INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE

1944

THE STATE LITERARY PUBLISHING HOUSE
PRINTED IN THE SOVIET UNION

A QUARTER OF A CENTURY IN THE SERVICE OF THE SOVIET PEOPLE

For a quarter of a century now Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin has been at the head of the highest organ of state authority in the Soviet Union. Three dates stand out in these twenty-five years of his presidency.

On March 30th, 1919 Mikhail Kalinin was elected Chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, Vladimir Lenin having recommended him for this post. In his speech supporting the candidacy of Kalinin, Lenin spoke of the former's great practical experience and his familiarity with the life of the peasants.

Later, in December 1922, at the suggestion of Lenin and Stalin, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was formed, with the object of uniting all the Soviet peoples into a single state union so as to build up a powerful defence for the country and to ensure the progress of all the Soviet nationalities. At the first All-Union Congress of Soviets again Mikhail Kalinin was elected Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R.

Then again, in the memorable days of 1937, at the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. held on the basis of the Stalin Constitution, Mikhail Kalinin was not only returned as a deputy but was unanimously elected Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet

Since the time he was first elected, to this very day, Kalinin has given undivided strength and energy, all his knowledge and experience to the state duties entrusted to him. It would take pages to enumerate merely the manifold aspects of his activities covering numerous and divers fields in the economic and spiritual life of the country: solicitude for the utmost and daily strengthening of the Soviet state; for the constant growth of productive forces in town and countryside; improvement of the economic, organizational, cultural and educational work of Soviet bodies and institutions; the elaboration and sanctioning of important laws by the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.; confirmation by the Supreme Soviet of edicts of vital political and economic importance; questions of foreign policy, and so on and so forth.

Mikhail Kalinin—"The All-Russian Starosta" (Elder)—as the people termed him, could never imagine his work otherwise than in closest daily contact with the workmen, peasants and Red Army men. "My object—my main object—is to be in constant, direct touch with the uyezds and volosts [1], with the working people, to learn their needs, to keep my finger on the pulse of life itself," Kalinin always declared. He has done much travelling in the U.S.S.R., visiting the most outlying corners of the country. He has made public appearances in the plants and works of Leningrad, he was a frequent visitor in the Ukraine and North Caucasus, with the farmers in the fields and the workers in the factories. His simple speeches act stronger than resounding words, helping people to organize their work better.

When the Stakhanov movement was born in the Donbas coalfields in 1935 and swiftly spread in a tremendous wave to all other branches of industry, Kalinin paid particular attention to this movement from its very inception. He helped no little in supporting and furthering this initiative of the working people which held forth such great promise in advancing the cultural and material status of the whole population. He addressed conferences of Stakhanovites and championed this initiative of theirs in all his reports and speeches

[1] Provinces (formerly gubernias) used to be divided into uyezds, and uyezds into volosts.—*Ed.*

at conferences and meetings. He appealed to leaders in industry, engineers and technicians, to do everything possible to promote the Stakhanovite movement, to spread it boldly in all branches of national economy, to introduce these new methods of efficiency in all stages of production.

Being familiar with village life from his own personal experience, Kalinin was able to chat with the peasants during his trips on matters of the closest concern to them, hearing what they had to say, settling their complaints and arranging matters to their satisfaction.

During the days of Civil War Kalinin toured the most important fronts on a special propaganda-instruction train "The October Revolution", which had been built on the initiative of Lenin. In later years Marshal Voroshilov wrote, in connection with this: "Those in action in the Civil War remember how, in the hard years of struggle, Mikhail Ivanovich's arrival at the battle fronts would instil new vigour into the ranks of the Red fighters and faith in ultimate victory."

The numerous ranks of Soviet scientists, writers and art workers also regard Mikhail Kalinin as their good friend and well-wisher. Proof of his solicitous care for them is to be found in his speech at the pre-election meeting of Leningrad intellectuals in 1937. Marking the concrete distinction between the oppressed status of the intelligentsia in passed days and their ever growing progress and significance in the Soviet Union, Kalinin emphasized that: "In making a decision on any question our Soviet state always relies on the opinion of specialists." And addressing architects and artists in particular, he declared: "There can be no hesitation in saying that the beauty of our future life, its comfort and convenience, depends to a large extent on you." And he concluded his speech with a spirited appeal to all Soviet intellectuals to give full reign to their creative endeavours.

Thousands of the country's best people, whose merits are recognized by the government, in most cases receive their high awards directly from the hands of the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. himself. Each such gathering Kalinin turns into an informal chat, prompting his hearers to still worthier deeds. Greeting those who have been awarded—men and officers of the army and navy, Stakhanovites of industry and agriculture, men of science, technique and art, Mikhail Kalinin not only praises their achievements, but also suggests new tasks for them, outlining, as it were, a programme for their future activities.

Being of peasant stock, a workman by trade and one of the most cultured and educated men of our times, Mikhail Kalinin is able to make himself understood and appreciated in his speeches, reports and articles, whether he is addressing Leningrad workmen, Byelorussian peasants, Red Army men, physicians or men of art. All those who have heard Kalinin know to what a high degree he possesses the art of speaking earnestly, simply and wittily of things great and small: from problems of state construction and international policy to questions of the everyday work of the secretary of a rural Soviet or of a school-teacher. Kalinin's "answers" reveal the life experience of a man who organically senses the concerns and interests of the general population.

II

Mikhail Kalinin pays much attention and devotes a great deal of energy to questions of culture.

"A tremendous development of culture is taking place among the entire population," he repeatedly emphasizes. "We aim to turn the whole country into intellectuals. This is the ideal at which we aim." Cultural development "proceeds not only through the channel of the special training of personnel in higher and secondary schools, but also in the social life which culture introduces among the population. The Communist Party, trade unions, cultural and sports societies and so on and so forth—all these organizations create intellectuals from among workmen and peasants. The progress of technique in industry and agriculture also promotes general culture," says Kalinin.

As a leading statesman Mikhail Kalinin frequently has occasion to deal with questions of art and letters. In one of his speeches he proudly noted: "The Soviet Union has been in existence only twenty years—from the viewpoint of history this is a fleeting moment—but during these twenty years the workers and peasants of our country had to win

their own power of authority, firmly establish it, set the national economy working smoothly, occupy themselves in building a socialist state under the most difficult conditions—and in this period we have succeeded in considerably promoting science and art too."

Every time Kalinin touches on art—he places its national, its folk origin, as the cornerstone, as the highest criterion. "National art—the people's art—is the highest form of art, it is the most talented and shows the greatest genius." Kalinin scathingly condemns that vulgarized definition of this basic aesthetic principle: "Sometimes folk art is looked upon as primitive, and when the word folk or national is applied it is implied in inverted commas. This is the worst mistake possible," he notes in one of his articles.

In contradiction to this Kalinin demands a detailed investigation of this complex conception. This, above all else, is the age-old art of the people itself—its folklore, its popular tunes, its folk dances, etc. "Both songs and dances were created by the people in the course of decades and even centuries," we read in one of Kalinin's articles; "the people improved them infinitely and brought them to the pitch of perfection. There is no great person who can accomplish this in the short span of years allotted him—a work like this can be done only by the people itself."

And it is because of this that individual creative endeavour too draws its wealth from the treasures of folk art, organically absorbing folklore subjects. Without quibbling Kalinin declares: "the most gifted of poets, the most talented composers become geniuses in their creative work only when they have direct contact with folk art, when they turn to its sources for inspiration. Without this there can be no men of genius."

Kalinin sees another characteristic expression of the folk aspects of art in the desire to voice the people's yearnings. It is namely in this that Kalinin explains the beauty and force of Russian literature, created by the most progressive men of society. History shows that the most profound appreciator of everything that was best and most genuine in art was the people.

"The people are the creator and guardian of everything of value," we read elsewhere; "the people are like the gold-digger, or the diamond-digger, discovering, unearthing, preserving, carrying and polishing through the years everything that is only of the highest genius." And by the same law of life, "the art which has no value cannot live on, cannot be preserved by the people". One could quote many of Kalinin's discussions—so well known and familiar to Russian readers—concerning Russian writers, painters and musicians, in particular about the Belinsky school of critique, about Maxim Gorky, Anton Chekhov etc. Kalinin's appraisals speak of a deeply original conception of the role of art in the life of a builder-people and a warrior-people.

In his public addresses and articles Kalinin time and again makes reference to the greatest figures in the art and letters of the world and Russia: Shakespeare, Goethe, Pushkin, Ostrovsky, Nekrassov, Leo Tolstoy; the artists Michelangelo, Perov, Kramskoy and Repin; the composers Glinka, Dargomyzhsky, Balakirev, Rimsky-Korsakov and Mussorgsky; the actors Mochalov, Shchepkin and Sadovsky, etc., etc.

In speaking of Soviet literature, Kalinin dwells particularly on those works which inherit organically the finest traditions from classical works—Sholokhov's *And Quiet Flows the Don*, for example.

When touching on the significance of Russian classic art, Kalinin underlines its national, original features. "Russian fine literature," he says, "has done much for the development of human thought, in which it occupies a place of honour. Pushkin, Tolstoy and Gorky are giants of art, great writers of the world, and at the same time they are real Russian writers, reflecting their epoch and the traits of the Russian people." Kalinin regards as one of the specific features of the Soviet system the fact that it encourages the development of all national cultures in the U.S.S.R., helping to bring to light and promote national talent, national folk art.

"What is more," Kalinin adds, "the national art of one people of the Soviet Union is kin to that of any of the other nationalities, even though they speak different tongues. . . And all because this is folk art."

III

As a statesman, in pursuing the peaceful policy of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Kalinin, however, never lost sight of the menace of war on the part of aggressive states. "We do not look for conflicts with other states nor the seizure of foreign territory. It is only those who seek to enjoy the fruits of others' labour, who strive for aggrandizement. We stand in no need of this. All our goods are the fruits of our own labour," he would often say. "But if anyone starts interfering, if anyone tries to seize what we have built and are building... well, we can give them more than a rap on the knuckles!"

Long before the war broke out Mikhail Kalinin had already predicted the source of this war menace—the nazi gangsters' lair: "German arms, military fascism can bring much grief, and not to the Soviet Union alone. . ." "but none of the Western powers, England included" is guaranteed against this disaster.

With equal sagacity Kalinin gave a prognosis of the international nature of the imminent battles: "Under conditions of modern warfare this is not an operation between two armies in action. Modern war demands the straining of all the forces of the state's population. War will involve the whole population of the Soviet Union, from great to small. And that is why we must prepare for it... This must be the aim of all our public organizations, our literature, cinema, theatre, etc."

In peace-time too Kalinin repeatedly stressed two points: the necessity of bringing into works of art war subjects, and the important defence significance of art. Ever since the treacherous nazi attack on the Soviet Union, in his speeches and addresses Kalinin has often adduced precisely artistic images and monuments as being of especially graphic illustration.

In recalling, for instance, the powerful influence exerted by the Supreme Commander in Chief's appeal in November 1941 to the Red Army men and the people to smash the enemy at Moscow, Kalinin said: "It is beyond my powers to describe the influence these words of Stalin had on the whole population and the army; one thing I can say—our strength seemed to have doubled. I would like that those who have the gift of imagination, revive and vest these emotions of millions of Soviet people in a literary artistic form as one of the most remarkable events of today's war."

And in the days when Leningrad first found itself imperilled Kalinin spoke of the art monuments of this city: "Lovely Leningrad, with its streets straight as arrows and its austere architecture. . . It is symbolic that the sculptor has depicted Peter the Great on a rearing charger trampling a serpent. Today a serpent seeks to twine its clammy body around Leningrad, a venomous snake which is poisoning the whole world. Leningrad and its inhabitants will show the nazi Huns what defence of one's native city means. . . Leningrad will never fall into nazi hands!"

As a leading statesman and educator of millions of people Kalinin has contributed greatly to the political and moral preparation of the people for the ordeal of war against nazism.

Hence the great popularity Kalinin enjoys among all true fighters against Hitlerism, whether they be in the Soviet Union or abroad.

PATRIOTISM AND THE NATIONAL PRIDE OF THE PEOPLES OF THE U.S.S.R.

The great war against the nazi invaders roused a mighty wave of patriotism in the Soviet Union. It can be witnessed not only at the front, among the men and officers of the Red Army, and behind the enemy lines, among the men and women partisans, but also far into the Soviet hinterland—in towns and villages—among workmen and collective farmers, intellectuals, children and aged people.

It is precisely the upsurge of nation-wide patriotism, surpassing in might anything ever known in the histories of states and nations, and the self-sacrificing efforts and labour heroism of the people at factories and plants, in the mines and pits, on the railways and in agriculture which have made possible the Red Army's great successes in its fight against the German invaders.

The Germans nursed plans of subjugating all the nations of the world. And to effect their crazy plans they plunged the whole globe into a new world war in order to exterminate other nations. But nowhere do the Huns practice this creed of pillage and rapine with such beastial brutality, so outrageously and ruthlessly as in the temporarily occupied areas of the U.S.S.R. Hitler and his henchmen have set themselves the aim of annihilating the population on the boundless expanses of our multi-national homeland and to turn those that are left living into "Ost-arbeiters"—to reduce them to slaves deprived of all rights and deprived of their country. The whole world knows that Russians and Ukrainians who have been forcibly sent to slavery in Germany, are made to wear special badges: the first with a white edging and the word "Ost" in the centre and the second with a yellow edging.

In the temporarily occupied areas of the U.S.S.R. the Germans are massacring hundreds of thousands of Soviet people; nazism is destroying our towns and villages, burning down ancient monuments, methodically looting the cultural and historical treasures of the Soviet peoples; they want only desecrate the sacred memory of great men dear to all our people —Leo Tolstoy, Chaikovsky, Pushkin, Turgenev, Shevchenko; the nazis exterminate our intellectuals. These atrocities of nazism made the national feelings of our peoples keener than ever. Our country's triumphant struggle against hitlerite Germany still further strengthens the feeling of national pride in the Soviet people—that pride in all the best creations of our peoples of the past and present which comprise the grandeur and glory of our state and promote the progress of mankind.

In today's war against the nazi invaders the Russian nation has become the centre of all the peoples of the U.S.S.R. and a progressive, liberative force in the eyes of all nations oppressed by the German enslavers. This is one source of the Russians' national pride.

The explanation as to why this progressive role fell to the Russian nation is to be found in the specific features of Russia's historical development. The vital strength of the Russians became evident as early as the days of the Tatar-Mongolian yoke when they proved themselves capable of overcoming feudal dismemberment by throwing off the Tatar-Mongolian yoke and setting up their own state at an earlier date than many other nations of Western Europe. Throughout its history the Russian nation has defeated all foreign invaders—the Mongolian tribes, the Teutonic hound-knights, the Polish and Swedish intervention armies, Napoleon and the armies of the intervention in 1918—1920—all those who have attempted to encroach on the freedom and independence of our country. The peoples inhabiting the western, southern and eastern outskirts of our country were able to escape complete destruction at the hands of foreign invaders only when under Russian protection, as can be seen from the history of the Ukraine, of Georgia and some other regions of the U.S.S.R.

Of course, these nations did not have an easy life under the yoke of tsarist Russia. But they chose the lesser of two evils—it was preferable to take shelter under the wing of mighty Russia than be enslaved and harrowed by the Polish or German, by the Persian or Turkish conquerors. This choice made by the peoples of former tsarist Russia fully justified itself.

The vital strength of the Russian people can be seen in the fact that even

under the conditions of the old, tsarist regime a powerful national culture arose which wielded a progressive influence on the development of all the peoples of Russia and enriched and advanced the culture of mankind. Russian science and Russian art played a truly tremendous role in the world of learning and art in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Such giants of scientific thought as Lobachevsky, Mendelyeev, Pirogov, Sechenov, Mechnikov, and Pavlov rank with the world's greatest men of learning. In the field of social science too Russia has such renowned exponents as Chernyshevsky and Plekhanov, and the inspired works of Lenin and Stalin have made Russia the lodestar of revolutionary-scientific thought. Their powerful influence on human minds, on the development of both Russian literature and that of other countries, makes it hard to find foreign names of the past century and a half comparable to Leo Tolstoy, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Anton Chekhov and Maxim Gorky. World-wide homage is paid to Russian music in the persons of such composers as Glinka, Chaikovsky, Moussorgsky, Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakov, and, of more recent time—Rachmaninoff and Scriabin.

Such exponents as Shchepkin and Mochalov, Yermolova and Kommissarzhevskaya, Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko, Moskvin and Kachalov have made the Russian stage world-famous throughout a whole century.

In this world-wide significance of Russian culture we find another source of the Russians' national pride.

Russia's finest people—progressive men of learning, writers, revolutionaries—were one and all genuine patriots. They loved Russia, they loved Russian nature.

Russian authors raised their native language to unprecedented heights, revealing all its wealth. As far back as the first half of the eighteenth century the famous Russian scientist Lomonossov wrote: "Charles V, Emperor of Rome, was wont to say that it behooves one to speak with God in Spanish, with friends in French, with adversaries in German, with the fair sex in Italian. But if he had been skilled in Russian he would, of course, have added here that in this language it behooves one to speak with all. For in Russian he would have found the magnificence of Spanish, the vivacity of French, the hardness of German, the tenderness of Italian, and above all—the brevity of Greek and Latin, so rich and powerful in depiction. . ."

And there are no writers who have felt the beauty, truth, purity and sincerity of the people's soul expressed in Russian song as the Russian writers did. To quote the words of Gogol, "throughout all Russia izbas are hewn of pinewood beams", "towns arise as mushrooms" and "the Russian is swaddled, wedded, and buried" to the rhythm of these songs. Russian poets sang of the glory of their country's heroic past, the might and valour of its arms, the beauty of its ancient capital Moscow with its white-walled Kremlin, of St. Petersburg which, by the will of Peter the Great, rose luxuriant and proud "from the swamps and marshes".

And this patriotism of the progressive Russians is indivisible from the destinies of the people, it is closely bound up with respect for national honour and the dignity of other nations, with the desire that a leading role in the progress of all humanity should be played by Russia and Russian culture. "In the persons of the educated people of its society Russia carries in its soul the unconquerable foreknowledge of its great designation," wrote Vissarion Belinsky, one of Russia's most enlightened men.

This love for their country, inseparable from love for the people of that country, its ideals of education and freedom, inseparable from a respect towards the destinies of all mankind, is characteristic of Russia's progressive men and women and can therefore be regarded as being inherent in the Russian national character.

The Russian nation has always displayed the deepest respect for everything progressive and advanced in the fields of spiritual and material culture created by leading minds in Western Europe and America. It learned in the past and still learns from these examples and will avail itself of them to the extent and degree to which they will further the progress of our state and our people. But the Russian nation has created its own great values thereby enriching the cultural treasure-house of mankind and any uncritical or slavish worship of the "foreign" is utterly alien to it.

There is a remarkable tale in Turgenev's *Sportsman's Sketches—Khor and Kalinych*. In this story Turgenev shares

his impressions of foreign countries with the peasant Khor who soberly and critically listens to what Turgenev has to say. "That wouldn't work out here," he remarks about one thing. "Now that's fine, that's good order," he has to admit concerning something else.

From this conversation Turgenev carried away "the conviction that Peter the Great was essentially Russian, a Russian just because he introduced reforms. If he sees something good he likes it, if he sees something sensible he takes it."

Enriched by the experience of our Soviet life, the great traditions of Russian culture have found their continuation and further development in the work of Soviet scientists, inventors and men of art and literature. During its twenty-six years of existence Soviet art has created values which, by their ideologic-artistic significance, are a new stage in mankind's progress.

Recently a volume of collected verses was published containing some—a mere fraction—of the best works written by Russian poets during the years of Soviet power. This book gives verses by Vladimir Mayakovsky, Alexander Blok, Valeri Bryussov, Sergei Yesenin, Nicholas Tikhonov, Samuel Marshak, Boris Pasternak, Edward Bagritsky, Constantine Simonov, Sergei Mikhalkov and many others. And this book is a convincing testimony to the fact that in ideological content and in wealth and diversity of artistic forms Soviet poetry is a new and outstanding manifestation in world poetry.

Russian art has attained many great achievements during the past twenty-six years: *Potemkin, Chapayev, Lenin in October, Lenin in 1918* and other films that have won world-wide fame; the poetry of Mayakovsky, the novels *And Quiet Flows the Don, The Soil Upturned, Peter the Great, The Road to Calvary, How the Steel Was Tempered*; Shostakovich's symphonies; Merkurov's sculpture of J. Stalin; the splendid performances in the Bolshoy, Maly and Art Theatres.

The thunder of cannon fire has not muffled the voices of the Muses—on the contrary, the Muses are on the march, they have come forth against the foe and have joined the fighting ranks. True artists, whose thoughts and feelings are at one with the people's in these days of trial and tribulation, could not but reveal the finest aspects of their soul in their creative endeavours. That stern, inspired and glorious Muse of the people brought them light in the flames of War.

It was in beleaguered Leningrad that Dmitri Shostakovich wrote his Seventh Symphony. It was in the days of war that the finest works of Soviet music were composed: compositions by Myaskovsky, Prokofieff, Shaporin, Shebalin, the songs by Alexandrov, Zakharov and Solovyov-Sedoy. The hands of Soviet sculptors—Vera Mukhina and Sara Lebedeva—have given us portraits of the heroes of this war. Many other works of Soviet literature, painting, sculpture, stage and film productions have acquired wide fame, not only in our country, but also abroad.

It is this world-wide significance of Russian Soviet culture that is the greatest source of the national pride of the Russian people and of all the peoples of the U.S.S.R.

In a great confraternity of nations, Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Georgians, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Letts, Lithuanians, Estonians, Moldavians, Karelians and other peoples of the U.S.S.R. stand shoulder to shoulder in today's National War, in their common fight against the enemy. On whatever sector of the front they may be in action, together with the Russian people they are defending their own national freedom and the independence of the Soviet country.

With their elder brother the great Russian nation in the vanguard, all the peoples of the Soviet Union are fighting for the complete liberation of the Ukraine from the nazi invaders. The heart of every Ukrainian and of every Soviet person, whatever be his nationality, fills with joy and pride at the thought of how our valiant Red Army, crushing the enemy's stubborn resistance, liberated Kiev, the capital of the Ukraine, and is driving the nazis from the western areas of the Ukraine.

The Ukrainian people achieved and defended its freedom and independence in century-long struggles against foreign oppressors and enslavers. They share with the Russians and other Slav peoples their pride in the valourous and glorious figures of the past: Svyatoslav, Vladimir of Kiev, Daniel of Galicia. Its capital Kiev is known as the mother of Russian, Ukrain-

ian and Byelorussian cities. The Ukraine gave birth to Bogdan Khmelnitsky, famous throughout the centuries—Khmelnitsky, that wise national leader who cemented the friendship of the Ukrainian and Russian nations. The road which Khmelnitsky pointed out to the Ukrainian people historically justified itself, as it led to the friendship between the leading Ukrainian men of culture and those of progressive revolutionary-democratic Russia. In the October Revolution, with the support of the Russian nation, the Ukrainian people once and for all threw off the class and national oppression and set up a free Soviet Ukrainian Republic in fraternity with other peoples of the U.S.S.R. It is today obvious, that without this fraternal co-operation with other peoples of the U.S.S.R., in particular with the Russian nation, the Ukraine could never have been liberated from the German invaders and would have been enslaved by them for ever.

The size of the Ukrainian territory, capacities of its population, its industrial development, agricultural importance and the scope of its national culture, make it comparable to the largest states of Europe. Its classical literary heritage, permeated with the spirit of the folk and love of freedom, is the pride not only of the Ukrainian people, it is also a great contribution to the cultural treasures of all the peoples of the U.S.S.R.

The Soviet Ukraine has produced such superb men of letters as Pavlo Tychina, Maxim Rylsky, Alexander Korneichuk, Mikola Bazhan and Yuri Yanovsky. The talented works of the Ukrainian film director Alexander Dovzhenko form a real contribution to Soviet films. All Soviet people are familiar with the names of such Ukrainian stage actors as Gnatt Yura, Krushelnitsky, Buchma, of such opera singers as Patorzhinsky, Litvinenko-Volgemut and Zoe Haidai—whose creative art has a rich field to draw from in the wealth of Ukrainian songs, in the fine compositions by Lyssenko and the works of modern Ukrainian composers whose creative endeavours promote the cultural progress of all the Soviet people.

The past history of all the peoples of the U.S.S.R. has many a page of heroic struggle for freedom and independence. Thanks to the Soviet power many treasures of culture and civilization were brought to light and were made the common possession of mankind. We can mention here such hitherto little known creations of genius as those by the twelfth century Azerbaijan author Nizami, of the father of Uzbek literature, Navoi, the great Georgian poets Rust'hveli and Ilya Chavchavadze, the Armenian author Ovanes Tumanyan and other classics by peoples of the U.S.S.R.

The magnificent epic poems of the peoples of the U.S.S.R.—*Manas*, *Jangar*, *David of Sassun*, *Kalevala* etc., are the very source of national poetry and the language of the peoples. They have become the property of millions of people speaking in different tongues.

The names of such eminent men in the world of art and literature of the U.S.S.R. as Jamboul, Avetik Isaakyan, Saryan, Samed Vurgun, Yanka Kupala, Johannes Barbarus, Ludas Gira, Khalima Nassyrova, Khamid Alimjan and many others are known to millions of Soviet people.

In the war against hitlerite Germany there is not a single Soviet nation which has not given remarkable heroes of war and labour, who, by their glorious deeds, transcend the heroes of past history, of folk tales and legends.

In the great alliance of the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition our Soviet country is fighting the common enemy of all democratic countries and this battle alliance naturally promotes a mutual exchange of cultural values between the three Allies. We never decline to avail ourselves of worthy examples in cultural achievements abroad and our Soviet peoples have always shown keen and wide interest in the best works of literature and art in other countries.

On January 24th, 1942, *The Times* Literary Supplement wrote that fifty English authors were translated into Russian between 1917 and 1935, including Rudyard Kipling, John Galsworthy, D. H. Lawrence, G. K. Chesterton, Shakespeare, Byron, Coleridge and Stern, all of whom are read with pleasure in Russia, their works continually coming out in new editions. Between 1928 and 1932 the works of no less than seventy English authors were translated into Russian. This is three times more than the average annual number of translations published during

the preceding period. These translations included the works of James Joyce, Bernard Shaw, Hugh Walpole, Thomas Hardy, Mogham, Ben Jonson, Thomas Macauley, Swift, Stevenson and Swinburne.

The common struggle against the nazi invaders has awakened wide interest in Soviet culture among the general public and intellectuals abroad. Many of our Soviet films enjoy great success abroad, and are met with acclaim. The works of Soviet composers are repeatedly performed under the batons of celebrated conductors and by the finest executants in England and America; these compositions—especially those by Shostakovich and Prokofieff—find high, unanimous appraisal in the press. The Soviet stage too enjoys universal recognition among those political and cultural figures in the Allied countries who are able to obtain first hand knowledge of it. The Russian ballet remains as ever peerless throughout the world—a fact acknowledged both by friend and foe. Many works by Soviet authors are translated into all languages in the world—Mayakovsky, Alexei Tolstoy, Mikhail Sholokhov, Ilya Ehrenburg, Ilf and Petrov, Constantine Fedin, Leonid Leonov, Alexander Korneichuk, Nikolai Ostrovsky, Wanda Wasilewska and many others.

All this behooves us to carry high the banner of our Soviet culture, the culture of the Russian, Ukrainian, Georgian, Kazakh, Azerbaijan and other peoples of the U.S.S.R.

Patriotism and the feeling of national pride, in our conception, are wholly free of any vestiges of chauvinism and nationalism. Whatever its shade and hue, there is no trace of haughtiness or condescension towards other nations and their culture. Such feelings are deeply alien to us. We love our country and its people and are proud of everything it has created during the many centuries of its history. And we are also proud of the cultural achievements of all the peoples inhabiting the Soviet Union. We are proud too of those great figures of other lands, men who created masterpieces of human thought. It is not without reason that Shakespeare and Cervantes, Voltaire and Goethe, Balzac and Dickens enjoy no less popularity and esteem in our country than in their native lands. In building up our culture it is not for ourselves alone that we work, our aim is the happiness of all mankind too. In this liberative war against nazism we defend everything that is progressive, all that has been created by the civilized world. In the great war we are today waging the national interests of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. are in fullest accord with the tasks and interests of all mankind.

ALEXANDER FADEYEV

Victory salute in Moscow

CONSTANTINE STANYUKOVICH

MORNING

For three days the ocean had been raging.

It roared and hurled its spumy masses madly at the little clipper *Krasavets* as though anxious to swallow her up.

But the *Krasavets* lightly rode the waves under her top gallants and storm jibs. She seemed to be flying with the waves, slipping down between them, rising with them again, shaking off their foaming crests.

During those hard, tempest-filled days neither sun nor sky were visible between the torn, flying, black clouds.

Nothing but darkness all around. The sailors were strung to the highest pitch of nervous tension, and more than once death seemed close upon them.

At last the storm began to abate and finally died down.

During the early hours of that glorious morning, a complete calm set in.

The sea became so delightful and caressing, bright blue, with a smooth swell, so quiet and tender that it seemed as if the long, lazy waves, devoid of energy, were gently rocking the ship, caressing her sides as though the ocean had thought better of its wrath and taken pity on the sailors into whom it had shortly before put the fear of death.

Not a cloud in the lofty turquoise sky. Endless and mysterious, it breathed tenderness, and its incomprehensible, unfathomable infinity attracted a dreamy, questioning gaze.

The sun, just rising above the horizon, still glowing crimson, was so blindingly bright, its beams flashed so merrily and ardently, that it seemed to be saying to the sailors as they turned out: "Well, here I am. Aren't you glad?"

II

This glorious morning, however, brought no gladness to the crew of the *Krasavets*, which was now under steam belching smoke from her white funnel as she rocked along at eight knots.

On deck, during the usual morning swabbing and scouring, the news flew from mouth to mouth that Dianka had disappeared.

This was news that worried the sailors and gave rise to lively discussion and conjecture.

Ivanov, the middle-aged, thickset bos'n, disturbed and alarmed, approached the sailors.

"Brothers! Own up! Who drowned the captain's bitch?" he said coaxingly. "She can't have thrown herself overboard. Dianka was a cunning rogue... Own up and be done with it! You'll feel the rope's end, and it'll be done with... But if the man who killed Dianka doesn't come out with it, the captain will give us all hell... You know what store he set on that dog. It's a slur on the whole crew... He'll think that we've been plotting against him and contrived to do away with Dianka..."

The uneasy sailors agreed that it was a bad business, and that the bos'n was right about the crew being "for it". But he was putting it mildly when he said a flogging was all they would get. They would be flayed alive on account of Dianka.

But nobody owned up. Nobody had seen Dianka thrown overboard. Only the man at the wheel had seen her running out of the cabin just before dawn...

"Don't put the captain in a rage, whoever did it... Speak up!" the bos'n implored earnestly.

But neither the sailors, nor the stokers nor the stewards showed any inclination to admit killing the captain's dog.

Then the bos'n drew his thick black brows together, his high cheekbones seemed to stand out on his flattened face, his large round owl-like eyes glar-

ed, and suddenly turning red and shaking with rage, he let them have it.

"Listen to me, you shameless sons of bitches! . . Listen, you sweepings! . ."

And then the bos'n displayed a fluency and proficiency in swearing such as only an enraged bos'n is capable off. He threatened to hunt out the bastard on whose account the captain would be "displeased" with them all, and then. . .

"Then," shouted the bos'n, thinking of the very worst punishment, "then he'll get three hundred from the rope's end. . . He'll be flayed alive. . . He'll be put in the can! . . No decent sailor'll waste any sympathy on the lousy Judas, let him choke with Dianka!"

The bos'n paused and added:

"So the best thing you can do is to speak up at once!"

But all the bos'n's eloquent prophecies plus the advice of three old sea-dogs to the culprit to have some conscience and not get all his comrades into trouble failed to induce him to confess.

Then the angry bos'n decided to hold a swift, preliminary interrogation.

In the unanimous opinion of the crew, he "hit out with judgement and discrimination", and his strong hand was "light". In actual fact, they were not real blows the bos'n gave a few lazy sailors who had some reason to bear a grudge against Dianka; he then examined those whom he had less reason to suspect.

Not getting a confession, the bos'n went on to interrogate his pet aversion, the crafty lazybones Elisseyka Zyablikov.

This handsome young sailor, a Cantonist [1], was languidly wiping a brass bollard on the quarters deck and seemed to be paying no attention to the general depression as he carelessly hummed some rollicking song under his breath.

The carefree appearance of the idler strengthened the strong and apparently justified suspicions which Zyablikov aroused in the bos'n. The latter had no doubt about his guilt—he knew!

Had not Zyablikov threatened time and again in front of them all that he would strangle Dianka? Had not the bos'n several times seen how viciously he had hit the captain's dog whenever a favourable opportunity occurred?

Dianka, slow to forget an injury, had shown equal hatred for the sailor.

Zyablikov was not only considered the worst sailor on board the clipper, an idler and coward at sea, but a worthless, foul-tongued liar and braggart whom it were best to leave alone.

The sailors avoided him and, to some extent, feared him.

It was with unusual force that the bos'n's large, hairy, tarry hand with its knarled veins met the handsome and somewhat insolent face of Zyablikov.

The latter took the blow calmly enough, drawing back a step; with an impudent and malicious smile on his large mouth he asked:

"What's that for?"

"You know well enough, rascal!"

"You're hitting me for nothing. It wasn't me that fed Dianka to the sharks."

"Not you? What other bastard could it have been?"

"Not me, anyway. If you want to know the truth I'm glad enough that there was another sailor to do it. I'd have had Dianka in the water long ago. . . A bitch in every sense of the word! . . She was more low-down and deceitful than the lowest wench. . . She'd be making as if she was running after the bos'n on deck, and then snap slyly at your ankles."

"Dianka snapped at you because you're a lousy sailor. She knew you. You did for the beast. Look out for your hide. It's not the kind to cover a drum. Own up, Cantonist."

"Think yourself clever, don't you? No good threatening. I'd have drowned Dianka long ago if that had been what I was wanting."

"And that's what you were wanting. You promised to throttle the dog."

"You can say plenty of things when you're mad."

"You're lying! You drowned Dianka. Don't get the men into trouble. Own up. If you don't, all the same I'll report you. Everyone knows the kind of jailbird you are."

"You're a fine fair judge! Prove that I drowned Dianka. Prove it. Fairplay Bos'n!"

The bos'n flew into a towering rage. With raised fist he hurled himself at Zyablikov, his outraged feelings thirsting to smash that handsome, mocking face. But Zyablikov side-stepped.

[1] A soldier's son liable to serve in the army in serfdom times.

At that moment bos'n and sailor saw the first officer coming onto the bridge.

Zyablikov, deliberately raising his voice, said in a would-be aggrieved tone:

"Why are you hitting an innocent man, bos'n? You're going too far. The first officer'll give you hell!"

"You. . . you drowned Dianka! You, you vermin!" growled the bos'n with conviction.

Shaking his fist at the sailor and throwing him a last look full of menace and suspicion, he sprang down the forecastle companion.

Zyablikov resumed his polishing of the bollard but he was no longer humming, and often looked at sky and sea with uneasiness in his eyes.

His carefree look had suddenly vanished.

III

After three almost sleepless days and nights, and after the terrible mental tension of a cowardly man who had to hide from the crew both the danger to the clipper and—first and foremost—his own fear of what at times seemed certain death the first officer had overslept. He did not get up at the same time as the crew according to his usual custom and did not feel annoyed or blame himself.

Pleased that he had made a good showing in the storm, that the captain seemed to be pleased with him, that the danger was over and that the *Krasavets* had stood the terrible battering so well, the first officer was in a happy mood and seemed to sense with his whole being the beauty of that glorious morning to which he had previously been blind. Clad in white, with his low stature, his long, well-combed, reddish whiskers framing his broad sunburnt face, somewhat haggard after the storm, with its high cheekbones, small eyes and stout cheeks, the first officer stood at the railing of the bridge breathing in the freshness of the ocean. He glanced at sky and water and, evidently satisfied with himself and with nature, turned to the officer on watch.

"A wonderful morning, Viktor Andreyich!"

"Splendid, Pavel Nikitich!" cried the very young middy delightedly.

"Just look at the sea. . . And it was quite a blow. . . I don't mind telling you!"

The first officer referred in a somewhat scornful tone to that same storm which had forced him to seek his cabin to sob and pray, to try and pull himself together to hide his cowering terror from the men. Smiling with self-satisfaction, he added:

"Your heart was in your boots, Viktor Andreyich, now wasn't it?"

"I was terrified. . . Shamefully terrified, Pavel Nikitich!" replied the middy, and feeling deeply guilty at having been such a coward, he blushed in confusion.

"Never mind. . . You'll get used to it, Viktor Andreyich," said the first officer patronizingly. "When I went through my first storm as a middy, I was saying my prayers all the time. Well, I must see after the swabbing. . . I overslept this morning," added Pavel Nikitich.

And as though he felt it beneath his dignity to show any unusually cheerful or happy spirit before the sailors, he left the bridge with the serious attentive look of an old officer and went on his morning tour of inspection of the clipper.

When Pavel Nikitich, accompanied by the bos'n, descended to the deck, the latter decided that this was the time to report the misfortune—not in the presence of the sailors, but without witnesses, when the first officer, whom Ivanych thought a good psychologist, could be more easily dealt with.

IV

"Permit me to report, Your Honour!" the bos'n began gloomily.

"I permit it. . . report, Ivanov," replied the first officer with jocular good nature.

"The crew are all in a maze at the misfortune that's come on us, Your Honour," the bos'n reported as they walked, his mien still more gloomy and depressed.

"What's this? What misfortune, you, animal?" the first officer asked in alarm, suddenly stopping and turning to the bos'n.

And his small eyes, which had just been so gay, now flashed angrily at

the bos'n who had so suddenly spoilt Pavel Nikitich's excellent mood.

"Dianka's lost, Your Honour!" said the bos'n as gloomily as though telling of some unprecedented tragedy.

"The captain's dog? Dianka? Where has she gone?" said the first officer in alarm, apparently not yet fully comprehending this unexpected and extremely unpleasant piece of news.

He knew how the commander of the *Krasavets*, Captain Bezdolin, loved the dog, and realized what he would feel at the loss of his only faithful friend, as the gloomy, silent captain called Dianka.

"I've searched the whole ship with the cabin boy, Martyshka, Your Honour. And she's nowhere to be found. Martyshka's half crazy with fear. . . It's terrible!"

"But where can Dianka be?" Pavel Nikitich was at a complete loss.

Not without a certain scorn for the first officer's senseless question, the bos'n replied:

"We must take it that she went overboard, Your Honour! . ."

"Of course, overboard, you ass! . . That means, the sailors? Outrageous! . . What were you about, bos'n, to let this happen? Disgracing the first officer like that! Do you understand what the sailors have done?" said Pavel Nikitich, paling slightly and distinctly articulating every word.

"Empty fellow!" thought the bos'n. "Just a windbag but no real understanding. Thinks the world of himself and understands nothing else but himself!"

The bos'n was upset by this wholesale condemnation of the crew.

"The crew's not to blame, Your Honour!" he said hotly.

"A lie! . . You're in it with them!"

"Permit me to speak, Your Honour!"

"Well?"

"I won't deceive you, Your Honour. The crew didn't think much of the captain's dog because of her sly bad ways. She might have been just an animal, but she seemed to think she was the boss and she used to bite. I must tell Your Honour that the dog was hated. . . But as sure as God hears me. . . nobody would ever have thought of plotting against Dianka and drowning her. . . After all, a dumb animal, it would be like murder. Only the worst sailor would think of drowning—an animal. . . Protect the crew, Your Honour. . . Say a good word! Tell the captain that the crew's not to blame."

The bos'n's ardent protestations appeared to convince the first officer that the sailors would not have dared such an insolent breach of discipline.

Slightly calmer, thinking that the morose captain would hardly dismiss his first officer from the clipper on account of the sailors being out of hand and mutinous, Pavel Nikitich looked at the bos'n with less anger as he asked:

"Who is the rascal?"

The bos'n had only just assured Zyablikov in the heat of anger that he would denounce him and he was convinced that if he mentioned the man, he and the crew would be saved.

After a moment's inner conflict, however, he replied hastily and decidedly:

"I have no idea, Your Honour!"

The bos'n felt calmer and clearer in his mind. It was as though he had found the solution to the conflict with the truth that was going on within him.

"You should have! . . Have you talked with them, urged the culprit to confess?"

"Yes, I talked to them, Your Honour."

"And nobody spoke up?"

"Nobody."

"Whom do you suspect?"

"I might be mistaken, Your Honour."

"But all the same? . ."

"I won't take the sin on me, Your Honour. . ."

"What sin is there here! . . Zyablikov, I suppose?"

"I tested him. It doesn't seem to be him, Your Honour."

The first officer thought for a moment. Finally, staring fixedly and angrily at the bos'n, he ordered:

"By six bells, when the captain wakes, I want to know the scoundrel's name. Understand?"

"I understand!" replied the bos'n, deadly calm.

"Find the swine. If he doesn't own up, then tell me whom you suspect, so that I can report to the captain. . . Otherwise. . ."

And without finishing his sentence, the first officer walked away.

V

"Handed out his orders!?" whispered the bos'n with an expression of scornful anger.

And adding several especially contemptuous curses in the feminine gender, he slipped down from the orlop to the main deck.

He felt it his duty to summon his assistants and several of the senior seamen and hear their opinion on what he had decided. Within a few moments all had gathered for a secret meeting in the bos'n's quarters.

"Well, brothers!" said the bos'n with agitation and some heat. "The first officer's all worked up. Like an angry rabbit. He'd sell the whole crew to keep out of trouble himself. At six bells he's to be told who's suspected, so that he can report to the captain. . . Then let him find his own man, but I, brothers, don't intend to split on Zyablikov! Even if it is he, the bastard, who drowned Dianka, I won't do it. Never mind what happens to me and the whole bunch, even if they take the skin off me, and dip me for it. What do you say, brothers?"

The old cross-eyed sailor Bychkov was the first to speak.

"You're right, Ivanych!" he said. "To hell with the first officer if he's such a louse as to expect that of us! . . They can't flog us to death for the bitch. . . Maybe we'll get a dose. . . Well, we'll take it! The skin'll grow again."

Bychkov spoke calmly and confidently, as though encouraging himself and the others.

All agreed. There was a babel of voices.

"No way out. . ."

"We're not going to tell tales. . ."

"We've got some decency!"

"Pretty sickening to suffer for a louse like Zyablikov, but there's nothing to be done."

Only two assistants were silent. But their faces showed that they were dissatisfied with the bos'n's decision.

The ethics of old-time sailors, however, would not let them bear tales to the officers, and neither of them had the courage to say that it was not worth while suffering for Zyablikov, and he should be denounced.

At last a red-headed, freckled assistant suggested that they start by twisting Zyablikov's tail for him, threaten to take him ashore and half kill him.

"Then he'll come out with it," added the red head.

The bos'n frowned.

"Who do you think you're stringing along?" he asked the red head. "Where were you brought up?"

The red-haired screwed up his eyes and replied, as though not understanding the question:

"Honest to God I mean it, Ivanych."

"Then stop playing the fool. . . If we take him and beat him up, then it's plain whom we suspect. Try to think of a better way of splitting on him. And honest to God's too!"

"I just didn't think of it that way, Ivanych. I didn't think that's all!"

"Just dumb, are you?" said the bos'n mockingly. "We'll give Zyablikov a lesson ashore, all right, but for the present we'll take what's coming to us from the old man! And he'll think of something!" the bos'n added gloomily.

All were silent and depressed. Nobody had the slightest doubt that the captain would drive them to desperation over Dianka.

Although the captain very seldom gave them the rope's end and never struck them they had an almost superstitious fear of the rare, but all the more severe punishments.

He had literally hypnotized the sailors with his mysterious silence and stern solitary ways. Always on deck during storms or bad weather of any kind, a real devil, as the sailors said, a complete stranger to fear, at other times he rarely came out of his cabin and never from year's end to year's end had he a friendly word for officers or ratings. The only creature for whom he seemed to feel any affection was Dianka. Martyshka, as everybody on the clipper called the cabin boy, had never received a blow from him. But Martyshka feared him incomparably more than his former hard-hitting captain.

In the forecastle Martyshka would relate in tones hushed with fear:

"And he never crosses himself. And he's not afraid of anything. And his eyes are terrible, they seem to burn right through you. And he's always

reading books. And he's never invited the officers to dinner, as other captains do. And the wardroom never invites him. It's as though he'd sold his soul to the devil!" added Martyshka mysteriously.

"Well, brothers, back to work," said the bos'n, closing the meeting.

"And I'll have a try with Elisseyka, Ivanych," said the cross-eyed sailor unexpectedly.

"How?"

"Talk to him friendly like, Ivanych."

"You're a simpleton, Bychkov! . . You can't get through his hide. . . We all know him!"

"You don't need to tell me, Ivanych. I've known fellows like him, though. On the *Orel* there was one, just the same. You could curse him and beat him, and no good—then suddenly, with a bit of friendly talk—he was right over on the other tack!"

"Well, try it if you like, Bychkov. . . But it'll be no good."

They all went up on deck.

The bos'n made his rounds to see how the swabbing was progressing.

"Get a move on, you devils! Stop dallying as though you were glued down!" he shouted.

He saw the very depressed expression on the faces of the young sailors.

"Don't get downhearted too soon. . . Keep your chins up, lads! . . Get that a bit cleaner there. . . Don't be afraid of a bit of elbow grease. . ." he added.

And there was a kindly, almost caressing note in the bos'n's rough voice.

Meanwhile Bychkov was "having a try" to convince Zyablikov with "kindly talk".

"And the crew doesn't believe me? . . And you, Bychkov, though you're talking to me decently—thanks for that much—you're wasting your time. I didn't drown Dianka. Do you know who drowned her?"

"Who, then?"

"As I see it, the captain himself drowned her."

"What do you mean, Zyablikov?"

"Use your brains and you'll see! If he hadn't let the cross-grained bitch have it all her own way, he'd still have her. And there wouldn't be any disturbance. . . So it's the captain who's to blame for it all, for spoiling his dog. . . So it works out that he drowned her himself. . . He should have looked after the brute and not let her bite people. . . And shall I explain something else, Bychkov?"

"What?"

"We've got a queer captain. . . Terrible! . . But maybe he's not so terrible after all. He'll realize that he's only got himself to blame. You've got to understand a man. . . You don't understand and think there'll be a terrible reckoning, but I understand and I'm not afraid about Dianka, though I remember how he gave me a dressing down," said Zyablikov boastfully.

Bychkov told the bos'n of his lack of success and of Zyablikov's words, adding:

"But it's right what Elisseyka thought."

"Yes, the rogue's got a head on him. . . The captain shouldn't keep such a brute!" said the bos'n angrily. "But Elisseyka is lying. . . It was he who drowned Dianka!" he added.

"God knows, Ivanych. Was it he? And he boasts that he's not afraid of the captain about Dianka. He's not so terrible, the captain, he says."

"And did you believe that yarn? You're a fool, Bychkov, just a fool!"

Six bells rang.

"Got to go to that dishrag!"

And the bos'n went up onto the bridge.

"Have you found him?" asked the first officer.

"Couldn't find out nohow, Your Honour!"

"Then tell me whom you suspect?"

"There's nobody I can think of, Your Honour."

"So you're shielding Zyablikov? Fine bos'n you are! I'll show you a thing or two!" said the first officer furiously. And rushing at the bos'n he pushed his small white fist under the man's broad darkened nose.

The bos'n's fixed gaze never left the first officer. The latter struck the bos'n in the face, and with a sort of relief shouted:

"Get out!"

And turning to the officer of the watch, he said:

"Of course, it's that scoundrel Zyablikov! I shall report as such to the captain."

At that moment Martyshka dashed out of the captain's cabin and ran to the bos'n.

"He's getting up!" said the cabin boy.

"Has he asked after Dianka?"

"No... But he will, any minute. And then it'll be hot!"

And Martyshka ran full tilt to the galley to tell the cook to make coffee.

The news that the captain had got up spread over the deck.

The depressed, apprehensive men were quiet. A dead silence reigned.

Nobody looked at the school of white albatrosses cutting through the clear air.

VI

Dianka, whose disappearance had put a hundred and thirty men into a panic, really did thoroughly deserve the hatred of the *Krasavets'* crew.

She was an unusually sly, clever mongrel, small, smooth-haired, dark chestnut in colour with a perkily curled tail and pointed ears; and she seemed to have successfully combined in herself all the unpleasant features possible in a cunning dog which by chance finds itself in a privileged position.

In the captain's presence Dianka seemed to be the best-behaved of dogs, tried in every way to show her devotion to the captain, hanging on his glance, licking his hand, and showing especial affection when she hoped for a titbit from his plate. Of course, Dianka was obedient and intelligent, anticipated the captain's wishes, never dared to show any dissatisfaction in his presence and tried with all kinds of tricks and games to attract his attention and bring a smile to his face...

With the officers Dianka was friendly and even affectionate when she came up onto the bridge to sun herself without the captain, and knew that the officer of the watch was not too well disposed towards her. But it only needed the captain to show himself for Dianka to assume a most independent and even challenging air. And then she would boldly get under the officer's feet and even growl if he drove her away.

With the sailors Dianka was arrogant and demanded her full share of respect from them, particularly when in the neighbourhood of the captain or the officers. But if she chanced to find herself without protection, she would assume an offended and warning air and make her way to the captain's cabin or up onto the bridge if she noticed any serious intention on the part of the sailors to give her a sly kick or blow.

She simply detested the sailors.

She took every chance to show her hostile feelings and even contempt for them and tried to bite the younger men, understanding that they would be afraid to warm the hide of the captain's dog, attacking them very slyly and usually in the captain's absence.

Looking as though butter wouldn't melt in her mouth, she would come up to a sailor, tail wagging, as though she were penitent and wanted to make friends. When the man began trustfully to pat her, she would snap at him and make for the bridge. From this safe height, close to the officer on watch, she would look down calmly at the deceived sailor, as though mocking him and seemed to be thinking:

"That one's sillier than any puppy."

But her ingenuity went further.

She undertook a troublesome duty, one not without its danger, which suited her down to the ground and gave full vent to her feelings of hostility to the sailors.

Whenever the bos'n's shout: "All hands on deck!" was heard and the sailors hastily ran up, Dianka would fly down frantically and bite the ankles of the last men climbing the companion, carefully reserving her hardest bites for those whom she most disliked.

However sly Dianka might be, attacking the sailors swiftly from ambush, she sometimes received some hasty blows. These only angered her, and increased her cunning and her bloodthirsty lust for the hunt.

The most frequent and hardest blows came from Zyablikov if he caught Dianka on deck for he usually had bitten ankles. Their mutual hatred only increased with time and they began to fear each other. The crew could not be sure whether the commander knew of his dog's cunning hunt after the sailors. Who would tell him of all these sly nips? True, the bos'n twice reported Dianka's bad ways to the first officer and had passed on the complaints of the men. But Pavel Nikitich only laughed.

"Nonsense!" he said. "Don't come to me with such rubbish."

Pavel Nikitich and the majority of the officers were delighted with the

ingenuity of the clever dog, which drove up the idlers with nips in the ankle. Only the doctor, Ivan Afanassyevich, who was not on particularly friendly terms with the wardroom, the steersman, who disliked naval men, and one midshipman were indignant.

But nobody could make up his mind to draw the commander's attention to Dianka's behaviour. The first officer refused to report to the captain on such "rubbish" as a dog nipping the sailors in play—and the others did not want to interfere in what was none of their business.

For that matter, the captain never entered into conversation with anybody He confined his speech to what was necessary to run the ship and made that as brief as possible.

The captain inspired a somewhat unpleasant feeling of diffidence and a kind of involuntary fear in the officers by his imposingly authoritative personality, his fearlessness and his hard, cold-blooded courage. His solitary ways, his avoidance of other people, and his stern silence intrigued and at the same time offended the officers. All disliked the gloomy captain, as they often called him.

Inspite of having been in command of the clipper for a whole year, he was still an enigma. Naturally, he was all the more often discussed and picked to pieces in the wardroom, especially for keeping so much to himself, and, contrary to naval traditions, not inviting his officers to dinner in turn and once and for all declining to take Sunday dinner in the wardroom. Ashore he was just as much alone. With the first officer, his immediate assistant, he was still more silent and secretive and gave him very little leeway. This happened as it were tacitly, without any particular discussion or explanation on either side. Apparently the captain had not the highest opinion of Pavel Nikitich, but he did not find fault with him. While Pavel Nikitich continually made greater efforts his fear of the captain constantly increased. The captain praised nobody and delivered no sharp rebukes. As though trusting nobody, he never left the bridge during a storm or when sailing in dangerous waters, standing there for hours on end, taking counsel with nobody, only issuing his orders.

A most interesting and intriguing subject of discussion in the wardroom was why Bezdolin had consented to take command of the *Krasavets* in place of her captain who had fallen sick. Bezdolin had but shortly before returned from a three year voyage in foreign waters, had spent six months with his family and—again foreign waters for three years. How could the sailors not be struck with amazement, when the captain's wife was, of course, a charming woman of thirty and their two children were, one need hardly say, wholly enchanting?

And after such a long parting, to remain only six months with the charming wife and the enchanting children?

Naturally, conjectures were rife about some terrible family scandal. And as might be expected there appeared a scandal-monger not without inventive powers. Midshipman Nelmin, who, like all scandal-mongers, knew "everything—everything" concerning those about him, and consequently two months after leaving Kronstadt was able to tell the wardroom the name of the charming wife's lover, and...

"You understand!" cried the middy enthusiastically.

On the basis of a letter from a comrade, received from Gravesend, a letter communicating vague rumours, the middy told in detail the tattle about how Bezdolin, wildly in love with his wife, after longing for her for three years, suddenly discovered that the charming one had been unfaithful to him, her young husband, with... Admiral Trilistny... The charming one could be faithful for one year only, and then...

"You understand?" cried the middy again, as though to make sure if his audience realized that he was lying. "You understand Bezdolin's horror at such baseness on the part of his Munya? You realize, gentlemen, how late he realized that a married man with a charming wife takes a risk when he goes on a three year voyage? And for whom had she been unfaithful? You know what a scurvy old fellow the admiral is? Well, Bezdolin told Munya sternly that she was—well, after the style of the Amsterdam ladies... He loved her passionately all the same, but it was a case of 'fare-

well for ever. Oh, Munya, may you enjoy life with your old goat!' He put on his uniform and away to the Ministry... And that's how he was appointed to the command of the *Krasavets.*"

"And you're lying like a marine!.. Why, his wife came down to see him off the day we sailed... And every evening the captain left the clipper in Petersburg... And Admiral Trilistny is a kind of uncle of Maria Nikolayevna's!.. Try to think out a better one!" said Nelmin's comrade suddenly.

For a moment the middy was taken back, and did not know where to look. But never despairing, he suddenly resorted:

"Well, and what then?.. Well, she came... maybe for appearance's sake... Or perhaps to beg forgiveness..."

"And Trilistny?"

"Well, what about him? Maybe it was some other admiral... What are you getting at me for, Ivan Ivanovich? Do you think I'd make it up?.. I'm telling you what Zhirkov said. He wrote me... Well, then he made it up... Very likely he made it up... I'm very glad if it's a slander on Maria Nikolayevna... A delightful woman. But all the same, I wouldn't have left her for three years!" added Nelmin magnanimously and cheerfully.

Nevertheless many believed that there was something in it, that it looked like some family scandal.

On the other hand, however, there were some officers who insisted that the captain's family happiness was undimmed. They loved each other, and Maria Nikolayevna was a noble woman... Not a word could be breathed against her... But the minister had issued the order: "Either sail... or send in your papers!" and so there had been no choice.

The more ambitious ones added that the captain was violently ambitious, and avoided everybody out of pride, because he considered himself above everybody else...

Thus the question of a family scandal remained an open one.

On this lovely morning, the wardroom was impatiently waiting the gloomy captain to sentence the crew on account of Dianka and the failure to surrender the culprit.

Who could it be but Zyablikov? Didn't they know that jailbird?

VII

It was almost eight bells, nearly time for hoisting the flag. Swabbing was finished, and the sailors gathered on deck in clean uniforms.

So far nothing had been settled, and the crew was thoroughly agitated and alarmed.

The captain had not yet come up, he had not sent for the first officer and had not even asked the cabin boy: "Where's Dianka?"

The young cabin boy was astounded at this marvel, and the captain's silence seemed terrible to him. Then handing him coffee, Martyn looked into the captain's face and it seemed to him gloomier and sterner than usual.

Trying to hide his fear and agitation, the first officer walked nervously up and down the bridge, every now and then looking at the port-hole of the captain's cabin. He was promising himself to punish the bos'n properly. "The animal! Couldn't get a confession out of Zyablikov and would not even accuse him... The rascals! Need a stricter hand!" he thought of the sailors, disappointed that he could not calm the captain with a report on a "villain" who had confessed... At least the first officer would have shown up well before the gloomy captain.

And why shouldn't that jailbird confess? What did he gain by keeping his mouth shut?

"Send Zyablikov to me in the cabin at once!" ordered Pavel Nikitich, seized by some sudden thought, and swiftly leaving the bridge, went into the cabin.

A moment later Zayblikov entered the first officer's cabin.

"Listen, Zyablikov... Of course it was you who drowned Dianka... If you don't admit it, all the same I shall have you flayed alive today, and as soon as you recover you'll be flogged again till you confess. And in addition, the sailors will half kill you as soon as they get you ashore even though the bos'n is protecting you... He won't say that he suspects you... But I'm convinced of it. You hear me—con-vin-ced!"

The first officer spoke quietly, almost caressingly and with a certain agitation in his voice.

"I didn't drown Dianka, Your Honour!" replied Zyablikov, glancing at Pavel Nikitich.

There was something penetrating and familiar in his clever, impudent eyes, making it clear that he, the reprobate, was needed by the first officer and was ready to come to terms.

"Don't lie, Zyablikov. Better own up. I'll intercede with the captain not to give you more than a hundred strokes. You'll come off better that way!" Pavel Nikitich urged him still more gently. "An open confession will prove to me that you can reform. And to encourage you, I'll reward you myself. I'll give you two dollars to go ashore with!" added the first officer.

And somewhat confused, suddenly realizing that he was doing something very mean, Pavel Nikitich shifted his eyes before the sailor's stubborn, impudent gaze.

Zyablikov swiftly decided that it would be better to confess.

A barely perceptible ironical laugh could have been seen in his eyes as he replied:

"What is the use of keeping silence before you, Your Honour? You can see right through a man, Your Honour. I drowned Dianka."

"Why couldn't you own up before? You have some conscience, anyway. Dismiss!" said the first officer, glad to shake the load off his mind, forget his baseness and feel satisfied with himself again.

Within a moment the news had flown round the clipper that Zyablikov had confessed.

The sailors were relieved. Their fear disappeared. Men who had intended to thrash Zyablikov within an inch of his life now pitied him and praised him for having done the right thing.

Bychkov came up to the outcast and said gently:

"Good lad, Elisseyka! Drowned Dianka and ready to pay the price. Didn't drop us in the soup."

"I didn't drown the dirty bitch!"

Bychkov's eyes nearly jumped out of his head.

"Then why did you confess?"

"Do you think it was for the sake of you fools?" said Zyablikov, annoyed and with impudent cynical frankness.

And after a pause he continued:

"If I told the truth and said that I didn't drown the dog, the first officer said he'd have the skin off me, but if I lied and said I did it, he'd see I'm flogged less... And you, you bastards, leave me alone about Dianka, for you'd have beaten me up, too."

"We'd have given you a lesson... that's true, Elisseyka. But don't you get mad, now. The lads were all feeling wild..."

"Yes, that scoundrel Elisseyka's to blame for everything!? They'd not have minded beating me up for nothing. And maybe the real one who killed Dianka'll give himself away sometime when he's drunk, and I'll be going about with my ribs stove in. Your sailors are just fools, that's all! And then the first officer'll understand how he sees right through a man... The skunk!" added Zyablikov angrily.

"Just a dishrag," Bychkov agreed.

"Say I am the worst sailor... a scoundrel, I'm not one to do that sort of a trick. And he... he's a fine, noble fellow? I've seen enough... seen through it. I'll take my hundred strokes that I've done nothing for, and when we get to Frisco I'm off... And you ragamuffins can live stupidly like swine, but as for me, I'm having no more. I'll find my way. I'll be my own master. Nobody'll dare meddle with me then. Can you understand that, Bychkov? No, you can't understand anything like that, you ignorant sailor!..."

And in actual fact, Bychkov could make neither head nor tail of it and only blinked.

At last he said good-humouredly:

"You're good at boasting, Elisseyka. You were never meant for a sailor at all..."

VIII

The captain, a rather short dark-haired man of forty, with a handsome, stern and energetic face framed in greying whiskers, prematurely grey hair, tough and strong, gloomy and thoughtful, was walking backwards and forwards in the cabin when the first officer entered.

"Good morning, Alexei Alexeyich," said the first officer cautiously and seriously.

The captain halted.

"Good morning, Pavel Nikitich," said Bezdolin in dry, official tones, stretching out his long, thin arm, with an engagement ring on his finger.

His thick brows were drawn together, and deep lines showed on his forehead. His black eyes, serious and piercing, gazed questioningly at the first officer. This was a look that always made Pavel Nikitich confused and uneasy, and this morning more so than usual.

Involuntarily reddening, he said hastily:

"I have the most unpleasant duty of reporting to you, Alexei Alexeyevich, of an unexpected happening. . . Your Dianka's disappeared."

The captain was silent. The first officer continued still more hastily:

"The crew is not to blame for this insolent, undisciplined act. The crew knew nothing about it and had no idea of the identity of the culprit, who did not confess for a long time. . . The bos'n refused to indicate any suspicious person, and I shall discipline him for that. But luckily I succeeded in inducing the culprit to admit his deed. As I never doubted, it was Zyablikov."

The captain said not a word. He looked still sterner and it would seem more imperturbable. Only his eyes showed a kind of revulsion.

Pavel Nikitich, completely at a loss, awkward, but trying not to display fear, continued not without a certain casualness:

"I shall give order to punish Zyablikov, Alexei Alexeyich. I consider that such an action calls for stern measures. . ."

A minute passed. At last the captain said sternly:

"Don't order any punishment."

"Very good," said the first officer and went out completely at a loss. The captain frowned fastidiously.

"Martyn!"

The agitated cabin boy appeared.

"What are you afraid of?" suddenly asked the captain, gloomily.

"I don't know, Your Honour!"

"But you're afraid?"

"Yes, Your Honour!"

"Am I a wild beast, or what?" he cried. And there was a note of sadness in that cry. Martyn preserved a subdued silence.

"Call Zyablikov!"

"Right you are!"

Zyablikov appeared and stood to attention in the doorway. There was no sign of fear on his face.

The captain sighed in relief.

"Why did you perjure yourself?"

Zyablikov told why. Explained that the crew was in a panic about Dianka. Reported that Dianka had bitten the sailors and him in particular.

The captain listened, frowned again, and once more there was something gloomy, sad and guilty in his eyes.

"Dismiss, and send the bos'n! You'll not be punished."

"Right you are, Your Honour!"

Triumphant and particularly impudent, he purposely marched past the first officer and then went to seek the bos'n in the forecastle.

"Well, the captain can see right through a man, see an innocent man. He's not like you fairplay devils, taking it for granted I'm the lowest swine. . . Go to the captain, Ivanych; he's sent for you this second! Don't do anything in your pants!" Zyablikov shouted after him and sniggered.

Once more the sailors ceased to pity the "worst sailor" and avoided him.

IX

"Good day, Ivanov!"

"Good health to you, Your Honour!"

"Why didn't you report to the first officer that Dianka used to bite?"

"I did report it, Your Honour."

"And then?"

"He refused to accept the report, Your Honour."

"And why didn't you come to me?"

"I didn't dare, Your Honour."

"Why? Speak out!"

"You didn't let us come to you, Your Honour. And I thought you'd not like them complaining of the dog," said the bos'n delicately.

"You mean—I'd punish not the dog, but the sailors?"

"I was afraid so, Your Honour!" said the bos'n awkwardly.

A small muscle twitched in the captain's cheek. But it was with apparent indifference that he asked:

"And when Dianka disappeared, you and the crew were afraid that I'd punish everybody mercilessly if no culprit was found?"

"Just so, Your Honour. The sailors were very much upset lest Your

Honour think it a kind of mutiny about Dianka. . . And I tried to find out who drowned the dog. And the first officer gave orders that the culprit was to be found by six bells or else I was to say whom I suspected. But I—even if you punish me—I didn't obey him. . ."

The captain knew he was not loved, but to appear as a brute in the eyes of these men who were quite unfortunate enough. . .

"Why?"

And in that moment, seized by horror and sadness, he wanted to cry out that it was not true, he was not like that. . .

He was just. He did not flog. . .

Only twice had he punished ruthlessly for theft, considering it a revolting but necessary method.

He never struck the men, never worried them with senseless drills, never overworked them, took care of his crew. He did everything that duty and conscience demanded. True, he never went to the sailors' quarters, never talked with them, never said a kind or joking word to them. He knew how simple and easy this would be. . . But he was ashamed to play a part before men whose lives were so wretched, dangerous and without rights, and difference of rank made such a gulf between them. . . Either be a captain such as he was or retire, but captains who flogged and joked, who stole and praised, trained the men like performing animals so as to make a show, and beat and mutilated them with a light heart, saying all the time that they had a soft spot for the sailors—these were often called "kind". . . But such "kindness" was impossible to him.

He only inspired fear!

Oh, if they only knew! He, the stern and isolated, lonely and gloomy, all this by nature as well as due to the sense of discord between the truth and lies of life, his heart wounded and burning, might be a stranger to them, but no enemy, a friend. . .

Naturally the captain said no word of all that was passing through his mind. He also had no intention of admitting that only the previous day he had found out by accident that the dog he was fond of bit the men and was hated by them, and. . .

How could the bos'n, Ivanov, understand?

"He's right! I didn't let them come to me!" thought the captain, and in his usual dry tone he said to the bos'n:

"Don't investigate any more. I drowned Dianka!"

The bos'n's eyes seemed about to start out of his head.

"Dismiss!"

X

Stern and silent as usual, the captain stood on the bridge and looked over the deck. Everything was bright and shining. The officers who had come out for the ceremony of hoisting the flag, and the sailors scattered over the deck were looking at the captain with astonished eyes.

"Stand by! . . Hoist the flag!"

All bared their heads.

The flag broke, and the usual morning reports began.

The first to report on the safety of the clipper was the first officer, and the white fingers held to the peak of his cap trembled slightly. When he had finished his report the captain said loudly:

"No need for you to have discovered the culprit, I threw Dianka overboard. . ."

After a moment he added:

"It seems that dogs can be just as scoundrelly and false as men."

After hearing the reports from his officers, the captain returned to his cabin. . .

In the forecastle lively discussion was going on, the sailors were happy but uncomprehending.

And that lovely morning, a ray of light seemed to have pierced the mysteriousness of the captain.

Translated by Eve Manning

PAVEL BAZHOV

THE WINGED HORSES

(From the Fireside Tales of the Urals)

There's an old bit of gossip about our Zlatoust metal-smiths. It is said they learned all they know from some Germans. From these Germans they copied the way of making blade-steel, ornamenting, engraving and gilding. That's how the story goes, and some people even say it's written in a book.

Well, you can listen to that sort of tale with one ear, but keep the other one open for what our old people say. Then you'll be able to judge for yourself.

It's true enough our foundry was under German management. For two years, or maybe even three, the Germans had the run of it. They were still knocking around long after government took over again. Not just one or two houses but two whole streets full of Germans. One was called Great German street—that was between Butylovka Hill and the Bogdanka. The other was Little German Street. The Germans had their own church and a school. They had their own courthouse too.

But there were plenty of other people in the foundry. One end of the settlement wasn't called the Demidovka for nothing. That's where the Demidov craftsmen lived and they've been making blade-steel for long years, as everybody knows.

And you mustn't forget the Bashkirs. They were in these parts long before we came.

No, they weren't well-to-do, but when it came to shaping a horse on a sword-hilt and tempering a blade, you wouldn't forget their work, no, not for a long time. You only had to set eyes once on the ancient designs on knife or sword and you would be dreaming of it many nights.

And we had some mother-wit of our own to add to this.

So, you see, we had someone to learn from without copying from a lot of imported Germans. It can be seen in the old designs. Look at some of the old workmanship. Anybody who understands anything at all can see the difference between ours and theirs; as different as a sheep from a golden eagle.

Here is one case my old grandfather told me about.

It was in the days of serfdom. Maybe a hundred years back. The Germans were living on the fat of the land and all the masters were Germans. People began to grumble. They said it was sheer waste to feed such a tribe. "The Germans can't teach us anything because they know so little themselves." Maybe some of that talk got higher up and it made the Germans worried. So they brought a fellow from their country—Wurma or Mumra was his name,—something like that. They thought: "He'll show these Russians how to make blade-steel." Only as it turned out Mumra was no good. He burned up a ton of money, but nothing came of it. The German management had to save their faces somehow, and soon the word went round that the best swordsmith in Germany was on his way, a regular magician, to hear them talk. Such an engraver and gilder as the world had never seen. The foundry people paid no attention after the affair with Mumra. They said it was just a lot of idle talk.

But, true enough, a German did come. He was a business-like looking customer and his name was Tankard. It was a funny name and of course our people made the most of it. "A Tankard's always good company," they said, "let's hope he's as good as he sounds."

A joke's a joke, but as it turned out this fellow knew his job. He was pop-eyed, they say, but he could see straight enough. He was a real master of his tools and a hard worker. A craftsman, and I can't say more than that.

But he was a cross-patch if ever there was one. He had only one word when you showed him any local makes. That was "Pooh!", just as if he would spit the word out of his mouth. So it wasn't long before folks were calling him "Pooher".

"Pooher's" line was ornamenting presentation weapons. He put golden horses on sabres, all alike, and the gilding always came out spotless. It was made to last, too. He was a pretty designer, there's no gainsaying that, and he was conscientious. The hoofs were as clean as cut glass, the ears stiff as holly, the

forelock as neat as a tsar's beard on a rouble, the eye was just where it should be to a thousandth part of an inch, the mane and the tail—you could count every hair. The golden horse was standing still and there was a golden crown just above it. The crown was a neat job too, every detail clear as clear, only people couldn't understand what it was doing there—over the horse.

Every time "Pooher" finished off a sabre he would pat himself on the back and say:

"Dat ist German job."

And the management backed him up.

"Oh, ja! Russians understand not such refine work."

That put our craftsmen in rage. They wondered how they could get even with the German. Maybe find someone to work with him—as a sort of apprentice who would turn out not worse than the German himself. They spoke to the management:

"Let us give Tankard an apprentice from our own people, it is our right."

But the management wouldn't hear of it:

"Dis ist very refine work. Russians understand not."

Our craftsmen stood up for their rights and tried to think of a likely man. They knew plenty of good ornamenters and gilders but they weren't all suitable. Some were getting on in years. You couldn't make apprentices of them, because they had been journeymen for a long time. Somebody young was needed of the right age to be an apprentice.

Just then grandfather Bushuyev came down to the workshop. He had been an ornamenter himself, but the Germans had rubbed him the wrong way and he set up for himself. He did like a lot of others—fixed up a little furnace in his cottage and took in orders—blue enamel and silver work, and gilding too. There was a bright young fellow about the place,—Ivan, grandson or nephew, who knows—same surname, Bushuyev. Clever in the drawing line, just the man to be an apprentice to "Pooher". He had had a lot of offers to work at the foundry, but the old man wouldn't let him go:

"I won't let Ivan go hob-nobbing with those Germans. They'll spoil his touch and ruin his eye."

Grandfather Bushuyev looked at "Pooher's" sabre and had to admit:

"That's a clean job!"

Then he stuck his chest out:

"But Ivan's got a bolder hand and a better eye."

The craftsmen struck while the iron was hot.

"Let him come and work in the shop. Maybe he'll put the German in the shade."

The old man wouldn't hear of it. They all knew the old man was not to be talked round. But the craftsmen had got the idea into their heads and they wouldn't give up so easily. They talked it over after old Bushuyev had gone.

"There's no harm in trying."

But others argued against:

"We'll be wasting our time. The lad's under the old man's thumb. And he's one that can't be driven, no, nor led either."

"Maybe a little cunning would come in handy," thought another.

But nobody had guessed how the old man would walk out of the workshop, thoughtful-like. Bushuyev walked away looking as though his mind was made up, but it wasn't. He could stand out against any man's arguments but his own.

"If it's a case of Germans riding the high-horse over Russians—well. . . that never happened before."

After two days muttering like this he let out a yell as though something had gone off inside him:

"Ivan, go to the workshop!"

The lad couldn't believe his ears.

"What for?"

"Because you've got to put that German in his place. You've got to beat him."

Ivan had heard about this newcomer and about the old man going down to the workshop, but he had pretended to know nothing.

"If you beat that German, you can marry Axinya."

Ivan had set his heart on this girl, but the old man had been against it because she had no dowry.

So Ivan ran down to the workshop as though he had the devil behind him. He talked to the craftsmen.

"The old man is willing and I'm more than willing. I've only been looking for a chance to match myself with a German."

The craftsmen went to the German management and pestered them to apprentice Ivan to "Pooher". They were only asking for their rights. He was of marrying age it's true but he looked a good three years younger. He had ridden three-year olds in the Bashkir races every spring. He knew every bone and muscle in a horse's body.

The German management hummed and hawed at first, but when they saw Ivan come in looking as raw as a turnip, they agreed. "He won't come to anything," they thought.

So Ivan was apprenticed to the German. As he watched him work he was thinking to himself: "The old Tankard knows how to make a horse, but there's no life in it. It ought to be designed at the gallop."

But he kept this to himself and stood there pretending to be struck dumb by a man so handy with his tools. The German was very pleased with himself: "Dat ist German job."

The weeks rolled by and one day "Pooher" went to the managemnt:

"It's time this boy showed what he can do."

And he winked at them as though to say:

"Now you'll see something funny!"

The management agreed, and gave Ivan a trial job. They handed him a sabre and told him when it must be ready. He had to do a horse with a crown which he would have to work in as best he could.

Ivan got busy. He knew his job right enough. But he had to beat the German, both in workmanship and in originality. He had already set his mind on a galloping horse. But what about the crown? At last he decided to do a pair of horses with a broad ribbon floating out from their necks and on that ribbon he would put the crown. Every detail would be clear. The crown would look like a Bashkir leaning back on his horse at full gallop.

Ivan looked long, feeling the design was just right. He made a fine job of the horses, they seemed to have real life in their nostrils and the crown didn't spoil it a bit. He thought and thought and suddenly remembered what Axinya had whispered to him the night before:

"Try your very hardest, Ivan! Suppose you put some wings on the horses to make them better than that German's."

Now he thought to himself: "Just the thing. I'll chance it." So he put wings on the horses and the design was even better than before. So he transferred it to the sword and gilded it in his grandfather's secret way.

The sabre was ready in good time. He polished it carefully, made sure he had overlooked no rough spots, and then told the management his trial job was ready.

The news went round. Old Bushuyev was the first on the scene. He took a long look at the sabre, slashed around with it like an old Cossack, then like the old fighters from Bashkir, tried its strength; but what took his fancy most was the little golden horses. He stared till his eyes watered.

"Thanks, Ivan, my boy! I was depending on you, but I didn't think you had all that wit in you. Useful and decorative. That design's good in every way, the way you've pushed the horses a bit from the hilt nearer the blade."

And so said all our craftsmen. But would the Germans be able to appreciate it? As soon as they came, they raised a shindy.

"What rubbish!" they said. "Who has ever seen a winged horse? Why has it a crown on the side? Why, it's an insult to the Tsar!"

They bullied and bullied the lad, and almost had him sent to gaol. It became too much for old Bushuyev.

"You hounds," he cried, "you brainless curs! I'd like to take hold of this sword and chop off your stupid blockheads! What do *you* know about these things?"

In the end the old man was pushed out by his own folks. They were afraid he would make too much trouble with the Germans. The German masters chased out young Ivan, screaming after him:

"This young fool must never be allowed into the works again! He'll pay a fine, a big fine!"

For Ivan this was a bitter blow, but his grandfather comforted him:

"We've lived all this time without the Germans and we'll go on living. We'll pay their fine too. And may the money choke them! Marry your Axinya. I don't object—no, I don't object."

Ivan cheered up when he heard this:

"It was her idea putting the wings on the horses."

That was a surprise for the old man:

"Why, that girl's got a head on her shoulders!"

He was silent for a bit, then gave a shout that was heard all down the street:

"I'll sell my horse and give you a wedding that'll set the whole town talking. The Germans won't always be on top. You see, you'll be rewarded yet for that sabre, when the right people see it. Mark my words!"

Some people laughed at the old man, but it turned out just as he said.

Soon after Ivan's wedding the Tsar's train of carriages arrived. There must have been twenty troikas all in a line.

It happened that a Cossack general was along with them. One of Kutuzov's men. Not a few of the enemy had been hacked up by him. And he had taken towns in Germany too. He was on his way to Siberia on some business when the royal train overtook him. He was a man of merit, so the Tsar took him into his retinue to do him honour. You see, the old man wasn't by any means weighted down with medals. The lackeys who picked up the Tsar's handkerchief had more to show on their chests than he had. So the Tsar decided to make some amends and give the old warrior a presentation sword.

The day after the Tsar arrived in Zlatoust the whole suite went down to the armoury shop. The Tsar told the general:

"I want to present you with a sword ornamented with gold. Choose the very best."

Of course the Germans had laid out all Tankard's work beforehand in the most conspicuous places. But one of the craftsmen put Ivan's sword among them on the sly. The general grabbed it as soon as he saw it, took a long look at the little golden horses, tried the blade on his finger, examined every rivet and said:

"I've seen plenty of ornamented sabres in my time but never one like this. The man who made it is an artist. He's got wings himself. I'd like to see him."

Well, there was nothing the Germans could do about it, so they sent for Ivan. Ivan came and the general thanked him for his work. He pulled out all themoney he had on him.

"Ivan, my friend, it's all that's left from the journey. But let me at least give you a kiss for your fine workmanship. It's perfectly balanced. Just the thing for a real good Cossack blow."

And he took such a slash at the air that the whole of the Tsar's suite were petrified and the Germans broke into a cold sweat. I don't know if it's true, but there's a story that Germans get all dried up when they have a fright. That's why they drink so much beer. Our elders used to say so and they ought to know. They've had many a scuffle with Germans in backstreets.

Ever since Ivan Bushuyev has been known in the workshops as Ivan of the Wings.

A year later, maybe more, a reward was sent, but of course the Germans grabbed it. As for "Pooher", he went back to Germany. You see, he had no reward, and after all he had plenty of skill and felt slighted at having his work put in the shade.

Ivan Bushuyev came back to the shop after the Germans and their toadies had been kicked out and only real craftsmen remained.

Of course it took more than a year, because the German managers had their hand in at court and were full of tricks into the bargain. Just take that business, with the diamond match. A lot of underhand work there, their cunning knew no bounds. But that's another story.

Old Bushuyev was as proud of Axinya as if she had been his own daughter, and was always praising her to the neighbours:

"A woman in a thousand! She and Ivan make a perfect pair like those winged horses. And they're bringing up some fine children. There's only one fly in the ointment. She hasn't yet given me a grandson I can know to be mine by the wings already sprouting on his shoulders. Well, maybe she will yet, or maybe the others might grow wings. What do you think? Who ever heard of winged parents having children without wings?"

Translated by John Evans

THE ELK

Something unexpected made Christina start and press herself against the tree. Something stirred in the water-side brushwood, and a huge animal emerged. For a flitting moment she caught sight of the lofty head with its branchy antlers, the grey flank that swayed rhythmically with every breath, the firm straight legs. . . The elk took a look around and, with a leisurely step, made for the slope where the ground-wind was still whirling, laying bare the brittle stalks of grass which had not been cut in the autumn.

Christina took a step from behind the tree to get a better view of the beast. Something crunched under her ski. The animal made a spring—it was as if a grey cairn had leaped into the air. A shot rang out. The elk dashed into the thicket.

The beast was getting away. She had let it slip. The crackling of breaking shrubs was dying away. By and by, it ceased altogether and all was still. Only the deep hoofmarks in the snow, with bits of black frozen earth trampled into it showed where the elk had dashed into the shrubbery. Had it been Christina's father or brother instead of herself, the beast would have been lying on the bluish, evening snow, dead or dying, while the hunter would have stood over it taking stock of what he'd got. Oh yes, the beast weighed at least three hundred kilos. She had seen his antlers, there were at least ten branches to them. She had missed an old bull the like of which none of the collective farm hunters had ever had the luck to track down, let alone kill. And she had found him, she had been following him for five days, she had seen him and then failed to kill him.

Twilight was gathering. The girl got up. Her weather-beaten face was flushed with anger, with the ignominy of failure. She picked up her gun and wiped it carefully. She gathered some dry twigs, and made a fire. She did all this almost mechanically, just as a matter of routine. Simply because she always did so, she chose a sheltered nook (the enormous trunk of a tree broken in a storm) to settle down in for the night, cut enough fir twigs, and hung an old hunter's kettle over the fire.

But, while doing all this automatically and unerringly she was thinking of something else. She was thinking of her father and brother at the front. Such splendid hunters they were! She was thinking of what they would have done had they been in her shoes, and she could not find the shadow of an excuse for her blunder.

And what was she going to say to Nesterov, head of the village co-operative store, who was sure to ask her about the results of her hunting? Looking back, she again saw Nesterov enter their house, heave a sigh and say:

"Why, lassie, I can't help dropping in just as if Fyodor and Mikhail were still at home. Here's an order come for us to kill some elks—and who's there to do the killing, I'd like to know? . . Well, goodbye. . . Must go and see the old men. . ."

Christina's family was always the first on the collective farm in fulfilling the tasks set by the party and the government. Whenever the best workers had to be named, whenever men were to be elected to the rural Soviet or representatives sent to Krasnogorsk—it was invariably Christina's father that was mentioned first, then her brother Mikhail, then Christina herself. And looking at Nesterov's rather gloomy face, the girl reflected that all the young hunters of the collective farm were now hunting down quite another kind of beast; but that if only her father and brother had been at home they'd answer Nesterov with just a nod as is the way of taciturn folk who can understand other people's difficulties; and they would simply go and get their hunting equipment ready to start after the elks right away.

"Write the contract, Uncle Ivan," she said, and took down from the shelf the inkstand, a pen and a sheet of paper.

Nesterov sighed again and reflected:

"Don't be in too much of a hurry, Christina. . . After all, it might be better to send some of our old men. Fact is, you'll be rather out of your depth."

"You just write it down," she repeated tersely.

"Wouldn't an amateur's contract be better?" suggested the cautious Nesterov. "You'll shoot squirrels and hares and

such like. . . say, for two hundred rubles or so. . . . What do you think of it? Not much, certainly, but still something to help the collective farm along. On the other hand, a hunter's contract would mean too great a strain, you can see it yourself, can't you? Now don't get the bit between your teeth! Just think. . . It doesn't take long to sign your name on a bit of paper—but there will be the devil to pay later on."

"Write the contract, please. In full. I'm not a baby. I know what I'm doing."

So Nesterov wrote it. She read that she undertook to shoot squirrels, hares, foxes and other wild animals and to deliver skins to the sum of fifteen hundred rubles.

"And where's the bit about the elk?"

"Let it alone, girl," a note of severity had crept into Nesterov's voice.

"Not for the world," was the reply, "put it in!"

Nesterov looked at her apprehensively. Probably he was thinking about there being so few hunters left in the village; perhaps he thought also that Christina was sure to bungle it, but that she was not a girl to forget what she thought was a slight easily, that she would go about telling people she wanted to go after elks but the manager wouldn't let her do it. So he added a special paragraph about killing elks.

But it never entered Christina's head that she could bungle it. In the morning she put her assistant in charge of the dairy, packed some food, selected a pair of short boots, changed the hides on her ski, and oiled the traps; and next day the vast, sombre taiga engulfed her.

She entered the forest as if she were its mistress and knew that only having finished all her affairs there would she return to the village.

And here she was curled up by the fireside, after her utter failure. High up above her the trees were sighing. It was beginning to thaw. A lashing wind had risen from the south-west that was sure to bring snow with it, which would cover up all the tracks of the beasts; and she would perforce have to return home with nothing better than a pile of squirrels' skins that couldn't fetch more than a paltry five hundred. She started thinking about her brother, a fighter in a destroyer battalion operating in the enemy rear. And the thought of him made her feel warmer. She remembered that killing elks meant helping the army also, that those three hundred kilograms of meat and that thick heavy hide were to be sent to the front—she had it written in the contract. And the elk had got away.

Christina rose. It was dark. The sky was heavy with clouds, but in between them she could see the Polar Star and the Great Bear. The morning was still far off.

Christina picked up her gun. A fine hunter to have made a shot, missed and forgotten to reload. A wretched hunter. And how shameful to get downhearted like that after the very first failure—even though her ill luck lasted fifty days instead of just five. And bending low, feeling for the half obliterated hoofmarks with her hands Christina started in the direction where the elk had gone.

An hour passed. . . Two hours. . . She still jogged along. All of a sudden the snort of an awakened animal broke the stillness of the night. The same moment she fired. The noise of the shot was drowned in the noise of the breaking branches. The elk was getting away. The quarry had been started. Now came the hardest part of it—a contest in endurance. Who will be the first to give in—she or the beast? And she smiled when she remembered one of her brother's letters: he told her how they had been chasing a German punitive detachment. The nazis were harassed without a break, they had no time to eat or drink; they were chased until they were brought to bay. . .

Once more she felt for the hoofmarks and resumed her chase.

Daylight was beginning to break. At last she can see the elk's spoor. The marks are fresh. The moist snow sticks to the hoofs, the animal strikes the hardened ground with his hind feet in an attempt to shake it off, and hurts his chestnuts. Christina notices a tiny red spot on the snow. But it is only when the day is drawing to a close that she catches a glimpse of the beast. The elk springs up and rushes down the slope. Only his antlers are to be seen. Christina fires. The antlers vanish. She sits down on a tree trunk and takes off her footwear. She massages her swollen feet and ankles. Then she gets up to follow the trail. There are no traces of blood on it now but she knows the wound has done its work. The strength of the animal is ebbing fast. There are sure signs of it: every six or seven steps the beast snatches a mouth-

ful of snow without slowing down. And Christina tries to mend her pace again.

The morning found them near the northern source of the Kolchim. The high mountain ridge shines pink in the sun. It's bitter cold. The thaw of yesterday has gone, leaving a firm crust of snow behind it that cuts her boots like a knife, but for the elk going is made easier by it. And Christina feels worn out. Rest she needs or at least a slowing down.

This frosty, rose-hued morning she saw her quarry once again. He had got up onto a boulder. Trying to keep unseen, Christina crawled towards it. A shot, a leap—and the beast is away with Christina on his tracks.

When the girl, in her turn, had clambered onto the boulder, her heart was thumping as if it were going to burst through her ribs. She wiped her eyes. Once again there was a crimson spot on the snow in front of her. She looked around and rushed down. The wounded elk lay in the bushes. She could not keep back a cry. On hearing her voice he started and the crushing of twigs and bushes renewed. That day she heard the elk often enough but she never saw him.

In the dusk she managed to get near him. She left her brother's lusan [1] on a small bush, conspicuous on the snow, and crawled to the right of the beast. She was making a detour, keeping well on the lee-side. The animal was crouched, ready to leap up. He was gasping for breath, looking towards his pursuer. Feet, head and flanks were trembling from fear and the strain. Christina, resting her rifle on a tree trunk, slowly took aim. The elk lay motionless. Once more having checked her sight she held her breath and gently pulled the trigger. The enormous bull shook, rose on its forefeet and collapsed.

[1] A kind of sleeveless homespun or leather jacket.

Translated by N. Dvoretskaya

ANTANAS VENCLOVA

ROADS

There were only a few blue lights burning on the darkened platform. When they were all driven out onto it, Algirdas Šaltenis could see through the fog and the wet curtain of snow a long line of platform wagons standing out black against the wet covering of snow, and dark-red cattle trucks. He understood where they were being taken.

An elderly peasant was walking beside him, his fur hat pulled far down over his eyes. As they passed the lamps, Šaltenis saw that his neighbour was shivering from head to foot. He could even hear faint sobs and see the outline of an unshaven cheek, down which trickled a few drops—either melted snow or tears.

"My kiddies. . . Albinelis, he's three years old," sobbed the peasant. "And Ievutie's little arms round my neck! Shall I ever see them again?"

A sudden shout from the escort sounded right in his very ear. A whip cracked, and somebody behind Šaltenis screamed pitifully.

The platform was quite empty, there were only the sentries in their waterproofs standing at the ends. People walked along broken planks, the melting snow splashing under their feet. All the men's feet were in torn boots or bound up with rags. Some of them still had shirts which were whole, but the majority had long been clad only in tatters. There were two men walking ahead of Šaltenis, one of them tall, stooping and unnaturally thin, a former chemist, the other hatless, with a bald greenish skull, a worker from Shanchai.

The men walked heavily and with difficulty. As they came out of the distribution point into the fresh air, they seemed dazed. Many of them groaned or coughed, some were feverish. . .

When they were driven to the trucks, they could hear loud, penetrating German commands. The entrainment began. And it was here that Algirdas Šaltenis decided to carry out a long conceived plan. Suddenly flinging himself to one side, he sprang away and then crawled under the train. There was another goods' train on the next line, and Šaltenis succeeded in crossing it. He swayed with profound weariness, but knew that he could afford

no delay. Agitated whistles could be heard from the platform on the other side of the trucks, the scraping of the escort's boots as they ran here and there, the sound of shots. Beyond the station, on the other side, was the river bank, studded with occasional trees and bushes. Stumbling and gasping with weariness, the fugitive made his way to the river and slipped through the bare bushes, slithering in the melting snow. As he ran over the ice, which was covered with water and cracked under his feet, he noticed the black silhouette of a soldier on a hillock.

Far away the light of an electric torch flashed on, then the sound of a shot rang out.

Šaltenis knew that his pursuers would not follow him into the forest, especially at night, so now he walked slowly trying to recover his breath. He was feverish, his lips were cracked and his legs seemed weighed with lead. The heavy flakes of wet snow ceased falling, the sky cleared. A few stars shone out between the fast disappearing clouds over the tops of the spruce trees.

Šaltenis felt the urgent need of rest, but feared to stop. He still felt himself too near the undergrowth, although there was no more firing to be heard. The wind was faintly stirring the tops of the trees. Without pausing, Šaltenis made his way deeper and deeper into the forest. Now at last he was free!

He had long lost his way. Delirium overcame him. He seemed to see the lights of some unknown city, he could hear hundreds of motor-horns. The doors of shops and hotels passed before his eyes. . . Suddenly he smelt freshly-baked white bread, and with it, came a sharp pang of hunger. The hallucinations disappeared, and the fugitive saw a small forest glade before him. In the dim early morning light he could make out a cart and a roofed-over haystack. Evidently there was a farm near, but Šaltenis was so weary that he decided to settle down where he was. He burrowed into the stack and immediately fell asleep.

When he awoke, he could not at first understand where he was. He was lying in a neat wooden cottage, smelling of freshly washed floors and burnt juniper. Through the open door he could see shelves with wooden spoons and bright-coloured cups set out very accurately and neatly. The walls were papered with newspapers and decorated with ikons. The sun's rays shone through the polished panes of the window, throwing squares of light on the floor, and an old pendulum clock on the wall showed the time to be half past eleven.

Soon an old woman came into the room carrying a clean shining bucket. Her bare feet touched the floor silently, as though fearful of disturbing somebody. She was wearing a flowered blouse and long, full skirt, with a pink shawl on her grey head. Her face was criss-crossed with wrinkles, and there was infinite kindness and tenderness shining from her eyes. Seeing that her guest had awakened and was regarding her with curiosity, the old woman approached and sat down on a low bench beside the bed, wiped her small dry hands on her apron and began to speak:

"Thank God, thank God, child! What a long time you've been lying there! Maybe you'd like a little nice warm milk, now? I've just been milking! . ."

Without waiting for a reply, she took a bright-coloured cup from the shelf, filled it to the brim with milk and held it to the sick man's mouth. He looked at the old woman; he felt that he wanted to ask her something, but could not remember what. He drank the milk and felt the old woman's hands smoothing his pillow and carefully wrapping the blanket round his weak, thin body.

"I see that I've happened on good people," said Šaltenis at last, when the old woman sat down by his bed. "Tell me where I am and who are you who are sheltering me?"

"And why shouldn't I take care of you, child?" she sighed. "We're not rich folks. Here in the forest we've got a bit of land; my husband used to be a forester, he made not a bad living. And my son, the Lord rest his soul, he used to help too, when he was alive." The old woman wiped a tear away with her apron. "And now? We managed to hide our cow in the forest somehow, and there was a little flour, so we live as we can. And you were very ill, child, eh, it's sick you are—we thought that you'd never see the light again. My husband found you in the haystack, we carried you into the house and we've been looking after you. We said you might be a good man, one of our own, a Lithuanian; how could we leave you there without helping you?"

"And the Germans don't come to you?" the sick man said uneasily, suddenly remembering.

"No, child, they don't come here," the old woman answered. "We're in the forest, and the Germans prefer the high-road. They're afraid of the forest. And what could they find here anyway? They could only take the last cow. They've plundered all the villages and folks say that they've taken everything to Germany from the towns."

"And is it long since your son died?"

The old woman stirred uneasily on the bench and looked at the sick man with something like fear. Turning aside, she sat silent for a long time. Tears were stealing down her face. Šaltenis regretted having put the question, but after a short silence, the old woman began to tell the story.

"Yes, it was last summer. It was when the Germans took Kaunas. If only he could have died a natural death. . ."

"Who killed him?" almost shouted Algirdas.

The old woman began fidgeting with her shawl, tying and untying the ends under her chin.

"We denied ourselves the last crust, so that our son could study, and not grow up ignorant like ourselves. My husband used to say: 'I've never learned anything, I can hardly read, but let my son have an education!' And how he loved learning, poor boy: he'd sit up all night over his books. He learned to be a mechanic. He worked at a factory. And under the other government, the Soviet government, thanks be to it, he was even the director of a whole factory; that was because he had a clear head and an honest heart."

With the corner of her shawl the old woman wiped away a tear and standing upon the bench, began looking for something. Opening a little cupboard, she took out a watch wrapped in a white handkerchief.

"And a good lad he was, may God give him eternal peace," she went on, stroking the shining metal lid with her dried hands. "When he came from town he'd bring me a present, a silk shawl, or a new cap for his father, a pair of elastic sided boots or something else of the kind. And all the time he'd say: 'I'm going to take you away with me,' he'd say. 'I'm not going to let you spend your old age in the wilds. We'll all live together in the town!'"

"And did you want to go to town?'"

"I wouldn't have minded, but my old man's heart wasn't in it! 'I grew up in the forest,' he'd say, 'and I'll die here.'"

"Is that a present from your son?" asked Algirdas, glancing at the watch.

The old woman in her turn looked at it as though seeing it for the first time, and sighed heavily.

"There, look," she said, giving the watch to Algirdas.

He took it and mechanically turned it over and over in his hands as he listened.

"That was sent by comrades of his. Otherwise we might not even have known anything. One day I was looking out of the window and there was an old man coming up the path, leaning on a stick. 'Does so-and-so live here?' he asked. 'Why, yes,' I said. 'I'm from friends of Vincukas,' says he. And he told how the Germans had come to the factory, and Vincukas had words with them. And then they'd shot him. . ."

And the old woman wept.

"When I heard that, I fell down in a faint, I was a month in my bed."

"Yes, it's many folks they've ruined," sighed Algirdas, "many and many!"

"And my old man—was he like he is now?" she glanced at her husband's photograph and shook her head. "He used to be jolly and talkative, and now there's not a word to be got out of him, he just sits and sits, as though he'd taken root. And dear God knows what he's thinking about all the time. And sometimes he lifts his head and looks so, that I go all of a shiver. He's not at home much at all."

Šaltenis had not yet seen the master of the forest glade. A day passed, another, but the forester did not appear. Meanwhile the sick man began to recover quickly. He could already move about the room, supporting himself by the wall, he would sit by the window and gaze long at the glade skirted with its dark spruce. There, beyond the wood shed, the cowshed and the well, beyond the little garden and vegetable patch, loomed the dark, impenetrable thickets. It was a deserted place, not a living soul was to be seen.

One evening, when a cold rain was beating against the window and the pines were groaning and protesting, the forester returned home. It was already dusk in the cottage, and the old woman had drawn the curtains and was preparing supper.

Suddenly the door swung open, and a tall and unusually sturdy old man entered.

Muttering a few words to his wife the old man threw off his wide, yellowish waterproof and wiped the raindrops from his beard and mustache. He was wearing high boots and a jacket belted with a new strap. He took off his broad-brimmed hat of home-made felt, and Šaltenis saw a large, weather-beaten face, untidy grey hair, long white eyebrows over burning black eyes. Casting an unamiable glance at his guest, the old man sat down at the table without saying a word to him.

As they sat at the same table, their elbows nearly touched, but not a word did either of them say to the other. The old man beat out his pipe and filled it, went to the stove, lighted it with a coal, and returned to his place. He raised his head and his cold black eyes rested on his guest's face.

"Are you tired of it?"

"Of what?"

"Our bread and salt."

"I've been ill and don't remember how much bread I've eaten," said Šaltenis drily.

The old man was silent.

"Don't you be angry," he said after some time, touching Šaltenis' elbow lightly. "I understand that it's not for fine living that you're staying here with us, it must be some misfortune that's brought you to the forest depths."

"What shall I say?" said Šaltenis, trying to find a suitable reply. "Of course it's not by my own wish that I'm here. It wasn't your bread that brought me."

"Now, now, I can see that you're right angry," the old man interrupted him. "And that's not right. I'll tell you the truth—I didn't want to take you in. I was afraid harm 'ud come of it. You can thank her," he nodded in his wife's direction. "She cried till I did it. And you can see I'm not one to give way easily."

"I can see that all right," muttered Šaltenis.

"So that's how it is. And now tell me where you're from? I ought to know, I'm thinking, who it is I've got in my house."

"Jurgis, for God's sake!" said the old woman, turning to him in alarm.

"I understand you," said Šaltenis.

With the blackened end of his thumb the old man pressed tobacco further down into his pipe and drew the smoke deep into his lungs. Then he waited, without taking his cold dark eyes from his guest's face.

"My name's Šaltenis, Christian name Algirdas," said the latter as though not noticing the old man's unamiable tone. "Do you know Vyšnialaukis?"

The old man nodded.

"Well, there you are. You should have heard of Šaltenis?"

"The beekeeper?"

"Yes, that's my father. He did keep bees, that's a fact. He's dead. And I studied. In another two years I'd have been an engineer..."

"An engineer?" repeated the old man.

The student felt the incredulity in his voice and with a sudden inimical feeling he thought: "You needn't believe me if you don't want to. It's all the same to me." And he was silent. The old forester was also silent, but Algirdas could see a sparkle in his eyes as much as to say: "I was right not to thrust my guest out." "No, I'll tell him everything. Let him disbelieve me if he wants, that's his own business," Šaltenis thought, and pretending not to notice the old man's sceptical look, he continued:

"When the Germans came, it was a nightmare. We rushed about the town, not knowing what to do. There was no more study. The German soldiers smashed the windows and looted the shops. And the amount of people they shot in Kaunas—terrible to think about it. Sometimes you couldn't cross the street—bodies lying piled up on each other, and blood. . ."

A gust of rain pattered on the window-panes.

"Lord, dear Lord!" sighed the old woman. She took a pan off the fire and the flames lighted up the cottage for a moment.

"I made up my mind to try and continue working. There were several of us who gathered in the draughtmen's room. When the Germans learned of it, their soldiers came and started sniffing round all the corners, looking for weapons. They smashed some of our draughtmen's instruments. And we had one professor, a grey-haired old man, and kind-hearted. And he started arguing with them, so they beat him up with their rifle butts; we were all in an uproar, we began

shouting at them and defending the old man, so they started on us. . .”

The old man laughed.

“Beat you up?”

“They did indeed. But listen to what followed. They arrested us, drove us into a cellar. For four days we were left there with nothing to eat or drink. Then they drove us out of the town.”

“What town is it you're talking about?” asked the old man his eyes boring into Algirdas.

“Kaunas, I thought I told you that. Things were bad for us, very bad,” and Algirdas clenched his fists. “They fed us like dogs, kept us half naked in the rain, in the open field, whatever the weather was. The sick were finished off on the spot. I remember a hump-backed old man, Jaudegis, who died of the beatings. Under the Soviet government I think he'd been the secretary of the land commission.”

“Jaudegis, did you say?” the old man asked.

“Yes, why?”

The old man did not reply immediately.

“It does not matter,” he said at last. “I knew one—Jaudegis.”

“His body lay there beside me for eight days. They didn't allow it to be taken away. I thought I'd never stand it; that I'd go mad. And then in the winter there was typhus. . .”

“Yes, last winter wasn't too easy,” the old man said, as though agreeing.

“Not long ago they decided to take us to a new place. They drove us here to a small place in the forest. They began entraining us. I don't know where they meant to take us. Some said to the front, to build fortifications, others said to Germany. When they were driving us into the trucks, I escaped. . .”

The recital had exhausted the student, he felt weary, and beads of perspiration stood out on his forehead. The old man listened attentively; his pipe had gone out but he continued to suck it with great concentration. Then he had supper, put on his outdoor clothes and after whispering something to his wife disappeared through the door. Everything was very quiet. Šaltenis lay down on the bed tired and drained of all strength. Outside the window the pines creaked and the cold heavy rain beat on the panes. . .

For some days the forester did not appear.

During this period the sick man recovered his strength. Now Šaltenis could move freely about the room. He was wearing the old man's clothes, which were too big for him. Seeing a piece of mirror on the window-sill, he looked into it and saw his pale face, like that of a stranger. His hair, cropped short in the camp, had grown again. He was amazed to find how thin he had become—his cheeks had fallen in, and his neck was long and thin. He suddenly realized the gulf which he had left behind, and his blood ran cold. . .

The sick man soon began to go out into the yard and sun himself. Sitting on a stump, he admired the clouds sailing slowly above the green treetops and listened to the pines whispering their old song.

“You must find it weary alone, child,” said the old woman as she weeded the cabbage sown in the glade. “But we're used to the sound of the forest, we'd be lost and sad without it.”

For the first time Algirdas began to think what he should do when he recovered his health. Of course the Germans would be in his own village, he could not show himself there, he must hide himself, wipe out all tracks. He had no desire to find himself in a camp again. But all the same, the outer world called him from this lonely place in a voice that would not be denied. Some way out must be found. He knew that in a day or two more he would have to say farewell to this hospitable cottage and the dear old woman who had looked after him like her own son.

One day, as he was sitting on the stump, Algirdas suddenly heard the cracking of twigs and somebody's heavy steps. Starting, he raised his head and saw the forester coming out of the thicket.

It was a hot summer day. The spicy air was filled with the heavy perfume of bark and bracken. Jacketless, his collar open, the old man seemed still sturdier than at their first meeting. His face and chest were sunburned, his eyes sparkled and the bare grey head shone white as blossoming lilac among the green branches.

“Now don't you be angry, that that time I. . .” he began. “I couldn't know where you were from. . . I thought. . . In these times. . .”

“Yes, that's quite right,” mumbled

Algirdas. "You know all about me. You may report it where you like. You'd even earn a few marks by it..."

The old man jumped as though he had been stung.

"Don't talk nonsense, son! You can't take anyone's word. I've been making enquiries. I found people from Vyšnialaukis and from Kaunas too. My son was with the bolsheviks. And now I'm squaring accounts with the Germans for him. We attack trains, free people. Whoever wants can come and join us. If you don't want, then you can go wherever you like. I know plenty more'll come to us..."

All this the old man spoke in a swift whisper as though afraid that somebody might be listening. At the other end of the glade the old woman, seeing her husband, raised her head from the cabbage beds and called:

"Jurgelis! Where do you go off all the time? Come home and have something to eat."

"It's all right, Mother, you go on with what you're doing, and we'll sit here... We've got serious things to talk about," said the old man, with a wave of the hand, and began filling his pipe.

The sun shone still more fiercely. In the distance thunder rumbled. The approaching storm made breathing difficult. A little breeze ran through the treetops.

"There's going to be rain," said the old forester, raising his face to the sky, overcast with scurrying clouds. "It's as hot as an oven."

A long whistle rang from the thickets followed by a second and a third. The old man did not raise his head, but stopped smoking, and listened intently.

"Ours," he said. "They're gathering."

The old man sighed, raised his head and looked at Algirdas, looked him straight in the eye.

"And you?"

For a moment Algirdas thought, then boldly returning the old man's gaze, he said:

"If you'll take me..."

The old man extended his broad hand to Šaltenis.

"Then we go the same road."

"Yes," replied Algirdas with decision. "There's no other path for me."

The old man gave Algirdas' hand a firm grip, then embraced him and kissed him. Clapping the student on the shoulder, he said:

"And now follow me. I've already told our folks about you..."

A little while later, stretching her back above the cabbage beds and screwing up her eyes, the old woman gazed for a long time at the spot where the men had been sitting. She could not understand at all where they could have disappeared to so unexpectedly.

"If only they'd had a drink of milk: dear only knows when they'll come back."

Meanwhile the men were walking through the forest in the direction whence those three prolonged whistles had sounded.

Translated by Eve Manning

JONAS ŠIMKUS

BOUNDARY POSTS

In twelve days, Albinas had barely managed to snatch a few hours' rest, and when he did, only late at night. And he was not the only one. Not far away he could see the tormented, harassed face of Juozas Burokas; a little further Simas Laukelis' sunken chest greedily sucked in air. Day and night, fifty-eight Lithuanians dug the fields in the Smolensk district, or repaired the highroad for the Germans.

Two months previously, when they had been brought here in pig trucks, there had been seventy of them.

Where had the other twelve gone? Perhaps they had turned into ravens, as in the fairy tales, and had flown back to their native parts?

Back there to the west, his fellow-villager Narbutas lay by the highroad. Still further—Petras Kimša and others. They were all sleeping their eternal sleep, never again would they rise from their cold beds...

Albinas sought a more comfortable position, but whatever he did, sleep fled his eyes. There was a ringing in his ears, his head burned from the wearying shouts: "Aufstehen! Aufstehen!"

The rasping voice had become so un-

bearable that Albinas involuntarily covered his eyes with his palms. But the shouts continued—they were ringing in his ears, beating in his temples...

It was already midnight. Not only the ravens were sound asleep, but that night-bird Nagel too.

Yes. Their lord and master Nagel slept in his wagon, behind seven bolts. But his rasping shout seemed to echo through the Smolensk lands by night too. Like some hideous nightmare, he harassed all, waking or sleeping...

Somewhere far away a thrush's note was heard. And like a drowning man clutching at a straw, Albinas caught at the far-off familiar sound. It seemed to him as though the bird's note came from his own Panemune.

"And perhaps it really is from Panemune?" flashed through his mind.

He gazed into the black autumn sky and fixed his eyes on two stars. For a long time Albinas had watched them—they were like dumb friends to him. But today the stars seemed to gaze back at him with some special meaning.

But those were not stars, they were Katule's eyes. And the whole heavens—that was her face. But how dark and sombre it was! What had happened to the dimples in her cheeks? And her bright hair? He shut his eyes and tried to banish his sad thoughts.

When he opened his eyes again and looked fixedly into the night, somewhere high, high up, as though on a moving ribbon, well-known, familiar places passed before his eyes. There was the scrub, and the fields, and a whole chain of houses, and at last, into the very centre of the firmament swam his own village of Panemune.

The village was like a flowering garden, and in that garden was his own field. Green, bright green.

Albinas' eyes were wide open, but he saw nothing of the sky. Here was the silver ribbon of the Niemen, and Albinas himself was lying on this ribbon, looking shorewards. Here, quite close, was his field carpeted with thick green. And there, on the hill, like children on all fours, crawled the strips of summer corn, bordered with beds of green clover. And still further, on the crest of a hill was etched his house, the home which he had begun to build early in the spring.

What a marvellous dream! But this was no dream. Albinas felt that he was not sleeping, and he had no desire to sleep. But sleep was necessary. Absolutely necessary. His head was leaden, he felt as though his body were being flogged with glowing irons. He knew well that he would be unable to rise in the morning if he did not sleep now.

And when this thought came to him, he would raise himself convulsively...

In the morning he would be unable to move a foot.

In the morning he would be unable to raise his hand.

That was how it had been last week with Narbutas. With the first faint gleam of dawn the rasping shout had rung out: "Aufstehen!" But Narbutas had remained lying there, breathing heavily, seeing and hearing nothing.

Nagel had run to Narbutas and began smelling at him with his long sharp nose.

He had swung an iron rod and slashed Narbutas across the face, then bending down, examined him closely.

A red weal sprang out on Narbutas' forehead. His face contorted with pain.

"Ach, so!" shouted Nagel. "Steh auf! Steh auf!" The German slashed Narbutas several times more across the face with his rod, then began to stamp on him.

But Narbutas did not rise, he did not move, he did not even say a word.

Nagel rounded up two workers and ordered them to set Narbutas on his feet. But as soon as they ceased to support him, he slumped to the ground again.

Then Nagel ordered that Narbutas be dragged from the road to the gravel pits.

At dinner time, when the prisoners were all together, one of them whispered to Albinas:

"Narbutas is finished. He's lying in the pit..."

And it was true—at the bottom of the gravel pit Narbutas was lying, his forehead blackened by the shot, the sand beneath his head stained crimson with blood.

Albinas had the hallucination that Narbutas was walking along the field, a small blackened hole on his forehead, followed by Nagel with a revolver trained on him.

But there was nobody there. The boundary posts stood motionless, appealing to the black sky, stretching into the distance, marking the line of the highroad.

Albinas lay down again, screwed up

his eyes, but the posts did not disappear. He could see them still more plainly with his eyes closed. But now they had become rose-coloured, as though bathed in the rays of the rising sun. And now the posts moved, they raced one after the other, and the last of them halted at the very bank of the Niemen. Albinas was striding behind the plough, straight to the nearest post, the furrows steaming, overturning the boundary mark. There were such furrows as had never before been seen on the fields of Panemune—new, like the new and unaccustomed life for all.

This picture stood out vividly before his eyes...

The chairman of the rural executive committee was standing by his plough; he shook his head saying:

"Comrade Albinas! This land is now yours. I wish you happiness and success in your work."

What a day that had been! He and Katule had wandered by the Niemen till late at night, unable to believe that this fine tract belonged to them. How could he, a simple farm-hand, ever have dreamed of such a thing! How everything had changed with the new government!

The landlord had been swept away as though by the wind, he had disappeared like dry husks.

There was plenty of work for Albinas and Katule before they cut and carried into the farm all the building wood they had received free of charge. In the autumn they sowed rye, in the spring, summer wheat.

And a fine summer it was, such as they had never before seen. Their first real summer!

But it had not ended as they had expected. They had not been fated to reap this summer wheat, and five German soldiers had settled down in the almost completed cottage.

For a whole month the Germans kept Albinas shut up behind barbed wire, starving.

In the evening, when all the arrested were paraded for roll call, their landlord would turn up from somewhere or other and walk past them, jeering at them.

"Better not to think, better not to think," thought Albinas insistently.

But where was his Katule? What had they done with Katule?

He wanted to turn over on his side and sleep, but a nervous fever began to shake him. Again he had to sit up. And again the boundary posts etched themselves black before his eyes. For how many months had they been looming before him? And these could not be rooted out like those in his own Panemune. They stretched endlessly, and the ranks of the toilers became thinner and thinner. Their graves became boundary posts, marking the road of death. There were already twelve such marks along the road...

"Whose turn will it be tomorrow or the day after?"

It was as though something had suddenly struck Albinas on the temple. There was a roaring in his head like a storm over the Niemen, through this ringing the rasping shout penetrated:

"Aufstehen! Aufstehen!"

Albinas rose, supporting himself on both hands. He could hardly move his legs. Around him all were sleeping. Silence. Absolute quiet in Nagel's wagon too. Why had he jumped up? What was the matter with him? This was not the first time he had thought about it. But Nagel had threatened them more than once:

"If anyone escapes, the remainder will suffer for it."

So far there had been no flights—none of them wanted to let the others down. And it was only now that the thought flashed into Albinas' mind: "Why shouldn't we all escape?"

Some soundless but very distinct voice strove to convince Albinas:

"But where can you escape to? The Germans are everywhere. They will catch you, and that will mean certain death. And here you may possibly survive. Some day the road will be built. The winter will come..."

But another voice rose wrathfully, it refuted reason, it inspired and excited Albinas:

"Twelve of your brothers are under the sod, and you too are doomed to lie here forever. If you stay here, you are lost! Flee, Albinas! Flee, don't wait! Find a place where there are no Germans. You'll cross the front, find the Red Army, you'll find salvation!"

Albinas looked around as though seeking something. He had already made up his mind, but he was sorry for his comrades who would be staying. Nagel would make them pay for it.

But what if he persuaded his comrades? What if they all agreed?.. Yes, but what if they did not agree and if Nagel came to know about it?..

Albinas took several steps and, bending down, began looking for a spade. It would be a good thing to find a pickaxe. But all the tools were in the wagon.

Slowly, carefully, he stole to the wagon. Perhaps some old spade might be lying about somewhere near? Albinas walked round the wagon, and as he approached the door, he suddenly heard a dull ringing. Albinas listened: was the sound real, or was it just his imagination? No, it was a real alarm clock ringing.

And Albinas saw with horror that the wagon was no longer as dark as formerly.

It was getting light!

Shaking with excitement, he hastily stooped down, and felt around with his hands. There were plenty of rocks and cobblestones along the road, but he took his time to choose.

Footsteps could already be heard in the wagon. That was Nagel. At any moment the door might open and his shout resound.

Unsteadily, as though stepping over a quaking morass, Albinas made his way on tiptoe behind the corner of the wagon. With preternatural strength his fingers were gripping a cobblestone.

He clenched his teeth to keep them from chattering, he felt that Nagel could hear the sound...

Every minute seemed an eternity. An importunate thought nagged at Albinas: better tomorrow. Then he could hide the pickaxe beforehand.

He hesitated, dropped the stone and decided to return to his sleeping comrades.

But at that moment the door creaked and Nagel's long nose emerged.

Shaking all over, Albinas pressed himself to the wall of the wagon. Nagel slowly descended the steps, whistling.

The thought flashed through Albinas' mind—better if the German did not see him, and he turned to the other side...

But it was just to the side where Albinas stood concealed that Nagel turned, still whistling. A towel was flung round his neck, and in his hands were a soap dish with soap and tooth brush and paste, instead of the usual iron rod.

Nagel had not expected to meet anybody here at this early hour, and started in alarm when he saw a man pressed close to the wagon.

Nagel's whistling broke off, and he stepped silently back. Then with a habitual movement he reached for his belt, where the revolver always hung. But he had not yet put on his belt, his revolver or even his jacket. After all, he had only come out to wash.

He turned, and with the same slow, calm step he moved towards the wagon.

At this moment Albinas suddenly sprang at the German. His fingers grasped Nagel's throat with such force that the latter had not even time to cry out. A fierce struggle followed. Nagel succeeded in throwing Albinas down, but he had not the strength to tear from his throat the hard hand of his opponent.

The dull sound of this silent struggle could be heard in the camp. One raised his head, another, a third. People rose as though from the dead. At that moment Albinas recalled the tent at the edge of the camp where two of Nagel's underlings slept, his two faithful watchdogs. Fear cramped his heart—how could he have forgotten them!? Casting the lifeless body of Nagel from him, Albinas dashed to the wagon. Stumbling, he ran up the steps and entered. Nobody there. On the table a small carbide lamp was hissing. Again fear seized upon Albinas. He turned suddenly, but nobody was there. Nagel would never rise again!

Hastily Albinas seized the belt and revolver from the table, and pulled the gun from its holster. Now his hands had ceased to tremble. He felt himself as strong as steel. And when Albinas descended the steps silently and carefully, he saw his comrades assembled around him. They were silent, as though they did not know what was happening.

"Nagel's done for, comrades," he said dully, and added: "And those two must be finished off too—quickly!"

All the prisoners followed Albinas. The dull sound of blows could be heard from the guards' tent, mingled with yells and finally, a particularly ringing shot. Then silence. Dead silence...

From somewhere beyond the boundless fields of scorched rye the sun rose, its rays lighting up the completely empty highroad. Only the posts stood there silently, their long shadows pointing westward...

Translated by Eve Manning

TETE DE PONT

Company Commander Lieutenant Gladyshev returned at dusk from the regimental command post, accompanied by an artillery officer and a couple of telephone operators. By the gait, and the special sort of solemn silence of his commanding officer, Private Sasha Kirikov, liaison man, drew the unreserved conclusion:

"There's going to be fireworks tonight, as sure as eggs is eggs!"

Gladyshev's orderly Tyunkin, of a taciturn nature, spat out the butt of his cigarette, ground it under his heel and mumbled:

"A fat lot you know. . . chatterbox. . ."

Kirikov had already opened his mouth to crush the sceptical orderly with a biting word when the lieutenant's voice nipped in the bud that flame which was ripe to burst into a simple-worded soldier's argument:

"Comrade Kirikov! Summon all the platoon commanders to me. Sharp!"

Measuring Tyunkin from head to heels with a scoffing and scathing look, Kirikov dashed off to carry out his orders.

When all the platoon commanders had assembled, Lieutenant Gladyshev crawled with them to the edge of the river. Kirikov could see them, hidden out of sight of the Germans in the brushwood of the river bank, leaning over a map, jotting down notes and repeatedly casting glances at that section of the river bed where tiny grey caps denoted shallow rapids. Kirikov tried to enter into conversation with the gunner T.O.'s but they proved to be as tight-lipped as could be, so the liaison man reverted his attention to his old pal Tyunkin.

"D'ye hear, Tunnykins? It's the big bang for you and me tonight. Wet rumps and water-bubbles for us tonight, you can bet your last cent!"

"And so what? And if we do wet'em. . ." grumbled Tyunkin as he carefully wrapped a newspaper and a waterproof round the mess tins containing the commander's dinner.

"And wet 'em we sure will. . ." Kirikov teasingly repeated. "Think we're going to use a magpie's tail to fly across to the other bank? This isn't one of your Olkhovka creeks—it's the Dnieper, man. . . Understand. . . the Dnieper! There's only the Volga you can compare to it. All the other rivers are just brooks, and nothing else."

Seeing that he would be unable to shake off his loquacious friend, Tyunkin resolved to squash him at one blow.

"Who needs a magpie's tail? Your tongue'll make three bridges. It'll come in handy for once at least. . ."

Dumbfounded by this sudden counter-attack, Kirikov racked his brains for suitable words to quash this new-baked wit, but the company commander's return prevented him settling with Tyunkin.

"Okay Big Boy, my turn next," he said to the messenger, while both T.O.'s spluttered with derision.

Having issued his final orders to the platoon commanders, Lieutenant Gladyshev dismissed them back to their sub-units and quickly began swallowing his meal, which had grown cold. The gunners in the next section of the trench were reporting something to the artillery command post by telephone. Tyunkin turned a sorrowful gaze on the pieces of cold fried potato. With a look of assumed indifference to everything, Kirikov polished the barrel of his submachine-gun with an oily rag.

The lieutenant finished his soup, and his eyes rested on the liaison man. During their many months of a common life on the march he had learned all there was to know about this ever cheery soldier, of whom he had grown quite fond. In this quick-tongued and quick-footed man was blended a bubbling and ardent love of life with cool soldierly fearlessness and the knack of preserving imperturbable spiritual equi-

librium in the tightest corners of front-line life. With his propensity for a flourishing word and witticism, Kirikov also possessed an inexhaustible fund of the Russian soldier's innate acumen. And it was because of this that the lieutenant forgave him his excessive inquisitiveness and waggishness. In the trying days of a soldier's roving life the lieutenant was somehow soothed by the presence of this incorrigible chatterer who always kept a sunny outlook on things. That was why he had appointed Kirikov his liaison man. However fierce the gunfire on the battle-field, the lieutenant was always sure that an order or dispatch carried by Kirikov would reach its destination. He also knew that the sight of the liaison man unconcernedly snooping from one trench to another gives fresh assurance to Red Army men who have dug in or who are dashing up to close with the enemy.

The lieutenant glanced at his liaison man and immediately saw through the latter's ill-concealed inquisitiveness. His eyes smiling, Gladyshev called Kirikov up.

"Well, star strategist! What are we going to do tonight?"

"Blow bubbles, Comrade Lieutenant," retorted the liaison man without pausing to think, his grey eyes lighting up with a mischievous gleam.

"Right on the nail! First we'll blow bubbles, and then we'll blow Jerry to the four winds."

"That's right, Comrade Lieutenant. But what gets me is how we're going to get across to the other bank. No bridge and no boats. And this is the Dnieper."

"Any fool can cross a bridge, especially if we ask Jerry not to look at the river and not to shoot. And that's where the catch is—to cross over unexpectedly. Like a bolt from the blue. That's what we're Guardsmen for. I'm the regimental commander and you, let's say, are the company commander. I give the order: force the Dnieper—and that's that. Now what would you start doing?"

"I'd rummage around the villages for boats."

"We've got all the boats we could find. Not enough!"

"I'd take all the empty German petrol drums that are lying around on the edge of the woods. Tie them together, a couple of planks on top—and there's your rafts!"

"Already done. And still there's not enough to go round."

"I'd dismantle the huts and make rafts out of the beams."

"The huts are adobe in these places. Too much work dismantling them. There's no time for it."

Kirikov sank into thought. He scratched the bridge of his nose. He spat ruminatingly. Then he rubbed the bridge of his nose again.

"Then this is what I'd do, Comrade Lieutenant. There's lots of fences and grain and threshing barns around here made of brushwood. If we'd collect all this here brushwood, bundle it in waterproof tarpaulins, and on top. . ."

"Hold on!" the lieutenant exclaimed excitedly, as though at last having found an answer to an unsolved question which had been tormenting him. "Hold on! Get all the platoon commanders here. Quick's the word!"

While Kirikov, somewhat taken aback by this sudden turn of their conversation, was dashing along the communication trenches looking for the platoon commanders, Gladyshev was pacing up and down the trench in a state of repressed excitement.

"What a head! What a brain! Worth his weight in gold! And as plain as a pikestaff! . . Why, dry brushwood is as good as cork-floats... A grand idea..."

. . . The remainder of the evening and the first half of the night was spent in feverish preparations for the night operation, although outwardly everything was calm and tranquil. The Germans would occasionally send yellow flares, rocketing into the sky above the high right bank. Now and again a short spurt of sub-machine-gun fire would burst out on the further bank, gashing the dark sky with the ruby and emerald streak of tracer bullets. Towards midnight, at a point downstream, where there used to be a ferry crossing in peacetime days, artillery fire opened and steadily swelled in volume.

"The demonstration has started," Lieutenant Gladyshev remarked to the gunner officer. The latter nodded in agreement and cast a glance at the luminous face of his wrist-watch.

Accompanied by Kirikov, Gladyshev made the rounds of the platoons. Under

cover of darkness his men were hauling to the crossing old patched-up boats, makeshift rafts built of barrels and drums and brushwood faggots and had entrenched in the brushes along the river-edge. They were silent, centered on those thoughts which always arise in a soldier's head when about to undertake a big and dangerous job. Gladyshev had no misgivings as far as they were concerned. Was it not with these men that he had forced about a couple of dozen large and small rivers and brooks during the last two months' offensive? True, tonight it was the Dnieper which they were to force, a river, the very name of which seemed to send a thrill of excitement through the lieutenant. Striding along a ditch which ran parallel to the river edge, amid the tall, unmown grass and the undergrowth, Gladyshev whispered to Kirikov:

"Gogol put it just right when he wrote: 'Wondrous is the Dnieper on a fine day.' "

"That's right, Comrade Lieutenant, just grand. But Gogol overdid it a bit when he said that even the bird on the wing can't reach the middle—and all that sort of thing. . ."

"That's not overdone, Kirikov, that's because he loved it so much. I'm from the Volga, you know, and I can understand how Gogol felt. When you love something you can't see an end to it, it's boundless, infinite."

"You're right, Comrade Lieutenant. If you ask me, if we set out for the other side and Jerry raises the chickens, then this here Dnieper'll seem wider to some of us than the Atlantic or Pacific ocean."

Kirikov fell silent for a minute. Then, powerless to conquer his inexhaustible inquisitiveness, he spoke up again.

"I wonder how our job'll get along tonight, Comrade Lieutenant?"

"Quite simple. We'll force the Dnieper."

"And how will we force this here Dnieper?"

"We'll fight for those little knolls over there on the right."

"All right, we'll fight. We'll drive the Germans out. And then?"

"And then, Kirikov, there'll be a tête de pont."

"Tête de pont? A what, Comrade Lieutenant?" Kirikov repeated, greatly struck with this peculiar word he had never heard before.

"A tête de pont, I said. . ."

"Yes, I heard you, Comrade Lieutenant. But I'd like to have it a bit simpler, in plain Russian, so as I can understand it."

Seeing that Kirikov was bursting with curiosity, Gladyshev laughingly retorted:

"Ah, that's a very intricate thing, Comrade Kirikov. It'll take more than words to explain it. As soon as we take those knolls, first thing tomorrow morning, I'll tell you."

"Right you are, first thing tomorrow morning," Kirikov answered in clipped Army-regulation style, left floundering by the answer of his superior officer.

. . . Exactly at zero hour the rafts and boats of the first rifle company, complemented with a sub-detachment of mortar- and machine-gunners and armour-plate riflemen, shoved off from the flat left bank and noiselessly moved ahead, crossing the river at the shallow rapids. The company commander was in one of the leading boats with Tyunkin and Kirikov. Downstream, by the old ferry crossing, guns kept up a ceaseless barrage. But here everything was quiet, the silence occasionally being broken by the short dry crack of a German sub-machine-gun from the other side.

The oarsmen and punters—local fishermen who knew all the deep and shallow spots hereabout,—noiselessly plied their oars or punts without raising a splash. The dark starless night hid the silently gliding craft from enemy eyes. In strained silence the men peered at the barely discernible lines of the tall right bank as it gradually drew nearer. Only their hands, convulsively gripping their sub-machine-guns and rifles, and the almost audible quickened beating of their hearts spoke of suppressed excitement—the waiting, second after second, for that which must, which cannot fail to begin. The soft rustle of the boat bottoms scraping the sandy bed sounded like a sigh of relief. . . One boat, then another. . . A raft, a second one. . . Hardly had the men stepped ashore when they were swallowed up by the darkness of the narrow strip of the low-lying edge of the river covered in undergrowth. The raft noiselessly shov-

ed off again for the return journey. The last of the second rifles platoon and the machine-gunners with their two "Maxims" had already crossed the narrow stretch of sand when things started.

Several men of the adjacent platoon betrayed their presence by too much noise and there instantly followed a long burst of heavy machine-gun fire from the tall bank and a flare was sent up over the river.

A second flare went up, then a third. . . Several dozen flares were now hanging above the bank, casting a ghostly and piercingly chilly light. Machine-guns burst out in a frenzy, mortar shells went screaming through the darkness, bursting between the boats and rafts and raising fountains of water. Then the artillery joined in and shells began to explode along the strip of bank, lifting pillars of wet sand.

"Look out, Tunnykins!" Kirikov cried impudently, keeping up with the company commander who was hurrying to catch up with the head platoon already hidden from sight in the bushes. "Look out, sonny boy! Don't forget this is the Dnieper and not any of your rippling little brooks! It's the Dnieper, sonny boy, the Dnieper!"

"Oh, shut up, you busted balalaika! I know without your telling me. . ." the imperturbable Tyunkin snapped back at him.

The men landed on the bank with few casualties, and marshalling his men into a spearhead, and feeling out the flanks of the adjacent units, Gladyshev led his troops against the rocket-illuminated green knolls of the right bank. In the two years he'd been at the front Kirikov had got used to most things. Never before though had he known such a night. The Germans put up fierce resistance, trying to throw back into the river the first small groups of infantrymen who stubbornly clambered up the steep slopes of the bank. The water and sand heaved under countless explosions.

Quickly dressing the lieutenant's wounded arm, Kirikov dashed from platoon to platoon and back to the battalion commander's post, transmitting orders and messages, repeating everything his company commander said, word for word. He crawled and leapt through the night air which was hot with the blasts of explosions, divining the required direction rather by instinct than by eyesight. All thoughts and feelings seemed to have grown congealed, turned into stone, pressed down by the chaotic din of night battle. As in a mist, human figures arose in front of one's eyes and the vague outlines of the German trenches; the faint hum of human voices—cries of suffering and hatred—melted in thunder-shattered ear-drums. To move onward, not to stop, to keep moving, quicker, whatever the cost. . . is all the mind thought of.

Only after he succeeded in finding the lieutenant and his invariable companion Tyunkin in this holocaust of fighting did Kirikov regain his usual spiritual balance. His lieutenant was striding here and there, shouting orders. That meant everything was in order, things were as they should be.

Just before the break of dawn when, having captured the first line of German trenches, the company was repulsing the enemy's fourth counter-attack, the figure of a huge German soldier loomed up out of the darkness in front of the spot where the lieutenant stood with his liaison man and orderly. Kirikov mowed down the German with a spurt from his tommy-gun, but the German managed to fling a grenade as he fell.

. . . When the blackness before his eyes cleared, Kirikov saw above him the blue autumn skies and the sun glowing amidst the goldened white clouds. His ears caught the distant sounds of battle, the sharp bark of A.A.-guns and the heavy, low hum of German aircraft. Kirikov tried to move but a twinge of pain shot through his shoulder and thigh. Then he remembered—he was wounded. He carefully turned his head. Next to him, in a shell crater under some bushes, his commander lay on a waterproof caked with blood. Lieutenant Gladyshev's face, tanned with the winds and sun of the steppes, had turned grey and had sprouted a faint fluff of a beard overnight. His blue eyes, sunken deep, gazed upwards, at the sky. His head was bandaged, and a crimson patch stained the dressing at a spot near his right temple.

Kirikov mustered his strength and softly called out:

"Comrade Lieutenant!"

As though wakened from sleep, without turning his head, Gladyshev's eyes slid from the sky to Kirikov. He looked close at him and smiled, with his eyes only.

"So you're alive, my strategist! That's good. . ." and his fluttering lashes closed for a moment.

The sound of this familiar voice and the warmth of those eyes, sunken with suffering, suddenly made Kirikov feel very much cheered up. And then, entirely uncalled for, there leaped into his mind again that obstruse little phrase: "Tête de pont". Mastering his pain, Kirikov turned on his side to face the lieutenant and exactly as it were yesterday, as though nothing at all had taken place overnight, he whispered:

"Comrade Lieutenant, you promised me first thing this morning that you'd explain to me all about 'Tête de pont'. . . Now's just the time, as we bask in the sun. . ."

Taken aback by this least expected question so utterly out of time and out of place, Gladyshev looked into the grey eyes of the liaison man. And in them he saw something so childlike, so boyishly mischievous that the lieutenant's bloodless lips parted in a wide grin.

"You're a funny chap, Kirikov, I must say. . . The way all sorts of silly fads simply stick in your mind. Here's Jerry, practically made mince-meat out of you, and all you think of is 'Tête de pont'. Well, I suppose I'll got to explain it to you. 'Tête de pont' is a French expression and in plain language it means 'bridge-head'."

"I knew that before, Comrade Lieutenant. . . But there's one thing I don't understand—why's it called a bridge-head when there's no bridge for miles around, and we've been clambering through brushwood all the time. . ."

"You're lagging behind life, Kirikov. We're not the sort of folk to throw empty words to the winds. While you and I were having our 'tête' last night, the 'pont' appeared. Just have a peep at the river."

Kirikov shifted his gaze to the river.

Across the river, which heaved under shell bursts from German long-range guns there floated inflatable boats carrying men and guns. And at the crossing, where faggot rafts had been laid that night, link by link, the bridge builders were setting up black, tarry pontoons and covering them with sturdy cross beams. And from the further, left bank could already be heard the impatient rumble of tank engines through the chaotic din.

Without removing his gaze from the river, from the bridge under construction, from the hustle and bustle on the river bank, Kirikov heaved a deep sigh and, putting into his words everything that he had experienced and suffered in the cruel hours of last night, he remarked:

"I see, Comrade Lieutenant. I understand—very much so. It's a real big thing, is 'Tête de pont'. . ."

ALEXEI SURKOV

THE GIRLS IN THE MINE

Anya Vedeshkina is not an actress. She has never left the mining village where she was born, yet, there was a day when Anya was to become a star, at least that's how Anya's fellow workers put it. It was not on the silver screen nor on the stage that she starred, but at the coalface underground. The cast were not actors but miners and timberers.

Here is how all this happened.

At one of the meetings Mukhanov, the party organizer of the mine, announced:

"Today first place again goes to Vedeshkina's girls' brigade. It has outdone not only the best shifts of our Number Fifteen mine, but all the shifts of the whole Stalinogorsk Coal Trust."

Anya Vedeshkina, who was sitting by the wall in the company of her girl friends, shyly fumbled with a button of her overalls. A wisp of blond hair had escaped from under a miner's cap; her face was black with coal-dust making her eyes look very bright.

The party organizer had hardly ceased speaking, when from among the boys of Rodionov's shift there came a suggestion:

"Let her teach the fellows the way

they should handle a drill. They've lost the knack of it, that's the trouble."

Mukhanov frowned: the words savoured of undisguised irony. Meanwhile the assembly was growing rather noisy.

"That's right: let the girl show her mettle."

"In Rodionov's shift she'd sing small soon enough. And the coal's kind of harder there."

There were other, more friendly, voices too:

"Why, Vedeshkina'd make good everywhere!"

"She can make rings round anyone!"

The girls of Vedeshkina's brigade were getting excited. Katya Kurtova bounced up, evidently with the laudable intention of giving her opponents a piece of her mind, expressed in a few scathing words, of which she was never short. But Anya Kashirskaya, who was more level-headed, held her back.

"Sit still. Don't meddle. Shouting's no use."

Obraztsova, the youth organizer of the mine, said something to Vedeshkina in an undertone, then stood up and addressed the audience:

"As I see it, there's nothing to argue about, nothing at all. The comrades from Rodionov's shift are absolutely right: things do seem to have been going wrong with Rodionov's team for some time, though, as a matter of fact, their boys are the pick of the basket—Diagovets, Pogonyaev, Pankratov and some others. I don't expect there will be any objection on the part of the administration if, just for a day, Vedeshkina is sent to work with Rodionov's brigade. They could go farther and fare worse than learning from a girl Stakhanovite."

This move only served to provoke more noise, but, luckily, it was already time for the shift to go down.

And so, on her day off, Anya found herself with a strange team, in the rival shift. For a moment or two the girl felt rather upset. With more attention than usually she inspected the hose of the compressed air line, then took a look under the transporter though as if to make sure no stray lump of coal had stuck there and even aimlessly fingered the timbering. Not that these actions were conscious, she just went through the motion, without being really aware of them, just to fight down her own uneasiness and to prevent people from noticing the colour that had rushed to her cheeks.

It seemed to Anya that everyone could hear the violent throbbing of her heart, that everyone was grinning at her. . .

As a matter of fact the miners were either too considerate to stare at the girl or simply thought jokes out of place down there, anyway, they left her to herself.

But, by the casual glances they threw at Anya one could guess that all the miners, including Diagovets, a sombre-faced middle-aged man and, perhaps, the ablest among them, and the jolly young Siberian Pogonyaev, that the meeting had not been forgotten, and that they all were itching to see how this girl would work beside skilled and experienced hewers.

Foreman Rodionov, a handsome, ruddy-faced man, spoke to Anya:

"I've appointed about the best shoveller to work with you. Zhigulin's his name, it's a treat to see the way he handles his shovel."

These words, their casual yet friendly tone, cheered her up a bit. But she thought she heard Diagovets mumble something about "the waste of putting Zhigulin to work with the 'star-guest', a weaker man would have done as well, and even so he would have to kick his heels half the time."

That put Anya's back up. All right. She'd show this grumbler. Her fears were dissipated. Having skilfully selected the softest spot in the coalface the girl drove the point of her drill into it and pressed the handle.

"If only the air supply is all right, if only the transporter doesn't stop," flashed through her mind.

But everything went on swimmingly. The air-pressure was all that it should be. It is no joke to hold a twenty-pound pneumatic drill in position, but the girl did not feel the exertion. Her drill bit deeper and deeper into the coalface which gradually showed a gaping hole. Now and then pieces of coal would fall down from the roof, against which the miner's cap would have proved but a poor protection; but with the true instinct of an experienced miner the girl kept close to the coalface so the falling lumps dropped far behind her and didn't hurt her.

At a distance Rodionov was watching Anya's work. At the outset he had had his misgivings. He was afraid the girl wouldn't rise to the occasion beside such old "coal-dogs" as Diagovets and Pogonyaev, and Zhigulin would have "to tread on her heels", as miners say. But his qualms proved unfounded. It made one feel good to see her work. How cleverly she made the work easier by first making a cut from below with quick but unhurried movements; it seemed as if the coal were crumbling down of its own volition, not because Anya was drilling it. How cleverly she chose the direction for her drill, and she knew how to use her strength sparingly.

"My word, she's an artist, that girl is," thought Rodionov.

Zhigulin, strong and experienced as he was, couldn't catch up with her.

As time went on, the pile of coal round him grew bigger and bigger. Once Anya dropped her drill.

"Let me help you," she suggested.

Woman-like, she couldn't help looking archly at Diagovets.

Zhigulin declined her offer with bad grace. He doubled his exertions but still couldn't keep pace with her. The scene made Rodionov smile. The whole shift was unrecognizable. The boys were obviously unwilling to appear slack in the eyes of the girls' brigade leader. They worked like the very devil. Even the sluggish Korenkov who had never before displayed any excess of energy had not smoked a single cigarette. Formerly, the men used to look rather pleased when there happened to be a slight delay in bringing up the props; it gave them an opportunity for a rest and extra smoke. Today everybody was in a hurry and shouting impatiently.

"Have you gone to sleep, you with your timber? Are your legs tied up or what?"

"Step on it, you son of a gun, and fetch the props. Don't you see we're waiting?"

"Hi, comrade foreman! Those sleepyheads have left us without timber again! Will you see to it?"

The foreman was rushing about, if the word is applicable to a kind of manoeuvering in the narraw spoce between the coalface and the transporter-trough, in a jumble of people, timbering, piles of coal, air pipes, lose boards and electric cables.

To an observer the sight of a coal mine at work must seem very picturesque. All along the coalface in a wide variety of attitudes, sitting, bending or lying, the hewers are punching away, traces of their work making fantastic patterns all over the wall, dimly lustrous in the electric light.

Near them are the shovellers, with their huge shovels, clearing away the hewn coal, dumping it onto the conveyor, which is slowly crawling away into the dimness of the bigger drift, where it will go into tubs and eventually arrive at the surface. The wall of coal is retreating appreciably, like a fighting line that can't withstand the powerful onslaught of the attacking forces. The coal-hewers and the shovellers give it no breathing-space. They are followed by men dragging logs and boards, who saw and cut and hack, and prop up the roof with wooden supports—"crosses", "frames" and simple props: these are timberers, whose business is to protect the miners from the danger of the roof falling in. All around you hear the rhythmical rumbling of machinery not unlike the sound of a great waterfall. It needs but a few diving helmets to make all these men look like divers. . .

Before the first half of the shift was over, Rodionov was obliged to appoint another shoveller to work with Anya: in spite of his doing his utmost, Zhigulin was unable to cope with all the coal hewn out by the indefatigable Anya. What could the feelings of the old miner be when the foreman said in an intentionally loud voice so as to make everyone present hear him:

"You're working well, Zhigulin, and even better than usual. But you see, today you've got Vedeshkina to deal with, so it's rather tough on you."

Zhigulin looked sheepish though he tried to look unconcerned. He tried to roll a cigarette and spilled half the tobacco on the ground. The Siberian Pogonyaev tried to cheer him up:

"She ought to have a whole brigade of shovellers working with her, this little Anya. The girl knows how to handle her drill, there's no gainsaying it. What's your opinion, Nikolai Afanassyevich?"

This to Diagovets. The latter smiled,

looked askance at the girl and kept his counsel. An old miner, who loved his job, he recognized the real skill and ability of a miner when he saw one. Now he had seen with his own eyes that Vedeshkina, though young enough to be his daughter, was in no way worse than himself at cutting coal. Well, perhaps, they had been right in saying she knew the job. It would be worth one's while to compete with her. And as he went on with his work you could see he was really putting his heart into it.

When the day was almost done the section manager, the youth organizer and the chief engineer came to the coal-face.

"Well, I see Anya Vedeshkina's star turn has proved a success," said Smirnov, the section manager. "Today the output of the shift is forty tons greater than it has ever been."

Anya was slowly switching off the air pipe; she was breathing hard, only just beginning to feel she was tired.

When Rodionov had measured her output and started on his calculations, the men crowded round him, eager to know the results.

"Twenty-two tons," he announced in a loud voice. "Now, let us see what Nikolai Afanassyevich Diagovets is going to present us with."

Here even the timberers left their axes and saws and tried to elbow their way to the scene of action. Who would be the winner: the "record breaker" of the shift, an old miner from the Donets Basin or this chit of a girl who, but a short time before, scrubbed the office-floors, and before that milked cows on a collective farm.

It was the zero hour. The machinery was stopped and it was so still that the drip of water somewhere nearby could be clearly heard. All eyes were riveted upon the foreman's face as if it were a dial, an instrument dial telling them the figure they were so eager to know.

"Twenty-two tons," announced Rodionov solemnly, secretly rejoicing at his own Stakhanovite being a match for this rising star.

The chief engineer laughed outright: "See how they've managed it between themselves. Neither wanted to let the other beat him. Both rather stubborn. But, if I am not mistaken, during this last month or two Diagovets never dug more than sixteen tons a shift. Why is it that he has surpassed himself today?"

"Neither can I remember Anya Vedeshkina ever giving an output like this, comrade chief engineer," said Rodionov. "Let's be just."

"Well, well, I'm not arguing the point. Both are bricks. Both have won."

They were walking towards the shift along the dark emergency drift, their rubber boots making squelching noises in the water underfoot, everybody gay and flustered from their enthusiastic work as well as with the recent excitement.

"Well, how do you like it? Didn't Anya Vedeshkina make you look alive? She hasn't disgraced her team, has she?"

"It rather seems it's we who have been taken down a peg or two," replied Diagovets. "I'll make a clean breast of it: we didn't quite believe all this talk about her, we thought it was just hot air. But now we see she's O.K. If we had a girl or two of her sort with us we'd beat everybody hollow."

Anya Vedeshkina was smiling silently. She'd have liked to say something nice to these blunt-mannered men. But they understood her without words. They judged her by what she had done.

N. DOLOTIN

HER DEVISE

What girl was this frowning lass? She knit her brows, peered out from under them, and compressed her lips—and that is the picture of her which is vivid in our memory.

Here are her school copybooks. A composition on the Paris Commune. "They (the heroes of the Paris Commune) loved their fair France better than life. For her they begrudged nothing. They lived in battle and in battle they died. Their's was the best, the noblest lite."

The blue cover of the copybook is smudged and scored through. Rhymes.

Through the crossed-out lines you can make out:

The aim of my life is not glory,
Is it worth while to live for glory!
My life's pursuit is not my own happiness
That I cannot hold dear.
Pleasure, comfort, beauty and wealth
Not in these live my dreams. . .

What follows is absolutely indecipherable, it is crossed and recrossed through again. Her thoughts would not fit into rhyme.

A few more leaves. Notes. It looks as though she jotted them down during lessons in haste and at random. They are about everything on earth: about an evening at the club, a dress fashion, a Komsomol meeting, about who is in love with whom—about all sorts of things.

"If I had been a knight do you know what I should have chosen for my heraldic devise?

Only he is worthy of life and freedom
Who for them does battle every day.

"It's a pity—don't know whose words they are. I wonder if anyone in the class knows?"

Her class had a code severe enough. It emphatically disapproved of painted finger nails, hair waves and high heels. Not that these were sedate young ladies or ascetics scorning everything earthly. Not at all—the girls were merry enough, even tomboyish, and the lads too were mettlesome. It was simply the unwritten code that had formed without any deliberate intention. There were girls who regretfully renounced a stylish coiffure which their souls so craved for, so as to escape the caustic remarks of the class.

Class meetings were the liveliest, parties the jolliest, disputes the stormiest and friendship the strongest.

There is a class at every school that sets the tone for the whole school. At this school it was this lively, industrious and comradely class that set it.

This was the class of Valya Gribkova, that dark-eyed, raven-haired girl.

She was neither very good looking nor brilliant and nobody noticed that she had any particular ability. But she attracted people strongly and those who knew her only slightly, remembered her.

Once she was called out to the blackboard to solve a problem in algebra. Mathematics wasn't her strong point in general and here she had a teaser. And there she stood before the board struggling to find the solution which constantly gave her the slip. Here the teacher happened to leave the room and as usual in such cases all rushed to prompt her. She flushed, stopped her ears:

"I won't, I won't listen! . ."

"Well, don't listen," said the boys scornfully. "What a little model!"

She stood before her comrades, all in patches of chalk, flushed and embarrassed, and looked at them as if apologizing because she could not accept their help.

Her comrades realized that this was not merely a pose, was not just a desire to seem better and more honest than the rest. She was just that sort.

In her blue woollen dress and low-heeled shoes she walked lightly and rapidly along Reutovo settlement and people meeting her smiled.

Her appearance was an eyesore to her elder sister Klavdia.

"Valya, Valya," she sighed, "do you realize that you are eighteen? Look at yourself, you're a regular boy. Come now, let me take you to the beauty parlour. There they'll curl your hair, pluck your eye-brows and you'll simply bloom."

Valya shook her head:

"No, let me stay as I am."

"Well, do as you please," said her sister angrily, "but go and look in the mirror: hair as straight as rats-tails, heavy eye-brows beetling all over the place. . ."

Valya frowned and turned away from the mirror: maybe it is so but let it be.

By now Klavdia was sorry she had said so much. Why, it was just like this that she loved her. Where else would she find such a little sister, so fine, upstanding and good-natured? Valya was a thousand times better than she was. Oh, well, she'd tell her so some day.

When all would be quiet and the tireless tongue of Kotik, Klavdia's seven-year-old daughter, was still at last, the sisters would turn on the light cautiously and pull some books from under the pillow—Klavdia some loose dilapidated novel, and Valya a well preserved volume by Maine Reid, Walter Scott or Fenimore Cooper. . .

"Knights again!" the elder sister would smile. "What a kid you are, Valya!"

Great-hearted knights, valiant warriors, noble hidalgoes. They fought for truth, for the triumph of justice, freed lovely ladies from captivity. . . But she could never put herself in the shoes of a languishing beauty waiting for her knight to come to her deliverance. No, she was a knight herself, with vizor raised she went forth to meet the foe. Over the lonely prairie, the scorched desert and wild bush she galloped to meet danger. And the fresh wind of adventure fanned her face.

Then came the war.

Everything changed at one fell sweep. All that seemed yesterday important and significant, appeared today useless and of no account. For her the jolly life at the summer camp snuffed out.

Wounded were brought to an army hospital. Valya watched the stretcher-bearers take out the sufferers. She put down her satchel on the snow and began to help. After that she often went to the hospital.

She did nothing out of the ordinary there. She helped the nurses, read to the men, told them stories or simply chatted with them. All the girls did the same. Among them were girls who read much better than her and could sing into the bargain. But still when any of the men felt especially down in the dumps or was in pain it was Valya he asked for.

The end of the school year was drawing near. The last year, the last class.

"What are you going to do after you leave, Valya? Tell us your secret. Going to college?"

"No."

"To work?"

"No."

"Stopping at home?"

"No."

"Getting married?"

"No."

"Tell us, Mademoiselle 'No', what have you done with your 'Yes'?"

At this the notes break off. Perhaps the bell went for the interlude, perhaps she just got fed up with answering the boring questions of her desk fellow. Or maybe she did not know herself where that "yes" was, did not know where to go or what to choose.

The last school social. Today they were still the tenth class B, tomorrow each would be on his own.

Klavdia went to the school to see how her sister showed up. Her gaze passed over the dancers and failed to recognize her. Is that Valya? Shapely legs, feet in dancing pumps. A slim figure in a simple yellow dress. A tanned rosy face, dark plaits wound round her head. She danced with such delightful consequence, her dark eyes shone so tenderly and shyly that her elder sister just devoured her.

"Valya," she said, "you're a dream!"

Valya smiled back at her, happy and embarrassed; you could see that she knew it was true herself and that it was grand. . .

Then tomorrow came. That same tomorrow which they had all awaited and feared a little. Yesterday's schoolchildren went off to Moscow to choose their colleges. Went to factories, to building jobs. Only Valya put it off.

"What are you waiting for, Valya? What have you chosen at last, darling Mademoiselle 'No'? Look how wide life lies before you. You may study—any science will yield to your persistence. The factory lathe will be obedient to your deft hand. Any pioneer detachment will be glad to march under your command. . ."

"What are you going to choose, Valya?"

"I've already chosen."

"I'm so far away from you! You'll soon be starting at college, and of course, I ought to be with you too. But I prefer what I've chosen. I'm happy—I'm a soldier."

The greatcoat of a soldier is what she chose. And to her fell the most difficult, dangerous and hardest war in which the enemy is not only in front of you, but behind you and on each side as well, is everywhere—partisan war.

All we know of this part of her life is from her letters.

"You can't imagine what it is like here. You all thought it to be romantic—you've no idea of what it is really like. Once I thought the same. It is much, much harder. . ."

The girl who had read books of ex-

ploits and adventures had gone to perform a real exploit. Life dispelled the halo of romance—things turned out to be decidedly more raw, more terrible. What is this—disappointment? regret?

"Don't think I regret it. No! I'd do the same thing again and again. Now I know this stern and grim but at the same time best and noblest life."

She probably did not notice that she had said those words once before in that school composition she wrote long ago about the gallant communards of Paris. She called their lives the best, the noblest. . .

How many terrible ordeals fell to her lot?

"It was pure chance that brought me out of that mission alive. I was saved by a downright miracle. I wasn't going to tell you about it but somehow I feel I must. I was already on the scaffold, the noose round my neck. But my luck was in, the execution was postponed as they wanted to question me. At night I managed to escape with the help of a few Soviet people."

Fearless little knight on whose escutcheon was emblazoned:

Only he is worthy of life and freedom
Who for them does battle every day.

She did not know whose words they were. Wise old Goethe had lived a long life. He had taken his Faust through all temptations and trials before he came to the final judgement of all earthly wisdom.

This girl had only begun life when she made these words her life's devise.

Here is the last we know of her—her last letter:

"Dear mamma and papa mine, Klava and darling precious little Kotik! I do not know whether you'll ever get this letter, perhaps it will be lost, leaving no more trace than my young life which is being lost here.

"I'm far, far away from home as well as from the men of my dearly beloved Red Army.

"I am writing this letter and don't know if I shall have time to finish it, perhaps they will come for me right now to take me off to the ravine. It is such a pity I shall never see you again. And I so want to see Moscow. . . My dears, don't think that I am crying, no, I shall not weep even when I am waiting for the bullet. I shall look the executioner square in the face. It hurts, though, to think that I was able to do so little, that I could not do what I intended. I know ours will win, that life will again blossom as it blossomed and flourished before the war, and that you won't forget me, that you'll remember me again and again. After all it's not in vain that I am dying, not in vain that thousands of others have laid down their lives.

"My dears, I'm very young, I plunged into life with my eyes open only during the war, then I understood its value and strength. And although I am to die I know life was always strong and will be stronger.

"I yearn to live, but there's nothing to be done. . . I fought as well as I could. . ."

What terrible accident betrayed her into the hands of the hangmen? What did they do to her? That we do not know and perhaps never shall. But we see Valya in her last hour just as fine, pure and firm as she was all her life.

NINA IVANTER

WOMEN OF ARMENIA

The beauty of Armenia can hardly be described. Only a person who has been there can fully realize her charm. The virgin snow and ice on the peak of Ararat gleams with a cold blue light, breaks out into a gorgeous orange, and then lapses into austere irridescence.

The fascination of Armenia becomes something tangible when you tear yourself away from the vision of the translucent distance and peaks and drop into the European building of the Sundukyan Theatre and see *Hamlet*, or visit the spacious shop of the giant Kirov works equipped according to the last word in technique, or see Armenian scientists at work in their laboratories or, finally, drop into a book-shop and turn the leaves of the splendid Armenian edition of Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace*.

Armenia with her cloudless azure sky

is not remote from the war, from the smoke and flame of battle. . . People in every house, whether it be a tiny clay cottage with a flat roof or a majestic many-storeyed building of rose-tinted tuff—are working for the Red Army. And old and young cannot speak of the Germans without anger.

At the village of Artashat, district of Kamarliu, we were walking through the vineyards. This is a breeding ground of venomous snakes. The mountain here too is of a peculiar fiery red and is called "Shamkhor" which means "The Serpent Queen". We carried sticks. Cautiously watching every footstep that I took, I asked Gurgen Babajanyan, the chairman of the collective farm:

"What's the name of that snake?"

"It's venomous, we call it a fascist!" exclaimed Gurgen vehemently, and his eyes flashed dangerously.

But most unforgettable of all are the Armenian women.

The old women are small, wizened and bent. Their eyes are dark pools of affliction. You look into their depths and see in them all the suffering of the Armenia of old and then you understand why they see their sons off to battle without a tear.

"Go, fight and don't come back without victory," are words from an Armenian mother's song.

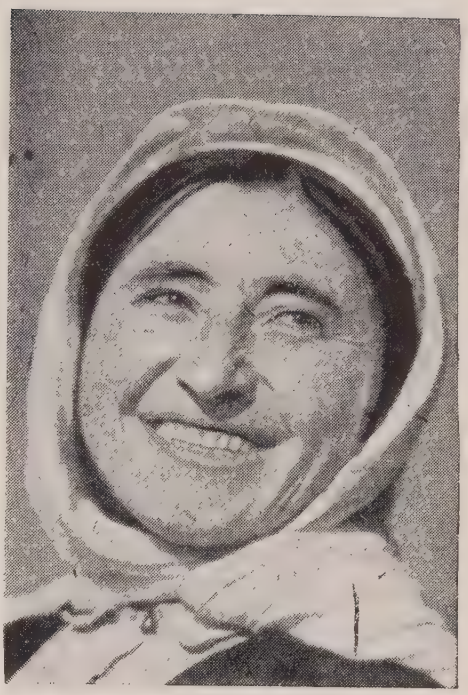
A woman from Zangibassar district came to an army unit training reserves for the front. Rumour had reached her that her son had proved anything but exemplary, indeed he had been confined to barracks. The mother asked the commander to let her see her son.

"Do you want me to call him?" asked the commander.

"No," said the woman, shaking her head, "I want to speak to him in front of the men."

The men were mustered. The mother faced her young son. She was all in black. . . sorrowful and proud.

"Listen, Khachaturyan, I suckled you at my breast, I didn't spare my health. For eighteen years I reared you and brought you up until you reached my height. I was proud to send you to the Red Army and thought you would deserve the name of warrior. Khachaturyan, we love you. You are our only son. But listen, Khachaturyan, if this happens again I shall disown you and send your father here—he's an old man but he'll serve instead of you!"



A woman of Armenia

The lad's cheeks and ears flushed with shame. His head dropped.

. . . At the collective farm of Agvi lives seventy-year-old Anush Onanyan. She has seven sons and six grandsons in the war.

Venerable Anush sends letters full of wisdom to the fighting men of her family:

"Your wound was a wound to my heart as well, Suren, my child. But you and I will bear everything. By our patience, my boy, we vanquish the foe. Go boldly into battle, my son, do not disgrace the family of Onanyan."

. . . Armenian girls have a graceful dignified carriage, their hair has a glorious sheen, their black eyes flash merrily. Many of them too have joined the Red Army.

In the Matenadaran repository of ancient manuscripts, you can find the absorbing legend of Aitsemnik, a heroic Armenian woman of the town of Ani. In 1125, the Emir Fadlun fell upon the town of Ani with a big army of Persian mercenaries. For a whole year

it was besieged. The Armenians swore to hold their town. Aitsemnik mounted the walls during the heat of the battle. At first she began hurling stones at the enemy. A shower of arrows was aimed at her. Aitsemnik tore the arrows from her body and pierced the enemy with them. Even the foe was amazed at Aitsemnik's courage. From generation to generation the people have sung the praises of this fearless Armenian girl.

The struggle with the German invaders has brought forth new Aitsemniks. Kekejan Assya is seventeen. She went as a nurse to the front and carried wounded men on her back from the field of battle. A German bullet wounded her in the hip but she carried to safety fourteen more Red Army men and commanders. It was she who dashed to bring up shells when a gun-crew was put out of action. Some time later her unit was sent to Stalingrad on the goodship *Alexander Nevsky*. A German bomb splinter wounded Kekejan but once more she stuck to her post and dressed the wounds of five men and two commanders. At the battle of Orel the fearless girl first climbed into one blazing tank and then into another and dragged out of the flames eight Soviet tankmen severely scorched. . .

Marlena Petrossyan more and more often ponders over the words of the writer Nikolai Ostrovsky: "The most precious possession of a man is his life It is granted him only once and it should be lived in such a way that there should be no painful regrets for years squandered aimlessly, no searing shame for a mean and petty past, so that in dying he should be able to say: 'All my life and all my strength have been given to the finest thing in the world: to the struggle for humanity's emancipation.'"

Do they regard only Armenia as their motherland? No, when they say "motherland" they picture not only "Mair-Ayastan" (Mother-Armenia) but the entire Soviet Union.

Girls and boys leaving school express a wish to take a part in the restoration of the areas devastated by the Germans. Liza Tatikyan says: "I shall finish school this year. I want to take part in the reinstatement of the liberated villages and towns of the Ukraine, Byelorussia and other republics. I shall do it both for my own Armenia and for all the Soviet Union because I hate Hitlerism with all the strength of my young heart. I want Hitler and his vile gang to see their destruction and our triumph. I await that hour with joyful anticipation."

Not one downhearted Armenian woman did I meet. In the Lusaber collective farm, in the village of Aytakh, Vagarshapat district, I met the old woman Bezo Arutyunyan. She had come to the cotton picking as a volunteer and had just worked many hours under the broiling sun.

"Is it hard for me? Do they ever ask the army man if it is hard for him to fight? You just can't sit at home. Cotton is needed. Hitler must be beaten," said this old woman wiping the sweet from her face with a piece of fluffy cotton.

HELEN KONONENKO

ONE MORE ERSATZ

Franco's Spain is taking an exceedingly active part in the hitlerite, so called, "peaceful manoeuvres". Franco himself has made numerous public appearances suggesting "negotiations."

(From the newspapers)

Berlin workshop hastily turning out a Dove of Peace.

Drawing by V. Fomichov

Drawing by V. Fomichov

FROM THE OTHER WORLD

Hitler staff announces that the seventy thousand and more German soldiers and officers who were thought to have been lost are all in excellent health having escaped from their encirclement.

Fifty-five German-fascist souls called up on parade from the cauldron by the help of black magic.

THE FLAGSHIP OF RUSSIAN NAUTICAL LITERATURE

Addressing himself, through the pages of *The British Ally*, to the Russian reader, G. B. Priestley asked him to "remember that the English fighting tradition belongs not to the land but to the sea (I suspect this is rather difficult for a Russian to understand). The sailor, not the soldier, is the typical hero."

A Russian can readily understand the natural pride English people feel about their naval glory, the more so as the fighting traditions of the peoples of the Soviet Union themselves are bound up also with the seas.

The Russian love of the sea is rooted in antiquity. Russian seamen occupy by no means the last place in navigation, both naval and commercial and, later, of a purely scientific nature too. As early as in the first half of the fourteenth century the Novgorodites ploughed the deeps of the Icy (White) Sea, and by the sixteenth century they had already discovered Novaya Zemlya Island and were opening up the route from the far Russian North to the River Ob. It is enough to say that Russians made eight circumnavigational voyages of a scientific nature, thus ranking second only to the English, who have eleven such round-the-world sea voyages to their credit [1].

Peter the First, who laid the foundation of the Russian regular army, also laid the keel of the future Russian navy. As is well known, the fleet built by Peter and directed by him, won a number of naval battles whose importance can hardly be exaggerated. The subsequent successes of the Russian navy at the sea battles of Oesel, Grengam and Chesma, Admiral Ushakov's capture of the unassailable fortress of Corfu from the sea (on which occasion Lord Nelson sent the Russian admiral a rapturous letter in which he congratulated him "from the bottom of his heart") and a number of equally glorious naval feats which followed, firmly established Russian naval renown in seamanship and bravery.

Russian literature has a number of outstanding works devoted to life and battle on the seas: the romantic sea stories by Marlinsky are strikingly unusual and brilliantly effective; the sketches by Dahl, Pissemsky, Grigorovich and the famous author of *The Precipice*, Goncharov. But for the portrayal of the innermost soul of the Russian fleet it was essential that a real sailor should take up the pen—a genuine seaman, one who had the salt spray in his blood, whose existence and activities were tied up with the sea and who at the same time was well gifted as a writer. And this happy combination of Russian seaman and Russian writer

[1] As a point of interest: out of twenty-nine circumnavigational scientific expeditions eleven were British, eight were Russian, seven French, one American, one Austrian and one German.

we find in the person of Konstantin Mikhailovich Stanyukovich, the centenary of whose birth was recently celebrated in the Soviet Union.

This man of letters was the son of Admiral M. N. Stanyukovich, Military Governor of Sevastopol and Commander of the Port of Sevastopol. Naval traditions were deeply rooted in this family, with whom the writer spent his childhood. His mother was the daughter of a sailor and, in former years, his father had been a dashing skipper in the sailing fleet. Admiral Stanyukovich ran true to type—the grizzled "sea wolf" personified, scrupulously honest and upright, an attentive and responsible superior officer and at the same time most exacting in service. This man of iron will, harsh and sometimes cruel, ran his home as sternly as he would his ship out on the high seas. In one of his stories, *The Formidable Admiral*, K. Stanyukovich presented the complex and stern features of his father and that domestic tragedy of which the future writer himself was the cause.

In his childhood days Stanyukovich's private tutor Hyppolite Debu, a political exile, implanted in the boy's heart the seed of the humanitarian ideas of the country, awakening in the lad a desire to devote himself to his native people. The unhappy lot of sailors, their lack of elementary rights in the Russian navy during the days of serfdom served to strengthen young Stanyukovich in this aspiration. This desire greatly increased during his years of training in the Naval Cadet Corps, in 1857—1860, which coincided with the great wave of the emancipatory movement in Russia. This was a period of tense struggle waged against serfdom by the revolutionary-democrats—Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov, Nekrassov, Saltykov-Shchedrin and others. Young Stanyukovich found himself caught up and borne along by the mighty wave of this movement.

The life of a young seaman on board ship was by no means what his father imagined it to be. Times had changed, and sharply so; the influence of emancipatory ideas had not only seeped into the navy but had even found ardent advocates among the young officers. And the naval officers of those days can, with full justification, be looked upon as the vanguard of politically conscious Russian society. Even that oldest of Russian periodicals *Morskoy Sbornik* (Naval Journal) turned at that time from a dry, "trade" publication into a living and enterprising organ of the press, dealing with vital, topical questions. It was in this periodical that Stanyukovich's first sketch appeared, in 1863: *Life in the Tropics*, which launched him on his career as a writer.

Russian literature is doubly indebted to the three years' sea voyage of young Stanyukovich, not only for his famous *Sea Tales* but also for one of the most absorbing poetical books about the sea—his story *Round the World on the "Korshun"*.

This fascinating book, whose material was furnished by the author's personal impressions, recorded for young readers, is worthy of being ranked with the sea tales of Jack London, Fenimore Cooper and Captain Marryat.

This story is one of those all too rare books which preserve their fascination for readers of all ages: leaving a profound impression on juvenile readers, it is read and re-read with equal interest in more advanced years.

Setting sail with the book's hero, Marine Guard Ashanin, the reader accompanies him on his thrilling voyage, visiting foggy old London, sun-scorched Batavia, drinking deep of the pungent salt of Atlantic winds and the coolness of the magical tropic nights.

Addressing his book to young people, the author tried to rouse in his readers the love of the sea, to reveal to them the throbbing beauty of the elemental forces of the sea and the spiritual nobility of those who conquer the vast deep. . .

Slipping its moorings for its three-years' voyage on the infinite expanses of the high seas, the corvette "Korshun" remains that "bit of native soil", and at the same time leaves on shore those chains which then shackled men and especially the simple Russian sailor of those days.

The captain of the corvette introduces a new, humane system on board his ship—one rarely to be found in the navy at that time. In such favourable circumstances the difficult profession of a sailor helped people to display their spiritual qualities: integrity of character,

moral purity and manliness. The sea makes a man of them—such is the author's underlying idea.

"Whoever has been at sea is always simple in heart and kindly towards people, keen in mind and bold in action," says Bastryukov, one of the ratings.

The commander himself, Vassili Fyodorovich, sets the pace in the general tone of conduct. It is in his relations with the skipper of the corvette that the character of the young sailor Ashanin is moulded. The latter trains himself in self-discipline and for the first time comes to know the joy of man's victory over the elements.

In the terrifying ordeal of the storm the captain, wearied with sleepless nights, remains on the bridge, and his calm assurance instills confidence even in the most timid of hearts. Ashanin is somewhat at a loss to understand from where the captain draws his strength and his ability to scorn danger. Vassili Fyodorovich modestly explains: "Don't run away with the idea that there are people who aren't afraid of danger... Everyone's afraid of it, and it is quite natural that they should be afraid... But the captain must keep himself in hand and not show this, so as not to make the sailors lose their nerve; it is essential that he should not lose his head but carry on, carry on, come what may... And that's the duty of a seaman."

Not bravado, but the consciousness of one's duty—such is the keystone of the captain's firm character. And this determined the behaviour of others.

With astonishing warmth of feelings Stanyukovich portrays the sailors from whom Ashanin learns "mother wit and the beauty of self-denial". The officers and crew are one in their common love for their country and their equally great love for the sea.

From beginning to end the book is filled with the breath of the sea, making it still nearer and dearer to the heart of every sailor. It is rare that a writer can so naturally convey the enchanting poetry of the sea.

"It stretched all around, a limitless hilly surface of water, brilliantly glittering on the eastern horizon beneath the rays of the swiftly rising sun. In slow and stately measure the tall waves, capped with grey, endlessly rolled on with a muffled roar... Now formidable and furious, like a savage beast, now soft and kindly, like a fostermother lovingly rocking in her lap the tiny craft entrusted to its care, this eternal roar will ever bring with it sad and happy thoughts, it will ever bring trepidation and rouse rapture; for all time will its undying music reverberate."

And this challenging voice of the sea long rings in your ears after you have closed this book.

The aim of Stanyukovich in this book which was, in effect, his own autobiography, compelled him to depart somewhat from the true story of his own life. The happy and radiant homecoming of Midshipman Ashanin from his long sea voyage in no way resembles the storm attending Stanyukovich's own return to St. Petersburg.

After his three years of naval service, out of respect for the young man's father, the Chief of the Pacific Ocean Squadron sent young Stanyukovich with a dispatch to the Minister of Marine, thereby hoping to facilitate his more rapid promotion. But the hot-headed young man, encouraged by the success of his first essay in literature, handed in his resignation on arriving in St. Petersburg. The naval authorities applied for his father's consent. In a letter to the "formidable admiral" Stanyukovich set forth in detail the reasons prompting him to take this drastic step and resign from naval service: his desire to devote himself wholly to literature and, through the pages of the press, to fight for the ideas of emancipation and for the people's interests. His father did not even answer this letter. It was only after his son's second letter, in which the latter threatened to behave in such a manner that he would be dismissed from the service in disgrace, after a court martial, that the "formidable admiral" tersely replied: "I do not wish to suffer such shame and I can not sail against the wind. Resign, and henceforth forget that you were my son!"

Stanyukovich's resignation did not, of course, mean that he had a hostile attitude towards naval service. A man indifferent to the sea and the navy could never have later written one of the best sea books in world literature, such as the *Sea Tales*. On the contrary, it was his very familiarity with the life of seamen, with the vital social interests of naval

officers, which prompted the writer to give up life at sea and take up the pen. In the words of one of his characters, it was on board ship that "his love for the muzhik, which had died out in his childhood, was now consciously reawakened. The seaman reminded him of the muzhik with his hopeless sorrow."

His desire to be of use to the people at first led Stanyukovich to establish direct contact with the Russian village. He spent some time as a village schoolteacher, but a short while later devoted himself entirely to literature.

Beginning as a reporter on several newspapers and periodicals, Stanyukovich gradually took his place in real literature, with his novels *No Way Out*, *The Slough*, *Two Brothers* and a series of publicist articles entitled *Letters of a Notable Foreigner* and *Sketches of Social Life*. In these writings he advocated democratic principles for the good of the people's welfare, and scourged all manner of businessmen, careerists, and intellectuals who had grown disillusioned with democratic ideals. Stanyukovich soon became one of the most popular Russian writers of the seventies of last century. But it was not only these works, permeated with noble ideas, that brought him fame.

In the spring of 1885 the Tsarist government banished Stanyukovich to Tomsk, in Siberia, for his connections with the revolutionary Narodniki. This blow could not shake or shatter the proud seaman's nature. "Konstantin Stanyukovich," recalls one of his contemporaries, "does not bend under misfortune; on the contrary, at such times he holds his proud, handsome head all the higher, and is alight with yet more youthful vigour. . . Misfortunes descend upon him one after the other, give him no respite, crowding down without mercy, but he grows all the gayer, all the more courageous."

In the backwoods of Siberia, far from the shores of the sea, he is as though born again, this time as an important writer of sea stories.

"I can write only from recollection," Anton Chekhov once remarked. "but never direct from nature. My memory has to sift the subject thoroughly as though through a filtre, so that only what is important or typical remains."

Exile in Siberia helped Stanyukovich to "filtre" his reminiscences of the sea and naval life and to revive them in his writings. His new stories won the immediate attention of the public. Having now definitely established himself in the world of letters, and after returning from exile, Stanyukovich devoted the rest of his life to nautical tales. One after another he wrote: *The Formidable Admiral*, *Stormbound*, *Children's Nurse*, *Sailor Girl*, *The Restless Admiral*, *The Sea Wolf* and other stories.

Although half a century has passed since these books first appeared, they are read today of no less absorbing interest.

With true artistic emotion, enthralled by the majesty of the mighty elements, Stanyukovich depicts the multiform nature of the sea, now raging and seething in storm, now serene and tranquil, bathed in the molten gold of noon or veiled in the diaphanous mist of a moonlit night. In his stories the reader senses the sea just as tangibly as the spectator does in viewing the canvasses of the well-known Russian marine painter Aivazovsky.

But Stanyukovich's main subject of interest is people. He has portrayed an imperishable gallery of sea-going folk—from admirals down to sailors. Their characters are drawn with astonishing poliancy and the national traits of the Russian seaman are portrayed with complete truth: his bravery, stamina, his knack of preserving a calm spirit even in the greatest danger and his shrewd wit.

Stanyukovich does not gloss over the less pleasing aspects of nautical life in those days. The sailors' existence on board some ships was more than terrible, and it was as such that the writer describes it. But at the same time he depicted how, even in these harassing conditions the best men among the sailors struggled for a better and brighter future.

The figures of courageous, manly and resourceful sea captains are particularly well portrayed in his stories.

Fearful Day—an excellent tale—describes the tragic situation of a ship which, rudderless, is being driven by the winds straight on to the reefs:

"There seemed to be no salvation. Not more than sixty seconds had passed since the clipper began drifting headlong

towards the rocks, and the captain—who had lived through eternity during these sixty seconds—could, to his horror, find no way out. . . Another ten minutes and the clipper would be dashed on the rocks, ground to bits, and not a man of them would escape death. . .

"Suddenly his eyes fastened on a small inlet in the shore, to the starboard. His eyes staring at this inlet lit up with a happy gleam which transfigured his whole face. And at the same instant putting the megaphone to his lips, his firm voice rang out commandingly over the whole ship:

"'Hoist the sails! Come on, be smart! Each second counts, come on, my lads!' he added.

"His calm and confident voice roused vague hopes in the men, though none of the crew as yet knew why the sails were being hoisted.

"Only the chief navigator, who had already prepared for death and who still stood calmly at the compass, started, and cast a look of astounded admiration at the captain.

"'Good Old Man, he's saved us!' the old sea wolf thought to himself, guessing what it was all about."

And it is with good reason that the sailors are proud of their captain: "But for our smart skipper we'd all be in Davey Jones' locker by now. . . Our captain's the man who pulled us through. . . What a sailor! What seamanship!"

"To be at home on the sea," the Russian admiral and scientist Stepan Makarov was wont to say. And this is the motto of every true seaman. And side by side with bravery and resourcefulness, another typical feature of the seaman is his love for his ship. This trait is personified in one of the writer's best characters—that of Senior Officer Vassili Ivanovich in the story of the same name: "His very life was bound up with that of the clipper, and he loved his ship with that strange love which every true sailor feels for his floating home."

That purest of all human feelings—patriotism—forms the keystone of all the exalted and heroic traits of seamen. Love for their country, readiness to sacrifice themselves for it—that is what determines the deeds of these men. The figure of Admiral Kornev (*The Restless Admiral*) who gives all his strength and ability to service the navy, is one of Stanyukovich's favourite characters. The writer repeatedly returns to this figure in a number of other stories, giving a finely analysed picture of his character. Admiral Popov, an inquisitive searcher for new ways and means in shipbuilding, served Stanyukovich as the prototype for his Admiral Kornev.

The sailors depicted by Stanyukovich were often malicious, unsociable, outwardly gloomy and taciturn. But let us remember the trying times in which they lived. It is not always that a writer is able to discern the living soul in such gloomy men and to reveal all that was good and worth-while in this world of seafarers.

Seamen have all the good traits of their people. They ardently love their native country, they can withstand trials and tribulations and they can look death boldly in the eyes. Irrespective of his nationality, the working man enjoys respect and esteem among sailor folk. Idlers and slackers, on the contrary, arouse a feeling of repugnance among seamen.

Sailors know how to respect their officers. They will treat a worthy skipper with the utmost esteem and trust, but a worthless and idle ship's master will arouse in them nothing but contempt and indignation.

Even in the most pitiable, universally despised and downtrodden sailors Stanyukovich can discern the Man. A remarkable example in this respect is his figure of Proshka in the tale *Man Overboard!* Everyone despises and ill-treats Proshka, who is the butt of the whole crew. No one ever treated him as a human being. In turn, Proshka nursed hatred and contempt for everyone. But no sooner was this downtrodden sailor treated in a humane manner that he showed the qualities of true comradeship. Risking his own life, he dives into the sea to save one of his comrades who has fallen overboard, and his courage arouses universal admiration.

Maxim Gorky once said of Charles Dickens that he "better than all others, acquired the difficult art of loving people". The spirit of Stanyukovich's writings has much akin to that found in the works of this great English master, although not to be compared with the latter's sweep and scope. But like Dickens, Stanyuko-

vich too had mastered that difficult art of loving people, joyfully revealing the truth and the good in their souls. Just as Dickens was once proud of the fact that the appearance of his *Nicholas Nickleby* had resulted in far-reaching changes in the educational system, so Stanyukovich was proud of the fact that the appearance of his *Sea Tales* had hastened the repeal of corporal punishment in the old Russian navy. And as Dickens is the favourite writer among young readers the world over, so is Stanyukovich the favourite author of young Russian readers, a writer who, for half a century now, has been ever rousing noble aspirations and feelings in young people.

The last years of Stanyukovich's life were particularly fruitful. He died on May 20th, 1903, from overstrain. In Russian literature, so richly endowed with talents, his works still retain honourable title given him, that of the Flagship of Russian Nautical Literature.

In the U.S.S.R. today there are a whole number of seamen-writers—headed by A. Novikov-Priboy and Leonid Sobolev—who are all worthy torchbearers to their talented predecessor, Konstantin Stanyukovich, who was first in the Russian world of letters to give a realistic portrait of the Russian seaman.

ALEXANDER SHARONIN

NOTES ON WRITERS OF SOVIET LITHUANIA

When on June 22, 1941, the treacherous German invasion interrupted peaceful construction in the Soviet Republic of Lithuania, thousands of her people, including her writers, took part in the country's fight against the nazis.

On the formation of the Lithuanian Division of the Red Army one of the first volunteers was Liudas Gira, an old and most popular Lithuanian poet—he is already in his fifties. The dangers and vicissitudes of the division's campaign were also shared by other Lithuanian writers: Jonas Marcinkevičius the novelist, the writer and poet, Antanas Venclova, Peoples' Commissar for Education of the Lithuanian Republic, Kostas Korsakas, Lithuania's foremost literary critic and E. Miezelaitis, a young poet. They were given a splendid welcome by the Lithuanian armymen and took an active part in the hard fighting in which the division annihilated 13,000 nazis and fought its way west for 120 kilometres.

That is how the Lithuanian writers are maintaining the traditions of their people who, since the beginning of the XIII century, have had to wage a stubborn struggle against the Teutons.

All Lithuanian literature is permeated with the spirit of hatred for the age-old foe. Kristijonas Donelaitis (1714—1780), the greatest of the Lithuanian people's poets expressed in his famous poem, *The Seasons* Lithuania's dreadful days during the domination of the German barons and their savage reprisals on the Lithuanian peasantry.

S. Daukantas the historian and Bishop M. Valančius, outstanding Lithuanians of the XIX century, unceasingly warned the people of the danger of Germany's "Drang nach Osten". In their books they have resurrected the heroic battles of the past in which the Germans painfully felt the power of Lithuanian arms. Prelate Maironis (1862—1932), the Lithuanian poet, describes in his poems, so dear to every Lithuanian, the victorious struggle of his people against the German knights. In Maironis modern German aggression, the occupation of Lithuania in 1915—1918, found a relentless opponent.

In the present war Lithuanian writers have shown that they can fight with sword and pen.

The State Publishing House of the Lithuanian S.S.R., now working in Moscow, has published two new books of poems by Liudas Gira—*Grünewald's Lithuania* and *Violence and Resolution*. Not long ago L. Gira was decorated with the Order of the Red Banner of Labour in connection with his forty years' literary work.

Several books during the war have been written by Petras Cvirka who won prominence in Lithuania by his novels *Frank Kruk, Craftsman and Son* and *Bounteous Earth* (excerpts of which were published in our magazine.—*Ed.*). We have in

mind his new collections of stories *Avenging Hand* and *Stories About the Invaders* and also his delightful little book of tales *The Silver Bullet* on subjects suggested by those legends in which the Lithuanian people have said their say about the German oppressors.

Salomeja Neris, the well-known Lithuanian poetess who won a state prize while still in Lithuania, has published a book of poems under the title *Sing, o Heart, of Life* devoted to the front, the hinterland and the partisan struggle.

Antanas Venclova, well-known in Lithuania as a prose writer, author of a big novel and several collections of short stories, has printed a collection of short war stories *The Road to Lithuania*, a book of poems under the title *Call of the Homeland* and despatches from the front *From a War Notebook* describing the Lithuanian Division's engagements in the Orel Region.

Kostas Korsakas, a literary authority, has shown himself to be a gifted poet, with a collection of verses called *The Law of Struggle* published during the war. He is also editor of the Lithuanian Literary Yearbook *Victory* published in Moscow.

Juozas Baltušis derives inspiration from the Lithuanian partisans and the work of Lithuanians in the hinterland in Soviet fields and factories (his book of short stories *White Clover*). Baltušis' name is not unknown among Lithuanians in the U.S.A. One of his dramatic sketches was published there recently, featuring his favourite hero *Uncle Silvestras*. Soviet readers fully appreciated the character of the old peasant Silvestras, the untamable fighter against the German invaders.

Jonas Marcinkevičius, besides his work as a war correspondent, has published a book of war essays entitled *I Will Take Revenge* and also a collection of narratives called *The Star*. He is now working on a novel whose heroes are officers and men of the Lithuanian Division.

We must make mention of Jonas Šimkus, known for his fine book of short stories *The Battle for God*. At present Šimkus is chief editor of *Soviet Lithuania*, the biggest Lithuanian newspaper; this, however, has not prevented him from writing a number of short stories.

A word or two about the younger generation, and they are by no means few. In Moscow E. Miezelaitis, V. Mozūriūnas, V. Reimeris and a number of others have published their anthology *On the Field of Battle*. Most of them are in action at the front. Several young poets have bravely fallen in action for the liberty of Soviet Lithuania.

Soviet Lithuanian writers are collaborating with the Lithuanian press of the United States.

Russian translations of Lithuanian authors are appearing ever more frequently in newspapers, magazines and books. At present books by Donelaitis and Maironis, the famous Lithuanian poets, are being translated into Russian.

It is well known that the invaders in Lithuania are trying to suppress national literature and all other manifestations of Lithuanian culture. Despite all obstacles, however, the voice of the Lithuanian patriot writers reaches the Lithuanians. Every day by radio they communicate with their people: they know that the untramelled word of Lithuanian writers finds a response among the people and lends them strength in the fight against the Germans.

The Lithuanian writers will return to their country by no means empty-handed, they will take with them those works which they have endeavoured to impress with the heroic deeds of their people, they will return as witnesses of the great struggle for freedom, honour and culture.

A. LAISVYDAS

SOVIET HISTORICAL NOVELS

A conference was recently convened by the Union of Soviet Writers to discuss Soviet historical novels. Alexei Tolstoy presided. Among those who spoke were Academician Tarle—the historian, Fadeyev—then head of the Writers' Union, Vyacheslav Shishkov—author of *Yemelyan Pugachov*, Anna Antonovskaya who wrote a novel about the majestic and tragic Georgian general, Georgi Saakadze, Sergei Borodin, the author of a novel about Dmitri Donskoy, the hero of the Russian people in its struggle against the Tatar yoke, and other writers of historical novels. Other speakers were Sergei Golubov, known for his novel *Bagration*, Georgi Storm, who wrote a novel about Mikhail Lomonossov, the greatest Russian philosopher, poet and man of learning.

What accounts for this interest in historical

subjects at a time when the thoughts and feelings of everyone, writers included, are centred on the stern events of our own days? If we consider the questions raised and discussed at this conference it becomes perfectly clear why the historical novel is of no less importance today than the novel depicting modern life. The destinies of mankind and of every nation today are being weighed in the balance. Fighting the nazis—the enemies of progress and civilization, desecrators of culture and national dignity,—we must look back at the path traversed. The finest traditions of bygone days are seen again in the deeds and exploits of the men of our times. If history is regarded as the sum of human experiences and not merely as a collection of anecdotes and more or less entertaining stories of the old days, our contemporaries will find it instructive. It not only helps people to realize the continuity of their historical development but also points the road to the future; and it is here that the artist has a big role to play. It is in his writings that the people's memories live: by the great magic of art he can revive pages of history that have become dim and show to his contemporaries the deeds, sufferings and bravery of their fathers and their faith in their own immortality. In his impassioned service of reality the true artist unfolds those aspects of the people's historic past which help them to fight for and defend their national property today.

Soviet writers of historical novels had achieved a fair measure of success long before the war and several works testify to the progress made in this field of Soviet literature. Alexei Tolstoy's *Peter the Great*—a novel familiar to readers in many countries, gives a completely new interpretation, fuller and deeper than anything previously written, of the figure of this great reformer of Russia who built up the might of the Russian state. The artist and eminent authority on literature, the late Yuri Tynyanov, wrote a subtle and refreshing novel about Pushkin—the genius of Russian poetry. The aim of the writer Kostylyov in his trilogy *Ivan the Dread* is to reveal the tragic and contradictory figure of the Russian tsar, whose historical fate recalls that of Louis XI. They were both great historical figures and not infrequently they waged a lone struggle for the unity of their country. In his fight against feudal dissension, treachery and perfidy of the boyars, Ivan the Dread was often compelled to put on the iron glove and show no mercy to his opponents. Ivan however never resorted to the cruelties attributed to him, for polemic reasons, by his enemies. He acted as a wise gardener, lopping the dry branches from the trunk of the Russian state. Kostylyov's novel unmasks the legend of Ivan "the Dread", and shows him in his true aspect, as Ivan the Redoubtable. [1]

In his screen novel *Minin and Pozharsky*, Victor Shklovsky depicted the two patriots—Kuzma Minin, a man of the people, a butcher by trade, and Prince Pozharsky—both of whom lead the struggle for Russia's independence against Polish intervention in 1612. This period was known as "the Time of Troubles", when Russia was harassed, not only by foreign invaders, but also by different pretenders to the Russian throne.

Thus, one of the main trends in Soviet historical novels expressing the heroic past of the Russian people had already taken form before the present war. Today the development of this trend has received further impetus from that unparalleled heroism of the Russian people in battle against the nazis. The war-time novels occupying the centre of attention at this conference further develop these trends. Sergei Golubov's *Bagration* tells of the last months of the life of this famous Russian general, the favourite pupil of Suvorov and companion-in-arms of Kutuzov. The artistic merits of this novel won high praise at the conference.

Much discussion centred around Vyacheslav Shishkov's *Yemelyan Pugachov*. The author of this comprehensive work is one of the oldest living Soviet writers, who recently celebrated his seventieth birthday.

Shishkov gives an all-embracing description of the XVIII century—the century of Russian enlightenment which saw the birth of brilliant scientists and poets such as Lomonossov and Derzhavin, the renowned generals, Suvorov and Rumyantsev and the outstanding statesmen, Count Panin and Prince Potemkin. The social-historical nature of Catherine II's reign was very involved. On the one hand the period saw the growth and development of progressive social forces, and on the other, the tightening up of the bonds of serfdom, which made the life of the Russian peasantry very hard. All this made peasant rebellion, headed by Yemelyan Pugachov, a Don Cossack, a man of great organizational ability, clever politician and an experienced soldier, very significant. Yemelyan Pugachov, one of the greatest favourites in Russian folklore, is portrayed by Shishkov against a broad historical background. The scenes described by the novelist embrace the Seven Years' War and extend practically as far as the beginning of the French revolution.

The wide range of subjects chosen by Soviet writers of the historical school was also noted at the conference. Last year witnessed the appearance of Eugene Lann's novel *Old England*, dealing with the Whig and Tory struggle in the period preceding the Utrecht Peace Pact. Its central figure is the great English satirist Jonathan Swift. His relations with Lord Henley and Lord Bolingbroke are discussed and his private life described; force of circumstances had involved him in the gambling policy of the Tory ministers and E. Lann tries to show the inner tragedy of Swift's life.

Valeri Yazvitsky's novel *Through Smoke and Flame*, a recent publication, also deals with a West-European historical subject. This book tells of two countries—Spain and France, at the middle and close of the XVIII century. Its main theme is the fate of a young Spanish naturalist (an imaginary character) who is compelled to flee to France to escape persecution at the hands of the Jesuits and the Inquisition. There the young Spaniard meets Buffon, Diderot and other figures of France, and accomplishes his work. The novel is unpreten-

[1] It is interesting to note that this legend is reflected in the traditional epithet of Ivan IV in foreign languages: Ivan the Terrible. This is incorrect, as the Russian word "Grozny" means "Redoubtable".

cious and pleasant reading and at the same time gives readers a picture of France during one of the most interesting periods of its history.

What is it that links together all these works by Soviet writers, so unlike each other in subject and style?

Unquestionably, it is their historism. By this term we understand, generally speaking, the correct perception of history, the ability to analyse with scientific precision the peculiarities of a period, and the features conveying its spiritual and social aspect. At the same time, by historism we mean the ability to see how progressive tendencies of historical development arise and become established during the birth pangs of history. Genuine historism in the writings of historical novelists is possible only when there is such an examination and depiction of history, when the writer can clearly envisage the ultimate aim of history's development—the building up of social relationships on a wise foundation.

Interesting light was thrown on this problem during the Writers' Union conference. The striving for historism is a salient feature of literature in the U.S.S.R., and it is therefore not surprising that it reaches a high point of development in Soviet historical novels.

But as Mallarmé rightly said: "The best songs are not yet written." This conference on historical novels has raised a number of new problems for writers—problems which, it is to be hoped, will find a solution in their future work.

BORIS SUCHKOV

TORQUATO TASSO

(1544—1944)

Torquato Tasso, one of the greatest poets of Italy was born on March 11th, 1544.

The fate of a genius in the hands of the court and clerical set, who tormented his soul, has endowed historical and literary research on his work with rare dramatic intensity, and has inspired poets. Carlo Goldoni and Goethe wrote plays about him; Byron, who in those days was suffering in sympathy with an Italy not yet liberated, poured out, in *The Lament of Tasso*, the dream of the Italian patriots who were his friends.

Forces of reaction immeasurably more harmful than those which reached Italy in Tasso's time, have descended upon the beautiful land that bore him. The honourable task of commemorating the poet and the man who remained proud through all his sufferings devolves upon those who, even in days of fierce struggle, do not forget the great in spirit.

While still a pupil, Tasso tried his hand at sonnets and madrigals. With the approval of his father, who was himself a poet of no mean attainments, Tasso published his first poem *Rinaldo* at the end of 1562. He was then 18 years of age. The poem which was built around the exploits of the renowned paladin of the Carolingian Cycle, Renaud de Montauban, met with no success, though it contains lines full of deep feeling, and has some vivid descriptive passages.

The youthful poet was not discouraged. He had already planned his *Jerusalem* and written the first 116 octaves. The laurels of Ariosto gave him no peace.

The new poem was of a conception entirely different to *Orlando Furioso*, and was written in an entirely different mood. Ariosto's work was about half-a-century older and in that time many changes had taken place both within Italy and without. While Tasso was planning his *Jerusalem*, Italy was groaning under the Spanish yoke, and feudal reaction, narrow and cruel, prevailed. It was further intensified by the clerical reaction which had become particularly fierce in the years following the Peace of Augsburg (1555). The Protestant faith was sanctioned in the greater part of Germany and the Protestant element raised its head in Europe. Then it became evident that a danger still greater than Protestantism had arisen, threatening not only Roman Catholicism but the Christian world as a whole. The invasion of Europe by the Turks showed no sign of abating.

The Jesuits added fuel to the fires of fanaticism, lumping Mahomet, Luther, the Sultan and Henry the Eighth together and condemning all. And there were those who listened to them. Among people of high sensibilities who lacked the energy necessary for a struggle, the religious mood deepened. To these Tasso belonged. But he was a poet. His long poem was nurtured in the stifling atmosphere of a double reaction, which hung over Italy like a black, clinging fog.

After the publication of *Rinaldo* the poet left Padua for Bologna, to continue his education at the famous university. But he did not remain there long. A clever and malicious pamphlet in verse, ridiculing certain students, professors and some of Bologna's most prominent citizens, was circulated in the university. Suspicion fell upon Tasso, perhaps not without reason, and since many were highly incensed and since they were hot-tempered, it became far from safe for him in Bologna. On his return to Padua, he continued his education there until 1565, when he entered the service of Cardinal Luigi d'Este, the brother of the Duke of Ferrara. He settled in Ferrara with the cardinal.

The first few years that he spent in Boiardo's and Ariosto's birthplace, that is, the years 1565 to 1574, were the easiest and most prosperous in Tasso's life; the cardinal's service was not exacting, the remuneration he received kept him from want. He had ample opportunity for study and could absent himself from Ferrara for that purpose. He visited Paris in 1570; while he was at court there, he wrote sonnets and madrigals, and gradually became the life of the court society. His own position improved when he left the cardinal for the Duke Alfonso II d'Este. It was here that Tasso wrote his dramatic pastorale *Aminta*, his first mature work. This was presented at court for the first time in the summer of 1573.

Aminta is in the affected taste of the period, and is an illustration of the change in the pastorale which took place in the course of the century that had passed since Poliziano's *Orfeo*. Though it was free now of the traces of the medieval mystery play and had the shining purity of the classic style, the lyrical part of the pastorale totally lacked the joyousness of *Orfeo*. *Aminta* is not the child of daybreak but of twilight. The young poet's talent is clear and fresh, but his surroundings have already closed in upon him, and seem as though hastening to infect him with their unwholesome atmosphere. In *Aminta* simplicity of form and much refinement is found. The verse flows freely, full of an inexplicably musical quality and variety.

For Tasso *Aminta* was but an episode, and the writing of it did not interrupt his work on the poem. His youthful efforts were revised, gone over again, the subject-matter frequently undergoing alteration. In spring 1575, the poem entitled *La Gerusalemme (Jerusalem)* was completed.

He was not anxious for its immediate publication: always indecisive, his hesitancy developed, after the immense nervous tension under which he had written, into a slow, heavy uneasiness. The thought that he might have transgressed some of the literary rules alarmed him; what was still worse, he might have profaned a religious theme by the introduction of sensual episodes and allusions to pagan classics. These were dangerous times and inquisitors were rampant. On the advice of people whom he trusted, Tasso made up his mind to leave out some lines that now seemed frivolous to his mind. But he was not in time; mental illness had crept upon the poet.

He fancied he was no longer appreciated as he had been. He became irritable and lost the power of self-control. His faith, he felt, was shaken, and, in his terror of the church's punishments, he confessed to two inquisitors in Bologna and Ferrara. But this failed to lull his fears. Persecution mania gained a still stronger hold upon him and impelled him to irresponsible actions.

His return to court life ended tragically. He took offence at the Duke who refused him an audience on one occasion, and became very agitated. The disease returned in a more exaggerated form. In the Duke's court apartments, Tasso broke into a torrent of vituperation against his employer, his young spouse, sisters and courtiers. The epithets used were unseemly for the court and unbecoming for a poet. He was seized and placed by Alfonso's orders in chains in the dungeon of the St. Anne Hospital, where dangerous and violent madmen were kept. Legend has embellished this episode with the romantic story of Tasso's passion for the Princess Leonora d'Este who, it is said, returned his love. The impossibility of marriage aggravated his disease and drove him to denounce the Duke who separated him from his love. This legend was used by Goethe as a subject for his work, but there is no foundation for it. Irrefutable proof has been given of this. The reason for Tasso's imprisonment was the Duke's desire to isolate him; and as for the chains, these were regarded at that time as an excellent therapeutic remedy for the mentally-afflicted.

Tasso spent seven years in this place. At first, his illness caused him much suffering, both physical and moral. His correspondence gives a detailed description of these sufferings. It was not until a year later that the lucid periods became more prolonged, and his serenity and the ability to consider things calmly, returned to him. By degrees he took up writing again.

Meanwhile, enterprising publishers brought out his poem and put the profits, which were fairly large, into their own pockets. One of the editions was published in Parma by a certain Ingenieri under the title *La Gerusalemme Liberata (Jerusalem Delivered)*. All these piratical editions were, as may be expected, full of mistakes and distortions, a fact which induced Tasso to consent to the publication of the true text in full. He deputed the task of preparing a new edition to a friend; this he read, and left the title of Ingenieri's edition unchanged. *La Gerusalemme Liberata* appeared in its true text in 1581.

It was the third of the poems of chivalry to be published in Ferrara after Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato* which appeared in 1494, and Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* in 1532. But how different was their reception in each case; all that the first-named poet expressed without a hint of piety, his successor did with delicate irony evokes in Tasso a serious and reverential attitude. The feudal and Catholic influences found here full reflection, but the Renaissance avenged itself. It gave the work a sensual pagan lyricism at times; the epic mood of the poem obliged the poet to turn to the insincere and florid baroque. But it proved impossible to accomplish the organic merging of two warring and incompatible tendencies: the one had been drawn from the Roman classics and Ariosto, the other had been bred by religious moods. Here was an inner conflict like that in the author's psychology. But the incomparable

beauty of the poem made it the most widely-known in Italian literature. What is more, it had very soon reached the people. The fisherman at the mouth of the Po, the gondolier of Venice, the peasant of Friuli still sing Torquato's lines. Their melodiousness draws music irresistibly.

It was this incomparable lyricism, glimpsed through the epic fabric of the poem, that rendered *La Gerusalemme* so widely-loved at certain periods. The romantic school in France and Germany placed Tasso far above Ariosto, above Dante, as Calderon was once placed above Lope de Vega. For the romantic souls, Dante was too austere, Ariosto too transparent and vivid. Far nearer to them were Tasso's subdued tones, plaintive moans, his almost feminine character. When Byron wanted to portray his Tasso as the prophet of the risorgimento mood, he had to give his poem the fire of a revolutionary feeling, essentially alien to the author of *La Gerusalemme*.

In Russia the poem is to be found in three complete translations in verse, one of which was made at the beginning of the XIX century by the poet Merzlyakov. The language of this translator was archaic even for his own day, and his style was ridiculed, but nevertheless some parts of the poem are very deeply felt. The second translation which is the only one in the true octave, is that of Min, the translator of *The Divine Comedy*. The third and most modern is Likhachov's, and parts of the *La Gerusalemme* were translated by one of the finest of the Russian lyric poets, K. N. Batyushkov, a great admirer of the Italian poet. In his wanderings through Italy he steeped himself in all that called up the image of Tasso. *The Dying Tasso*, an elegy, one of the best things Batyushkov wrote, is a souvenir of that period. Tasso became the hero of another work written during the Pushkin epoch, Kukolnik's dramatic fantasy *Torquato Tasso*. The blind poet, Kozlov, who sang the praises of nights in Venice, could not forget the music of Tasso's lines sung on the lagoon. Pushkin knew the Italian poet's work well. In an early poem, *The Little Town*, he informed us that on his book shelf "Virgil stands beside Voltaire, Tasso and Homer together". In his memorable poem, reminiscent of Chenier *Near That Spot Where Golden Venice Reigns* he too has a gondolier who "sings of Rinaldo, Godfred and Erminia". His enthusiasm did not hinder Pushkin from according Tasso his rightful place in Italian literature. On learning that a Russian writer was studying Tasso, he counselled him to turn to the study of Dante.

Tasso's renown, his place in the world's greatest literature, is built entirely on his *La Gerusalemme*. *Aminta* occasionally appeared as the satellite of the great planet, and accompanied the epic, but his other works are scarcely known beyond the frontiers of his own country.

He wrote many lyrics, but gems worthy of a poet of his magnitude are hard to find among them. The majority are rather mediocre work "done to order" and are of little interest. He wrote a number of works in prose, dialogues on philosophical themes, dissertations, etc. There is nothing which raises them above the general level of literature popular during the arid period of the later Cinquecento. Of far more interest are the vivid examples of Tasso's correspondence where much more sincerity and directness are to be found and the finish is not inferior.

His confinement in the Hospital of St. Anna ended in the summer of 1586. He spent the closing years of his life more or less peacefully in Rome, under the patronage and protection of the brothers Aldobrandini, the Pope's nephews. He never fully recovered his mental balance. Spectres continued to haunt him, things went badly with his work, he lost confidence in his own powers. And, though the Pope had a plan for crowning him at the Capitol with the laurels of a poet, as once Petrarch was crowned, it was already difficult to choose the right moment. The poet was eagerly anticipating it, but he was in a state of constant morbid excitement.

Traces of this are apparent in all the things written in these years. *Torrismondo* which was written in 1586, is somewhat better than the other tragedies of the late Cinquecento. For this he used rough drafts he had made in his youth. His *La Gerusalemme Liberata* was rewritten in 1592 as *La Gerusalemme Conquistata* in an attempt to purge the poem of its pagan elements and intensify its religious feeling. But it merely meant disfigurement of a work of genius. *Il Mondo Creato (Week of Creation)* written in 1594 on the theme of man's creation, is a dry and lifeless hotch-potch of Bible stories, dissertations on scriptural and philosophical subjects, and conjectures at astronomical and physical problems. The poet had obviously outlived himself and he found ease and rest only when he was placed in the Monastery of St. Onofrio on the Janiculum where he died on April 25th, 1595.

ALEXEI JIVELEGOV

MY RECOLLECTIONS OF MAXIM GORKY

Maxim Gorky's writings were placed at the service of the Revolution right from the very first period of his literary activities. His tales and narratives give an artistic description of that historical period when the first Russian revolution was being prepared. The heroes of the novels are called to struggle, and often came forward as representatives of the organized revolutionary movement. When Gorky created those courageous and straightforward characters, tempered in struggle, he gave the integral figure of a professional revolutionary with all the psychological traits of a bolshevik, a man of the highest moral requirements.

Gorky's journalistic writings were a response to the most vital questions of the time which largely accounted for the interest roused by his articles and sketches fre-

quently appearing in the pages of the progressive press.

Maxim Gorky assisted the Bolshevik Party in every way possible, this help taking the most diverse forms. Gorky recitals, for instance, used to be arranged, all the proceeds of which were given to the party funds. I well remember one such recital, held in 1903 at the apartment of a well-known St.Petersburg barrister, Oscar Grusenberg, where Gorky read an essay he had just written, entitled *Man*. This work, a veritable hymn to Man, made a tremendous impression on its hearers, and the second reading of it elicited still greater enthusiasm. This recital brought a good sum of money to the party funds, as all those invited paid generously.

I recall an amusing incident at the tea table, during the interval between the first and second recital of this essay. The hostess kept on fussing around Maxim Gorky, offering him various things to eat. She also prepared him a small sandwich of brie. Gorky thanked her most politely but was afraid to risk it. The hostess pressed him to eat it and Gorky finally put it in his mouth. I happened to sit facing him and caught the helpless look of his eyes when he bit into the sandwich and tasted the strong cheese. He was at a loss what to do—there could be no question of spitting it out, and the idea of swallowing it seemed too alarming. I involuntarily smiled. The hostess observed my grin and began asking what it was all about. Meanwhile, by dint of desperate efforts, Gorky at last swallowed the luckless brie sandwich. When solicitously offered a second one Gorky, with undisguised horror in his eyes, but with irreproachable politeness, said that he was not hungry, thank you, but that he would have no objections to nibbling a biscuit.

Maxim Gorky gave large sums of money to the revolutionaries, from the funds of the "Znanie" Publishing House, of which he was a shareholder and where many of his tales and essays were published.

At that time he was already a writer enjoying worldwide fame, and his works were being translated into many foreign languages. But Gorky received no royalties for these translations, as Russia was not a signatory to the Literature Convention and his works could therefore be translated into any language and printed in any number of copies without royalties been paid the author. In 1905 the "I. Ladyzhnikov Theatre and Book Publishing House of Russian Authors" was established in Berlin; the publications appeared in Russian, but as they were printed in Germany, which was a member of the Convention, the authors' copyrights were fully observed. Now no publishers had the right to print Gorky's works without permission of I. Ladyzhnikov's Publishing House. Maxim Gorky was thus able to give considerable sums of money to the party, out of the income he derived through these publishers.

This publishing house had a very small staff: in the autumn of 1905 its personnel totalled three, with myself as Secretary of the editorial board, which was in Geneva. Unless my memory fails me, at that time we published *Children of the Sun* and *Smug Citizen*. Later on in the autumn, i.e. after the tsarist manifesto in 1905 [1], those in charge of the publishing house moved to Berlin, and I brought them all the editorial material and correspondence files, arriving in Berlin at the end of December 1905. Gorky's writings were also published abroad, in the German language. *Vorwärts*, the German social-democratic organ, for example, published Gorky's sketch *Sage*, in its issue of June 3rd, 1906, and a year before that the Swiss publishers "Demos" published Gorky's letter *On the Caucasian Events* in a separate brochure.

In 1907 the Ladyzhnikov publishers printed the sketch *January Ninth*. As is known, on January 9th (January 22nd by the New Calender), 1905, the workers, headed by the priest Gapon, went to the Winter Palace in St.Petersburg, with a petition to the tsar. This procession was shot at by the tsarist troops, resulting in a huge number of victims. This harsh cruelty caused strikes in all the enterprises of the city, including the electric-power station. The movement found support all over the country. Learning that the troops had been placed under martial law, Gorky and other representatives of the intellectuals called on the authorities and tried to prevent provocative action. In his sketch Gorky describes only that part of his activities on that day which were known to the official authorities. But actually the writer took active part at a meeting which was held on the evening of January 9th at the Free Economic Society. This was the only place where the intellectuals could assemble that evening and night, and Gorky addressed the assembly, not from the speaker's rostrum, but from the gallery, so as to remain unrecognized.

It should be said that Gorky did everything he could to help the revolutionaries. I personally, for example, more than once had occasion to avail myself of Maxim Gorky's country-house at Mustamiaki in Finland, as a rendez-vous with comrades on matters of shipping literature, obtaining printed matter and to meet Finnish revolutionaries.

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin was deeply interested in all Gorky's writings and those of us who used to work in St. Petersburg tried to keep Lenin acquainted with everything Gorky wrote. Gorky's sketch *On the Writer Who Grew Conceited*, which appeared in Petersburg illegally, was re-written by V. Kozhevnikova and myself in invisible ink, between the lines of C. Krestnikov's dissertation *On Mumps*.

Coming to the post-revolutionary period, I would like to mention Gorky's participation in the anti-war movement when, with his cooperation, the Soviet delegation was chosen for the Amsterdam Congress in 1932, and an appeal was drawn up, addressed to this Congress, which Gorky himself was to read. He was the only member of the Soviet delegation who managed to get as far as Berlin, but on arriving there, he could not obtain a Dutch entry visa, and as a result there was not a single representative of the Soviet Union at this Congress. Henri Barbusse addressed the Congress with

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[1] That same hypocritical manifesto promising liberties, and about which a song was sung, where the following words occure:

The tsar got the wind up, and signed a manifest-o,
To the dead he gave freedom, to the living—arrest-o.

a protest against the measures taken both by the German and the Dutch governments who barred the representatives of the U.S.S.R. from this Congress. As is known, all the anti-war parties, including the pacifists of all countries, were represented at this assembly.

Right up to his very last days Gorky was always consulted by the Soviet delegation when questions relating to the work of the International Anti-war Committee (which, in 1934, became also the Anti-fascist Committee) were being decided. The 1932 Congress elected a Permanent Anti-war Committee headed by Henri Barbusse, and the representatives of the U.S.S.R. on this Committee were Maxim Gorky, N. M. Shvernik, and the writer of the present lines.

In the last years of his life Gorky gave much of his strength and attention to the struggle against fascism. His utterances about the fascists as being the very dregs of human society, capable only of "the foulest, most disgusting and bloodthirsty misdeeds", are today common knowledge.

Maxim Gorky appealed for the ruthless destruction of a gang such as this, which brings barbarity and desolation to the world. "If the enemy does not surrender—he is destroyed," wrote Gorky. And in this great war the Soviet people are waging against the nazi invaders who have attacked Gorky's land of birth and his great people, the voice of this great genius, of this peerless Russian writer, continues to sound as a tocsin call throughout the world.

HELEN STASSOVA

NEW BOOKS

The first Russian translation of a collection of poems by the talented Uzbek poetess Zulfiya entitled *Loyalty* has been brought out by the State Publishing House of Uzbekistan in Tashkent.

Most of the poems in this book have been written during the war. The title *Loyalty* indicates that the main theme of the collection is the loyalty to country.

Zulfiya is a poet of tender lyricism, but she has found words to convey a feeling of passionate hatred for the enemy: "Avenge, my jewel without price, your vengeance is sacred as the words of a vow, as the fire of prayer," is her appeal in the poem *Avenge*. This feeling is combined with an ardent faith in victory.

Zulfiya's work successfully combines the modern and traditional forms of eastern poetry. Her descriptions of scenery are enchanting; a fine and subtle feeling for nature blends with the lyrical feeling of the poetess. The poem *He Was Called Farkhad* stands out among the other poems in the collection as one of Zulfiya's most mature works. This poem is about the famous Uzbek artist Kabul Kari, who bravely fell in action. Before his death, Kabul Kari sings his favourite aria from the opera *Farkhad and Shirin*, inspiring his comrades-in-arms to even greater feats.

Mikhail Prishvin, an old Russian writer, is a passionate lover of Russian nature and knows it well. His new book *Drops from the Forest* (published by the Soviet Writer Publishers, Moscow, 1943) is a kind of hunter's diary. It was born when the writer was roaming, gun in hand, through field and forest, in intimate communion with nature.

The whole of Prishvin's book is impregnated with an aroma of simplicity and sincerity. His inherent feeling for nature, what he calls "a kinship feeling for nature", makes each one of his notes a prose poem.

The landscapes of his native land, its natural beauties are indivisibly linked in Prishvin's perception with the emotions which comprise a love for one's country.

It is in no way surprising that in war-time too, this book—at first glance so divorced from vital topics of today, should move the reader powerfully, so impregnated is it with tenderness and love.

Mayakovsky—an Innovator in the Realm of Language, by Professor G. Vinokur (Soviet Writer Publishers, Moscow, 1943) is an analysis of the poetic language of V. Mayakovsky.

The author has minutely investigated numerous examples of the linguistic innovations in which Mayakovsky's poesy is so rich. He shows how Mayakovsky's innovations always have their reason, and are justified by artistic intent. Vinokur notes that in his innovations Mayakovsky is organically true to the traditions of the Russian language and thus is deeply national.

Vinokur's conclusion that Mayakovsky's poetic language is permeated with the element of the *spoken* word, is also of interest.

The three-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Isaac Newton was celebrated not only in Moscow, but in other cities of the Soviet Union. One of the celebration meetings took place at the Kazan Aircraft Institute, and the reports made at that time have recently been published in a special collection entitled *Isaac Newton, 1643—1943*.

This book includes the reports entitled: *The Life and Work of Isaac Newton*, *The Optical Works of Isaac Newton* and *Newton's Philosophical Views*, as well as articles by the art critic M. Dulsky, on Newton's iconography.

The State Publishing House has issued a book entitled *Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin*, a short biography of the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., Marshal of the Soviet Union, J. Stalin.

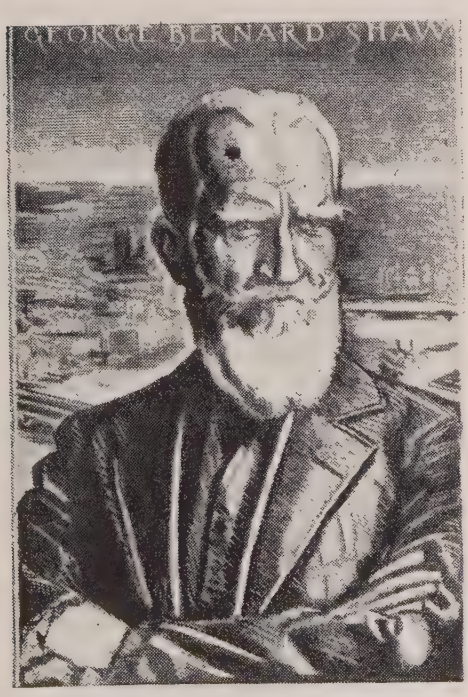
A book by Academician V. P. Potemkin, People's Commissar of Education of the R.S.F.S.R., entitled *The Policy of Pacification and the Fight of the Soviet Union for Peace*, has been published in Moscow.

"The second world war is not yet over," states the author, "but attempts are already being made to write its history. . . Unfortunately, these historical efforts frequently

lack the necessary knowledge of facts; at times they border on outright inaccuracy in the depiction of events; sometimes, also, a strong tendentiousness is found in them." The author has made it his aim—one in which he has fully succeeded—to show in the correct light, on the basis of documentary facts, the role of the Soviet Union, from the first days of its existence, in the struggle for peace among the peoples and the energetic resistance to the aggressive states. At the same time the author cites many facts and documents concerning the policy of encouraging the fascist aggressors, Germany and Italy, which was carried out by the "pacifists" in the Chamberlain-Daladier camp, whose real object was to direct the spearhead of fascist aggression eastward, against the U.S.S.R.

The most important international events which took place in the period between the two world wars are shown from this angle. The author divides his work into the following chapters: *From the Versailles Peace to the Locarno Agreements* (1919—1925), *From Locarno to Munich* (1925—1938), *From Munich to the Beginning of War II* (September 29-30, 1938 to September 1, 1939).

The author devotes special attention to Munich, the culminating point in the policy of encouraging the aggressor, as a factor bringing nearer the second world war, and a diplomatic plot directed towards the isolation and encirclement of the Soviet Union.



Engraved by M. Pikov

On the occasion of the anniversary of the German defeat at Stalingrad, the State Publishing House of Political Literature in Moscow has issued a pamphlet by E. Genkina entitled *Heroic Stalingrad*. The episodes of this magnificent epic pass before the reader; the days when the battle raged for the "Volga stronghold", the turning point in the Soviet people's war against the nazi invaders, risé afresh in the memory of the reader.

The pamphlet quotes the words of foreign statesmen and the world press about the Battle of Stalingrad.

Professor K. Korobkov's short sketch *Kutuzov* (Moscow, The State Publishing House of Political Literature, 1943) acquaints the reader with the biography of the great Russian military leader, and the main points of his strategy and tactics; he describes in detail the most important episodes of the war of 1812: the burning of Moscow, and then the retreat of the remnants of the French army along a route actually dictated by Kutuzov.

Kutuzov's strength lay in his close moral ties with the masses of the people and with the army.

Kutuzov commenced his military career under the guidance of another military genius, Suvorov, who wrote about him in one of his reports: "He was on my left wing—but was my right hand."

Like Suvorov, Kutuzov was a master of manoeuvre, a deep and subtle strategist.

Professor Korobkov's pamphlet is issued in the series *Great Fighters for the Russian Land*.

The State Literary Publishers is shortly to bring out a collection of selected works by Bernard Shaw in Russian, illustrated with woodcuts by Mikhail Pikov, one of the best Soviet artists in this line, who has completed a portrait of Bernard Shaw and several vignettes.

The "Star of the East" Publishing House (Tbilissi) has issued a number of collections of war stories by Georgian writers in Russian including *The Old Fisherman* by K. Lordkipanidze, *Partisans* by A. Kutateli, *A Beloved Voice* by A. Cheishvili and tales by A. Beliashvili, B. Chkheidze and I. Lissashvili.

In the Briansk Forests, sketches by Alexander Krivitsky and Pavel Krainov, dealing with the action of the partisan detachments, was issued in book form by the State Literary Publishers in 1943. A number of these sketches have been published in our magazine.

ARTS

A GREAT RUSSIAN COMPOSER

The Hundredth Anniversary of N. Rimsky-Korsakov's Birth

Late in the autumn of 1862 the clipper *Almaz* of the Russian navy approached the shores of England. For almost four months the vessel lay at Gravesend and Greenhithe. Young undergraduates of the Naval School, being on their first voyage, made trips to London to see the sights—Westminster, the Tower, the Crystal Palace, and to do the theatres, Covent Garden and the opera.

The following summer the *Almaz* set out on another voyage from Kronstadt. But this time she skirted the northern coast of the British Isles and, braving the Atlantic storms, reached America. A sojourn in New York followed. There were visits to Annapolis, Baltimore, Washington, Niagara. . . Then a few months in Brazil, excursions to the beautiful environs of Rio-de-Janeiro. On the return voyage the course lay across the ocean and through the Mediterranean, where they went ashore at southern ports, then northward, stopping at Plymouth and Christiansund.

Among the undergraduates of the Naval School, who were on board the *Almaz* was Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, the scion of a Russian family. Towards the end of the voyage, which lasted thirty-two months, he was promoted to the rank of a midshipman. Who could have guessed then that this reserved, rather cold, young officer from Tikhvin, in the Novgorod gubernia, the son of a retired governor, was to become one of the most famous composers of the XIX century?

There was one man who must have foreseen Korsakov's future. This was Mili Balakirev, his teacher, a versatile and gifted musician, active in musical and social circles. It was he who urged Korsakov to take up the study of music seriously. On his advice the young musician began to compose a symphony in 1862.

In St. Petersburg a circle of young composers who very soon were to become the pride of Russian national music formed around Balakirev. "The Five" as they were usually called abroad were Balakirev, Mussorsgky, Cui, Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakov, the critic Vladimir Stassov being the composers' friend and counsellor. Balakirev, who in the sixties had revolutionary sympathies and was anti-clerical, opened Korsakov's eyes to the world and to social problems and made him think about Russia's destiny. Balakirev's and Stassov's conversation and counsel bore fruit. During the voyages Rimsky-Korsakov read a great deal and joined in animated conversations and arguments with his companions, among whom there were many young men of progressive ideas, eager for knowledge. They read and discussed the works of the great Russian critics and publicists, Belinsky, Dobrolyubov, Chernyshevsky, were keenly interested in Buckle, John Stuart Mill and Macaulay, and obtlained copies of *Kolokol (The Bell)*, the revo utionary magazine which Herzen published in London. They read, too, a great deal of fiction and Korsakov was also interested in geography and meteorology. He found time to study English.

Thus the young composer's outlook was formed. Now a man of enlightened ideas, his indignation was aroused by the despotism and by the treatment of sailors as serfs; these things were far from uncommon aboard the war-vessels of that time. His visits to the United States took place during the Civil War. His sympathies were wholly with the northern states, which were fighting for the freedom of the negroes.

What progress did he make at this time in his music? At first he continued to work on his symphony. But this did not last long. Gradually his composition, his dreams of art receded into the background and his duties in the navy engrossed him. He was following the profession demanded by his family's traditions; his great-grandfather and his uncle had been admirals in the navy, his elder brother was a counter-admiral, the director of a naval academy.

But he had been born a musician, not a sailor, and music eventually gained the mastery. He had only to appear in St. Petersburg in his own environment, the Balakirev circle, to be surrounded once more by the things which interest musicians, the atmosphere of creative work. Balakirev persuaded him to finish his symphony which was performed at the end of 1865, Balakirev conducting. Rimsky-Korsakov was twenty-one at the time (he was born on March 18th, 1844). At last he took the decisive step and devoted himself wholly to music. True, he continued to wear naval uniform for eight years. Finally in 1873 he was appointed inspector of the admiralty bands. And so he became a civilian. He held this post the next ten years. In 1871 he became a professor of the St. Petersburg Conservatory, where he conducted the classes in composition practice, instrumentation, orchestration and, later, harmony. He was already known as the composer of three symphonies, the symphonic picture *Sadko*, of a number of overtures, many songs and an opera, *Pskovityanka (The Maid of Pskov)*. The last-named work was produced for the first time on January lst, 1873, in the Mariinsky Theatre, St. Petersburg, and was accorded an enthusiastic reception in progressive circles.

The beginning of the composer's career coincided with the growth of progressive movement in the sixties in Russia. The revolutionary struggle against tsarism, the survivals of the serf system, the brilliant work of a group of advanced scientists, thinkers, writers and artists, the

materialistic philosophy and realistic aesthetics of the Russian educators, the new fiction—all went to make up the social and cultural background of that period. The advances that were then made penetrated deep into musical culture, which was brought within the reach of various strata of the town population.

The New Russian Musical School—"The Five", was determined to struggle for a national musical culture. National character, truth in art, the service of only the highest ideals of humanity and social justice—this was the programme of the Balakirev circle, a programme which Rimsky-Korsakov accepted and embodied in *Pskovityanka*. The opera is based on a historical theme, the struggle of the free city of Pskov against the tsarist government. Very impressive is the mass scene of the Veche [1] culminating in the singing of the "Song of Freedom" of the young people of Pskov.

In the seventies Rimsky-Korsakov devoted himself to the study of instrumentation, harmony, counter-point and musical form. As a professor at the conservatory of music, he came to realize, during the process of teaching, the gaps in his own technical training. And though he was the composer of some important works that had won general acknowledgement, he felt that these gaps might hinder his own creative development. For five or six years he studied the old masters of counter-point.

At the same time he was preparing, in conjunction with M. Balakirev and A. Lyadov, new scores of Glinka's *Ruslan and Lyudmila* and *Ivan Sussanin* for the press. He considered that this work was "a very useful school leading to modern music from the intricacies of counter-point and strict style. As one of Glinka's most important inheritors, it was only natural that after his work on *Ivan Sussanin*, he should begin to compose his historical operas *Pskovityanka* and *The Tsar's Bride*, that after *Ruslan and Lyudmila* the way would lead to *Sadko* and *The Tale of the City of Kitezh*.

During these years Rimsky-Korsakov was constantly arranging and revising Russian folk songs. The outcome of this work was the publication of two volumes: *Forty Folk Songs*, and *A Hundred Russian Folk Songs*. Rimsky-Korsakov stated once: "I listened to folk music and the voice of Nature, and based my own creative work on what has been sung and heard." Ceremonial chants and game-songs attracted him most of all, "as being the more ancient, because they have come down to us from pagan times and by their very nature have been preserved, to a greater extent, intact".

Fairy-tale fantasies, the poetic world of Russian legend and beliefs, the romance of ancient Russian pagan rites, always had a strong attraction for Rimsky-Korsakov. Characters of the fairy-tale type are introduced into his early symphonic compositions *Sadko* and *Antar*. *The Tale of Princess Lada* is woven even into the opera *Pskovityanka*. Beginning from the close of the seventies these fairy-tale types prevail in his work.

The connection between opera and folklore is emphasized in the titles and sub-titles, as for example *The Snow Maiden*, a springtime fairy-story, *Mlada*, fairy opera-ballet, *Christmas Eve*, a legend told in carols, *Sadko*, an opera-legend, *The Tale of Tsar Saltan, Kashchei the Immortal*, an autumn legend, *The Tale of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevronia*, *The Golden Cockerel*, a whimsical fable. It is characteristic of Rimsky-Korsakov that his deep interest in Slav mythology and its cult of the sun found expression not only in the writing of operas like *The Snow Maiden* and *Mlada*, on pagan themes, but also in the original treatment of a subject from the Christian faith as in *The Great Easter Festival Overture*, based on Easter hymns, composed in 1888. The composer tells us that his intention was to reproduce the "legendary and pagan aspect of the holiday". Very typical of him, too, is the introduction of ancient ritual and pagan fantasy into the operas composed on Gogol's Ukrainian stories *A Night in May* (in 1878) and *Christmas Eve* (in 1894-95).

The peak of Rimsky-Korsakov's creative achievements was *The Snow Maiden* composed in 1880-81. He called it his "ninth symphony". It reflected the composer's bright, optimistic outlook, his profound feeling for nature and the folklore background that pervades his music. The symphonic *Tale* woven around themes from Russian poetic folklore is very close in its gentle, lyrical tone to *The Snow Maiden*.

His absorption in the fantastic, fairy-tale element was combined with a striving for truth in imagery. "Even the most imaginative art," he said, "is only successful when it has normal roots, a tangible contact with solid earth."

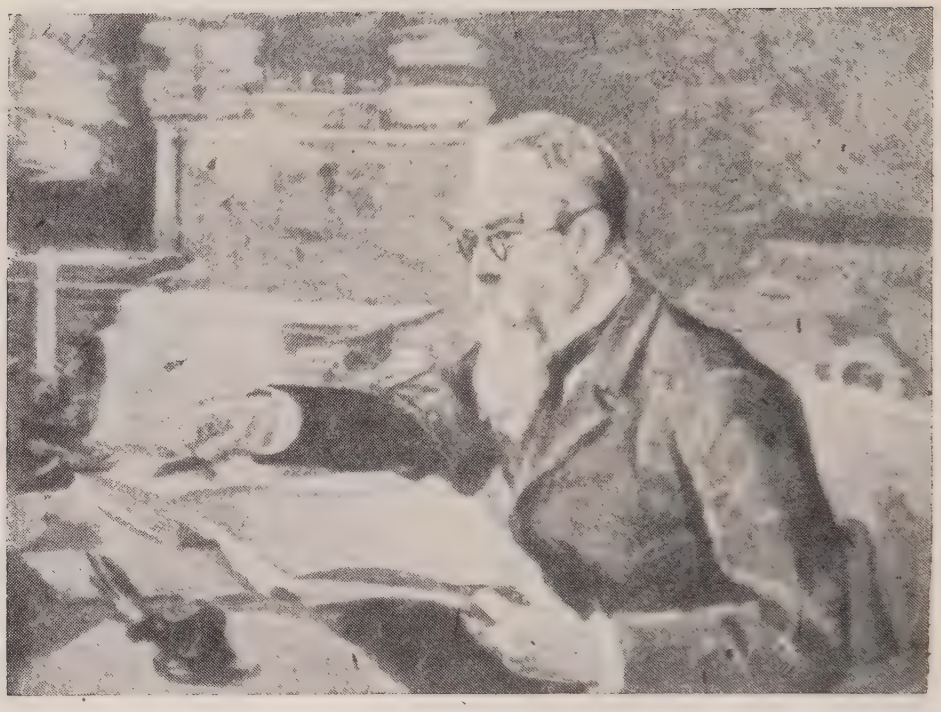
In the nineties the development of the realistic tendency in Rimsky-Korsakov's works is very obvious. In one of his best works, the opera-legend *Sadko*, written in 1895-96, "the real and the fantastic, the dramatic (in so far as this comes into the legend) and common, everyday life are in complete harmony" in the composer's opinion.

Of considerable importance in the evolution of Rimsky-Korsakov's style in opera was the one-act opera *Mozart and Salieri* composed in 1897 to Pushkin's text, which was neither altered nor adapted.

The crowning achievement of his striving after realism was *The Tsar's Bride*, a historical opera written in 1898, based on L. Mei's drama. This is one of the finest and most gifted works on the musical stage of Russia or of the world. Russian life at the time of Ivan the Dread is presented with immense dramatic force and the characters are thrown into powerful relief. In Rimsky-Korsakov's realistic operas it is possible to find points of contact with Chaikovsky's work; he became a close friend of the composer of *Eugene Onegin* and *The Oprichnik (The Tsar's Bodyguard)* during the last years of Chaikovsky's life.

A large circle of musicians, mainly composed of his pupils, gathered around Rimsky-Korsakov in the middle of the eighties. They met at the house of the well-known timber-merchant M. Belyaev and were known as the "Belyaev circle". Some of its members were gifted composers—Glazunov and Anatole Lyadov. Every year new faces appeared in the circle. "New trends"

[1] Gathering of the whole population of a town in old Russia.—*Ed.*



N. A. Rimsky-Korsakov *Painted by V. Serov*

towards eclectism, academic tendencies and what Rimsky-Korsakov designated "cold dispassionate composition out of the head" penetrated the circle. Modernistic influences made themselves felt. The "new trends" evoked an inner protest in the composer, and the realistic tendencies in his operas of the nineties became much more marked.

Friendship with Belyaev led to Rimsky-Korsakov's taking part in the work of the music publishing house in Leipzig, which printed the new works of Russian composers. Rimsky-Korsakov was also the initiator, principal director and conductor of the Russian symphony concerts organized by Belyaev in 1886.

His career as a conductor began in 1871 and continued for over thirty years. From 1874 to 1881 he was the director of the Free School of music founded by Balakirev, who retired from activities in the musical world. From 1883 until 1894 Rimsky-Korsakov was assistant-director of the court-choir under Balakirev.

Although his attitude to modernism in general was one of strong disapproval, Rimsky-Korsakov could not escape some of the newest influences in the creative work of his later period. Innovations, akin to the European trends of the very beginning of the XX century, but fresh and original, appeared in his new operas *Kashchei the Immortal* (1901-1902), *The Tale of the Invisible City Kitezh* (1903-1904) and *The Golden Cockerel* (1907). Yet, though the idea of these operas is allegorical, their social aspects are distinctly marked. Rimsky-Korsakov responded to the social moods of the pre-revolutionary epoch and the revolutionary events of 1905-1906.

The anticipation of and the longing for emancipation that prevailed in many circles of Russian society during the XX century found symbolic expression in *Kashchei the Immortal*. The grotesque of *Golden Cockerel* contains mordant satire on autocracy. Belsky's libretto considerably extended the content of Pushkin's tale, upon which the opera was based. In the joyous, rollicking *Tale of the Tsar Saltan* which is brimming over with kindly humour, elements of political satire may be discerned. Pushkin's text is closely adhered to on the whole. This opera appeared somewhat earlier, in 1899.

The opera-legend *The Tale of the City of Kitezh* is subtle and contradictory in content. Woven around the Russians' valiant struggle against the alien invader (the action takes place during the Tartar invasions, in the legendary Volga town of Kitezh) there is a mystical element bound up with the idea of sacrifice. It is a somewhat unusual interpretation of the rituals which had always seemed so attractive to the composer. But this is not the main point. The most powerful characters in *Kitezh* are national and realistic. The dominating idea is the Russian people's lofty patriotism, moral fortitude, readiness to endure any tribulations, any torments, for their country's sake. The opera is epic in character and at the same time has a deep and penetrating understanding of psychology that reminds one of Mussorgsky's musical dramas on folk-themes.

The structure and vocal arrangement of Rimsky-Korsakov's operas are distinguished by great variety, proof of the many tendencies at work in his creative evolution. If in some operas group-singing is avoided and the whole is kept in the recitative style (as in *Pskovi-*

tyanka, the one-act operas *Boyarynya Vera Sheloga*, *Mozart and Salieri* and *Kashchei*), in others, complete, finished arias are used extensively (as, for example, in *The Snow Maiden* and *Sadko*) and also ensembles (as in *The Tsar's Bride*). The flexible recitative and the semi-declamatory aria are used in harmonious conjunction with *bel canto*. The vocal parts for some fantastic, imaginary creatures such as the swan in *Tsar Saltan*, the Shemakhan tsaritsa in *The Golden Cockerel*, have an instrumental quality. Leit-motifs and leit-harmonies are usually prominent in Rimsky-Korsakov's operas.

His original melodies, written in the Russian national spirit, are very close to folklore, and have the true Russian national intonation. He constantly included Russian folk-melodies in his operas and orchestral works, as for example, the Overture, Symphonietta, Concerto for pianoforte and violin, Fantasia for violin and orchestra. In conjunction with Russian themes he also employed very largely the melodies of other nationalities—Ukrainian in the operas composed on Gogol's stories, Spanish in the *Spanish Capriccio* for the orchestra, Serbian as in the *Fantasia on Serbian Themes* for the orchestra, Polish in the Opera *Pan-Voyevoda*. He particularly favoured the melodies of eastern nationalities. There are some fine examples of his adaptation and stylization of them in several operas, ballads, in the symphonic suites *Antar* (the second symphony) and *Scheherezade* composed in 1888. Both these suites have the traits typical of his symphonic composition: the national character, the landscapist's descriptive treatment, the imaginative fairy-tale subject, the structure of the suite and, finally, brilliant and colourful instrumentation.

Rimsky-Korsakov was a master of orchestration; the truly remarkable ability he displayed in using the instrumental colour range to advantage and the expressive power of orchestral tones permitted him to reproduce vivid and poetic pictures of nature in music. The pictures of the sea which had left an unforgettable impression upon him while he was serving in the navy, are reproduced in the operas *Sadko*, *The Tale of the Tsar Saltan*, in the symphonic suite *Scheherezade*, and the ballad-cycle *On the Seashore*. In *The Snow Maiden* he paints the approach of spring, in *Kitezh*, the untrodden woods and the lonely lake, in *Antar*, the desert. And magnificent symphonic pictures in others: the battle at Kerzhenets in *Kitezh*, the wedding-procession in *The Golden Cockerel*, the three marvels in the *Tsar Saltan*, and many other examples. His harmony has a fine range of colour; he is a bold innovator in this field, and created a system of new harmonies.

Rimsky-Korsakov's vocal chamber music included seventy-nine songs (composed to texts by Pushkin, A. K. Tolstoy, Maikov, Mei, Fet, Koltsov and other poets) as well as several duets and a trio. These works belong in the main to two periods: 1866-70 and 1897-98. In the latter period the cycles *Spring*, *To a Poet*, *On the Seashore* and many other songs were composed. Among vocal compositions should be mentioned the *Switezyanka* (after Mei's poem), *The Soothsayer and Oleg* (after Pushkin), the prelude-cantata *From Homer*, and choruses which consist of adaptations of folk-songs and original compositions to poems by Pushkin, Koltsov, Lermontov.

In proportion, the number of instrumental chamber-pieces, left us by Rimsky-Korsakov is not large—a few piano-pieces and several ensembles.

A very important part of Rimsky-Korsakov's creative work was the completion of works left unfinished by his friends, of the older generation of composers. Dargomyzhsky made him a personal bequest to complete the instrumentation of the *Stone Guest*, an opera. Rimsky-Korsakov revised and completed Mussorgsky's opera *Khovanshchina*, worked up his *Boris Godunov* and the symphonic picture *Night on Lysa Gora*, orchestrated several songs, edited the score of Mussorgsky's unfinished opera *The Marriage* and many of his songs. In conjunction with Glazunov he finished Borodin's opera *Prince Igor*.

His influence on the music of the last quarter of the XIX century and the first decades of the XX was incalculably great. Apart from his significance for Russian composers, his music played a very important role in shaping national schools of music. Outstanding composers of the Ukraine, Armenia and Latvia—Lyssenko, Spendiarov and Vitol—were his pupils. His influence was felt by a number of Western-European composers, in particular Debussy and Ravel, the Italian Respighi, who was his pupil, Arnold Bax and others.

Rimsky-Korsakov was the founder of the leading school of Russian composers. He had about two hundred pupils, many of whom became noted composers: Glazunov, Lyadov, Stravinsky, Grechaninov, Ippolitov-Ivanov, Arensky, Julia Weisberg, Cherepnin; famous Soviet pupils who are living today are Myaskovsky, Prokofieff, Gnessin, Maximilian Steinberg and Assafiev. Rimsky-Korsakov's text-books *A Practical Guide to the Study of Harmony* and *The Foundations of Orchestration*, are important and essential in teaching. His reviews and articles were collected in the volume called *Musical Articles and Notes* published posthumously. The *History of My Musical Life* recorded by Rimsky-Korsakov, with occasional interruptions, for thirty years, from 1876 to 1906, is a historiographic document of the greatest interest. Like the text-books, it has been published in English.

Rimsky-Korsakov's works were greatly admired by progressive musicians when they were performed abroad. Claude Debussy wrote about *Antar*: "No words can express the enchantment of the theme and glamour of orchestration and rhythm; I can't believe that it is possible for anyone to resist the power of his music; it makes one forget everything: life, your neighbour, and even the bothering necessity of decent behaviour, so great is the desire to utter cries of joy."

In 1907 Rimsky-Korsakov was approached through Glazunov to ascertain what his attitude would be to his election as a doctor of Oxford or Cambridge University. He declined this honour on the grounds that it was out of place for a composer to hold any title of honour.

A gifted composer, a very able teacher and conductor, the responsible head of several musical institutions, the author of valuable

text-books on music, Rimsky-Korsakov was looked up to as a great authority, a musician of remarkable attainments and a man of very high personal qualities. His straight-forwardness, high principles, and moral courage were thrown into relief by the events of 1905. The venerable composer defended those students of the St. Petersburg Conservatory who showed revolutionary sympathies, joined the political strike and suffered under the reprisals begun by the Conservatory administration. The directors of the Imperial Russian Musical Society, which had control over the Conservatory, took measures to dismiss Rimsky-Korsakov from his professorship. As a protest several professors, including Glazunov and Lyadov, resigned. Rimsky-Korsakov received letters of sympathy and greetings from all quarters. Under Glazunov's direction the students prepared to perform *Kashchei the Immortal*. The production of this opera became a public demonstration with addresses and speeches which were cut short by police interference. The public performance of Rimsky-Korsakov's works was forbidden by the police in St. Petersburg and a number of provincial towns. This situation continued until the autumn of 1905 when new regulations were published, declaring the Conservatory independent of the Imperial Russian Musical Society. Glazunov was elected director. On his invitation Rimsky-Korsakov returned to the Conservatory at the close of 1905.

A direct response to the revolutionary events of that year was Rimsky-Korsakov's arrangement of the Russian workers' song *Dubinushka* for a symphony orchestra (and chorus if desired). A more distant response was *The Golden Cockerel*. This, his fifteenth opera, only saw the light after the composer's death.

Nikolai Andreyevich Rimsky-Korsakov died after a heart attack on the night of June 20th-21st, 1908. In him Russia lost one of her great sons; music in Russia and over the world lost an acknowledged leader.

BORIS STEINPRESS

BERNARD SHAW'S "PYGMALION" AT THE MOSCOW MALY THEATRE

Bernard Shaw wrote this play in 1912, and that same year it was staged by the Alexandrinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg.

Since then *Pygmalion* has been produced in Russia many times, both in the capital and in the provinces, and has now acquired an interesting stage-history of its own. At different periods the play was produced so as to stress now the first part and now the second part of the paradox: one production emphasizing that any street girl can, if she takes the trouble to do so, learn manners and comportment and master perfect pronunciation, and another laying stress on the fact that having donned evening dress and learned perfect pronunciation, this girl does indeed become another person.

D. Zerkalova as Liza and K. Zubov as Higgins

The early performances mainly brought out the second part of the paradox, which seemed to be profounder, more ideological—almost "Ibsenian": the revolt of Liza, who declines to be Higgins' doll.

Then this was relegated to the past, and our stage producers enthusiastically turned their attention to the exposure of the conventionalities of high-society upbringing, the tragicomedy of Higgins or the unusual transformation of Liza's father, that philosophical dustman, from the moment the fortune of the American multi-millionaire descended upon his head. At one time Doolittle was near to becoming the hero of the performance.

Five years ago this play's history entered upon a new stage: the Moscow Theatre of Satire produced *Pygmalion* as a vaudeville—an old-time vaudeville of the first years of George V's reign—outspoken irony addressed to those who at one time might have taken it all seriously.

And now, at the very height of the war, Shaw's *Pygmalion* has appeared once more, this time on the stage of the oldest Russian playhouse—the Moscow Maly Theatre.

This "fantasy" (as Shaw calls this play in the author's remarks) is interpreted by actors brought up in the traditions of genuine realism.

The house is invariably crowded, and the audience includes many military men who have either arrived from the front only yesterday, or are leaving for the front tomorrow. And everybody greatly enjoys this old play by G.B.S.

How is Shaw's *Pygmalion* interpreted today? It is interpreted as a most vivacious play showing the vastness of human possibilities, how ludicrous any caste restrictions are, and how incautious is any exaggerated self-opinion.

Liza Doolittle is performed by Dina Zerkalova—one of the most charming actresses of her generation who began her stage career, in Odessa, a quarter of a century ago. Today Dina Zerkalova is one of the leading actresses at the Maly Theatre.

Zerkalova's flower girl is, above all, a most talented girl of the people, and this is clearly evident even in the very first scene, where she still expresses herself in the most vulgar slangy terms and does not know how to behave.

This, most likely, weakens the force of the paradox. What had to be proved here was that any girl can become a duchess, and not only one who was obviously talented, clever and forceful.

This, probably, violates stage tradition, according to which her gradual transformation should be shown by emphasizing the involuntary blunders and lapses during her first appearances in society.

Zerkalova's Liza also backslides and jumps from very "high" to very "slummy" pronunciation. At the most inopportune moments her vocabulary becomes more than slangy. But we do not carry away the impression that these lapses are involuntary. No, if Liza wished to she could stand up to the examination to infinity. Have we not seen how perfectly she manages her task! But at times she ceases to take sufficient interest in it. It is not through inability that she backslides, but from sheer roguishness. She is fed up with being a duchess: there's nothing very difficult about it. . .

This is not quite in keeping with "tradition", but it is highly fascinating and gives an exceedingly interesting result in the last scenes. Here Liza rises in mutiny against Higgins who, having employed her for his experiments no longer takes any notice of her now his experiment is completed.

For Liza Doolittle this is unbearable. She is very proud and this alone is sufficient to make her conceal from Higgins that she is piqued by his lack of attention.

She does not expect anything of Higgins; in any case she will not let him think that she has her eye on him.

Once, but only for a very short time, he had seemed to her to be a man from another world. She was inclined to think that he was not behaving cleverly, that it was through absent-mindedness that he failed to notice the main thing—but still she hesitated to pronounce the final sentence. But now, when he is no longer an enigma to her she firmly censures him. Higgins now merely irritates Liza. The play ends, not with the mutiny of Liza, but with the condemnation of Higgins.

This is how Zerkalova plays Liza.

Higgins is also a little unusual. He is usually shown as a man wholly engrossed in his science, very persistent and stubborn in his life of learning but compliant and soft in everything else, and sometimes depicted as a sort of cavalier Rippafrato from Goldoni's *Mistress of the Inn*. . . Towards the end of the play he falls in love with Liza, after she has shaken him out of his state of absent-mindedness. But at this juncture she prefers to marry Freddy Einford-Hill and not Higgins, as Shaw states in his sequel. Zubov, who plays Higgins, does not stress either his compliancy or his absent-mindedness. After all said and done, Zubov-Higgins did not fall in love with Liza.

Mr. Higgins with his mother (played by E. Turchaninova)

On the other hand, how magnificently ambitious he is! And that is why his wordy duel with Liza is so genuinely dramatic.

Diamond cut diamond. He resurrected Galatea. And one might easily expect the unexpected. But what really did happen was the most unexpected of all. He roused, not envy or vanity in her, but a great sense of human dignity. The better and more triumphantly she mastered the art of "high-life" the more forceful and convinced became her pride. It was no longer possible to shake free of her either by means of gifts or condescending recognition of her talent, or even by condescending love. The struggle of self-pride reaches tremendous tensity and fills the whole play. Higgins loses Liza precisely at the moment when he first becomes capable of regretting it.

This main conflict is splendidly supported by other members of the cast: E. Turchaninova, who, with her usual stagecraft, plays the part of Mrs. Higgins, the professor's mother; E. Velikhov's strict and witty impersonation of Colonel Pickering, and V. Vladislavsky's peaceable philosopher Mr. Doolittle.

This, then, is how the actors of the Maly Theatre interpret *Pygmalion* in 1944.

It might be said that this is a good performance but that it is not quite what Bernard Shaw wrote in 1912.

But it must be remembered that Bernard Shaw—contrary to the prevailing opinion—never sacrificed, even for the paradox, that which he considered to be the main thing. Let us recall that for G.B.S. the main thing has always been human dignity. Let us not forget that precisely this "main thing" is today being subjected to the greatest historical ordeal. And we shall then come to the conclusion that not only is it a good performance but also good "Shaw"—in all its main tokens.

LEONID BOROVOY

The well-known Kamerny (Chamber) Theatre has begun performing in Moscow once more after a two-years' absence from the capital. The season began with C. Paustovsky's tragedy *As Long as the Heart Beats*.

The action of the play takes place in a small Russian town occupied by the Germans. In their common desire to throw off the hated yoke of the invader Soviet patriots unite their forces—an actress and a craftsman, a river captain and an old violinist. . . The leading part of the actress is played by People's Artist of the Republic Alice Koonen.

In the Kamerny Theatre's repertoire are the musical comedy *The Far-flung Sea* under the joint authorship of V. Vishnevsky, A. Kron and V. Azarov; A. Korneichuk's *Front* and G. Mdivani's *Moscow Skies*.

All these war plays express the Soviet people love for their country and hatred of the enemy.

The theatre is also working on West-European classics and plays by contemporary British and American writers.

Although it is war-time the capital's oldest theatre, the State Academic Maly Theatre, is reviving Griboyedov's classic *The Mischief of Being Clever*.

The Mischief of Being Clever is one of the most brilliant works in Russian literature. It was first staged in 1831 and has been running constantly for more than a century, preserving all the power and freshness which are the hallmark of true genius. Some of Russia's most famous actors have played in the comedy and have given us immortal performances. In the first Moscow production of *The Mischief of Being Clever*, the part of Famussov, the old nobleman and government official, reactionary humbug and scandal-monger, was played by the famous Mikhail Shchepkin, the founder of Russian realism on the stage.

The comedy, revived during the National War, was played by leading artists of the Maly Theatre. Famussov was played by Mikhail Lenin, People's Artist of the R.S.F.S.R. It was his first appearance in this role and he brought fresh colour to it. Chatsky, the hero of the play, a progressive of his time who boldly threw down the gauntlet to conservative society, was excellently performed by Tsaryov. Other great successes were Yablochkina and Ryzhova, two Russian actresses from the old guard who have been on the boards now for over fifty years.

The smaller Opera House in Moscow, attached to the Bolshoy Opera House of the U.S.S.R., has presented *The Conflagration*, a new opera by the composer Dmitri Kabalevsky. It deals with the heroic defence of Moscow at the beginning of the National War.

An evening devoted to the composer Serge Prokofieff was given at the House of the Union of Soviet Composers. The composer's war-time works were performed. The pianist M. Yudina, professor of the Moscow Conservatory, played fragments from the opera *War and Peace*, the ballet *Cinderella*, recently completed by the composer, and from the music to the film *Lermontov*. S. Prokofieff's sonata for flute and pianoforte was also played. In conclusion the composer played ten pianoforte miniatures.

72 *A scene from "As Long as the Heart Beats"*

In the spring of 1943 a ladies' concert ensemble of four comprising L. Shur—pianist, I. Lebedeva—singer, R. Tsivina—violinist, and M. Boyarskaya—reciter, left Moscow for a tour in the Soviet Far East where they spent a busy six months. They were just about to return to the capital when insistant requests for performances came from remote Yakutia. The artists agreed and set off. They gave a series of concerts in local clubs. Once again, just as they were about to start for home after their last concert, Hero of the Soviet Union I. Mazuruk, the well-known Polar airman, asked them to perform for the flying personnel and people of the Far North. It was no easy trip before them. It meant a flight of ten thousand kilometres under difficult flying conditions over a range of mountains thirteen thousand feet high. The artists were undismayed and flew to Chukotka and Kolyma.

The Moscow lady artists performed for the polar airmen in a local hut, circular in shape and hung with the skins of polar bears and reindeers. In clubs at Magadan and Seimchan they gave concerts for the workers and engineers of the Soviet Far East Building Organization. At remote ore-fields they sang and played to the miners. At packed club-houses they performed to Chukchi and Kamchadals who had never before seen violin or accordion. Inspired by their hearty reception the artists gave nineteen concerts in twelve days.

Several years ago an Art School was opened in Moscow to train teachers for secondary schools. Besides general educational subjects the future teachers take courses in sketching, landscape painting and the history of art. In the final term pedagogics and methods of teaching drawing and sketching are studied. While still at the Art School students about to graduate obtain practice in secondary schools where they give their first lessons to children. This year the school has opened a scene painters' and decorators' course training future artists for the theatre.

V. I. Baksheyev, Stalin Prize winner, one of the oldest of Russian artists, is head of the school.

Since the war began many men from the front, war invalids, have entered the school. Now they are studying, mastering an attractive and useful vocation. All were drown to the school by a love of art. Many of them had never had a brush in their hands before, but the first year's study already makes it possible to discern the distinctive talents of each.

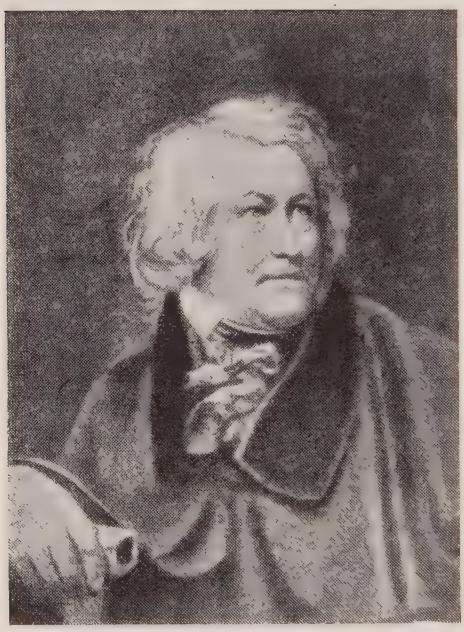
Nineteen-year-old Viktor Shevtsov, who lost a leg at Stalingrad, delights in working on his own themes. He is now planning a number of works on war subjects. Twenty-year-old Nikolai Paramonov fought with a tank unit, was badly wounded at Tikhvin and lay six months in hospital. Returning to Moscow he entered the Art School. Here he made his first acquaintance with water colours and is already doing good work. Vassili Makeyev was a sergeant in the coastal defences and volunteered for Stalingrad during the hardest months of the German offensive. There he was wounded. Now he not only dreams of becoming a drawing master but of continuing his own education. "I want to teach and to learn," he says. Evgueni Litvak was in the front-line from the very first months of the war. He fought at Yukhnov, Voronezh and Stalingrad. E. Litvak brought back from the front a wad of drawings he had done there. His ambition is to become a scene painter. Vladimir Kuznetsov has seen and been through a lot. Until he joined the army he went in for acrobatics and sport, was the youngest entrant in the Moscow—Gorky ski run in 1936. He joined the forces in 1938 where he served as a tank commander. He lost a leg in the present war.

All these young folks are eagerly pursuing their new vocation.

An exhibition of the works of Z. Vilensky, the Moscow sculptor has opened in the town of Molotov. The exhibits were done by the sculptor during his stay in the Molotov region between 1941 and 1943. Among them are a monumental portrait of Joseph Stalin, a series of portraits of outstanding local men and women, workers and collective farmers, etudes and sketches on industrial subjects ("Open-hearth Furnace Worker", "Blacksmith") and a series of composite sculptures on atrocities perpetrated by the nazi invader and of partisans of the Great National War. All the works are made out of baked fireclay.

IN MEMORIAM

BERTEL THORWALDSEN



It was the 24th of March, 1844, and the usual performance at the Court Theatre, Copenhagen was attended by leading men of science, art and literature. The members of the audience recognized popular favourites: the architect Bindesbell, Hans Andersen, whose stories were known all over the world, Oehlenschläger, the playwright. Beside the latter sat a tall old man with splendid white waving hair. A latecomer passed down the row of seats, and the old man was obliged to rise to his feet. When the woman had passed by he seated himself again, but sank deeper and deeper into his chair. "He's taken ill—Thorwaldsen is taken ill!" Oehlenschläger cried out.

The old man who fainted in the theatre died that same evening.

Denmark buried her great sculptor with honour: the funeral was an impressive sight. No less impressive had been the welcome his country had given him six years previously in 1838. A specially-chartered frigate had brought from Italy sixty-two cases of statues in marble and plaster, the works of a sculptor to whom the world had accorded first place among the masters of his art. He was at that time sixty-eight years of age. Copenhagen founded a museum for his works. His name was known to every educated man in Europe. It was true fame, true glory, that had come at last to the man who, even at the peak of his success, never forgot that he was the son of an ordinary wood-carver who worked on the wharves of Copenhagen ornamenting the prows of ships, and that his childhood and youth had been passed in want. The path to fame had not been an easy one. In the northern countries of Europe, in Russia, in England, the name of Thorwaldsen was never forgotten. Among Russian artists and writers he was the acknowledged leader of European sculpture, the foremost representative of classicism in the truest sense of the word. His name was associated with that of famous Russians sojourning in the Italian capital, with Alexander Ivanov, the painter of "Christ Appearing to the Multitude" and Nikolai Gogol, the author of *Dead Souls*.

Thorwaldsen went to Rome in 1797, after completing his course at the Copenhagen Academy of Arts, where he won a number of awards. At the beginning of 1803, Thorwaldsen found himself in such difficult circumstances that he decided to leave the city. His few belongings were already packed, but due to some hitch with his passport, his departure had to be postponed for a day. With a heavy heart he returned to the studio, where only one figure remained unpacked, the big plaster cast of Jason. The hero of the myth of the Argonauts stood gazing over his shoulder at his destiny. . . A knock came at the studio door; one of the guides who for a trifle conducted wealthy visitors around Rome, had brought Thorwaldsen an English maecenas by the name of Sir Thomas Hope. "Jason" could not but impress the visitor, sent, it would seem, by destiny itself. "What would that figure cost if it were sculptured in stone? Six hundred sechinas? I will give you eight hundred." Thorwaldsen received a sum in advance and was thus able to remain in Rome. His "Jason" was talked of and became well-known.

The Rome period lasted for forty years. Thorwaldsen executed bas-reliefs, statues, figures on tombstones. His portrait-bust and full-length statue of Byron were subsequently taken to Cambridge. He visited Warsaw and there executed the monument set up to Copernicus.

In Switzerland Thorwaldsen or rather his pupils working according to his sketches, hewed a memorial from the cliffs. This memorial, in the form of a mortally wounded lion, has become world-famous.

Throughout Thorwaldsen's art, which was restrained, somewhat inclined to monotony, but always integral, whether he was portraying the Russian aristocracy (the Countess Vorontsova was one of his first patronesses) or a scene from the antique, or the life of the apostles, the same unity of aesthetics and outlook, the strictly "classical", is observed.

He was fond of clothing his statues in the garments of ancient Rome. He preferred his own abstract idea of his subject to historically faithful treatment. But the profoundly-truth-

ful conception of his best works has the power to stir the spectator. His monument in Mainz to Gutenberg, the inventor of book-printing, is well-known. The sculptor had never seen any authentic portraits of Gutenberg, for the simple reason that not one of them has survived. It is highly probable, though, that Gutenberg, living as he did in the middle of the XV century, shaved his beard as was the fashion among his contemporaries. Thorwaldsen's Gutenberg has a long flowing beard divided in the middle. Yet this portrayal of the first printer has such force and life in it that almost all subsequent statues of Gutenberg are inspired by Thorwaldsen's. We might recall the cover of Gutenberg's biography, recently published in Moscow. And does modern humanism, in particular the humanism of the Russians who praised through Maxim Gorky's lips the worth and dignity of man, find anything strange or alien in the glorifying of human beauty in Thorwaldsen's "Jason", "Mars", the "Shepherd", and "Vulcan"? The Danish sculptor has given us in his statues the manly image of the warrior and the tender features of the boy on the verge of youth, and an apotheosis of manual labour. His women are chaste and tender, the various representations of his "Graces" both in the round and in bas-relief, display a plasticity and rhythm rarely encountered since the age of Hellenic art. For the sake of these we forgive the sculptor those curious lapses which at times produce an almost ludicrous impression on us: as for example, the obviously unsuccessful large relief of the Disciples, mounted on their apocalyptic steeds.

Thorwaldsen was one of the greatest workers in marble. His famous contemporary, Canova, if legend is to be believed, began his artistic career with a lion modelled in butter. Canova's wonderfully-decorative sculptures retained something of that feeling. But Thorwaldsen was a true sculptor, a stone carver; his marble has the quality of marble, it is felt as stone, and it sometimes happens that Thorwaldsen's portraits remain faces carved in stone and have not taken on the look of living flesh. It was characteristic of him to prefer working from memory and not from his sitters, to look at his own work and not at the model. That was how Hogarth used to work, that was how Daumier worked. Thorwaldsen always bore in mind, while at work, the surroundings in which his sculpture was to be placed. He was a master of decorative plasters. His figures in the round are examples of the art suitable for the decoration of buildings. The best statues display his skill in attuning sculpture to landscape. His Byron was primarily intended to be placed in a landscape-setting. Their architectural setting is also taken into consideration; a striking instance of this is the Church of the Holy Virgin in Copenhagen. He is perhaps closer to us in this respect than to Canova or the XIX century. One of his half-portrait, half-conventionalized sculptures is that of Georgina Russel, which has something of the majolica manner in the rounded figure. Many of the outstanding features of European sculpture at the beginning of the XX century owe much to Thorwaldsen's searchings and studies, and to his achievements in composition.

He remained unspoiled by fame, and despite the high awards he received, never became rich or proud. His pupil, Emile Wolf, has created for us a portrait of Thorwaldsen from a rough model. He wears the artist's smock in which he worked, and is holding a sculptor's mallet in his right hand. His left rests on the head of his statue of "Hope", one of his attempts in the early Greek classical style. Highly-conventionalized though the portrait is, it remains with its broad, obstinate brow, its intent gaze, and thin, compressed lips, the face of a Danish peasant, with a beauty of its own in toil.

ALEXEI SIDOROV

NEWS AND VIEWS

"The day will dawn when I shall return you this clod of imperishable earth, o Ukraine!" exclaims the front-line poet Leonid Pervomaisky in his beautiful poem entitled *Earth* written during the first months of the war when, in those grim days of retreat he carried away with him a clod of his native earth "soaked in the rains of autumn" and when, never for a moment, did he lose firm faith in the coming victory.

And the day did dawn.

It was of this joyful day of victory that the Ukrainian writers, who recently assembled in the Moscow Club of their Union, wrote in their poems and prose: the lyrical Vladimir Sossyura, the emotional Maxim Rylsky, the trenchant novelist Yuri Smolich, and many others.

The entire evening was permeated with Ukrainian speech and Ukrainian tunes.

With stirred feelings those assembled heard the songs of the kobzars—Ukrainian folk singers, accompanying themselves on the kobza—their multi-stringed national instrument. Heavy were the ordeals suffered by these people, inhabitants of Mirgorod who for two years and four days languished under the yoke of German occupation. It is no mere chance that they kept exact count of their term of captivity, for each day seemed to drag by slower than a whole year. September 21st, 1943—the day when the Red Army came—will for ever remain the happiest day of their lives. Great is the ineffaceable grief inflicted on them by the nazi monsters. There is hardly a hut that has not suffered bereavement—a member of the family either killed or driven off into German captivity.

But the people did not bow their heads. The Germans forced the kobzars to build roads. And they sang as they toiled. They were mercilessly beaten by the German slave-drivers, but they composed ever new songs, songs of wrath and hatred, songs of hope and freedom. And these songs rang out over the liberated land, they rang out in Moscow. The kobzars succeeded in hiding from German eyes their musical instruments, their national costumes and feminine finery. And here they sit now, in their colourful embroidered shirts, the women in their finely embroidered puff-sleeves, gaily coloured necklaces and multi-hued wreaths on their highly piled braids. They sing also old-time ballads of the legendary folk heroes, songs to the words of the great Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko and songs composed during today's war.

The road built by the kobzars for the Germans received the name of "Kobzars' Road", and it is now standing the Red Army in good stead; and the songs of the kobzars is the living history of the people who, even when trodden underfoot by the ruthless nazi yoke, fully preserved their strength of spirit and their faith in victory.

There is a legend which runs that in one of their wars the Persian army defeated a far stronger foe. When asked how they achieved this they answered: "Firdousi's poem was read out to us before the battle."

Today, as it did in the X and XI centuries, that immortal work by the Persian poet Firdousi *Shāhnāma* infects the hearer with martial spirit, inspires him to deeds of valour. Such was the general opinion of all the writers who spoke at this gathering in the Moscow Writers' Club, where fragments of translations of this poem were read. For the first time, one of its chapters, that dedicated to the war of Iran against Turan the aggressor and the heroic exploits of Rustam, the renowned national hero of Iran, was heard in Russian.

The translator, poetess Banu, the author of many Russian translations of Tajik and Persian classic and modern poets, undertook the tremendous task of translating one of the greatest works of world literature. This will require a number of years, as *Shāhnāma* consists of 60,000 verses, of which Banu has so far translated 2,000.

All those who took the floor at this gathering, orientalists, poets and critics, noted the exactness and clarity of this translation, its equirhythmicality, and expressed the hopes of seeing this work completed as soon as possible.

Edward Bagritsky, one of the most original of Soviet poets, died ten years ago. At the evening devoted to his memory were many of his old friends, well-known writers and poets, many young folk just starting out in the world of letters were also there. That is a sure sign of the unfading youthfulness of Bagritsky's poetry and undiminishing esteem for him as a man. Korneli Zelinsky, the critic, hit the nail on the head when he said: "Bagritsky was the bard of the Soviet youth's courage." "The topical nature of Bagritsky's subjects and the amazing vitality of Mayakovsky," he continued, "speak of the profound patriotism of these poets."

Bagritsky was one of the first to realize and sing about the glamour of ordinary work. His heroes are research workers, hydrographers, mechanics, pisciculturists. He sang of the lofty endeavour of the "new knights" as he called them. He revealed the ideals of the new Soviet people in such works as *T.B.C.*, *The Man from the Suburbs*, *The Death of the Pioneer Girl* and many others. In his splendid poem *The Tale of Opanas*, written in the style of the folk bards, the poet gave us Commissar Kogan. In him we have the typical stalwart of the Civil War period, a true soldier of his country. Bagritsky paints nature in vivid and intimate verse.

In recalling Bagritsky each of the speakers stressed his passionate regard for poetry's cause, his interest in the budding poets. This was not the condescending back-patting of the "giant" for the beginner but a deep personal interest in promoting good work, in seeing that new poets made progress. He was merciless towards mediocrity and vulgarity in art.

"That's not sea, but suds," he once said when rebuffing an artist who was boast-

ing about his common-place landscapes.

Bagritsky was not to be deceived by surface gloss, by a lightly won ephemeral success. But with what untiring persistence he would labour with those who showed even a spark of talent!

The evening concluded with a reading of Bagritsky's poems by V. Kachalov, an actor from the Art Theatre. Although Kachalov is a man of another generation and seemingly different tastes he has been an ardent crusader for Bagritsky's works for many years. With truly youthful fire Kachalov read *The Tale of Opanas*, the ballad *John Barley Corn* and the spirited poem *Spring*.

Leili and Mejnun, a poem by Alisher Navoi, the Uzbek classic writer, has been translated into Russian by S. Lipkin. It is one of a series of five poems under the general title *Khamsa* and is the first of the author's works to be translated into Russian. The poem tells of an all-conquering love, a love that can only end in death.

In his poem Navoi propagates what was at the time a progressive idea for the East, namely that marriage should not be a matter of barter, that the free inclinations of the heart must not be thwarted.

The translator read excerpts from the poem to a gathering at the Writers' Club.

S. Lipkin is one of the most talented and prolific translators from the languages of the Soviet nationalities (the Kirghiz epic *Manas*, the Tartar epic *Idigey* and many others). The translator has a rich vocabulary and a fine sense for words. He succeeds in reproducing the style of the original without abuse of the archaic form. His work is comprehensible and written in a style familiar to the modern reader.

S. Lipkin does not limit himself to working in his study. He pays long visits to the countries and to peoples whose works he is translating. He has travelled the length and headth of the Kirghiz steppes and the mountain auls of Kazakhstan. All participators in the discussion pointed out that Lipkin has given a very real idea of the rather unfamiliar world of the ancient East, that he has given vital portrayals of people, their passions, griefs and joys comprehensible to the modern man despite the remoteness of the epoch.

A wide discussion was evoked by a talk on the "Problems of the Historical-Biographical Novel".

The speaker was Leonid Grossman, author of the well-known biographical novels: *The Notes of d'Archiac* (about Pushkin), *Ruletenburg* (Dostoyevsky), *The Velvet Dictator* (Garshin), the interesting research work *Balzac in Russia* and many other historico-literary and fictional monographs. He gave a detailed review of the origination and development of the biographical novel from Plutarch to our day. It is a genre widely employed in modern literature. One of the first of the moderns was the English writer Lytton Strachey who published *Eminent Victorian*, in 1918. The speaker dwelt particularly on the works of André Maurois, Stephan Zweig and Romain Rolland.

L. Grossman said that late Yuri Tynyanov *(Death of Vazir Mukhtar, Kyukhlya)* was the father of the modern Russian biographical novel. In his works could be heard "the clear footfalls of history's onward march".

Grossman mentioned Olga Forsh with her novel *Contemporaries* (about Gogol), Storm *(Life and Works of Lomonossov)*, Ehrenburg *(Gracchus Babeuf)* and many others as big Russian writers in this genre.

In the speaker's opinion Academician Tarle's works on Napoleon and Talleyrand achieve the level of works of art by their scope and the bold relief with which the historic figures are portrayed, their attractive structure and flexibility.

Reviewing the most outstanding works in this genre Grossman raised a number of very pertinent problems. To what extent might the scope of the genre be extended? Do memoirs of the Casanova and Cellini type belong to this genre, or the historical portraits of Tsars Ivan III, Ivan IV, Boris Godunov and others by Karamzin, biographies in the form of anecdotes such as Brusson's *Anatole France in a Robe* and, finally, those autobiographical novels of such writers and poets who according to Sir Walter Scott made their lives as interesting to the reader as the chapter of a novel. What should be the leading form of the historical-biographical novel: the fictional novel giving a broad background of the epoch and in which the historical figures appear side by side with invented characters and events or the strict biography based exclusively on documentary data?

The discussion revealed partisans of both forms who, however, agreed on one point and that was that the figures and epochs of the past should be resurrected in order to help mould the present. The speakers called on the writers of today to portray the heroes of the present war so that their deathless example might serve future generations.

Anatoli Vinogradov, a well-known historical novelist, author of *The Condemnation of Paganini* and a number of works on Stendhal and Mérimée appropriately said: "The attraction that the past has for us is the desire to know the foundation on which our heroic epoch has been built."

One of the liveliest evenings at the club was the gathering to celebrate the 70th birthday of Tatiana Shchepkina-Kupernik, the well-known poetess and translator.

Calderon and Tirsa de Molina, Lope de Vega and Goldoni, Shakespeare and Racine, Hugo and Rostand are but a few of the many writers who have found in her a brilliant translator. Her translations of Rostand's plays have been staged by the leading Russian theatres while *Cyrano de Bergerac* is a hardy perennial on the Soviet stage today.

The secret of the seventy-year-old poetess's youth is to be found in her unremitting zeal, clear mind and broad outlook. In Moscow's hardest time during the war, the autumn and winter of 1941, Shchepkina-Kupernik worked with unflagging energy: she translated, wrote, drew up repertoires for groups of actors touring the front and took the liveliest interest in their work.

The Government awarded Shchepkina-Ku-

pernik the Order of the Red Banner of Labour on her 70th birthday.

In reply to the congratulations heaped upon her the poetess said that if her work had merited praise it was not to her that the honours were due, but to all those to whom she owed her success. She was indebted to her ancestor, the great actor Shchepkin, whose example she had followed in her passion for creative work; she was indebted to her mother who taught her diligence, to her father who inspired in her the love of freedom and taught her to appreciate Pushkin, the light of Russian poetry, to Shakespeare who opened to her the vast world of human passions, to her friend Anton Chekhov who showed her the realities of life. And before all she was indebted to her Soviet homeland, which, in its great test, today was astonishing the world with wonders of bravery and heroism.

We regret to have to announce the death of Yuri Tynyanov, the writer—a severe loss to Soviet literature. Yuri Tynyanov was an outstanding artist, a discerning master of the written word and a prominent scholar.

His novel *Kyukhlya*, dedicated to V. Küchelbecker, friend of Pushkin and one of the most progressive representatives of Russian society of the twenties of last century, is written on the basis of a profound study of historical and literary material. The artist and the scientist are happily blended in the author of the novel, which is one of the first works of its kind in Soviet literature.

In the novel *The Death of Vazir-Mukhtar* Yuri Tynyanov draws a picture of Griboyedov, author of the classic comedy *The Mischief of Being Clever*. Griboyedov was not only a brilliant writer but an outstanding diplomat as well. Yuri Tynyanov deals with the period when Griboyedov was ambassador to Persia, a post to which he was appointed after he had written *The Mischief of Being Clever*.

Alexander Pushkin appears in both these novels. Besides Yuri Tynyanov wrote a novel called *Pushkin*, devoted to this greatest of Russian poets. It gives a broad picture of the life and customs of Pushkin's epoch. The first three parts of the novel are amazing for their breadth of material, polish, colour and superb language. The reader has been deprived of the fourth part for we have been deprived of Yuri Tynyanov. The work to which he devoted a year of labour and inspiration remained unfinished.

Yuri Tynyanov's scientific works, his investigations *Dostoyevsky and Gogol*, *Problems of Poetry*, and the book *The Conservatives and the Innovators*, reveal profound knowledge and rare erudition. Yuri Tynyanov also possessed great organizing abilities. For many years he was the guiding hand in the publication of *The Poet's Library*, begun on Gorky's initiative.

It was many years ago that Tynyanov discovered in himself the symptoms of an incurable disease. With the artist's indomitable will he fought death to the very last. Hopelessly ill and fully aware of approaching death Tynyanov went on dictating chapters of his book *Pushkin*. He was no longer able to hold the pen himself. Nevertheless he was also unable to stop work as all his life, every moment of his existence had been given to the service of art.

Anna Karavayeva, the writer, has celebrated her fiftieth birthday. She is the author of *The Saw-Mill*, a story about life in the Soviet countryside, *The Golden Beak*, a historical novel, the action of which is set in the Altai goldfields at the end of the XVIII century, and a number of tales drawn from the life of the workers and intellectuals. During the war Anna Karavayeva has written a series of stories about the heroic work in the Soviet rear.

On her fiftieth birthday the Soviet Government has decorated Anna Karavayeva with the Order of the Red Banner of Labour.

Izmailovo station of Moscow subway

There is not a theatre company in Moscow which does not consult the Central Theatre Library when embarking on a new play.

The library has an invaluable collection of about 100,000 volumes on the theatre of all ages and all peoples, scenery, costumes, make-up and stage properties. On its shelves are editions beginning with the XVI century and ending with the latest publications in Russian, French, English and many other languages. The library has a *Complete Collection of All Russian Theatrical Works*. This many-volumed publication issued by the Academy of Sciences embraces the period of Russian theatrical history from 1786 to 1899 and contains all Russian plays of the XVIII and XIX centuries. The library has many rare works: for instance the manuscript of A. Griboyedov's *The Mischief of Being Clever* which was long kept out of print by the censor; the first Russian edition of Beaumarchais' comedy published in Moscow in 1787 under the title of *The Marriage of Figaro*; the first Russian edition of Sheridan's *The School for Scandal* called by the translator *The School of Slander or The Desire to Censure Others* published in 1791.

Actors, stage managers, scene designers and students of theatrical schools use the library. It assists not only Muscovites but also the personnel of provincial theatres who often ask for advice and consultation. Letters come to the library from the front where actors, now with the forces, are in their leisure hours doing theatrical work among their comrades.

In preparing Bernard Shaw's play *Pygmalion*, the actors of the Maly Theatre studied in the library the history of the first productions of the comedy.

The library conducts systematic scientific work: the annotation of magazine articles, the bibliography of plays about the National War, the selection of materials on the history of the British theatre of the XIX century and so on.

The late C. S. Stanislavsky, founder of the Moscow Art Theatre once wrote, in giving an estimation of the library, that "this library provides invaluable sources for any theatre, stage manager or actor and contains vast subject matter on iconography, the history of the theatre and special publications on theatre art."

Their front is under the ground. Above them Moscow throbs. They wear tin-hats like soldiers but they carry pneumatic drills and monkey-wrenches instead of rifles and tommy-guns. They are laying the latest extension to the city's underground, work which has not ceased for a moment during the war. In our magazine we have already described the opening of the new Zamoskvorechye line and the building of the new underground stations. After that yet another section was opened, the Pokrovsky line, which joined the centre of the city with Izmailovo, a remote Moscow district with a population running into hundreds of thousands. Who is doing the job? Who is excavating all these thousands of tons of earth, pouring out these dozens of thousands of tons of concrete? It is the young people of Moscow, mainly girls.

They not only know how to do a good day's work underground, but how to spend their leisure and have a good time. The underground builders have their amateur entertainers: singers, dancers, reciters, musicians. After the working day is over they gather for rehearsals.

Since time untold the Russian people have been fond of choral singing. Girl underground builders are learning songs, old and new, and also the choral works of Soviet composers, popular airs about the Great National War. They stand in a close semi-circle, hands folded across their bosoms, strong, weather-beaten hands, used to toil. Then a tall, well-built woman takes the stage emerging in front of the chorus. As she dances, her dazzling smile reflects the joy of motion. She is Natasha Solovyova, the best concrete mixer of her shift. She and her girls have held for many months the red banner presented to the workers who return the best production results. And all the other members of the chorus are leading workers, shock workers, as they are called. There's Martha Mozgova, a cable worker who day after day exceeds her quota by sixty per cent. Then there's Shura Khrenova who welds the joints between the tube sections. Up to the war women were not employed at this work at all. Now they are making a good showing at this by no means easy job too.

A rival in popularity to the chorus is the favourite Russian instrument, the accordion. The underground builders have their orchestra of accordion players led by M. Lavrentyev, a veteran of the Moscow "moles", who had a hand in boring the first tunnel. Among the underground workers are some first-rate singers, reciters, acrobats and mimics. Every shaft, every station has its amateur circles.

Underground workers, like other amateur artists, take part in the country-wide festivals of amateur art, held in all towns and villages, at all factories and enterprises in the Soviet Union to discover talent and assist its development. The country-wide festivals aim at the encouragement and development of amateur art, an important factor in the country's cultural life.

The events of the Great National War are vividly reflected in unwritten song and ballad. Every people of the Soviet Union has its singers, bards and impromptu performers, each with their own strongly defined national characteristics. The even flowing ballad of the North has its contrast in the passionate, rhapsodic song of the East. The melancholy song of the Ukrainian kobzars is strikingly at variance with the stabbing rhythm of the Uzbek folk poets. In the thirty months of war the treasure house of folk art has been augmented by many excellent works in which the war dominates.

A conference was held in Moscow recently to discuss "The Great National War in Oral Folk Art". To it came bards, folk singers and folklore experts from all the Soviet Republics. In the scientific reports the involved processes at work during the war in the creation of epics were brought out. Of great interest was the study of the spontaneous productions of the men at the front: songs, ballads and anecdotes. Born as they are amid the din of battle and danger, nothing could be better proof of the people's invincible optimism, strength of spirit and faith in victory. The conference listened with lively interest to a report on the work of bards behind the enemy lines. The Huns raged in the temporarily occupied villages, pillaged, burnt and murdered, while right beside them the bards

chanted their songs summoning the people to the struggle and inspiring them with confidence in victory.

Folklore experts of the national republics spoke of the work of the "ashugs" of Armenia, the "akyns" of Kazakhstan and the "shakhirs" of Turkmenia. The high-lights of the conference, however, were the performances of the singers and bards themselves as they gave illustrations of their art.

Not long ago in Alma-Ata, capital of Soviet Kazakhstan, an all-republic competition (an "aitys") of folk bards was held. To it came famous bards ("akyns") from Karaganda and Semipalatinsk, Ksyl-Orda and Kustanai, South and North Kazakhstan regions. They performed in the State House of Opera and Ballet. The competition lasted five days and every day the house was packed. The audience were not only local townsfolk, but people from the surrounding villages as well. Later the hits of the competition were enthusiastically discussed in collective farm villages, at factories and in clubs. After all, the "akyns" had sung of what is uppermost in the thoughts of every Kazakh, every Soviet patriot. Their songs, so varied in imagery and word, were linked by one common idea: to work as well as possible, to exert every effort for the enemy's defeat.

Venerable Jamboul, most famous of folk bards, was accorded a stormy ovation. The decorations on his chest gleamed through his white beard. Jamboul is a Stalin Prize winner. The whole country knows his songs. They have been excellently translated and are very popular in Moscow and Leningrad, in Kiev and Tbilissi. . . Jamboul sang. The other "akyns" to follow him caught up the burden of his song, each adding his impromptu contribution. This was a genuine festival of inspiration, popular talent and art coming from the very heart of the people.

At the conclusion of the "aitys" prizes were presented to the most outstanding singers. Jamboul, "aksakal" (in kazakh means grey beard.—*Ed.*) of folk poetry was first among the prize-winners. Then followed four other prominent Kazakh "akyns". In all prizes were awarded to thirty bards.

Drawing by V. Fomichov

The Soviet artillery can be heard in Jassy to where the headquarters of the German Field Marshal Manstein was evacuated.

From newspapers

A NASTY SHOCK FOR THE GERMAN GUEST IN JASSY HOTEL

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No. 4, vol. XI April 1944

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