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The news that the forces of the second Ukrainian front have reached the state borders of the U.S.S.R. has called forth exceptional enthusiasm among all strata of the Soviet people. Scientists, writers, workers and collective farmers are sending greetings to the Red Army and promise to increase their efforts to hasten the final victory over German fascism.

March 26th, 1944—the day when the Order of the Supreme Commander in Chief to the Commander of the second Ukrainian front was published, became a holiday for the whole people.

That day the Red Army Ensemble was giving a concert in the Large Hall of the Moscow Conservatoire. In the middle of the concert the leading artist suddenly appeared on the stage:

"Comrades! . ."

These words astounded the assembly.

"The wireless has just announced the Order of the Day issued by the Supreme Commander in Chief, Marshal Stalin. Several days ago the troops of the second Ukrainian front, continuing their resolute offensive, forced the river Dniester for 175 kilometres, and captured the town and important railway junction of Beltsy. . ."

The immediate wave of applause drowned the speaker's words. When the noise had died down, he continued:

"Developing the offensive, the Soviet forces have reached our state borders, the river Prut, along a front of eighty-five kilometres."

There was another mighty burst of applause. The stage, the stalls, boxes and the body of the hall merged in a surging expression of their pride and joy.

Professor A. Alexandrov, the leader of the Ensemble, applauding with the audience, suddenly made a half-turn to the Ensemble, spread out his arms, and the hall resounded to the mighty, triumphant strains of the State Anthem of the U.S.S.R.

Below we publish some of the responses made by outstanding Soviet people to this new splendid victory of the Red Army.

AT THE BORDER

These are days when great offensive operations are being completed. The wave of the people's righteous wrath is sweeping from its path all the enemy's barriers. Our forces have reached the borders of the U.S.S.R. What boundless joy these words inspire in the hearts of all true children of our land!

I write these lines shortly after my return to Moscow from the lovely and ancient capital of the Ukraine, that city of a wonderful past and a brilliant future—Kiev. I write them in the heart of the Moscow night, listening to the chimes of the Kremlin bells and the impressive notes of the State Anthem. I write them, remembering all that I saw in liberated Kiev, in liberated Ukraine, And what I saw there human words cannot adequately describe: a return of life, of life which seemed to be killed by the professional German murderers. I saw the face of the immortal Ukraine, taking on a flush of health again, as though the blood again coursed afresh, joyfully, through its veins, saw her flexing her muscles anticipating the great work of reconstruction and creation, the sparkle of returned life in her eyes, which but yesterday seemed extinguished. . .

Our victory over the hitlerite bandits is the victory of light and reason over darkness and barbarism. The deeds of our people, our country, in the fight against the German bandits are of immortal splendour. Today when I meet the famous Heroes of the Soviet Union, when I see our generals who combine the amazing strategy of brilliant military leaders with a wonderful simplicity, our rank-and-file fighting men who always follow Suvorov's instructions to "understand every manoeuvre"; when at the same time I remember that both our generals and our rank-and-file soldiers are fighting for their country and the happiness it has achieved—then I realize with crystal clarity that our Red Army cannot but be victorious.

And may the blood which they have spilled be on the heads of the German bandits, the enemies of humanity and of all humane feelings!

MAXIM RYLSKY,
Ukrainian poet

A DAY WHICH WILL BE MARKED IN HISTORY

It was with feelings of the greatest joy, pride and gratitude that we, Leningrad scientists, heard the Order of the Day of the Supreme Commander in Chief, Marshal of the Soviet Union, Stalin. Our forces are on the frontier! Along a stretch of eighty-five kilometres the border of the Soviet Union is cleared of the German-fascist invaders.

Two and a half years ago they broke through, armed to the teeth, insolent and ferocious. And now, thrashed in the south, they are running home again. Even when not one invader is left in our country, the memory of this historic day, March 26th, will ever be dear to us. We, Leningrad scientists, promise our beloved country to work still more intensively, giving all our strength, all our knowledge and all our experience toward the hastening of the complete victory over the hated enemy.

A. YOFFE,
vice-president of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R.
Professors V. DOBROKLONSKY, P. KOBEKOV, corresponding members of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R.
Professors V. SPIRIDONOV, S. KUZMIN, A. VERIGO, I. STRASHUN

GREAT EVENTS

Every day brings us joyful reports of the new, splendid victories of the Red Army, every day brings nearer that day when the Soviet soil will be entirely cleared of the foul German invader. But never have the Soviet people felt so vividly the approach of that glorious day of celebration as now, when the banners of the gallant troops of the second Ukrainian front are waving on our borders at the river Prut. This is a real historic victory!

These great events, like all the battles which the Soviet people have won against the German-fascist invaders, have fulfilled with wonderful accuracy and inevitability the wise prognoses of our great military leader Stalin, whose firm hand is leading the Red Army to victory. His unshakeable confidence in the inexhaustible creative strength of the Soviet people, his confidence in victory over the hitlerite invaders spread to every Soviet patriot, and inspired the people of the U.S.S.R. to gallantry in battle and devoted labour.

Soviet scientists are proud of the glorious Red Army, of its brilliant Supreme Commander-in-Chief, our courageous people who stood like an iron barrier in defence of their country. We feel that we are an indivisible part of our people. And today, when the whole country salutes the victorious Dniester divisions, we join our voices with those of the workers in Soviet mills, factories and fields, we join in their noble spontaneous vow: to devote all our strength, with renewed energy to bring about the final defeat of the ferocious enemy.

Academician V. KOMAROV,
President of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R.

THE FRONT WILL RECEIVE YET MORE ARMS

It was with the deepest joy that the people working at the Stalin artillery plant learned the news that the Soviet forces had come out upon the frontiers of the U.S.S.R., the river Prut. In honour of this historic victory, the workers and engineers determined to turn out an extra quota for the front.

From month to month, the victories won by the Red Army have been inspiring us to increase the production of artillery. The people working in our plant continually improve the technical processes of the work. Last year, for example, we cut the expenditure of labour on several types of guns by 43 per cent.

While rejoicing over the glorious successes of the Soviet forces, we daily increase the productivity of our work, and at the present time, the labour enthusiasm in our plant has risen to still greater heights.

We shall give all our strength to ensure the front a supply of menacing artillery, to hasten the final defeat of the hated enemy.

A. ELYAN,
director of the Stalin artillery plant, Hero of Socialist Labour

CONSTANTINE SIMONOV

DAY AND NIGHT

Chapters from a novel

Already in the morning, Colonel Bobrov had been sent to meet and speed up the division in which Saburov was battalion commander. It was midday when Bobrov met it, before reaching Srednyaya Akhtuba, about thirty kilometres from the Volga, and as it happened, the first person he met was Saburov marching at the head of his battalion. After enquiring the number of the division and learning that the commander was a good distance back, the colonel swiftly took his place again in the car which had the engine running ready to start off.

"Comrade Captain," he said, his calm tired eyes resting on Saburov, "I don't need to tell you why your battalion must be at the crossing by six o'clock. You must understand that yourself."

And without another word, he slammed the door and nodded to the driver.

On his return at six o'clock that evening Bobrov found Saburov on the river bank. After the grueling march the battalion approached the river with its ranks somewhat ragged, but within half an hour, Saburov had already dislocated his men along the slopes and gulleys of the hilly riverside, to await further orders.

When Saburov had placed his battalion along the shore, ready for embarkation, and sat down on a tree trunk lying right beside the water, Colonel Bobrov came and sat down beside him and opening a swanky cigarette case filled with "Northern Palmira" which he had acquired in some mysterious manner, offered one to Saburov.

They lighted up, and as the thin wisps of smoke curled upwards, Saburov put the question which had been exercising his mind for a long time.

"Well, how are things there?" and he jerked his head towards the right bank.

"Hardish," said the colonel. "Hardish..." And for the third time he repeated the word "hardish" in a whisper, as though there was nothing more to add, everything to be said was contained in the one word. And if the first "hardish" simply meant difficult, the second one meant very difficult, and the third one, whispered, meant terribly difficult, desperately so.

Saburov's gaze rested on the right bank of the Volga. There it lay, high, steep like the right banks of all Russian rivers. All the continual ill luck which Saburov had experienced in this war came from the fact that all the western banks of Russian rivers were steep, while all the eastern banks gently sloped. And many Russian towns stood precisely on the western banks of rivers—Kiev, Dniepropetrovsk, Mogilev, Rostov—any town you like. And all of them were difficult to defend because they backed on to the river, and difficult to take back, because then they were on the far bank.

Dusk was falling, but the German bombers circling, diving and rising again over the town were plainly visible, and the bursting AA-shells thickly dotted the sky like tiny porous clouds.

In the southern part of the city a tall grain elevator was burning, the skyward-leaping flames visible even from here.

And on the arid steppe, beyond the Volga, as far as Elton, thousands of starving fugitives were wandering, longing for so much as a crust of bread.

All this aroused in Saburov at this moment a plain and simple feeling of hatred for the Germans.

The evening was cool, but Saburov still felt the scorching sun of the steppe, and the dusty march; he had not yet pulled himself together and wanted to drink continually. Taking one of the men's steel helmets, he descended the

slope to the shores of the Volga, his feet sinking in the soft sand, and made his way to the water. But when his thirst was somewhat quenched by the cool water and he dipped the helmet in for the second time, a thought suddenly struck him like a blow as he raised it to his lips—a simple thought and at the same time shattering—Volga water. He was drinking water from the Volga and at the same time he was at the front. These two concepts—war and the Volga—despite their obviousness somehow did not fit. From his childhood, his school days, all his life in fact, the Volga for him had been something deeply, profoundly Russian and only Russian, so utterly far from any thought of foreign invasion that now the fact that he was standing on the bank of the Volga, drinking its water, with Germans on the opposite shore seemed to be utterly unfeasible.

He looked at Stalingrad afire on the other side, and suddenly realized that to surrender this town to the Germans would be not only hideous but monstrous for the whole of Russia, for all those people who like himself, had from their childhood thought of the Volga as a primordially Russian river and could not conceive of it as otherwise.

It was with this new feeling that he mounted the sandy slope to where Colonel Bobrov was still sitting. The latter looked at him and as though answering his secret thoughts, said:

"Yes, captain, the Volga. . ." and pointing up the river, he added: "And there's our launch crossing with a barge. . ." And looking again, attentively, with a professional eye, said: "Embark one company and two guns. . ."

Within fifteen minutes the little steamer, tugging the barge behind it, was approaching the shore. Saburov and Bobrov went down to the roughly constructed moorage from which the men were to embark. With a few skilful manoeuvres, the captain of the tug moored the barge to the pier. The Red Army men working there caught the hawser and wound it round thick bollards. Now the company could embark.

Wounded men were carried from the barge, passing the men crowding the pier. Some of them groaned, but the majority were silent. A young nurse was going from stretcher to stretcher, placing their heads more comfortably, whispering to them, or helping them to shift to an easier position. The seriously wounded were followed from the barge by about fifteen others able to walk. Saburov was surprised to find them so few.

"What a few with slight wounds!" he said to Bobrov.

"A few?" Bobrov repeated and laughed. "There are as many in other places, too, but not all of them come over here."

"Why not?" asked Saburov.

"How shall I explain it to you? . . Just because it's difficult and because it's hot work there. And furious. No, I'm not putting it the right way. . . It's impossible to put it into words. You'll get over there yourself, and before you've been there three days you'll understand all right."

The first company began to move over the pier onto the barge, but here an unexpected complication arose. It appeared that a number of people had gathered on the bank who considered that they absolutely must cross to Stalingrad at once and on this barge. One was returning from hospital; another was bringing a barrel of vodka from the store and insisted on being taken over with it that very day; a third, a huge, burly looking man hugging a heavy case pushed through to Saburov telling him that he was bringing capsules for mines and that if he didn't bring them that very day they'd have his head. And finally there were people who, for various reasons, had come over in the morning and now wanted to get back to Stalingrad as quickly as possible. It was impossible to reason with them. And neither from their tone nor their expression would one ever have guessed that there, on the right bank, where they were in such a hurry to be, was a besieged town, with shells bursting on its streets every minute.

With innate composure Saburov permitted the man with the capsules and the one with the vodka to embark, telling the rest to wait for the next barge. Last of all to approach him was the nurse, the same who had just come from Stalingrad and accompanied the wounded off the barge. She said that there were more wounded on the other side, and she had to bring them over with this same barge. Saburov could not refuse her, and when the company embarked she

followed the others along the narrow plank to the barge, then onto the tug.

The captain, an elderly man in a blue jacket and his old merchant fleet cap with the peak broken, barked an order into the deck cabin, and the tug cast off from the left bank.

Saburov sat at the stern, his legs hanging over the side, holding the rail. He had taken off his greatcoat and laid it beside him. It was pleasant to feel the river breeze playing under his tunic. He opened it and let it swell out like a sail.

"You'll catch cold, Comrade Captain," said the girl returning for wounded, who was standing beside him.

Saburov smiled. It seemed a ridiculous idea to him that in the fifteenth month of the war, when crossing to Stalingrad, he could suddenly catch cold or go down with flu. He said nothing in reply.

"And you can catch cold before you notice it," the girl insisted again. "It's chilly here on the river in the evenings. I cross every day and I've got such a cold that I've lost my voice."

And in fact, her thin girlish voice was hoarse.

"You cross every day?" said Saburov raising his eyes to her face. "How many times?"

"As many times as there are wounded to bring over. It's not like it used to be here now—first the field dressing station, then the field hospital, and then to the rear. We take the wounded from the forward lines and bring them straight over the Volga ourselves."

She said it in such a matter of fact way that to his own surprise, Saburov found himself asking her that empty and foolish question which in the ordinary way he never asked:

"And aren't you afraid, crossing backwards and forwards so often?"

"Yes, I'm afraid," said the girl. "When I'm bringing the wounded over from there I'm not afraid, but I am when I go back. It is more frightening when one's alone, don't you think so?"

"Yes, that's true," said Saburov, thinking how he himself, when with his battalion and thinking about them, always felt less fear than on the rare occasions when he was alone.

The girl sat down beside him, dangled her legs over the water too and touching his shoulder confidently, whispered:

"You know what it is that's frightening? No, you don't know. . . You're already quite old, you don't know. . . It's frightening to think that you may suddenly be killed and then there'll be nothing. Nothing of all that you'd dreamed about."

"What won't there be?"

"There won't be anything. . . Do you know how old I am? I'm eighteen. And I've seen nothing, nothing at all. I dreamed of studying, but I haven't studied. . . I dreamed of going to Moscow and everywhere, everywhere—and I've been nowhere. I dreamed. . ." she thought for a moment, then in a whisper, touching Saburov confidently on the shoulder once more, she continued: "I dreamed of how I would fall in love, get married, and there has been nothing of all that either. . . And sometimes I'm afraid, terribly afraid, that maybe there'll be nothing of it all. I shall die, and there'll be nothing, nothing. . ."

"And if you'd already studied and travelled and were married do you think it wouldn't be frightening?" asked Saburov.

"No," said the girl with conviction. "Take yourself, for instance. I know you're not frightened like I am. You're quite old."

"How old?"

"Well, thirty-five, forty, aren't you?"

"Yes," smiled Saburov, and thought bitterly that there was no object in proving that he was not forty and not even thirty-five, and that he too had not learned all that he wanted to know, and not been where he wanted to go or loved as he wished to love.

"There you are, you see," she continued, "and so you shouldn't be frightened. But I'm frightened."

She said it so sadly and at the same time with such simplicity, that Saburov wanted to stroke her head as though she were a child and say something simple and comforting, such as that everything would be all right and nothing was going to happen to her; on the contrary, everything was going to be as she wanted. But the sight of the burning town stopped him uttering the idle words, and instead he contented himself with simply stroking her head once, then swiftly took his hand away lest she

think that he had taken her frankness the wrong way.

"They killed our doctor today," said the girl. "I was bringing him over when he died. . . He was always so bad-tempered, and scolded everybody. And when he was operating, he scolded us all and shouted at us. And you know, the more a wounded man groaned and the more pain he was in, the more the doctor scolded. And when he was dying, and I was bringing him over—he had a stomach wound—he himself was in terrible pain, but he lay there quietly and never scolded, he just said nothing at all. And that was all. And I realized that probably he was really a very kind man. He scolded because he couldn't stand the sight of pain, and when he himself was in pain he was silent, said nothing right up to his death, nothing at all. . . Only when I began to cry over him, he suddenly smiled. Why did he do that, do you think?"

"I don't know," said Saburov. "Maybe he was glad that you were still alive and whole in this war. And so he smiled. And maybe it was not that at all. I dont' know."

"And I don't know either," said the girl. "Only I was so very sorry for him, and it seemed too strange. He was so big and strong. . . It always seemed to me that all of us, and I myself, would be killed first, and he after everybody else, or perhaps not at all. But it turned out just the opposite."

Puffing, the tug was approaching the Stalingrad bank, it was already within two to three hundred yards of the shore, when suddenly with a whistle the first shell plumped into the water in front of it. Saburov started from the unexpectedness of it. But not the girl.

"They're firing," she said. "And as I was sitting here talking to you, I was just wondering why they didn't fire."

Saburov did not reply. He was listening, and even before the second shell fell he knew that it would pass well beyond them. And actually, it fell about two hundred yards behind the tug. The Germans had taken it into what was known as an artillery fork—one shell ahead, the next astern. Saburov knew that now they would divide the fork in half, then divide it again, correct their fire, and what happened next, as always, would be a matter of luck.

Saburov rose, and taking a few steps to the very stern, put his hands to his mouth and shouted across to the barge:

"Maslennikov, tell the men to take off their overcoats and lay them beside them."

The Red Army men standing by him on the tug, realizing that the captain's order applied to them too, hastily stripped off their coats and laid them at their feet.

As Saburov had foreseen, the German gunners halved the fork so exactly that the third shell plumped down almost on board the tug.

"A crate!" said the girl.

Saburov looked up and saw a German double-fuselage Fokke-Wulff artillery corrector, the kind they call a "crate" at the front because of its queer shape. It was flying low, just over his head, and was obviously the reason for today's accuracy on the part of the German gunners, who were not usually distinguished for that quality. The plane was correcting their fire from above. The heavy barge behind deprived the tug of any possibility of manoeuvering, the only thing to do was to wait for the five minutes which still separated them from the bank.

Saburov glanced at the girl and saw to his surprise that she apparently had nothing of that feeling so often arising in moments of danger: she had no desire to press close to anything, or be near somebody. She stood calmly, five paces from Saburov, where he had left her at the side, and waited silently, with the air of being used to it, staring straight down at the water rushing past her feet.

Saburov went back to her.

"If anything happens, can you swim ashore?"

"I can't swim," she said.

"Not at all?"

"Not at all."

"Then stand over there," said Saburov. "There, look, where the life-belt's hanging. Stand beside it."

He pointed to the life-belt, and just at that moment a shell hit the tug. It evidently landed in the engine room or the boiler, for all at once there was a thundering roar, everything became a crashing confusion in which Saburov was swept off his feet by the crowd of people hurled against him, tossed into the air and flung into the water. A few

strong strokes brought him to the surface. About twenty paces from him he saw part of the tug turn slowly round, and scooping up water with its funnel as though with a big glass—it went down.

All around, people were struggling in the water. Saburov's heavy, water-filled top boots pulled his legs downwards and at first he made up his mind to dive and pull them off. But the barge, being carried past him by the current, was so near that with soldierly care for his uniform, he felt it a shame to waste the boots and decided he'd manage to swim there with his boots on.

All these thoughts had flashed through his mind in a second, the next instant he saw the girl a few yards away, sinking after an unsuccessful attempt to seize a bit of flotsam. With a few strong strokes, Saburov swam to the spot, ready to seize the girl by her tunic as she rose again. Luckily the current was bringing the barge right up to him, and summoning all his strength he used his free arm to bring him right across its course.

Within a half minute he had seized the hands stretched out to him from the barge, pulled himself up to it, bringing the girl with him, and after seeing that strong hands had lifted her up on board, swiftly clambered up himself.

"Oh, thank God, Comrade Captain!" said Maslennikov's joyful voice beside him.

Saburov glanced at him. Maslennikov was bootless and tunicless; not sure whether Saburov would get to the barge alone or not, he had been prepared to jump into the water.

"Wait," said Saburov and turned back to the water.

One after the other the Red Army men who had escaped from the tug were swimming to the barge. Last of all came the captain of the tug. He clambered up onto the barge, snorting and cursing, jamming down his merchant fleet cap with the broken visor, which had somehow or other remained on his head.

A little cutter was puffing diagonally across from the bank, to cut across the path of the barge.

"Hawser coming over!" shouted a stentorian Volga bass.

A moment later a sandbag fastened to a thin line whistled through the air and plumped onto the barge. The Red Army men hauled in the hawser.

A few more shells fell into the water far behind the barge, and then all was quiet. The steep bank near at hand hindered the German's fire.

"Call a muster roll," Saburov said to Maslennikov, "and get dressed. Are you going to stay barefoot like that?"

Maslennikov looked in some confusion at his bare feet and hastily began pulling on his boots.

One of the men had thrown his own greatcoat over Saburov's shoulders.

"Give the girl a coat," said Saburov. "Where is she?"

She was sitting there, a few paces from him, wearing a greatcoat that somebody had already thrown over her shoulders, and with feminine care was wringing out her long hair, twisting it round her hands, as though she had quite forgotten that she was wet to the skin. Saburov wanted to go to her, but at that moment Maslennikov touched him on the shoulder.

"Well?"

"Eight men missing," said Maslennikov in a whisper, and there was an expression of suffering on his face: not yet ashore, not a single fight, and already eight men gone.

The barge was brought up to the wharf. Now it was not only the sound of artillery that was audible, but the rattle of machine-guns somewhere quite near. Saburov, who as yet did not know the actual situation in the town, was amazed. The machine-guns were not more than two to three kilometres away.

The excited men hastened ashore. Saburov stood and let them pass him. The girl was one of the first to land. When Saburov remembered her, she was neither on the barge nor on the wharf. He and Maslennikov were the last to land.

The Stalingrad bank was hard, of clay soil. Ordinary soil, just like all other soil, the soil of Stalingrad.

After a two-hour lull, fierce fighting broke out at dawn, and continued for four days. It started with bombing, which brought Saburov his fifth scratch. The bombing was prolonged and vicious. Besides Junkers-88's, the battalion was bombed by Junkers-87's, those same Stukas with screaming bombs which had been the subject of so much talk during the German invasion in France. In reality, there were no screaming

bombs. . . there was simply an adaptation under the fuselage which gave forth a frightful howl when the Junkers dived. Actually, it was a simple idea, in principle reminiscent of a child's rattle or the whistle attached to a boy's kite. And not only Saburov, who had previously been bombed by these howling aircraft, but also the majority of his men, who heard it for the first time, feared these machines which counted on psychological effect, not more but rather less than ordinary bombers.

Just before midday Babchenko rang up.

"I shan't be coming to you," he said, "I'm going to another job. The chief'll probably be coming to you. So see to it. . ." And he hung up.

The chief was the name by which the division knew Colonel Protsenko. And the warning to "see to it" meant that Saburov should stand his ground and not let the chief make his way to the most dangerous spots, as he would most certainly wish to do.

And sure enough, very soon Protsenko arrived with his adjutant and a submachine-gunner. After Saburov had reported, he asked as usual:

"How are you, Alexei Ivanych?" and held out his left hand, the sound one. After his wound, his right hand still would not work properly, and all the time he was talking he would move his fingers, trying in this way to restore the circulation and replace the massage the doctor had prescribed.

"Good enough, good enough," he said, walking about Saburov's little underground room and casting an appraising eye over the ceiling. "It'll take Frytz"—he pronounced the name with an Ukrainian accent—"a half-tonner to show his dislike for you. And if he grudges half-a-ton, he won't get anywhere."

Together with Saburov, he went round the machine-gun posts, then accompanied him to the stone wall beyond which the mortar men were digging in. He looked with dissatisfaction at the small, badly-dug slits, and speaking into space, as though he had not noticed the mortarmen there, said:

"Queer folks, Russians. . ."

"What do you think, Alexei Ivanych," he continued, "who is it that is killing us in this war? You may say: the Germans. But I say that it's laziness. . . The Germans kill two—and the third—laziness; the Germans two—and the third—laziness."

He turned to the mortar men.

"Do you know the African bird, the ostrich?" he asked the sergeant, who had immediately appeared standing at attention in front of him.

"Yes, sir!"

"And how does it resemble you, do you know? No, you don't. It's like you because it takes cover the same way as you do. It hides its head, and leaves its behind sticking up and thinks that everything is hidden. Lie down!" Protsenko suddenly shouted in a ringing voice.

"What?" repeated the sergeant, uncomprehending.

"Lie down! There's a mine coming. Lie down in your trench while you're still alive. . ."

With a spring the sergeant flung himself into his tiny trench slit, in which, as Protsenko had predicted, there was not room for all of him.

"Well, there you are, you see," said Protsenko. "Your head's safe all right, but half your bottom's shot away. It's gone. Stand up!" he shouted sharply once more.

The sergeant rose, smiling sheepishly.

"Give your orders," Protsenko said to Saburov, and turning on his heel, went on.

Saburov stayed behind and gave orders for deep trenches to be dug, then hastened after Protsenko.

Two machine-gunners were lying by the stone wall. They had tried to take the deepest possible cover behind it, and had in fact gone so deep that the muzzles of their machine-guns were pointing in the general direction of the sky. Protsenko came up to them and lay down before the machine-gun, tested the sight and then rose, brushing the brick dust from his knees.

"Are you a hunter?" he asked the elderly pockmarked sergeant who was No. 1 at the gun.

"Yes, I sometimes go hunting, Comrade Colonel," said the man with alacrity, preparing for a heart to heart talk with the chief.

"I can see that you do," said Protsenko. "It's ducks you're getting ready to shoot here, you've aimed the machine-gun at the sky. Aimed it well, just ready to catch them on the wing," he added longingly and at the same time

ironically". The only trouble is that the Germans usually walk about on the ground. Apart from that I'd have no fault to find."

And turning, he continued on his way in the same unhurried manner. No. 1 gunner, his face a study in confusion, turned upon No. 2:

"Didn't I tell you—where's the muzzle pointing, into the sky? Where did you place the gun, eh?"

"What are you on at me for?" the second gunner tried to defend himself. "I did the same as you did. . ."

"Never mind what I did. You, as No. 2, should help me to choose the position. . . "

Saburov never heard the end of their argument. Protsenko went on further, all the time moving the fingers of his wounded arm, as though he were beating out some inaudible melody on an invisible drum, and without turning to Saburov, speaking into space as was his wont when out of humour, said:

"The divisional commander shows where the machine-gun should point—into the sky or along the ground. . . Fine, very fine. That's what he studied in the General Staff Academy for. . . And when are you going to learn how to blush?" he shouted at Saburov, turning sharply. "When shall I teach you to blush?"

Saburov was silent. The colonel was right, and even if regulations had allowed it, there was nothing he could have said.

"When the divisional commander stops placing machine-guns and when you learn to blush, then we shall win the war and not before. And don't you forget it. . . "

They had only just returned to the staff cellar, when the Germans started their artillery and mortar barrage in preparation for an attack.

"In general, you've not got so bad a grip, you've got a grip that'll hold," said Protsenko, cocking his head slightly on one side and listening to the explosions. "You'll hold on, but you've got to teach your men. . . Day and night you've got to teach them. . . Because if you don't teach them today, tomorrow they'll be killed, and not simply killed—after all, it's war—but killed for nothing, uselessly, that's what's the trouble. Where's your observation post?"

"On the fourth floor, under the roof."

"Well, go up and see how things are. And in the meantime, let them bring me something to eat."

On his way out Saburov whispered to Petya to get the colonel some food, and climbed up to the fourth floor. . . From there, through the broad French windows opening onto a burnt balcony, almost everything in front could be seen. Along a neighbouring street Germans were running from house to house and fence to fence. Shells sent up columns of smoke right by the house, some of them thundered against the walls, and then the whole house rocked like a ship tossed by a big wave.

Saburov noticed that most of the Germans visible were fussing about opposite the house on the right, where Maslennikov was placed instead of Parfyonov who had been killed. He ran back down the stairs to the cellar and rang up first Maslennikov, then Gordienko, warning them of the attack in preparation. Both replied that they had observed it themselves and were ready for battle.

Protsenko, who did not like to interfere with the arrangements made by his subordinates without the most urgent necessity, sat in the cellar calmly crunching a black rusk with a piece of dry sausage on top. When the German attack began, to the roar of the mortar shells still exploding all around, Protsenko, despite Saburov's requests, went up himself with him to the observation post. He stayed there for about an hour. Saburov was nervous, he wanted to take Protsenko somewhere down below. When a heavy shell drove through the wall and exploded in a neighbouring room, fragments of plaster and brick coming through the broken wall right to where they were standing, he pulled the colonel's arm as though he would drag him down by force; Protsenko freed his arm, looked at him and instead of using the bark of a superior officer usual in such a case, simply said:

"How long have we been fighting together? The second year? Then why do you pull my arm? . ." And considering that there was no more to say, took off his cap and began beating the dust from it.

When the Germans withdrew after the first, unsuccessful attack, a late

shell burst on the staircase, just one floor beneath Saburov and Protsenko, who were about to descend from the observation post. A whole flight was torn out by the burst, and they had to climb down by the upturned beams and the remnants of the bannisters.

"Now do you see why you mustn't hurry your superior officer?" said Protsenko. "If I'd listened to you and gone down before, I'd have stopped that shell. Babchenko told you: 'The chief's coming, so see to it. . .'"—his sudden mimicry of Babchenko was comically perfect—"and you would have brought me under that lot. So you see. . ."

Protsenko left Saburov during a lull between the Germans' attacks.

"Well, keep chirpy," he said to Saburov as he left. And at the very last moment he turned round with a smile and added confidentially: "When I really learn to make war, then I'll stop visiting the battalions and let the regimental commanders do it, and I'll only pay visits to the regimental staffs. . . But I'll drop in to see you for old time's sake. When people have been at Voronezh together, it's as though they'd christened their children together. I'll come and pay you neighbourly visits."

He turned and left, limping a little as usual and drumming in the air with his fingers.

Just before evening the Germans launched another attack, but were driven off. When dusk fell, Petya brought Saburov a pan of boiled potatoes.

"Where did you get them?" asked the latter in astonishment.

"Here, quite near," said Petya.

"But where all the same?"

"Well, nearby," replied Petya mysteriously.

And when Saburov, who was hungry and had no time for questioning, had both cheeks full, Petya, standing over him like a careful mother, watched proudly how these potatoes, from some mysterious source, disappeared into the captain's mouth one after the other.

"But where did you get them, after all?" asked Saburov, in a satiated, contented voice.

An inward struggle was reflected on Petya's face. On the one hand, he knew that he must reply to the question, but on the other, he wanted to keep the newly discovered source of supplies a secret from the captain. Saburov looked into his stony face and smiled.

Petya was distinguished for his courage, his care and his good spirits—in a word, the three main qualities needed in a batman. Before the war he had been in charge of getting in supplies for a Moscow factory, work to which he had taken a fancy during the First Five-Year Plan. To get things which nobody else could get, nobody knew how or where, was the one thing he loved. He procured I-beams in Yalta, grapes in the northern town of Kostroma, and timber for building in the Karakum desert. He did the impossible, and this delighted him. He never sought out things or "wanged" them for himself, but to get the necessary materials for the factory where he worked, he was ready to stop at nothing. His rivals detested him, and the administration swore by him. Finding himself Saburov's batman at the front, in addition to his bravery in face of the enemy, he displayed amazing courage in face of all the difficulties of supplies. When the battalion had nothing to eat, Saburov sent Petya to forage for something and Petya always found it. . . When there was nothing to smoke, Petya would rummage out some tobacco. If there was nothing to drink, Petya would always rout out a tot of vodka, with such celerity that Saburov suspected him of hoarding a secret supply.

Petya had only one failing: although he never used unlawful methods, nevertheless he liked to invest his successes with impenetrable mystery and was thoroughly disgusted when Saburov or anybody else asked him questions about it.

"Well, and where did you get them, then?" Saburov repeated, and Petya, feeling that there was no way out of it, decided to speak up.

"Here," he said. "In the yard there's a wing of the house, and under it a cellar, and in that cellar there's a woman living."

"What woman?" asked Saburov, raising his brows.

"A Stalingrad woman; she used to live here in the wing. Her husband's killed. She crept into the cellar with her three children and there she is. . . And they have everything there with them—potatoes, carrots and all the rest of it. . . So as not to starve. She's even got a goat with her in the cellar, but she says that it's stopped giving

milk because of the darkness. I told her my commander liked potatoes, and without a word she boiled a panful, and told me to come when I needed them, and even gave me some pork fat. . . You never noticed it, but you've been eating potatoes with pork fat," added Petya chagrined.

This business with the woman impressed Petya mainly from the point of view of food. But Saburov was amazed at a woman with children suddenly turning up among all these ruins, and rising swiftly, he flung on his cap and said:

"Show me where she is."

They went along corridors, and stooping, crossed a space under fire to the wing; and there among the tumbledown walls, Saburov actually saw something like doors with stones and boards piled around. They descended a few rough stairs. The cellar was a big one, which had evidently been made yet larger during the war. A tiny home-made oil lamp stood on a barrel covered with boards in a corner. Beside the barrel squatted a woman, not yet old, with a tormented, harassed face, rocking a child. Two little girls, about eight and ten years of age, sitting beside her, looked at the two arrivals, their eyes round with astonishment.

"Good day."

"Good day," said the woman.

"Why have you remained here?" asked Saburov.

"And where should we go?"

"But the Germans have been here."

"We covered everything up above, so that they saw nothing."

"Covered it all up. . . you might have been smothered."

"It would have been all the same, if the Germans were here."

"Today it's late," said Saburov. "Tomorrow I'll think how I can get you away from here."

"But I'm not going."

"Why not?"

"I shan't go," she repeated obstinately. "Where should I go?"

"To the other side, over the Volga."

"I shan't go. With them?" she pointed to the children. "I might have gone alone, but I shan't go with them. I've saved all I had and brought it down here. It may be enough for a month, maybe, two, and maybe by that time you'll have driven the Germans away."

"And suppose a bomb falls here or a shell, have you thought about that?" said Saburov, no longer hoping to convince her, but unable to reconcile himself to the idea that a woman with three children dwelt here.

"And if it does?" said the woman indifferently. "Then it'll get us all at once—both me and them; we'll finish all together. And if I go, then they'll die gradually, first one, then another. . . I'm not going."

Saburov did not know what to say to her. There was a long silence.

"And if there's cooking to be done, then I'll cook for you, and you'll have something to eat. I've a lot of potatoes. . . I'll cook them for you myself." She jerked her head in the direction of the eldest girl. "She's grown up now, she can look after the little ones, and I'll come and cook. He can tell me when it's needed," she nodded at Petya, "I'll make cabbage soup too, only without meat. And for that matter, I can kill the goat," she added after a pause, "I'll kill it, and then I can make it with meat."

She could see by Saburov's eyes that he understood her and would not insist further that she should go, and if she now talked about how she would cook, it was not in order to induce him to let her stay here, but simply from the Russian woman's real compassion, which told her that these soldiers—she understood nothing of the various ranks—were unwashed, hungry, their clothes unmended, and some day they would be going to their own homes again. Something must be cooked for them while they were here, even if only cabbage soup, and if she was going to make cabbage soup, well, then, she could kill the goat. What use was it now, anyway? It gave no milk, all the same.

Saburov came up out of the cellar into the open air, and looking at the ruins, again thought, as once before in Elton, where had they got to? In front of him, as far as the eye could reach, were Germans. He looked at this riddled house, shattered with shell splinters.

"And here we are. . ."

Then he thought with calm confidence that from the house he would not budge.

Translated by Eve Manning

S. SERGEYEV-TSENSKY

BUSTARDS

Deep snow had fallen not only over the Crimean steppe, but also along the south coast; but the bustards, steppe birds which usually spent the winter in the Crimea, were reluctant to believe it. After flying across the mountain crest, they circled over the coast in flocks, or some times alone—seeking clear ground where they could feed for a week or two until the snow melted.

But in vain—there was not a yard of earth without its white shroud.

Legs and necks stretched out, the black wings, white on the undersides, carried their big grey bodies even out over the sea, as though in desperation they had decided to fly over to Turkey; but disappointed by the boundlessness of the water, they returned once more to the inhospitable shore, licked by its little waves.

They saw dark lines along the mountain sides, and noisily flapping through the cold air they winged their way there, only to find that these lines were precipices, sheer walls of bare cliff, where they might find some place to settle and rest, but nowhere to feed—not even moss grew there.

Exhausted, the bustards settled down on the snow itself, not only in the forest glades, but even near to inhabited places: they had lost all fear of men, shaken by the catastrophe which threatened them with death from starvation.

Not from cold, because it was not cold. The cyclone which had blown the snowclouds here had given way to calm. The sky arched clear, lofty, greenish blue over the mountains, where the sun was already setting.

On the highroad running parallel to the coast, but fairly high above it, a small passenger car was moving. It contained two German staff officers—a major and a first lieutenant.

This road was often used by lorries and passenger cars—the snow was sufficiently flattened, there was no thick forest on either side, only bushes and twigs from felled trees, which meant that despite the frequent curves, the road, with a few exceptions, was visible for some distance in front and behind.

Near a Tartar village, about two kilometres away, the German officers saw a crowd of men and women with spades clearing the snow from the road on a slope leading down to the sea.

"What a primitive people these Tartars are—pah!" said the first lieutenant, screwing up his cold face in scorn. "It's not so much that they're lazy, as that they simply don't know how to do anything!"

"Don't worry, we'll teach them to work," hissed the major through his teeth, tapping the ash from his cigarette, and added impressively: "I say 'we', Germans, for I cannot accept even the idea of handing the Crimea to those Mamalyzhniks[1]-Rumanians!"

"Yes, just imagine giving such a country to the devil knows who!" said the first lieutenant with somewhat affected indignation. "Let them hug their hopes, of course, but we're not such fools."

"As soon as the snow thaws, we'll have to go hunting wild goats and deer in these mountains," said the major, gazing dreamily through the window at the forests on the mountain slopes, already blue with the shadows of evening.

"I've heard that there are large numbers of moufflon here, and the skins of these wild sheep are excellent for winter jackets," the first lieutenant put in.

"Yes, I must bring up the question immediately at H.Q., so that the Mamalyzhniks and the Italians don't cut in before us. . . There are even squirrels and martens in these forests, and I, with the heart of a born sportsman, can't find time to go hunting," and the major smoked the remainder of his cigarette, feeling very sorry for himself.

Suddenly he noticed a bustard flapping heavily by, flying low, and shouted to the chauffeur:

"Stop! A wild goose!"

Despite his heavy build, the major slipped out of the car with the greatest agility and immediately, without taking aim, fired his revolver after the bustard.

[1] From mamalyga, a Rumanian national dish.—*Ed.*

But the distance was already too great, and two or three moments later it had disappeared beyond the trees; nevertheless the major fired after it twice more, aimlessly, in his disappointment.

The first lieutenant had also left the car and drawn his revolver, looking round to see if there might not be some other birds.

"It's only partisans you can hunt with a revolver," he said consolingly to the major.

But the later was not to be comforted.

"Foul luck!" he cried. "Of course, if I'd had a rifle, then. . . As for the local partisans, you know yourself how they quietened down after we hanged the forester who was in with them! . . Look, that's where they're flying to, those wild geese—over the sea!" And he pointed to a flock of bustards, which actually were flying low right over the waves, searching for a place along the shore where they could alight and rest for the night.

After looking all round and seeing that there were no more "wild geese" in the vicinity, the major said angrily and decidedly:

"No, the Mamalyzhniks aren't getting this splendid base for our advance on India!"

As he spoke, he made an energetic gesture in the direction of Batumi, and then with still more energy—dusk was falling—wedged himself into the car. The chauffeur was about to drive on when two youths with thick oak sticks in their hands suddenly appeared from round a bend in the road. One of them was carrying a splendid bustard slung over his shoulder, holding it by the long neck.

"Aha!" said the major in triumph. "There's the very goose I fired at!" And once more he sprang out of the car.

2

For the partisan group concealed in the mountains, there was nothing unexpected about the deep snowfall. The group was composed mostly of local people, who knew well that although it does not lie long, snow falls in the Crimea almost every year. The group had already made most of its winter preparations in the autumn, and in the dugouts everyone was well fed—the stores were sufficient to last until April—and warmly clad. But the deep snow made it more difficult for the group to operate, since they had no skis. Not only had the several days' blizzard covered all the forest paths, it had drifted so deeply into the hollows and ravines that one could sink in it.

It was about this time that rumours reached the partisans that a landing party had crossed the bay from the Taman Peninsula, driven the Germans and Rumanians from Kerch, occupied it, and were advancing further into the Crimea.

In order to ascertain the truth of this good news, the leader of the group sent two lads to the nearest Tartar village on the coast.

Naturally, a movement of the occupation troops along the roads leading eastward, to meet the Red Army forces, was to be expected, and the commander of the group made plans for some of his men to mine the roads, while other groups blew up bridges, attacked supply columns and in general, hindered the enemy's movements in every way.

The two lads, Mitya and Vassyuk, both of them strong and quick-witted, had already been out scouting several times in the autumn, before the snowfall, and had brought in important information, which had enabled the group to lay a night ambush on a wooded part of the highway, disable two tanks and five lorries carrying soldiers and munitions by a dawn attack, and seize for themselves machine-guns with several cases of cartridges, not to mention tommy-guns and other arms.

After this the partisans had expected the Germans to send punitive detachments into the mountains from various directions and had made every preparation for hard fighting, but after penetrating several kilometres into the mountain forests, the punitive detachment had returned the same day—they had found it unhealthy to spend the night there and had contented themselves with plundering and burning the forester's cottage.

From one of the hilltops where the partisans had their dugouts, they were accustomed to see through their field-glasses the white cottage nestling in a glade, where the forester Akim Semyonych lived, a reliable man with whom

they maintained connections. All the mountain forest, sixty-two thousand acres in extent, was preserved, and there were about a dozen such cottages dotted here and there. Akim Semyonych lived in the one nearest the coast. He had his family and his little farm—a cow, a calf and a pig. When the partisans saw this cottage on fire, it was plain enough that it was the Germans' doing, and it was not hard to guess that they had taken the cow with her calf and the pig. But it was only on this day when they approached the pile of ashes, that Vassyuk and Mitya saw what had happened to Akim Semyonych himself and his family.

The sturdy, red-bearded man of fifty-five, unhurried in word and action, who had lived in the forest so long and knew its ways better than anyone, was hanging motionless from a large beech tree, his head bent to one side, his hands fastened behind his back and his naked, bluish feet nearly touching the snow. All around were the tracks of foxes. His long pink skirt had frozen, and snow lay in the folds, along with bird droppings.

The fox tracks were especially thick round the ruins of the burnt-down cottage and shed, and when the young scouts approached closer, they recoiled, for the forester's wife—a woman still young who was called Axinya—and her three children—the eldest did not look more than twelve—had been burned alive by the punitive detachment, and in the nights the foxes had been feasting on the bodies—those same foxes which had run about under the bare feet, without touching them, leaving them for a future reserve.

Akim Semyonych had been a hunter like all foresters, but shooting in the preserve had been strictly prohibited, so as not to scare the animals. Hunting foxes, however, had been permitted, as they destroyed the wild kids and young moufflons—in the Crimea there are no wolves or jackals. The foresters used to set traps for the foxes, and many a dozen had Akim Semyonych caught in his long life. Now it was the foxes' turn to triumph.

Mitya and Vassyuk were so shaken by what they had seen that not a word did they say to each other; but their grip tightened on the thick sticks with which they tested the depth of the snow.

Mitya was a little older than Vassyuk—nearly sixteen—and was in charge of the reconnoissance. Both had been born in the same town, one situated here on the south coast, and up to the beginning of the war had attended the same school. From their Tartar playmates they had learned the Tartar language; and from their faces—brown-eyes, black-brows—might have been taken for Tartars. This was a great advantage for the group, since even the old folks in Tartar villages welcomed the lads as their own.

At the village nearest the forester's cottage they learned that the Germans had tortured him and his wife for a long time, in the attempt to force them to say where the partisans had their base; but without any success. At the same time, there was a spirit of joyful excitement in the village; people would smile mysteriously, and wink towards the east, towards Feodossia and Kerch. Somebody even insisted that the Red Army was now in Karassubazar; one might not believe this, but the main thing was that people were talking about it, with a light in their eyes. At the same time the lads managed to gain important information about troop movements eastward.

All that was needed now was to regain the forest from the highroad as successfully as on their outward journey, so as to return safely with their news. But concealed German soldiers were watching all the roads and even the paths beaten out by woodcutters.

The scouts made their way along the ditches beside the road, waiting until it should be dark enough to make use of the thick oaks, which had not yet shed their yellow leaves, in order to slip into a ravine and, moving along its edge, make their way to the path before night fell. It looked as though the night would be light, so that there was no fear of losing their way. Suddenly and quite unexpectedly, they almost stumbled over a bustard sitting in the snow, buried up to the very wings.

"Look! A bustard!" cried Vassyuk, and Mitya's stick landed on it just as it was about to rise. "Another bustard!" said Vassyuk, excitedly, but more quietly, nodding to another flying not far away, while Mitya dragged the dead one out of the snow.

At this moment, three revolver shots sounded from the highroad, one after another, and the lads looked enquiringly at each other.

Only Germans could be firing, and only at them, but from here the highroad was invisible, so the Germans there could not see them either. But if the Germans had not seen them, at what were they firing?

Neither of them dared to move a step at this moment of deadly danger, for fear of being discovered. Both froze to the spot. But suddenly the answer to the riddle dawned on Mitya—the Germans had fired at that same bustard which had flown past. On making this guess, both the lads felt the curiosity of the successful hunter with regard to the unsuccessful one. Slinging the bustard over his shoulder, Mitya led the way to the highroad, and Vassyuk, without even asking the reason, followed him.

3

The evidence of their senses was against the stout German major's triumphant shout—both the lieutenant and the driver had seen that the bird had not been killed but had disappeared a long distance away, and could not possibly have been brought back within a moment; but the major was so anxious for it to be true that he forgot both time and distance.

"Aha, boy, give me my goose!"

He looked gaily at Mitya, reaching out his hand in its brown glove.

"That's not a goose, it's a bustard," said Vassyuk smiling involuntarily at the German's ignorance of simple things, but Mitya with the greatest alacrity threw the bustard off his shoulder and held it out to the major, saying gaily:

"We saw it, how you shot the bird! . . Look where you hit it—right in the head."

And although the major had fired at the bird from behind and with all the luck in the world could not possibly have hit the head, nevertheless he exuberantly showed the lieutenant the bird's head, smashed by the heavy stick, repeating three times:

"There's a shot for you!"

"But this bird's not a goose, it's bigger," said the lieutenant.

"Not a goose? . . Yes, you're right, it's much bigger. . . A huge bird! I've never shot a bird like this before," said the major thoughtfully, as he took the bustard by the neck and tested its weight in his outstretched hand. "It can't be less than twenty-six pounds! . . Boy," he turned to Mitya, "it is not a goose, eh?"

"It's called a bustard, but it's all the same," said Mitya gaily. "It's reckoned much better than any goose! . . It's as good as a quail—the meat tastes the same."

"Aha! Tasty meat! . . Bustard!" the major solemnly repeated the name, and once more testing the weight and admiring the bird, began to stow it away in the car. He already had one foot inside, to get into his place again, but on second thoughts asked:

"Boy! Where from you come, eh?"

"From over there," Vassyuk answered carelessly, pointing down to where the people had finished work and were beginning to disperse.

"We were clearing the road there," Mitya added still more carelessly, smiling brightly.

"A-a-h! Where go you?" the major asked again.

Mitya barely had time to name the village when Vassyuk cried out:

"Two more bustards!"

Two exhausted birds were winging their way down to the forest, and observing people on the road, flapped away at no great speed in the direction from which the young partisans had just come.

"O-o-oh! I can't let that go! I have the heart of a sportsman!" cried the major ardently, dragging out his revolver.

The lieutenant also jumped out of the car and drew his revolver, although he said nothing about his sportman's heart; but neither the one nor the other was able to fire, for in an instant the bustard had disappeared—somewhere or other—the country round about was very uneven and hilly.

"They've settled," said Mitya encouragingly, and even crouched down to illustrate what he meant, looking at the lieutenant.

"Aha! Yes, yes! They've settled!" the major caught him up, and led the way from the car over the road in the direction of the bustards' flight.

The lieutenant followed him, and Mitya and Vassyuk followed them like

setters following a hunter. Only the driver, a man of nearly fifty, disciplined and therefore taciturn, remained sitting in the car, waiting for the officers to return with two more of these huge, strange birds, which he had never seen before.

Darkness had been rapidly falling, but there was not much further to go, only about six miles to the nearest town, on a cleared road running along the coast.

So that the Russian boys would not scare the birds, the major wanted to lead the way with the lieutenant, but soon, getting tired of sinking in the snow up to the knees at almost every other step, he sent the lads ahead.

Vassyuk and Mitya looked most conscientiously through the bushes over the twilit glades, and as usual walked pretty fast, leaving tracks for the Germans to follow. But no bustards could they find.

"Well, boys, hey! Where is your bustard?" the tired and wheezing major would ask from time to time, while the lieutenant said nothing, but sometimes looked suspiciously at Mitya, the elder of the two.

Mitya noticed this. He also saw that they had already gone a sufficient distance from the highroad and that it was dark enough for them to slip off in the direction of the path they had followed in the morning, the one which passed the forester's burned cottage.

With a meaning look at Vassyuk, Mitya suddenly started and said softly to the major:

"They're sitting over there!"

He stopped, crouched down and pointed, where something loomed up dark; it was already difficult to distinguish anything plainly, but Mitya, followed by Vassyuk, swiftly moved aside, letting the hunters pass, so that they could crouch down and take aim.

Aiming in the direction Mitya indicated, first the major and then the lieutenant actually did crouch, taking aim with their revolvers; and Mitya, behind them, with a good swing brought his stick down on the major's head with all his strength.

Vassyuk's blow on the lieutenant's head followed an instant later. The latter had time to fire, but only at the bush in front of him, and then he also sank down across the major's back.

Gasping like men doing heavy physical work, the scouts brought their sticks down again several times on the heads of those who had possibly given the orders not long ago to torture and hang Akim Semyonych the forester and to burn alive his wife Axinya and his three children in the smoking cottage.

After taking the revolvers and documents from the bodies of the dead Germans, Vassyuk and Mitya took the familiar path, confident that night would halt the pursuit, while by morning they would be safely back in their dugout.

Translated by Eve Manning

LEO KASSIL

A PERFECT EAR

Perchikhin himself was of the opinion that had he possessed at least a passable voice he would undoubtably have become a famous singer. But Semyon Perchikhin had no voice at all—passable or otherwise. To balance this, however, he had a phenomenally perfect ear. I know of no one else who has such finely attuned hearing as he. And it was this that determined his war speciality.

He hails from Kronstadt—born and bred in a family boasting generations of Baltic sailors. But fate destined him to sail the northern seas beyond the Arctic Circle. His astonishingly keen hearing—he could catch sounds which nobody else was capable of detecting—served him in good stead in the navy. This did not advance the musical career of which he dreamed, but Petty Officer Semyon Perchikhin proved peerless as hydro-acoustics man on board the Guards submarine captained by Hero of the Soviet Union Zvezdin.

When the sub would set out on a long-range roving cruise, penetrating with great daring right into areas harbouring enemy ships, all communication with the outside world would na-

turally be cut off. Even incoming radio messages could not be received, as sensitive direction-finders and submarine-searchers on board enemy ships could detect the faint disturbance in the ether, which cannot be eliminated even when the sub's radio only receives messages. The boat would thus betray its presence—and then its number would be up. . .

In such cases the ship had to proceed underwater for long stretches. It was dangerous to raise the periscope for even a single moment. And at such times the only link with everything that lay outside the metal hull were Perchikhin's ears, with their fine, quaintly formed hellixes with thin veins showing through the pale skin—giving these ears the appearance of some exotic blossom. Squeezed in his tiny cabin, Perchikhin would sit at his hydro-acoustics apparatus, ear-phones pressed to his head—listening-in to the sea for hours on end.

How many times did he offer me the ear-phones, to listen-in for myself. . . I would put them on, and hear the muffled roar of the sea—and the sound told me nothing whatever. But for Perchikhin it opened a veritable book of sounds, illusive and inscrutable whispers which he alone could infallibly read.

"D'ye mean to tell me you can't make out what's what? Here, listen," he explained, as he returned me the ear-phones once again. "Hear that? It sounds like 'pooh-pooh, pooh-pooh'—a spaced, heavy, breathy sort of sound. . . That's a transport wallowing along—a hefty tub—about four kilometres away from here. And here's a metallic sort of 'tap-tap'—hear it? That's a destroyer. And there's a small boat paddling along—hear it? Clucking like a hen."

But no matter how hard I strained my hearing, my ears caught nothing but the smooth, monotonous reverberating, voiceless zoom of the sea. Yet when we surfaced our periscope we saw everything which Perchikhin had heard whilst the submarine was still in the depths: a big transport vessel in the distance, the destroyer escorting it, and a small boat just putting out of harbour.

The roar of the sea carried thousands of voices, and each and every sound was clearly distinguishable and readable to Perchikhin. He easily deciphered these sound-hieroglyphics. His highly sensitive ear never confused extraneous sounds with the veritable orchestra of murmurs, whispers, mutters and tappings which lived within the submarine itself, which were made by the boat itself and which its acoustic machines also recorded. With magic precision, Perchikhin could detect and locate the slightest of sounds on board his own boat. He could unerringly define exactly what machine was running and at what speed the submarine was proceeding. The ticking of chronometers, the chug-chug of pumps—everything was caught by his hearing. By sound he could even recognize the step of the commander, the first mate and the boatswain. Things reached such a pitch, that Perchikhin, without budging from his seat, would open his cabin-door and call out to the cook:

"Hey you, there in the galley! . . Look smart, Mironov—something's boiling over there. . ."

And legends began to arise around Perchikhin's extraordinary hearing. The men were more than ready to exaggerate the remarkable abilities of their acoustics man, nor was Semyon Perchikhin himself very prone to disclaim these yarns. He was not unwilling to flaunt his truly astonishing sense of hearing.

"Well, Perchy, heard any news?" his companions would ask him, out of sheer boredom with the long underwater cruise.

Bending low over his machine, Perchikhin would lift one ear-phone from his ear, and looking up at his mates would make an unhurried report as follows:

"Want to know if I've heard any news? Well—there's all kinds of news. There goes a launch five kilometres off. And some one's singing a song in the fort. . . Ha! 'I Loved Those Blue Eyes'. Thank heaven's he's tuned up his guitar at last, but one string's badly tuned. Hopeless deaf ears! Fancy not being able to tune a guitar properly! . . Ha! there goes a turbot, right by our ship. Yes, definitely, it's a turbot. A codfish's 'engine' sounds different."

"Stop your leg-pulling," the men laughed, "think you can make us believe you hear the fishes?"

"But don't you know what a strikingly keen hearing I've got—a perfect ear," Perchikhin would insist. "Why, I can

hear the quietest of quiet sounds. I can hear the word you want to say even before it reaches your tongue—sure as I stand here. . . You haven't said it yet, it's still rolling around in your head—but I can hear it already. There's Kostya Mironov standing looking at me, and he's going to say: 'You bloody liar!'"

"And so you are—a bloody liar!" the cook exclaimed heatedly.

"See? I told you I could hear it before it's spoken!"

Mironov snorted and went off along the ship. And Perchikhin jeeringly called out after him:

"Scram! You've got rumblings in your belly, and the noise hurts my ear-drums!"

"Ah!" Perchikhin would often confide to me, "with a hearing like mine it's in the opera I should be, checking up voices, or out in the woods, teaching the birds to sing. . . And because of the war, here I have to be, listening to all sorts of unpleasant sounds made by Jerry. . . An outrage to my ears, if you ask me."

The sailors once decided to play a joke on Perchikhin. As he was going down an iron well leading to the hull of the submarine, the men placed a sack to trap him. Failing to see the sack waiting for him, he stepped right into it and the whole thing was instantly hoisted up. No sooner had Perchikhin's head appeared above the trap-door when the sack was drawn tight over him, and swiftly tied up. Keeping silent, all the men scattered, treading on tip-toe and barely restraining their laughter.

"Come on, you, untie this here sack," Perchikhin's muffled voice was heard, as he floundered around helplessly. "You needn't think I can't hear who's played this idiotic trick. It's no use your walking on tip-toe, Mironov—you're no fairy-like ballerina—I recognize your step. And I can hear Valyaev puffing away in that there corner—needn't try keeping quiet—I hear you perfectly. And Chubenko too—your guts are having an argument: 'You've gone too strong on the borshch soup, Boss!' that's what they're saying. . . Hurry up and untie this here damned sack, otherwise I'll rip it into macaroni with my dirk."

The joke had fallen flat and they had to release Perchikhin.

"Lord, what ears the man has," Mironov grudgingly exclaimed as he helped to extricate Perchikhin from the sack. "They're not ears—they, bally sound-detectors."

Perchikhin's perfect sense of hearing had more than once done good service in the submarine's combat cruises. It was he who was first to hear the sinister heavy thunder of water being threshed by the screws of a German cruiser and helped Zvezdin to locate the exact bearings and course of the enemy warship. Having full faith in his acoustics man, the commander calculated the distance and angle of torpedo attack and Perchikhin, discarding the earphones to avoid being deafened, heard two heavy explosions under water. Zvezdin had made a double hit and knocked out one of the best German warships.

Another time, when cruising at a considerable depth, Perchikhin caught from above a strange rapping noise, scarcely distinguishable from the internal sounds made by the boat itself. And Perchikhin reported to his commander that another submarine was cruising above their own. What is more, by the unusual hum of its Diesel engine Perchikhin spotted that it was not one of our ships. Still, the captain decided to verify this information, and for a brief second raised the ship to periscope level. He immediately spotted a large German U-boat. But the latter had also sighted our periscope. The enemy ship began quickly submerging, and fired a torpedo at Zvezdin's ship. Perchikhin clearly heard the torpedo rustle past just above the ship, and die away. Then followed a duel to the death between two submarines in the depths of the sea. The battle was fought blindly, as neither opponent could see the other. Everything depended on Perchikhin now. He never let the enemy out of hearing. The submarine crew received strict orders to keep absolutely silent. Perchikhin was glued to his apparatus, listening to the voices of the sea. But the Germans too were lying doggo. This strained silence and tense waiting in the depths of the sea continued for three hours. The strain was evidently too much for German nerves, and the nazi U-boat started up slowly, very slowly, nosing its way. But nothing could escape the ears of Perchikhin, who immediately reported the enemy's manoeuvre to his commander. Zvez-

din swung his ship for attack, and a direct torpedo hit wrecked the nazi U-boat.

It should be added that Perchikhin exploited fame as a man who could hear everything, not only on the ship on which he served, but on shore too. . . That was how he made the acquaintance of Dussya, the pretty waitress in the dining room of the submarine shore base.

"Please let me talk to you," he said insinuatingly, as he caught up with Dussya not far from the moorings, "I've heard so much about you."

"Really? Whatever could you have heard about me?" Dussya asked shyly, flattered by the attention of this renowned acoustics man.

"Everything. I don't need any telephone, I just tune in with my naked ear. I'm that sort of man. Anyone else would only start to listen, but I've already got it all by ear. The more so as I'm an acoustic expert, mark you—Perchikhin, Semyon Perchikhin, if I may be allowed to introduce myself. So let's be friends."

Dussya was the belle of our submarine shore base, and poor Perchikhin really did have to listen to frequent references to Dussya by his many rivals.

"It's always a mix-up," Perchikhin complained to me, referring to Dussya. "There I'd be—all set to take Dussya out for the evening to the movies at the Red Navy Club. And no sooner do I set out to call for her when—there she trips along the pierhead with a convoy of three big stiffs from the *Gremuchy* hovering in her wake. Sailing round and round her, and to spite me, they steer an anti-submarine zigzag course. Naturally, I rights my service cap and veers to port, still maintaining observations. She just ignores me though visibility's perfect. Then I swings my helm to starboard and with a flanking movement hitch my anchor to port of Dussya. . . But then three from the *Gremuchy* steadily follow our course. Now I ask you, what sort of a stroll can a couple have with such a convoy?"

Perchikhin's chances began to look a bit rosier when preparations were launched for a big concert of Red Navy amateur artists at the base club. Dussya had a good singing voice. Perchikhin at first thought of joining her for a duet, but seeing that his vocal qualities were less than nil, he had to rest content with accompanying her on the accordion, which he played pretty well.

At the rehearsals he reassured Dussya:

"The most important thing, Dussya, is not to become flurried and get stage fright."

"But I'm not flurried at all. . ."

"That's what you say. But I know better. Can't I hear how your heart's going pit-a-pat even from where I stand? It's palpitating like the engine of a corvette. But maybe," he added slyly, fingering the typically Guardsman moustache which he had only just started growing, "maybe it's because of me that your little heart's put on speed?"

"You hear more than's good for you!" Dussya peevishly exclaimed.

"Acoustics!" and Perchikhin would deprecatingly raise his arms, as though regretting the fact that he was gifted with such super-human audition.

One of the men on board the submarine had even composed a song poking fun at "Perchy the Perky Acoustic".

A short time before we left on a cruise Perchikhin sought me out with a crestfallen look:

"I was hoping she'd signal me 'Yes'—instead of which she's flagged me 'No!'" he gloomily informed me.

"I simply can't understand why we can't splice up and sail alongside. No, it seems our courses run different ways. A pity. . . Or maybe my approach is all wrong—or she spotted me from the wrong side. All right. We'll see when we get back. I'll start all over again."

Early Arctic autumn had already descended when the submarine, having reached its area of activity, submerged. Cold, unpleasant damp was penetrating into the hull. Lamps burned brightly in all the sections, so bright, that it seemed to divide the whole ship into solid parts, appearing to press on its hull from within. It seemed as though it was the light which kept life going on in the boat, and that were it to be extinguished, the water would burst its way in and flood it from stem to stern. These trying hours of combat cruise passed in a calm and businesslike manner, each minute filled with the customary dangers. The men were used to threading their way between the maze of machines, levers, knife-switches, dials and indicators where a stranger would find himself lost like a cockroach in a clock. This cruise was a particularly

serious one—enemy waters had long since closed over the submarine, and Perchikhin remained constantly glued to his apparatus.

Then everything ran its usual course. Perchikhin eared out the sound of a ship's screws, declaring it to be a large transport vessel escorted by at least five patrol boats. It must have a precious cargo since it was so carefully escorted. Worth the risk.

Zvezdin glanced at his watch. Night was coming on. Under cover of the darkness he could rise to periscope level and decide from what point it would be best to attack. Everything on board the submarine was now gripped by that silent inspiration which is engendered by imminent battle action. The horizontals man, Chubenko, was keeping the ship on a dead even keel, right under the surface of the water, carefully manipulating the helm. Zvezdin raised the periscope.

"Hold that course!" he commanded. "Don't spoil the horizon for me!" Then the torpedo-gunners heard that familiar order: "Bow guns—Stand by for action!.. I'll soon tickle their ribs," Zvezdin softly remarked as he turned the periscope. "Fire!"

All this was so familiar to the submarine crew—the commander's irate "tickle their ribs", and that slight jolt of the ship as it was relieved of its two torpedoes—and still these moments were tense to the utmost. How indescribably endless these moments of expectation seemed! And then—a muffled roar, as though the ship had been shaken.

"Bull's-eye!" Zvezdin exclaimed as he listened attentively. And then he added: "And now our ribs are going to be tickled. . ."

Before he had finished the phrase the water above the ship—which was swiftly submerging—burst into thunderous explosions, dashing the whole craft to and fro; all the lamps flickering out for a moment. Depth charges were being showered down on them by the enemy escort ships. Perchikhin had removed his ear-phones well in advance, as the explosions were ear-splitting and could have deafened him. Depth charges came down on them in groups. The air-bubble danced crazily in the pink liquid of the level-gauge. The lamps kept flickering off and on, as the severe jolts kept no knocking the knife-switches out of their sockets. The submarine crew counted one hundred and eighty-six depth-charge explosions. Then everything grew quiet. The ship lay suspended without motion. They must keep hugging the bottom. The engine could not be switched on, as it would be immediately detected overhead. Perchikhin again glued himself to his ear-phones, listening-in to the surface.

Two hours dragged slowly by, then two more. Four hours—a whole eternity of immobility and utter silence. The ship still hid in the depths of the water. Another three hours passed. Not a sound could be heard from above. Perchikhin's ears ached with the terrific strain. His head throbbed with pain, but he did not remove his ear-phones. The air in the ship grew stifling. His ears began to ring, and with every minute he found it more and more difficult to listen-in to the sea.

Zvezdin resolved to slip away, and the boat nosed ahead at its lowest speed. But even this was enough to betray their presence. Three monstrous explosions, merging into one, hit the submarine. All the lights went out and a sharp smell of acid filled the air. The men lost their foothold in the utter darkness, striking against the machines until their bodies were all bruised and bleeding. Coming to, in complete darkness, Perchikhin cried out:

"Anyone left alive?"

Utter and absolute silence was all that greeted him. He then called out again, repeating his question. Not a word, not a sound in answer. This deathly silence alarmed him more than the pitch dark. Then suddenly the lights went on again. Perchikhin's comrades dashed towards him and he was carefully lifted to his feet.

"Not hurt, Sam?" he was solicitously asked. "What were you shouting for?"

"Why don't you say something? Have you all gone dumb, or what?" Perchikhin shortly exclaimed, gazing into the faces of his companions and looking around him in alarm. "Why's everything so quiet? I can't hear anything at all. Are we still lying doggo?"

"What do you mean?" they all cried out in chorus. "Everything's O.K. We got away safely and are now on the move.

What's the matter? What's come over you?"

"What the hell! . . I'm asking you—why don't you speak? Playing dumb, or what?" Perchikhin cried out in shrill tones, and he struck the iron partition with his clenched fist. He pricked his ears, and again struck at the partition with all his strength and then suddenly the whole truth dawned on him and without a word he sagged down to the floor, blood flowing from his ears and crimsoning the deck. . .

Yes, he had not heard the words spoken by his comrades, he had not heard the powerful throb of the engines that were speeding the submarine back to safety; he could only feel the metal of the deck quivering underfoot. Nor did he hear the ventilators as they resumed their hum, but could only sense and breathe deep of the fresh ozone laden air, from which he guessed that the ship had surfaced. Nor did he hear the command: "Switch the screw to Diesel!" as the boat sped along the surface of the sea, heading for home shores. Neither did he hear the prearranged gun signal fired next morning by Zvezdin as the boat slipped into harbour—the signal telling of victory. Nor did he hear the clamorous greetings on the pierhead as his comrades tenderly carried him out in their arms, into a world filled with invigorating freshness and cool light, but a world of utter silence, noiseless, deathly mute and which, to Perchikhin, seemed even more dreadful than that silence of the grave which had reigned down below, in the heart of the submarine. He did not hear the piercing cry which rose from Dussya's throat as she dashed to meet him and suddenly saw him being carried on a stretcher. He heard nothing—nothing, except the palpitating beat of his own heart which seemed rent by anguish, and this unbearable pain found a throbbing echo in his stricken ears.

In the naval hospital where I visited him that same day the doctor told me that the patient's ear-drums had been injured by the close explosion of depth-charges, but that his condition was not hopeless. Much depended on whether Perchikhin could keep a grip on himself, as, the surgeon added, he had suffered a slight concussion of the brain too, and it had affected his nervous system.

He lay flat on his back, his bandaged head thrown back on the pillow. On seeing me his face lit up with a painfully sad smile.

"There's a nice mess for you!" he said guiltily. "And to think I'll never hear any songs again! And just imagine what fine songs will be sung when the war's over. So it's written off for the shore I'll be? Shoved into some old-lady job of work!? No, damn it! Not as long as my name's Semyon Perchikhin!" he shrilly cried. "No! I've still got my eyes. I used to hear Jerry—wherever he was, right to the bottom of the sea. And now I'll use my eyes to spot him, wherever he may be, to the bottom of the earth—the dirty louse! I'll strain my eyes till they can see through stone and brick! And I'll spot him! No, by God! I'm not to be written off as 'C.3'. Not by a long stretch! The old boat's not sunk yet! Why don't you say something?" he added plaintively. "At least nod your head, wink, or wave your hand to show you agree with me. Am I right, eh?"

Mironov and the signalsman Pavlenko called to see him. Perchikhin was familiar with the signal code and Pavlenko, taking his stand in front of the bed, briskly flung his arms up and down and from side to side, signalling something to the stonedeaf acoustics man. Perchikhin's face broke into a wide smile.

"Here. . . slow down a bit! Don't scribble in such a hurry—I can't make out your handwriting when you start conducting a polka-mazurka at top-speed. So she wants to come and see me, you say? Remember me kindly to her, give her my greetings, and let her drop in to see me in, say, five days' time. You see, I look a bit of a mess just now—and it might put her off for good."

And five days later I dropped in to see Perchikhin again, this time accompanied by Dussya. With a mysterious expression on his face the doctor led us into the ward where the injured man lay. All the dressings had been removed from Perchikhin's head, but small tampons of white gauze still remained in his ears. On catching sight of Dussya Perchikhin blushed furiously and drew the blanket right up to his chin. We nodded in silence, Dussya's cheeks too flushed red as, with her eyes demurely lowered, she took a seat slightly to one side.

"Why don't you sit a little nearer to

him, and be nice to him?" I could not refrain from telling her.

"But I. . . but then. . ." Dussya stumbled over her words, growing more shy than ever. "But he knows it himself. . . I've told Sam dozens of times. . ."

"That's the first time I ever heard you say so!" Perchikhin exclaimed in firm tones, as he quickly sat up in bed.

Translated by Moss Muscatt

A. SOFRONOV

OLD WINE

Ilya Sagaidak had spent all his life amidst the vine-yards of Taman. A grey-haired descendant of the Dnieper Cossacks, a vine-dresser born and bred just as his father had been, he loved his work and never even thought of forsaking it for any other. In his younger days he had been a jolly, boisterous man, and his wife, Stepanida, seemed to have been cut out for his mate: a hazel-eyed chatty woman always on the move, who looked as if she would never grow old and as quick and skilful as any at vintage time. They brought up their son Nikolai to be as jolly and avid for life as themselves.

Twenty-two years ago Ilya Sagaidak had sat by Stepanida's bedside, patting her rather big hand and saying:

"Thank you, Styosha, thank you. . . I've been waiting for years. . . and a son. . . isn't it lucky? . . thank you! . ."

It was then that Ilya made up his mind to fill a keg with his favourite wine of Cabernet, and bury it in the ground to mature. So a hole was dug near the fence and the keg lowered into it. Having done this, Ilya came to his wife and said:

"Let it lie until Nikolai gets himself a wife. Then, as his wedding-day comes, you won't find a better wine,—it will be sweet and full, it'll have both body and bouquet,—there'll be no other to match it. . ."

Twenty years passed by, his son had grown up, many things had happened, the village had long since become a collective farm. Ilya Sagaidak was brigadier of the vine-growers' team. In 1940 he took part in the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition, and together with Stepanida, visited Moscow.

At home, on his farm, he watched with joy the birth and blossoming of love between Nikolai and Zhenya, the daughter of Roman Miroshnik, a neighbouring farmer, who was brigadier of the tobacco-growing team and as popular a man on the farm as himself. It was a settled thing, that in the autumn of 1941, after harvest time, there would be a wedding that'd make the Sagaidaks and the Miroshniks relations. The old wine-dresser felt quite elated and went so far as to disclose to his son the secret of the barrel that had been buried twenty years before in the kitchen-garden near the fence, where the grass grew so thick and juicy and where the cherry-tree planted the year Nikolai was born gave such big and heavy fruit every summer.

But the old wine was never drunk on a wedding day. The war came; Nikolai joined the army. Old Sagaidak had a mind to dig out the keg to do the seeing off properly, but Nikolai objected:

"I'll come back and marry Zhenya. . . That will be the time to drink it. Let it be as father planned it. . ."

A great sorrow befell Ilya Sagaidak. By a splinter of a German bomb Stepanida was killed on the door step of her own house. The old man was left alone. He buried his wife in the village cemetery, just beyond the vine-yards, shed a man's scant tears over her grave and returned to his empty house.

Another misfortune came on the heels of the first: the Germans broke into the village, and started their iniquities: they tippled on the villagers' wine, killed their fowl and cattle and insulted the village girls.

Old Sagaidak's eyes became hard. His hair turned white all at once, as if the winter which had just set in had powdered his head with unmelting snow. He saw the Germans break down village buildings and injure people. To look on this was more than he could bear, so he left his house for the vine-yard and lived there. . .

For a long while there was no cannonade to be heard: the frontline had shifted much further away. But one day there came again the familiar rumbling of artillery. At first, Ilya couldn't believe his ears, he thought it must be the wind blowing fiercely from the Markhot ridge.

He listened: no, it was not the wind, it was cannonade right enough. He couldn't stay in the vine-yards any longer and went to the village. On his way he dropped in at Miroshnik's. The old man looked at him out of empty, unseeing eyes.

"What is it, Roman?"

"They've taken Zhenya away. . . and my son Pyotr."

"Where to?"

"To the Crimea. . ."

And so Sagaidak learnt that the Germans were retreating and taking the population along with them over the strait.

The night fell and the village was lit up by several fires at once. Sagaidak went out on the porch and judging by the location of the fires understood that the Germans had set fire to the creamery, the cheese-dairy, the tobacco-drying rooms and several dwelling houses. What really surprised him was that a red glow spread over the space where there was nothing but vine-yards, and apple and cherry orchards.

"They can't be burning down the orchards, can they?"

At daybreak ten Germans entered his house, with a corporal at their head. One was posted to stand sentry, while the rest, black with soot and ashes as they were, sprawled in all likely and unlikely places and fell asleep immediately.

Later in the day the corporal spoke to Sagaidak:

"We wish to have a little wine. We is here last night. A little fire raise. Then away go. Russ will tomorrow here come."

In the daytime the cannonade came much nearer. It was now distinctly heard. Sagaidak would have gladly throttled those Germans—but what could he, an unarmed old man, do against ten brawny soldiers, all armed to boot? He'd give anything to detain, to capture those ten incendiaries, those damned German murderers. Then he had a brainwave: the keg buried right between the fence and the cherry-tree the Germans had felled. That wine was twenty-two years old, just the right age. It must be heady. . . Perhaps, perhaps. . . it was to be his last resource.

"I'll get you some wine. I have a barrel maturing in the ground. It's in the yard. Come along."

He took a spade and strode in the direction of the cherry stump, followed by all ten Germans. They even stopped speaking and held their breath when he started digging, turning up and throwing off the earth in big slices. At last, his spade struck against something hard, and presently there appeared, all coated with black clinging earth, the bulging belly of the keg.

"Oh Russ, old man!" cried the corporal when the barrel had been brought into the house. It was scraped clean and put on a stool. Its wooden plug was knocked out and a thin rubber hose inserted in the hole. All the ten Germans reached out their jugs. The wine oozed out slowly, lazily, it was thick and dark-coloured, and a heady, honey-like smell emanated from it. One after another, the jugs were slowly filling. Finally all were full. The men eyed them eagerly and swallowed their saliva. But the corporal was in no hurry. For some time he looked keenly at the old man, then suddenly shoved his jug toward him and ordered:

"Drink, Russ, drink!"

"Afraid of its being poisoned!" thought Sagaidak and, for the first time since things had begun to happen, he smiled. Then he took the proferred jug and tossed it off at a draught.

"Oh, Russ!" grunted the corporal approvingly and refilled the vessel.

The Germans emptied their jugs and attacked the barrel again; they were getting noisy.

Sagaidak went out and stood on the porch. He felt rather giddy. He took off his hat and remained bare-headed in the cutting wind that came from the Azov Sea. His lips curved in a smile. Sagaidak stood on the porch, leaning against the wall of the house. He was pleased. It was a rattling-good wine. If they were going to lap up the whole of it, they would never get away.

Indistinct rumbling noises came from the inside of the house. Then snatches of discordant singing. Something jingled. A chair crashed down. After that the door was suddenly pushed open and the corporal emerged on all fours. But he fell asleep before he had got quite over the threshold. Sagaidak pulled him out by the shoulders, took the German's pistol out of its case and dragged him to the barn. There he tied the German's hands with a rope and threw him on the straw, face down. Having regained his breath, he returned to the porch and for a moment stood still, listening. No sound but a re-

assuring chorus of powerful snoring came from within.

He opened the door. Sagaidak picked up the tommy-guns, grenades and bags scattered all over the room and carried them to the end of the kitchen-garden. There he lay down and watched the house. Two truck-cars tore through the village during the night; a handful of Germans ran by without stopping, and after that all was quiet. Only a few machine-guns started rattling once or twice somewhere in the orchards. . .

At dawn three armoured cars came all the way up the street and stopped as they reached the village square. Sagaidak thought he heard Russian spoken. A score or so of foot-soldiers joined the cars. In the pale morning light Sagaidak saw the stars on the armour of the machines. He got up out of the weeds and made for the group. On seeing him the young officer called out:

"No Germans here, old dad?"

"Why, but there are, sonny! There are some. You come and see."

"Where are they?"

"They're dead to the world, were on the spree last night. . . You just come with me, comrade," Sagaidak was pulling at the officer's sleeve.

The soldiers surrounded the house. The lieutenant, with the old man and two of the men, entered. The snoring was in full sway.

"Do you keep a militia station cell for the drunk and disorderly, or what, old dad? Well, they've done with a whole barrel. . . Take away their arms," he ordered his men.

"They are in the kitchen-garden. I took them over there. And I have a corporal in the barn."

"Who stood the treat?"

"I did. A good wine too, Cabernet. Had kept it for the wedding day."

"For the wedding day?" the lieutenant looked a bit incredulous.

"For my son's wedding. . . But now—I couldn't help it, could I? Kept it buried for twenty-two years."

When the colonel, whose commanding station was to be in that village, heard what Sagaidak had to tell, he shook hands with the old man and said:

"You're a true Russian, Ilya Ivanovich. . ."

There are winds that blow from the Black Sea, and others that blow from the Sea of Azov. Like draughts, they pass over Taman, over the burnt down villages, and orchards, and vine-yards. And on winter days, in the slight southern frost, Sagaidak may be seen working in the vine-yard, seeing to his wines, wrapping them up, tucking them in. The vine-yard will revive, and the bunches of grapes will be just as big and heavy as they used to be in the pre-war years. Our land is imperishable!

A letter—the third already—has just come from Nikolai. It was written somewhere near Zhitomir. Nikolai had learnt from his father that Zhenya had been taken away by the Germans, that his mother had been killed by a German bomb. All this was hard to bear. And now this letter came from the boy. It was a sad letter but there was joy in it, too. The boy wrote that he'd go on and on, and leave no stone unturned, but would find Zhenya. He said he was avenging his mother's death and that his avenging hand was heavy. He was commander of a tank detachment, not big but quite impressive. Had been decorated three times.

The boy was also making a request: he asked his father to hurry up with the vine-yards so that young wine be ready to celebrate the victory. And he complimented old Sagaidak on his having put to such good use that keg of old wine.

Translated by N. Dvoretskaya

BATTLE*

AN HOUR WITH PANFILOV

After an astonishingly early winter, during which, for a period of ten to fourteen days in October, there had been enough snow for sledges, the weather changed. The frosts ceased and there was the usual autumn slush; the nights were dark and moonless.

Afraid of taking a sudden header into a hole with my horse, I did not ride straight along the bank where they had been digging before we came and where we had also dug trenches; I went by a roundabout route following the village road. It was not easy for the horse even at a walk. Tossing her head, Lyssanka dragged her hoofs out of the sticky mud with a sucking noise. I sat deep in the saddle lost in thought.

On the way I began to overtake people on foot going in the same direction. I gave a start. Who were they? Newcomers? Reinforcements? From time to time the rays of my pocket torch cut through the darkness.

Who were they? Were they stragglers from a column? They were in twos and threes, stiff from the monotonously drizzling rain, ground-sheets thrown over their shoulders to shield them. The muzzles of their rifles, which they carried slung, jutted out.

"How far to Sipunovo, Comrade Commander?" someone asked.

I answered and passed on. The torch went out and for some time the road was empty. All around me was silence; the distant roar of gunfire died down during the night. Then again ahead of me somebody was dragging his feet through the sticky mud. Again I saw the men in twos and threes. I did not need to ask any questions, they were not from our division. Our men were well-trained in marching and did not straggle or lag behind. My heart was torn between two feelings: I was glad of the reinforcements, but. . . but the devil take them, they marched very badly.

My horse shied. The torch showed me a cart sunk in the mud up to the hubs, a fallen horse and a driver soaked to the skin.

A minute later I saw on one side the burning ends of cigarettes. Several soldiers were lying at the roadside smoking: their tired and aching bodies did not feel the dampness. From all sides I was bombarded with one question: is it far to Sipunovo? I rode on to my destination. In the forest near the village of Sipunovo was the headquarters of the battalion attached to ours.

2

When I arrived I walked down the wet steps into the underground headquarters office.

"Ah, Comrade Momysh-uly, come in! . ."

It was a husky voice that I knew well, that of General Ivan Panfilov. He was sitting beside an iron stove taking his boots off. One boot was already off, a small swarthy foot was held out towards the red-hot iron and in his hands he held a "portyanka" [1] one end of which was stained dark with damp while the other end was a clean white. Panfilov's adjutant, a young rosy-cheeked lieutenant sat nearby. In another corner sat a captain whom I did not know.

I sprang to attention and reported my arrival. Panfilov took out his watch and glanced at it.

"Take your coat off and sit down by the fire."

He put his boots on. His greatcoat with the modest khaki stars was soak-

* Excerpts from the first part of these reminiscences of Momysh-uly, a Red Army officer, from the grim days of fighting near Moscow in the autumn of 1941, were published in our issue No. 10, 1943. They were taken down by a Soviet writer Alexander Bek, who is still continuing to collaborate on them with Momush-uly.—*Ed.*

[1] Footcloth worn by Russian soldiers over or in place of socks.

ing wet from the rain and was drying by the stove. Apparently Panfilov had been along the lines to receive the newly arrived unit; he had been out in the rain a long time; he probably had not slept all night. There was, however, no trace of tiredness to be seen in his wrinkled fifty-year-old face, very dark and swarthy, with its little black moustache clipped English fashion.

"Did you hear what we did today, Comrade Momysh-uly?" he asked screwing up his eyes and smiling.

It is difficult to explain how pleasant it was for me at that moment to hear his calm hospitable voice and to see his sly squint. Suddenly I felt that I was not alone, that I was not left face to face with an enemy who knew something, some war secret which I had not fathomed. Our general knows that secret, I thought; he was a soldier during the First World War and then, after the Revolution, battalion commander.

"We repulsed them. . ." Panfilov continued. "Phew-w-w. . ." he whistled jokingly. "I was afraid. . . only don't tell anybody, Comrade Momysh-uly. . . the tanks broke through. He over there," Panfilov pointed to the adjutant, "was there with me and saw things. You tell him how we met them."

The adjutant jumped to his feet.

"We met them chest forward, Comrade General," he said.

Panfilov raised his sharply slanting black eyebrows in an expression of discontent.

"Chest forward?" he asked. "No, sir, it is easy to pierce the chest with any sharp object, to say nothing of a bullet. That's all nonsense meeting them chest forward. Trust a company to that sort of fighting cock in an army uniform and he'll lead them chest forward against the tanks. We didn't meet them with our chests but with fire! We met them with guns! Didn't you see that?"

The adjutant hastened to agree. But Panfilov repeated acidly:

"With our chests. . . You take a look, brother, and see whether they're feeding the horses. . . Tell them to saddle up in half an hour."

The adjutant saluted and went out quite confused.

"He's still young!" said Panfilov softly.

Looking at me and then at the unknown captain, Panfilov drummed on the table with his finger-tips.

"You can't fight with the infantry's chests," he began. "Especially we at the present moment, comrade. We haven't got very many troops here at Moscow. We must spare our men."

I listened attentively to the general, trying to find in his words an answer to the questions that were troubling me, but so far I did not find it.

"Save them by actions, by fire, and not just with words," he added thoughtfully. "And now, Comrade Momysh-uly, you have a new neighbour. . . meet Captain Shilov."

The captain stood by the table, tall, stately, young for his rank, apparently about twenty-seven years of age. He was not wearing the fur cap which all the commanders and men of the Panfilov division wore, but a khaki forage cap with the red tabs of an infantryman. He did not say a word, but even that manner of his, keeping silent until addressed by his superior officer, his uniform and his bearing showed that he was a regular officer. We exchanged greetings.

"Did you come by road, Comrade Momysh-uly?" asked Panfilov.

"Yes, Comrade General."

"Many stragglers?"

"A lot," I said.

"Ah! . ." exclaimed Panfilov disgustedly.

He turned to the captain. Shilov went red and stood to attention. Instead of a reprimand, Panfilov said:

"I know, I know, captain, what you're thinking of. Somebody trained them, somebody taught them and now, if you please, you may pay, Captain Shilov. Isn't that so?"

Panfilov smiled and so did Shilov. The tenseness left him.

"No, Comrade Major-General, it wasn't that."

"Not that?"

With a rapid movement the general moved over to the captain. His tiny eyes gleamed with curiosity.

"I wasn't thinking of myself, Comrade Major-General," Shilov answered firmly. "I'm afraid they will have to pay for it later. Permit me to go out and take the necessary measures, Comrade Major-General."

"Make it hot for the stragglers?"

Major General Panfilov

"No, Comrade Major-General. Make it hot for the officers, and I'll have it discovered who are most to blame."

Panfilov laughed.

"Good, good, captain!"

"May I go out?"

"Wait a minute."

Panfilov was silent for a moment, thinking. Then he repeated:

"There you are, Comrade Momysh-uly, now you have a new neighbour. The battalion is weak. Poorly trained. Am I right, captain?"

"Yes, Comrade Major-General."

Turning to me Panfilov explained that a reserve battalion stationed in Volokolamsk had been attached to the division. Captain Shilov had only taken over the battalion a few days before. Prior to that he had commanded a company at the infantry school which had been transferred to Volokolamsk after the Germans broke through in Vyasma.

"We had to remove the old commander," said Panfilov. "He spoilt the men, was sorry for them. Idiot! Being sorry for them means to be not sorry for them! You understand me, captain?"

"Yes. I know that, Comrade Major-General."

For several seconds Panfilov stared silently at the serious young face of Captain Shilov, then turned to me.

"And you, Comrade Momysh-uly, I sent for you because. . ."

I was all attention. . . The general, however, simply said that Captain Shilov and I would have to examine together the gap between our battalions.

"If the enemy gets into that gap smash him together. Be prepared for this. Agree on all questions of communications and combined action on the spot. Don't leave one another in the lurch."

Once more he looked attentively at the captain and then gave him permission to go out.

Nothing was clear to me, however. I was still bothered by questions. "Smash him together!" How? With what forces? The battalion was defending an eight-kilometre line. Where would we get the men from? Should we weaken and lay bare the front? And what if the enemy should attack simultaneously at another point? "Smash him together!" The enemy, however, would be smashing at us, with superior forces, at different points and in different directions.

I grasped at every word uttered by Panfilov and came to this conclusion: the secret of battle, the secret of victory was as dim as ever to me.

3

The door closed behind the captain.

"A head of gold he's got, I should say," said Panfilov thoughtfully. "Well. . . were there a lot of stragglers, Comrade Momysh-uly? Very many?"

"There were a lot, Comrade General."

"You're always in trouble, however good a head you've got, if your soldiers aren't trained."

For a moment Panfilov's face became dark and gloomy, but a second later he glanced at me and smiled. There was a lively glint in those little eyes framed in a network of fine wrinkles.

"All right, Comrade Momysh-uly. . . tell me. . ."

I reported in brief the successful night raid. But Panfilov interrogated me, getting at all the details. Once again the same thing happened as had happened before: it was not a report but a conversation.

"Do you know what, Comrade Momysh-

uly?" said Panfilov blinking. "Tell Shilov all about this. Encourage him a bit. . . Tomorrow I want him to strike the way you do."

The general did not congratulate me, did not shake my hand or say "well done!", but he praised me in another way, much more businesslike.

"It seems you've learnt to fight the Germans, Comrade Momysh-uly," he continued.

"No, Comrade General, I haven't learnt."

He raised his brows.

"How's that?"

"I've been racking my brains all day today, Comrade General. When I think for the enemy I win easily, but when I think for myself I don't see things so clearly, I don't see the victory."

Panfilov screwed up his eyes, but did not answer immediately.

"Tell me all the details!" he ordered. "Get the map out."

4

I spread my map out on the table. The red pencil line that indicated our positions was still untouched, unbroken by battle. On either side of our battalion's front stretched the lines of defence of our neighbours. This line represented a thin chain of rifle pits and machine-gun nests which protected Moscow from the enemy.

I stated quite frankly that after having duly considered the situation I could not see how it would be possible to prevent a breach in the battalion position with the forces at my disposal. As any officer will realize, it was not easy for me to say this, but nevertheless I said it. Panfilov did not speak but nodded his head inviting me to continue. I told him what was worrying me, told him that I hadn't even one platoon in reserve, that in the event of a sudden drive I had nothing with which to support our defences, nothing in the way of reinforcements.

"I am confident, Comrade General, that my battalion will stand and die on those positions, but. . ."

"Don't be in such a hurry to die, learn to fight," Panfilov interrupted me. "Well, continue, Comrade Momysh-uly."

"Then, Comrade General, there's something else that worries me. . . Today the battalion line is separated from the enemy by a no man's land fifteen kilometres deep."

I pointed this out on the map and again Panfilov nodded his head.

"Well, Comrade General, do we have to give him the fifteen kilometres?"

"What do you mean, give him?"

I explained:

"When he smashes our outposts, Comrade General, he will advance rapidly."

"Why should he smash them?"

So far Panfilov had listened carefully and attentively. Now for the first time throughout my report his face expressed dissatisfaction.

"Why should he smash them?" he repeated sharply.

I did not answer. It seemed clear enough to me: the outposts, a couple of sections, some ten or twenty men, could not check the enemy's main forces.

"You astonish me, Comrade Momysh-uly," said the general. "You've been fighting the Germans, haven't you?"

"But, Comrade General, we did the attacking then. . . and it was at night, and a surprise. . ."

"You astonish me," he repeated. "I thought, Comrade Momysh-uly, you understood that a soldier does not sit still and await death. You must go out and meet it, carry it with you, attack. If you don't play, they play with you."

"Where should we attack, Comrade General? At Sereda again? The enemy will be more careful there."

"So what?"

Getting out a pencil Panfilov pointed to no man's land.

"You, Comrade Momysh-uly, are correct in one thing: when the enemy comes right up close, that thin line of ours won't hold him. But first he has to get there. You said he'll smash. . . No, Comrade Momysh-uly, you can fight only in this no man's land. . . Take initiative in fire, attack. Where are your outposts?"

I showed him. Two roads led from the German positions to the battalion lines: a dirt road, and a highway with ravines on either side. Each was guarded by an outpost posted some three or four kilometres ahead of the battalion lines. Panfilov grunted his dissatisfaction.

"What is the strength of the outposts?"

I told him.

"Not enough, Comrade Momysh-uly. You should have a strengthened platoon here. More light machine-guns. Heavy machine-guns aren't necessary. The groups should be light, mobile. Act more boldly, push the outposts forward towards the enemy. Let them meet him with fire, let them attack with fire as soon as the enemy begins to move."

"But, Comrade General, the enemy will outflank them. . . will stream past them on both sides."

Panfilov smiled.

"You think that where the reindeer can go the soldier can go as well? And where a soldier can go, an army can go? That, Comrade Momysh-uly, wasn't said about the Germans. Do you know how they fight nowadays? Where the truck can go, the army goes. Where are you going to take motor transport over those gullies and pot-holes if the roads are closed? Tell me, Comrade Momysh-uly, where?"

"They'll drive us out then. . ."

"Drive you out? A platoon with three or four machine-guns isn't driven out so easily. They must fan out, give battle. That, Comrade Momysh-uly, will take half a day. . . Let them diverge, it's not dangerous. Don't let them surround you, though. At the right moment you must get out, slip safely away. For example, like. . ."

With a light touch of the pencil Panfilov blocked the road near a German-occupied village, then the pencil ran to one side and, forming a loop, returned to the road at another point somewhat nearer the battalion lines. He looked up to see whether I was following him, whether I understood him. Panfilov repeated the twist, then made another like it, all the time drawing nearer the battalion lines.

"You see," he said. "A spiral like that, a spring. How many times will you force the enemy to attack for nothing? How many days will you rob him of? Now, Herr enemy, what have you got to say to that?"

I understood him. I had ideas of the same sort myself, but before my talk with Panfilov I could not rid myself of the hypnosis of defence; it had seemed to me that I did not have the right to lead the men out of the trenches.

5

Panfilov's adjutant returned.

"The horses are saddled, Comrade General."

Panfilov looked at his watch.

"Very good. . . Ring up headquarters and tell them that we are leaving in ten minutes."

He felt the collar and shoulders of the coat that was drying near the stove, sat down on his heels and threw some wood into the fire; he sat there on his heels for a moment at the open stove door. Confidence showed through those simple gestures, just as it had done at my last meeting with him. I could feel that he had long been training for battle in a thorough and calculated manner.

Then Panfilov returned to the map, looked at it and twisted the pencil in his fingers.

"Of course, Comrade Momysh-uly," he said, "things do not always happen in the way we have just decided they should. It is not the pencil or the map that the pencil draws which fight. It is the man who fights."

Almost his every word was instructive although he did not instruct, he was simply thinking aloud.

"Take courageous and experienced commanders to strengthen the platoons," he said. "Let there be something worth having there."

He tapped his forehead.

"Shall I send those who took part in the night raid, Comrade General?"

Panfilov screwed up his eyes.

"I have no intention of commanding the battalion in your place, Comrade Battalion Commander. I have my division to look after. You'll have to do this yourself: select intermediate positions for your outposts, find the points of attack and select your commanders."

He was wrapped in thought for a second, then he finally answered me:

"No, why should you send those who've already been in battle? Let the others have a taste of enemy fire. Everybody has to learn to fight. But tell them the chief thing, Comrade Momysh-uly: they must let nobody pass

along that road. Don't let the enemy reach your positions. Today the enemy is fifteen kilometres away. That's very close, Comrade Momysh-uly, when there is no resistance, and it's a long way off, when every little grove, every hummock, offers resistance."

He looked silently at the map and then continued:

"There's another thing, Comrade Momysh-uly. Check up on the mobility of the battalion. And make sure that your waggons, horses and harness are always ready. . . Anything can happen in war-time. Be ready to rouse them at a moment's notice, be ready to move rapidly."

It seemed to me that he was expressing himself indirectly and confusedly. Why was he telling me all this? I again decided to persist in telling him what was worrying me.

"Allow me to ask a question, Comrade General?"

"Ask away. That's what we're here for."

"It's still not clear, Comrade General. In any case the enemy will reach the battalion positions. You said yourself that we can't hold them. Then allow me to ask, what are the prospects? What have I, the battalion commander, got to be prepared for? For retreat?"

Panfilov drummed on the table with his fingers. This was a gesture of difficulty.

"And what do you think about that, Comrade Momysh-uly?"

"I don't know, Comrade General."

"It's like this, Comrade Momysh-uly," said Panfilov after a short pause. "A commander must always think of the worst possibility. Our job is to hold the road. If the Hun breaks through he should again be confronted by our troops on the road. That's why I took a battalion from here. I wanted to take you, but you have an important road to defend."

He pointed to the Sereda-Volokolamsk road on the map, the road across which ran the red line marking the battalion position.

"It is not the line that is important, Comrade Momysh-uly. If necessary don't be afraid to bring the men out of the trenches, don't be afraid to concentrate, but hold that road. Do you understand?"

Colonel Momysh-uly

"Yes, Comrade General."

He took up his greatcoat, and as he put it on, asked me:

"Do you know the riddle; 'What is the longest thing in the world and the shortest, the swiftest and the slowest, the most often neglected and the most regretted?'"

I did not guess at once. Glad that he had got me guessing, Panfilov pulled out his watch and pointed to it.

"That's the answer. Time! Our present task, Comrade Momysh-uly, is to fight for time, to rob the enemy of time. Show me the way."

We left the dugout.

"YOU SURRENDERED MOSCOW!"

Next morning the guns again began to fire dully over our heads from away behind us.

All was quiet on the battalion front. Donskikh and Brudny, the platoon commanders, reported at the appointed hour: the road was clear. A long way ahead of us were the observers: they were watching the Germans from the tops of tall trees as they had done the day before. I was awaiting an urgent telephone call. It came and the telephonist reported:

"Comrade Battalion Commander, from there. . ."

The telephonist knew everything that was going on, there was no need for an explanation, I knew where the call came from.

"Hallo. . ."

"Comrade Battalion Commander, German cavalry. . . coming along the road. . ."

I recognized Brudny's rapid speech. His turn had apparently come. Brudny's platoon was deployed on the second road.

"How many?"

"About twenty."

"Let them pass."

Close behind the cavalrymen a group of motorcyclists appeared. Today the enemy was acting warily with patrols out ahead of his vanguard. Our troops, however, were well hidden in the woods.

The roadside woods where Brudny's platoon was awaiting the Germans, were not very big. There was, however, another grove about a quarter of a mile away, to which it would be easy to run if the right moment were chosen, so that having avoided the enemy they could return to the road.

An hour later the German horsemen and motorcyclists went back, and the road was clear for them as far as the river.

Shortly after this Brudny reported that a column of trucks carrying infantry had appeared. The Germans considered that the road had been reconnoitred and were advancing without flankguards as they had done yesterday.

"Are you ready?" I asked.

"Yes, Comrade Battalion Commander, we're ready."

"Let them come close and then attack. Keep calm about it."

"Very well, Comrade Battalion Commander," answered a firm and serious voice.

A runner brought me news of what had happened. The same thing happened on this road as had happened yesterday. A volley from ambush, followed by a second and then a third. Again the Germans jumped down from the trucks and ran, for the moment forgetting everything they had been taught, forgetting orders, discipline, their invincibility, and becoming a panic-stricken crowd.

I kept questioning the telephonist who received reports on the course of the battle from the distant woods.

"Are they running? Are they lying down? Give me an exact answer!"

"They're running, Comrade Battalion Commander. . . Running hard! We've done it again, Comrade Battalion Commander."

I had thought about this the day before. How ought the Germans to behave when they came under sudden volley fire? They should lie down pressed closely to the ground and open a hurricane fire in reply. It would seem that without any orders this ought to be dictated to everyone by the instinct of self-preservation. Once more I repeat, there is a force at work in war which paralyses the imagination, which robs one of reason, which plays tricks on a man, making him the easy victim of death.

In those days, at the time of our first battles, I wracked my brains to discover what this force was. The time came—but more of that later.

2

Suddenly, at the very beginning of the battle, we lost contact with Brudny's platoon.

The telephonists who were sent out to examine the line, returned after running into the Germans. I got the telephonists to coroborate the story, not understanding what had happened. The enemy had fired on them from a village on the road. The telephonists did not know how many Germans there were there or whether trucks had arrived there.

It was strange and alarming. Where was our platoon? What had happened to them? Surely they weren't surrounded. Surely Brudny, that resourceful and intelligent officer would not let the moment pass when he should have withdrawn.

What was to be done? How could I help them and with what? I had an urge, a strong urge to take a platoon myself and go to their rescue. No, I had no right to do that, I had the battalion, I had the five mile front and it was my duty to stay there.

Overcoming my ardent desire to go to their rescue, I tried to think cooly. Let us assume the platoon is surrounded.

Would my fifty soldiers, my fifty boys surrender? Would they raise their hands? They would not, they would fight to the death. I believed that, believed the men and their officer. They had rifles and they had four light machine-guns and ammunition—so let the enemy try to do his worst!

I sent a platoon of our reconnoissance troops to their rescue. Half a platoon! Those were the forces we fought with in those days. I ordered the officer "to approach unseen, not to run into trouble, to act with intelligence and circumspection; to await darkness and when it was dark to join up with Brudny, fight together with him and strike with certainty.

I ordered him to tell Brudny that when he had fought his way out he must take his platoon back to the road as he had been ordered and next day lay another ambush and again meet the Germans with fire.

3

Having sent off the officer I went out of the dugout. The sky was gloomy and seemed to hang low. There were still two hours to dusk. I did not want to meet people, to talk. I could think of nothing but the platoon that had been cut off, of the fifty soldiers in the roadside wood. I walked slowly down to the river.

I strained my ears to listen—could I hear the thud of the German mortars from across the river? No, everything there was quiet. And what if everything were already over? What if I should never again see my Brudny, my Kurbatov and the others?

Later, when I became hardened to war my heart did not often pain me as it did then.

I returned to the dugout and awaited the reconnoissance party, awaited news.

"Comrade Battalion Commander, a call for you," said the telephonist.

Lieutenant Sevryukov, commander of No. 2 company was on the line.

"Comrade Battalion Commander, Lieutenant Brudny's platoon has fought its way out of encirclement," he reported.

"How do you know?" I asked quickly.

"What do you mean, how do I know? They're here."

"Where?"

"As I have already reported," Sevryukov answered with that lack of hurry that often tortured me, "I have reported, Comrade Battalion Commander, that they are here. They have entered the company lines."

"Who?"

I still did not understand, or, rather, I had understood, but. . . But perhaps, now, at this very moment, everything would explain itself differently. Sevryukov answered me:

"Lieutenant Brudny. . . And the soldiers. . . Those who have returned. Six were killed, Comrade Battalion Commander."

"And the Germans? And the road?"

The question slipped out although what sense was there in asking? It was certainly clear enough. . . Sevryukov's answer came. The enemy had seized the road. I did not speak. Then Sevryukov asked:

"Comrade Battalion Commander, are you still there?"

"Yes."

He reported that after occupying the village nearest the river the Germans had not advanced any farther that day. I did not ask any more questions. I was thinking.

"Shall I call Lieutenant Brudny to the telephone, Comrade Battalion Commander?"

"It doesn't matter."

"Shall I send him to you?"

"No."

"What shall I do?"

"Wait for me."

Laying down the receiver, I did not get up immediately.

4

So there it was, the worst thing of all. The bad thing was not that we had lost the road, I was prepared for that. According to our tactical plan it should have happened the next day or the day after. But today my lieutenant, my platoon, my soldiers had abandoned the road without orders. They had fled!

That was why I did not get up immediately.

A few minutes later I took my horse and rode to No. 2 company's command post. Not far from here, three days ago, in that memorable twilight, I

had seen the troops off. But then, three days ago, I had been greeted by troops on parade. Now the Red Army men who had returned were sitting and lying wearily on the ground which was covered with an early snow.

By the dugout on the slope of a mound which was lost in the inequalities of the river bank, stood a group of officers. Somebody, a small built man, left the group and came running towards me.

"Get up! Attention!"

It was Brudny. He ran up to me, saluted smartly, and then stood to attention before me.

"Comrade Battalion Commander," he began excitedly.

I interrupted him.

"Lieutenant Sevryukov! Come here!"

The forty-year-old Sevryukov ran up clumsily.

"Who's the senior officer here?"

"I am, Comrade Battalion Commander."

"Why aren't you commanding? What sort of a rabble is this? Fall everybody in, officers as well!"

Boszhanov came up, the political instructor of the machine-gun company. He asked me softly in Kazakh:

"Aksakal[1], what's happened?"

I answered him in Russian:

"And you, Comrade Political Instructor, doesn't the order include you? Get on parade!"

Boszhanov stood still for several seconds, his broad face looking up at me. He obviously wanted to say something, but decided not to. He was fond of me and understood me better than anybody else; he realized that I would not permit a soothing word.

The straight line of the troops looked black against the snow. It was quiet. Only from the far distance, from far away in the east, came the dull roar of gunfire. I walked over to the men on parade. This time Sevryukov reported. Beside him standing tensely to attention, was Brudny. I turned to him.

"Make your report."

He spoke hurriedly.

"Comrade Battalion Commander, today the reinforced platoon under my command wiped out about a hundred fascists. We were surrounded. I decided to attack, and break through. . . ."

"Good. And why didn't you return to the road?"

"Comrade Battalion Commander, we were pursued. . . ."

"Pursued?"

I screamed that word with anger, with hatred.

"Pursued? And you dare say such a thing in justification? The enemy has announced that he will pursue us to the Urals. That's what will happen, won't it? We shall surrender Moscow, we shall surrender our country, and run back to our families, to the old folks, to the women, and we'll babble pitifully: they pursued us. . . Is that what we'll do? Answer me."

Brudny did not speak.

"It's a pity," I continued, "that the women can't hear you. They'd slap your face and spit on you. You're not an officer of the Red Army, you're a coward."

From the distance again came the dull roar of gunfire.

"D'you hear that? The Germans are there as well, behind us. That's where our brothers are fighting. We, our battalion, are covering them here from a flank attack. They trust us, trust us to stand and not let the Germans pass. I trusted you. You held the road, you blocked the Germans' way. And you were afraid. You ran away. D'you think you surrendered the road? No, you surrendered Moscow."

"I. . . I. . . I thought. . ."

"Our conversation is finished. You may go!"

"Where?"

"Where you were ordered to go!"

I pointed across the river. Brudny jerked his head as though he were trying to look back towards where my hand was pointing. He did not repeat the motion but continued to stand to attention before me.

"But there, Comrade Battalion Commander. . ." he began, hoarsely.

"Yes, the Germans are there! Go to them! Serve them, if you want to! Or kill them! I did not order you to come here, I don't want any refugees. Go!"

"With the platoon?" asked Brudny uncertainly.

"No. The platoon will have another commander. Go alone!"

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[1] The name used by Kazakhs when speaking to the elder of the clan. Aksakal in Kazakh means grey beard.

There are various ways in which a battalion commander may use his authority against an officer who does not obey orders: he may send him back into battle; remove him from his post; hand him over to a Court Martial and, if the circumstances warrant it, shoot him on the spot. And I. . . I too sentenced him on the spot. That was shooting him before the men—even if it wasn't physical—the shooting of an officer who, forgetting the honour of a soldier had fled together with his men from the enemy. I punished dishonour with dishonour.

Brudny still stood before the silent ranks as though he had not understood that the conversation was really over and that I had driven him out of the battalion. It was a terrible moment for him. He had, of course, often thought of war and of death; he knew that in battle perhaps he would have to give up his life for his country; he dreamt of being brave; dreamt of the great joy of victory, and at the same time of reward, of fame, of the minor, personal happiness that was dear to him.

Now real war had come, there had been a real battle, and he, Brudny, a lieutenant, a platoon commander, had fled with his platoon. The judgement had already been made, without discussion, without voting, made on the battle-field, decided by the authority of his superior officer, the battalion commander. All his dreams vanished. He, Brudny, had saved his life, but there was no life for him any more; the word "coward", the word of disgrace, had been hurled at him before the ranks; the sentence had been passed—drummed out!

He stood as though all this—it was perhaps worse than death—had not reached him, as though he were awaiting some last word from me. In silence I looked straight at him. I was like a man of stone at that moment. There was no flutter of pity in my heart. Those who have fought will understand me: in such moments hatred, like fire, burns up other contradictory feelings.

Brudny understood: everything had been said. He found strength to lift his hand to his cap in salute.

"I understand, Comrade Battalion Commander."

Having answered he turned left about, military fashion. With rapidly increasing strides, as though hurrying to get away, he walked towards the bridge over the Ruza, into the darkness where night hid the enemy.

5

Somebody left the dark wall of the platoon and ran after Brudny. Everybody heard him shout:

"Comrade Lieutenant, I'll go with you. . ."

I recognized that tall, broad-shouldered silhouette with the semi-automatic rifle slung from his shoulder; I knew that voice.

"Kurbatov, come back!"

He halted.

"Comrade Battalion Commander, we're all guilty."

"Who gave you permission to leave the ranks?"

"Comrade Battalion Commander, he can't go there alone. . . There. . ."

"Who gave you permission to leave the ranks? Get back to your place! If necessary speak to me as you should to an officer of the Red Army."

Kurbatov rejoined the ranks and then said:

"Comrade Battalion Commander, allow me to speak to you."

"No, this isn't a meeting. I know, you all ran away with the commander. The commander, however, is responsible for you. If he orders you to run you are obliged to run. Does everybody hear me? If the commander orders you to run away, you are in duty bound to run. He is responsible. But when the commander orders you to "Stand", then he himself, and everyone of you is in duty bound to kill whoever runs. Your commander could not get a firm grip on you, could not halt you and shoot on the spot whoever did not obey him. He must pay for that."

ANOTHER BATTLE ON THE ROAD

When I returned to the headquarters' dugout, I sent for Kurbatov.

He came in looking gloomy. The enemy had chased him amongst others, this man whose head sat proudly on his shoulders, a strong and handsome man, and, one would think, a brave one. Why? Why had it happened? That was what I had to know.

"Tell me," I ordered him, "what happened to you out there. Why did you run?"

Kurbatov answered me briefly. During the exchange of fire with the Germans they heard the rattle of tommy-guns quite close behind them. Tracer-bullets came from the village behind the troops. Brudny shouted: "Follow me!" and the platoon, with their rifles at the ready ran from the wood to the nearby grove as had been previously arranged. Suddenly from there also the troops were greeted with shots. Some fell and somebody screamed. The men ran to one side and from that time on could not be halted. The tracer-bullets came after them all the time; the Germans, still firing, gave chase; as the soldiers say, "they were hot on their heels".

"How many of them were there, how many tommy-gunners chased you?" I asked.

"I don't know, Comrade Battalion Commander," answered Kurbatov dourly.

"Were there a dozen? or fewer?"

Kurbatov looked down and did not answer.

"You may go," I said.

One of my platoons had run away. The platoon commander was responsible for this. And I? For everything that had happened and would happen in the battalion, for every failure in battle, for every case of flight, for every officer and man I was responsible. My platoon had not obeyed orders, therefore I had not obeyed orders.

I reported the incident to regimental headquarters, made the required explanation, replaced the receiver and. . . I made myself responsible before the most merciless of judges, before my own conscience and my own mind.

I had to find out what my fault had been. Was it because I had placed an unreliable officer at the head of the platoon? Was it because I had not discovered in time that he was a coward? No, he was a normal man.

What had he been afraid of, out there amongst the bullets? What had made him forget his duty and his authority as an officer? Perhaps he had succumbed to the cowardice of the others? No, I did not believe that my soldiers were cowards. Perhaps, then, I had trained them poorly? No, I did not admit any guilt in that respect.

The truth came, penetrated into my consciousness only by degrees, in rough, scarcely recognizable outlines.

As a matter of fact, when I had given the lieutenant his orders a few days ago I had thought: "Surely the Germans aren't like sheep, once, twice, three times to put themselves in the way of our volleys." Only I had not drawn any conclusions from these flashes of thought; I had thought the enemy more foolish than he was.

Apparently we had given the German officers something to think about after the first battle on the road; it had happened earlier than I had anticipated. In the event of meeting an ambush the enemy apparently had a plan ready which I had not guessed in good time. He had answered surprise with surprise. He had put my platoon to flight by the same means—sudden fire at almost point-blank range, the same trick that had put his soldiers into a panic.

Yes, I had not thought enough yesterday. I had been beaten before the battle began. That was my mistake.

2

I glanced at the map; I imagined the battle and the flight; I tried to imagine how my enemy, the German commander had prepared and carried out his operation.

My men had fled. The enemy had forced them to flee, the enemy was pursuing them. Mentally I saw it and pondered over it. I saw how they had hurried, panting, lashed by the gleaming threads of the tracer-bullets, urged on by death; I saw how the Germans chased after them, firing as they ran, also panting and sweating, excited by the chase. How many groves of trees, bushes and gullies there had been on the path of that flight! There was plenty of cover; they could have dropped to the ground and turned their weapons against the enemy, could have let them approach quite close, triumphant, seized with the enthusiasm of the chase and then cooly shoot them down at close quarters.

Brudny had not remained cool; Brudny had lost control of himself and of his soldiers, that was his crime. But I, the battalion commander, should have thought for him and foreseen everything yesterday.

The enemy held the road. So far only one road. The other was not yet in his hands. There Donskikh's platoon, frequently changing the site of their ambushes, were lying in wait for the Germans. Tomorrow the enemy would try by some means to put that platoon to flight and drive them back.

All right, Mr. Great German, we'll do what you want, we'll run!

3

I got in touch with Donskikh by telephone and ordered him to take an escort and report to me. About an hour and a half later he arrived.

He seemed the same as before. The skin on his hands and face was still the same as it had always been, a tender, virginal white. He came in blushing slightly from embarrassment. His first gesture and his first word, however, told me that Donskikh had changed. He caught my glance and smiled: the smile was one I knew, somewhat shy but still it had something new about it—it reflected some sort of inner strength, he seemed to recognize his right to smile. His movements had become more confident and more rapid. He saluted, reported more freely than he had done formerly.

"Sit down," I said. "Get out your map."

The places where he had laid his ambushes were not marked in any way on Donskikh's map. Under such circumstances the map is not to be entrusted with any secrets. The site of the first battle, however, was no longer a secret, and Donskikh, as though to keep it in mind, had marked it in with a red circle. I looked at it. Donskikh again blushed. We both knew that there had been a real test of morale there; there they had experienced the great joy of victory—we both knew and neither of us said a word about it.

"See here, Donskikh," I began. "Last time you and I talked it over this way: the enemy might encircle the ambush. That is possible, but you must not allow yourself to be surrounded."

Donskikh nodded. His glance showed that he understood.

"The enemy, however, may surround you unnoticed. For example, like this... He envelops you from this flank." With the blunt end of the pencil I showed him on the map. "You have a way out here. You get out, begin to withdraw, but the enemy, who has approached unseen beforehand, is already lying on your path of retreat, is already waiting and can already see you and will greet you with fire in your face. What then?"

"What?" Donskikh repeated. "Bayonets!"

"Oh, Donskikh! . . They're a long way off for the bayonet; they'd shoot you down. Don't you see that? Wouldn't you run?"

He raised his head a little.

"I, Comrade Battalion Commander, would not run."

"I'm not referring to you alone. Wouldn't your men run?"

Donskikh did not answer but looked at the map, thinking and seeking an answer.

"Of course, Donskikh, you must fight even in the most desperate situation. But why should you get caught in this way? Let the Germans get caught. With the bayonet, Donskikh, you can kill one man, with your brain you can kill a thousand."

"But how, Comrade Battalion Commander?"

His youthful blue eyes looked trustfully at me.

"Run!" I said. "Run, as the Germans want you to, in disorder, in panic! Flee! For ten or fifteen minutes fight and stage a panic. Let them come after you! That's also necessary, but the game will be played by us. They will not chase us but we will force them to run after us, force them to do it by our cunning. You stick to the road and drop into this gully." (I again touched the map with the blunt end of my pencil.) "Here you must take instant cover, lie on both sides of the road, here and here. Allow the Germans to pass the first group and then the second group will meet them with machine-gun fire and volleys straight in the face. They will hesitate and turn back. Then you must lash them from here, again in the face at point-blank range. Catch them between two fires and shoot down all who were giving chase! Do you understand?"

Living through this battle in my imagination I glanced at Donskikh with a malicious triumphant smile, in which there was, no doubt, hatred and a fiery

spirit. Donskikh did not smile in response. I saw by his eyes that he had caught the idea, but in the depths of his pupils I saw a trembling that seemed to have remained frozen there for a moment.

I did not immediately realize what was the matter with him. Was cunning not to his liking, did he prefer a more honourable battle? Or perhaps for a moment he had experienced some horror of war, of the bloodbath that he was about to perpetrate? . .

"I understand, Comrade Battalion Commander," he answered firmly however.

We discussed various details. Then I said to him:

"Instruct the men about the manoeuvre."

"Manoeuvre?" he reiterated.

For some reason or another he thought this a strange word. It was probably not this, not the annihilation of his enemies that he had connected with the word "manoeuvre". Immediately after that, however, he answered as was expected of him:

"Very good, Comrade Battalion Commander."

"That's all, then, Donskikh."

He got up.

On the following day this youngster with the gentle face and the gentle heart would have to lure the enemy into a trap and shoot down stampeding, maddened men at point-blank range. I saw that he could do this.

Such is war, such is the way the war, the great war against the foreign oppressor, had changed us.

4

I had scarcely got up the next morning when my batman, Sinchenko, reported to me somewhat mysteriously:

"Comrade Battalion Commander, there," he pointed to the door, "Lieutenant Brudny. . . He's waiting till you get up."

"What is he doing here?"

My heart beat faster. Had he really returned? Had he really done what he had said he would?

"He went to the Germans, Comrade Battalion Commander," Sinchenko said hurriedly, "he has brought their tommy-guns back with him. Now he is sitting there and won't speak to anybody. Wants to see you personally."

"Let him come in," I said.

Sinchenko disappeared. A minute later the door opened again. Without saying a word, his lips tight pressed, Brudny came up to the table where I was sitting, put down two German submachine-guns, two German soldiers' books, letters, a notebook, German paper money and coins. His deep sunk black eyes looked at me, not flinchingly, but wildly and frowning.

I wanted to tell him to sit down but suddenly felt that I could not pronounce a word, that I had a lump in my throat. I took out a cigarette, got up, walked over to my greatcoat for matches although they were in my breeches pocket. I lit a cigarette and stood by the little window that had been cut under the sloping log roof and looked out into the daylight, at the trunks of the big-rooted pines and at the thin snow that lay on the ground in patches between the trees. Then I turned round and said quietly:

"Sit down, Brudny. . . Had your breakfast?"

Brudny did not answer; at that moment he could not speak either. Sinchenko looked in at the door; he ran up to me and whispered in my ear:

"Shall I put vodka on the table for breakfast, Comrade Battalion Commander?"

He, my batman, my dear old Sinchenko, knew what had happened yesterday as well as the rest of the battalion did. And he understood what was happening now.

"Yes," I said, "pour out a glass for the lieutenant!"

We breakfasted together. Brudny told me about his night wanderings; he told me how he had killed two Germans; in his eyes, which sparkled moistly after the vodka, there were occasional glimpses of the former Brudny.

"Now tell me, Brudny, what happened yesterday? Why did you withdraw without orders?" I asked.

He frowned, he did not want to speak about that.

"But you know. . ."

"I don't know. . ."

He said still more unwillingly:

"But you said. . ."

"You were afraid?"

He shook his head. Now that yesterday's word had been repeated it was easier for him to talk about it.

"I don't understand myself, Comrade Battalion Commander. . . It was, what shall I say. . . like a brick against my head. . . It was as though I wasn't myself. . . I had stopped thinking."

He jerked his shoulders nervously.

"Like a brick?" I asked.

Suddenly I found the word that I had been searching for in my thoughts. A blow struck at his psyche! At last I had named what was for me the secret of battle, the secret of victory in battle.

A blow at the psyche! At the brain! At the spirits!

It may be strange, but that moment when it would seem that nothing was happening remained in my memory together with the most vivid experiences of the war. I can see it today: I am sitting in a low log-roofed dugout together with the swarthy Brudny; on the table there are plates and glasses of tea; Brudny is speaking, nervously twitching his shoulders; and suddenly those words flashed through my head like lightning.

With joy I felt that for the first time everything was clear and that I did not view the battlefield through a curtain of darkness.

A blow at the psyche—that is what brings victory.

Once, Mr. Great German, it worked against me and against my platoon, but once is enough.

To Brudny I said:

"Well then. . . I shan't give you a platoon. But I suppose you are not afraid of the Germans now. . . I shall send you to them. I appoint you second in command of the reconnoisance platoon."

He jumped up joyfully.

"Thank you, Comrade Battalion Commander!"

I dismissed him. My thoughts drove ahead, penetrating the fog.

A blow at the psyche! Now, at last, the secret was out!

So it seemed to me.

That same day, however, a few hours later, the enemy showed me that I had not understood everything; he showed me that there were other rules of warfare. In war, as you know, the proofs are not like those in logic or in mathematics. In warfare the proofs are shown in blood.

Here is what the men of Donskikh's platoon told me when they returned from battle. Donskikh himself was no longer able to say anything.

That day, October 22nd, the enemy forces facing our battalion front brought up artillery and stores along the road they had captured and also continued along the road where two days before Donskikh's ambush had checked them.

This time the Germans advanced more warily, on foot and in open order, firing from their tommy-guns into the roadside woods and bushes. The empty trucks moved slowly beside the soldiers.

Donskikh's platoon again gave the Germans a volley. The enemy, however, was now prepared for this and the Germans immediately dropped to the ground. Then, running in spurts they began to envelop the platoon.

This is where our plan came into action. The time had come to feign panic, to flee in disorder; the platoon fled.

The Germans saw them run: "The Russians are running! Forward!" The Germans gave chase. The troops ran, as had been planned, without going far from the road. The German lorry-drivers speeded up: the soldiers climbed into the moving lorries, and standing in them, fired as they came along, chasing our troops in comfort from their lorries.

The platoon disappeared into the gully. The men lay down rapidly behind bushes and hummocks on both sides of the road. The lorries appeared. Excited by the chase the Germans were firing at random.

A sudden volley from the side and enfilading fire from the light machine-guns. You know what it means to be caught in an enfilade? It means sudden and certain death. Men dropped dead and there were loud cries, the lorries crashed into one another. From the flank came volley after volley, fire and more fire.

Stupified, seized by fear, the Germans fled like a herd. And behind them, fire again—death in their back!

Then suddenly from the other side where they had taken cover behind the lorries they were again faced with death, again a volley and again the enfilading fire of light machine-guns.

What I had foreseen took place. The second blow, the second surprise brought the enemy back to his senses. They did the only possible thing to save themselves from annihilation: in a howling maddened wave they dashed forward, towards the fire, towards our troops.

The Germans had no bayonets. They had not been taught to attack with bayonets at the "on guard", but with their tommy-guns pressed to their bellies, firing as they advanced. Either despair lent them strength or their commander held them well in hand at this critical moment; in any case the Germans seemed for a moment to have remembered everything they had been taught, and they advanced on our thin line, not with bayonets in front of them but with long gleaming lines of tracer-bullets.

Suddenly everything changed. A simple rule of wa fare was brought into play, the rule of numbers, the rule of numerical and firing superiority. Over two hundred infuriated men came dashing towards our position. We had but a handful there, half a platoon.

As I later realized, there was a mistake in the very planning of the battle. In fighting with weak forces against a stronger enemy you must not try to outflank him, or fight to envelop him. This was a bitter lesson; don't bite off more than you can chew.

Donskikh ordered a withdrawal. He himself with a light machine-gun and a few men remained to cover the retreat. He faught and died like a hero. Sergeant Volkov who was using the other machine-gun, was also killed. For a short time, however, for two or three minutes, they had held up the enemy. Half the platoon got away, taking the wounded with them.

6

That was how the Germans captured the intermediate positions.

That night a general outline of the situation was reported to me. The summary of operations of Rokossovsky's army for that day, for October 22nd read: "Today the enemy had by evening completed the concentration of his main forces on the left flank of our army with an auxiliary group against the centre of the army."

Against the centre of the army. In those days that was our battalion and our two neighbouring battalions with the artillery attached to us, 2,000 Red Army men on a twelve and a half mile front.

WILL THE RIFLES SAVE US?

It was already dark. The reconnoissance reported that there were German troops in all the neighbouring villages; every village was covered by strong enemy forces. All my roads had been taken from me.

The highway, however, did not belong to the Germans as long as we were there. I thought out ways of getting out of the circle. We could go through the woods. They stretched right away to the north, almost as far as Volokolamsk. It would be easy for the infantry to go through the woods but what about the wheeled transport, the guns and the waggons? Abandon them?

I was thinking this over and at the same time continued to fight. The Germans attempted to continue their movement down the highway under cover of darkness. We did not allow them to pass. They diverted their transport to a roundabout road. We hindered them by striking at the points where the roads branched. As before I still felt that we were twisting the enemy's tail. I did not want to let him go.

Lieutenant Anissyin, a messenger from Panfilov, came at nine or ten o'clock in the evening. He gave me a note from the general: get out of the circle immediately and take the battalion to Volokolamsk. The distance between the battalion and our retreating troops was something like fifteen miles. How were we to cross this area?

I decided to enter the dense forest during the darkness and then to advance by compass going in a straight line to Volokolamsk, cutting a path in the forest for the artillery and the waggons. I ordered parting volleys to be fired at all German bases and at all villages that were within reach of our guns.

The battalion began to move.

"Good-bye for the present, you scoundrels! We shall meet again."

2

We marched and marched through the forest in the darkness. It was a fo-

rest preserve, ages old. Saws and axes got to work; we felled trees, dragged them to one side, cutting a path through the forest, hewing out a monument for ourselves. There were seventy saws and about a hundred and fifty axes in the battalion and all of them were in use. We marched on and on. In the darkness the freshly cut tree stumps gleamed a dull white. Our two-wheeled carts, ambulances and guns moved along the road we had cut. We were taking twelve guns with us. Two that had been damaged in battle we blew up. We had lost about twenty horses, but the load had decreased; we had fired over a thousand shells at the enemy and carried with us only the standard reserve of ammunition. There remained but a few boxes of cartridges. Those that had been expended represented our volleys, our machine-gun fire, the three German attacks we had repulsed. There was no bread in the waggons, nor were there canned meat, grain or vegetables; only a little food had been saved for the wounded. Yes, it was time to retire. The next day would have been much more difficult.

We marched, sawed, hacked. We moved slowly; in places where the trees had been brought down by storms, where the forest was thicker, we moved less than half a mile an hour. But we continued cutting our road by compass. We left behind us a monument which we had hewn out to ourselves and which would last a dozen years.

We marched without a halt, without a rest, only the working parties were changed every hour.

Morning overtook us while we were still in the forest, still moving. The tall tree trunks whistled and sighed as they came down, smashing and crushing young trees and dry branches. Suddenly there was a halt. The vanguard reported that the battalion had reached a glade which ran across our road. There was a dirt road there which led to the highway. The road was held by the enemy.

3

I stood on the fringe of the forest looking ahead.

Motor lorries were crawling along, they stuck in the mud and were towed out. Those with seats intended for the infantry carried no soldiers but upon them and in the drivers' cabins the barrels of mortars were piled like firewood. The infantry were on foot pushing and hauling their lorries. Some of them were heavily loaded with ammunition, others had light guns in tow behind them. Inside some of the lorries, machine-guns and grenades lay along the side walls.

I stood there watching and thinking. There was no end to the column. The horsemen that I sent out along the forest edge returned and reported that they could not find the end of the column. This was the stream of traffic that we had yesterday held up in another place.

What should I do? Deploy my guns? Get out my machine-guns? Give battle? But then I had almost no shells and very few cartridges. Should I wait for the night? Let these locusts move on in silence? No, we were needed in Volokolamsk, we were needed in order to meet them there with fire.

The battalion moved silently towards the fringe of the forest. I glanced at the troops. Everyone had his rifle. Everyone had a full issue of a hundred and twenty rounds of ammunition in his belt. This was practically our whole ammunition supply. When these were gone there would be nothing left to fight with.

The glade was about half a mile wide. We had to cross that half-mile; we had to cut through the column and then disappear into the wall of the forest on the other side.

Again I looked at the troops. Would the rifles save us? I called the officers and discussed the idea of the break through. It was like this: the battalion would take up diamond formation one rank deep. The waggons and the guns would be inside the diamond. On my orders the battalion would advance at a medium pace retaining its diamond formation. Rifles were to be carried at the "on guard" position, ready for action. On my orders they would fire in volleys as they advanced.

4

It was not easy to take up the formation in the forest. Ahead, at the sharp apex of the battalion I placed Rakhimov, the two flank angles were formed by Krayev and Tolstunov; the rear point was formed by Boszhanov.

From the rear point I moved forward

to the van, moved past waggons and guns. I stood beside Rakhimov and looked round. Softly I gave the order:

"Battalion—quick. . . march!"

We moved forward, a bristling diamond.

The Germans did not at once realize who and what we were, who were those strange silent ranks moving out of the forest. Many of them continued pushing their lorries; others turned to us and looked at us in astonishment. It really was something difficult to understand. The Red Army men did not charge with their bayonets, did not shout "Hurrah", it was not like an attack. Were they going to surrender? It did not look like it. . . Had they gone mad?

They let us advance eighty to a hundred yards without raising the alarm. Then we heard a commanding shout in German. I felt that some of them were running to the lorries, for their arms, for the machine-guns. I actually felt it: it seemed now that time was divided into the tiniest fractions.

"Battalion. . ."

A moment of silence. The rifles did not move. I had ordered them to fire as they marched with their rifle butts pressed against their ammunition pouches.

"Fire!"

A volley broke the silence.

"Fire!"

With an intermittent, thundering sound, which made even us shiver, we sent several hundred bullets fanwise.

"Fire!"

We advanced and fired. It was a terrible business—volley fire from a battalion, single shots from seven hundred rifles repeated at horrible regular intervals. We kept the enemy pinned to the earth, gave him no chance to raise his head or even to move.

We marched and fired, clearing a path before us. Not a single soldier broke the ranks, not a man wavered. I led the battalion into an opening between the lorries. On the road dead Germans lay in the mud. I continued to give orders without turning and trod on one of them. Under my boots the body sank into the mud.

Over the bodies, through the German column, passed men, horses and wheeled transport.

The battalion crossed the road. During one of the moments of silence I shouted:

"Battalion! Obey the orders of Lieutenant Rakhimov!"

Now Rakhimov gave the orders to fire. The men fired, turning round. We still did not let the Germans raise their heads or move.

Only two hundred to two hundred and fifty paces were left to the wall of the forest. Still we had not allowed one German to use arms against us.

Suddenly, in the distance behind us, several tanks appeared. With a horrible and increasingly loud rattle they came towards us: at the top of my voice I ordered:

"Battalion! Double march! Horses at the gallop! Into the forest!"

They dashed away. Only a handful of men, the rear angle of the diamond, Shilov's and Boszhanov's men, continued to march, looking at me. Despite the seriousness of the moment I smiled. Damn it all, they had learned not to run! I shouted to them:

"Who do you think you are? A special unit? Follow me at the double!"

We also got through. Behind us came the rattle and roar of the tanks and the rat-a-tat-tat of the machine-guns.

Men, waggons, and guns took cover in the forest. Some twenty or thirty paces from the forest I fell dawn. I did it intentionally; I had to look round to see whether there were any wounded, whether anybody had got left behind defenceless and without help; if even one had been left behind we had to hold back the enemy somehow and get him out. There had been nobody left behind, however. Two soldiers running, bent double, were carrying somebody.

I looked to both sides. Boszhanov and some five other men had dropped beside me. Amongst them was Polzunov. I shouted:

"Get going, lads!"

We jumped up and made a dash for the forest. A stream of tracer-bullets was sent towards us from one of the tanks. One of them sizzled uncomfortably near my foot.

Once in the forest our guns turned round. With a crash they opened fire. The time had come to use the "emergency ration" of shells. I turned round as I ran. The tanks had halted. One of them with a broken track was spinning like a

top, like a cat on hot bricks. So you don't like it? We dashed on into the forest. The tanks, continuing to fire, put into reverse.

VOLOKOLAMSK

Again we marched through the woods, sawing, hacking, cutting a path. Volokolamsk was not far away. We could hear the gunfire quite clearly. I was leading the battalion to the town.

A battalion column on the line of march is nearly a half a mile. Into a town that seemed to be doomed, where the smoke of the conflagration at the station was already felt, an army unit came in formation, maintaining the regular intervals, commanders at the head of the companies, with guns, machine-guns and waggons. Ours was not a measured tread, we did not "goose-step" as though we were on parade. The men were tired, stern, we had no holiday before us, no joy, but battles still harder than those we had fought, yet under the eyes of the townspeople we stuck out our chests, kept our ranks and marched in step.

They did not admire us, did not look on us with enthusiasm. Retreating troops are not admired, retreating armies do not command respect. The women looked at us accusingly, some wiped away tears and in the glances of others I read contempt.

Hard indeed was that march through the town.

We went to headquarters.

2

I went through the outside room where the telephonist sat at his instrument and where the staff officers were waiting. I entered Panfilov's room. I stood to attention and was going to report, but he would not let me. Getting up from the table on which there was a telephone and a large scale map, Panfilov walked quickly towards me and took my hand in both of his.

"Sit down, Comrade Momysh-uly, sit down. . . Do you want some tea?"

To hide his excitement he walked up and down the room.

"Sit down. Tell me, have you lost many men?"

I reported my losses.

"Did you bring the wounded with you?"

"Yes, Comrade General."

He was glad, but he was not a slave to his joy and kept himself well in hand. Calling his batman, Panfilov ordered him to bring me lunch and put the samovar on the table. Then he called his chief of staff to the telephone and told him to report to Rokossovsky at Army Headquarters, that a full strength battalion believed to have been lost, had arrived in Volokolamsk. He got out his cigarette case, offered me a cigarette and lit one himself. Then he sat down and resting his elbows on the table leaned towards me.

"Tell me the story. Tell me about everything," he said kindly.

3

I reported briefly on our journey.

While I was talking Panfilov asked me questions from time to time and then listened to me again, occasionally saying:

"Eat, Comrade Momysh-uly, drink."

The lunch, however, got cold. Sometimes Panfilov laughed. He listened, leaned over towards me, kept his eyes on me, as though seeking something different in my words, something more than I had put into them.

My report gave Panfilov a picture of the battle, a battle which was still going on and which was reaching a new stage, a battle in which his division, his child, was being subjected to a terrible examination.

It was probably only then that he discovered why, at a certain moment some two days ago he had suddenly felt, whilst conducting a fierce battle, that the enemy had weakened his pressure, that it had become easier to breathe. Then far from Volokolamsk, far from our own troops, our guns had gone into action, our battalion, cut off at the cross-roads, was fighting. The enemy columns had been cut across; the main road was blocked; the drive weakened for a time, the Germans had nothing with which to develop their offensive, they had no support.

Panfilov, of course, heard much more that was probably known to him before and which my report only served to confirm.

At that time Panfilov, as you know, said that he intended to hold the enemy in the area before Volokolamsk for a

month. On October 23rd, however, when several blows were struck simultaneously at the division's thin front line; when the enemy's main and auxiliary forces which were concentrated against us made a simultaneous drive at Volokolamsk; when the centre of the front was broken over a distance of almost twelve and a half miles; when there was a threat that the whole division would be split up into a number of isolated and surrounded groups, after which Volokolamsk and the Volokolamsk highway leading straight to Moscow would be without covering troops, without defence—at that terrible moment when an immediate decision was necessary, Panfilov ordered a retreat of nineteen miles.

He, the father of the division, at that time did not himself know what the division's strength was, did not know how durable or flexible it was. The dogged determination of its men had not been tested, the stamina of the soldiers, the officers' ability to manoeuvre and act independently in battle had not been measured. On that day he could have lost everything in an hour.

I do not know whether you realize what Panfilov was experiencing—I understood him and I understood his decision.

The Germans did not break through to Moscow. At Volokolamsk they were faced as before by our troops, by our divisions. Such was the history of those days.

Translated by George Hanna

ALEXANDER BECK

THE POWER OF THE SOVIET MAN

It is already more than a year since the Germans were shattered at Stalingrad. On looking back we Stalingraders instinctively recall how our city looked in those days. It was a nightmare... The Germans really had made an awful mess of it. There were times when you would walk along the street and your heart would be ready to break—nothing but ruins on ruins.

It was a problem at first to know how to tackle the job, to know what to begin with. Roofless houses, factories, clubs and hospitals demolished, schools burned and railways wrecked... Our dear Volga city was a dead city. Every street, every hillock, every corner of it was dear to us. It set your heart aching to see what those nazi fiends had done to it.

At present the Red Army is freeing towns and villages and we know in what a state Hitler's blackguards leave them. And I want to tell comrades of the newly liberated areas: however fearful your home town disfigured by the Germans may look it will live, will be restored, of that there is no doubt. Soviet people have a great inner strength, a strength that fire cannot burn, water cannot drown, that can neither be broken nor destroyed. We Stalingraders have become firmly convinced of this.

Our city is living again. The chimney stacks of many factories and mills are already smoking, engines are already hauling their loaded lorries along the restored railway lines. Thousands of workers and employees have already moved into houses repaired or built anew. The kiddies are going to school while hospitals, kindergartens and creches are functioning.

And really it was nothing but stones and ashes... Of course there is still several times more work to be done, and we will do it! But even today when you pass through the streets your mood is very different: you feel life seething all around.

On February 4th, 1943, we Stalingraders at a meeting pledged to ourselves and Stalin that we would bend every effort, bear all hardships, so that our city would live and would be even more beautiful than before. We pledged that we would be just as staunch at the job of restoring the city as were the men who defended our Volga bastion.

I remember our first Sundays given up to clearing the streets and factory grounds. Everyone took part, both old and young. And then one Sunday I got an idea: could not we inhabitants think of something more so as to rehabilitate our city the quicker? What if we whipped together volunteer brigades of women and went out every day after work to rebuild and repair the houses? Surely by hook or by crook we could find three-four hours a day for the job. True we were

not bricklayers, nor plasterers nor carpenters—but these are made not born. Our Russian woman isn't the sort to shrink at difficulties. We would try...

I got together eighteen women—working at kindergartens—told them of my idea and said: "For all of us Stalingrad is our life, we can't look at its ruins without pain. Let's start building." The women caught on at once. I work at a kindergarten, am the mother of two little children while my husband like many another woman's has shed his blood at the front for his country... The women understood me. They all felt the same way about it. We talked it over and decided to tackle the job.

What should we start with? We decided to begin with the famous house of Pavlov. Maybe not everybody knows as well as I do what sort of house this is. Every Stalingrader passing by this house pauses involuntarily for a moment to look at it. For two months it was valiantly defended by a handful of men of the 62nd Army. They beat off dozens of attacks by fascist infantry, shellings and bombings but did not yield. On its facade they wrote: "Motherland! Here some of Rodimtsev's guardsmen stood to death... This house was held and kept by guardsman Sergeant Yakov Fedotovich Pavlov."

We got the idea of working on this house until we had restored it completely and of calling ourselves guardsman Sergeant Pavlov's brigade.

We began work on the famous house on June 13th. We worked with great enthusiasm that evening and when we knocked off I told the women of the deathless deeds of Stalingrad's defenders. I found this easy for I had more than once carried wounded men from the field during the battle, dressed their wounds and seen how after a brief rest they returned to the fray with their bandages still on...

That is how it began. We began to clear the city of ruins and rubble, dug foundation trenches, cleaned bricks and stacked them for laying. We had not one professional builder in the brigade. Maria Vilyachkina is a teacher at the kindergarten, Ekaterina Konobevtseva a cook, Alexandra Martynova a housewife with a big family—those were the sort of people we had. They all had their main jobs and their home cares but all were drawn together by the desire to make their contribution to the renaissance of Stalingrad.

We did not think then that our initiative would start a whole movement, that it would stir the whole city. Now of course I realize that if we hadn't set the ball rolling then somebody else would have done, that it would have been done just the same because everybody had the same desire.

Our brigade addressed a letter to the working people of the city. We called for the organization of volunteer brigades to help the regular builders.

Five days later over five thousand Stalingraders were out at the building jobs. Women and children and old folk—all turned out. Of course in those days I was cheerful as I had never been before—there, I thought, that's what the people's spirit means: they got the idea and out they went with pick, spade, axe and wheel-barrow.

The scenes in the town are hard to describe! Wherever you looked you would see groups of women carrying the tools of the trade. Some were restoring a chemist shop, some a school, some were filling in craters in the streets, some digging reservoirs or unloading barges...

It was somewhat tough at first. There were moments when you just wanted to sit down and weep: five times you would build a Dutch stove and there'd be something wrong every time. Or you had to make a door and you couldn't think for the life of you how to fix the frame... And then things began to go well. The women got round those who showed a knack for this or that trade and picked up hints. Medical workers became bricklayers, teachers became painters... Old man A. M. Ivanov made a name for himself: he taught many women the wrinkles of carpentry, in fact all the woodwork was done under his direction.

Several days later another seven thousand Stalingraders turned out and then over thirty-five thousand. People worked two or three hours a day while some were at it for four, five and six hours: we even found many boasting that they had not missed a day.

It was a voluntary affair of course, but nobody wanted to lag behind.

Take old lady Mazurina, for instance, who although she is seventy has not miss-

ed a day yet. She has three sons in the Red Army. She was first fiddle in the brigade: whether it was laying bricks at a house, sawing rafters at a school she was first, first in everything, beating all the youngsters.

The housewives in general work with particular zeal and energy. It was they mainly who rebuilt and restored the homes of servicemen's wives and likewise schools, milk kitchens, creches and kindergartens.

I tell you straight the women showed what a big force they are. Let us take Agrippina Morchukova, a housewife, a woman getting on in years. For several hours a day she stood up to the waist in water unloading boards. And she did it of her own free will. This woman patriot helped five Volga families to build their houses, doing everything, including the roofs.

And you can enumerate hundreds of simple modest heroines. In six months our volunteer brigades helped restore and rebuild over eleven thousand houses, one hundred and nineteen restaurants, hundred and sixteen shops, thirteen hospitals, five cinemas and open all the schools. They built baths and laundries and public conveniences, did everything that had to be done.

Now it is winter, building work has stopped for a while, and our brigades are utilizing the time to learn carpentry, plastering, painting and other trades. Circles and courses have opened in all parts of the city. When spring comes the work will begin again at full speed and we shall be able to build new houses, kindergartens, schools, hospitals and clubs without outside help.

Pulling all together we shall not only restore our dear Stalingrad but make it more beautiful than it was. And we call on all the inhabitants of liberated towns and villages to do the same.

If one Soviet man is a force then what a power we are altogether!

ALEXANDRA CHERKASSOVA

THE GRAVE OF 128 YOUNG MARTYRS

A young boy covered by snow entered the headquarters of a Guards regiment housed in a peasant hut that had escaped the fires started by the fascist incendiaries. His sunken blue eyes stared gravely from his emaciated face as he paused to shake the snow flakes off his torn cap. He stood there, speechless, shivering from cold or from excitement which usually grips a man when he meets his dear ones or relatives after a very long time.

"What can we do for you, my lad?" an officer asked him.

"Please, uncle, come along with me. It's not far to go. . . Just the other side of the village, there's a ditch. . . A big, huge pit. . . The second year it has been there. . . I'm the only one who escaped alive. . . Please come with me. . ."

On a cold January day excavations began outside the village. People drove their spades into ground frozen as hard as granite. The entire village turned out to Bezymyanny Yar (Nameless Ditch) and the people listened in silence to the harsh, slightly hoarse voice of the freckled lad, Mitya Kozub:

"Dig here, please. . . That's where their little bones are . . ."

The world will shrink in horror on hearing this. They were not partisans. They made no raids on German garrisons. They were youngsters living in a children's home in the village Mikhailovka, and it was against these children that the Germans directed their monstrous reprisals.

Here are the traces of this bloody massacre: the ditch is filled with bones, skulls of the little martyrs. The old grey-haired stable-man Lyashchenko, cautiously lifting the remains from the ditch, whispered wrathfully:

"Is this really possible: suck the blood of babies, that's what they do!"

Doctor Nelyubin, an army doctor, could not repress his indignation as he examined the bodies:

"Such torture of children! Why, it's incredible! They did not simply shoot the youngsters: they crushed their skulls, broke their bones."

All the while Mitya Kozub demanded persistently:

"Go on, please! There should be more of them here."

None of those present could restrain their tears. Women sobbed bitterly, old men wept, and even the guardsmen wip-

ed the tears away with the sleeves of their greatcoats. Right there, near the snow-covered ditch a statement was drawn up, the first signature being affixed by the little citizen of the Land of Russia—witness of the unforgettable tragedy. Mitya Kozub. Here it is:

"In March 1942, during their occupation of the village Mikhailovka, Tomakovka district, the German-fascist invaders brutally tortured and shot 128 children between the ages of two years and six months and sixteen, maintained in the local children's home. The children were told that they would be moved to the Invalids' Home of the Vladimirovka Rural Soviet. Under German escort (the sick and the very tiny ones in carts and the healthy and older children, on foot) they started out for the neighbouring village. On a hill beyond Mikhailovka, some $1^1/_2$ kilometres to the north-east of the village, in an anti-tank ditch known as Bezymyanny Yar, all the children were shot.

"The Hitlerites seized the children, threw them into the pit and then shot them from tommy-guns. Taking part in the murder of the children was the German commandant of the Tomakovka garrison. The bodies of the victims were then buried.

"We have examined the spot where 128 children from the children's home were killed.

"Excavations revealed heaps of bodies thrown into the pit in disorder, some of them with traces of physical violence (fractured bones, crushed skulls, etc.). Discovered in the pit were also cups, spoons, toys and towels with rabbits, foxes and flowers embroidered on them."

Mitya Kozub escaped by a miracle. This is what he tells:

"I came to the children's home in 1937. We lived quite well, were always well dressed and fed. We were taught there too and we always had enough books, notebooks and pencils... Then things grew bad when the Germans came. Our teachers grew very sad and auntie Nyura, our nurse, was always crying. Then the Germans took auntie Shura who used to teach us singing and we never learned what happened to her. Then one day they came and told us: 'Hurry up and get dressed, we'll take you to another home, in a different place.' I was older than many of the other children and guessed what the Germans were going to do. So I ran away and hid in a field of Indian corn outside the village, to which the Germans took the children. And there I saw... saw everything. The Germans placed their tommy-guns against the children's heads and fired and they dropped into the ditch."

The villagers exhumed the remains of the little martyrs and buried them near the village school. All the villagers gathered near the grave. The guardsmen fired in salute. Mitya Kozub mounted a tank turret which served as a platform. He was bareheaded and the wind ruffled his blonde hair.

"There are little Lyudmila's bones there, and Boris' too... They were my friends, yet I can't recognize them. Soldiers, please don't forget what you've seen here..."

Mitya's voice broke down. With the sleeve of his padded jacket he wiped away the tears, adding:

"Please, don't forget..."

Next to speak was guardsman Fyodor Averin, and his voice was charged with emotion as he said:

"I can't find words, comrades. I've seen many a death in this war, but never anything like this. Only the hitlerite monsters, devoid of any semblance of human beings, of heart and reason, are capable of such humiliation, such torture. In the recent fighting I killed about a hundred Germans, destroyed ten enemy fire-points. But now that I have heard Mitya Kozub, I say: it is not enough, much too little! Listen to me, Mitya: here, before you, before the remains of your little friends, before these women, grandfathers and children, I vow to be even more merciless in the destruction of the German barbarians. For these little bones, Mitya Kozub, Hitler will pay with his black bones. You may depend on us, my boy..."

Guns boomed and the little accuser of fascist Germany, Mitya Kozub, his head bared, stood on the turret of a tank, which shortly afterwards raced into battle obedient to the passionate, wrathful voice of its commander as he ordered:

"Fire at the baby-killers!"

V. DMITRIEV

Ukraine

"WE DOO'D IT"

When taking over a splendid new plane navigator Afanassyev found a typewritten letter in English in the pilot's cockpit:

May 26, 1943

Hi fellow!

I just want to pass along a "hello" to you and say that I'm sorry we didn't have an opportunity to meet. As you have probably noticed by the inscriptions on the nose and tail of this ship, I sort of have an interest in this A-20. . . and so I want to get acquainted with the fellow whose going to guide the destiny of this "roaring rowdy".

I'd like to make a bargain with you, as I'm damned anxious to keep an eye on this ship. If you will write me a bit of a note from time to time, telling me what gives with you and the plane. . . that is what the censors will O.K. . . I'll answer you back by way of the radio. You see, the Raleigh cigarette people have arranged to have the show broadcast overseas by shortwave. So, if you're not too busy on Tuesday nites. . . listen in and we'll have a get-together.

Best of luck to you. . . and I know I don't have to tell you to keep punchin' those heels 'till they're on their heels for good.

You doo'd it!

Red Skelton

California

From a small note written in an unknown hand we learned that Red Skelton, the well known American film comedian often uses the phrase "We doo'd it"—that is what he called the plane he had built and presented to guardsmen airmen of the Baltic Fleet air arm.

"Sounds O.K.," said navigator Afanassyev. "We're Russian, and we'll do it all right in the Russian style."

Red Skelton made no mistake in choosing the recipiants of his plane. The renowned Guards unit to which the plane was detailed was the first to blaze the trail of revenge to fascist Berlin, to Danzig and to Königsberg. From this unit came heroes of the Soviet Union Guards Colonel Preobrazhensky, Guards Major Plotkin, Guards Major Khokhlov, and Guards Captain Grechishnikov. During the war this unit has trained another generation of brilliant fliers. And many of the unit's men were anxious to receive the plane given by an American actor. The commander, however decided to hand it over to the best crew—but which was that? You couldn't have found a finer lot of men if you had hand-picked them, they were all experienced, hard-headed dare-devils. The commander solved the dilemma by putting their names in the hat. Out of it came the crew comprising Guards Captain Pyotr Streletsky, navigator Nikolai Afanassyev and gunner-wireless operator Ivan Trussov, all of whom had been decorated.

"I'm not going to make a speech," said the commander in a matter of fact tone to the crew. "You know as well as I do that the country and the honour of the Soviet officer are dearest of all to us. Go to it, boys. With you are the Russian people, with you are the people of the United States."

Captain Streletsky was radiant.

"We'll go to it, all right, on this little beauty," he said. "We shan't have to blush. I'm not the only one to warrant that, here's my son, Valeri Petrovich, the fourth member of our crew, and we won't let him down!"

He pointed to his map-case. Framed in it was a photograph of Valeri Streletsky, the captain's son, just two years and eight months old. From the frame of his father's map-case he looked calmly and confidently at the crew in action. They had his approval.

And young Valeri had good grounds, for his daddy's Guards air formation had in short time sunk ninety German destroyers, gunboats, mine-sweepers, torpedo motor-boats, tankers, transports, and light-ships, with a total displacement of 342,300 tons. Ninety units of the German fleet had been written off for good while, eight other vessels had been badly damaged. Captain Pyotr Letunovsky, for instance, one of Captain Streletsky's pals, flying with navigator Demchenko, had torpedoed seven vessels one of which was a 15,000 ton transport.

Senior Lieutenant Bunimovich who hails from Vladikavkas, has sunk eight ships, six of them in September. All

six were transports of between 6,000 and 8,000 tons.

Then there's Mikhail Sovetsky. His advent into the world was tough to say the least. He was picked up when a baby by some kind person on the streets of Moscow. His name, Mikhail Alexandrovich Sovetsky was given him in a children's home. He grew up, reached manhood and became steeled at the same time as his young mother—his country, which fostered in him all the finest qualities of a Soviet citizen and man of the forces. He has sunk seven ships with a displacement of 50,000 tons not counting U-boats. He has hunted enemy ships day and night.

Captain Pobedkin has sent six vessels to Davy Jones' locker.

These facts are a warrant that the simple, well equipped, strong and formidable plane Boston A-20 No. 53926, so sensitive to the controls, is in reliable hands. Those same hands have written the following letter from the Baltic to Mr. Skelton:

Dear friend!

I am proud that this formidable, roaring eagle you have presented to the Soviet Union has been entrusted to me. Sincere thanks from the bottom of my heart for this plane.

Your plane Boston A-20-G No. 53926, bearing the devise "We doo'd it" has been handed to my crew who have been in action since the beginning of the war.

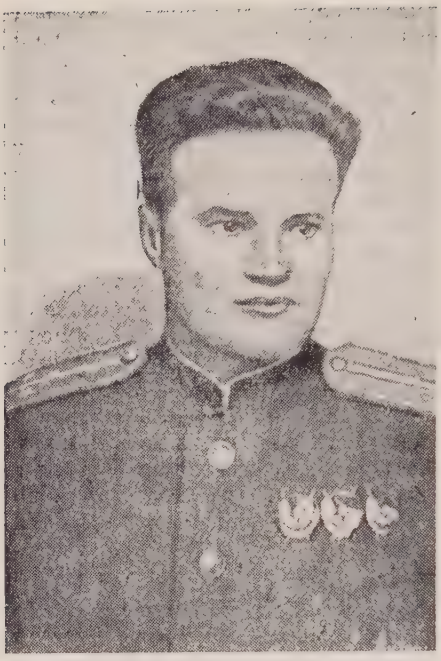
Now that we have received this machine we shall seek the enemy with still greater vigour and persistance so as to destroy him and thereby justify both the great trust placed in us by our command and your hopes.

You too may be proud of this machine on which we have already flown many responsible missions, resulting, among other things, in the sinking of the nazi munitions transports with a total displacement of 10,000 tons.

The crew had to surmount many difficulties before they could deal these knock out blows. The very changeable weather, enemy fighter patrols and heavy flack from the escort vessels calls for a thorough knowledge of the job and determination both on the part of the crews going on such long distance sorties and from the ground staff.

Our navigator is Guards Captain Nikolai Afanassyev, twice decorated with the Order of the Red Banner. Thanks to his exact calculations we arrive at our destination in enemy waters under any conditions and return to base with a victory to report.

Captain Streletsky standing beside his aeroplane



Junior Lieutenant Sovetsky

On board too, we have the liveliest and most fearless of wireless operator-gunners, Guards Sergeant Ivan Trussov, who has been decorated with the Order of the Red Star. He is expert with the machine-gun as attacking enemy fighters have discovered, to their dismay.

With a crew like this, of course, every mission on which the command sends us must be well fulfilled.

On one sortie, while far behind enemy lines, our machine came into heavy flack, but we were not to be stopped by that. The target was ahead and the mission had to be carried out.

Victory was the reward of determination, persistance and reasonable risk.

But, friend, I won't hide it from you: the fuselage and the plane's great wings were riddled with shrapnel. The machine was crippled. Nevertheless we got her back to base. Shell-shattered she became dearer to us than ever.

Thanks to the exceptional efforts of our ground staff, the mechanics and other experts, under the supervision of Engineer Lebedev, your plane was soon air-worthy once more. And so again we are getting our own back on the fascist scum. 'We doo'd it'. We doo'd it as befits Russians and guardsmen, as Baltic sailors. The enemy knows this well. The motto stands out boldly on the fuselage. It is our fighting devise.

Yes, friend, we shall do our utmost to destroy the nazis, our common foe, as soon as possible.

So you might be proud of the men fighting on the plane you have presented to us. We are ready at any minute to fall in battle for the great ideas of progressive, freedom-loving humanity. For our Soviet motherland! For the great leader Stalin!

We send you our photographs, dear friend Skelton, and we ask you to send us yours.

We wish you good health, happiness and success. With a hearty handshake and cordial Baltic greetings

Commander of the Boston A-20-G No. 53926, 'We doo'd it', Guards Captain *Pyotr Fyodorovich Streletsky*

Navigator Guards Captain *Nikolai Fyodorovich Afanassyev*

Radio-operator-gunner Guards Sergeant *Ivan Alexeyevich Trussov*

A great deal that has found no place in the letter might be said of the naval fliers.

What can one write when on active service, when time is short and everyone wants to say as much as possible about the machine? We wrote the letter sitting under the wing of the plane, where the Soviet star is painted. The flying field is blanketted with snow. A heavy layer of sparkling frost rimes the branches of the trees. Mist drifts among the woods, creeps over the wings and the houses, and settles in the hollows; the frost nips hands and face. If I were an artist I would certainly paint the picture for you, in oils. This is certainly not flying weather, but we fly. This weather is our weather. "You go out unnoticed, cover your target unnoticed, and return unnoticed," say the airmen, "and the results are A 1."

The worse the weather the better for us, but disastrous for Fritz. In good weather anyone can fly, but in weather like this, grey, grubby and dim, only experts in blind flying take off. We call them "blind bombers". There, leaning

against a plane, is pilot Razgonin. He has sunk eight German vessels with a total tonnage of 40,000. He hands a letter, just received from Sverdlovsk, to his navigator, Victor Chvanov. He reads it and passes it on to Streletsky.

He, Shamanov and Pyatkov read it in turn. This is what they read in this letter from the depths of the Soviet hinterland:

The Commander of the X Guards Unit.

Dear Major,

Hearty thanks for the honour you have done me in praising my nephew Victor Chvanov. Thank you very much. You have told me such a lot about the courage and gallantry of Victor whom I love like my own son. He is as dear to me as my country. He is the last of the Chvanovs left to me: his mother, father and two sisters were killed by Hitler's foul hangmen. That is why Victor is so bold, vengeance burns in his heart. He could not be otherwise. But Victor has not yet settled his account with green-uniformed Fritzes. He has not yet taken revenge for Nadyusha, his youngest sister, but he will. Four-year-old Nadyusha was burned alive. Words fail me in expressing my bitter hate for monsters who could do that. Besides, words are not what are required: it is steel, tanks, aeroplanes that are required! Only bullets can rid us of the German brigands and sadists. I am overjoyed that Victor has sent about ten fascist ships to the bottom. He has four decorations. How proud I am: now I shall work still harder for the front! I shall try and help you, grand airmen, by my work in the rear. I shall do all I can to help ease my nephew's sufferings for his family. Greetings to Victor's comrades-in-arms. Health and happiness to all.

Sverdlovsk. *K. Budekina*

Somebody said:

"Let's send this letter to Red Skelton as well. Let him read it in California."

The envelope is sealed.

A Baltic mist steals over the snow-covered aerodrome. The engines are started. The formidable and stately machine "We doo'd it" taxis to the start. There, she turns, pauses a second and then tears down the runway. Streletsky takes off nimbly and smoothly and the large Soviet stars on the machine flash above our heads. The plane climbs. It circles three times over the aerodrome and the pilot sets her nose to the west. I start off for the post with this letter—one thought rings in my mind:

"On those wings they will win worthy victory. Bon voyage!"

GRIGORI MIROSHNICHENKO

Engagement Ring *Drawing by V. Fomichov*

THE ORGANIZATION OF SCIENTIFIC WORK AT THE INSTITUTE FOR PHYSICAL PROBLEMS

. . . For many years I was the director of an institute in Cambridge, the centre of English science, so I had a good inside knowledge of the organization of science and research work abroad. When I returned to the Soviet Union and started to work here again I became especially interested in all questions relating to the organization of science in general, and in particular, in relation to the organization of the scientific work of my own institute, where I felt that the methods used in the West could not be unreservedly applied in the Soviet Union. . .

It must be remembered that in our socialist country science occupies a position peculiar to itself. . . Of course it is well known and generally accepted that in other countries science also plays a large part in the cultural and technical progress. But in our country science is regarded as one of the main foundations from which our culture develops and as the guiding agent in the progress of our technique and national economy. Therefore. . . the connection between science and life must be closer and more complete. . .

I shall now try to give you an idea, first, of the general principles of scientific organization to which we adhered when arranging the scientific work at the Institute for Physical Problems, and secondly, what we actually achieved. . .

In the first place, you must remember that our institute is young, only seven—eight years old. In spite of the fact that I was a more or less mature scientist when I returned to the Soviet Union it was difficult to organize an institute without a school or research workers. Therefore it developed much more slowly than if it had been an offshoot from some other institute and had then developed independently from this basis. The choice of personnel was particularly difficult owing to the nature of our work which is connected with strong magnetic fields and low temperatures, fields little developed at that time in the U.S.S.R. During the first few years we were occupied with the training of the research workers and staff of the institute. Its normal growth and expansion could only begin after this kernel had been formed. . . .

What are the problems facing an institute of the Academy of Sciences? I have in view, of course, an institute of physics or, at any rate, an institute dedicated to research work in the field of natural science; the problems and organization of institutes working in other fields of knowledge will, of course, be different. . .

Further, I wish to make it quite clear that I am talking about the organization of an institute belonging to the Academy of Sciences. What is the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R.? It is the headquarters of Soviet science. From my point of view its duty is to be the intellectual, the ideological leader of our entire science, and direct it along healthy channels. . . And this should also be the policy of each separate institute, i.e. each should try to have a leading influence on science in the field in which it works and occupy a place in "greater science"—the science which studies those basic phenomena essential in obtaining the deepest insight into nature. The problem of greater science is to gain the necessary knowledge for remoulding nature in such a way that she can be made to serve mankind and his cultural progress. Therefore the choice of the institute's main theme is exceedingly important; it should correspond to those tendencies in the development of science which are the most promising at the moment and which, in the existing conditions of science, as far as practical possibilities are concerned, will give the most fruitful results and advance the quickest.

In my mind there are three such basic tendencies in physics: research work in the field of low temperatures, in the

field of the atomic nucleus, and lastly, in the field of solid bodies. . .

At the Institute for Physical Problems we study phenomena occurring at low temperatures, in the region of absolute zero. During the last few years the development of research in this field has made one of the biggest advances in physics and many new and fundamental discoveries can be expected in this direction.

The scientific work of our institute is in the hands of a small number of leading scientific workers which ensures concentration round a small group of leading themes and that the main purpose will not be lost sight of. Nothing is so dangerous for the progress of scientific work as when it gets choked up with minor themes, which distract attention from the main problems and goal. The main thematic material of our institute is worked out by three or four scientists so that the main purpose is never lost sight of.

When the general tendency of the work has been decided upon the next most important question is the choice of scientific workers. Real success can only be achieved in greater science by a person of great creative talent and with a creative attitude towards his work. Such workers are few, and it cannot be otherwise, just as there are not many great writers, composers or artists to be found in any country. But those that we have must be given conditions in which their scientific talent can serve the development of greater science to the fullest. Therefore the nucleus of an institute can be formed of only a small number of very carefully selected scientific workers. The institute must be so organized that the resulting conditions allow the scientific workers to give eighty per cent of their time to scientific work and the laboratory and not more than twenty per cent for social work and other duties. Only under such conditions will the scientists be able to work in their own laboratories personally. For it is only when one works in the laboratory oneself, with one's own hands, making experiments, often even doing the purest routine work connected with them, only then can one achieve real results. Good work cannot be accomplished if it is put into somebody else's hands. A person who spends twenty or thirty minutes superintending scientific work cannot be a great scientist. At all events I have never seen or heard of a great scientist who conducted his work in such a way and I think that it is an impossibility. I am sure that, at the very moment a scientist, even the greatest, stops working personally in the laboratory, he not only ceases to progress, he ceases to be a scientist altogether. These principles are very important but they only refer to peace-time. In times of war one has to act differently.

It is most important to impress these principles upon beginners. With this purpose in view I try to organize their work within rather strict limits. For instance, a research worker must not have several themes on hand, especially when he is only just setting out on his career. When he has developed and becomes a mature scientist he may perhaps be able, as a rare exception, to study two or three themes at once, but he must start with one.

The next important factor in the organization of the scientific work to ensure success is that the scientist must only be allowed to work a limited number of hours in the laboratory. To work "voraciously" is harmful, it exhausts and lowers creative power. At our institute all work in the laboratory stops at 6 p.m. The scientists must go home, think over their work, read, study and rest. In exceptional cases, with the assistant director's permission, work can be continued until 8 p.m. Night work is only allowed by the director's special permission and is only justified by the technical demands arising from the special conditions of an experiment. This is the regime observed by the scientific workers of our institute.

But an institute which, judging by the quality of its scientific workers and results, can be considered as capable of becoming a centre of greater science, might still develop into an isolated unit, locked within itself and unable to satisfy those demands which we set ourselves at the beginning, i.e. unable to make its influence on the science and culture of the country really felt.

How can an institute make its influence on the development of the leading science of the country felt? How can it unite itself with the country's other sources of scientific thought? There are many ways of doing this. We shall only mention the most important.

First of all the institute must use those advantages which it automatically possesses as a member of the Academy of

Sciences. The chief of these advantages are a rich, modern technical equipment and the possibility of chosing a strong scientific staff which make scientific work practicable which would not be so in other institutions. For example, our institute has an installation for obtaining liquid helium in large quantities which gives us exceptional opportunities, lacking elsewhere, for carrying out experiments at low temperatures. Taking advantage of this, we offer research workers from other institutes the chance of doing their low temperature research work, which cannot be conducted anywhere else, at our institute. This work is not usually of a leading nature and often stands quite apart from the main work of the institute.

The visits of scientific workers from other institutes are usually arranged in the following way. The candidates are invited to our scientific meeting to report on the experiment which they wish to carry out. A discussion follows, and if the suggestion is of fundamental scientific interest, and the author is sufficiently qualified, he is supplied with every possibility for conducting his work. As the main work of the institute must not be in any way disturbed, the number of such outside workers is not large, usually not more than two or three.

So far, the number of those wishing to work with us in the Soviet Union has been greater than we are capable of accommodating—a sure proof that our institute is in the leading ranks, for other scientific institutions would only want to come into contact with or be interested in the work of a leading academical institute.

The constant visits of scientific workers from other institutions is one of the means of keeping in touch with the outside scientific world. Having finished their work they return to their own institutes not only with the experience resulting from their own experiment but also with a knowledge of the other work going on in our institute, and so our scientific experience penetrates the other scientific institutions of the country. In this way a living contact is kept up and we also learn what other institutes are doing. This living contact is the strongest of all connections and its use is a good method of influencing the development of science in the country.

In the future it will be highly expedient to arrange such a living contact between Soviet and foreign scientists. During the first few years of the existence of our institute scientists from abroad came to visit us. But latterly political circumstances have become so complicated that, although there were those who wished to come, contact with foreign countries was completely severed and all such plans had to be postponed. But of course, such contact must be regarded as a normal and healthy working condition of any academical institute as all the science in the world consists of one indivisible whole. If an academical institute claims a leading place it must be such that it can inspire a desire to work within its walls in scientists not only of its own country, but those of other countries also. This would be an objective proof that greater science was being conducted in the institute.

There is another method by means of which our leading academical institutes can influence the science and culture of our country. That is, the training of scientists.

Only the institute itself can train its own scientific staff and should pay the greatest attention to the nurturing of the young. Therefore the post-graduate students organization must be supported and welcomed in every way possible. But here certain difficulties arise upon which I should like to dwell.

The first difficulty is in the selection of the post-graduate students. . . When present at their examinations I usually observed that the university professors preferred those students who knew the most rather than those who understood the most. Now science needs people who, first and foremost, understand. Therefore the selection of students from the universities for post-graduate studentship from the examination data is very difficult. For the successful selection of post-graduates they must be kept under observation for some time while doing work on which they can show their creative fibre and independence of thought. . .

The method of selection employed at our institute during the last two or three years before the outbreak of the war was as follows:

As we had more liquid helium for the conducting of experiments at low temperatures than all the rest of the cryogenic laboratories of the world put together we were able to organize a practical course, through which every student studying

physics at the Moscow University had to pass. At first this course was organized for the best students only, but during the last two pre-war years all the students, without exception, were included, and each one carried out two-three laboratory experiments with liquid helium. From the point of view of criogenic laboratories this is a tremendous luxury, as even in the Leyden and other laboratories work with liquid helium is still regarded as difficult of access, even for scientists, and in our institute every student of the Moscow University was able to make experiments on such problems as the properties of superconductors and to study magnetic phenomena at temperatures approximating to absolute zero, etc. It is only natural that the university should have welcomed such a chance and eagerly sent us their students.

As the course progressed a certain system was gradually established. The students who showed up best were noted, and if they wished, were allowed to do more than the three set experiments. The scientific workers superintending the course gave the students advice and the best were sent to me. In this way we were able to note the most talented students and get into close contact with them when still in their third year and keep an eye on them. Further, we invited the best of them to come to the institute for practice, then they were allowed to take part in the research work. They were regarded as junior laboratory assistants, helped our scientific workers, wrote down the experimental data during the experiments and arranged the simpler apparatuses, etc. The selection of post-graduate students was then made from amongst the practicing students with regard to their work at the institute. Of course, such a method of selecting young scientists enables one to embrace a wider circle and to eliminate the element of chance.

At this point our experiment was cut short by the outbreak of war. But if we had been able to continue we should have developed it along the following lines: on finishing their post-graduate course and getting their degree these young scientists would have gone to other scientific institutions and so spread the scientific experience obtained at our institute. Further, it is not too much to expect that one out of ten or one out of fifty would prove to be sufficiently talented as to be

Academician P. Kapitza

taken on our permanent staff. Thus the institute would have grown.

Such a method of observing the students right from the university desk, carefully and continually verifying their talent, is, in my opinion, the only right way of selecting young scientific workers. In this work no strength should be spared, not only because these young scientists are our future but because they are our present. And as one gets older it is only these young people, one's own students who can save one from premature fossilization. Every student in his own field, as a matter of course, knows more than his teacher. And who can teach his teacher better than his own pupils?! The teacher with his experience directs the work, but in the long run, as the teacher teaches his pupils they deepen his knowledge and widen his mental outlook. Without pupils the scientist usually decays very quickly as a creator and ceases to advance. I shall never forget the words of mygreat teacher Rutherford: "Kapitza," he said, "you know, it is only thanks to my pupils that I feel young myself." And now that I am approaching old age too, I feel that the society of young people is the modus vivendi that saves one from withering away, that keeps one alive and interested in everything

new and progressive in science. You see, conservatism in science is worse for a scientist than premature death, for it holds back the development of science.

Now let us pass on to another important means of contact between the scientific work of an institute and the outside world which, it seems to me, is unjust to ignore not only in scientific institutes but also in the Academy of Sciences as a whole. And that is the propagation of science. We talk a lot about the popularization of science implying by this its popularization for the masses, but somehow we are not used to the thought that there is another sort of scientific propaganda. Every big scientific achievement, every step forward in science can not only be popularized (and this is not necessarily the business of the scientist) but it can be propagated, and this is the business of the scientist. He must point out the significance of his work to his colleagues, explain the role it is destined to play in science and show how it can influence the development of scientific thought, of our philosophic outlook, technique, etc. The propaganda of science is not simply scientific thought put into simple words. It is a creative process; therefore it is not at all clear or easy to imagine or explain to others how such and such a scientific achievement can influence the development of science, technique and culture as a whole. . . Our propagandist work was carried out by lecturing in scientific institutions, by inviting research workers from other institutes to attend our scientific meetings, discussing problems with them touching on fields of science contiguous with our own, etc.

Such forms of contact between science and life are unorganized and only a matter of chance in the scientific institutes of our country. The result of this is, that the influence of one branch of science on another is held up, and the penetration of scientific achievements into the life of the country is delayed. The training of scientific propagandists and the organization of their work must be seriously thought about. I always try to encourage the widest possible discussion of all scientific work, and not only do I not restrain scientific arguments when they arise at scientific meetings but on the contrary, consider it a good thing to incite them to really argue properly. All discussion of scientific work should be welcomed. The more arguments the more contradictions arise, the more heated they are the greater their stimulating influence on the healthy development of scientific thought. True to this principle our institute contributed, I think, more than any other to the meetings of the Physico-Mathematical Department of the Academy of Sciences.

Now we shall come to one of the most important forms of the influence of scientific work on culture—its influence on the development of progressive technique and industry.

What organizational form should the influence of science on our technique and national economy take in our socialist country? This question is often deliberated and is the most crucial of all. . . I think we often vulgarize the connection between science and technique and its understanding. Many hold that all scientific work must have an immediate and direct outlet in the technical field, and they judge the work of a scientific institute according to the concrete help which its scientific work has given some branch or other of industry. This, of course, is not right. Such an attitude is naive and leads to a harmful simplification. The most superficial glance at the history of science and culture shows that all greater science infallibly has an influence, not only on technique, but on the whole background of our lives. It is perfectly clear that only owing to the fundamental work and discoveries of Faraday were such absolutely new forms of the weapons of human culture, such as the dynamo, the telephone, etc., made possible. But it is also obvious that it is quite useless to insist that the Faradays should themselves make the telephones and dynamos. Faraday had no engineering turn of mind and the industry of his day was not ready to embody all his ideas. This was done some tens of years later by Bell, Siemens, Edison and other great engineers. There are many such examples. But the fact that Faraday did not apply his ideas to technique himself in no way belittles his great discovery of the laws governing the properties of electrical currents. . .

The question of the connection be-

tween science and technique is most complicated. When an ordinary engineer calculates the braking of a bogie-truck or the durability of a building he uses the laws of mechanics given by Newton. When a patent expert rejects the regular "most promising" proposition for a perpetual motion engine he has the law of the conservation of energy to back him up which was discovered by Mayer. When an engineer comes to a scientist for advice and asks him, either to explain certain phenomena arising in the processes of production, or show him how to calculate some mechanism or other, it is also an important form of the connection between science and technique. All this happens every day in all sorts of different circumstances and in hundreds of different places. But it is so usual that we do not even talk about it. We do not feel it and set very little value on it. Nevertheless this is one of the most powerful means of scientific influence on technique and industry. . .

For instance, our military technique, as Stalin has often said, is equal to, and in many cases better than, that of our enemy. What is this due to? Why, of course, in the first place to the existence of our greater science and our scientists who are influencing our technique in a number of invisible ways.

To what, for example, is the high level of our metallurgy due? In the first place to Chernov and all his pupils and to those scientific traditions belonging to metallurgy which they elaborated for many years. Of course, we have much to thank the engineers for. They were able to understand and extract everything they needed from greater science created by the founders of our science of metallurgy. But without Chernov, Kurnakov and their followers our metallurgy would not have given us the indispensable good steel for making the weapons with which our army is armed; there could not have been such good armour plate as we are making; and without it the designers would be powerless to make us first class tanks.

Let us take another example—our aviation. What does it owe its progress to? Without Zhukovsky, Chaplygin and their school it could not have developed. But Chaplygin would never have been able to design an aeroplane or even draw its outline. He was a great mathematician. Just as his teacher Zhukovsky was a genius who laid the foundations of the aerodynamics of flight. The whole world bows before Zhukovsky for the discovery of the fundamental theorem on which are based the calculations for the wing profile of an aeroplane. It was thanks to this discovery that the lifting power of the wing was first understood. But what would have been the good of asking Zhukovsky to calculate these aeroplanes? His theory is like a beautiful apple tree which he planted and from which apples will be picked for many generations to come by those who build aeroplanes. . .

From this general introduction I shall now pass on to concrete examples of our institute's connection with technique. At first glance, what I have to say may appear contradictory to what I have just said. But this contradiction is due to chance circumstances—the fact that besides being a scientific worker, I am also an engineer. But this accidental circumstance should not be regarded as a general rule. . .

In 1930, or thereabouts, our technical press published a most lively discussion about a very important question—the wide application of oxygen in industry and its possible influence on modern technique. A number of interesting papers and calculations made by our leading engineers showed what an enormous influence cheap oxygen would have on industry. There was a particularly interesting one on ferrous metals: furnace alloys, the making of steel in an oxygen blast. Underground gasification and intensification of several chemical industries etc., were also discussed. All these tempting and interesting dreams depended on large quantities of cheap oxygen. Methods for obtaining these large quantities of oxygen were simultaneously suggested and discussed. I took a great interest in this material and paid special attention to certain papers with obvious mistakes. I began to think out different possibilities for obtaining the cheapest oxygen. According to modern physical conceptions it was possible to show it would be cheapest to get the oxygen from the air, where it is in a free state. Further, it was possible to show that the cheapest way of getting oxygen, taking into

account the present level of technique, would be by liquifying air and then expanding it. Oxygen and nitrogen can be obtained by expanding liquid air just as alcohol can be obtained by the distillation of a liquid mixture of water and alcohol. And then it could also be shown from general scientific conclusion, that with the modern apparatuses for obtaining liquid air the efficiency was not more than 10—15 per cent and that the liquefaction and rectification cycle was over-complicated. Further it was possible to show how a cycle nearer the ideal might be affected. I was able to show that the surest way of simplifying and cheapening these processes for obtaining oxygen in large quantities was to give up the idea of the piston refrigerating engines and use rotation—the turbine. It is an interesting point that although the idea of building a cooling turbine was suggested as early as 1890 by Rayleigh it had never been successfully carried out in spite of several attempts. It was possible to show theoretically the probable cause of error in these attempts, and how to avoid them. All this theoretical work was very interesting and of course was the work of the scientist.

Having arrived at these results I passed them on to the engineers and pointed out what path, in my opinion, should be taken in order to develop a new technique for producing cheap oxygen. They told me straight that the professor was indulging in a little fancy, that it was too unreal, too far from their present conceptions. In other words our technical thought was not ripe to accept these new ideas.

Actually, as a pure scientist, I might have stopped here, published my results and waited until technique was ripe enough to embody them. I should have had the right to stop, after completing the theoretical work, if I had not happened to be an engineer myself, if, I will not hide it, I had not been seized with the zeal of an engineer. I had been told that the ideas which I had put forward as a scientist were too unreal. I decided to take a step forward.

Within $1^1/_2$—2 years I built a machine for obtaining liquid air on these new principles at our institute, and the general theoretical plan was proved in practice. The machine was handed over to industry for its further practical development. . .

But no time was wasted. The institute often did the work that we had counted on industrial organizations doing for us. From the liquid air machine we went on to build a new cycle for obtaining liquid oxygen. We continued to try out our theory and obtained liquid oxygen by means of a turbine. We also made experiments to find out how many hours the machine could work without stopping and under what conditions it would have to work in the factory. Therefore, although the oxygen machine worked under institute conditions, it was not advisible to assume too early that it had already developed into an industrial concern. . .

Working in conjunction with factories taught us a lot. It showed us that industry possesses creative engineers and that there is a demand for a new technique. From our very first steps the work on oxygen met with the help, support and interest of the government. We were eagerly met half way in all our attempts and it was only owing to this that we were able to go forward. The only thing that held us up was the organization of the factories which is not able to adapt itself quickly and easily to new ideas in technique. However, I have no doubt that with our economic system it will not be difficult to find new organizational forms by means of which the embodiment and development of progressive ideas in technique would be smooth and quick, and would open up enormous possibilities for the influence of science on industry. But these forms still have to be found.

The war has increased the country's need for oxygen. We must roll up our sleeves and, exerting every effort, set about making our machine on an industrial scale ourselves, studying the problems of durability and continuous exploitation. This we did in Kazan after the evacuation of the institute. On the basis of the Kazan experience and draughts a large industrial machine is being urgently built under the guidance of, and together with, the institute which will be turned to industrial exploitation.

The war, and the future post-war period of national economical problems, renders the question of oxygen a very

pressing one. We must act energetically and use all those possibilities which our method of obtaining oxygen has opened up for industry. . .

For the time being, Kapitza the scientist has had to give way to Kapitza the engineer. As an engineer I tried to set up an industrial organization which would be able to assimilate and introduce new scientific ideas. . .

All this, of course, does not contradict what I said at the beginning. It is quite by chance that I am able to work as a scientist and as an engineer. I am not the only case of a man having two professions. Borodin the composer was also a chemist; but it must not be considered the rule and held up as an example. Nobody insists that a singer should always be his own accompanyist; and in the same way we should not insist on scientists seeking the practical application of their scientific work to industry. Some scientists have the necessary engineering bent and then, of course, this happy chance should be made use of. But if this is not the case only much harm can be done by urging a man to do what he is not capable of doing. Take, for example, Acad. N. N. Semyonov. Semyonov's work on chain reactions and combustion is one of the most brilliant and progressive works produced in the Soviet Union. The theory of combustion, the theory of explosions and the theory of detonation resulting from his work and that of his school, has a colossal influence on the modern development of internal combustion engines, explosives and many other branches of technique, which is acknowledged everywhere. Here and abroad, everywhere where the processes of combustion are studied Semyonov's name has a fundamental significance. But if Semyonov tried to build an internal combustion engine himself, or even direct such work, nothing would come of it, and his time and strength would be distracted from greater science where he has proved himself to be such a virtuoso. We value Semyonov as a great Russian scientist and he is the pride of our theoretical thought. His work in the field of theoretical chemistry will be valued for many generations to come.

If the vocalist be not able to accompany his own songs why encourage him to do so? But it must be confessed that our industry does not pay much attention to the training of personnel for the practical realization of new, leading technique. . .

In the Soviet Union we have exceptional facilities for realizing scientific influence to the full; but we must not be too primitive in the manner in which we solve these problems. . .

Our greater science already has a bigger influence on our technique and life than we usually imagine. This influence is made feasable owing to the ever developing traditions created by greater science and its connection with our life and industry through innumerable invisible fibres. It must be remembered that without the traditions of greater science, the foundations of which were already laid by our scientists in the time of Lomonossov, we should have had no good cannons, strong armour plate, or fast aeroplanes though in fact not one of our scientists from the Academy can calculate an aeroplane or shoot from a cannon.

We do not yet understand all the possibilities at our disposal in our country, that force which brings our science and life so close together and all those possibilities which the Soviet government offers scientific work. We do not yet know how to use to the full that great freedom which exists in our country for the development of scientific thought. . .

We have been called to a great work in a great country and we must be the first to value and respect that work and see that it develops.

From a shorthand report of an address by P. L. KAPITZA

A HISTORIAN OF THE PEOPLE'S STRUGGLE

In Memory of Yemelyan Yaroslavsky

Academician Yemelyan Yaroslavsky, who died in December 1943 at the age of sixty-seven, was one of a galaxy of outstanding Russian historians and at the same time a most popular public figure in the Soviet Union.

As a youth of twenty, Yaroslavsky entered the revolutionary struggle, and very early came to the conclusion that the success of this struggle depended on the conscious attitude of the masses of people to their situation, on their understanding of the great idea of freedom in the name of which the Bolshevik Party was leading the revolutionary movement of the peoples in Russia.

In his boyhood Yaroslavsky was extremely interested in science, for which he showed capabilities distinctly above the average. But living under the conditions of tsarist oppression, he did not feel that he had the right to shut himself up in his study, cut off from life and the struggle. When he was already a "professional revolutionary", however, even in his most difficult and arduous years as he wandered through the towns of Russia carrying out his energetic propagandist and organizational work, Yaroslavsky still found time to devote to scientific study. He was particularly attracted by ethnographical, geographical and historical questions.

Like many of the fighters for freedom, Yaroslavsky's revolutionary work alternated with more or less regular spells of imprisonment. But here too he wasted no time, lightening the hard prison life by study. For example, he utilized his involuntary leisure to learn many foreign languages, which in turn enabled him to become acquainted with the best foreign scientific literature and belles-lettres. Using a method worked out by himself, Y. Yaroslavsky studied foreign languages without a teacher, perfecting himself by means of painstaking translations into Russian of the best works of foreign literature. In this way he learned French, German, English, Italian, Spanish, Swedish and Japanese. At the same time he studied several languages of the peoples of Russia. Here he made use of another method—meeting people of various nationalities in prison, Yaroslavsky taught his comrades Russian, at the same time learning from them their languages.

Yaroslavsky was in exile until 1917, returning to Moscow after the February Revolution. Here this talented scientist and tribune of the people won for himself the affection and respect of the general public. In 1937 the people of Omsk region, Siberia, where he had lived and worked before the Revolution, elected him as their deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.

While carrying on his many-sided state and public work, Yaroslavsky at the same time played a leading part in the scientific life of the country, particul-

arly in the sphere of history. It was along this path that he was able to combine, organically and indissolubly, theory with practice, science with politics, and a strictly objective historic knowledge with his characteristic enthusiasm in disseminating the ideas for which he had fought since his youth.

In one of the last articles he wrote, Yaroslavsky formulated the direction of Soviet historical science as follows: "The historical science of the U.S.S.R. should be just as militant as every other science. It is not defence against the fascist mongrels who falsify history, but attack, advance that should fill the historian's work in the U.S.S.R."

Not defence, but attack—is the slogan of Yaroslavsky in science. He makes it his aim to smash everything which hinders the victory of the most progressive ideas, and it was thoroughly in keeping with Yaroslavsky's own temperament. He was attracted by spheres of knowledge which were either completely untouched, or where new paths had to be beaten out, and all past achievements revised.

Yaroslavsky's creative method as a historian had the most fruitful influence on the development of science and the training of young scientists.

In his scientific investigations, which are based on a rich foundation of the latest and most convincingly documentary material taken from original sources, Yaroslavsky never takes up the position of the impartial observer, but openly arrays himself against the enemies of progress, against the falsification of progressive science, defending it from attack or distortion.

All concrete historical questions he raises to the heights of theory and principle.

Yaroslavsky has done much towards the study of those epochs which show most distinctly the historically progressive role of the working class in Russia. As a historian he is an authority on the subject of the proletarian movement in Russia, of that struggle for freedom which brought the people to the formation of a state of a new type—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. He is the author of the biographies of Lenin and Stalin, the leaders of the Bolshevik Party, most widely read in the Soviet Union. These biographies, written in a lively, popular style, have been translated into a number of foreign languages.

During the last years of his life Yaroslavsky took up a special study of the lives and work of Marx and Engels. He dreamed of writing an extensive work on the role of Marx and Marxism in Russia, and for this purpose had collected a great amount of material. Death cut this work short when it was nearing completion. In *Herald of a New World*, written on the eve of his death, and devoted to the sixtieth anniversary of the death of Karl Marx, Yaroslavsky gave a concise program of his investigations of the role of Marx and Marxism in Russia. Referring to Marx' native land, Germany, Yaroslavsky wrote in this article with grief and indignation:

"In Marx' native country his great teachings were vulgarized by the German social-democrats, who considered themselves the spiritual successors to Marx... Nobody did so much to vulgarize, distort the great teachings of Marx as opportunists such as Bernstein, renegades such as Kautsky, and others like them. It was they who prepared the way for the rule of the most reactionary imperialists, the German fascists, Hitler's party. In Marx' native land the fascists have been slaughtering for ten years. The house in Trier, where Karl Marx was born and lived, where the first revolutionary ideas came into his youthful mind, has been swept from the face of the earth. The great works of his brain have been consigned to the flames in Germany and the countries occupied by the Hitlerites. Hundreds of thousands of his pupils have been tortured and killed. The German fascists think that by this they have destroyed Marxism. Miserable pigmies, rulers of an hour! They have succeeded in sullying half of Europe, but only the blind can fail to see that of the hitlerite party nothing will remain, except the memory of its hideous crimes, the bloodstained tracks of the invasion of this brown plague. But Marxism lives on and will live on, a great teaching assisting humanity to create a system which will ensure a joyful existence for all people." *(Historical Journal*, No. 3—4, 1943, Moscow.)

Yaroslavsky made an especially intensive study of the history of the working class movement in Russia, and its leading role in the bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1905, the February Revolution

of 1917 and the October Socialist Revolution. In a number of published works, as well as in lectures and speeches on the revolution of 1905, Yaroslavsky, first and foremost, worked out, on the basis of a tremendous amount of archive material, a detailed picture of the first Russian revolution, particularly the armed uprising of December 1905. His big monograph, *The December Uprising of 1905*, written for the twentieth anniversary celebration of these events, is still the best work on the first Russian revolution. Yaroslavsky devoted considerable time to a study of the liberation movement amongst the armed forces of tsarist Russia. Yaroslavsky showed that 1905 was the year of "awakening" of the mass of Russian soldiers and sailors, who later played such a heroic part in the overthrow of tsarism.

Yaroslavsky's works on the history of the October Revolution of 1917 and the Civil War in Russia are likewise based on extensive factual material, and depict this revolution as the outcome of the whole struggle for freedom of the Russian people, as an expression of its basic interests and century-old hopes. . . In his *From the Great Utopia to the Great Socialist October Revolution*, Yaroslavsky showed the importance of the ideological movement of the Russian proletariat for the advance of human progress in general.

Yaroslavsky wrote about five hundred historical works running into many thousands of pages.

In 1939 he was elected an acting member of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. From that time onwards, he became the generally recognized leader of Soviet historical science. He became the editor of *The Historian-Marxist*, the main magazine of Soviet historians, and later of the *Historical Journal*. His opinions on general historical questions, principles and methods, were heeded by all Soviet historians. In one of his articles Yaroslavsky mentions the assistance accorded to the historians by the Soviet public and the leaders of the Soviet state, especially J. Stalin. "If we collect all the directions," said Yaroslavsky, "given on historical subjects by Stalin, Zhdanov, Molotov, and Kirov, we shall have a whole program for the development of historical science in the U.S.S.R., touching upon all the key questions."

He emphasizes the fruitfulness of the discussion and criticism to be found on the "historical front", which prove that Soviet historians are not inclined to content themselves with what has already been achieved, but aim at a science which does not lag behind life. But, wrote Yaroslavsky, "the French say: 'La critique est aisée—l'art est difficile.'" It is necessary to carry out a number of new Marxist-Leninist investigations in the realm of history. Of particular importance is work on the Soviet period of our country's history and in general, the modern epoch of world history.

Among these problems which still call for a tremendous amount of work, Yaroslavsky included questions connected with the study of the past history of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. "In Moscow, in the Ukraine, in Azerbaijan, in Kazakhstan, textbooks are being compiled on the history of the peoples." This work should be developed in all the republics of the Soviet Union. "A really scientific history of the various peoples can be compiled only with the participation of historians" organically connected with the nationality in question. In particular it is necessary "to revive the most valuable memorials to the epos of a people and carry on extensive work on the numerous manuscripts connected with the history of the peoples of the U.S.S.R."

Yaroslavsky advised historians to conduct the same intensive study of questions connected with the Slav peoples. Historical science in the U.S.S.R. can and must ensure the formation within the country of a scientific centre of Slav research. "It is sufficient to glance at the map of Europe and note the changes which have taken place in recent times, it is sufficient to consider the conditions under which historians of the Slav countries must work, in order to understand that the only country in which a really scientific study of the history of the Slav peoples is ensured, the country in which the greatest Slav forces are concentrated, is the U.S.S.R. We have all the conditions for the creation of such a centre of Slav research—a wealth of printed material and manuscripts, and a large number of famous scientists. It is necessary to attract the young, post-graduates to this work as well."

Yaroslavsky placed a very definite emphasis on the necessity of work on

military history and the history of military science. In particular he called for work on the question of just and unjust wars.

Yaroslavsky pointed out the necessity of a critical approach to the characteristics and evaluation of wars both in our own country and foreign lands, at all times. He pointed out that now, when important cadres of military experts have developed, masters of the theory of historical materialism, serious work on the history of wars and military art might be expected. In particular, historians working on military subjects should produce Marxist works on the history of wars.

There are a number of interesting works on questions of the history of culture and social thought in the U.S.S.R.; in particular, Yaroslavsky wrote, on the theatre, architecture, painting, and several other branches of art and science. For the most part, however, they have been written by art research workers. Now, as Yaroslavsky pointed out, historians should "have a weighty word to say" in this sphere.

Yaroslavsky wrote his program articles when the Soviet Union was still at peace. But even at that time Yaroslavsky noted the tenseness of the international situation and emphasized that nothing could hinder Soviet historians from developing their scientific activity, even though many of them might have to exchange the pen for the rifle.

"We must work with tenfold energy on the great scientific tasks facing the historical front. In our own sphere we are doing our duty towards Socialist society confident that this is the best way of doing our duty towards progressive mankind."

These prophetic words have been fully justified during the war days.

In the tense and grim months of the summer of 1942, when the German-fascist hordes in the course of their summer offensive pressed on the Volga, Yaroslavsky, with his usual confidence and enthusiasm, wrote his military articles elucidating the character and tasks of the Great National War. In those days Yaroslavsky again undertook the determination of the most immediate tasks of historical science in the U.S.S.R.

"There can be no doubt," wrote Yaroslavsky, "that like all working people in the U.S.S.R. scientists and historians in this country fully recognize the importance of the first and main task—the defeat of Hitler Germany. They are doing everything to make the historical scientific front just as militant as all other fronts. For this, the historians' work must acquire that political alertness demanded by the times, that force of scientific objectivity and historical truth which convinces and subjugates, and at the same time brightly illuminates the road to victory by examples from the past. Historical science must be just as militant as every other science in the U.S.S.R. Not defence against the fascist mongrels who falsify history, but attack, advance—this is what should fill the historian's work in the U.S.S.R. The carrying out of such work at the present period can be a sharp weapon in the struggle against Hitler Germany, in the fight for the complete defeat of fascism and against every reaction."

He demanded that historians in the U.S.S.R., arming themselves with the experience of all past wars, assist the peoples of the Soviet Union by their historical work to realize more profoundly the liberating character of the just war being waged by the Soviet people against Hitler Germany, and the noble, exalted aims of this war. He demanded that they make preparations for the first work on the history of the National War, the history of the defence of Moscow and other heroic cities. Preparatory work along this line should be carried on by Soviet historians everywhere, at the front and in the rear. The history of the National War is not only the history of the movements of military units, of advance and retreat, victory and defeat; it is not only the history of the partisan warfare waged in the enemy rear. It is also the history of the many-sided work and the common activity of all parts of front and rear which firmly unites the people and ensures victory.

What he considered to be a particularly important task was the thorough exposure of fascism, its predatory imperialist essence, its reactionary "ideology", inimical to all humane ideas.

Historians should expose the fascist falsifiers of history who strive to depict the history of Germany in the spirit of "Deutschland über Alles", and especially to represent Germany as the originator of the Russian state and the builder of

Russia, as the cultural founder of world civilization. In opposition to these insolent and ridiculous ravings of the fascists, all progressive historians should help the peoples to realize that Germany, and particularly the Prussian junkers and the German imperialists, are a factor of international reaction, the strangers of liberation movements, and the instigators of international conflicts.

Reckoning up the results and noting the prospects of the work of Soviet historians under the conditions of the Great National War, Yaroslavsky called upon historians to follow the traditions of humanism and true patriotism, which is a stranger to all race exclusiveness.

"The work of Soviet historians, whatever period it covers, must be imbued with one idea: it must educate the peoples of the U.S.S.R. in the spirit of love of their common country, which they founded in October 1917, for their native land, dear to the working people of the whole world; they must strengthen the feeling of friendship and brotherhood between the peoples of the U.S.S.R.; they, like all our science and literature, must supply the inoculation against any trace of race hatred, against the slightest remnant of the reactionary past in the consciousness of people."

These words reflect the noble views of a humanist and scientist, a friend of the people, a sincere advocate of progressive science. His untimely death is an irretrievable loss to Soviet science.

ANNE PANKRATOVA

ON THE BRINK OF THE ABYSS

"There has never been a case in the history of war when the enemy leapt into the abyss of his own accord. To win the war we must drive the enemy to the precipice and throw him over."

J. Stalin, *Order of the Day* February 23, 1944

Drawn by Kukryniksy

BOOKS AND WRITERS

A NOVEL ABOUT XVIII CENTURY RUSSIA

From the semicircular wood engraving big dark eyes look searchingly. Their gaze, quiet, intent, a little sad perhaps, radiates intelligence and will. The strong soldier's hand grips the chain that shackles it. . . This is one of the earliest portraits of Yemelyan Pugachov, leader of the greatest Russian peasant revolt of the XVIII century.

Quite a number of excellent portraits of Pugachov, painted or engraved by his contemporaries, have come down to us; but we are much less fortunate as regards literature dealing with this hero of the people.

After Pushkin's story *The Captain's Daughter*, where the character of Pugachov is sketched in brilliant strokes, writers of diverse gifts and outlooks have many times endeavoured to portray this complex and contradictory personality. But almost all these attempts have fallen far short of the mark. Most of the writers were lacking in a knowledge of the epoch and in the ability to fathom its singular peculiarities, and instead of a great figure of the people, a man of iron will and indomitable courage, there emerged from the pages of these pseudo-historical novels the fantastic figure of a wild adventurer and buffoon.

Vyacheslav Shishkov's new novel *Yemelyan Pugachov* at last gives readers an historically truthful, vivid and integral portrait of Pugachov.

We see why this Cossack cavalry cornet became the leader of a vast rebellion, we recognize in him characteristics which have continually recurred in the history of the Russian people as genuinely national traits: ineradicable love of freedom, soldierly courage, warm heartedness and keen wit.

The first parts of the novel came out in the Leningrad journal *Literary Contemporary*, and were published later as a separate volume.

Pugachov's childhood, playing at war, lording it over the village youngsters, forms the prologue to the novel; then the writer at once carries the action into Prussia, whither the Seven Years' War took Yemelyan Pugachov along with the Russian troops.

The battle of Gross-Jägersdorf, the capitulation of Königsberg; the engagement at Kunersdorf, where Friedrich II's army, reputed invincible, was utterly routed, this was the military school in which Yemelyan received his training.

This experience of warfare was later of great use to Pugachov, cornet in Field-Marshal Rumyantsev's army, one of the attackers in the storm of the fortress of Bendery. By the way, it was here that Pugachov first learned of his resemblance to Peter III, the late tsar.

Years passed, Pugachov settled down in the village Izhorskaya of the Don Cossack troops, and soon after the Don Cossacks elected him their chief and sent him with a petition to St. Petersburg.

The tsarist government saw a dangerous enemy in this intercessor for the people. Persecution and imprisonment began. The tsar's henchmen tried to discredit Pugachov in the eyes of the people by presenting him as a criminal. As is known, Pugachov countered his powerful and treacherous enemy by a bold military ruse without which he, a simple Cossack, would never have been able to get far in the serfdom Russia of the XVIII century, where the commoner had no rights. In the Urals, not far from the township of Yaïtsk, Pugachov declared himself to be tsar Peter III.

Describing the scenes of Yemelyan Ivanovich's "appearing before the people" Shishkov scouts the notion that Pugachov tried to impose a "cunning deception" on those around him, and so forth. Pugachov did not hide from the first envoys of the Cossacks the fact that he was a simple Cossack himself; but nonetheless the envoys hailed him as their tsar.

The tsarist officials sought the "runaway vagabond" Pugachov and did not know that no such vagabond existed in Russia, "but there was, under the name of Pyotr Fyodorovich III, the redoubtable leader of a revolt, Yemelyan Ivanovich Pugachov. By the will of the people he existed, by their will he acted".

With these words Shishkov concluded the first volume of his novel. We now have before us fifteen chapters of the second, the final volume.

"An historical narrative" is the new subtitle the author has given his work. His style is more severe than in the first volume, the historical background of the story still wider. Vyacheslav Shishkov's book is growing into a vast panorama of the epoch.

The content of the chapters of the second volume so far published may be briefly summarized in the famous words of Pushkin's *History of Pugachov*.

"The whole of the common folk were for Pugachov," wrote the poet-historian. "The clergy wished him well, not only the priests and monks, but the bishops and higher church dignitaries as well. The aristocracy alone were openly on the side of the government. . . The class of clerks and officials was still small in numbers and unquestionably belonged to the common people. The same may be said of the officers who had risen from the ranks."

It is just this popular character of the movement led by Yemelyan Pugachov which is so skilfully conveyed in the novel.

Pugachov was not only fully aware of the magnitude of the task he had undertaken in leading great masses of rebels of many different nationalities, but he grudged nothing, even life itself, to carry into effect "the will of those who sent him". His manifestoes about land and freedom were a programme for the complete emancipation of the serfs. The pages describing how these manifestoes were drawn

Yemelyan Pugachov

Drawing by E. Higer

up, and how they were put into effect, are the best in the novel. The figure of Pugachov grows in stature: yesterday he was but a spontaneous rebel, today an able leader and diplomat, a wise law-giver, able in his "mandates" to the people to utilize both his own personal experience and the knowledge of such adherents who had deserted from the government camp such as the Cossack captain, Padurov.

Pugachov's army, like that of Stepan Razin before it, was made up of many nationalities. In the struggle against serfdom Bashkirs, Tatars and Kirghizians, to whom Pugachov was bringing emancipation from feudal oppression, rose under his banner together with the Don and Ural Cossacks.

And Pugachov himself did not underestimate the part played by the non-Russian peoples in the revolt he had raised.

Once Yemelyan happened to hear some Cossacks who remembered old times talking about whether he did not take the "infidels" too much to his heart. Pugachov summoned the malcontents to him and said:

"As we be united in one sovereign Russia, so every tribe must be of one colour and order. Strike whatever finger you may with an axe, the whole hand hurts. To the hand all the fingers be alike, and so be all the peoples to your tsar."

Pugachov's army besieged Orenburg. By roads great and small, by highways and forgotten tracks, the news spread throughout the length and breadth of Russia of great things afoot among the people of Orenburg, of Pugachov who promised "to put an end to all the blood-sucker-landlords in Russia, to give their lands to the peasants and take all the common folk into his grace."

It is curious that for a long time St. Petersburg knew nothing of the defeat of Kar's troops by the followers of Pugachov, nor of the siege of Orenburg, nor of the other redoubtable successes of the "domestic enemy" as the Empress Catherine termed Pugachov. But when at last the first news of the victories of the "brigand" reached Catherine's palace, there was terrific consternation. Immediately there were sittings of the War Council, the fitting out of a military expedition under General-in-chief Bibikov, exhortatory manifestoes from the Empress to the people, a solemn ceremonial anathemization of the "malefactor" by the clergy of Kazan. Meanwhile the country was shaken to its foundations, the peasant uprisings swept across the Volga, threatening the central provinces.

The importance of the part played in the Pugachov rebellion by the serf-workers of the Ural manufactories is well known. Skilled Ural workmen cast for Pugachov's army guns of a new type as yet unknown to the tsarist generals. Pugachov's envoy Khlopusha declared to the Urals work folk that the tsar had commanded that "the old order in the factories be broken, that the lot of all the work folk should be eased, and the tears of the common folk wiped away. . ."

The published chapters of the second volume end with the scenes in the Ural factories.

It is a vast canvas that Shishkov has spread before us. He has painted Russia of the XVIII century, from the palace of the Empress with her high dignitaries, to the landlords' country seats and Cossack colonies, the feudal villages and factory settlements. People of diverse social classes and callings are portrayed with a vigorous conviction such as is possible only to an artist who is himself great-hearted.

Here we have courtiers and scholars, outstanding thinkers of the age and reactionaries, military leaders and soldiers, poets, craftsmen, merchants, Cossacks, peasants and workers. Amidst all the brilliance and originality of the foremost people of XVIII century Russia there rise the figures of the scientist and poet Lomonossov, the writers Fonvisin, Novikov, Derzhavin, Sumarokov, the architect Bazhenov, and statesmen of various trends and degrees of greatness, the brothers Orlov, Nikita Panin, Chernyshov, Kirill Razumovsky, Rumyantsev, Potyomkin and Suvorov, then a young man.

One recalls the conversation between the architect Bazhenov and the archbishop of Moscow, Ambrose.

"Yes! I can say without boasting," says the architect showing Ambrose his designs for the new Kremlin palace, "if all this were realized, this Russian fairy-tale, Russian genius would soar on wings. For long enough have we followed foreigners' leading strings. These Damosts, Schlüters, Frostenbergs and their like. We cannot but admire their genius, but our own native architecture is worthy of the laurels of immortality. Take the builder of the Nikola Morskoy Cathedral in Petersburg, take Chevakinsky, or Kazakov, Ukhtomsky, the Yakovlev brothers, Michurin, Kvassov. . . Just lately Count Stroganov was showing me some drawings done by a little lad of his,

twelve years old, one of his serfs, Andryushka Voronikhin. . . Such talent! . . Or take the marvelous Cathedral of Vassili Blajenny. . . Who built it? Barma and Postnik, unknown Russians, created it, transferred into stone the rich tent-like forms of the wooden churches and as though with a chisel sculptured from stone this people's wonder, in the centre a cathedral, and nestling close, eight supporting churches, eight glorious towers, and all together nine cathedrals. And where did they get the idea from? Such fantastic beauty is only seen in dreams and visions. It is Russian genius. Russian genius!" exclaims Bazhenov.

The portrayal of Catherine bears witness to Shishkov's ability to depict the most complex historical characters. We get an insight into her contradictory inner feelings, her equally contradictory undertakings and actions, her great statesmanship, her vanity and practicality. Catherine, with her "liberal" plans of the period of her reign, her scholarship, wide reading, and efforts to instil into the people some elements of education, was able so to "captivate Europe" that Voltaire for example sang the praises of the Northern Semiramis. Diderot, who felt a sincere love for Russia, believed that Catherine's reforms might develop into something truly worthy of the Russian people. The author of *Yemelyan Pugachov* while fully recognizing the sagacity and diplomatic genius of the Empress, her measures in the sphere of the organization of the army, the development of science, crafts, trade, metallurgy and mining, is not in the least inclined to overestimate the activities of this "first lady of the nobility, who held in fee millions of tax-burdened souls". From the very first chapters the reader feels that he has before him not a "court history" of the Russian state, but a living history of a great people. The genius and unparalleled courage of this people in the struggle with the serf-owning landlords are embodied in a figure typical of the given historical epoch, that of the national leader Yemelyan Pugachov.

More than a century and a half separates us from the events described by Shishkov, but nonetheless the people of his novel, beginning with Pugachov and ending with the rank-and-file soldier, live, breathe, rejoice and hate with such convincing impetuosity, with such inimitable individual temperament, as though they had been miraculously recorded by a contemporary.

YAKOV TEMOV

SOVIET SHAKESPEARE STUDIES

The study of Shakespeare in the Soviet Union grows year by year. A few years before the war there appeared in our country for the first time since printing was introduced in Russia the carefully annotated texts, in the original English, of several Shakespeare plays, besides the publication of his collected works in English.

Large audiences gathered to the public readings of Shakespeare in English organized about that time by the Central Library of Foreign Literature. This was a clear indication of the fact that an ever-growing number of readers, and particularly of young students, were no longer satisfied with reading translations of Shakespeare but were beginning to read and study him in the original.

One remembers the time when one searched the shelves of the Moscow libraries for volumes of the *New Variorum*, that bible of Shakespeare scholars. Now the *New Variorum* has become the daily bread of any advanced student working on Shakespeare. What is more, one may now truly claim that many commentaries written by Soviet scholars are worthy of a prominent place among the pages of this universal edition.

As Shakespeare in English became increasingly popular, the work of the Shakespeare translators increased. One must mention, in the first place, the inspired "portraits" Pasternak painted from Shakespeare's "originals"; what I mean is that what Pasternak did was not mere translating, but he made living "portraits" of *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*; one must also mention the numerous works of our distinguished verse translator, Tatyana Shchepkina-Kupernik; the austere, harmonious and thoughtful translation *of Hamlet* by M. Lozinsky; and the delightful Marshak translations of the fool's songs from *King Lear*, to mention just a few.

This work of translating Shakespeare into Russian and into the other languages of the Soviet Union continues. I. Steshenko has just completed a new translation of *Twelfth Night* into Ukrainian, and this will be performed by the Franko Theatre in liberated Kiev; the poet Lakhuti is working on his translation of *Romeo and Juliet* into Tajik; during the war *Othello* has been translated into Chuvash, and *Twelfth Night* into Kirghiz; the Tartar Academic Theatre in Kazan is working on its production of *King Lear*, etc. Some of Shakespeare's plays have been translated into as many as 24 languages of the Soviet Union.

Apart from literary translations, I have undertaken a word-for-word translation of Shakespeare's plays, with accurate indications of the meanings of every doubtful word. In other words, these are scientific, prose translations which without claiming any artistic merit, aim at rendering the exact meaning of every word and idiom.

This work on Shakespeare's texts and their translations is, as it were, the background of our Shakespearean activity. The articles of Lunacharsky, the late I. Aksyonov, the research of Prof. A. Smirnov, the essays of S. Krzanovsky and the studies of other scholars, including the theses of many young scholars and the papers read to various Shakespeare conferences have both set and solved many problems in a new way.

My essay on *Shakespeare's Style and Language* appeared in the symposium *English Realism* published by the Academy of Sciences just before the war. A book of mine *A Commentary to Shakespeare Plays* appeared in

Leningrad at the time when that heroic city was besieged by German troops.

What is so typical of our Shakespeare scholarship is its close bond with the practical creative problems of our own present-day theatre. It is typical that, for the last five years, the annual Shakespeare conferences should have been organized by the All-Russian Theatrical Society. During discussions concerning Shakespearean performances the dominating question is usually whether the performance in question has rendered Shakespeare's thought with sufficient truth and depth, and whether it has contributed anything new to the understanding of the play. Our theatre not only reproduces Shakespeare, but endeavours to act as a thoughtful commentator.

Working, as they do, in close cooperation with the theatre, our research workers have thrown new light on a number of aspects of Shakespeare's creative genius, on his humanism, on his deep roots in his native soil and milieu, on the living bond existing between his work and his period; they have also made a fresh study of the immense gallery of his characters and approached from a new angle some of the principles of his dramatic art (evolution of character, continuity of action, etc.).

Soviet scholars have never attempted to work in a vacuum. They have always looked back to the famous comments on Shakespeare by both Russians, including such writers as Pushkin, Turgenev, Belinsky, and foreigners. With greatest attention our scholars have always studied the present-day Shakespeareana of England and America. Thus, in the Shakespeare Room of the All-Russian Theatrical Society, the works of Dover Wilson and Granville Barker in England, of Adams and others in America, have been discussed time and again. Great interest was aroused among Russian scholars by Professor Pinto's paper read to the Royal Society of Literature in April 1943 on the importance of Shakespeare in our struggle against Hitlerism.

To us, Russian scholars, Shakespeare is not simply a cold mirror of life, nor is his work an act of passive contemplation. Nor is it merely a gallery of psychological types. Shakespeare's work shows us, above all, the active struggle of Man against the dark powers of hatred and evil. That is the main theme of the ever-young poet and playwright, and this is what we realize today more than ever. Shakespeare's name, together with so many other great names, is written on the banner of progressive and freedom-loving humanity. We know that Shakespeare is one of those numerous and powerful bonds uniting the great nations in their common struggle against the nazi barbarians.

M. MOROZOV

NEW BOOKS

The Young Guard Publishing House has just issued an anthology of Byelorussian poems under the title of *Byelorussia in the Crucible*. The compilers set themselves the aim of presenting examples of all that is best and most characteristic in Byelorussian war-time poetry.

The thirty-eight poems in the collection, written by outstanding Byelorussian poets, each with his own particular style, have one common feature—elements of folklore in them. It is expressed in different ways, sometimes in purely song form such as in the *Nadya-Nadeika* by Petrus Brovko, about a girl partisan tortured to death by the fascists, sometimes in martial form as in the popular poem *To Byelorussian Partisans* by the late Yanko Kupala. Direct and indirect links with folklore are a feature too of the narrative poems, as for instance, the *Ballad of the Four Hostages* by Arkadi Kuleshov, which tells of a partisan's children who are tortured and murdered by the Germans, and the *Ballad of the Red Banner* by P. Brovko, about a valiant Russian guardsman.

The collection might be split up into groups according to a number of main subjects. The first is the unity of peoples in the struggle led by Stalin. On this Yakub Kolas, one of Byelorussia's best poets, has written a poem called *Stalin's Word*. P. Glebko's poem *Stalin Is With Us*, and Maxim Tank's *So Said Stalin* belong to the same group.

Partisans as a theme are popular: *Avengers* by P. Glebko, *Kotus Kalinovsky* (about a famous Byelorussian partisan) by P. Brovko, *Ambuscade* by Y. Kolas and many others.

The third subject, that of the Native Land, is represented by lyrics permeated with sorrow and tenderness for our fair country defiled by the fascists. One of the best of these is *I Hear Your Voice*, by Maxim Tank. The Native Land is personified by the poet, first in the character of a nurse, then of a mother, then of a girl partisan—her name is "whispered by the grass and leaves" and re-echoed by "the untramelled wind".

The poems about Byelorussian people carried off to slavery in Hitler Germany inspire implacable hatred for the enemy. Such are Arkadi Kuleshov's poems: *A Letter from Captivity* and *On the Minsk Highway*, Y. Kolas' poems *The Oath* and *The Earth Speaks* in which the poet promises the homeland "not long will you be in thrall" and M. Tank's *To Arms* also call for vengeance.

The Soviet Writer Publishing House has issued *Mountains and Night*, a collection of stories by V. Kozin written during this war. This author's pre-war books contain a number of short stories and narratives about Soviet Central Asia. His early books *Sun of Lebab* and *Desert Colour* are devoted to Turkmenistan. Others are about Kazakhstan.

Continuing the same theme in his new story *The Dungan Mountains*, which opens the collection *Mountains and Night*, the author shows the flourishing of life brought by the victory of the socialist five-year plans. Kassym Magui, people's poet of Kazakhstan sets out in the spring of 1941 to tramp the roads of his vast and wealthy country, to feast his eyes on the mountains and observe the people: "the poet must travel and see much so that his word does not become placid and complacent". In his wan-

derings and encounters with people Magui observes the new life unfolding and tries to create a poem about the man of the new world. The news of fascist Germany's attack on the Soviet Union finds Magui in remote mountain pastures. He descends from the mountains to take part in the war. But his departure for the battle wakes within him the germs of his poem about the new man. He sees this "formidable figure" of the new man rising to the defence of his country.

Other stories describe people of various republics—Turkmens, Kazakhs, Tartars and Armenians—line up with the Russians in the National War.

Kozin's stories centre around actual episodes in Red Army life and mostly in the life of the cavalry. The Soviet cavalry's dash and fearlessness, the peculiarity of fighting in the mountains permit Kozin to display his skill in romanticism. This and his love of a tense situation, and, sometimes, a queer and involved style are typical of Kozin's narratives and do not always constitute their best points. Their true worth consists in the author's thorough knowledge of men from the Soviet republics and his ability to describe them with great feeling and engaging humour.

The history of every country has its most colourful epochs in which facts interweave with legend and imagination and heroes of history emerge as miraculous figures created by folk fantasy. Such is the Russian Prince Vladimir Krasnoye Solnyshko [1] (X century) sung in many a ballad with the same esteem as those Russian stalwarts Ilya Muromets, Dobrynya Nikitich and others. Folk legends have created such vivid figures that the writer undertaking to restore the legendary hero to his earthly proportions has to drag him down from the lofty poetic pedestal on which he has been raised by the poems of folk tradition. To make of him a mortal being; to place his life in its true setting and do it convincingly without shocking the preformed views and feelings of the reader is a task both difficult and responsible.

This task has been undertaken by the writers Olga Forsh and G. Boyajiev in writing the historical epic play *Prince Vladimir* published by the Art Publishing House. The play deals with the period of the rising power of the Kiev princes: that important stage in the history of old Russia—the conclusion of the alliance between Prince Vladimir and the Byzantine Emperors and the christianization of Russia.

Prince Vladimir was one of the first to attempt to bind the scattered Slav principalities into a single Russian power. These historic events, known to us mainly from the written chronicle and folk legends, are illuminated realistically for the first time in literary-dramatic form. The playwrights show the awakening of the Russian people, coming to the realization of their power and recognizing that their strength lies in unity.

In the collection of stories *There Are Such People*, by Leo Kassil (Soviet Writer Publishing House) people are portrayed who, torn by the war from their peaceful pursuits, find themselves in the thick of military events and become active participators in a titanic struggle involving the whole world.

The wife of a boatswain killed by the fascists during the war, joins the ship named after her husband and gives her life fighting beside the gallant boys in blue *(The Black Shawl)*.

The charming story *Fedya from the Submarine* deals with an eight-year-old boy whom circumstance leaves stranded in a sector of the Northern front. The boy shows himself a regular little man without losing his childish artlessness. Particularly exciting and also amusing is the episode with the German parachutist who is captured with Fedya's help.

Such are the plots of some tales in the collection. Although varied in theme these stories are linked by the common thought—that of man's great strength of spirit, the urge to be of use to society, and the sense of responsibility is increasingly felt in the National War.

"I love my birthplace with a deep and lifelong affection—the Don where I spent my childhood, youth and manhood. . . It was with a description of these very parts, a description of the quiet Don and its people that I began my literary career. I put all the force of my love, enthusiasm and feeling into these descriptions. There's no place on earth that is dearer, nearer, more loved by me than the quiet Don and its broad, flashing and dream-like fields. Love becomes particularly acute when you are deprived of the object of your affection." This is what the writer Constantine Trenyov, who has a government decoration, wrote in the preface to his selected stories published by the Soviet Writer Publishing House.

And really, only a deep love and thorough knowledge of what you are writing about could enable you to portray with such force, depth and veracity the nature, people and events on the Don as Trenyov has done in his stories *Damp Ravine*, *At the Fair*, *In the Cossack Village*, *The Lost Well*, *Farm Labourers* and *Omelko*.

Besides tales of the Don Trenyov's collection of selected stories contains other tales written at various periods. Prominent among them is a little story called *Here Lived Anton Chekhov* describing the life in Schwarzwald. In it the writer outlines with pitiless clarity the stupidity and cruelty of the German bürgers, those very same people who in July, 1941 smelted down for cannon the bust of Anton Chekhov, the great Russian writer, who died in Schwarzwald in 1904; those same people who have wrecked many a life by their obtuse, cramped philistine morality.

The collection ends with *Lyubov Yarovaya*—a play which earned Trenyov a Stalin Prize and is one of the best-known and popular productions of Soviet theatre.

The Soviet Writer Publishing House has taken off the press a collection of poems by Yuri Yunghe, bard of the Baltic Fleet. It is entitled the *Log-book*. The author died at his post during the National War. In his rhymes he gives us brilliant and attractive portraits of the "veterans of the sombre sea" who defended Petrograd during the October Revolu-

[1] Krasnoye Solnyshko means the Fair Sun. — *Ed.*

tion and who are now annihilating the German invaders at Leningrad.

The Leningrad Literary Publishers have brought out a book by Grigory Miroshnichenko entitled *Colonel Preobrazhensky of the Guards*.

This book presents a series of sketches about the men of an aircraft unit of the Baltic Fleet and its renowned commander. The author portrays the remarkable figure of a Soviet officer. Fearless in action, he is the first to lead his winged fosterlings into battle. On land, in lulls between combat flights he is ever solicitous and attentive to all the needs of his unit, nothing escapes him, even down to the wash-basins for his men. A formidable and grim foe in battle, in private life he has a most winning way, full of charm and simplicity; in moments of leisure he likes to play the accordion or crack a joke with his comrades; but at his battle post Colonel Preobrazhensky is a strict and exacting military leader—a man for whom military honour and discipline come before all else.

Colonel Preobrazhensky's career as depicted in these sketches by Miroshnichenko is typical of that of many Red Army officers. Before the war he lived in a small, tranquil, provincial town, Cherepovets. Strongly attracted by aviation he joined a flying club. The well-known arctic flier Molokov was one of the "godfathers" present at Preobrazhensky's aerial baptism—his first independent flight.

Colonel Preobrazhensky is at present in command of a unit which has been assigned many a difficult and perilous combat task. In those trying days of August 1941 Preobrazhensky's unit—with its commander in the lead, made the first raids on Berlin and other German cities. These first air-raids—just retribution meted out against nazi centres—are described in detail in this book.

Colonel Preobrazhensky has trained a brilliant array of young pilots, and the author acquaints readers with a number of Preobrazhensky's pupils and battle-mates, many of whom have bravely fallen in action.

These simple and unassuming sketches by Miroshnichenko describing the deeds and everyday life of a Soviet aircraft unit make very interesting reading.

THERE...

June 1941

AND BACK...

March 1944

Drawn by Boris Yefimov

IN MEMORIAM

LIFE IS LIBERTY

"He died in the name of the greatness of mankind."

During a recent raid on Berlin with the R.A.F., which he accompanied as war correspondent, Captain Nordahl Grieg of the Norwegian Army—a well known Norwegian writer—lost his life. Nordahl Grieg was born in 1902.

Captain Nordahl Grieg was one of the most outstanding writers of the younger generation of Norway. He came of that family which gave the world the composer Edward Grieg.

In 1923—1924 Grieg studied at the Oxford University, and wrote his series of essays on Rudyard Kipling and the British Empire. In 1924 he published his novel *The Ship Continues Its Course*, which won the author deserved fame. Nordahl Grieg extensively took up journalism during the following years and also did much travelling.

As correspondent of several Scandinavian newspapers, Grieg left for China in 1927. In 1933 he visited Moscow. The influence of the modern Russian theatre is strongly felt in the three plays he wrote during this period—the last of which *The Paris Commune* is the most significant of his dramatic works.

His play *Our Glory, Our Might*, has been produced on many European stages, and has been translated into Russian. This play aroused heated discussions in Norway. In this work Grieg shows Norway during the World War I, and Norwegian seamen who, compelled to put out to sea despite all dangers, perished at the hands of German U-boats which sank Norwegian vessels without warning although they flew their national flag of a neutral country.

The country was infested with German spies who carried on their subversive work with impunity, keeping their headquarters informed of vessels putting out to sea. (In 1916 there was no law to combat espionage in Norway.) The play ends with prophetic words about the preparation for a new war in the East.

Nordahl Grieg wrote a number of novels, plays and poems. His book *Spanish Summer* was born in the battles in Spain, while the scene of the first part of his novel *The World Must Still Be Young* is laid in the U.S.S.R. and the second part in Spain. Grieg is also the author of a number of splendid translations of Keats, Shelley and Byron. All his creative endeavours were bound up with that struggle being waged throughout the world—a struggle in which Grieg himself took most active part. "Some fight with blood, others with word," he wrote in his book on Spain. And he himself fought both with blood and with word. When there dawned one of "the most sombre dramas of our days, all acts of which had been bound with the logic of death"—the war in Spain, from the very first day and right up to the tragic finish of this drama, hand in hand with the Spanish people Nordahl Grieg stubbornly and passionately fought against the fascist invaders. His articles and public addresses of that period all burn with a fiery appeal to help people who prefer "to die standing than live on their knees". He branded those who called themselves democrats and confined themselves to words of sympathy but in fact often helped the enemies of Spain. What bitterness rings in his lines dedicated to the heroes of Spain who "struggle alone, and proudly" and who were betrayed!

He wrote of the grandeur of spirit: at Brihuega the mechanized Italian troops were defeated by the poorly armed Spaniards; fascist fliers over Madrid—practically all of them Germans—could never beat the Republicans in single-handed combat. "Why? Because our ideas are better, nobler, higher... Because in modern warfare our strength of spirit is just as important as trenches."

When the Hitlerites invaded Norway in 1940 Grieg happened to be in Oslo. Together with a small group of men, he succeeded in removing from Oslo Norway's gold reserve. Till the very last moment of evacuation Nordahl Grieg was in the Norwegian army and it was then that he wrote his inspired patriotic verses which quickly spread all over Norway and enjoyed the widest popularity throughout the country. The whole of Norway repeated his fiery words—"Life is liberty".

On arriving in England Nordahl Grieg underwent training at officers courses of the Norwegian army and took part in various military operations, in the capacity of war correspondent.

His verses were printed in illegal pamphlets and recited by heart. He appealed to Norwegians to stiffen resistance against the invaders, he imbued them with faith in victory.

There are so few of us here,
And the fallen are our friends and comrades.
We shall bring the dead with us
When we return...

"... and let it be known to all men worn and emaciated—return we shall."

This solemn promise to return was not mere words. He did all in his power to make it come true. He took active part in commanders' raids by British and Norwegian forces on the shores of Norway; he took part in the air-raids on Berlin.

In his poem written a short while ago on the death of the Norwegian anti-fascist Wiggo Hansteen killed by the Germans, Grieg wrote:

Fire burns in the heart
At each new shot of the executioner:
Who next of the best
Will fall his victim?

And it was Nordahl Grieg himself who was fated to be "the next of the best", falling in the fight for the liberation of his own nation and other peoples from the tyranny and barbarity of nazism.

The death of Nordahl Grieg, who perished in the prime of his power and talents, is a grievous loss, but even in his very death he appealed to life, to continue the struggle for freedom: "for future generations our death and our struggle is not in rain."

N. KRYMOVA

ARTS

A FILM OF GRIM REALITY

The adaptation of a literary work for the cinema is always fraught with difficulties. This is particularly true in the screening of novels—the most complex literary form. This being so, we feel all the more gratified at the remarkable success of the new feature film *Rainbow* based on Wanda Wasilewska's novel of the same name and produced by the Kiev Film Studios. Readers of *International Literature* are already acquainted with the contents of this novel [1]. And now its characters appear on the screen.

Millions of people are suffering unspeakable anguish and torture in the countries and territories at present under the heel of the hitlerite imperialists. No fate can be more bitter than to fall under the yoke of these XX century Huns. And it is to these innocent victims of the hitlerite invaders that this new Soviet film is, in essence, dedicated.

Rainbow portrays events that are grim and harsh, and is merciless in its realism. It is a picture of bitter truth. But what boundless warmth and tenderness are depicted in the scenes showing the people's close knit friendship, their solidarity in the face of the hated enemy! The harsh austerity of events are all the more intensified by the humour which runs through the film.

"The soul that wishes to live worthily must fight for the truth!"—these words, from an old Ukrainian folk song, serve as the epigraph to this film. The hero of *Rainbow*—personified in the People—can indeed assert that he lives worthily.

Here is the collective farmer Olyona Kostyuk. She has returned to the village home from a partisan camp in the forest to give birth. The fascists seize Olyona, and offer her the safety of two lives—her own and that of her newborn babe—at the cost of betraying her people. But there can be no choice of paths for Olyona to whom betrayal would be more bitter than death.

Here too, is Fedossya, the elderly peasant woman in whose house the German officer, Werner, is billeted. Fedossya, sparing of words, yet makes her every word ring out like a rifle-shot aimed at the invaders. Her conversation with Pussya, Werner's paramour, is one of the high lights of the film. It might be thought that Pussya—that "German sheep-dog" as the

[1] Excerpts from the novel *Rainbow* were published in *International Literature* No. 3, 1943.—*Ed.*

A still from the film

village had dubbed her,—should be now the high-handed lady and mistress; that her every word would serve as an imperious command to Fedossya. Is she not the "wife" of the omnipotent German Kommandant with a protecting German sentry standing constant guard outside her window? And yet it is Fedossya who is mistress here, and Pussya trembles even at a passing glance thrown her by this stern and silent peasant woman.

The children portrayed in this film are true to life. And these child actors have contributed several powerful scenes of such dramatic tension that the spectator is gripped with ming'ed feelings of pity for the youngsters and wrath for their brutal torturers.

A nazi soldier bursts into a cottage in search of milk. Only a few children happen to be at home, and after some difficulty and gesticulations the German makes them understand what he wants. But there is no milk in the house for the Germans had slaughtered their cow a long time ago. The German grows angry. Every rustle and creak of floor boards alarms him. Gripping his gun, he points it in turn at each of the children. And although it is only a film, one's heart is rent by anguished expectation. Will he shoot? Did not the German Captain Langheld confess at the Kharkov trial that a German corporal cold-bloodedly shot a baby in its mother's presence, while the latter was being interrogated? And are there not other such cases? This is no exceptional occurrence!

The scene showing this German soldier and the four young children—whose total ages are less than twenty years—is perfectly staged and consummately acted. Can one ever forget that ghastly scene where the older boy dashes frenziedly from little sister to younger brother, an then on to his second sister—a tiny toddler—to shield them with his own body, against the gun with which the German bully threatens them one ofter another?

In depicting the enemy on the screen producer and actor are confronted with an involved and difficult task. In *Rainbow* this difficulty has been overcome. Outwardly, Captain Werner gives the impression of being quite a decent fellow. By nature, however, he is one of those despicable creatures who do not like to soil their own hands but prefer torturing, manhandling and killing through the medium of others.

As portrayed by G. Clering, the German captain is a blend of cold brutality and typical German sentimentality. Werner is a clever and dangerous enemy, but finds himself powerless before the assembled people who "remain dumb and just stare"—but in such a manner as to send cold chills down the spines of the conquerors.

N. Bratersky gives a subtle impersonation of the traitor—the village elder. Confusion, bewilderment and a guilty fear are sensed in his every word and action. Shifty eyes, abrupt gestures, an uncertain look—betray the man as a Judas. Bratersky acts convincingly in the scene showing his trial by the partisans. When the death sentence is pronounced, the traitor falls to his knees and begs for mercy. But every word he utters, his whole aspect arouse only repulsion in the spectator who heaves a sigh of relief when justice has been meted out.

The difficult role of Pussya—Werner's mistress—is admirably performed by N. Alissova, who gives a convincing picture of a whore to whom nothing is sacred or worthy of genuine affection. She is the type who would sell anyone, as long as she could derive profit from it. Alissova acts with superb skill in the scene with her sister, whom she visits by express orders of Werner to worm out from her the whereabouts of the partisans. When her sister wrathfully rates Pussya and soundly smacks her face, the latter bursts into tears. Here too, the natural reaction is one of hearty laughter at the discomfiture of this "collaborator" of the German command.

A remarkably high level of filmcraft is attained by the actors in the leading roles. N. Uzhvy as Olyona creates a truly magnificent and courageous figure as mother and patriot. Her role doesn't call for much speaking, but her features are more eloquent than any words—especially her determined eyes with their clear gaze. Uzhvy portrays the tragic and noble feelings of Olyona with a poignant and great simplicity. Every act in this human tragedy leaves an indelible impression on the audience: the mother's labour pains, the ineffable joy which lights up her face when she presses her newborn infant to her breast; and her grandeur during that ghastly moment when Werner subjects her to monstrous moral torture by putting a bullet through the tiny body of her first-born.

Fedossya is played by E. Tyapkina, who has splendidly conveyed that stoniness of heart—supreme expression of human sorrow of which Shakespeare has so aptly said:

> *. . . my heart is turned to stone;*
> *I strike it, and it hurts my hand.*

In this film Fedossya personifies the people's wrath, its stubbornness and thirst for justice. Her performance reminds one of Maxim Gorky's *Mother*. And one can well imagine the mother from Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* as being of the same mould.

Mention should be made of A. Dunaïsky who plays the part of the veteran Okhabko—one of the characters vested with irrepressible humour—the same folk humour which since times immemorial has served oppressed people as a sword and shield in the struggle against their enslavers. At a village meeting the German-appointed village elder—a traitor—reads out the latest order issued by the occupation forces. This order makes reference to the "duty" of the population "to their country and to the German army". When a voice is heard asking for an explanation of what country is meant the elder replies: "The German Vaterland". Whereupon Okhabko—it was he who had interrupted the elder—with inexpressible irony says: "I see—now everything is quite clear!"

It is Okhabko who mocks the German rule ordering all villagers to wear numbered tabs. "That's my German name," Fedossya explains to the Red Army scouts who penetrate into the village on reconnoissance. And old Okhabko hangs round the neck of his cow a tab-number similar to his, rousing Werner to cry: "The number tabs are to be worn only by human beings!"

In adapting this popular novel to the screen,

A still from the film

particular care had to be taken not to depart from the book which had become so familiar to millions of readers. And the producers fully appreciated this point. Naturally, all the wealth contained in the novel could not be fitted in to the film version. But all its main features have been transferred to the screen in such a manner that we have a fully independent work of art made in accordance with all the laws of cinematography. One shortcoming could be mentioned. The film entirely omits the scene showing the mutual relations between Werner and his superior, who demand information concerning the partisans, at all cost. And this scene is essential if one is to fully understand the character and conduct of Werner.

Excellent artistic tact has gone into the production of the film. A minor incident will serve to illustrate this. The son of Malyuchikha, the peasant woman, who tries to hand over some bread to Olyona, who has been arrested by the Germans, is killed by the nazi sentries. Together with her younger son, the mother buries the dead body under the floor of the cottage. Malyuchikha's children gaze in horror as the two of them bury the dead boy. The full tragedy of the situation does not strike the children at once. It is only after the body has been placed in its little grave and the mother and son begin trampling down the earth at the very spot where the face was—that the tragedy dawns on them, and they begin weeping bitterly. This is a very subtle psychological detail, which redounds to the merit of the director, Mark Donskoy.

This is not the first occasion that we have reviewed films by this outstanding producer. Donskoy is responsible for the film tri based on Maxim Gorky's *Childhood*, *In ... World* and *My Universities*. More recently he adapted for the screen one of the most popular Soviet novels: Nikolai Ostrovsky's *How the Steel Was Tempered* (*The Making of a Hero*). Mark Donskoy is now working on Boris Gorbatov's *Unbowed*—a popular novel about the present war.

All who collaborated in the filming of *Rainbow* worked wholeheartedly and attained a high degree of artistry. And no small thanks are due to the camera-man. From the very first shots one sees the hand of that mature master B. Monastyrsky. The film's grim realism is emphasized by the bleak pictures of wintry village landscapes.

. . . There are many gallows in this film. . . But alas!—many, many more have been erected all over the Ukraine during the German occupation.

Nothing can or will save the Germans—neither their countless gallows nor the unspeakable tortures which the nazi barbarians apply in trying to terrorize Soviet people. This is expressed in the film most strikingly and convincingly. The final scene of the Soviet troops bursting into the village and annihilating the enemy garrison, is rendered in light and joyful tones. These are the first rays which presage final victory, when the people will cherish and pay abiding homage to the heroes and heroines who gave their lives for their country—Olyona and others, whom the authors of the film *Rainbow* depict with such warm and heartfelt sympathy.

TIMOFEI ROKOTOV

The Bolshoy Opera House of the U.S.S.R. by once again staging A. Borodin's classic opera *Prince Igor* recalls one of the ancient heroic pages in Russian history, immortalized in the epic poem *The Lay of Igor's March*.

The opera *Prince Igor* on which the composer worked for eighteen years was begun on the advice of the well-known Russian art critic Vladimir Stassov. The libretto also came from Borodin's pen who made use of a wealth of historical material. He left his monumental work unfinished to be completed later by the composers A. Glazunov and N. Rimsky-Korsakov.

In subject, its typical folk characters, musical language and proximity to the sources of folk art, *Prince Igor* is an opera of a profoundly national type. Prince Igor is depicted as having all the qualities of a people's champion who raises his sword in defence of his native land. The composer was not afraid to make his hero a captive. Neither did he fear to lay bare the conflicting emotions experienced by the Russian prince who found himself in the power of his enemies. Treating his subject matter in this way, Borodin has emphasized the nobility of Igor who places the interests of his country above everything else.

The Bolshoy Opera House has fully realized the responsibility involved in reviving this classic Russian opera. The mass folk scenes were well planed and the leading parts entrusted to its best artistes.

The orchestra of the Bolshoy Opera House conducted by A. Melik-Pashayev plays no small part in the opera's success. Decorations and costumes are by F. F. Fedorovsky who has excelled himself in the scenes at the Prince's court, the Khan's camp and the old Russian town of Putivl.

Ballet-master K. Goleizovsky who is responsible for the dances of the Polovtsy performed at the Khan's court, borrowed largely from the existing folk dances of Central Asia.

Another revival at the Bolshoy Opera House is B. V. Assafyev's ballet *Bakhchisarai Fountain*, staged by R. Zakharov. The leading role of Maria, the beautiful captive of a Tartar Khan is taken by the Leningrad dancer Galina Ulanova. Muscovites have not had the pleasure of seeing this outstanding artist for over two years. Now she has again captured the hearts of her audience by her profound acting, grace of movement and genuine poetry of the dance. Others taking part are A. Messerer, M. Gabovich, S. Messerer and P. Gussev who have achieved a masterly delineation of the characters of Pushkin's poem on which the ballet *Bakhchisarai Fountain* is based.

Cultural life is reviving in the towns of the Soviet Ukraine liberated from the Germans. Most of the sixty theatrical and musical companies who left at the time of the German occupation have now returned.

The Taras Shevchenko Dramatic Theatre, one of the first to return to Kharkov, opened the season with A. Korneichuk's *Bogdan Khmelnitsky*, dedicated to one of the Ukraine's greatest historic figures. The Musical Comedy Theatre has also returned to Kharkov.

The Moscow State Jewish Theatre has produced the tragicomedy *The Bewitched Tailor*. This is a dramatic version of the well-known story by the Jewish classic writer Sholom Aleichem. It deals with a poor unlucky tailor who becomes the victim of a vicious joke. The play is staged by People's Artist of the Republic V. Zuskin who also takes the leading role.

After struggling to save a little money, the tailor buys a nanny-goat at the market to help feed his large family. On the way home he drops in at a tavern. While he is resting there the tavern keeper exchanges the tailor's nanny-goat for a billy-goat. At home the bitter disillusionment, reproaches and abuse of his hungry wife and the tears of his children await the tailor. The poor fellow returns to town to lodge a charge against the wily tavern keeper. But the latter learning of this replaces the billy by the nanny and the tailor is made a laughing stock in court. Confused but happy the tailor hurries home. But on the way he once more falls in with the tavern keeper who again effects the change of goats.

The vivid portrayal of the tailor reflects the backwardness of the Jewish poor suffering under the social injustice of tsarist Russia.

The 75th anniversary of the death of the composer A. S. Dargomyzhsky, an outstanding figure of classic Russian music, a contemporary and friend of Glinka, was commemorated by numerous newspaper articles on his life and work.

Many names famous in Russian music are linked with the Moscow State Conservatory, founded in the sixties of the last century. It was here that S. Taneyev and A. Scriabin studied. Fifty years ago, the youthful Rachmaninov carried there the manuscript of his first opera *Aleko*. More recently its graduates L. Oborin, G. Ginsburg, Y. Bryushkov, Marina Kozolupova, J. Flière, J. Zak, R. Tamarkina and many others have excelled at international music contests in Warsaw, Brussels and Vienna.

At present about a thousand students are studying at the six faculties of the Conservatory which trains musicians of the most varied specialities: composers, theoreticians and historians of music, conductors, singers and performers on various instruments.

The present war has set the Conservatory new tasks and now more than ever before it feels itself to be the centre of Russian music. The Conservatory has created an Academic Capella of Singers whose purpose is to revive the best traditions of Russian chorus.

The first items in its repertoire are to be the monumental cantatas and oratorios composed during the war.

Another departure is the setting up of a scientific research department under the composer, Academician B. V. Assafyev. This department is now working on subjects such as "Glinka and His Contemporaries" and "Moscow and Its Music".

The repertoire committee headed by the composer Dmitri Shostakovich is now unearthing from the archives Russian classics that have undeservedly fallen into oblivion.

A number of professors and music experts are taking part in compiling a text-book on the history of Russian music and another on Russian folk music.

The Conservatory has also been actively helping in the country's war effort. During the past two and a half years, professors and students of the Conservatory have given over 1,000 free concerts at the front, in hospitals and army clubs.

At a special concert dedicated to the works of P. I. Chaikovsky in Belomorsk, a town in the Karelian-Finnish Republic, various works of this great composer were rendered by the chorus, soloists and orchestra of the national ensemble "Kantele".

The ancient musical instrument, the kantele, whose origin is described in the national epic *Kalevala*, gives an expressive and vivid rendering of Chaikovsky's music. Outstanding successes were variations from the ballet *The Sleeping Beauty* and *Autumn Song* played by the kantele orchestra. Choruses from the operas *Eugene Onegin*, *Cherevichki* and *Mazeppa* sounded very well to the accompaniment of the kantele.

The composers D. Shostakovich, Y. Shaporin and A. Khachaturian and many leading artistes attended a Moscow concert devoted to the works of Eugene Kapp, the modern Esthonian composer.

Kapp began to compose fifteen years ago. His first works were the symphonic poem *Avenger* based on episodes of Esthonian history, and the national ballet *Kalevipoeg*. His new opera *The Flames of Vengeance* deals with similar themes. His *Patriotic Symphony* is dedicated to the Red Army waging a heroic struggle against the nazi invader.

One of the most successful performances was the composer's sonata for violin and piano which is outstanding for its profound national colouring. The last movement of this sonata is based on an old Esthonian melody.

Thousands of cinema-goers have been deeply stirred by the full-length documentary film *The Court Is Coming*, released by the Central Newsreels Studios. This picture is a film record of the trial of the German officers and a Russian traitor who took a leading part in the atrocities perpetrated against the people of Kharkov and Kharkov Region during the German occupation.

The audience is first shown the results of the nazis' monstrous crimes: devastated towns and villages, heaped up bodies of Soviet civilians shot by the fascists. Shots were taken of the beach in the town of Ossipenko (Berdyansk) strewn with the bodies of people murdered by the Germans; of war prisoners' camp where the fascists vented savage brutalities on Red Army officers and men who had fallen into their hands. These scenes are a vivid illustration to what is disclosed later at the Kharkov trial, which is given in full. The film ends with the execution of the fascist murderers.

A recent exhibition was held in Moscow of water colours by S. V. Gerassimov, painted during the past two years. These sketches illustrate a journey by Gerassimov from Moscow to Samarkand in November 1941 and the return trip in February 1943.

Drawn from the train window at numerous wayside stations and the market places near the stations, these fleeting sketches reveal masterly skill, expressiveness and ease of execution. The hand of a master is apparent even in the most fugitive sketch.

Although there are no outward signs of the war in Gerassimov's water colours, yet one senses its grim atmosphere in every picture, every sketch.

WISDOM IS LIGHT, IGNORANCE IS DARKNESS

We learnt from Napoleon *We learnt from Charles XII* *And now we learn from our own experience*

Drawing by I. Semyonov

NEWS AND VIEWS

At the Ninth Plenum of the Soviet Writers' Union, held in Moscow between the 5th and 9th of February, the achievements and the shortcomings of Soviet literature in war-time and its outlook for the future came up for heated discussion.

Among the writers who crowded the conference hall of the home of the Soviet Writers' Union on Vorovsky Street, were some of the most prominent figures in Soviet literature, who had come from the front, the national republics and the different regions of the Soviet Union.

In the Presidium were: Mikhail Sholokhov, taciturn, reserved and calm; Ilya Ehrenburg, with a tired expression on his face; writers of the older generation—the dramatist Trenyov, the novelists Shishkov, Fyodor Gladkov, Konstantin Fedin, and Alexander Fadeyev; the writers of the front, Leonid Sobolev and Pyotr Pavlenko, and Nikolai Tikhonov, gray-haired but energetic as ever.

The procedure of the conference was repeatedly interrupted by special broadcasts, announcing new victories gained by the Red Army. The roar of the salute penetrated the hall, reminding the audience of the great events taking place in the world.

The victories of the Red Army and of the Soviet people sounded the keynote of the Plenum's work. The first period of the war, with its inevitable hardships, lay behind, and Moscow, Stalingrad and the Dnieper were the great milestones which pointed to victory. Enormous stretches of Soviet territories have been liberated from German occupation, enormous creative restoration work in industry and agriculture has been resumed, and steady progress has marked Soviet industry in the hinterland. The friendship among the peoples inhabiting the Soviet Union has grown even stronger in the crucible of war. The Soviet government has adopted a most democratic legislation in granting the Union republics the right to have their own armies and to enter into direct diplomatic relations with foreign states.

Soviet literature, which has always served the people, saw itself confronted by new important tasks. This has heightened the role and importance of the Writers' Union, as a centre of ideas, uniting all the writers. It stands to reason that the new tasks have made it necessary to effect some organizational changes. The Soviet writers have unanimously decided to go back to the Gorky tradition, to the time when the Writers' Union was headed by the outstanding Soviet writer, whom the people recognized as the man who best expressed their thoughts and as a prominent public figure, who knew how to unite and direct the activity of the writers in solving the most important social problems.

Nikolai Tikhonov was unanimously elected Chairman of the Soviet Writers' Union, and Dmitri Polikarpov—Secretary. (Before that the latter was the head of the Radio Committee, an organization similar to the BBC.)

Tikhonov, a many-sided and talented writer, a poet of a romantic disposition, is also known as a fine prose writer. Throughout the war he lived in besieged Leningrad. His poem *Kirov Is With Us* and the poem of *The Twenty-Eight Guardsmen* are famous all over the country. They were read by soldiers in between battles and have inspired the people to heroic feats in labour. With his passionate, honest and courageous writings, Tikhonov was forging a deep hatred for the enemy in the hearts of the people and a firm faith in victory. He was the conscience of Soviet literature.

The Plenum was opened by a report, in which Tikhonov outlined the new features which have made their appearance in Soviet literature in war-time.

"In peace as in war"—the speaker began—"it is the *truth* that remains the hero of Soviet literature. We should not forget the hardships which we have suffered, the days of crucial battles and the enormous efforts made by the country on its road to victory... The truth about the war should be described in such a way as to shatter the soul and the heart and lay bare the whole depths of mighty spirit of the Soviet people." This is an ethical and artistic problem which requires more realistic content in our literature. Tikhonov analysed the most prominent works of Soviet literature in war-time—Sobolev's *Sailor Soul*, Leonov's plays, Grossman's *The People Is Immortal*, Simonov's poems and rhymes, the works of Tvardovsky, Surkov, Antokolsky, Aligher, Inber, Kuleshov, Tychina, Isaakyan, Abashidze, Jamboul and many others, and pointed out that in these fine works of art they were able to reveal the many sides of Soviet life today. The great Soviet historical writings, such as: A. Tolstoy's *Years of Trial* (a tragedy about Ivan the Dread), Shishkov's *Yemelyan Pugachov*, Alimjan's *Mukanna* and Sergeyev-Tsensky's *The Brussilov Thrust*—have well expressed the feeling of patriotism that fills the hearts of the Soviet people. The success of these writings is due to the fact that they reflect the hopes of the people and correspond to their inner demands. These features constitute one of the chief criterions which determine the value of their writings.

Tikhonov criticized some writers who lacked perspective in their work, and limited themselves to narrow personal emotions. He also pointed out that the normal development of art demands a steady, varied criticism, giving advice to the writer, helping him to gain a more profound knowledge of life and showing him his shortcomings. Criticism should be raised to a higher level.

The speaker then stressed the matter of the writer's duty and said: "In this historical battle the place of the writer is determined by the kind of arms he has mastered." But if these

arms are to be effective they must be put to use. "Some writers complain of being unable to work in the difficult conditions resulting from about three years of war. But what about our fighting men, wading knee-deep in mud, crossing marshes, storming German fortified defence lines and crossing river after river? And what about the workers and engineers, who do not rest and sleep, staying in the plant until the urgent war orders have been finished? And can it be said that it is easy for the transport workers to deliver munitions to the front on time, regardless of weather and danger? . . We, writers, must also increase our creative efficiency."

Then Tikhonov added that by following the right road dictated by life itself, Soviet literature has laid the foundation for its growth and development. But art must not rest on its laurels, otherwise it is not art but a trade. Therefore Soviet literature must follow the rightly-chosen road. Its main task lies in showing an even greater variety of characters, in showing the characters of the Soviet people to their full height and in working on new topics presented by the war. "We, writers, have been charged with the task of educating future generations, and Soviet literature must aspire to such great aims as the maintainance of the ideas of the Soviet state, of the lofty principles of Socialism and the strengthening of the people's moral health."

The speakers who followed Tikhonov supplemented and developed the latter's basic ideas. Here we shall mention only those ideas which underlie the most interesting speeches.

In his brilliant speech Ilya Ehrenburg stated that the work of a writer cannot become a work of art unless the author has lived his subject and treated it, not as an illustrator, but as an artist.

Fedin spoke in similar vein and added that an artist should not reflect life but express it. Only he who has lived his subject is able to give a true picture of life.

Olga Bergholz, the young, talented Leningrad poet, spoke next. She said:

"Today, more than ever, the creative activity of the writer depends on his knowledge of life." A sharp line should be drawn between literature and literaturishness. As an example of a purely literary approach to life she cited the *Leningrad Symphony*, by the able writer Paustovsky. "The story begins by telling how in December 1941, a little girl is walking along a quay in Leningrad and carrying a piece of bread. She is so weak that she drops to the ground, and at this moment a crow tears the bread from her hand and flies away with it. That is terrible enough, is it not? But the truth was even more terrible. The truth is that in December 1941 there was not a single bird in all Leningrad. Then some sailors on patrol, who happen to pass by, carry the girl home and leave a loaf of bread and a can of salmon on her table. Here the author wanted to show the sailors' generosity, but the truth is that they were even more generous: they gave away their bread rations, their meagre 300 grams! Of course, they had no loaves of bread or salmon at all!

"In his story Paustovsky also shows an architect, carrying some fragments of an iron fence to his home on the fifth floor, to have them put back in place later. Here, too, the situation was even more tragic: this architect lacked the strength to climb to the fifth floor even without any load. . . But this same architect, who could not muster enough strength to reach the fifth floor, was in those same days working on plans for the restoration of his city!"

Truth about life is the foundation of art, and there is no doubt that the truth about the war can be told only by that writer who knows real life, because much that is new and unexpected has come to the surface in war-time. A true artist must not limit himself to the depiction of the tragedy and horror following in the wake of the war. Such portrayal of our times would be one-sided. As Leonid Sobolev rightly said, a writer must see things in their real historical light, and then all the details of his work will be in their proper places. Today faith in victory and a knowledge of the road leading to it constitute that real, historical perspective. "When the war is over, the people will say: 'We have won, and now you tell us how we did it; explain to us the mystery of how Leningrad held its own for 900 days, of how Moscow and Stalingrad were defended and saved. What was the country doing in those days? Show us the people, the girl, the shepherd in the Kazakh steppes, the workers who were turning out shells in the Urals. . .' Of all this we must write clearly, simply and truthfully. And to be able to do so we must observe the Soviet people now; we must look for those qualities which have created that invincibility at which the whole world is amazed."

Several speakers told of one serious shortcoming, namely that so little is being written about the rear. We may mention Perventsev's *The Test*, we may speak of Shaginyan, Karavayeva and Gladkov, but all this is a mere introduction, telling about the "people who are forging victory in the rear", as the poet of the front, A. Surkov, said.

All the speakers stressed the increased demands made on literature, on its ideological content and artistic forms.

The Plenum has given additional proof of the unity of purpose by which the Soviet writers are inspired and shown the organic ties between literature and the people, bearing in itself the seeds of a brighter and greater future for literature. New novels and new names have made their appearance, and new roads to literature are being laid. The feeling which inspired the writers assembled at the conference was expressed best in a letter addressed to the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, Marshal Stalin, signed by the members of the Presidium of the Plenum of the Soviet Writers' Union: Tikhonov, Sobolev, Vishnevsky, Ehrenburg, Marshak, Karavayeva, Pavlenko, Gladkov, Serafimovich, Fedin, Fadeyev and Trenyov. The letter states:

"Everyone of us, Soviet writers, remembers the determination of the place of literature in the life of our people, as given by you, when you spoke of the writers as engineers of the human soul. This has given us, writers, vast rights in our young society and imposed heavy duties on us. Arming the souls of our fellow-citizens with a fiery love for our country and devastating hatred for the enemy—such has become the meaning of our work in the days of the Great National War. Working in the rear and at the front, we are trying our best to fulfil with honour this sacred duty of the Soviet writer s

But we have done very little as yet, compared to what the people expect of us and what is expected by world from Soviet literature, by a world admiring the greatness and courage of the Soviet people. It is our duty to immortalize for posterity and history the gigantic heroic deeds carried out by the people, whose blood and sufferings have decided the outcome of victory for justice and reason over the dark forces of nazi beastliness."

Tsarskoye Selo, one of the finest beauty spots around Leningrad was renamed Pushkin in honour of the great Russian poet A. S. Pushkin, on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of his death in 1937. Pushkin received his education at the lyceum founded there at the beginning of the XIX century. Many pages of his life and much of his works were connected with this vicinity.

During the autumn of 1941 when the Germans reached the approaches to Leningrad, they occupied the town of Pushkin and held it until January 1944 when the Red Army drove the enemy from the Leningrad area and recovered the town. Two Red Army officers, Majors F. Samoylov and K. Arenin, who entered Pushkin with the forward troops described their impressions:

"We followed a desolate highway to the Catherine Palace, now a mass of ruins. The windowless walls with their gaping holes seemed strange and unreal to us. But willy-nilly we had to enter the place to acquaint ourselves with the terrible extent of the destruction. The palace which was the work of Rastrelli, Cameron and other famous architects, sculptors and painters, is no more. What the Germans could not take away with them, they wantonly and barbarously destroyed.

"The scene that met our eyes in the once splendid Blue Hall baffles description. In a corner we saw the fragments of an old gilded column. The walls had been stripped bare of their tapestries, the parquet floors had been torn up and carried off. Gone too were the famous paintings. Every hall, every room was strewn with the wreckage of furniture.

"The stately structure of the Alexander Palace had been burned down. Before setting the building afire the vandals had gone to work with the axe. They ripped up the floor, and stripped the walls of their decorative woodwork. Not a single door remained in the palace. Many of them were found in the German dugouts and blindages.

"The Pushkin monument, a source of pride to the people of Leningrad, is gone, only the pedestal remains. The picturesque beauty spot known as the Chinese Village, is now a desolate waste. The Chinese Theatre is in ruins.

"Desolate too is the famous Park where the young Pushkin loved to roam under the lindens. Its fairy bridges and decorative railings, the pride of Russian ornamental iron workers, were either shipped to Germany or destroyed. The lindens were felled and used for firewood.

"The ruins of these monuments of Russian culture cry out for vengeance."

One hundred thirty years ago the first Public Library in Russia was opened in St. Petersburg. This was the first national library to receive copies of all the books ever published in Russia. During its early years the library led a modest existence. In 1814 its circulation amounted to 1,340 books distributed among 329 readers.

Preserving duplicate copies of all Russian publications and various collections issued both at home and abroad, the library amassed a fund which most fully represented Russian literature from the XVI to the XIX centuries.

At the beginning of the sixties the library helped in the foundation of Moscow's first Public Library, by presenting it with a number of valuable collections, including the personal library of N. N. Rumyantsev. These beginnings laid the basis of the Moscow Rumyantsev Library, now the Lenin Library and the central institution of its kind in the Soviet Union.

The Petersburg library was the most important cultural centre of pre-revolutionary Russia. One of its most constant visitors was V. I. Lenin while many well-known writers and scientists including L. Tolstoy, M. Gorky, C. Timiryazev, N. Dobrolyubov and V. Korolenko frequented its reading rooms. The library gained greater cultural significance after the October Revolution when it became a vital centre of scientific research and educational activity.

The war which reached the very walls of Leningrad interrupted the peace-time functions of the library. In the summer of 1941, the silence of its reading rooms was broken by the noise of hammers. Rare books and manuscripts were packed and sent to safety further into the rear. Collections and catalogues were removed to the cellars. Anti-fire devices were installed in the upper parts of the building and the windows were fitted with protecting shields.

During the grim days of the siege, the library was frequented by officers and men of the Red Army, munition workers, officials of the Communist Party and municipal bodies, hospital staffs, etc.—all of whom sought and found the requisite literature.

Under these conditions, the library personnel devoted themselves to safeguarding the book fund from fascist shells and bombs. They strove to meet the needs of the men and women, soldiers and civilians gallantly defending the city. Such duties they regarded a matter of honour.

As the siege continued, fascist bombs destroyed many books, manuscripts and important archives. But thanks to the selfless labour of the special salvage brigades formed by the library staff, losses were greatly minimized.

The library named after the famous Russian writer and satirist M. Saltykov-Shchedrin celebrated its 130th anniversary which coincided with the smashing defeat inflicted on the enemy at the walls of Leningrad.

During the course of the war, the personnel of the library diminished to two hundred, all of them women—from the director to the junior members of the staff. These women librarians lead a strenuous war-time life. As in pre-war days, they receive frequent queries from the universities, colleges, research institutes, from professors, scientists and students preparing to defend theses. Hundreds of requests reach them from men at the front. Nor have the library's connections of long years' standing with scientific and cultural organizations abroad been discontinued. New books and magazines, and suggestions for exchange of books reach the insti-

tution from the Universities of Cambridge and California, from the Peiping National Library, the Congressional Library in Washington, the Afghanistan Academy of Science, from Australia and Palestine.

A highlight of the celebrations in connection with the recent 130th anniversary of the Saltykov-Shchedrin Library was a meeting and an exhibition on the theme "The Public Library during the National War."

A young Red Army lieutenant spending a few days leave in Moscow paused before a door bearing a small plaque:

"Home and Museum of Nikolai Ostrovsky, Writer."

How many times in the trenches and dugouts at the front had he fingered the tiny well-thumbed volume *How the Steel Was Tempered*. Many times had he dreamed of visiting the house in Moscow where Nikolai Ostrovsky, the writer and favourite of Soviet youth, had lived and worked.

There are indeed many ties between the Ostrovsky Museum in Moscow and the men at the front. This museum is visited every day by men on leave. Letters, photographs, front-line newspapers, war-worn copies of Ostrovsky's books are delivered to the museum by the postman. An issue of the front-line newspaper, *Fighting Banner*, contains a notice about a literary evening at the front devoted to the work and life of N. Ostrovsky. "Our men sat there, rifle in hand," states the newspaper, "themselves participants in the literary evening and its heroes. The names of characters from the book *How the Steel Was Tempered* were mentioned in conjunction with the names of living men, soldiers who had won distinction in their respective units." The newspaper also carried a letter from the audience to the writer's mother, O. O. Ostrovskaya. "In the trenches," they wrote, "your son's books pass from hand to hand." The letter went on to relate that among the spare cartridges in the pack of the severely wounded Red Army man, Nikolai Yevsikov, was the book *How the Steel Was Tempered*. This small volume had been torn by shrapnel. "This book," stated the letter, "inspired him to be brave and staunch."

A small photograph depicted a heavy tank with five young men beside it—the guards badge and Government decorations pinned to their tunics. Inscribed in large letters on the armour of the tank was its name: "Nikolai Ostrovsky". The guards crew of Nikolai Ostrovsky's tank have more than once distinguished themselves in battle.

Thus do the ideas set forth in the books of N. Ostrovsky live again in the deeds of Soviet soldiers upholding the great cause for which the writer gave his life.

TWO DANCES

The Hungarian dance with a German partner

The Gesta-Polka-Coquette performed by the Polish émigré government

Drawn by Boris Yefimov

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