climb a flight higher up, or he would go round to the little wing opposite where there were also people expecting letters from the front; he never once knocked at the door of the flat where the Bereznyak family were living.

One day there dropped in a small woman wearing a forage cap and a khaki padded jacket. She said she was working at a hospital which had just arrived in their town, and that among the badly wounded they had political instructor Bereznyak who was trying to learn the whereabouts of his family.

"His case is serious but not hopeless," she said. "He has a wound in his face. . . it's heavily bandaged."

Throwing her coat over her shoulders, Mila ran to the hospital. Her heart was beating very fast.

"I mustn't cry. . . I simply mustn't cry," she kept repeating to herself.

And then she was being led along a large ward lit by soft blue lights. Men with bandaged eyes were lying or sitting on the beds. A woman in a white overall, evidently the nurse, was reading the newspaper aloud. Mila was taken up to the bed where her husband lay. His face was invisible under the bandages.

Hearing his wife's voice, Bereznyak turned his head and for some time lay in silence and just kept kissing Mila's hand.

"It's an eye wound," the physician on duty explained to Mila when Bereznyak had been led away to have his wound dressed.

"Which eye?" Mila asked breathlessly.

"Both. The right one is torn right out. But you should not lose hope. Tomorrow he will be examined by professor Orlov."

The next day Mila was standing in dreadful suspense near the door of the operating room, where her husband was being examined by the famous surgeon. The examination lasted a long time. Hearing the angry and strained tone in which the professor was giving orders to his assistant surgeons and noting the hopelessness in the gesture with which he ordered them to put on the bandage, Mila not only saw, she knew that there was no hope whatever.

That very evening it was Bereznyak who started the painful but inevitable conversation they were both awaiting. That was Bereznyak's way, he always took upon himself, always bore on his own shoulders the hardest and heaviest burden.

"I am blind. . ." he began. "It can't be helped. Many a time have I thought it would be far better to lose an arm or both legs than to be deprived of one's eyesight. But there it is. I shall never see again. It's a bit hard on you, Mila. . . I understand. . . I give you your freedom. Go back to your family. . . The main thing is that you should not suffer," he said gently.

"I can't imagine that my husband who knows me can say such a thing to me," said Mila.

From that day on, taking up her abode in the hospital, she never left her husband's side either by day or night. Mila fed him like a child from a little spoon, and with a bitter smile she thought of the time when she had thus fed little Irinka. She gave him his medicines, she took him to have his wound dressed, read books to him, even told him fairy-tales just to while away the time and amuse him. It seemed queer to her when out of habit he would take up a book, stroke its binding, turn over the pages and then throw it aside irritably as if suddenly remembering something. He loved books, and he could never read them again.

Something new and great filled Mila Bereznyak's whole being. She knew it was love, that now she loved her husband even more than ever, though before it would have seemed impossible to her. In him she loved a man, a citizen, a soldier who had honourably sacrificed everything for the defence of his country.

"What was the last thing Bereznyak has seen in his life before losing his eyesight?" she asked herself, and with pride she remembered her husband's story about the battle in the district of Dalnik. There, just a few seconds before being wounded, firing his tommy-gun from his left shoulder, as he always did, he had picked off a Rumanian machine-gunner. She said to herself:

"My husband is now an invalid. Some people would think that this meant the end of everything. But it isn't true. An invalid is not a person physically disabled, but a person who has no soul, no noble and beautiful soul."

And now we open the door of number 35, Karl Marx street, in Tashkent. Here live Political Instructor Bereznyak and his family. We are greeted by a man in uniform who rises from behind a table piled

with books, and gives us a cordial handshake.

We make one another's acquaintance. Political Instructor Bereznyak is now a post-graduate of the Central Asia university. He specializes in the principles of Leninism. He has already mastered the Braille alphabet for the blind. Using a metal stencil, he is able to make synopses of the material he has studied. His work is progressing quite successfully. His wife is busy with her own work, his little daughter goes to school. Frequently in the evening some university friends will come in for a chat, and discuss some newly published book or tell him about some article they have just read.

Leaning on his wife's arm, Lieutenant Zyabkin often comes round to see the Bereznyaks. He is now director of the school for the blind. At the hospital their beds stood side by side. In those days the lieutenant did not know where his family was, and used to feel very lonesome.

Three hundred letters addressed to different parts of the country were then sent off by the hospital staff in order to locate the lieutenant's family. At last the precious lines came which gave the addresses of his wife and parents. But the lieutenant was very depressed. Wouldn't his wife disown him now that he was completely blind?

It was Mila Bereznyak who took upon herself to break the news to this woman.

"Is the man who has no eyes blind?" she wrote. "If so, my husband is not blind. He clearly sees his goal before him. He has not dropped out of life. Ways are not barred to him. He studies, he works. I love him even more now, I have a greater feeling of esteem for him. Just think, this man has suffered for me, for you as well, and for our children."

As for Mila Bereznyak herself, she works hard and well. Irinka is an excellent pupil. Her father and she are great friends and quite inseparable.

So lives the family of the disabled Political Instructor Bereznyak.

A Soviet woman was able to keep this family intact, to strengthen the ties binding it, to be its loadstar through the hardest trials.

What she has done is no exploit, nor is it merely a duty fulfilled.

The motive power of her actions is true love.

M. EVGENIEV

Airmen receive instructions before taking off for a night flight

BOOKS AND WRITERS

A RED LETTER DAY FOR SOVIET POETRY*

Olga Bergholz is not a newcomer to Soviet poetry, but hitherto the poetess had not, so to speak, succeeded in finding herself and in raising her voice to its full volume.

The Leningrad Notebook, and, in particular, the poems "A February Diary" and "The Leningrad Epic," have won Olga Bergholz a place of prominence in Soviet poetry.

The great events of our times, the supreme effort of the Soviet country in its titanic struggle against Hitlerism, the powerful breath of the people's patriotism, the passionate will for victory which animates the hearts of millions have evoked a powerful resonance in the works of these poets, enriching them with a new cycle of ideas and images, profoundly deepening their patriotic themes, filling their poetic voice with a harsh metallic ring. This was, so to say, a rebirth of many Soviet poets.

The poetry of the Great Patriotic War has already unfolded itself, clearly revealing a number of principal divisions, trends and genres: front poetry replete with battle scenes and front war sketches; poetry exposing Hitlerism and the atrocities and crimes perpetrated by the Germans; lyrical poetry in which the theme of war frequently intrudes into the most intimate feelings of man; the poetry singing of the invincible friendship of the peoples of the U.S.S.R., etc. More and more works are added, contributing to Soviet poetry their original themes, new genres, their own peculiar intonations.

Olga Bergholz brings into her poetry the theme of war-time hardships and privations that are heroically being overcome by Soviet patriots. The fact that while faithfully depicting these hardships and privations she succeeded in reflecting with the same realistic confidence, faithfulness and colourfulness the courage of the Soviet people and their will for victory, the very will which is, indeed, stronger than death, is an artistic victory for the poetess.

The Leningrad Notebook opens with short lyrical poems, distinguished by their simplicity, tenderness and warmth. But the central place in the volume is occupied by two poems: "A February Diary" and "The Leningrad Epic," which overshadow the other lyrics. This is due to the fact that Olga Bergholz's poems represent precisely the genre in which the poetess feels herself most at home and where her talent is unfolded in its full grandeur of unexpectedly rich, delightful possibilities.

In the person of Olga Bergholz Leningrad has found a fine, sincere and versatile artist of one of the greatest epochs of its history. Her poems glorify the great Soviet city which was born to the salute of cannon from the cruiser "Aurora," the City of Lenin, the city of new Soviet construction, of vast blocks of factories, schools and palaces.

It is in a state of unprecedented tension that the tragic aspect of seething Leningrad rises from the pages of this book. It is a city of long, tense, weary nocturnal gloom; a city hoary with frost, chilled to the marrow, silent, its stillness disturbed only by the sorrowful sound of snow crunching under sledge runners; a great city, beleaguered by a frenzied enemy.

Clad in a hoary cloak of frost,
The city was like a provincial town,
With strangely quiet streets, the tram-tracks lost
Under a heavy quilt of fluffy down.
And on the Nevsky, like a mute complaint,
The snow crunching under tiny sleds—
A sight both pitiful and quaint—
With water, firewood, the sick, the dead.

Such is Leningrad as depicted in "A February Diary." But the Leningrad people, who realize that

Our suffering has reached a stage
Unparalleled, unmatched in any age,

are nevertheless filled with unwavering confidence in their victory, with a strong, stern inner collectedness and determination to win it:

We do not cry, for it is truly said:
Our eyes are frozen dry, we have no tears to shed.
Indeed, we do not cry, for tears bring no relief
Where hearts are filled with hatred to distraction,
It has become an earnest that we'll live,
Our source of unity, our urge to action.
No mercy, no forgiveness for the knaves,
Avenge, avenge, your lips must never quiver—
Cry out the victims from the common grave
Dug on the right bank of the river.

Olga Bergholz's realism is as courageous as the struggle of the defenders of Leningrad. Behold, says the poetess proudly, addressing mankind, these are the conditions in which the Soviet city fights on and does not yield; see, this is what it's fighting for, behold and emulate its example!

The other sections of the poem tell about the friends of Leningrad, whose fight to

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* Olga Bergholz, *The Leningrad Notebook*. Soviet Writer Publishing House, Moscow, 1942.

save the city inspires the author and fills her with admiration: there is a soldier who begs his wife not to use such phrases in her letters to the front as "please, take care of yourself for the children's sake," or "spare your life for our sake." He cannot spare his life precisely because he is fighting for other children, for the children of Leningrad, who

. . . are crying for bread.
There is none. But we are fathers.

That is why he remains lying in the snow, defying the bitter cold, patiently waiting for the enemy, "the executioner of children," to appear, waiting to execute the executioner.

The sense of duty which urges Soviet man to overcome all war-time hardships in struggle against himself and against environment, and sometimes heroically to sacrifice himself for this duty, this is one of the key motifs of the poem which permeates a number of its sketches.

The supreme selflessness of Soviet man, simple and modest, and yet partaking of legend-like character in its grandeur, reaches its apex in the third chapter of the poem. A transport column travelling at night over the frozen surface ol Lake Ladoga is carrying bread to besieged Leningrad. With the thermometer at 40° below zero, the bitter cold is a far greater torment than bombing. But defying the frost and the bombs, Soviet drivers move steadily ahead. They know that Leningrad is near, that the city has had no bread for two days, that mothers are waiting for it in the long queues in front of the darkened bakeries.

Suddenly one of the trucks comes to a stop. Something has gone wrong. The repairs are a matter of five minutes, but, try as he might, the driver cannot unbend his fingers which are stiff from the cold.

His fingers numbed, he stood there, silent, grave.
What's to be done? Await the others?
But what about the bread? Two tons of bread will save
Some sixteen thousand Leningradites.
He dipped his hands in gasoline,
Pressed to the engine, gripped the pliars,
And the repairs moved quickly in
The driver's hands ablaze with fire.

The reader appreciates the simplicity, faithfulness, the passion and force with which Olga Bergholz has shown him this ordinary, unobtrusive victory of Soviet man, his sacred courage and selflessness! The name of such people in our country is legion, and by immortalizing them in art the author has enriched world poetry.

Yes, this bread did reach Leningrad over the "road of friendship of many for many others," and it is indeed true that "the world has never known a road more fearful, and yet more joyous." This bread was sent by the whole country, by the entire Soviet people, "generous and beloved," whether impersonated in the heroic driver, in the bright-eyed Masha who broke through with presents to Leningrad, or in the women collective farmers who, tormented by pangs of regret that they had nothing else to offer, sent handfuls of onions to the Leningradites.

My country, my people,
My own blood—I thank you!

are the words that stir every reader of this book as he repeats them together with the poetess.

The enemy is tightening the ring around the city. But all the more energetic and magnificent is the resistance of its defenders. A wounded officer Semyon Potapov collapses on the snow-covered ground, but forbids the men to pause to save him, urging them on forward. And leaping across the dear body of their officer the men with drawn bayonets pursue the fleeing Germans.

There they are, the friends of Leningrad, who brought to the poetess the message of eternal life. They did not spare their own lives that the great city might live; for the sake of the dear old engraver, who on his own initiative, without any order, worked by the dim light of an oil burner and engraved a special medal showing a child, woman and man in the centre of a ring of barbed wire with an austere, simple inscription: "I lived in Leningrad this winter."

A poet is the creator of beauty, and he too "cannot do without it." And "The Leningrad Epic" is a long, stirring and joyous song of beauty. It is the beauty of courage, of patriotic exploit, of conscious self-sacrifice, the beauty of energetic, unbending, unconquerable Soviet people. And as is always the case with the true poet, the beauty of her images harmonizes with the sonorous strength of Olga Bergholz's verse, the modulation of its rhythm, the expressive intonation of her emotional, plastic and laconic language, with the mysterious birth of those indescribably beautiful lines which immediately strike a responsive chord in the reader's heart, compelling him to read and reread them aloud.

But there is yet another kind of beauty in this epic, even more majestic in its grandeur, which towers above it like a dome, and this is the beauty of its humane idea.

The people of Leningrad realized that notwithstanding the gloom of their life they remained human. The love of Soviet people for one another kept them warm in the cold, dismal city, a love born of their very privations.

The war has indescribably sharpened the feelings of love and friendship in Soviet people, their feelings of mutual aid, mutual assistance and solidarity. It is this love that moves the poetess to share her bread ration with a mother; it is this love that

leads the Red Army man, the defender of Leningrad's children, into battle; this love that guides the driver when he sets his hands on fire to repair the truck; it is for this love that Semyon Potapov lays down his life, that the old engraver persists in his work to produce his medal.

The idea of Soviet humanness resounds with special force and beauty in "The Leningrad Epic." And here too the poetess succeeded in finding the remarkable words which fascinate by their truth, joy and melodious charm. The final accord of the poem is a lullaby to an unborn babe:

Welcome, godchild
Of our victories,
Dearest herald,
Harbinger of peace.
Your dreams will be both happy and serene;
A world no more disturbed by battle's din,
Where men no longer fear to raise their eyes
To the nocturnal, moonlit skies.

It is so clear, so natural that a Soviet mother should dream of peace, of those days when gentle clouds will float tranquilly in the blue haze of the ether, when swallows will again sing in the cities and will begin to build their nests in the shell holes of the scarred walls. And the poetess is waiting for this future happiness with the inimitable freshness of some rejuvenated, new human being.

Amid the grim pictures of battles, privations, hunger, cold and air-raids, this gentle cradle song is born like a miracle. But even this dream of joy is menaced by the enemy. This dream must yet be defended. And the last lines of the poem again resound with the metallic ring of brass:

Then let insatiable vengeance
Ring as the only hymn today.
Let nought but hatred hold its sway,
With burning urge for victory,
To bring us back the happy day
Of love, and peace, and liberty.

. . . History knows many a siege of great cities. Take for example the famous siege of Paris during the winter of 1870-71. But rising from the pages of *The Leningrad Notebook* is the picture of a city hitherto unkown to mankind. It is a city of a collective, single will of all its inhabitants. They love their city, their country, one another, for they are the children of their people, the children and builders of the socialist system; and it is for this that they will never surrender. The strength and nobility of the poetic voice of Olga Bergholz is merely the artistic interpretation of the voice of the Leningrad people themselves.

Nevertheless, *The Leningrad Notebook* is not merely "the poetry of a besieged city," but above all a remarkable document of Soviet poetry in general. With exceptional sincerity, faithfulness, passion and charm the poetess tells the story of Soviet people and of their exploits.

Y. DANILIN

FIERY AND INSTRUCTIVE POETRY*

Pavel Antokolsky comes from the same family as the famous sculptor Antokolsky, whose chisel produced the majestic and tragic statue of Ivan the Terrible.

To anyone familiar with Antokolsky's unique poetry, full of romantic dramatization, with the emotional life of the footlights, the author's identification with the theatre will not come as a surprise.

Antokolsky, poet, artist and theatrical producer combined, is at present directing one of the best theatres at the front, where *Chkalov*, his verse play, is now being presented.

This play about the great Russian pilot and those youthful heroes who bear his banner in the Patriotic War, is not the only poem written by the author in dramatic form. Antokolsky likes to embody his major works in theatrical form. Such, for example, is his poem *Robespierre and the Gorgon*. The intrepid Jacobin is one of the author's favourite heroes in the struggle for freedom, just as the great Frenchmen François Villon and Victor Hugo are closest to him among the representatives of Western-European poetry.

However, not only historical verse dramas, but Antokolsky's lyric poems as well, resemble an impassioned dialogue between the poet and history. His poetry abounds in characters of heroes of people's movements, of great statesmen, from Peter the Great to the builders of the Soviet State.

Even our contemporary period, with its heroic characters of Soviet pilots guarding the skies over the capital, the exploits of seamen of the Black Sea Fleet, of Leningrad anti-aircraft gunners, as represented in his verse, seems like a record of history.

It is no accident that one of the best poems in the small volume *Six Months*, dedicated to the Patriotic War, bears the title *A Page of History*.

The morning of June 22nd, 1941, the morning of the first day of the Soviet people's Patriotic War against the German barbarians, who treacherously invaded the U.S.S.R., is pictured by the author as follows:

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* *Six Months*, by Pavel Antokolsky. Vol. of verse. Published by the Soviet Writer Publishing House, Moscow, 1942.

That morning our blood began to flow.
Throughout the land, the people—silent, taut—
Stood in the streets in groups while loud-speakers
Gave out the stern appeal of Molotov.
His voice rang with sorrow and wrath.
Then, like an echo, came the siren's scream,
And men in overalls from factory and field
Responded to the call, fists clenched, determined, grim.
In Moscow, at sea, or on the battle-field,—
Whether I die today, or live to be a hundred,
I never shall forget that moment of the day:
'Twas like a mighty roar of thunder,
A nation rising ready for the fray.
It seemed that listening with rapt attention
We felt the globe swell with rage,
Lift its hand with painful tension
And slowly turn o'er history's new page.

The Fascist Is not Human, a satire on the fascists, breathes noble fury, while *The Black Sea Ballad* is filled with pride for his country. Returning from a raid on Rumania, three Soviet pilots fall into the sea and for many hours keep afloat, fighting the waves. Converting their suits into sails, the airmen firmly hold them up above the surface of the water; what if their limbs are numbed, they keep on swimming until rescued. The next morning finds them again aboard planes headed for Constanza.

A Soviet patriot, Antokolsky holds dear the cause of the European peoples. His poetry goes out to those "invisible people" of Europe who are hastening on the doom of the Hitler gang, to the heroic Yugoslav partisans, to the brave workers of Paris and Brussels engaged in illegal activities.

As Europe fights on day and night
Two years in never-ending battles,
The peoples yearn to help time's flight,
To speed the day when scores are settled.

But to "help time's flight" one must fearlessly go out to meet it, must not delay the decisive battle.

For

Time will neither wait, nor pause,
No force can halt its mighty stride,
But with the people's righteous cause
Its path will surely coincide.

This poem, one of the best in the volume, is well named *History's Lesson*.

Not only history, but poetry also can be instructive. Such precisely is Antokolsky's poetry. His thoughts and feelings develop in close mingling, in fraternal association with the people in the grim days of the war, and at the front the voice of the poet, no longer young but filled with youthful ardour, rings out with irresistible force.

P. BORISSOV

A BOOK ABOUT THE URALS*

There has been published in Sverdlovsk, in the heart of the Urals, a highly interesting book on the life and work of the Soviet rear. Among the writers and poets who have contributed to it are Mariette Shaginyan, Anna Karavayeva, Fyodor Gladkov, Nicholas Lashko, Pavel Bazhov, the oldest Ural writer, Agnes Barto, Professor Danilevsky, a Stalin Prize winner, Ilya Sadofyev, Constantine Murzidy and Boris Riabinin.

The word "Urals" in the local dialect means "golden earth." The first Russian munitions shops sprang up in that region a long time ago. The Urals today are right called the "backbone of our defence." Their fame has been enhanced by the heroic labour of Stalinite workers of the Urals. They lighted the fires of new blast-furnaces and factories, constructed tanks, guns and machine-guns, automatics and shells, and are tirelessly helping the front, continually increasing its ability to smash the enemy.

The stupendous work accomplished in the Urals these days is dear to the heart of everyone striving for victory and taking part in the holy war against Hitler Germany. Therefore every reader of the symposium *The Urals Speak*, whoever he may be, will read with interest this book about "the golden earth" which has become the great arsenal of the Soviet country. It deals chiefly with labour. Enthusiastic, untiring labour. Labour that knows no slackening. The people of Urals say: "Work is battle," and the writers contributing to this work give perfect expression to this conception of our people.

They paint a majestic picture of patriotic enthusiasm which transformed not only the country in the rear but the men too, as Stalin said in his historical report November 6th, 1942, that reverberated throughout the world.

Dmitri Bossyi, a famous milling-machine operator, Stalin Prize winner, Nurulla Bazetov, Ibrahim Valeyev, Dmitri Sidorovsky, experts in casting steel, and many others, whose labour has made their names known throughout the country: these are the characters of *The Urals Speak*. The labour psychology of these men has become a national feature during war-time. The searching eye of the writer fathoming the

* *The Urals Speak*, Literary-Art Symposium, Sverdlovsk, 1942.

depths of the immense industrial front of the Urals found a novel quality in it.

A special place in the book is devoted to woman. She has come to the works, does most complicated industrial processes that before the war had been exclusively a man's job. She was impeded by the lack of experience and by her previous widely different habit of life, yet the stronger her love to her native country and to her man at the front, the more persistently she kept at her work.

A working girl in Fyodor Gladkov's story *Malka's Luck* says: "You have to love in order to fight. . . Man's beauty is not in his dreaming of things far off, but in enlarging his present-day life to embrace the far off." The sweetheart of this girl is at the front; he is a long way off, but through her generous efforts in the rear she keeps at his side. It is her love for him that is so far away that prompts her give her blood to the wounded lieutenant and to undertake the most difficult, most harassing, most serious things, whatever the conditions.

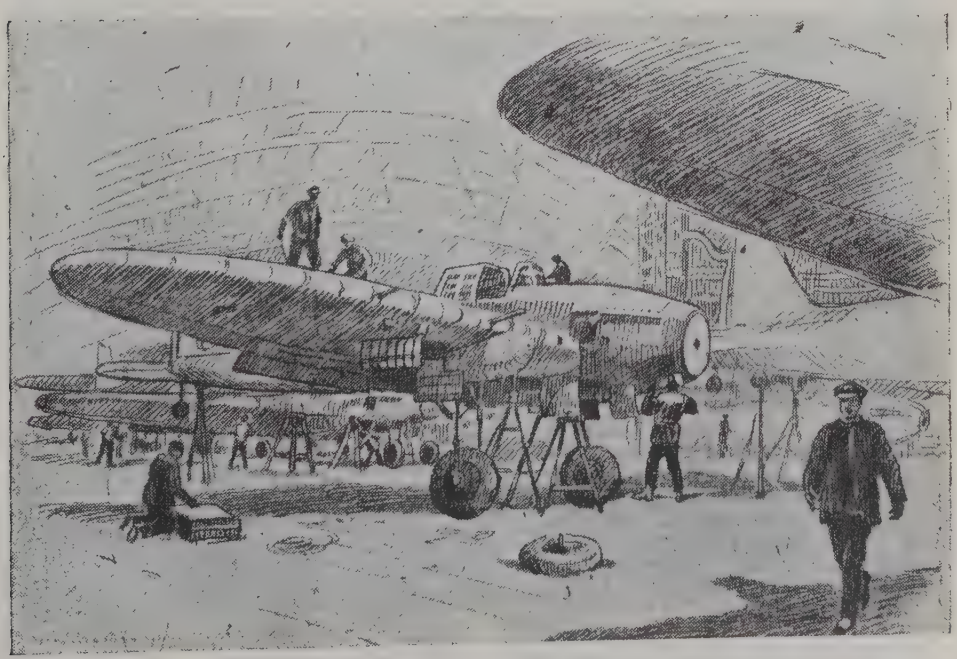
But the strength of a mother and a wife can manifest itself in different forms. Popova in the story *The Strength of Woman* takes us into the home and the everyday life of an old mother whose entire love is centered in her son at the front. She is lonely: her son's wife, an engineer, is at the factory all day. Just when the daughter-in-law has a specially responsible job to do, the mother receives the news of her son's death. Her grief is unbounded. But for the time being she has got to keep their common sorrow from her daughter-in-law. And the helpless mother finds the strength to help another woman even at this, the hardest hour of her life. The job is completed, the quantity of armaments which the front gets from the far away Urals works is greatly increased. An old helpless Russian woman has done her bit to increase it by the strength of her moral forces, by the steadfastness of her mother's soul.

The entire contents of this symposium are distinguished by a great love of the Urals and its people. This is a marked feature of the Urals writers who are well represented in the symposium, outstanding among them being Pavel Bazhov, a great literary master. But the same love permeates the work of those authors that are only beginning to write about the Urals.

The Ancient Fame of the Urals, by V. Danilevsky, the Stalin Prize winner, shows that he, too, is proud of the Urals and its men. He has collected important historical material testifying to the valuable part the Urals play in the development of the Russian war industry.

The verses published in the symposium are distinguished by a very warm flow of feeling.

ANATOLE KOTOV



Assembly shop of an aircraft works in the Urals. Drawing by P. Vassilyev

AN IMPRESSIVE FILM ABOUT SOVIET PATRIOTS

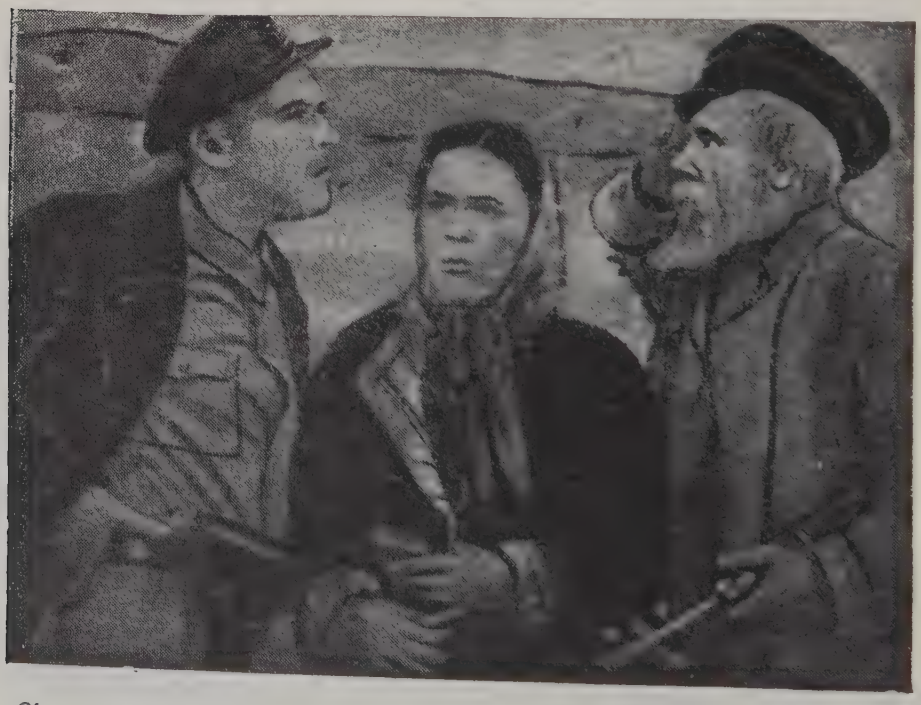
The artist who takes an active part in the struggle of his country and his people by devoting all his creative power to it, must experience a feeling of deep satisfaction. Among the names of such artists, those of the authors of the new film *Partisans* deserve special mention. I. Proot, the scenarist; I. Pyryev, the producer, a Stalin Prize winner; V. Pavlov, the operator, and the actors who play the leading parts, have together created a good film in which genuine patriotic spirit has been combined with realistic skill. *Partisans* is an exciting film about heroic Russian men and women, partisans, who carry on a fierce and splendid struggle against the Hitlerites.

The fate of its heroes is dear to the hearts of the millions of spectators who gaze at the screen with eyes filled with deep emotion. The secretary of the district committee Kochet, the engineer Rotman, Natasha, the telephone girl, Gavrila Russov, the old engine-driver, and the others, their comrades and companions-in-arms, used to live a full and intensely creative life, loving their native town, where they had erected schools and a power-station, a theatre and hospitals.

The enemy hordes, who had so treacherously attacked the Soviet country, had also reached their town. The glow of blazing fires lit up the streets. Nazi bombs fell upon the town, houses were reduced into ruins, people perished. The cunning and brutal enemy trampled underfoot all that was sacred and precious to them. And the Soviet patriots were moved by one feeling: to take vengeance on the enemy, to crush the nazi usurpers. The peaceful citizens and the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages went away into the forests and formed partisan detachments.

The film *Partisans* tells us about the simple everyday life and actions of ordinary Soviet people.

The city is quivering under the blows of artillery fire and bombing from the air. The Germans have approached the outskirts. The population are leaving their homes. In the local committee rooms gather the active members of the town and district. It was here too that they used to gather in the days of peaceful construction, but now each of them is troubled with entirely different thoughts and problems. Engineer Rotman has just blown up the electric power-station. That was a terrible moment It was hard to decide to destroy in one



Characters from the film "Partisans." Kochet and the partisans

Gavrila Russov (M. Zharov) talking to Colonel Mackenau (M. Astangov)

moment what had cost so much energy to build. But it had to be done. The power-station could not be left at the disposal of the enemy.

"Look, my friends," says Kochet to the assembly. "Look and remember. It is our town which is burning. The enemy have flung themselves on this little Soviet town, on all that we ourselves have created. But they will find here neither bread, water, nor light, nor will they find peace or rest."

They listen to Kochet's words with rigid faces. They hear the call of their country and join the partisans.

At the head of the detachment are Kochet and his militant comrades: engineer Rotman, Potapenko, a worker, Sasha Russov, a young railway employee, and his grandfather, an engine-driver Gavrila Russov, who had been awarded three crosses of St. George as an old Russian soldier, and Natasha, a telephone girl.

This is the nucleus of the partisan detachment which soon becomes the terror of the nazi usurpers.

The episode of swearing the partisan oath is splendidly presented. The words of the vow, pronounced over the remnants of a village burnt down by the Germans, over the corpses of Soviet people tortured by barbarians, sound passionate, stern and threatening.

In reply to the terror and executions spread by the invaders in towns and villages, the partisans derail German trains and blow up their munition stores. The invaders are powerless in their struggle against the partisans. Lately, when seizing another little town, the Germans hoist their flag over the city in front of their massed troops. But at the most solemn moment of Colonel Mackenau's speech the German corporal drops the banner and falls dead from a partisan bullet.

In a series of episodes of the everyday life of a partisan detachment we see the figures of national avengers rising before our eyes. The actors give a most skilful exposition of the varied and powerful characters of these people. Grandfather Russov's part is splendidly acted by Zharov, who shows an alert, clever old man, a man of experience who had fought the Germans twice before, in the war of 1914 and then in 1918, and is now fighting them again for the third time in 1942. The striking figure of a girl partisan has been created by Mary Ladynina. The part of Kochet, commander of the partisan detachment, is most brilliantly acted by Vanin.

According to what the Germans themselves say, Kochet's detachment "can neither be caught nor destroyed." The German command decides to send some provocateurs into the detachment. A German convoy is dragging along the road a "wounded and exhausted" "prisoner lieutenant" tied with ropes to their horses. The partisans, having

no suspicion, rescue him from the convoy and bring him to their headquarters.

The prisoner poses as a lieutenant, tankist Orlov. He agrees to Kochet's proposal to remain in their detachment.

In the beginning the command of the detachment trust him entirely. "Lieutenant Orlov," who is in fact a German spy, Hans Albrecht, sent by the German command, can speak Russian well and makes friends with the radio-operator Natasha.

"To learn to work a radio-transmitter, to become a real radio-operator and go away to the Arctic," this is his cherished dream, he tells Natasha. And Natasha, having no suspicion, begins to teach him to work the apparatus. Seizing his chance during the lessons the pseudo-Orlov transmits to colonel Mackenau the necessary information by using a secret code. As a result, the Germans attack Kochet's detachment, but the partisans heroically defend themselves and win the fight.

The episode of the fight between the partisans and the Germans is splendidly produced. The producer had carefully studied the tactics and peculiarities of the partisan struggle, and was able to demonstrate how the partisans, with only small forces at their disposal, are able to inflict great losses on the Germans.

Kochet sends old Russov to establish contact with another partisan detachment under the leadership of Gloushchenko. "Lieutenant Orlov" informs the Germans of this too. Old Russov and Gloushchenko fall into their hands. On the day fixed for the execution of Russov and Gloushchenko, sentenced to be hanged, Kochet and another partisan try to get into the town, but the Germans catch them, and they are brought before Colonel Mackenau for interrogation. As he is disguised in different clothes and wears a beard, none of the townspeople recognize Kochet. During the months of partisan struggle his face has acquired a new expression, one might even say new features. Then a brilliant idea comes to Mackenau. He wants to be definitely convinced that it is really Kochet who stands before him. And remembering that an old watchman was found in the building of the local committee, he orders Kochet to be shaved and dressed in German uniform. At the moment when Kochet, dressed in German uniform, is sitting at the table beside the colonel, he is recognized by the old watchman. The latter, thinking that Kochet has turned traitor, calls him by his name.

By his extraordinary courage, firmness and ready wit, Kochet manages to escape. He hurries to rejoin his detachment.

The episode of the peculiar psychological duel between Kochet and the German colonel is undoubtedly the finest moment of the film. The part of Kochet is brilliantly interpreted by Vanin. During Mackenau's interrogation Kochet presents himself as a simple peasant, very greedy for food and drink; all of which is played by Vanin in a most natural way.

After Kochet's return to the detachment he and Rotman have their suspicions aroused by coincidences, which begin to happen too frequently. The German command is evidently well aware of what is going on in the detachment. It is clear that there is a spy in their midst. Kochet thinks of a clever plan for exposing the spy. This plan will enable him to lead into a trap and annihilate the German command of the whole district.

In Orlov's presence he sends a message to a neighbouring detachment and makes an appointment for a meeting of the two detachments in the church of one of the suburban villages. At the same time he gives secret orders to the partisans to be ready for an encounter with the Germans.

The fight in the church ends with the complete route of the German detachment. The spy and provocateur Albrecht who tries to escape is caught and killed by Natasha in the church-tower.

The bells ring calling the partisans to further militant operations in order to free their native town.

The film *Partisans* has been deservingly recognized by the spectators as another outstanding success of Soviet cinematography.

The film-studios evacuated far into the rear have managed rapidly to resume normal production and have already produced such films as *Parkhomenko*, *A Fellow from Our City*, *Kotovsky*, and others. *Partisans* was produced by the Alma-Ata Film-Studio. It gives us very truthful episodes drawn from partisan warfare, introduced into the film as they actually happen today among the partisans of the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Lituania, the Crimea and all the regions temporarily captured by the nazi usurpers.

There is much humour, warmth, human kindness and courage in the film itself and in the interpretation of certain parts. The partisans laugh gayly at old Russov's jokes, and he, in turn, subsequently looks boldly into the eyes of death and dies like a hero. The partisans are deeply moved when listening to Natasha's song, but stern and merciless when they have to carry out their sacred mission, to take vengeance on the Germans for all their evil deeds.

In the film we see also a very truthful picture of the abominable, inhuman outlook of the German army, trampling with their hateful boots the streets of Warsaw and Paris, Prague and Amsterdam, Brussels and Oslo, scattering everywhere death and destruction.

The people of Russia, the Red Army, have repulsed the Germans, have destroyed the myth of their invincibility and are inflicting on them more and still more shattering blows.

ROMAN KATSMAN

NEWS AND VIEWS

GORKY MEMORIAL DAYS IN THE U.S.S.R.

March 28th, the seventy-fifth anniversary of Maxim Gorky's birth was celebrated as a festival of Soviet literature and art in the fullest sense of the term.

On that day, the most important Soviet newspapers devoted their leading articles to the great writer. *Pravda* wrote: "With burning words he fought for those ideals of the liberty, independence and honour of the people, of wisdom and culture, of honest creative labour, of the friendship of peoples, for which today the Red Army is fighting."

The newspapers of Moscow, Leningrad and other towns published special anniversary articles by prominent people in the world of literature and culture, devoted to Gorky. In his article *Our Gorky*, in *Pravda*, Academician Yemelyan Yaroslavsky analyzed the social conditions which formed the background for the growth and development of Gorky's talent, and told of his implacable fight against fascism. The writer C. Fedin in his article *Teacher and Fighter* quoted a number of interesting extracts from letters by Maxim Gorky, showing his amazing capacity for work, his exceptional modesty and simplicity. Samuel Marshak, the well-known writer, recalled his first meeting with Gorky about forty years ago. Marshak was fifteen then, and was just beginning to write verses. For a long time Gorky gazed at the sickly-looking boy standing before him, and said at last in his deep voice:

"It's all very well to write verses, but you must think of your health too. . ."

In addition to an article by the poet N. Tikhonov, published in this issue of the *International Literature*, *Izvestia* contained interesting reminiscences of Gorky by C. Trenyov, one of the oldest Russian writers, as well as long articles by M. Dobrynin and the poet P. Antokolsky. "A friend of Tolstoy, Chekhov, Korolenko and Kotsyubinsky," wrote P. Antokolsky, "Gorky linked our day with the wealth of culture of the nineteenth century."

Literature and Art, the organ of Soviet writers, actors, musicians and artists, published an article by Professor S. Durylin entitled *A Great Russian Patriot*. The author quotes interesting lines from Maxim Gorky's letter to Red Army men in 1928: "I have always wanted, and still want," wrote Gorky, "to see all the people heroes of labour and creative work, the builders of a new, free life. We must live in such a way that everyone of us, despite differences in individuality, should feel himself an equal with others, either individually or collectively."

The ancient Russian Volga town of Nizhny-Novgorod, so closely connected with Gorky's youth, has long borne the name of the great writer. Here, too, there were extensive public celebrations of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the birth of its great townsman. Large factories and plants, schools and clubs held meetings and lectures on the life and work of Maxim Gorky. The regional library organized a Maxim Gorky exhibition. Writers and poets of the town held a Gorky Session on March 28th.

An exhibition was opened in Tula on Gorky's life and work. Lectures were given for subscribers to the regional library on "Gorky's Life," and "Gorky, an Ardent Fighter Against Fascism."

The miners' clubs of Stalinogorsk, Bolokhovka, Shchekino and other districts of the Moscow Coal Basin celebrated the anniversary with literary and art gatherings in the evening. Miners' amateur dramatic groups performed scenes from *The Lower Depths*, *Vassa Zheleznova*, and *Children of the Sun*. Readings from Gorky's works were organized for schoolchildren and students of trade schools.

There was not a town in the whole of the Soviet Union which failed to celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of Gorky's birth. Throughout the country Gorky celebration meetings were held in the evening in factories and plants, in schools, clubs and hospitals. And on the stage, at concerts, at cinemas, in lectures and speeches, the name of the great Russian writer rang out with fresh force. In town, collective farm and factory libraries there was a noticeable increase in the demand for books by Gorky, who takes his place with Pushkin, Gogol, Tolstoy and Chekhov as a favourite writer. The whole country celebrated the seventy-fifth anniversary of Maxim Gorky, the writer of genius of the Russian people, the irreconcilable fighter for the universal ideas of freedom and right.

The State Literary Publishing House has marked the seventy-fifth anniversary of

Gorky's birth by issuing a book of reminiscences by C. Fedin entitled *Gorky Among Us*, which has been already printed in the magazine *Novy Mir* (New World). C. Fedin is at present completing the second part of this work including Gorky's life abroad from 1921 to 1928. The third part of the reminiscences will cover Gorky's work in the U.S.S.R. from 1930 up to the writer's death in 1936.

There are many large theatres in the Soviet Union named after Maxim Gorky, including the Moscow Art Theatre, the Grand Theatre of Drama in Leningrad, the Rostov Theatre of Drama and others.

The Moscow Art Theatre is particularly closely connected with the name of Gorky. It was this theatre that first staged his powerful play *The Lower Depths*, forty years ago. The theatre celebrated the seventy-fifth anniversary of his birth with two of his plays, *The Lower Depths* and *Barbarians*. There was an interesting exhibition in the foyer: "Gorky and the Moscow Art Theatre."

The Gorky Grand Theatre of Drama, which recently returned to Leningrad, arranged a literary matinée, with a reading of the Gorky play *Yakov Bogomolov*, recently discovered in the Gorky archives.

The Rostov Gorky Theatre was unable to celebrate the Gorky anniversary: its magnificent new building had been ruthlessly destroyed by the German-fascist barbarians during their occupation of Rostov.

The Chaikovsky Concert Hall in Moscow marked the seventy-fifth anniversary of Gorky's birth with a literary and art matinée arranged by the Union of Soviet Writers. Speeches and reminiscences were given by the writers A. Fadeyev, K. Chukovsky. V. Ivanov, C. Fedin, S. Shchipachov, A. Surkov. The programme included extracts from Gorky's works.

On March 28th, the All-Russian Theatrical Society organized a grand concert in the evening for Moscow art workers. The writer K. Chukovsky spoke, giving reminiscences of Gorky. Well-known actors and actresses A. K. Tarassova, V. I. Kachalov, M. M. Tarkhanov, all of them Stalin Prize-winners, took part in the entertainment which followed.

The Moscow Scientists' Club marked the Gorky anniversary with a report by Professor A. Yegolin on "Gorky, Writer of the Russian People." The writers L. Leonov, S. Marshak, C. Fedin and N. Nikitin told about their meetings with Gorky.

The Moscow cinemas marked the seventy-fifth anniversary of Maxim Gorky's birth with a "Week of Gorky Films." They included the trilogy *Childhood*, *In the World* and *My University Days*, the films *Kain and Artyom*, and *The Artamonov Affair*, based on the well-known works by Gorky, and the documentary film *Maxim Gorky*.

Up to the time of the Revolution, Maxim Gorky's works were published in Russia to the number of 1,083 thousand copies, in eight languages.

In the Soviet Union (1917—1942) his works have been published in 65 languages to a total number of 41, 469 thousand copies in twenty-five years. Maxim Gorky's books are published in the languages of peoples who before the Revolution had no written language of their own, including some of the Caucasian peoples such as the Adygheys, Ingushes, Kabardians, Lezghians and Chechens, and the Nanais and Evenkis of the Far North. The works by Gorky published in the largest editions are *Mother*—1,745,000, *Childhood*—1,968,000, *In the World*—1,467,000, and *My University Days*—1,379,000 copies.

S. B.

Editor-in-chief: HELEN STASSOVA