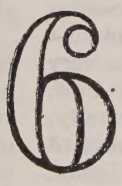
INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE



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SOVIET INTELLECTUALS IN WAR-TIME

Both at the front and in the rear modern warfare demands incessant creative work on the part of intellectuals, the successful outcome of which depends on the number of intellectuals who are closely bound up with the people.

The entire period of development of the Soviet state prepared Soviet intellectuals for their duties in the present war.

Immediately after the establishment of the Soviet government the best of the old intelligentsia, who correctly appreciated what the Soviet revolution meant to the country's development, joined actively in the gigantic task of remaking Russia.

It is sufficient to name such men of learning as the late Climent Timiryazev, who served as the prototype for the film *Baltic Deputy*, the geologist Alexander Karpinsky, who was then President of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., the self-educated scientist and inventor Constantine Tsiolkovsky, the botanist Ivan Michurin who transformed the very nature of plants, the astronomer Prof. Pavel Sternberg, of Moscow University, Academician Alexei Bach, an eminent chemist and modern political figure, and many other scientists who, from the very first days of the Soviet revolution, gave a true appraisal of the significance of the new Soviet system in promoting science and culture.

The Soviet government drew the old intellectuals into participation in the work of building up, but at the same time regarded the training of a new technical intelligentsia from among the general population as a matter of primary importance.

The growth in the number of Soviet intellectuals can be seen from the fact that before the outbreak of the present war up to fifty million people were attending educational establishments. During the period between 1933 and 1938 the universities and colleges graduated 476,600 young specialists in different fields. The colleges and technical schools of the Soviet Union trained about three million specialists during the Five-Year Plans.

At the beginning of the first World War the Ukraine possessed nineteen higher educational establishments with 26,700 students. On the eve of the present war this Soviet republic had more than 160 schools of higher learning, with a total of 127,000 students. Before the Revolution Georgia had only one university, with 300 students ; on the eve of the present war this republic had twenty-one universities and colleges with a total of 22,700 students. Before the Soviet revolution Byelorussia, Azerbaijan, Armenia and what are now Central-Asiatic republics had no schools of higher learning whatever, whereas today the Uzbek republic alone possesses forty-two higher educational establishments attended by over 27,000 students.

In pre-revolutionary Russia the percentage of women among intellectuals was quite small. In 1914 women students constituted only 15 per cent of the total number of university and college students; by 1940 this percentage had increased to 43. In 1914 there were only 1,919 women doctors—9,7 per cent of the total number of physicians in Russia; by 1940 more than half the number of physicians in the U.S.S.R. were women. In the Soviet Union women won not merely political, but also full, factual equality.

The Red Army has unquestionably played a big part in training new skilled cadres of intellectuals. Equipped with all the modern means of warfare, the Red Army demanded full mastery of all modern arms both from its officers and the rank-and-file.

During the present war the regular officers of the Red Army who had undergone training in the usual military schools have been supplemented by hundreds

of thousands of intellectuals from various fields of industry, from schools of higher learning, from research institutes and elsewhere. This helped both officers and men to a more efficient and speedier mastery of the technical means of warfare, to the skilful control of operations and to a thorough grasp of the art of war.

When the nazis were preparing their treacherous attack against the Soviet Union, they placed great hopes on undermining the morale of the Soviet people and of its vanguard detachment—the intellectuals. But the experience of war has more than proved the disastrous mistake of the nazi invaders.

Soviet intellectuals played a vital part in the successful war efforts of the rear, and the beneficial results of their direct participation in the work of industry, transport and agriculture are evident always and everywhere. Thanks to the selfless toil of engineers and technical experts the Soviet industries were able to start the mass production of war equipment swiftly and smoothly and to furnish the front with machines, munitions and other supplies. What energy, initiative and effort intellectuals showed in coping with such incredibly difficult tasks as rebasing industry in the East, as the setting up of new plants and factories far inland and in rebuilding industry in the towns liberated from the German invaders!

Builders of new aircraft enjoy particular popularity throughout the country.

Merited fame has been won by Alexander Yakovlev, Sergei Ilyushin, Nikolai Polikarpov, Sergei Lavochkin, Pyotr Sukhoi and other designers of new war planes. It is with good reason that the Germans named Ilyushin's stormovik Il-2 the "black death". Ilyushin is at present busy improving this formidable fighter-plane.

As a result of his indefatigable work and his close contact with active aircraft units at the front, Yakovlev has made excellent progress in perfecting Soviet fighter-planes. A noteworthy fact is that the constant improvements he makes to his aircraft in no way hamper their high-speed production as the plants building Yak planes do not have to introduce any new equipment or effect any modifications in the technology of production.

A powerful, reliable and economic engine is essential for a good war plane, and the aeroplane engines designed by Arkadi Shvetsov, Alexei Mikulin and Vladimir Klimov have greatly contributed to the successes of Soviet aircraft engineering. A short while ago Shvetsov finished work on a new aero-engine possessing exceptional features.

In perfecting the designs of his engines, Mikulin—the pioneer of Soviet aero-engine construction—always takes the demands of front-line pilots and engineers into consideration.

Vassili Grabin and Ilya Ivanov have designed excellent guns which have fully proved their worth on the Russian war fronts.

Cooperating with a group of other engineers, Joseph Kotin—who designed the heavy "K.V." tank—has designed several fine types of self-propelled guns.

Soviet sailors received splendid armaments thanks to the group of engineers and designers working under Nikolai Shamarin, which has supplied the Red Navy with highly effective means of defeating the enemy at sea.

The task of supplying the war industry entailed an increase in raw material resources, an increase in the production of high quality metals, of motor-fuel, explosives, etc.; big successes have also been scored in this field.

A large group of scientific workers and engineers headed by Prof. Nikolai Rubtsov of the Higher Technical College in Moscow accomplished a vitally important war task in perfecting the technology of munition production.

Another group headed by Julian Kozhevnikov ensured the mass production of trench-mortars; the body of engineers supervised by Ivan Maslennikov designed new, highly efficient machine-tools for the war industry.

In step with all these designers, inventors and engineers are those innovators on the production front—the Stakhanovites of the factories and fields. The achievements of innovators, both in Soviet armaments and in Soviet war-time production were largely due to the daring efforts of physicists, mathematicians, chemists and scientists in other fields.

During the present war 1,059 people have won Stalin Prizes for outstanding achievements in the fields of science,

invention and for fundamental improvements in factory production methods.

This year more than a thousand names have been submitted for consideration by the Stalin Prizes Committee.

In agriculture too, intellectuals play a most important part.

Academicians Trofim Lyssenko, Ivan Yakushkin and many other Soviet agricultural experts have helped in substantially increasing the country's food resources, the tens of thousands of collective-farmer experimental-plot workers making a considerable contribution to the successes in this direction.

Close collaboration between research workers and men of practical experience, between famous scientists and factory Stakhanovites, has always been a salient feature of the social and intellectual life of the U.S.S.R.

The war has introduced considerable changes in the speed and character of research work.

We would, in particular, note the new investigations of the country's natural resources, first and foremost of the Urals. The special Commission, set up under Vladimir Komarov, President of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., was of much assistance to the Urals plants when they switched over to local manganese ore and when they launched new methods of production.

At the close of 1943 the Academy of Sciences reported on the completion of fifty vitally important war-time research undertakings in the institutes of the Academy's departments of physico-mathematical, technical, chemical and biological sciences.

Despite the difficulties involved in evacuation, the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences completed a number of highly important war-time research works; similar work has been done by the Georgian, Byelorussian, Uzbek and Armenian Academies of Sciences and the Kazakh Branch of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences.

The temporary seizure of the Donbas by the nazis made prospecting for new coal fields in the eastern parts of the country and the extension of existing coal fields problems of pressing urgency. Thanks to the investigations by Dmitri Bogdanovich and Grigori Chikryzov, thick seams of coal were discovered in Uzbekistan; the seams are near the surface and cover an area of over 300 sq. km. As a result of this the most thickly populated industrial district of Uzbekistan—that of Tashkent—now has its own local coal supply.

Soviet scientists have also achieved considerable results in introducing new technical means in industrial production, in setting up huge reserves and in a substantial saving of state funds.

An idea of the moral stamina of Soviet scientists both of the older and younger generation can be obtained from the work done by the Leningrad University during the blockade. Neither famine nor frost, neither fierce bombings nor furious shell-fire could daunt or break the spirit of the truly heroic body of people working here. In the beleaguered city, suffering from the incredible hardships of the blockade, the scientific workers of the University never ceased their teaching or research work for a single day. It will be sufficient to mention that up to the middle of 1942, i.e., before the University was evacuated to Saratov, the scientific workers here successfully completed more than seventy vitally important research undertakings, many of which were of particular war-time significance.

Moscow University and the higher educational establishments of Central Asia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Siberia and the Urals all contributed substantially to the country's war efforts.

In the field of medicine practically all the institutes are investigating new methods of treatment, the speedy cure of wounded and sick Red Army men and officers and promoting the efficiency of the Public Health Services. The group of medical workers headed by Academician Nikolai Burdenko, professor of the First Moscow Medical Institute, Chief Surgeon of the Red Army Medical Corps, has achieved outstanding successes in the domain of surgery. The new methods of treating wounds, proposed by Professors Alexei Speransky and Alexander Vishnevsky, have won wide popularity. The surgical methods employed by Prof. Andrei Savinykh of the Tomsk Medical Institute and the Moscow surgeon Sergei Yudin are distinguished by supreme skill and perfection.

Practically in every town where there is a university physicists, chemists, bio-

logists, physicians and other scientists actively cooperate in Civilian Defence work. A group of chemists including the eminent scientists, Academician Alexander Frumkin of Moscow University and the well-known chemist Academician Mikhail Dubinin has worked out new methods of anti-chemical defence.

The war introduced fundamental changes in the nature and range of research work by Soviet scientists, as can be seen from the following example. One of the associates of the Physics Institute of the Academy of Sciences left for the front as soon as war broke out, serving in the Signal Corps; the radio equipment of a number of Red Army units was placed under his supervision. This serviceman continued to work as a scientist, and at the front he carried on research. He proposed to his colleagues who remained in the institute that they design a new type of set, which they did with great zeal. When several models of the new set were finished the institute associates brought them out to the front themselves to test them under actual service conditions.

Another instance: one of the research institutes far inland designed an apparatus vitally essential for scouting purposes. One of its designers went out to the front to test this new appliance right at the forward line so as to discover its advantages and shortcomings; besides this he trained the army scouts to handle this new invention.

During the days of Stalingrad's severe ordeal thousands of intellectuals of this city selflessly carried on their work side by side with the workers in the plants and factories, and when the need arose they took up rifles and went into action against the enemy. Prof. Anton Pytel of the Stalingrad Medical Institute did splendid service in treating wounded soldiers while Associate Prof. Boris Panchenko of the Mechanical Institute won renown as the chief of staff of the famous destroyer battalion comprised of workers from the Tractor Plant.

No sooner had the front-line receded from Stalingrad than the local intellectuals, hand in hand with the Stalingrad workers, set to work rebuilding their city. When the staff of the Stalingrad Medical Institute were faced with the problem of how to obtain the scientific and educational equipment which had arrived at the station they unanimously decided to convey all the equipment to the institute by hand, there being no local means of transport available.

The government decision to restore the Stalingrad Medical Institute found a quick response on the part of many universities and colleges in different parts of the country. From distant Siberia and Kazakhstan, from the Urals and the Volga came a stream of medical equipment, books, reagents, etc.

Space prevents us from dwelling on the activities of artists, painters, writers, musicians, theatre and film workers. Readers of *International Literature* will have gained some idea of the work of Soviet intellectuals in the fields of art.

We shall confine ourselves to the statement that quite a number of truly remarkable works of art have appeared during the war in the fields of literature, music, painting and the cinema.

The nazi Huns wantonly destroy the culture of the peoples they temporarily enslave, closing down universities and schools and burning the finest creations of progressive mankind.

The Germans closed those old established seats of world science and culture—the Liege and Ghent Universities in Belgium, the Leyden University in Holland and the Prague University in Czechoslovakia—the oldest university on the continent of Europe.

The whole civilized world stands aghast and indignant at the havoc wrought by the modern Huns in the University of Oslo. In the Ukraine the nazis burned down the splendid University of Kiev and wrecked the schools of higher learning in Kiev, Kharkov, Stalino and many other cities of the Soviet Union. The German invaders looted the Industrial Institute of Novocherkassk and the laboratories and libraries of the higher educational establishments in Voronezh, Rostov, Kursk and Orel.

In Novgorod, Leningrad, Kalinin, Tula and other regions they reduced wonderful creations of Russian architecture to piles of rubble. They destroyed the famous Pulkovo Observatory; the marvelous palaces and parks around Leningrad were the pride of national Russian art; the nazis looted and burned the palaces and laid waste to the parks, desecrating everything.

The nazi barbarians will meet with full retribution for their unspeakable crimes. Soviet intellectuals, loyal to the great moral traditions of the Russian intelligentsia, see their main task today in speeding the hour of complete victory over Hitlerism. The activities of representative men of learning and art in the Allied countries testify that in these decisive days of the war true masters of culture are all ready to give all the strength of their spirit and all their knowledge to the cause of the struggle against that mortal enemy of freedom and intellect—Hitlerism.

SERGEI KAFTANOV

Sunbeams too hot for them.

Drawing by V. Fomichov

FYODOR GLADKOV

A SOLDIER OF THE REAR

(Chapters from a novel)

I get up in the morning with the first sound of the radio announcer's voice. This is my alarm clock. It may sound surprising, but I can feel it coming beforehand—like a sudden nudge inside me, and begin to gather myself up and rise to the surface from the depths of sleep. To the sound of a march I jump out of bed and dress myself quickly. Outside the window everything is dark as though it were still midnight, except for the sky just over the opposite house, where there is a trembling phosporescent dawn—the reflection of the factory furnace. I switch on the light and my nine-metre room seems as cosy as my bed. I turn the wireless down till it plays quietly, so as not to awaken the neighbours, plug in my electric kettle, filled the previous night, and go to wash. Drying myself as I come back, I see in the mirror a lean face, a straight, firm nose with deep folds above it, hollow cheeks and dark eyes.

Over the small newspaper-covered table are pinned photographs of my Lisa holding Lavrik, my brother Ignati in his flying suit standing by an aeroplane propellor and my old father and mother. My mother is wearing a shawl on her head and sits there, small and wrinkled, with father standing beside her, tall, awkward, a grey mustache hanging down to his chin. He has a hooked nose and prominent, commanding eyes. Yes, the photographer has caught very well my old man's dry, stubborn character. These fine old master workmen with a fighting record always have a sort of stern, almost angry assurance.

I sleep on a folding bed. Lisa put it on the lorry for me in all the fuss and bustle. I even shouted at her:

"What the devil do you want to load me up with that lumber for, Lisa?"

But she ignored my shouting, smiled through her tears, a little fold near her mouth trembled:

"We may be parting for ever, Nikolai. What's going to happen to Leningrad?"

And when I saw that fold, a pain shot through my heart and I caught her in my arms and pressed her close, kissing her flaxen hair again and again...

And now I've been living here in the Urals with my factory for half a year. I have to admit it, I don't know which I long for most—for Lisa and Lavrik, or Ignati, or Leningrad itself... It is hard to be torn away from all my past. It hurts me that I am not there at the front with Ignati and my Lisa, not fighting as a soldier. I keep telling myself that from here, too, I am hammering the Leningrad blockade. The guns and other arms depend on our work. I turn out five and ten times over quota, and today and tomorrow I shall set my lathe so as to do twenty and thirty times my quota... fifty times, a hundred, the devil take it!

While I drink my tea, I read Lisa's last letter—it's already worn thin with reading. That little talk with her has become a necessity for me. I can hear her dear voice and she smiles at me through her tears.

"My dear one! First of all, don't worry about us. I'm working at the factory from morning till night, and Lavrik's with Granny. You'll never know him, he's quite a man now. Bombs and bursting shells don't make him turn a hair. He doesn't throw himself down on the floor as he used to do, or crawl about, or lie frozen to the spot. He tells Granny quietly:

'That's a shell fallen on Ligovka,' or 'I'll go and watch Uncle Ignati packing at the German kites.' And when Granny tells him: 'Now, none of your nonsense, Lavrik! Get your clothes on at once and come to the shelter,' he answers calmly: 'The shelter's silly. It doesn't help at all.' Isn't he a young monkey!

"I've got a bit weak, dear. I have a terribly long walk twice a day, you know—there and back. For, of course, there are no trams running, you probably know that. We're blockaded, and when you've said that you've said everything. Supplies are terribly bad. I often get dizzy spells and my hands and legs tremble. And our old man looks dreadful, he can barely keep on his feet. But he insists on going to work just the same, he won't take sick leave. 'I've still got my legs whole,' he says, 'and my head's on my shoulders, and the front needs my skill more than my life, these days,' he says. 'There's no such thing as old age.'

"I'm writing this letter at home. I've just got in from work. It's early morning, and quite dark. I lighted the lamp and felt I must have a talk with you. We're having a hard time, dear, very hard.

"But I'm not one bit afraid, it's just as though all we're going through wasn't real; the explosions and the aircraft roaring overhead are somewhere outside life, like a dream or delirium, and they're forgotten in a minute. I've no water and I do want a hot drink so as to get warm. Everything in the room seems as though it were covered with frost, and I feel as though I too am going to freeze... lie down and never get up again. I must go to the Neva for water. There's one thought that warms me—Lavrik's with Granny, and it's warm there. They collect palings and boards from wooden sheds and heat an iron stove. And I break up chairs and tables and the wardrobe and heat the stove in the kitchen, and then I lie down on it.

"And my love for you warms me, and our happiness brightens everything. And it is for this happiness and our wonderful life that we made for ourselves that we are enduring all these dreadful days and will go on fighting to the end, fighting with all our might."

This is what my Lisa wrote me, my splendid pal. I tuck the letter away in my jacket pocket, dress quickly and go out into the entry. The light is on in the kitchen, Agrafena Zakharovna is there. Her husband, Tikhon Rabotkin is a smelter at the factory, and the apartment is theirs. She is a gentle, kindly soul, and now she shyly smoothes a smile away and cries in surprise:

"What have you got up so early for Nikolai Prokofyich? It's more than an hour yet to the whistle."

"Got to be there before dawn, Agrafena Zakharovna. I may not be home at all tonight."

"Eh, what times these are! Folks have never worked like this... It's as though there was thunder in the very earth... There's my Tikhon Vassilyich... staggered in at three o'clock at night, fell onto his bed and didn't know another thing... And now he's yawning and stretching and making ready for the factory too. My heart's in my mouth: if only he doesn't go down..."

"Don't you worry, Agrafena Zakharovna, he won't go down; he's obsessed. We're all soldiers, we're all at the war. You just don't know yourself..."

Tikhon Vassilyevich's voice comes to me, muffled by the door:

"Nikolai! We did thirteen tons. My brain's bubbling, and the smoke's in my dreams."

He is forty-five years old. His face is burnt and the whites of his eyes bloodshot. He looks as though he suffered from chronic poisoning. But his stride is firm, he walks with the swing of an athlete. He has a trick of staring intently not at a person's face, but somewhere over his shoulder, and smiles at his own thoughts.

"The Kirovites want to have a fight with me," he says good-naturedly. "Well, let them! I've nothing against a good fight. I like a scrap, when people are all watching. Makes me feel good..."

I leave the house. It is only a short distance to the factory. Our settlement is a town in itself, with wide streets, houses of several stories, trams, boulevards and flowerbeds on the squares. At the end of our street, beyond the square, the factory is visible, the cylindrical glass roofs of the shops, the chimneys with their plumes of smoke, the huge brick buildings, the scaffoldings and the concrete towers rising over the boulevard. The electric lights are still dazzlingly bright there. Night is just beginning to give place to the first misty grey

of morning. The snow on the pavement and on the roofs is blueish, the sky seems covered with hoar frost, reddish stars are still twinkling to the west, while to the east there is a clear green band. Women with marketing bags and purses are hurrying to the shops, the dry snow creaking under their feet. Far behind me, its bell ringing, a tram comes rumbling along, the first one from the far off town. The trunks of fir trees rise in a dense clump behind a high fence on the far side of the street, their cone-shaped tops velvety black in the thick darkness. There is noise and rustling from the factory side just as though a breeze was sweeping through the fir park. Over Leningrad the stars are still shining brightly, and German guns are firing into them. There is thick darkness there, shaken by the explosions of shells. The roar of explosions echoes through the empty town in menacing waves, like a groan of great suffering. Can I enjoy even a moment's quiet rest? No. I must concentrate all my energy with a thousand times greater intensity, so as to avenge on the enemy all the torments of the people imprisoned within the blockade. Lisa, my little son, my father, my mother merge with all the people of my country.

The factory yard, the space between the buildings and the streets is empty. Far away, on the square, there is a mass of blue-grey aircraft with spread wings. They seem to be standing erect, alive, impatient, ready for flight. On the right at the entrance to the long building, tanks come crawling out, rumbling, clanking, swaying. Guns project from their turrets like long arms pointing the way ahead, looking as though they may fire at any moment. Several workers and Red Army men are sitting or standing on the tanks, shouting and laughing.

My shop is a long way off, beyond the offices. The snowy surface of the road has been ploughed up and the way is pitted with holes and hummocks. Snow, covered with soot and slag, lies in fluted drifts over the stacks of evacuated machine parts and over the piles of odd lumber belonging to the factory.

For eighteen years, half my life, I have been working at the lathe. I attended a workers' faculty and lectures at the Literature and Languages Institute without any break in my work. I attempted to write poems and stories, but found I was no good at it, although, incidentally, my speeches and reports on literary subjects were not at all bad. I had loved books passionately right from my early years, and I shall love them to the end of my life. But first and foremost, I am a master worker of armaments, a soldier in the army of defence workers. I love my lathe, and I love to turn out beautiful parts so that they may come to life and rejoice in my hands like works of art. It always thrills me to hold in my hands a part I have made, and admire its shape and polish. My greatest joy is in the feeling that this object, the work of my hands, is not just a piece of metal, mechanically formed by the milling-machine, but a part of myself—of my inspiration, my love, my aspiration. My competitors, old experienced hands, have had to acknowledge that they could not "trump my trick" as they called it. And right up to this day I am famed as the best milling-machine operator in our district. My parts are accepted without testing—my name is the best trade mark. But now, in war-time, when war technique in the hands of a skilled fighter is the decisive factor, in addition to fine work I must turn out ten, twenty times as much. And this cannot be done simply by increasing the number of lathe revolutions. Various new gadgets have to be devised, so as to make it turn several parts and carry out several operations simultaneously. And that's why every day, every hour I'm driven by the one thought—how to improve my lathe, to make the milling-machine work so that the whole mechanism obeys my slightest movement, a barely perceptible touch of my hand. I have gone a long way during these months.

From the time when our factory was evacuated to the east I never for a moment ceased my quests, and here, even when the factory was being set up anew, I kept racking my brains over the problems of how to make the lathe semi-automatic, so that not only inexperienced workers could use it, but even apprentices, and at the same time increase the quota thousandfold. This work at the lathe and this gradual rigging of it seemed somehow to bring me closer to Leningrad, to the front-line, to Lisa, to Ignati... After all, I had been in the army—I was a tankman during the war with the whiteguard Finns and received

the Order of the Red Banner. But now I had been sent with the factory to the Urals, because I was the best milling-machine operator. "Go with the factory," I was told. "Get it going as quickly as possible. The army needs you there no less than here. Give us arms."

So I went. Our train took three weeks to reach this old Urals town. The director and the chief engineer had flown by plane the same day when we left, so as to prepare the premises, make arrangements for the unloading of our equipment and for transport, and find places for the people to live in. Some of the workers and engineers had their families along with them. It was warm weather, but cold at nights—we shivered in our overcoats. The skies were amazingly clear—a deep blue, and the fields shimmered orange in the sunshine as though they were on fire, and the air was so clear that you felt you could count the straws in the thatch of cottages in the far distance. Flocks of jackdaws circled over the dejected copses sometimes gathering in a black cloud, sometimes racing into the heavens.

An angry restlessness filled us during this endless journey. If we could have set up the lathes on the platform-trucks, we would all of us have set to work with a will.

We would stand for days at a time at stations choked with trains, sick with our idle life, yearning to do something. During the first days enemy planes kept flying over us, dropping bombs. But they were not very bold about it, flying at a great height. Then our AA guns would speak up, and they would make off. Incidentally, twice bombs fell on station buildings, on empty cars, and on the villages beside them. Fires broke out. Then we uncoupled our coaches and rolled them further off.

II

I enter the shop. It is blazing with electric lights. Everywhere—between the lathes down below and among the girders up above, there are constellations of lamps sending out their piercing rays. The endless expanse of the building is filled with a blue smoke. Green flashes dart forth blindingly here and there. And everywhere—roaring. The floor under one's feet seems to be alive, trembling with the heart-beat of the lathes and motors.

I immediately seem to feel a kind of sympathy, a link with my lathe, as I always do. I can see it from far off, and it seems to greet me with its shine and glow and a kind of warmth as though it were something living. It almost seems to me as though it had taken on something of myself—my character and my restlessness. I have an almost superstitious feeling when I see it again after being separated from it, a feeling that if I had forgotten it, if its breath had left me even for an hour, it would be avenged on me, it would either refuse to work or it would rend me. That's the best way I can explain my feeling.

My friend Petya, the technologist, meets me in the shop, cheerful as always, in his Leningrad overcoat, well shaved, pale, his face yellow with lack of sleep. In his eyes there is suffering and vengeful anger. When we were bombed on the way to the Urals, his five-year-old daughter was killed, and his wife lost her reason. I sometimes think that when he is at home, alone in his room with his own thoughts, he paces to and fro like a wild beast in a cage. It must take tremendous self-control to keep himself in hand, to keep his head cool and work carefully, calmly, deciding methodically and in detail all the technological problems, large and small, that come his way. He receives many suggestions of all kinds from the workers, and he discusses them all, seriously and thoroughly, and with a friendly simplicity. Some of the suggestions are good, some foolish, but he examines all of them with the same care. And although he may show a man that his idea is a poor one, illiterate from the technological point of view, nevertheless he always encourages him, braces him up and imbues him with confidence in his own powers.

"It isn't the value of the suggestion that's the main thing," he says, "it's the fact that the man's trying to get somewhere. If he's trying, that means he's going to grow."

To anyone who does not know him, his stern calm might look like a matter-of-fact coldness. Nobody could see any sign of change in him, but I sensed well enough what was going on inside him. There was one thought burning him up, one longing—for vengeance. Verochka's

death, Natasha's insanity—this is his own private hell, but it is inseparable from the sufferings of millions of people, mine too. And without a word spoken, we can understand and feel for each other. We both have the same drive in our work. And this drive shows itself in different ways, his in a menacing silence and a withdrawal into himself, while I seethe and boil, get all worked up and sometimes can hardly hold myself in.

Petya takes my arm and walks with me along the broad entry into the smoky, roaring distance pierced with lightning flashes. Naturally he makes for the machine-tool workshop.

"Well, show me," he says with an assumed indifference. "I want to see what the universal lathe looks like in action. We'll test it together. We must bring it to absolute perfection. I don't advise you to rig the lathe today. You'll start your Stalinist shift [1] when we change. Better rest and prepare."

"I've already checked everything plenty of times, Petya. I'm sure of fifteen quotas. You can see for yourself right now."

He knows all about it. The gadget that I've been racking my brains over for so many days, the general and detailed blueprints, the construction which I finally brought to exact and economical simplicity—all this took an enormous amount of strength. And when I felt that I had worked out my idea to the end and saw it in concrete form, I knew one second of absolute bliss as though I had emerged from some oppressive depths, filled my lungs with fresh air, and saw the blue skies. I knew the joy of realizing that simplicity is the most difficult thing to find, and that there is no more complicated path than the search for it. It seems almost an insult after all one's harassed strivings. You look at your blueprints and laugh at yourself, call yourself "idiot" with angry satisfaction—why have you been worrying all this time, racking your brains, when the whole thing is as simple as can be.

"In my place you'd have done it all at once with much less effort, Petya," I tell him on the way to the workshop. "If it hadn't been for your help I'd have gone worrying for the devil alone knows how long and worn myself out with it. It's bad to be an amateur."

He looks at me with the penetrating, kindly ridicule of a friend who can see right through one. Then with a gruff warmth in his voice he strips off all my pretences.

"All the same, up to now nobody else has managed to think out and construct this gadget. I didn't do it either, as you can see, although I'm not only a technologist but a designer as well. Don't pretend and don't fish for compliments. You know well enough that it's the idea, the flash of inspiration, that counts, and not its working out. To the devil with your complaints! What you need now is to be firmly confident in yourself, in your ability to give the factory what others aren't giving it."

Petya comes of old Leningrad stock, born and reared in a workers' family. Our fathers were old friends and fought together through three revolutions. I particularly liked the way Petya's father took part in all that we did, as though he were the same age as ourselves. It delighted me, the way he would come home from work and shout:

"Now then, boys, get ready for a game of volleyball! Out into the yard!"

Petya and I were already studying at the workers' faculty. He had chosen a designing institute, while I wanted to go to the factory, to the milling-machine. My father was pleased with my choice. He was fanatically proud of factory work and regarded the young folks' tendency all to make for technical institutes with a grim, almost puritanical scepticism.

"That'll spoil them," he growled, looking at me with his piercing eyes under their shaggy grey brows. "Just spoil them. They'll get out of gear."

I was longing to get to work at the factory, and impatiently awaited my final examinations. My greatest pleasure was to wander through the shops. Many were the hours I spent by the lathes, where I would stand as though under a spell, watching the milling-machines work. It seemed magical to me. People got to know me, I made many friends, and often I would work the lathes myself. Many of the fellows would treat me like a quick and clever pupil. And so when I entered the shop as apprentice, I was already quite at home there, and the lathe worked obediently under my hands.

[1] A special shift in honour of Stalin.

Petya scolded me roundly: how could I drop my studies without going right on to the end? The worst fault a man like me could have, he said, was not to carry a job through to the end. To leave off in the middle was to be not a man, but a fraction of a man. He thawed a little when I swore to him that I would get my knowledge all the same, while I worked. But later, after finishing the workers' faculty when I told him that I had made up my mind to go in for literature, he was staggered:

"You're crazy, Nikolai..."

But all this strengthened our friendship still further, and after all, the best friendship is the stormy friendship of youth.

... I started in the machine-tool workshop as a fitter, working on the parts for improving my lathe. I don't think I've ever been so excited as during that first short hour. And afterwards I could not calm down all day, till evening came. I will not describe here the part I was making. My blueprints are in the factory archives, and my thoughts and heartbeats die with the day that is gone. What I want is to write of my own inner feelings...

This year has been the most tragic in my life, a dreadful path of human suffering and struggle. I felt that to live and work in the rear was unutterably harder than to be at the front. Hatred for the enemy makes one want to fight him face to face. A thousand kilometres' distance rends the heart with the quietness of the stern soberness of work. And intensity of effort does not suffice to overcome this distance. One must have the clear vision, the ardour of a fighter whose heart is bleeding.

III

When it was nearly time for me to take up my Stalinist shift the shop began to fill with all the administration, headed by Pavel Pavlovich Buyerakov, the director—a short, thick-set man with a red face and a cunning twinkle in his eyes... He had a button of a nose which was tucked in comfortably between cheeks which seemed to hardly leave enough room for it. Buyerakov was dressed all in grey—grey overcoat, big grey cap, grey suede boots. One would expect a man of his stout build to walk heavily, to puff along, but he strode ahead of all the others, shouting in a youthful tenor. He has an excellent memory for names and faces, knows the character of each worker, remembers all the events in his life—things which the worker himself may have forgotten. His ringing, jolly voice can be heard in the shop from far off.

"How do, Grishin! How's things? Is your wife still crying for Leningrad? Aha, and you, Kostya, I've caught you... What were you thinking of, snub-nose, falling behind yesterday? I rely on you, my friend!.."

His exuberance and lively, gay voice seems to blow through the shop like a fresh breeze. Buyerakov is one of ours too—a Leningrad man, and here he is the same as always, just as though the war and all the trials we have lived through had had no effect on him. But actually, it was only thanks to his energy, determination and initiative that the factory had started working at full speed before the time set. Perhaps it was his life and energy that inspired everybody with the same brisk, indefatigable and determined spirit. He is an experienced engineer. It is impossible to imagine the factory without him.

Beside him strides the long-legged chief engineer, Vladimir Yevgenyevich. He has a long face with thin lips pressed tightly together, and a cold, reserved expression. We rarely hear his voice. His eyes are particularly unpleasant—they stare straight through you but as though they did not see you. They trouble one with their indifference, and repel with their intentness. He has grown up with the factory and is completely merged with it.

The Communist Party organizer, Alexei Mikhailovich Sedov was also with them, walking beside Petya.

I was excited, but tried to appear calm and collected, and it pleased me that people looked at me with surprise—they had thought to see me in a fever, whereas I did not even pay them any attention, but remained absorbed in my work at the lathe.

I had come into the shop as I always came to work, and gone to my place without any unnecessary talk or greetings, put on my overalls and in silence, unhurriedly and methodically tested the motor and the gadgets, made my calculations and put everything in order. Al

though I was hidden behind the lathe, and only my neighbours could see a thin figure in overalls, still I could feel the warmth in our milling-machine department. Nobody approached me or asked me any questions—everybody knew that I had no use for talk when I was working. And all the more so now, when my place of work was marked off. It was only out of the tail of my eye that I could see the eager looks of my friends to right and left. The old workers had an air of being as busy as I was, while the young ones seemed to be more nervous and excited than myself.

Buyerakov had his hand out even before he came close to me and he cried in his youthful tenor:

"How do, how do, Nikolai Prokofyevich! Well, how's it going? All ready? We shan't disturb you, but we'll have to mark this event in our family. Now, now don't protest! It's not just your own affair. We're not celebrating, we're placing a serious question of responsibility, of help for the front."

And at once, without the slightest change of tone, with the same youthful ringing voice, he announced:

"Incidentally, your old man's working like a hero, an example to everybody. And Lisa's a great girl—active and energetic, like a young Komsomol... Hasn't she told you anything about Ignati?"

"What?" I dashed to him. My heart seemed to stop beating. "Has anything happened, Pavel Pavlovich?"

"Nothing, nothing... Everything's all right."

And again, without stopping for breath, he shouted with his high, piercing voice into the depths of the long, bright, crowded shop:

"Comrades! Friends! This shift is a special one for our factory. Nikolai Prokofyevich Sharonov mounting the Stalinist shift is undertaking to turn out fifteen quotas by the end of the shift. No milling-machine operator has ever yet set such a record, and I feel sure that comrade Sharonov will carry out his undertaking. I shouldn't be surprised if he beat even that figure. Our Russian men are a special breed—they do the impossible. They've always amazed the world with their daring. They showed it by their victories during the Stalinist Five-Year Plans, and now they're showing it both on the battle-field and by their work on the home front.

"Tomorrow morning comrade Sharonov will report the result of his work. It will be a new victory for those who do a thousand percent of the quota. You find them everywhere now, but still they are few, individual heroes. Sharonov is showing the path for a mass movement of victors—fighters who are at one and the same time killing and routing the fascist beasts of prey. Let us wish Nikolai Prokofyevich" (he raised his arm and turned to me), "let us wish our comrade and friend a brilliant success."

Applause.

I am not used to such solemn ceremonies. So it was with the awkward, stupid look of a man thoroughly embarrassed, with concealed irritation that I was forced to come out from behind my lathe. In an angry voice I found one phrase to say:

"In mounting the Stalinist shift I give my word, comrades, to turn out not less than fifteen and if possible more than fifteen quotas."

And this ended the ceremony.

But I stopped Pavel Pavlovich and looked him straight in the eye. He seemed confused, lost countenance a little. Sedov came over to us uneasily, just as though some danger were threatening the director.

"All the same, Pavel Pavlovich, you must tell me what has happened to Ignati. I'm facing a serious test, and you're bringing me off my balance... Tell me, Pavel Pavlovich!"

First of all the director pretended to be thoroughly frightened, then he sighed with relief.

"Uff—you young devil! Fall on me like that!.. Well, here you are, then: the airman Ignati Sharonov has been awarded the Gold Star and so on... Congratulations! Now that's enough news for today. I wish you a brilliant success."

"For today?.. Then there's something else?"

He waved his hand and ran back from me to the entrance. The others hurried after him. Petya first started to follow them, then his steps slowed, he stopped, stood looking after them, turned sharply and came back.

Never before had I started with so light a heart. From the beginning I was full of the one thought which made my

heart tremble with joy and my hands tingle. Ignati a Hero of the Soviet Union, with the Order of Lenin and the Gold Star... Lisa active and energetic like a Komsomol... I felt blinded, drunk with it. I envied Ignati and was filled with dreams of Leningrad... where every clod of earth is dear to me from childhood. I shook with rage. Those wolves' fangs bared in Pavlovsk, in Pushkin, in the Park where the curly-headed youth dreamed of freedom, where he studied at the Lyceum, in Peterhof, they had wrecked and destroyed the palace and the fountains... Is it possible to forget it, even for a second? Can any love of work deaden this unbearable pain?

There was one time in the Caucasus when I joined a group of Cossacks who were going, a whole crowd of them, on horseback and on carts, to fight the locusts. It was the first time I had ever seen those disgusting vermin. They crawled along irresistibly, in a dense continuous mass, their globular green eyes gleaming dully in the sunshine. They rustled like dry leaves. I fancied that these billions of insects brought a sickly stench with them. It was a horrible, irresistible invasion of rapacious filth. They crawled over the grain fields to strip them. Hundreds and thousands of people were digging deep ditches, and far away, from end to end of the land, horses dragged stone rollers to crush the foul brood. The little monsters poured into our ditch like a waterfall, but could not climb out again up the sheer sides. And very soon the ditch was full of a seething dirty green mass. We threw spadefuls of earth on top of the vermin, covered it up and watched with disgust how the earth stirred. We ran back to another line to dig fresh ditches. We jumped to the next line to dig new ditches and people were awaiting the enemy, spade in hand, the enemy that seemed to seethe in the sunshine and it seemed as though there would never be an end of it.

The Germans... Yes, they are locusts which have flowed into our country. They are a horde of butchers, frenzied with their hangings and shootings, tortures and outrages on defenceless people. Villages burning, towns blown up; and along the bare road under the low-lying clouds, an endless procession of women and children, dragging along, guarded by soldiers. Prisoners being driven to slavery—to a slow tormenting miserable death. And it might be my Lisa holding Lavrik by the hand, who was going into the hopeless distance, menaced by the enemy's guns, in the mud, under the cold rain.

This is the picture that often haunts my dreams.

But now, despite myself, there was joy in my heart: Ignati had received the Gold Star! I wanted to laugh out loud like a boy, stamp and shout with all my might. Even my very lathe seemed to be smiling. I wondered what plane Ignati had been flying—maybe one of our stormoviks? Couldn't he feel my invisible presence in the most important parts of his machine?

I took off the first group of parts and examined them with my usual sharpness and instinctive alarm. I could see my comrades' attentive eyes following me. Probably I was pale—those good fellows who think such a lot of me were pale too. I pulled over the lever of the speed box, and the pulse of the lathe quickened. Probably, I thought, Ignati feels the same triumph when he alone boldly tackles several of the enemy and sends them down with a cool, calculating certainty, or breaks through furious flack and dives down onto German tanks batteries or trains.

Petya came up to me, but made as though he were not in the least interested in my work, but in the hydraulic press which stands in the central passage behind me like a triumphal arch. Raising his head, Petya watched this huge mechanism in an absent-minded manner, as though disapproving of its slow, springy movement. But I knew well enough why he had taken up his position beside my lathe. His heart was beating rapidly too. It even seemed to me that his face had hollowed and his lips darkened.

I laughed, looked at him slyly under my brows and waved my hand to him. He approached slowly, raising his brows questioningly. But when he met my laughing eyes, he shrugged his shoulders and shook his head reprovingly.

He took up a part and examined it, then moved quickly to the lathe and became absorbed in watching its movements.

"Good. How much, though?"

"Don't worry. I'll do more than fifteen."

"I don't doubt it, Nikolai—this is just the beginning."

He disappeared behind the other lathes, but when he came out in the passage to the left, I could see the operators gathering round him, not letting him go on.

Setting my teeth, I gave the gear lever another turn. I'd give her all she could take, devil take it!..

In the morning Sedov came—alone, his eyes red with sleeplessness.

"I'm not disturbing you, Nikolai Prokofyevich?" he asked gently, with a diffident smile.

"You're welcome, Alexei Mikhailovich."

"Until now I thought myself invulnerable, but tonight I've been half crazy... Well, how's it going?"

I laughed.

"And I, on the contrary, feel brisker and fresher than last night, when you—excuse me—dragged me into that celebration meeting..."

"Oh, drop it, Sharonov! Haven't you the sense to see that it wasn't you it was done for... Let's drop the subject... Tell me—how many?"

I reported calmly:

"By the end of the shift I hope to bring it up to seventeen quotas..."

Sedov is another one of ours, a Leningrader, another friend from my young days. But he is in some way different from Petya Polyntsev and me. There always seems to be some sort of dividing line between us, he seems to be full of thoughts that he keeps to himself.

When the time came for supper, I felt that I could eat nothing. I was filled with such excitement, such inner triumph, that it seemed to be transformed into a physical feeling of joyful strength. I saw nothing of what was going on around me as I urged on my machine and with a keen delight felt throughout my whole body the grinding of the cutters biting into the metal. Silver shavings and dust scattered and fell, oil streamed onto the cutters and sprayed out in a golden shower. Yet at the same time, even in my very hair, I could feel the human breath, the human crowd in the huge shops. And the warmth was human—living, close, comforting, while the rumbling and talk of the machines, the breathing and creaking of the gigantic presses and the voice of the electric motors could not be separated from it, just as the life of my lathe could not be separated from mine.

After the whistle the workers rushed up to me along all the passages.

"Well, what about it, Nikolai Prokofyevich?"

"Congratulations, Nikolai!.. My word, there's work for you!"

"How much? Actually seventeen?"

And suddenly I was deafened by clapping.

A whole procession came to meet me. It was headed by the director, who held out his hand to me, shouting:

"Congratulations, congratulations, Nikolai Prokofyevich! Let me embrace you, my good fellow, my dear comrade!.. Heroic Leningrad's lived up to its name here too!.."

IV

I came home in the best of spirits, had the finest wash and rubbed my chest and back with a wet towel. Agrafena Zakharovna met me at the entrance. She was standing in the kitchen door and her affectionate smile made me smile too. She is a wonderfully tactful woman and seems to have an instinctive understanding of both her husband and myself. She knows when to be silent and keep out of the way, when to meet one with her simple, motherly talk, when to come to the door and invite one in for a cup of tea... I've never heard a rude word from her, nor complaint about hardships and difficulties. And when she tells me how many hours she has been standing in line in the frost at the shops, in a crowd of half-frozen women, then it is them whom she pities, and not herself, and tells amusing little stories about it all.

"How sick the people got of it!.. In the frost, and the wind... and some of them with children... They're heroines, too!" She would laugh softly and shake her head. "It takes a plaguey deal of trouble to feed you all..."

As I passed her I nodded to the closed door of their room.

"Is he asleep?" I asked with the familiarity of one of the family.

She frowned in pretended disapproval and nodded quickly.

"I forced him to bed, the stubborn old mule, washed him myself and rubbed

his back for him, like a child... He's fighting with himself all the time... He can't keep away... Wants to go back to the furnace. I gave him a cuff, undressed him, took off his boots, pushed him into bed and locked the door on him." And she laughed with kindly triumph. "Let him stay there a bit, the crazy loon... I won't let him out for anything... And now it's time to look after you a bit... Come in here, Nikolai Prokofyevich, and have a cup of tea, it's freshly made."

"I'll have tea with pleasure, Agrafena Zakharovna, and especially with you, for you're a wonderful woman."

She is always quiet and calm, as though nothing could surprise her. One feels that if a fire broke out or German planes came over, she wouldn't get excited, she would be as calm as ever and wipe a smile from her lips in the same way. Unhurriedly she would look after her husband and myself and with gentle insistence get us into a place of safety, and then go to save her household. At first glance it might seem that she is indifferent to everything, that she can find nothing new on this earth. But when you come to know her better, you're surprised to find how much motherly tenderness and care there is in her! She knows what my Lisa is suffering in Leningrad, cut off from all the rest of the country, and how badly I feel sometimes; how not only in the shop, but at home too there is only one thought driving me—to fight for my Leningrad, for my own people, for my country. She knows it all, sees it all but never once have I heard her sigh or try to console me.

I sat down at the kitchen table with her. The stove made it very warm there. On the fire something was boiling and bubbling; without saying a word Agrafena Zakharovna poured me out a glass of strong tea, pushed over to me the sugar and the tongs, opened the oven door and pulled out a tray of well-browned curd cakes. Just as silently, she carefully laid them on a plate and pushed them nearer to me on the table.

"What's that you're doing, Agrafena Zakharovna?" I protested. "How can you deprive yourself of such things in these days? I'll gobble up all the curd cakes, and then what'll Tikhon Vassilyich have?"

"Eat them, eat them, Nikolai Prokofyich, and enjoy them... There's enough for all. There's nothing I like better than to see folks enjoying my cooking..."

She stood there with a businesslike air, waiting for me to take a curd cake.

"I shan't touch a thing till you sit down and have some too."

"Where can I find the time to be sitting here with you?.. I've got to run to the shop, I've got a place in a line there."

But all the same she sat down—but only to push the saucer with the pieces of sugar closer to me.

"But I've got my own sugar, Agrafena Zakharovna. Why waste yours on me?"

She looked at me with her wise grey eyes and shook her head reprovingly. I felt ashamed of my pettiness, just as though I had unintentionally insulted her. And probably to make me feel more comfortable, she poured herself out a cup of tea, took a curd cake and carefully broke it in half. The hot cake with its crisp brown crust crackled appetizingly. Crumbs of curd fell onto the table, and Agrafena Zakharovna carefully gathered them up. I took a curd cake, sank my teeth into it and revelled in the hot crust, its wonderful crispness and the flavour of the baked curds.

"You eat them all, Nikolai Prokofyich, I made them for you. You've had a hard night. Hard enough, but you came out on top!"

"How do you know, Agrafena Zakharovna?"

"I can see it. Your eyes are like a child's. And you're enjoying my curd cakes."

"They're delicious, Agrafena Zakharovna. I've eaten nothing like them since I was a child."

"When you're feeling light-hearted, Nikolai Prokofyich, then you always have a good appetite. You'll never know failure."

I laughed.

"Indeed! Everyone has his failures."

"But you won't. There may have been failures before, just from sheer rashness, but now there won't be. You're like a mill, you grind everything down, and gold comes out. Just like my old bear. Neither of you can sleep quiet in his bed. Today my smelter came in like a devil out of hell. And keeps on growling: 'The Kirovites won't put it over on me! They've one problem to

solve, I've got two.' And there I sat by him and him growling..."

She stood up, wiped away a smile, blinked and bent down to my ear.

"If my sleep-shy starts making a fuss, don't you let out a peep. You go to bed and not a sound out of you... He'll think there's nobody home, and he'll flop back into bed again. That's the only way..."

"No letters for me, Agrafena Zakharovna?"

She did not answer, but began putting on her coat.

"I can't make it out, why there's no letter from Lisa for so long..."

She calmed me with a reproof.

"They're fighting there too... you and Tikhon aren't the only ones..."

She went out into the entry in her sheepskin coat, with a warm shawl on her head. Then she quickly returned and tapped sternly on the table with her finger.

"And see that you eat it all up... mind you, don't get me angry..."

Her simple, homelike care went right through me.

One of their rooms had been given to me—that meant I had upset their lives, crowded them. The old, experienced worker, whom the factory was proud of, surely had a right to rest in peace. But he met me cheerfully, almost as though it were a pleasure.

"It's nothing, don't worry yourself, Nikolai Prokofyich. Close quarters never hurt anybody. Nowadays people have to come closer together, and the closer they are, the stronger they are. We're working people, we've got to stick close together."

At that time, when I was sitting there confused and uncomfortable, Agrafena Zakharovna stood some distance off, and said nothing. And when I glanced at her, I thought she probably detested me, as though I were some kind of enemy. When I asked if I might bring my things and spend the night, even if only in the kitchen, she smiled.

"And why in the kitchen, Nikolai Prokofyich? You can see for yourself that your room's at liberty—make yourself at home. Tikhon Vassilyevich will go with you and help you bring your stuff along. Why be shy? After all, we're your own people. Look at all you've suffered! Your very heart must be scorched..."

And Tikhon Vassilyevich, a thickset man with a scorched face covered with stubble and blood-shot eyes, carrying with him a smell of slag, smiled good-naturedly and winked at me, jerking his head at his wife.

"She hasn't much to say for herself and doesn't make a fuss, but her heart's in the right place."

And however much I protested that I did not need Tikhon Vassilyevich's help, I could not convince him that I had only a bag, a folding bed and a bundle of bedding which I could quite easily carry myself, the more so as they were at the Palace of Culture right alongside. Silently, with a quiet smile, he put on his coat, while Agrafena Zakharovna, pleased, stopped wiping the smile from her lips.

At that time Tikhon Vassilyevich made a strange impression upon me. He seemed kindly and friendly, but never looked me straight in the eyes—his gaze would avoid my face and wander over the tables, the wall, or his own hairy hands. He never looked at Agrafena Zakharovna either. I felt very awkward, and that evening I made up my mind that I was unwelcome, that they had only bowed to necessity. For several days I was tormented by this uncomfortable feeling. When we were walking together along the pavement in the dusk, in the direction of the factory lights, he said nothing, but sometimes gave a rasping cough. I should have expected that he would have endless questions to ask me—of Leningrad, for instance, of the fighting on its approaches, of the way the factories were working during these terrible days and nights, when the sky blazed, filled with thunder and the roaring of aircraft.

We had unloaded our train on the territory of a giant Urals factory, and had immediately began fitting up and equipping the blocks, where construction had been halted since the first days of the war, and the very walls were only half finished. In addition, we had been allotted space in three of the older shops, occupying half of each "box". This town, like all the Urals towns, had been stirred up like an ant-heap; the whole land from the north to the southern slopes of the

mountains was rumbling metallically and alive with hundreds of thousands of people, trainloads of them arriving day and night, tired and harrassed. In the old town all the clubs, several schools, museums and buildings in the university settlement had been taken for factory shops. The streets, yards and boulevards were crowded with all kinds of machines and piles of rusty parts of all shapes and sizes. All the apartments and hostels were filled to overflowing, newly arrived engineers and workers packed together, several in a room. The town's only hotel and the Peasant House were also full, and in the corridors and the entrances women and children with submissive, harassed faces sat or lay on their luggage.

Tikhon Vassilyevich and I walked along without exchanging a word. He had a heavy, weighty step while mine seemed somehow light-spirited and pert. Probably I seemed to him slight and ridiculous. The silence wearied me, but he seemed to enjoy it. At last I could hold out no longer and said somewhat challengingly:

"The uninvited guest is worse than the Tartar, as the saying goes. Although we're not guests, we're at home in the Urals too, but all the same, we've come down on you like an avalanche. There'll be some things'll have to be broken down here, Tikhon Vassilyevich, and we'll start something new too."

My words seemed not to touch him—he said nothing, and blew his nose. I felt still more oppressed, and anger rose in me. What the devil did he want to blow his nose for, like a bear? Was it all the same to him, what the country was going through? I wanted to ask him angrily what the other workers thought of the way we had invaded their factory, but suddenly he said good-naturedly:

"Everything'll shake down, everything'll find its place. . . and the people'll shake down together too. . . It's easy to break things down, but not so easy to put them together again."

"We have a strict time limit, Tikhon Vassilyevich. Our factory must be going full blast within one month."

Again he was silent for a long time, then laughed and cleared his throat sceptically.

"Well, what about it? Everything's possible. Limits make no difference. We'll help you all we can."

There was the same tedious kind of talk on the way back. He carried my folding bed on his shoulder, I the bedding and some kind of a bundle.

He had a wonderful gift of going without sleep for two or three days at a time without losing his usual calm—the calm of a strong man. And when he went to bed, he would fall asleep in an instant. His rumbling and snoring seemed to shake the house. But very often, especially in the last days, he would wake again in an hour or two and leave the room, his face swollen with sleep, but with an alert sparkle in his eyes. The whites were always blood-shot, but his eyes did not pain him.

I ate my curd cakes with the greatest enjoyment, looked at the stove to make sure that no coals had fallen onto the floor, and went into my own room. And as soon as I saw my bed with its comfortable pillows, I suddenly realized that I was dead tired. I undressed, forgetting everything, drunk with sleep, and the wall, the table, the blue morning sky seemed to float before my eyes and become somehow unreal...

V

It was one o'clock when I awoke, I had slept soundly, dreamlessly. Actually, I did not awaken until Agrafena Zakharovna's knock on the door aroused me.

"You've done enough snoring, Nikolai Prokofyich! . . Time to get up! You've slept plenty!"

"I'm getting up, Agrafena Zakharovna. And how's Tikhon Vassilyevich? Hasn't torn down the wall yet?"

Agrafena Zakharovna laughed.

"Gone off to the factory. . . I came home, and he was sleeping like a baby. I wakened him myself. Eh, he was furious, shouted at me, but I just looked at him and shook him, laughing. Well, he saw that he couldn't scare me with his noise, and started laughing himself. . . "

"You're shrewd, Agrafena Zakharovna!"

"Shrewd, is it. . . Got to be shrewd to deal with you menfolks. . . Now hurry and get dressed. . . The director's been here looking for you. I wanted to wake you, but he wouldn't hear of it: 'Not on any account,' he said, 'let him have

his sleep.' He'd come at one o'clock, he said. A real good sort, he seems."

I jumped out of bed and started hurriedly flinging on my clothes. I was filled with uneasiness. Why had Pavel Pavlovich come himself to me at home? That had never happened before. It must be something important that had brought him. I remembered yesterday's conversation about Ignati. . . Ignati. . . Hero of the Soviet Union. . . Even in my sleep the joy of it had filled me. But Pavel Pavlovich had not told me everything, he had kept something from me. He knew me well, was evidently being careful of me. He put me off with a joke. I had felt at the time that he had not told me all there was to tell, but I had thought the rest concerned the details of Ignati's exploit. Now my heart was filled with foreboding. Had something happened to Lisa? No, he had spoken cheerily about her. He had praised my father, too. Could Lavrik be dead? But he had answered my question with the ordinary phrase: "everything all right". What was it then?

I plugged in the kettle, went to the window and began listening for the sound of a car. The street was quiet. Warmly dressed women with marketing bags passed the window. A cart filled with wood rattled past. The horse was shaggy with hoar forst, and steam was rising from it. A bearded old man in a patched coat was walking beside it, holding the bridle. I sat down by the table and opened a book by Hülle on milling-machines, but immediately threw it down again. I heard a motor horn and jumped up from the stool and dashed to the window. A lorry filled with furniture rumbled by.

But why should it necessarily be bad news that had brought Pavel Pavlovich? Perhaps he wanted to talk privately to me about Petya, who was going through such a bad time, and who was closer to me than to anybody else. . . Or perhaps Pavel Pavlovich was going to fly to Leningrad within the next few days, — he had already been once,— and wanted to ask me what messages I had for Lisa and if there was anything I wanted him to do for me. . . But this idea did not lessen my anxiety.

I did not notice it when a car drew up, did not hear the bell; the first thing I noticed was Buyerakov's ringing voice in the entry. I dashed to the door, threw it open and met Pavel Pavlovich's broad smile. He entered the room quickly and rubbing his hands cried:

"Well, there's a frost for you today. Giving us a nice dose—of Ural's pepper..."

I took his hand.

"Why didn't you wake me, Pavel Pavlovich?" I asked. "That's too much!"

He shook my hand and looked at me reprovingly.

"Indeed that would be a nice thing... What for? You needed sleep good and proper. I just looked in, in case."

His eyes were without their usual twinkle. It even seemed to me that he felt a little uncomfortable.

"Is your kettle boiling? There's nothing I'd like better than a glass of tea."

He sat down by the table, looked around the room and then took from his pocket a pipe and a rubber tobacco pouch. I made the tea and got out the glasses. Buyerakov seemed unable to find anything to say, and appeared to be feeling awkward. I watched him out of the tail of my eye, unable to stifle my uneasiness. For a long time I had known him as a good administrator and organizer who had grown up with our factory and devoted himself to it utterly and entirely. Often he was brusque and demanded much of people, but at the same time he was a simple, kindly, transparent soul. He was fond of a good joke, enjoyed jolly talk, and often his witty keen mockery urged people on more than any reprimand. But whenever he learned that some worker or engineer was in need, or sick, he was the first to come to his aid. There had been a case in our shop when an old worker fell ill and was taken to the hospital. The next day Buyerakov visited him bringing a singlet and felt boots, sat by his bed for a little while, joked with the old man and raised his spirits, and as he was leaving, asked him if there was anything he needed.

"If only I had some cabbage now, Pavel Pavlovich," answered the old man. "Sour cabbage. . . I feel that if I could only have some cabbage I'd get well at once. . ."

And that very same day Pavel Pavlovich brought him a jar of pickled cabbage. And at that time it was no easy matter to find.

Puffing at his pipe and looking around him, he began talking in ordinary tones, as though wanting to cheer me up.

"You probably haven't the slightest idea, Nikolai Prokofyich, how far you have shot. It's all round the factories. And we're losing no time in rigging the other lathes with your gadget. You and Polyntsev are to arrange it. Start right off with your own section. But the next shop's pulling us back. We've got to make a bit of a change there. They aren't looking for inventions and improvements. And discipline's bad. We want to ask you to head a brigade, get things going there, create a new atmosphere."

He was purposely dragging things out, so as to find the best way to approach me and calm me with shop talk. His delicacy touched me. I placed a glass of strong tea before him and taking my own glass, sat down at the table opposite him. We exchanged smiles, and in his screwed-up eyes I saw something of forewarning, of sympathy. He poured his tea into the saucer, placed a piece of sugar in his mouth and began drinking the tea with enjoyment, blowing away the steam—it was cold in the room.

"Our Leningrad people in that shop are not showing the slightest initiative. And although the shop manager's a well-known engineer, he was appointed hastily. But young folks are hot-headed and impatient. One can work with them and work well, they only need to be organized, spurred on and got competing."

I could no longer keep up the role of hospitable host, and interrupted Buyerakov.

"Pavel Pavlovich, I've guessed what the matter is. You've not come here to discuss business with me. You've not just come on a visit. You have something special to tell me..."

He emptied his saucer, placed the half-filled glass back on it, and fixed me with a searching look. Then he thrust his pipe into his mouth and began to light it, watching the flame.

"You see, it's this way, Nikolai Prokofyich. . . We're in the middle of a battle now. And our strength lies in the fact that we, bolsheviks, never give way under any blow. Our people know how to endure any trials, they know how to sacrifice themselves, they know how to fight and win. We are hardy folks, and we always go forward. I know that you're a strong man, a little impulsive, but staunch and determined. And for that reason, I have no intention of hiding the truth from you. Though of course you would have known it anyway, if not today, then tomorrow. But that doesn't alter anything."

I checked him impatiently with a gesture.

"There's no need for an introduction, Pavel Pavlych. You've known me long enough. Tell me straight out: has anything happened to Lisa? Or the child?"

And he looked at me searchingly and puffed at his pipe.

"No, they're all right."

"Well, what is it then?"

"There you are. . . going crazy. . ."

I took myself in hand and began rolling a cigarette.

"Why crazy, Pavel Pavlych? It's not strange if I'm impatient. One may expect any kind of blow these days. And I'm prepared for anything. . ."

"That's the main thing, Nikolai Prokofyevich. See what a terrible thing happened to Polyntsev, but he's working splendidly, as always. And my brother was killed, he was a Baltic sailor, and my sister and her children were shot in Pushkin. . . But, my friend, that mustn't bring us off our balance. On the contrary, it should make us fight all the harder."

"Then something's happened to Ignati, Pavel Pavlych?"

"Yes. . . Came down with his plane in flames behind the enemy lines."

I stood up and grasped the edge of the table. My heart seemed to stop beating, to freeze. I must have turned very pale, for Pavel Pavlych also stood up looking alarmed, and came to my side.

"Don't worry, Pavel Pavlych. . ."

His face cleared.

"You know, Nikolai Prokofyich, I think it's early yet to give up hope of Ignati. To come down with one's plane doesn't necessarily mean to be killed. There have been cases when airmen have crossed the front-line and came back. . ."

With quick gulps he swallowed the rest of his tea and knocked out his pipe in the ash-tray. I wanted to take his empty glass and fill it again, but he covered it with his hand.

"We won't try to lull ourselves with

hopes, Pavel Pavlych. Even if Ignati landed safely, all the same, the Germans would get him at once. And there's one thing I'm sure of—Ignati would never be taken alive."

"I've no doubt of that, Nikolai Prokofyich. But let's wait and see. Yours is a lucky family, as your old man always used to boast."

And Buyerakov laughed warmly.

"Tell me, Pavel Pavlych, when was it that Ignati received his title of Hero of the Soviet Union. After his death or before?"

"A few days ago. And he came down six weeks ago. The order is in the papers. You'll read it today or tomorrow."

He laid his hand on my shoulder and again searched my face with a kindly sternness.

"I understand very well what you are feeling, Nikolai Prokofyich. But I know as well that you won't flinch. . . whatever happens. . ."

Tears chocked me, but I tried to control myself.

"Oh, what would'nt I give that German bastard if only he were here!" I sighed, clenching my fists, and my lips trembled.

"We're giving them something worthwhile as it is," he said smiling, putting his pipe into his pocket. "We'll soon be smashing them so that there'll be nothing but dust left of their equipment and of themselves together with it. . . To put it in a nutshell, we here in the rear are fighting not so badly too. You know that our Leningrad factory is scattered in various places and now these parts of the factory have become large-scale, independent places like ours. And that means something."

He looked at his watch and rose hastily.

"Time to go. Get your things on!"

"Why, where do I need to go?"

"I'm getting the shop-managers and technologists together to discuss some practical questions."

I obeyed him automatically, without the vaguest idea what it was all about. The director's voice seemed to be thundering, but at the same time to come from a great distance. The frosty air brought me to myself somewhat. The snow was blindingly white in the sun and the sky seemed covered with hoar frost. Instead of accompanying Buyerakov into his car, I told him politely but decidedly that I preferred to walk.

"Well, that's as you like. . . For that matter, I'd like to walk myself. But they're waiting for me."

The car swiftly disappeared in a cloud of snow.

I crossed the road and walked along the boulevard, under the trees with their twigs covered in thick, fluffy white frost.

. . . No more Ignati, I should never see him again. Perhaps he had been burned together with the plane, or perhaps he had been seized by the Germans and died under terrible torture. It would be foolish to nurse any hopes that he might have been saved. . . The war had dealt me another cruel wound, one that would never heal. Wounds dealt the spirit remain. Ignati was like a part of myself.

Now it was Lisa's turn, Lavrik's, my old man's. . . Leningrad was gripped by huge German forces. Thousands of guns and machine-guns were pounding its suburbs, and heavy shells were battering its century-old buildings. On the streets, people fell among the shattered fragments, hit by splinters. Lisa running along the pavement, exhausted with hunger and cold, going to or from work, with the burning eyes of a brave ascetic. . . whistling a shell flies over and explodes somewhere near. . . flinging up her hands, she falls to the ground. . . I trembled and clenched my fists, groaning. There, that was where I should be, and not plodding away in a shop a thousand miles off, in safety! . . There, where my Lisa was running about the streets or standing at her lathe, under shell-fire and bombs, where my Lavrik with childish rashness pulled his sledge about the yard till a heavy shell rushed at him. I must be there, defending them, or else my nearest ones, my infinitely dear ones would be torn from me, as Ignati had been. I must defend them whatever happened or perish with them. . . To Leningrad, to Leningrad at once!

The Committee of the Communist Party occupied several rooms on the first floor of the factory-office building. I noticed only that there were some people in the corridor, and that someone greeted me. I replied without seeing who it was. Rosy-cheeked, wild-haired Olya held out her hand to me gaily. I asked her to tell Sedov that I had come

to him on personal business and begged him to see me.

"But he said himself that if you came, you were to go in at once. As soon as the person with him comes out, you go in."

She rose quickly, seized a packet of papers and ran out of the room.

So Sedov knew about Ignati's death too, he was expecting me. . . He had known yesterday, of course, but had spared me, like the director. All the better, it will be easier to talk to him. . . He was expecting me, he knew that I would come to him and tell him all that was in my heart. An old comrade and friend like he was could not fail to understand me.

I halted in front of the map of the European part of the U.S.S.R. There it was, the red circle that denoted Leningrad! Compressed in a ring! And in that ring Ignati had died. And I was here, in the forests of the Urals heights, where not a single enemy aircraft could penetrate, where it took three weeks for Lisa's letters to arrive. Here I was making guns and aircraft which were annihilating the Germans. Yes, making them. . . but not flying them, not seeing or feeling the force of my blows. . . Not seeing my shells tearing the foul bodies of the murderers, and burning their tanks. . .

A tall, lanky man in a black leather coat came out of the room, and Sedov appeared in the doorway, accompanying him. He waved his hand to me in greeting, and it seemed to me that he looked at me with concern.

"Come in, come in, Nikolai!"

He took my arm and we entered the room. I sat down in an armchair, and he took his seat behind the writing desk.

For some time we were both silent. He looked at me expectantly, then turned away from me a little and seemed lost in thought. Unconstrained by my presence, he rested, and for the first time I saw by his swollen features and the deep folds on his forehead how weary he was. I very much liked his Gipsy-like features—the swarthy face, energetic-looking nose, black, burning eyes, thick curly hair: it seemed to embody great strength, an iron will and self-confidence. His dark-blue cloth shirt with the wide turned-back collar made him seem pleasantly simple and accessible. I had known him when he was still a Young Communist, we had studied in the workers' faculty together, shared our sports and hunting trips. After that, he had entered the machine-construction institute, and for some years we had not met. But he had returned to us at the factory as the second secretary of the Committee of the Communist Party. At that time he had been simpler and more impulsive, and the three of us—he, Petya and I—had spent whole evenings together in my room in eager talk. At that time Lisa was still a student, dreaming of astronomy and physics. Often enough she dragged me to the observatory at Pulkovo, and through the telescope we would gaze at the moon, Saturn, or Mars. We became acquainted with all the astronomists, both the famous older men and the young students, "terribly clever fellows", as Lisa called them. With sparkling eyes she would tell us thrilling hypotheses of the origin of the solar systems, of nebulae, of great worlds. . . Petya would fall into side-splitting ecstasies and stretching out his hand to her, would declaim:

Secrets unfold before our eyes,
Distant worlds shine forth. . .

Glorious days of our youth! But now Sedov no longer joined our intimate circle. Though for that matter, it was not often that Petya and I could spend much time together at home—no time. It always seemed to me that Alexei Sedov carried some great burden. When did he sleep? One could find him in the shops day and night. In the course of the day he managed to do his work in the Party Committee and to attend to the shops, and get to town, visit the Regional Committee, the Town Committee—and go through the whole factory.

He turned to me again and again looked at me expectantly.

"Ignati's dead, Alexei Mikhailych. . ."

Quietly, as though speaking to himself, he replied:

"I know. . . I know, and feel for you very deeply, Nikolai. I was very fond of Ignati."

Overcome with agitation, I jumped up from the chair and began pacing up and down the room.

"I am a soldier, of a combatant unit, Alexei!" I cried hotly. "I fought in the

tanks against the whiteguard Finns, and I didn't fight so badly, either. You know that yourself. And it's my duty to take Ignati's place. To remain here in the shop, when the enemy's strangling Leningrad, when he is trampling over our country—no, that I can't do any longer. . . it's more than I can stand. . . I've no right. . . I'm going to the front, Alexei. . ."

Sedov listened to me, calmly and patiently, and I could see that if I had gone on talking for an hour, he would not have attempted to interrupt me. My hands were trembling as I lighted a cigarette.

"Have you done?" he asked, looking at me under his brows.

"Yes."

"Well, you see, it's this way, Nikolai. . ." He leant back in his chair. "You're right. And I understand you very well and sympathize with you. Sit down and don't get so excited. Let's talk quietly and sensibly."

He took a packet of cigarettes from the desk drawer and without looking at me, struck a match. He lighted the cigarette only when the match had nearly burnt out.

"You see, it's this way. . . I don't think it was to rest or to save our lives that we were sent here. When we were sent here deep into the rear, we were being moved forward to front-line positions. And you are fighting here no worse than Ignati or any tankman or artilleryman."

"That's not it, Alexei, you are just clothing the work of the rear into language of the front."

"And have front and rear got two different languages? The government knew who should be sent to the front and who should be sent to arm and supply the forces. And to leave your working position in the front-line of defence production, even for the fiercest fire on the battle-field, would amount to desertion no less than running away from the trenches. Your seventeen important parts in place of one increase the output of arms many times over. Which is better for the front—you, as a fighter, just one man, or a whole battery of guns and a squadron of aircraft? That's putting it in the dry language of mathematics. But from the psychological point of view? On the battle-field you would send one shell against the enemy, and the roar of the gun would satisfy your feelings, your longing for vengeance. But apart from direct personal feelings, we bolsheviks must take a broader view and realize that the defeat of the enemy and our victory are ensured by flooding the front with arms and equipment. Is it possible that you have lost your balance so much as to lose that understanding and sense?"

He was silent, looking at me intently. In his eyes there was reproof and sadness warmed by affection. Undoubtedly I had troubled him, he had not expected such a mutiny from me. He rumpled his curly hair and smiled.

"Don't be hot, my friend. I know it is hard for you. Lisa's there, your little boy's there. Ignati perished. The Germans are bombing and shelling the city. And that's the reason for the storm in you. Isn't it?"

"It is and it isn't."

"It is, and nothing else, Nikolai. I'm not blaming you or accusing you of anything. I repeat that psychologically it's all very right and natural. Even inevitable. But that's only impulse, instinctive reaction. And we're people whose first duty is to the state."

My face burned. I felt myself weakening under Sedov's penetrating glance. But he was agitated too. Nobody could have noticed it except myself, but our long years of friendship had taught me to understand his inward feelings by small signs that other people would never have observed.

He stood up, took another cigarette and lighted it from the first.

"Do you remember, Nikolai, you once said that in our working class, a firm layer of cultured workers had grown up during the Five-Year Plans. These are the advanced people, those who can see far. Many of them have received a higher education without leaving work. In a word, a real working class intelligentsia. During the war they have shown themselves to be the decisive force. Who is it that is working out the new technology today? They are, together with the engineers. Where did the movement of those who fill the quota a thousand percent come from? It came from them. By means of various gadgets, lathes are being made semi-automatic, and even workers with slight qualifications and adolescents can work

them. The use made of time has been concentrated a hundredfold. Ten years ago it would have seemed a miracle, but now it is accepted as a natural thing. I hope that you yourself are one of these advanced working intelligentsia."

Again he fell silent and looked at me, awaiting my reply. I also rose, and we smiled at each other. He approached me and extended his hand. I grasped it and pressed it warmly.

"Well, what about it, Nikolai? You'll continue fighting in our positions, then?"

"Yes, we'll work, Alexei, we'll keep up the fight without sparing ourselves."

He laughed, shook his head reprovingly and said jokingly:

"Well, and what a devil of a hot-head you are, Nikolai! Turbulent as ever."

He walked with me to the door.

"When you write Lisa," he said evidently moved, "give her my greetings. And don't forget to tell her about this dramatic meeting of ours."

But of his own wife he said not a word.

VI

The Leningraders form the kernel of our shop. There are about a hundred and fifty of us, most of them around the same age as myself. We are all good friends, but there are three who are nearest to me.

First there is Vassya, a tall, thin fellow with laughing, shining eyes which look with intent, merry expectancy. He competes with me with the utmost good humour and enjoyment, and not only gets excited about his own successes, but is equally delighted at mine.

Then there is Mitya, small in stature, shy, silent. At first glance one might put him down as a gloomy pessimist, but actually he is the best fellow in the world, affectionate and dreamy. He plays on the guitar with great feeling, and could spend all his free time with it.

And lastly, there is Yakov, with flaxen hair, invisible eyebrows, haggard looking, apparently always dissatisfied about something. He works at his lathe with an angry zest, continually talking to the tools and other things about him as though they were alive.

They usually come and spend the evening with me once a week, and we either visit the Palace of Culture and go to the cinema, library or a concert or walk along the boulevard.

Vassya came first. When he was still in the entrance his voice could be heard joking with Agrafena Zakharovna—pretending he wanted to kiss her hand, but kissing his own by mistake and crying out in pretended chagrin:

"Missed the mark again! Have I gone blind or something?"

"Don't worry, Vassili Nikitich," Agrafena Zakharovna consoled him in serious tones, "your own hand is always nearer and dearer."

"What a tempest in a teapot there's been," he said while he was still in the doorway. "At the entrance I met our chief engineer and took off my cap; and he reached out his long arm and took it from me and then stood there like a steeple. I was taken aback, didn't know what to say or do. Well, then he said to me quietly: 'I'll support your cap—it seems to jump; can't keep its place on your head.' 'Why, Vladimir Yevgenyich,' I said, 'I took it off to you.' 'But this is not the first time today it's jumped up from your head. And I don't know whether it's afraid of me, or whether it just starts to frisk when it sees me.' 'That's because I've got such a lively character, Vladimir Yevgenyich!' 'Well,' he says, 'now I shall know that even a simple cap reflects a man's character.'"

Vassya looked at me with gay expectancy and himself began to laugh. I tried to smile so as not to hurt him. He shook his head in dissatisfaction:

"H'm. . . So it didn't take on?"

"You're not up to the mark, Vassya," I said gloomily. "Your story missed fire."

"Well, what's to be done. . . Give me some tea, then. Or maybe there's something stronger? . ."

There is no electricity from six o'clock until eleven. Vassya always comes at five o'clock, knowing that that gives us time to boil the kettle before the current is turned off.

He shares a room with Mitya and Yakov, in some professor's apartment. They call him Kashchei [1], on account of his leanness, fussiness and quarrelsome disposition.

I was not in the mood for conversa-

[1] A Russian fairy-tale character symbolizing Death or Evil.—*Ed.*

tion, and Vassya's arrival gave me no particular pleasure.

Vassya came up to me and laid his hand on my shoulder.

"Never mind, never mind, Nikolai! We mustn't let it get us down. Aren't there plenty of other people who have had losses? Sometimes my heart stabs me too, but I don't want to give in. . . The devil take it! How can I get my family out of Pskov? Only with these two hands. . . and this fire. . ."

And he struck himself on the chest.

"And have I shown any weakness, Vassya? I think I have enough strength to keep myself in hand."

"I know, I know, Nikolai. But you can't hide anything from me. You can say what you want, or say nothing at all, I can see through you."

The kettle boiled, rattling the lid. I took out the plug, made tea, plugged in the stove and set the teapot on it to draw. Vassya, as though suddenly recollecting something, hastily left the room, but returned immediately and winking at me solemnly placed a bottle of vodka on the table.

"Here you are, Nikolai! The surest cure for all burns and heart diseases."

He took two violet-tinted glasses from the shelf, and also a piece of bread and several potatoes.

"Splendid!" he said in triumph. "Clever woman Agrafena Zakharovna, second sight!"

He broke off the crackling sealing wax from the top of the bottle, and striking its base against his palm, sent the cork flying somewhere into the corner.

"Eh, Nikolai, remember our young days in Leningrad. . . To youth, Nikolai, eternal youth!"

We clinked glasses, emptied them and took a bite to eat. Vassya filled the glasses again.

"And now we'll drink to your Lisa. . . To the splendid woman whom you, Nikolai, you silly fellow, should bring over here at once. Send her a telegram tomorrow!"

I swallowed the vodka, jumped to my feet, and seized Vassya by the shoulders. He smiled quietly and nodded in satisfaction.

"Sit down, Nikolai! I know just what you're feeling like, pal. Better drink to cool your feelings."

I was already tipsy and the grief in my heart seemed to melt a little. Vassya's eyes were shining and his cheeks flushed. He was always talkative, and now began to speak with especial excitement.

"You're feeling rebellious, my dear chap. . . Well, the devil take it, rebel, go up in smoke. . . only don't burn yourself up. . . No good for your own abilities. . . understand? Do you think nobody knows how you went and stormed Sedov? Of course they do. I understand you well enough, but don't you give any grounds for idle talk, remember that every step you take is noticed. You've got to be a steel pillar... Send Lisa a telegram. . ."

The bell rang, I went out into the entrance, but Agrafena Zakharovna had already let Yakov and Mitya in.

As usual, they took off their coats quietly, rather shyly and then shook hands with Agrafena Zakharovna.

"Is Vassya here?" Yakov asked me, for some reason in a whisper, stroking his hair down with his palm. "He sloped off, the blighter, and left us with Kashchei."

The boys went into the room and I into the kitchen, to Agrafena Zakharovna. She was busy at the stove.

"Where's Tikhon Vassilyich? He's disappeared into the factory just at the wrong time."

"And you try to make him see it, Nikolai Prokofyich. I'm not any law for him. I'm waiting here for him, keeping everything hot on the stove. But I feel in my bones that he won't be here today."

"Well, if he isn't here, you come to us, pay us a visit."

But she pushed me gently to the door.

The boys were sitting shoulder to shoulder, drinking tea. The bottle was already empty. Mitya sat silent, indifferent, while Yakov told him something, laughing.

Mitya rapped on the bottle,

"When did you manage to drink that vodka away with Uncle Nikolai?. . That's an object lesson for you!. ."

Everybody laughed, and then Mitya quietly took a similar bottle from his trousers pocket, knocked out the cork and filled his glass. At that moment the light went out. There was a chorus of startled "Oh's!" I lighted the oil lamp.

"And who's managed to empty my glass?" asked Mitya disgustedly.

Yakov soothed him with a quiet smile.

"It's dried up, Mitya—flown away. What are you so surprised about? Spirit means the same thing as ghost. I looked it up in the dictionary."

"And you'd catch that spirit on a foggy night. . ." said Mitya threateningly, and half-filled a tea glass. There was more laughter.

I was deeply touched. These were real friends, they had come to try and distract me, to drive away my sad thoughts. I wanted to laugh as I watched their awkward efforts to get me interested in everyday affairs and raise my spirits with a friendly glass of vodka. And it had probably been no easy matter to get.

We drank another glass each, and Mitya quietly brought in his guitar from the entry and sang softly:

From our far distant home,
From the Neva's white foam,
For labour that's glorious,
Achievements victorious
To the Urals we've come. . .

Song after song we sang, softly, dreamily, leaning against each other. It was the first time we had spent such a pleasant evening here.

VII

One evening Petya came to my room. He liked very much to have tea with me. He would brew it himself, lay the table, and always brought some biscuits or something sweet, or else a loaf of white bread from the dining room. As we sat there over tea he began to thaw and smile for no special reason. We talked very intimately.

"Tell me, Nikolai, what do you do at home when you're quite alone?"

"Rack my brains for new gadgets."

"Show me what you've done, after tea."

"There's plenty of time for that. I'll have to put them aside now—a new shop, new duties. . ."

"You won't drop it all the same, I know you. . ."

He placed his empty glass on the saucer and examined my work table. He laughed and winked knowingly.

"And what's that pile of papers? Are you writing a thesis?"

"I'm writing a confession," I said grumpily, confused.

"Wha-a-t? What sort of confession? My dear friend, you're an incorrigible poet."

His face took on an expression at once tender and sadly dreamy. Nobody but myself ever saw that expression, and I but seldom. This light usually shone in his eyes when we were talking about literature, our favourite authors, or of their heroes, and gradually passed over to our own experiences and memories of our youth.

"You know, Nikolai, I envy you. It seems to me that a man with the soul of a poet has moments of joy that to a man like myself, for instance, are unknown. Perhaps I knew something of the sort in the dreams of my early youth. In poetry there is a light, an intangible brightness that cannot be expressed in words. And this brightness lends wonderful beauty to life. Here you are pouring out your heart in verse, but I write nothing and never shall, I haven't that instinct. But how I long to know that inner illumination!"

"Petya, my dear fellow, we are both poets at heart. You are wrong in thinking I have the instinct of an artist. This confession. . . Well, if you want to know, it's about my actions and ties with people—a report to my own conscience on how I've borne myself in these great days of battle."

He laid his hand on my shoulder.

"Our heads are filled with romance just as before, Nikolai, but now. . . we are wiser, we've gathered up the experience of age. And we've preserved our splendid restless discontent through our whole lives—do you remember Nekrassov?

That glorious discontent, which knows
No self-deception, no stagnation,
Which e'en in our declining years
Makes us ashamed to leave our posts. . .

Petya knew the way to my heart. Such moments were rare in our lives so filled with the intensity of labour, but they were unforgettable. It was pleasant sitting there in the silence of my little room.

Ever since our childhood we had been linked by a brotherly affection, and marriage had not only failed to break this tie but had strengthened it. We had simi-

lar thoughts, similar tastes, but different characters. He treated people with condescension. He was convinced that their weakness, roughness, bad habits were due to no fault of theirs but to a poor system of education. Whereas I could not stand roughness and swearing, drunkenness or coarseness, a dishonest attitude to work, lying or deception, or heartlessness—and I would rage, go into furies at it. And when he saw me in such a state, he would treat me kindly and condescendingly, with an ironical gleam in his eyes. I would flash out at him, but he would joke good-humouredly:

"Noble knight! You're impatient, and for that reason you're unjust."

That evening he was in a disturbed mood.

"Yes, without a feeling for romance, Nikolai, our life is futile. What you love makes up your life, and your dreams sing in your soul. But dreams can only be of what is new, and a real struggle can be only for what is new."

VIII

The next morning I entered the shop which had fallen behind in production. Mostly local people were working there, young people predominating. Among the older workers, there were several from Leningrad, while the rest had come over with the shop when it was transferred from a local factory. The Leningrad people welcomed me warmly, as one of their own. They were grey-headed men with aged faces and tired eyes. They had all worked for many years with my old man. They crowded round me, shook hands and there was a warm smile in their eyes.

"Well, how goes it, Sharonov? What does Prokofi Ilyich write? How's he getting on? . . He was a lively old man, he was."

"And you, too, Sharonov—congratulations! Keeping the Leningrad banner flying. . ."

"We've got nothing to boast of here, though. . . It's rather a mess. . ."

I shook my head reprovingly and growled:

"And what have you been about, you Leningraders?"

They lapsed into a gloomy silence, offended, looking to one side or the other. One of them, whose broad bony face was seamed with wrinkles, with strands of wet hair clinging to his temples, looked angrily at his mates, brushed them aside and shouted hoarsely:

"I hate all this making a show, hate it like poison. . . I shall speak my mind and shame the devil. . . We've not done anything to write home about so far. We've done our jobs honestly and conscientiously, but here's Sharonov getting after technology and turning out twenty quotas. Sharonov's right—what have we all been doing? Nothing but whisper in corners and make a joke of it."

"And you, Khobotyev, didn't notice that you were so backward with your jokes, either?" someone caught him up spitefully.

"I joked, I tell you straight. . . And instead of getting up on our toes ourselves, we waited. . . wa-a-aited! . ." (He seemed to be viciously mimicking somebody.) "Waited for someone to come up and bow to us and say: 'Be so kind, Leningraders, as to get the machine out of the bog it's stuck in! . .'"

"Oh, drop it, Khobotyev! Why do you make a fuss about nothing? . . Is that how things were?"

"And how else?" asked Khobotyev, laughing angrily and winking. "Tell me where's the difference. . . Let's drop the eyewash, comrades. . . Would they have sent Sharonov if it hadn't been like that? . . Better cut the cackle and roll up our sleeves. . ."

And Khobotyev went to his place in disgust. Confused and shamed, the workers dispersed one by one to their lathes.

I walked through the shop to learn the general condition and order of this huge "box". The first glance showed me that all was far from well here. Even the dim, damp air seemed to weigh heavily. All kinds of rubbish lay about underfoot—shavings, moulds, pieces of metal. Young fellows and girls were strolling about the passages while several lathes were standing idle. A flaxen-headed lad was looking at me with a kind of startled gladness from behind a lathe, smiling, and his merry eyes drew me over to him. I can always pick out these young fellows of the right kind at once—something in the look of them, in their eyes, their movements breathes a love of work and an absorbed interest in what they

are doing. His lathe was well looked after, his table clean, the floor swept.

"How's work going?" I asked with a friendly smile.

"Well, how shall I put it, comrade Sharonov. . . You've made a record, while we've dirty faces. . ."

"Faces, indeed! . . Not to judge by your face for instance. . . Let's get acquainted."

"My name's Baranov. Easily remembered. I've been working two years, but it's just as though I'd only seen a lathe for the first time yesterday. I don't turn out my quota."

"Why? Your lathe's in order, and you seem to know how to work."

"The lathe's in order, but the order's not in order! I'm just finishing yesterday's work, then I must go for a supply of material and cutters. That'll cost me forty minutes, sometimes more. And there goes your quota. And then, comrade Sharonov, judge for yourself how one can work here if initiative's got stuck. Here for instance, I'm making this. . ."

He stopped the lathe, took out a shining worm-gear, turned it over in his hands and then gave it to me. It was excellent work, and very complicated. Such work could be done only very slowly and carefully on a turner's lathe. It was necessary to watch the cutters without letting one's attention wander for a second, and work the machine exactly and carefully. This part was like a plaything, but without it the machine would not move. It appeared that Baranov was turning out two or three to a shift, while his quota demanded not less than five. What was the use of my thousand percent, when this plaything was in front of me, an immovable barrier? My parts might be lying there in piles before this miserable worm gear, and it would kill them and turn them into so much worthless metal. I stood silent before Baranov, who was still smiling, looking hopefully at me, and I could see that he believed in me.

"Nobody here's really learned to work the trick with this part. Cuts without a knife, damn it! . . I swear I never shift my eyes, you may not believe me but it's true. . . it got me all upset. . ."

I could not see the fellows who were to be in my brigade anywhere—they were probably waiting for me in the office. I passed into another part of the shop and suddenly saw Yakov standing at a lathe beside a rosy-cheeked girl showing her something. Three lads were standing near them, watching his hands with the closest attention. He turned some lever twice, and the girl cried in amazement:

"Look at that, now! And we've been struggling and fussing. . ."

The young folk were talking and laughing with the greatest animation.

Yakov saw me and beckoned.

"What are you about, Yakov? Showing off to the young folks?"

"Here, you see," he said squeamishly, pointing at the lathe, "they're rolling the shanks. . . Can we afford to do it at the rate we're working? Something else is needed here, a bolt and a couple of turns. . . What could be simpler? That's what we've been doing in our shop for long enough."

He emerged from behind the lathe and came up to me, paying no attention to the young people around.

"But tell me your name!" a girl called out gaily. "I'm going to put your portrait in our shop window!"

He pushed his cap to the back of his head and waved his hand.

"I'll be here myself and you can admire me every day if you like. . . Love and kisses!"

There was a burst of laughter.

"It's more like a market place than a shop," Yakov growled angrily. "Look at the muddle, Nikolai Prokofyich! No material—so they run about to look for it; no tools—so they pinch them from a neighbour or go running to the store. And there it's like a tram stop in the rush hour. . ."

"And where are our lads, Yakov?"

"Upstairs, with the shop manager. They want to have some kind of meeting. All the chiefs are there. What about it, shall we join them?"

"No, Yakov, I'm stopping here, and you go up there and tell them it's time to start work. You and Vassya show what you can do."

With angry determination he made for the main door.

It was the same everywhere—dirt, rubbish, people jostling each other, lathes standing idle. Our shop was right alongside over the way, and there eager young people were pushing ahead, the air was

thick with ideas, there was an intense struggle going on, while here it was like a backyard in a village. Right alongside there was a real fight going on, a decisive attack, the very next shop was in the thick of the struggle, and side by side with us there were thousands of workers from the old factory where that veteran Tikhon Vassilyevich was in the thick of it, fighting for the first place in the forward line. He was already spoken about in the region as an innovator among the smelters, and he wouldn't let anyone get ahead of him in a hurry. The thousand percent movement had started, whole detachments sprung up. The barometer showed a rising storm! They were organizing front-line brigades and a kind of cross-country race. How was it that there was such a sleepy atmosphere here?

I turned back and passed between the lathes. Lads and girls began running up to me, encircled me from all sides staring at me inquisitively as though I were some sort of peepshow. I stopped and smiled at them.

"What's the matter, folks? Why have you left your lathes? Where's your discipline, eh? See somebody new and make a dash for him like kids for a conjurer. . . Is that what you call working?"

I spoke sternly, but I had to smile all the same, there was so much life bubbling in them.

"Comrade Sharonov, are you coming to us?" a flaxen-headed girl kept asking insistently, seizing my arm, and immediately her question was taken up by several voices.

"Are you going to teach us, comrade Sharonov? Yes? That'll be grand! . ."

"Well, go back to your work now, folks. I'll come to you and you can show me and tell me how you're working."

They were excited, and each one of them was wanting to get closer to me. I almost thought I could hear the beating of their hearts.

"You'll come, you really will, comrade Sharonov? Don't forget, I'm Lyuba Maslyakina. . . We'll be expecting you every day. . . I'm Olya Buravina - . . Whatever happens, we've got to organize front-line brigades. . ."

I noticed that I was hurrying back, and realized that I was on the way to Baranov. And as I went I could hear the screech of metal, the rumble of the motors and the shouts of the workers. In my own shop I hardly ever noticed the metallic voice of the machines, their smell, or that special trembling in the air which belongs to a factory. Habit makes us deaf to movement and noise. The seething life of the shop and the sound of the machinery had become my natural element. I had merged with it organically and never noticed it any more than I noticed the air which I breathed. But here, in this shop, there was something unhealthy.

From the very first day, it was necessary to start organizational work, to make the people put their work-benches into apple-pie order, keep their tools at hand, and help to tune up the lathes. The foreman evidently felt prickings of conscience, or else the fresh breeze which was blowing through the shop had livened him up; be that as it may, he began running about the shop like a boy. My brigade stirred up all the others, infected them with its own zeal and fervour.

While I was racking my brains to find a way of milling Baranov's part, I had a sudden idea. Not far from Baranov there was a small milling-machine which had evidently been forgotten. I went up to it and began excitedly examining it from all sides. One thing I understood—this lathe could be turned into a kind of complicated gadget. Baranov's part could be served by both lathe and worker. In order to make a number of screw-like cuts, all efforts had to be concentrated on one microscopic point at a given moment, and the steel cylinder had to be continually directed along the drawn line. To put it in technical language, a line with a large bias had to be cut with as much intense care, as much detailed exactness as is required at a manual operation. It was not surprising that the turner could not turn out more than two or three to a shift. One thing was clear to me—either the table with the part has to revolve, or else the motor with the cutters. And suddenly the memory of a mantis which I had once observed in the south flashed through my mind. It had seized a grass-hopper in its huge front legs, with nippers on the ends of them, and began to eat it, agilely moving its head and body. This rather horrible picture of the rapacious insect had remained with me. The movement of the head had been like the movement of a

motor, very neat and exact. And now as I examined the lathe, the idea occurred to me that one of its motors could be fixed so that instead of the part moving, the motor would move along the part. . .

Our brigade worked in this shop for a fortnight. We spent a great deal of time in organizational work. The shop consisted mostly of young fellows and girls. We saw that they learned discipline, learned to keep their work-benches and lathes clean and tidy, and to make the best use of their time. Three front-line brigades were organized, and the young folks were proud of belonging to them, and turned themselves inside out not to let the brigade down. They would still crowd round each of us in the dinner hour with eager questions about how we had made our records, and how they could become as good as we were with the greatest possible speed. We explained to them that first and foremost they must know the lathe inside out and use it like a musician uses his instrument, that they must learn to know the cutters and sharpen them, that they must learn how the lathe went with any and every kind of work and any number of revolutions—only then could they know how to rig it, how to increase its output with various adaptations and gadgets. And these adaptations and gadgets were their own individual affair—everything would depend on the ability of each one, his love for the job. We told them that they were in the war, and in wartime people become heroes. We often analysed the work of the best workers and of the lagging ones, made them look for the cause of their successes and mistakes, so as to avoid the latter in the future. It was all very lively and stimulating, and we ourselves found it intensely interesting, discussing the work with these young people.

The store was cleaned out and began to look like a well laid out shop, with the names of the tools and other things marked. The store manager with the shaggy cap showed an amazing activity, just as though a wind had blown the cobwebs away. Cupboards appeared by the work-benches where the tools belonging to each worker were kept. The Leningraders helped us, as well as many of the local workers, headed by Baranov. At the same time a great deal of progress was made in rationalization, under the guidance of our brigade, sometimes using the practices of our own shop, sometimes seizing on the suggestions made by the workers.

Translated by Eve Manning

LEONID SOLOVYOV

A BLACK SEA LEGEND

Prokhor Matveyevich Vassyukov, the old boatswain, prides himself on belonging to one of the oldest families in Sevastopol.

"My little house on the Korabelnaya Side was built by my great-grandfather," he will tell you proudly. "The plane tree grandpa planted is still in my garden. You won't find many families as old as ours in Sevastopol."

Prokhor Matveyevich had left his home town many a time, sometimes for a year, sometimes for two. Once he was away for more than ten years. But he invariably returned to lift the latch on the garden gate and step into the shimmering carpet of shadow cast for him as if in welcome by grandpa's plane tree.

In 1920 when the gallant Crimean campaign led by Mikhail Vassilyevich Frunze was over, the old boatswain came back to his little cottage and settled down with the firm intention of never leaving Sevastopol again. But fate decreed otherwise. The Germans came and occupied Sevastopol and now Prokhor Matveyevich is living on the Caucasian coast. He wasn't settled there by any means. As a matter of fact he had not even unpacked all of his luggage which is standing ready at any moment to be moved back home again to Sevastopol.

"No, thank you," old Prokhor will reply emphatically to all suggestions that he make his home where he is now. "I'm only here on a visit. My home is over there in Sevastopol."

An obstinate old chap!

One day he said to me:

"I'm like that chip of Sevastopol

stone. I cannot rest until I am back where I belong. You've heard about the stone, of course?"

I said I hadn't. The old man gave me a look in which incredulity was mingled with a fine scorn.

"Call yourself a Crimean? Why everybody knows about that stone. Eh, man," he said chidingly, "what if it came your way? What are you going to do with it, eh?"

Then the old boatswain relented and told me the legend of the Sevastopol stone, a stirring noble legend of the Black Sea. Subsequently I heard it from other sailors on board vessels, in submarines, in dugouts and at batteries. But though I desired it fervently the stone itself never came my way. This is how the story goes:

When the Supreme High Command ordered Sevastopol to be evacuated, the withdrawal of the Soviet forces was covered by the marines. These were true warriors, gallant and brave, made of the stuff of true heroism. They knew in advance that there would be no retreat for them. Holding off the furious fascist onslaught, they fought one against ten, one against a hundred without yielding an inch. With superb courage they stood their ground, fighting to the last breath though hopelessly outnumbered.

It should not be thought, however, that all these heroes perished. Some broke through to the mountains and joined the partisans, others managed to get away on rafts, fishing smacks and small boats and after days of fierce struggle with the elements reached the Caucasian coast.

One such rowboat had been tossing about in the Black Sea for five days, heading for distant Tuapse. There were four sailors in the boat. One of them was dying. The other three sat silently watching over the sufferer. True to the seaman's tradition of friendship and honour, they had not abandoned him when a shell splinter struck their buddy down on one of the Sevastopol's streets. They had carried him away with them to save him from falling into German hands. The three sailors had done everything they could for the wounded man under the circumstances. But that was not much for they had neither surgical instruments nor medicine. They did not even have a crust of bread or a drop of fresh water to drink. They kept themselves alive by eating starfish. But the wounded man grew steadily worse daily and hourly. Now he was dying.

When they had carried him away with them from the scene of the battle—it had been near the Monument to Lost Ships—his comrades had not noticed that the wounded man held clutched tightly in his hand a small grey stone, a chip of the granite that had been sliced off by a shell from the stone embankment. Only later when they were bandaging his wounds in the boat did they discover the stone and were about to throw it overboard when the man stopped them.

"Don't," he said feebly. "That's a bit of Sevastopol. Put it in my inside pocket. Let it lie near by heart."

The sailors did as he bid them and the stone, the fragment of Sevastopol the wounded marine had carried away with him lay against his heart until it ceased to beat. He did not die easily; he raved and groaned, begging constantly for water. The youngest of the three other sailors leaned over the side and caught a large transparent starfish with an orange stripe across its flabby middle. He tore off a piece of the slippery plasma and gave it to the sufferer—it was all he could offer his dying comrade. And the sun poured down relentlessly, the blue expanse of sea spread for hundreds of miles around and the glittering surface of the smooth water hurt the eyes.

The sailor died. . . Before he expired he regained consciousness for a while and handed the Sevastopol stone to his friends.

"I kept it because I had hoped to return to Sevastopol one day and fit the fragment into its place and cement it down firmly. Then my mind would be at peace. But until then I thought I would carry it with me close to my heart so that it would burn there like a glowing coal, giving me no rest by night or by day until I would see our Soviet flag flying over Sevastopol bay. But it is my fate to die. To you, my Black Sea friends, I bequeath this stone. Take it and guard it like the apple of your eye. This is my last request to you. Take it and lay it in its place, cement it down good and true. Let it not stray, for only the hand of a sailor can return it to its place. And now. . . farewell. . ."

That evening his comrades consigned the body to the waves. But since they

had nothing to weigh down the corpse it did not sink at first but kept bobbing up and down on the water, a grim reminder of the dead sailor's last will and testament.

The stone passed into the safekeeping of the eldest of the three remaining sailors.

After fifteen days on the open sea the sailors heard the roar of aeroplane engines overhead and soon a motor-boat came and picked them up and took them ashore to hospital.

When they were exchanging their clothes for hospital garb and the nurse asked whether they had anything of any special value they wished to have locked up in the safe, the eldest handed her a chip of granite.

"This," he said. "Take it. . . It is a piece of Sevastopol."

The nurse was surprised but she said nothing and gave the sailor a receipt for "one stone, grey, weight 270 grams".

Three weeks later the sailor was discharged from hospital. He was entitled to leave but declined and asked to be sent to the front to fight with the marines on the hottest sector. He demanded so insistently that his superiors finally gave in and he left.

He was a sniper. His score of Germans killed increased daily by three, five and sometimes seven. The Sevastopol stone was always with him; they say that whenever he sighted a German and aimed his rifle the stone would begin to burn in his breast; they say that there was actually a scorched mark on his striped sailor's undershirt. Be that as it may, the marine was fearless, and indefatigable, and he never missed. Each morning before dawn he would take up his position in ambush and at night when he returned he silently showed his comrades a handful of empty cartridges and they knew that each cartridge stood for a dead German. The small wooden box in which he kept the empty cartridges was his account sheet.

One day after two months of sniping he crawled back to his unit with a German bullet in his chest. When he died his friends found 311 cartridges in his box. They packed them up and sent them to his mother with an accompanying letter of condolence.

And the Sevastopol stone passed on to the next marine. This one was a scout, a dashing, merry youngster who went over to the German lines and brought back prisoners for questioning as easily and effortlessly as if he were bringing back cabbages from his garden plot. He even managed to make friends with a Russian girl in one of the villages behind the German lines and never failed to look her up when carrying out his assignments in the enemy rear. His commander was quite taken aback when one fine day his best scout returned from the German rear with a wife! The girl was sent to her parents on the Soviet side and the scout, of course, received a sound scolding for this incredible breach of discipline. But he soon expiated his sins by bagging a German staff major on one of his reconnoissance sallies.

When the scout was wounded and sent to hospital he handed the stone to one of his comrades, a signalsman, who was soon decorated for repairing field telephone lines under furious enemy fire.

They say that the Sevastopol stone was subsequently passed on in turn to an artilleryman, to machine-gunners—in both cases it was considered the property of the whole crew—and finally a pilot in the Black Sea air force. This pilot shot down three Junkers in battle and was wounded in the act of ramming a fourth enemy plane when his ammunition gave out. It is not known who got the stone after the pilot went to hospital. It is said that it went to another sniper: some claim that it is now being cherished by the crew of a submarine, while others swear that the flyers have it, that they have resolved not to let it out of their hands until they can fly it to Sevastopol and replace it. . . But it does not really matter who has it, for we can rest assured that it is in strong, reliable hands!

And if you want to see the stone, take a trip to Sevastopol when the war is over. You will have no difficulty in finding Prokhor Vassyukov the old boatswain on the Korabelnaya Side, for everybody knows him. The old man will take you to the embankment and not far from the Monument to Lost Ships you will see it: it will be lying in its place, firmly welded in with cement. And the old boatswain will not forget to remind you that it was put there by a marine.

Bend down, then, and put your cheek to it. For who knows, it may still be warm.

1942. *Translated by Rose Prokofieva*

YURI KRYMOV'S LETTERS FROM THE FRONT

(Addressed to his wife and parents)

Yuri Krymov did not enter the world of Soviet literature as a beginner. He did not have to begin something at this new stage in his life, but merely to continue as a trained and experienced Soviet engineer in the same direction, as a practical builder of the new way of life following a path he had long before chosen.

His first work was the novel *Tanker Derbent* (1938), which has been translated into several languages including English. The reader is surprised at the free, easy style and the simplicity of the human feelings described by the author which to some might seem too simplified and common.

The very essence of Krymov, however, was in the usual, and it is in this that we see, in the main, the excellence of his gifts.

He joined the literary world with the outlook of a man who was able to make things with his own hands and who had a fine knowledge of the value, sorrow and joys of achievement.

He did not have to make tormenting journeys into life, he lived in surroundings that he himself had created and life seemed to him simple, easy and beautiful because he saw life from the inside.

Tanker Derbent was followed by the novel *Engineer*. Yuri Krymov in his second book showed himself to be an active and strict writer who selected subjects like a young engineer selects problems to be solved, taking the most important and risky ones.

This immediately distinguished him from many others and, without knowing it himself, he began to express a new tendency in Soviet literature.

As soon as the war broke out Yuri Krymov joined the army as the war correspondent of an army newspaper.

In life he had been the complete civilian, he knew war only from books, had not experienced the trials of 1914—1918 nor the Civil War. It is difficult for such a man to find his place immediately in the gigantic mechanism of the front, it is difficult for him to accustom himself to unusual conditions and to retain, under conditions of constant danger, his tranquillity of spirit.

Yuri Krymov, however, remained his true self even here.

The war did not violate the integrity of his nature, did not reduce in him his hunger for impressions of the new life, did not lessen his solicitude for his country and hurl him into the ranks of the faint-hearted. The war showed him to be a patriot and a hero.

We have before us his letters to his relatives. In these short letters we see Krymov's character, his fine and noble patriotism.

One cannot help but be moved when one reads his persistent requests to his relatives to seek out somebody, to be sure to inform them that their sons and brothers, Krymov's comrades at the front, are alive and well. Or to be sure and write letters to those of his comrades who have lost their families and who envy those who get news from home.

Krymov's destiny was always that of his country and his people. In peace-time he had been an oil engineer, then he wrote novels and in war-time he fought.

He did this as simply and calmly as he had done everything else all his life.

Yuri Krymov was a young but monolithic writer. As a man he will long be remembered by those who knew him for his directness, courage and nobility.

I

June 27th, 1941

Dear Anna, Father and Mother,

We are travelling to Bryansk without any halts. Although there are no reserved seats the train isn't too bad. Everything is well organized and in good order. The lads are merry and bright. We are eating what we brought from home and drinking tea, in short, all's well.

Fondest kisses.

Yuri.

II

(All the following letters are addressed to his wife except where indicated)

Beginning of July 1941

My dearest Anna,

I shall reach my destination today and will then let you know my army address. I am writing this before I set off on the last stage of my journey, hence the hurry.

I am quite well and shall soon be on the job.

I am worried about you, about how you will live during the next two or three

months. What about the rest home and your courses? [1] As soon as you get my address write to me. Unfortunately that will take about twenty days.

I learnt from the newspapers that a state of emergency has been announced in Moscow. How do you spend your evenings? How are mother and S.U.? [2] Bearing up? Unfortunately it will be a long time before I get your answer to all these questions.

Kiss them for me. Convey my best wishes to all our friends and get someone to live with you or you will be miserable in the evenings.

Lots of kisses, my dear.

Your *Yuri*.

III

July 3rd, 1941 (?) [3]

My Dear,

It is already fourteen days since I left and I haven't once found time to write you a proper letter. I have not sat still for an hour and have so many impressions that I do not know where to start. I have been with my unit for three days just behind our lines. At the moment I am in the lap of nature, green all around me, wild strawberries and singing birds. The weather is fine, the sky yellowish, veiled as only an Ukrainian sky can be. Everybody is going calmly about his business, calmly cooking dinner or cleaning his rifle. From time to time however, this tranquillity is disturbed by a humming sound accompanied by a characteristic whistling. This sound is immediately followed by the orderly officer's shout: "Take cover!" Then the hubbub begins. We are already used to this side of our life and leisurely crawl, like beetles, into slit trenches. In general you get used to the war and begin to see the everyday routine side of it.

What are my impressions of my first days at the front? Firstly about our men, about the army. They are wonderful, in the best meaning of that word. They are wonderful for their humanity, their will to win, their inimitable, modest bravery. I used to think that much of what I heard about our army was exaggerated but now I see that it is the truth. The men are prepared to give their lives for their country at any hour, any minute. The troops wept when, for strategic reasons, they had to withdraw from positions that they had been defending for a long time. An officer has just told me: "Every inch of our land that we give to the enemy is torn out of my heart."

The division that I have been with for four days put up an astonishing fight. Twice they drove the enemy out of a fortified zone, completely wiped out two nazi divisions, gave two others a severe trouncing and retired only under orders.

There is a really friendly relationship between officers and men although it is based on discipline.

We have shortcomings, plenty of them, but they are not important. An army like ours can only conquer, and conquer it will. The shortcomings are obvious to everybody and measures have been taken to overcome them.

The German soldiers are apparently in a despondent mood. They are hurled into battle drunk, and when our boys launch a bayonet charge they run with their hands in the air. They don't like the bayonet, our troops say. I saw a nazi airman prisoner. He was a man of about thirty-five, looked like Ribbentrop with long hair and gloomy face. He has a Military Cross and has made fifty raids on London. In addition to this he fought in Greece, France and Poland. I will give you all the details about him when I see you. One thing he said is that our division has earned his respect...

IV

July 27th, 1941 (?)

My Dear,

I have been at the front a fortnight already but it seems like centuries. In some prehistoric time there lived in a wonderful house in the beautiful city of Moscow a writer, Krymov, who wrote novels and stories, sometimes got worked up (speeches at the Union of Soviet Writers, work on a film, reviews, etc.). How far away that all seems! It seems to me that I have spent half my life in a rattling car dashing madly along village roads, over rye fields and

[1] He refers to Nurses Training Courses.

[2] S.U. is a pet name for Krymov's father. The letters are the initials of his name and patronymic.

[3] A question mark follows the date on those letters that were undated in the original. The date of writing has been established approximately

stubble. That man, namely me, jumps out of the car, runs into a cottage and there kindly women, Ukrainians, give him milk to drink and while he drinks, his tunic unbuttoned, they look silently at him with their troubled, loving eyes. Oh, those eyes—beseeching, stubborn and loving—they are with you wherever you go. Of course you know everything about what is the most important thing for them all: "How are matters at the front? How are our boys there, Gritsko, Khvedya, Opanas? Perhaps you know them ? Are our men fighting well? Are they cutting down the nazi butchers?" You drink up your milk, answer hurriedly in general terms, try to give them some money. They won't take it. Not for anything will they take it! "My dear boy, are we so poor? Keep your money, we don't need it!" Darling, darling people! How can we grudge you anything, how can we cheer you, soothe you? It is very important to keep a bold face. That calms the people. We have a sufficiently martial air about us without that, however. Tanned and gaunt, our caps crushed flat, we have become real soldiers.

A few words about the work. I must admit that I underestimated the difficulties. I have to work literally on the run and that requires some practice. I am getting my hand in a bit. The only thing is that I am not hardened enough. Now my teeth have let me down. I go about with a gumboil and my face bandaged,—how do you like that?

I have been in action three times. I won't describe the battles to you because I don't know whether it's allowed. In any case one thing is clear: the Soviet Union is not France or Poland. The Germans are losing their offensive spirit. I interrogated one prisoner and he said that in beginning the war with Russia the Germans had made a fatal mistake. Sometimes they are seized with real panic. When our boys go for them they throw down their tommy-guns and run, holding up their hands. Our men are in good spirits. Our people can endure a lot and their patience is unequalled. I believe that by winter we'll make a better hash of them than Kutuzov made of Napoleon. . .

My dear. . . I think of you all the time. I can't well imagine how you are living there without me. I hope to get a letter from you soon. I have a definite address, now!

Write to me more often now, dearest. I send you my fondest kisses and embrace you.

I will write to mother today.

V

(*Addressed to his mother*)

End of July 1941

. . . Now, at last we seem to have got a postal address and you can write to us. The address is. . . I cannot write a lot about life here because it is too closely connected with operations and one is not allowed to write about them in letters.

Our work is made harder by the constant movements that are necessary in mobile warfare. I found out what war was sooner than I expected because when I was looking for my unit I got to the forward positions and stayed there for some time. Now I know what it is. I am taking part in a war the like of which has never before been seen, something that has never occurred in history. That is obvious even to me although I have never been in any other wars. To my no small astonishment I have turned out to be quite a decent soldier. People simply don't believe that I am a reservist and have never been at the front before. My endurance, however, could be better. Again I have a gumboil which is trouble enough under conditions at the front. Never mind, I hope to get rid of it somehow. In general the most important things at the front are patience, doggedness and endurance. Apparently I have the first two qualities and the third does not depend on me. Nothing worries me except my teeth. I have got a lot thinner like everybody else here. That is not to be wondered at: heat, always on the move and little sleep.

I see many things here that will later be real treasures for a writer. I have so many impressions that it is difficult even to describe them. The funny thing is that I have not got that feeling about the war which I felt those who fought in 1914 had. Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* doesn't show what I feel. *War and Peace* is more like it. I see how a great hatred is growing up in the people, how their

fear becomes less every day and how decisiveness and contempt for death come out more clearly. The Great National War is still only in its first phase. The idea of a decisive battle, as in 1812, is maturing in the consciousness of both men and officers. The men change before your eyes. Apparently I am changing too.

The absence of news from home is agony to me. All of you write to me together. Write often because all the letters may not get here.

VI

July 30th, 1941

My Darling,

I am taking the first opportunity to write. . . I want to tell you about an engagement fought by companies from one of our infantry regiments. The Germans hurled an S.S. Shock Regiment, the "Hitler Regiment" against them. I won't describe the artillery preparations, mortar fire, etc., to you. The finest thing happened when the enemy came into close contact with our companies. Before then they had already lost several tanks and a lot of infantry, but our losses were quite insignificant. The Germans continued to press forward. Suddenly a nazi officer shouted to our troops in Russian: "Russian soldiers, give up your arms, you are surrounded. We have come to deliver you from slavery," etc. Lieutenant Pastushenko, the twenty-three-year-old commander of Number 3 Company, leapt up out of the trench: "Battalion, fix bayonets! Grenades at the ready! Follow me against the nazi barbarians!" Pastushenko of course had not got any battalion; there was one infantry company and an attached machine-gun company. The nazis, however, were seized with real panic. They threw away their machine-guns, ammunition pouches, everything that hindered flight, and ran hell for leather to a deep ditch where they lay down. Our machine-guns raked the ditch from the flanks. The engagement resulted in two battalions of nazis being wiped out. The battle lasted quite a while. By the end of the second day the "Hitler Regiment" had ceased to exist.

On the table in front of me is a heap of photographs taken from German dead and cuttings from their newspapers which say that this particular S.S. Division marched through Greece in three weeks. It seems that it is not long since they came from Athens. The boys in our Number 3 Company are all recruits, young and unseasoned.

Naturally all our battles are not carried out so brilliantly, but I want to write about the best. Actually I have only outlined the bare facts of the battle. The trouble is that my mind is tired of describing and I have to describe this battle in notes for *Pravda* and *Sovietsky Patriot*. I don't know how to get in touch with *Pravda*. I have only just returned from the front-line, there is a lot of work in the office and I cannot get away to Kiev.

I feel quite normal, my gumboil has gone. I am getting fairly used to conditions at the front although our people (political workers) have worse conditions than, say, officers on the staff: there is too much movement and travelling with their consequent dirt and fatigue. I am glad that my work is very necessary, even essential at the front. Yesterday I saw the papers distributed and realized what our newspaper means. The newspaper is a tremendous weapon at the front. The newspaper we issue is a front-line one and not at all bad. The officers and men respect us. Sometimes the dinner hour at the front is an embarrassing time—the troops try to do their best for us: one pushes a spoon into your hand, another gives you a helping that is a bit better, while a third sits you on his greatcoat.

I think you can get some idea of what my life is like from these incoherent letters of mine. Life is not easy but full of meaning. I have probably never before lived a life so full of meaning. Of course there is the dark side of it, but I will tell you about that after the war. The most important thing you know—I worry about you and the family.

Every evening when I fall asleep, under no matter what conditions, I always think of you, especially now when we get reports of air raids on Moscow. Of course you have a permanent place in my heart no matter what happens. Do you remember that Alexei Tolstoy says somewhere: "Everything passes, events and people, only your treasured, loving heart remains." Who said that to whom

I do not remember. But it is exactly what I feel when I think of you. I have changed a lot during this month. However many months the war may last, whatever trials I may have to go through, my love for you and my gratitude for the years I have lived with you will never be wiped out of my heart as long as I live.

I kiss and embrace you, darling Anuska. Kiss S.U. and mother for me. Tell them to write more often to Kiev and to this address.

More kisses.

Your *Yuri*.

VII

(Addressed to his mother)

August 1st, 1941

I still have not received a letter from you. I have heard nothing whatever about you since the moment I left. At the same time, therefore, as you send correspondence to my army address send an immediate detailed letter to the following addresses. . . Write a letter immediately. It would be better to write several letters simultaneously as long letters are not allowed at present and I want to know about everything in detail.

I am in good health and uninjured and am satisfied with my work. Our chief is a fine man—clever, honest and well educated. My comrades are also good fellows. In short, as far as my surroundings and my work are concerned I am in luck. I am frequently in the front-line where there is fighting going on. I have seen a lot but unfortunately I cannot write about it. For this reason my letters cannot be very informative.

Every day I listen to the radio and get the communiqués of the Soviet Information Bureau. Where you are it is also like being at the front and that worries me tremendously. You get my letters but I don't get yours. We here don't consider air raids dangerous. Apparently that is because we are used to them. When I think of you, however, my heart is in my mouth. When I think of you in those conditions I have some unpleasant moments.

I move about a lot, but that is as it should be on my job. That is good rather than bad although it has its negative side: fatigue and dirt. I find that I have more endurance than I expected. During the past few years I have been getting a bit stout, but now I have got rid of it and am the lively youngster I used to be. Nowadays I am almost indistinguishable from the regular soldier, and in some ways I am even better than some of them. I feel quite at home under war conditions although I have had no real trials as yet.

There is one little thing I would like you to do: please go to Arbat Street and find a certain Maria Sergeyevna Dolgova. From her find out whether she knows where Faina Dmitriyevna Derighina is at present. She is the wife of one of my comrades. She was evacuated from Sambor and he knows nothing about her. Let me know the results by post and tell Dolgova to write to the newspaper *Kollektivist Pereyaslavshchiny*, Pereyaslavl, Kiev Region.

VIII

August 5th, 1941

My Dear,

I have just been sitting in a garden talking to one of my comrades. How well we are getting used to the war! A leisure hour when there is nowhere to go, nothing to do and nothing to upset the nerves seems a strange existence from the distant past.

There is a cinema in the little town where we are. They are showing *Tanker Derbent* and the whole of our unit has seen it. Unfortunately the sound was so bad that it was difficult to understand anything. Yesterday I wired two articles to *Pravda*. If they are published go and get the money. I have spoken on the radio twice after trips along the front. I am working a lot and am no doubt doing some good.

Write to me, my dear. . . I think so much about you and about our family, about our flat and about the lame Katka[1], and all this is like a bright little corner in my heart. When I read about the air raids on Moscow I so much want to be near the city, to protect Moscow. This is not only my wish. We all dream of defending Moscow, even of dying near Moscow. Such splendid firmness of spirit and such hatred of the nazis has probably

[1] Katka—a kitten found by Krymov during a 40° frost in 1940 in a snowdrift near a rest-home by Moscow. Her paws were frost-bitten and she became lame.

never existed in any other army, cannot, in fact, exist. We are hitting back at them hard. In the last battle in which our comrades took part, the enemy losses were about twenty to one of ours.

In six weeks of war I have learnt what our people are like and what a force our Red Army is. And our collective farmers! Whole volumes could be written about them. We can go into any cottage and the people share their last crust with us and don't want to be paid for it. What one could tell about it all! This is an astounding war. All my previous conceptions fade before the reality.

But I am being told to hurry. Fond kisses, my darling. Kiss all the family for me.

Your *Yuri*.

IX

August 12th, 1941

My Dear,

I have not written to you for four days because I have been travelling all the time.

I like my job and work a lot. It is not what I imagined, but what I am doing is essential for the troops and every day I feel my value in the army. Ours is a good crowd, they respect me and take my opinions into consideration; my work goes along smoothly.

I have a new friend, a soldier-artist who is known all over the army. We get on splendidly together. He is a fine man, a simple, modest and courageous lad. The last time I was in a serious engagement with him I realized what he is worth. At night I sleep under the same greatcoat with him, we lie in the darkness, smoke our cigarettes and talk. About what? He is a well-known artist and I am a writer, shall we say, "with a name". But we do not have any of those "intellectual" conversations such as take place between people in the art world. We talk about the fighting, about the safety of Moscow, about our relatives and our past. All of us have but one interest nowadays—the war. From morning to night we live only for the events at the front. We have, therefore, a community of interests and thoughts in the fullest sense of that word. Friendship at the front is something special and does not resemble friendship in peaceful surroundings.

Do you ever see our dear S.U.? How is he standing up to the war? What is happening in your lives? Write everything you can in a letter, it will be a great pleasure for me.

I think of you all the time. I am calm and cheerful. I am known as a brave man in the unit, but I don't know to what extent that is true.

Write to me, my dear, be cautious and careful always. I kiss and embrace you. Kiss S.U., Mother and Auntie for me.

Your *Yuri*.

X

Middle of August 1941

My Dear,

I received nine of your postcards all at once. You can imagine what a pleasure it was for me! To know that you are all alive and well, to feel your cheerfulness and confidence in victory means a lot to me. You are wonderful! When the bad time came you got better and are working. This raises my spirits. I must admit that I experienced a number of hard days and your letters came just in time.

Lieutenant Pastushenko has been killed; he was our hero and our favourite. How often he has fought whole crowds of nazis, and alone with his machine-gun has been far behind the enemy lines. The last time he brought back Political Instructor Gnoyevoy from the battlefield. He carried his comrade on his shoulders for three kilometres under fire. In the last fight a cursed shell smashed his wonderful, golden head. Nobody could bring him back. I understand and believe those comrades who were with him. All round were those swine from the S.S. and there was nothing that they could do. Two of ours were also wounded. No doubt they did all they could: they took his party membership card and removed his collar tabs and badges. I suppose there was nothing else they could do, but still I can't bear to look at them now. I think that if I had been there I would have brought back his dead body. I was not a friend of his, but I knew him and had a heart to heart talk with him. No other death has

wounded me so much. The boys in his regiment simply grind their teeth with rage. Hundreds of the boys have sworn to avenge his death and some of them have already kept their word. I also swore that if an opportunity occurred I would settle accounts with the brown scum. That will be more difficult for me than for a rank-and-file soldier (I am thinking of getting at them with my own hands). If you consider it sensibly, however, that is not really necessary. All that is required is to obey orders and do whatever is required of you. My heart aches nevertheless.

At the moment we are in the rear; ten kilometres separate us from the nazis. I can see heights held by the enemy. When I look towards them I am thinking all the time of Pastushenko.

There is a patriarchal silence in the little town where we are quartered. The collective farmers are selling plums and maize at the market. Children run along the dusty roads begging cigarettes from the truck drivers. The blackbirds, harbingers of autumn, are singing lustily. They fly in black clouds along the front-line and suddenly disappear behind the trees. Girls in white smocks are serving customers in the chemist's: salol, calcex, etc. . . . The town baths are working. The sun is shining with the bright, farewell rays of autumn. Suddenly there is a roar. Our artillery opens fire. A siren screams like the wailing of a hysterical woman; all those peaceful people, as though obeying an order, raise their eyes to the sky.

Beyond the heights there are groves of trees with more blackbirds flying there. Still I continue thinking of Pastushenko. He was very dear to me. I must stop it, however. When the war is over I will write about him, if it falls to my lot to do so. He was such a simple, natural and brave lad. Today all my thoughts are not worth a farthing. I must do things. There are wonderful people around me, heroes. Everywhere there is the same vigorous unbending spirit, a resolution to fight until victory has been won.

Write more often, my dear. I think of you all the time. Kiss mother and S.U. for me. I send you my fondest kisses, my dear.

Your *Yuri.*

XI

(Letter addressed to his mother)

End of August 1941

I have just received your postcard. Everything here is still the same. We are holding the brown swine firmly. All my comrades are alive and well. There is plenty of work. My health is satisfactory.

We have another request to make to you. Go to this address: Apartment 8 at No. 20 Kiprensky Street, Sokol, and tell Ivan Mikhailovich Tokarev that his son Anatoli is in good health. His address is the same as mine. He is a comrade of mine at the front, so please be sure to do this for him. Ask the father to convey greetings to Mikhail Shcholokov. He has written to them but has not received any answer.

I send you my fondest kisses. I am now writing to S.U. Greetings to Simochka, and to Masha Yermolinskaya and Aunt Lyuba and all other friends. My letters are like Chekhov's soldiers' letters. It can't be helped, this is war.

XII

(Letter addressed to his father)

Beginning of September 1941

I received two postcards from you. As you can see the mail is now working smoothly. I have only a vague idea of how you are living now. If you take my own life for the past ten years you will not find so many impressions and experiences as have come my way during the last two months. This is the Great National War! I expect a whole library will be written about it. It is a grand epic that contains all the material for the composition of a book like *War and Peace.*

I am getting your postcards and the lads all look hungrily at me. Many of them have not had a line from home yet. They all send you best wishes. Let Simochka and Masha write letters to them. We have Alexei Tsaruk, a real hero, with us. He is our Party Secretary. Then there is Rudakov, a private in a Red Banner Division and an excellent artist.

There is not the slightest chance of my making a trip home at present. I am so tied up with work, and there is nobody to relieve me.

Rudakov is sitting opposite me now, reading Chekhov and chuckling.

We are in the rear at the moment, where there is absolute silence. When you look around you get the idea that you are in an army camp in peace-time. That's not a bad thing for the time being.

Write more often.

XIII

September 4th, 1941

My own darling,

Yesterday I received another five postcards which you sent to Kiev. A letter is a festival for me. It is a pity they do not come more often. What is more, you write uncommonly little. I want to know how you are getting along without me, what the spirit is like in Moscow. At every step here we see examples of a firm, unbending spirit in the most varied people, from young collective-farm girls and children to senior Red Army officers. This is a real people's war, so that the Germans are, in actual fact, not just fighting against an army but against a whole people, against an unparalleled ideological solidarity, courage and fine martial qualities. Many examples of heroism amongst our people are so astonishing that a newcomer might not believe them. And how simply, how naturally, all this happens! The last thing our heroes do at the critical moment is to see themselves as others see them. They despise death because the feeling that urges them on in battle is stronger than the fear of death. You must have the same feelings. It would be fine to hear about this.

My very biggest kisses, my darling. Kiss all our people. Tell them to write.

Yuri.

XIV

Beginning of September 1941 (?)

My Dear,

We are a long way back from the forward positions. That is why I have only just found a chance to think clearly. Here in the rear everything that happened at the front seems more colossal and fearful.

I am sitting in the editorial office. On my knees I have a little kitten, a skeleton, all skin and bones. I gave him soup and took him in my hands. He rewarded me with a whole concert for this. Now he is trying to catch flies and play with my pencil. Great little people, these animals!

I don't quite know how to describe my feelings to you. In spirit I am calmer than I have been for a long time. This tranquillity, incidentally, is of a special kind. It results from everything being so definite. Whatever depends on me I do, and as far as is in my power. Events that do not depend on me progress outside my field of vision. I have few ideas in my head, only impressions. The ideas will probably come later. One thing is certain: the time for the decisive test has come, not only for me, for you and all our near and dear ones, but for our whole people, for the whole world even. The fate of generations depends on the outcome of the battles we are now fighting.

When I came to the front I thought that it would be something like the war described by Remarque, Barbusse and other writers who depicted the war of 1914. Nothing of the sort! The nearest thing in literature to what I see here is *War and Peace*. Ideas are maturing in all of us which are similar to those of Prince Andrei before the battle of Borodino. Read over that part again where Andrei talks with Pierre in a shed on the eve of Borodino.

Everyone knows why he is fighting this war. Even without reading the newspapers you realize, from mere contact with officers and men, how profound is their readiness for the decisive struggle. As for the Germans—well, I will send you a postcard belonging to a prisoner whom I myself interrogated. This postcard has been printed in our newspaper. The Germans are uneasy in spirit.

There is something else: find Sophy Dolmatovskaya immediately and tell her that Zhenya is alive and well. True, the last time we met we were in a difficult enough situation, but since then I had news of him several times, the latest came quite recently.

I am always thinking of you, my dear, and want to believe that we shall soon be together again and that our meeting will take place under happy circumstances. You will be the nearest and dearest to me until I die.

Fondest kisses.

XV

September 9th, 1941

My Dear,

We are again behind the lines. It is only rarely that enemy aircraft come buzzing through the air and then our fine long-nosed ack-ack guns get going. Our comrades went to the forward positions yesterday. So far all our people are alive, nobody even wounded. Phew! Touch wood! We are all in such buoyant martial spirits that one would think we were advancing and not on the defensive.

How can I describe my comrades to you? It is difficult to write about them in a letter. Before me is sitting Political Instructor Alexei Tsaruk, a tankman. He is a healthy broad-shouldered lad, always frowning and of gloomy mien. This, however, is only his outward appearance. He is a happy-go-lucky fellow, and his jokes are such that you always feel some kind of special, vivacious seriousness in them. The vast majority of his old comrades have either been killed or are fighting on other sectors of the front.

Another one is Senior Political Instructor Polyakov. He wears glasses and reminds one of a professor, even in uniform. He speaks rapidly and with an unintelligible Ivanovo accent. Not long ago that professor was in battle with our brigade. The way he threw grenades at the Germans wasn't at all bad. Several times he was smothered in earth from bomb explosions. His face was black and gaunt but still there was something professorial about it. Thanks to his calmness the brigade did not suffer any losses. Two of them got cut off but they turned up again, alive and uninjured. One of the two is sitting opposite me in the cottage. He is Political Instructor Denissov, a good kind-hearted boy with brown eyes. He is terribly fond of laughing aloud. He is always in the most happy mood whenever there is the slightest success at the front.

Many of the boys never hear from their families. The last time they saw their wives and children was under awful circumstances at Sambor. Their relatives left them on lorries during a terrible air raid. Where are they? What has happened to them? Still the lads are not downhearted, this is a state which they have reached after frequent meetings with death. This is the contempt for death which I see at every step.

I ask you to stir up some of the girls to write letters. Let them write to Political Instructor Alyosha Tsaruk (Alexei Ivanovich) and to Junior Political Instructor Anatoli Shcholokov. They do not get letters from anywhere, and probably will not get any.

It is a long time since I was in a group in which I felt myself to be so closely bound up with my comrades, despite all their differences. They are by no means angels but they are real comrades, soldier comrades. We are fated to be together and that means a lot.

I am changing, changing a great deal. It is difficult to tell you what the changes are. I have become more direct, more honest, that's one side of it, and the other is that I am harder, coarser and, maybe, have less feeling. My determination has increased wonderfully. I cannot even understand, for instance, how I could have got excited about all sorts of writer's rubbish, have felt my vanity wounded. All that is now a thing of the past. Life has become much more interesting. My mood never wavers. I am always in the same frame of mind. Pastushenko's death, however, made a deep impression on me.

I received your letter. What clever, good and honest letters you write! I am proud of you as well. You are a rare person, you have a heart of gold, loyal and courageous. Always remain the same under all circumstances, no matter what may happen to us. Look boldly on life. All that is absolutely essential today. You are attending nursing courses. That's good. Only one thing I fear and that is that I may lose touch with you. I'm afraid you will not be able to stand the sufferings of other people. My only hope is in your heart of gold, which will support you.

With regard to evacuating mother and S.U., I think it is too soon. I don't know what is happening but it seems to me that Moscow is far back in the rear. Maybe I'm wrong, but that is what I've been told. But you do as you think best. You can see better than I how things stand. Kiss them for me and read them this letter because I cannot write a lot.

Yesterday we received gifts from unknown women in Ashkhabad. The letter in the parcel which I received begins like

this: "Dear soldier or officer! Gallant son of our country!" It is very strange and touching to read such lines addressed to yourself. The parcel contained cigarettes, a towel, socks and lots of other things. They probably spent their last coppers to buy them. At every step you see love and solicitude for the troops and a kind of careful attitude on the part of the people, women, children and old men. When we go to a new place, people who have known us only for a week accompany our trucks to see us off with tears in their eyes.

Rudakov has just come in and I have to go. Rudakov sends you his regards. He and I are the firmest of friends. Regards from Tsaruk, Shcholokov and Denissov.

Fondest kisses, my dear. Kiss mamma and S.U.

Your *Yuri*.

There was a long silence after this letter. In April 1942 Krymov's wife received a letter from the editor of the newspaper *Sovietsky Patriot* telling her that he had last seen Krymov on September 19th, the day when the newspaper workers, surrounded and fighting their way through the German garrison, had been compelled to divide up into small parties.

In November 1943 the Moscow Branch of the Writers' Union received a letter from the Chernobayev Military Commissariat in Poltava Region informing them that a collective farmer, Alexei Kovalenko, who lived in one of the neighbouring villages, had sent in three documents holed by bullets or bayonets, an army book, an unfinished letter written by the dead man, a postcard addressed to him and the book *Tanker Derbent* accompanied by a letter of explanation. The Military Commissariat sent the Writers' Union the documents and Kovalenko's note, the latter published below (XVI).

XVI

Yuri Solomonovich Krymov was killed on September 20th, 1941 and buried on the 22nd by Oliksy Yakovlich Kovalenko. He was buried with all honours.

Inform his parents that the whereabouts of the grave can be obtained from Kovalenko, Oliksy Yakovlich, Bogodukhovka village, Chernobayev District, Poltava Region.

November 7th, 1943.

The hero fought with the Germans to the last drop of his blood until the enemy pierced his breast with a bayonet making seven wounds from which the hero died.

Oliksy Kovalenko.

XVII

(The following letter was pierced by a bayonet and badly stained with blood. Although experts have succeeded in reading most of it a number of words are still missing.)

22.00 hours, September 19th, 1941

Dear Anna,

I haven't written to you for a long time because there has been no opportunity to send off a letter. Nor is it possible now. I think, however, that a letter written will reach you somehow while that which remains unwritten will disappear without leaving a trace. So I shall sit down to write.

It is now late at night. I am sitting in a big cottage. All around me on benches, on the floor and on the sleeping shelf are my dear comrades. They are sleeping in full marching order wearing their greatcoats belted, ready to move and their arms around their rifles or machine-guns. There is a night light burning and its flickering flames send moving shadows across the white-washed walls. Sitting at the table opposite me is the commissar. He, like myself, has not slept for four nights.

What has happened, how did we get surrounded? It would take a long time to tell you this, and I don't want to anyway, because things are still not clear. One thing is indisputable: everywhere, which ever way you turn there are German tanks, tommy-gunners or pill-boxes.

For the fourth day our formation has been fighting in a circular defensive position inside a ring of fire. At night the ring around us is marked by the glow of conflagrations. They break out, first here, then there, all along the horizon, giving the sky a fantastic rosy hue. Magnificent gold branches stand out in the darkness. The stars grow pale. The glow crawls across the distant steppes and

dies down only to break out in another place. Towards morning we are to leave this village. The faces of the collective farmers are stern and troubled. The speech of the women is soft. . . the abrupt shouts of the officers. The roar of motors. The neighing of horses.

"Don't worry, comrades, we'll come back! We'll come back soon! . . "

"Come again. . ."

"And if you will be killed by the Germans?"

"If not us, then others will come. Good-bye, dear. Come on, beauty. Let's pull up the straps. . . Put a little hay on the seat. Some cold water, an egg-plant. Thank you. . . you. . . We shall soon come back, if not us then others, the same as us, not a bit worse. . . The German parasites will perish like a bad dream. Good-bye, comrades! . . No, not good-bye—au revoir!"

The road is dusty, long columns of motor-trucks and carts, the base units are moving towards the centre of the ring. The line units are marching in, being regrouped for a decisive thrust to break through. The ring is closing in rapidly. There is no longer anywhere to move to. Within the next few hours we must expect a decisive battle. There is no doubt that the formation will fight its way out of the encirclement. But how will it do it? At what cost? This is what is passing through the mind of every officer.

Under these menacing circumstances one thing happened which has great significance for me. I will write about it in detail.

During the day I rejoined my unit after having been absent for two days. I took out a damaged car. On the way, as I left a village which the Germans had entered I took ammunition that the harassed base units had not had time to get away. I took two badly wounded men and brought them away from the front-line. All night long I carried on my car boxes of grenades and two groaning, tortured men. Finally, I found a village lying-in home and left the wounded there, asking the people to hide them if the Germans came. When I went away one of the men took hold of me by the collar of my tunic and kissed me on the lips. "Comrade Major," he said, "you are dearer than a father to me." And at that moment he was dearer to me than my own future.

There was nothing extraordinary in those actions of mine, everyone of us is constantly doing similar things. Nevertheless it was good to go back to my unit with a consciousness that my absence had not meant lost time. When I arrived, therefore, I was in excellent fighting spirits. Before I had time to report to the commissar the Party Bureau had met. My acceptance into the party was on the agenda. There was I, just as I arrived, covered with dirt, bristles on my chin, sitting in the full-grown maize. Around me were my comrades, members of the Party Bureau, and active party members. Everybody had a sub-machine-gun or rifle in his hands. The guns were roaring not far away. Patrols were marching up and down in the maize-field around us. Such were the circumstances of my acceptance into the party.

The secretary of the Party Bureau and Political Instructor Alexei Tsaruk read out my application and the recommendations of my comrades, the Communist officers. They had only known me since the beginning of the war.

What astounding recommendations they were! They contained a complete description of one of the battles in which I had taken part; the description of one of the battles near Bobritsa last month was especially interesting. I looked at the ground because my eyes were smarting. You understand I have always felt that I would join the party during a fierce battle. Actually all that I foresaw has been surpassed. I joined the party at that moment when the whole formation was in encirclement, that is, on the eve of a decisive, mortal battle for my comrades and me. My spirit is astonishingly calm and I feel fine. In battle I usually am calm, but now some new feeling had been added to that usual equilibrium. Pride. The consciousness that I have not lived in vain. I rely on you. If you remain alone it will not break you. You are an excellent, honest and resolute woman. People like you do not go under.

Two o'clock at night. I have just received a report that the enemy is four kilometres from our left flank. Rudakov says that we are standing with one leg on a penny and no where to put the other. There is a glow along the whole horizon

and some sort of an ominous crackling. You can't understand a thing about what is going on, but we have seen too much of life and are not easily scared. The lads are asleep. A new report has come in. We have no units on the left flank. We are on the defensive in a circle round our position. Events are developing rapidly. Senior Political Instructor Gridchin just came up and gave me two biscuits. I have no idea where he got them from. He did not eat them himself, though, but brought them to me.

(The letter was left unfinished.)

Translated by George Hanna

CREATIVE EFFORT

I descended the steps, passed through a small room where an orderly was frying pancakes over a red-hot tin-stove and entered the room where Lieutenant-Colonel Verzenko sat. The latter signed to me to take a seat. We were old acquaintances, well-known to each other.

Officers kept entering the dugout and after reporting to the lieutenant-colonel departed. There were artillerists, liaison officers, sappers, tankists, the commander of a heavy trench-mortar detachment, the commander of a ski detachment, army doctors, two commissaries and a slight bewhiskered, shock-headed commander of a motor company. To each of them the lieutenant-colonel issued precise instructions.

The gist of the operation in hand was as follows: reconnoissance had established that the Germans were mustering a strong spear-head to drive at the right flank of one of our formations. The officer commanding this formation planned to leave a relatively small force as a shield where this blow was anticipated, and these troops were to hold back the Germans at all costs. The main forces, making three night marches, were to be shifted to the left flank. Here they would deliver a blow at the weakened sector of the German front at the very hour when the nazi assault was expected against the opposite flank. If successful, our troops were to cut off this German spear-head and surround and destroy it. Lieutenant-Colonel Verzenko was placed in command of the shock troops which consisted of several rifle battalions reinforced with artillery and tanks. He was to launch the first blow, pierce the enemy's defence and, without waiting for our main forces, to pour into the breach, to push on ahead, smashing the enemy's rear-lines and straddling the roads.

It was already midnight by the time Lieutenant-Colonel Verzenko had attended to everything, and only then did he sit down to supper.

"I seem to remember that at the beginning of this war you were only a company commander," I observed to the colonel.

"Well, we've learnt a thing or two during these last two and a half years, you know," he replied. "Panov!" he called out to the orderly. "Tea ready? And what about the pancakes?"

Panov entered with the teapot and a dish of pancakes. We both sat down.

"Yes," Verzenko ruminatingly remarked, "things have certainly changed these last two and a half years, and we've learned quite a lot. Quite a lot," he repeated. "And our officer has also changed. He now has a different and higher conception of an officer's honour and personal dignity. And there's been a stiffening of courage too. And a schooling in hatred of the enemy. All these qualities, like many others, are very important. But I'd like to speak of one particular trait which, in my opinion, is highly essential."

We lighted cigarettes and then the lieutenant-colonel went on:

"Our officer didn't possess a bad theoretical training when this war started. He had an academic knowledge of manoeuvre, tank wedge and pincers; he could size up a situation pretty accurately and knew the means and methods of waging defensive and offensive operations. There's no denying this. But he had no practical experience in warfare. And yet here we were facing the terrific onslaught of a tremendous army with a perfect practical experience in the workings of every link of its huge machinery. History shows us that such circumstances always have the most serious consequence. Before, when I was menaced

by enemy tank pincers, although theoretically speaking I knew what this meant, I found myself nevertheless at a loss. The enemy appeared to be everywhere and to be seeing everything. Nowadays, thanks to practical experience, when I find myself threatened by enemy tanks, I am fully aware of all the means and methods for warding them off, and I resort to these methods without any flurry or bustle, almost instinctively, one might say. And this is what I would call a commander's technique.

"But all this is only the foundation. The main structure still remains to be built up. And this entails creative ability. Take a good pianist, for example. Seated at the piano, he doesn't worry whether or not his finger will touch the right keys—that's technique, and is taken for granted. He is wholly engrossed in realizing his creative ideas. And it's the same with a good officer. Thoroughly conversant with the technique of his job, he has every opportunity to apply himself to a purely creative solution of his task without having to waste time on details."

Pouring himself another glass of tea and slowly stirring the sugar, he continued:

"Were you to examine carefully what precisely distinguishes the work of the best of our officers at the present time—I would emphasize, in today's unparalleled offensive of the Red Army, you would find the creative aspect in every feature: in sizing up the situation, in planning action for the attack, in delivering the blow, in stationing the artillery and reserves. No red-tape anywhere. We act audaciously, suddenly and creatively. This dumbfounds and stuns the enemy, who is accustomed to fixed, hard and fast rules and regulations, set down in black and white."

. . . At eight o'clock the heavy mortars of the Guards unit opened up, and then the action started. For half an hour, the heavy, medium and light guns of practically the whole formation pounded away at the narrow sector of German defence in front of the small village of Semyonovka. At eight thirty, Lieutenant-Colonel Verzenko's unit charged into attack. This wholly unexpected powerful blow on the very day set for their own drive on another flank, made the Germans waver. Verzenko sent his tanks and a ski battalion pouring into the breach and, pressing home his blow, turned north-west. By nine o'clock Verzenko was already in Semyonovka.

The events of the two following days seemed to me like a kaleidoscope of impressions, sensations and emotions all swiftly following one another as in a dream. Verzenko steadily pushed on towards his objective in the north-west. Although moving ahead without a backward glance, he took constant care to ensure the safety of his flanks. He gave no thought as to whether or not the formation's main forces were managing to keep up in his wake. His aim was to forge ahead, disrupt enemy communications and strike at the Germans' rearlines. He risked being cut off from the main forces but, taking the necessary precautions, he thrust forward in a deep flanking movement round the enemy troops in this area.

Spring-floods had played havoc with all the roads. Guns and vehicles got stranded in the mud so that the men themselves, floundering almost knee-deep, had to haul the machines sometimes for a mile or more. Our troops had no sleep, and little to eat. After a battle, having flung the Germans back, Verzenko's men without rest or food pushed ahead throughout the night to prevent the enemy from entrenching. This was noble toil, a supreme straining of human muscles, human will and human endurance.

At first the Germans attached little significance to this sudden blow, regarding it as a demonstration aiming to divert them from their own attack on the opposite flank of their enemy. So they continued their assaults against this flank, driving against the shield stationed there. But our shield stood, unassailable. It could neither be pierced nor even dented. Our men doggedly fought for every patch of soil, for every hillock and hollow.

It was only when our main forces began pouring into the breach that the Germans divined our manoeuvre and, ceasing their attack, began moving their troops towards this gap. Verzenko's unit, which was moving straight ahead, was the first to come under the hammering blows of the nazis.

And it was only then that I fully appreciated the significance of what the lieutenant-colonel had been telling me. I

frequently saw him during these hectic hours and had a good chance to observe him closely. He sat in his Willys smoking a stubby pipe, a map spread open on his knees—pitting his wits against his invisible opponent—a German general but a few miles away who very likely at that same moment was poring over a map just like Verzenko. Outwardly Verzenko seemed calm and composed, answered all questions and even joked occasionally. His eyes took in everything around him but with the sort of superficial gliding glance which always occurs when the mind and brain, wholly preoccupied in solving a complicated task, reacts automatically, though quite intelligently, to everything irrelative to this task. I had seen such eyes before looking at artists and inventors engrossed in work—the eyes of creative effort.

An exact conception had to be gained of what the enemy contemplated and this from dozens of signs and symptoms by no means always lucid and from the contradictory reports coming in. And this was not always achievable. At such times Verzenko would experience alarm like that of a chess player who has lost his grasp of his opponent's plans and is forced to play at random.

"Steady now, steady!" he appeared to say to himself. "Wait a bit, think it over, analyse it thoroughly, and everything will become clear." He would then put his map aside and attend to other matters.

But whatever he might be doing, the map with its intricate plotting and charting of red and blue lines remained constantly in his mind's eye. And then, wholly unexpectedly, a sudden surmise, prompted, maybe, by some insignificant report, would light up the whole picture. This was a great work of synthesis, the knack of fitting in all the endless parts of a confused jig-saw. This cannot be explained away merely as the result of technical experience. It is that subtle and striking penetration into reality which is attainable only by creative ability. And from whatever direction the Germans might launch their blow—be it at the spear-head, base or flanks of our wedge—Verzenko always foresaw the enemy's intention and forced his own will on them, frustrating their plans. His artillery was always on the very spot where the nazi tanks appeared, his sub-machine-gunners swiftly outflanked the enemy infantry who tried to dig themselves in.

Repulsing the enemy's assaults, Verzenko steadily forged ahead—this was his main task. Under cover of night, floundering along the flooded roads under the most gruelling conditions, he moved his units far forward and at dawn would drive a blow at the Germans where they least expected it.

I particularly remember one of the manoeuvres effected by Verzenko. It took place on the night following the second day of the break-through. At five p.m., before nightfall, Verzenko had occupied the deserted and devastated hamlet of Vassilki. From here ran the two roads to the small town of Pologoye where the Germans had concentrated their main forces which had been moved up here to repulse our advance. One of the roads ran fairly straight and smooth, the other, making a detour, was far inferior and our scouts reported that the latter road offered considerable difficulty for traffic. This road debouched on the flank of Pologoye.

"Well, what do you think, Ivan Petrovich? Which road should we choose?" Verzenko asked one of his officers, who had been posted with him a short while before. They both sat in a wrecked hut poring over a map.

"Not hard to make a choice, if you ask me. A flanking drive along the inferior road seems the best," was the officer's opinion. "There's no sense making a frontal attack down the straight road!"

"Not a bit of it," retorted Verzenko. "It's just on the bad detour road they'll be expecting us. From the map they'll consider this is precisely the place where we will launch our attack. Exactly the sort of thing dictated by hard and fast stereotype manoeuvre. Under the circumstances the right thing would be to make a frontal drive, along the straight road. I'm sure they've stationed only a shield force there, and booby-trapped the place."

"Head-on attack along a straight smooth road?"

"Exactly. From the point of view of manoeuvre that's the correct solution. But there's a third alternative. . ."

He summoned one of the commanders, a sapper and the weather man and the four of them held a conference for a while. Then he called out his sub-unit commanders.

On the map, Verzenko marked with a pencil the position of the forest which stretched for many miles, and which approached Pologoye from the west.

"At dusk," he said, "we'll make for the forest, where we'll seem to disappear. At night the Germans will head to meet us along this bad detour road, and will reach this spot, Vassilki, by morning. But we won't be there. What they'll find instead will be the vanguard units of our formation's main forces. Engaging this vanguard, the Germans will mistake them for us. Meanwhile we'll make a night march through this forest, which is regarded as impassable in winter, reach a point west of Pologoye by morning and cut off the Germans' road of retreat, trapping them in a bag."

After a moment's silence he added:

"I warn you, it's not going to be exactly a stroll. True, we're lucky to have frosty weather, and our weather man promises us still more frost."

I observed the officers as they left Verzenko after the conference. They were confronted with a most difficult manoeuvre. And seeing the concentrated look on their pleased and excited faces I thought of what tremendous psychological force lies latent in a creative and boldly determined plan of action. This force fires those putting it into effect, infects them with its drive and determination.

As soon as night fell, Verzenko's group headed for the woods, the sappers in the lead, clearing away the undergrowth. In full kit, and hauling along the guns, slipping and falling, rising again to their feet, the men pushed on through the rough lane being cut through the forest.

Verzenko reached Pologoye at the close of the second day, and succeeded in his task of cutting off the road of the enemy's retreat. Here Verzenko held on for another twenty-four hours until the main forces arrived, all the while repelling the fierce pressure of the Germans who were trying to break through the trap.

On the fourth day we were seated in one of the houses in Pologoye where Verzenko was quartered, and once more the orderly was frying pancakes on the very same little red-hot tin-stove.

I was now in a position to remark that during the past few days I had witnessed the creative effort of a military leader. I had seen real generalship, that drive and determination, that astonishing penetration of the enemy's intentions, that finesse, harmony and audacity of stratagem and manoeuvre attainable only by creative ability.

"There's no doubt that you're right," I remarked. "The creative approach is obviously the main thing distinguishing our officers of 1944. And perhaps this is the principal explanation of the splendid successes of the present offensive which is astounding the whole world."

"Well, not altogether," the lieutenant-colonel answered. "Offensive is the product of quite a number of elements, each of great importance. The creative approach is, of course, an essential feature, but still, it is not the main thing by itself. The main thing consists of a number of such essential features. But these are subjects for conversation in themselves. . . Panov! Any more pancakes!"

"Coming, Comrade Colonel."

"All right. Let's have them!"

EUGENE GABRILOVICH

THE HOUSE WITH THE DOVECOT

The company reached the foot of the hillside on which lay the small town. At the foot-hill a brook followed its winding course, its waters covered in thawing pieces of ice, with patches of wet snow here and there. Terraced on the hillside, small white houses reached down to the edge of the stream.

Apart from the other houses, to the right, stood a wooden building with a dovecot. Two windows of this house gave out onto the steppes, and two faced the river beyond which the company had entrenched. Company commander Lieutenant Boyaryshnikov wearing a large white cape over his shoulders, stood behind some bushes, field-glasses glued to his eyes. Meandering alleys glittering in the sun, hoarfrosted roofs of houses and clumps of pussy-willows floated across his field of vision.

The place was deserted. The people had either hidden in the cellars or had,

as everywhere else, been driven off to the west by the Germans. No signs of life could be detected in the streets of the small town. But when the first platoon rose from behind the bushes and tried to descend to the water's edge mortar shells began falling thick and fast on the eastern banks, ahead of and behind the men.

The shooting came from the town. The missiles landed with such accuracy that the men were forced to dig in, hardly having made five steps forward. They lay sprawled flat, without raising their heads. Boyaryshnikov ordered the platoon to be shifted slightly to the right. But scarcely had the men taken up their new positions when the mortar fire was transferred here. Boyaryshnikov then ordered the platoon to be withdrawn to the bushes. Hardly had a couple of minutes passed when the missiles began landing fair and square in the shrubs, shaking the frost dust from the branches.

The fighters lay motionless in the snow, having somehow or other dug in with their sapper shovels. The German mortars waxed furious, keeping up volley fire, covering every yard of land in a hail of death-dealing splinters of metal. Two missiles landed right near Boyaryshnikov, spattering him from head to foot with clumps of snow and clods of earth.

It was obvious that some invisible hand was directing the fire of the German mortars. A camouflaged observer was somewhere concealed in a spot which gave him a clear command over the whole terrain. Boyaryshnikov's glasses restlessly roved from one house to another.

Next to him, earphone pressed close to his ear, lay Efim Prikhodko, the telephone operator, who was in communication with the platoon commanders. Mortar splinters tore the tenuous thread of wire several times. And each time Prikhodko would descend to the river and crawl along in search of the spot where the wires had been torn. Despite the frequent ruptures the line worked smoothly. Right now Prikhodko lay near Boyaryshnikov, shouting into the receiver:

"Rose, d'ye hear me? This is Perekop calling!"

"What d'ye think, Prikhodko? Where d'ye suppose they've posted their observer?" Boyaryshnikov thoughtfully asked. Try as he might he spotted nothing through his field-glasses.

"It's hard to say," replied Prikhodko with a marked Ukrainian accent, "but there's one thing I don't like, Comrade Lieutenant,—and that's that little house over there—a rather suspicious house, if you ask me," he said pointing to the house with the dovecot.

Boyaryshnikov had long since marked down this particular house, but no matter how closely he examined it through the glasses, it showed no signs of life. Its windows were closed and shuttered, the square little yard, enclosed in a grey fence, was utterly deserted. There was nothing that could betray the presence of human beings.

Suddenly Prikhodko gave vent to a muffled exclamation:

"Look! Look, see that, Comrade Lieutenant! . ."

His hand pointed at the lone house standing to the right. From behind a corner a woman had appeared, wearing a white fleecy shawl. In her hands she held a basin of washing. She made her way to the middle of the yard and halted near a rope drawn across from a barn to a solitary tree which stood near the house.

"Strange!" Boyaryshnikov reflectively said. "Why this sudden pressing need to dry her laundering, at a moment like this?"

"Look, look!" Prikhodko cried excitedly.

The woman was now hanging the linen out to dry. There was something odd in the way she did this—now she would hang up a man's topshirt, then take it down, only to hang it up in another place. Boyaryshnikov attentively followed her movements. There seemed to be something intelligible in this strange behaviour of the woman. His eyes were tensely glued to the spot. Now she had hung three towels side by side, resulting in something like the Russian letter "Ш". Boyaryshnikov's heart began beating quicker. He had once read somewhere about signals being transmitted by such original yet simple means.

He kept his field-glasses glued to his eyes. The woman took two more towels and suspended them in the form of a "T". Boyaryshnikov found himself being carried away by this mysterious game,

whatever it was. He feverishly wondered how the woman would manage with her job. He already divined that she wanted to convey the word "ШТАБ"—"STAFF"—but he was still not yet fully certain of this.

"Look, Comrade Lieutenant!" Prikhodko cried. "She's hanging out a pair of gent's what-d'ye-call-ems. What a woman! . ."

And indeed, the woman was now hanging out men's underwear. They could see how she hesitated in thought, puzzled by how to manage with the letter "A". Boyaryshnikov began to have doubts as to whether she really wanted to write the word "STAFF". He put it down to a mere coincidence in the woman's movements, which he took to be some intelligible signals.

But his doubts were soon dispersed. The linen hung on the line by the woman began to flutter in the wind. She now picked up her basin from the ground and disappeared into the depths of the yard.

"Ш. . . Т. . . А. . . Б", Prikhodko slowly spelled out. "So that's what she's written! So their Staff H.Q. are here, and maybe the observer is perched right inside that house, complete with his telephone. The woman must have been surprised to see a telephone there and thought the place was their Staff H.Q. Or maybe it was too hard for her to spell out such a long word like 'Observer' . . ."

The linen fluttered in the wind. Yes, Boyaryshnikov could have no doubts now. Through his glasses he could clearly make out this word billowing and flapping on the ropeline.

"Well, what are we going to do, Prikhodko?" Boyaryshnikov said, rather than asked.

"You ought to know best, better than me, Comrade Lieutenant," the Ukrainian replied with a sly grin.

"But the woman's there, Prikhodko!"

"She's no fool, Comrade Lieutenant. Bet she cleared out a long time ago. . ."

Boyaryshnikov closely examined the house once again. Still, where could that observer possibly be concealed? For the tenth time his field-glasses came to rest on the dovecot. Its doors were open, forming a gaping black hole in the attic, but no sign of life inside it. Then, suddenly he caught the glint of glass in the sun—a stereoscope had been cautiously thrust out. Now everything was as clear as daylight.

"See, what did I tell you!" Prikhodko exclaimed. "What a woman, what a woman! . ."

Then Boyaryshnikov saw the white-shawled woman turn out from the yard-gate and quickly make her way down to the river. For several seconds he kept his field-glasses focused on her. The white-shawl showed for a moment in a neighbouring yard, then turned into a side-street and vanished from sight. The lieutenant heaved a sigh of relief.

"Come on, I'll tell 'em myself," he said to Prikhodko, taking the field-telephone receiver from his hands.

And three minutes later the battery stationed behind the company barked out its message of death. The shells screamed their way overhead and the little wooden house was instantly gripped in a ring of fountains of earth raised by the explosions. The house became enveloped in smoke, yellow tongues of fire licking skyward.

"There he runs, there he runs, Comrade Lieutenant!" Prikhodko gleefully cried out.

Bending low, a figure clad in a green tunic was seen dashing across the roof, rushing to and fro amid the flames. The small grey figure was engulfed in smoke.

"Ha! That scared him good and proper!" ejaculated Prikhodko in a jubilant voice.

The company launched into attack. The German mortars opened up again, but the missiles now landed far behind our men—there was no longer anyone to correct the fire of the German mortar-gunners.

By the evening the little town had been occupied by our men. Something drew Boyaryshnikov to make his way to the outskirts where stood that lone little house with the dovecot. He easily found it by familiar bearings—as it stood apart from the rest of the houses, way out on the northern edge of the town. On reaching the spot, all that he found were the charred walls and the chimney rising like a gaunt black finger pointing skywards.

Our gunners had done a thorough job. But Boyaryshnikov sadly stood thinking of how this house at one time

had been the home and hearth of a family which now remained shelterless. But could he have acted otherwise?

A dark figure was rummaging around amid the wreckage in the yard digging for something in a pile of ashes near the burned porch. Boyaryshnikov stepped closer. The figure straightened itself up, and he saw it to be the same woman in the white shawl.

When making his way to this spot, words of thanks kept revolving through his mind—words of gratitude which he must express to this woman. For some reason or other he was certain that he would find her. And now that he had found her, Boyaryshnikov found himself tongue-tied. The only thing he could say as he stepped closer to her was:

"You? What are *you* doing here?"

"This is my home," the woman answered simply.

A. KALININ

DAUGHTER OF THE LITHUANIAN PEOPLE

Marija Melnikaite had just turned twenty. She was of small build, had blue eyes and toil-worn hands. Marija was born in Zarasai known in the Baltic as the Lithuanian Switzerland, famed for its wonderful lakes, forests and hills. Her father was a locksmith, her mother a peasant woman. Here is Marija's biography, written by herself shortly before her death:

"I, Marija Melnikaite, daughter of Juozapas Melnikaite, was born in June 1923. My father was a locksmith and I helped him in the shop. Our family consisted of seven people. My parents owned no property, neither house nor land; we lived on my father's earnings.

"I started work at the age of seven. In 1933 I began attending school. In 1937 I again went to work. My parents were hard up and needed my help. I got work in a confectionery factory and later in a garment shop.

"When our Lithuania became part of the Soviet Union I rejoiced, for I saw an opportunity to continue my studies. Soon I joined the Komsomol organization. I became active. I attended evening courses. I thirsted for knowledge; I wanted to know all about our beloved Red Army and the Soviet Union. Not long before war broke out I worked in a collective farm, and soon afterwards came to work as a turner in a factory. I quickly learned the trade, fulfilled my norm and soon even began to double it."

Marija grew up into a diligent, modest girl. She studied avidly, read much, broadened her conceptions of the world and of people. She loved her country, its language and poetry. She knew the poem about Gražina by heart and at one time herself tried to write verses about this legendary heroine.

Gražina is the name of a national heroine of the Lithuanian people. In the ancient past, more than six centuries ago, German crusaders came to the castle of her husband, the ruling prince, and tempted him with a large sum of gold into selling his country. When Gražina saw that her husband was about to agree she donned his clothes and left the house. She assembled the army, led it against the Germans and defeated them. Only later when the rejoicing Lithuanians were celebrating their victory did they discover that it was Gražina who had led them into battle.

When the Germans invaded her little town of Zarasai Marija recalled with particular clarity all she knew of Gražina.

The Lithuanian people did not submit to the Germans. They waged a fierce relentless struggle against the enslavers. Marija found her place in this struggle. She became the organizer and inspirer of an underground youth organization. She and her friends wrote leaflets, set fire to German stores. When she realized that the fascists were after her, she turned over the leadership to her nearest friend and herself left for the villages. Wearing a simple cotton dress and a blue kerchief on her head, she went from village to village telling the truth about the Red Army and the Soviet Union. She would gather the peasants in the forests and tell them of the partisan movement, of Stalingrad, of life in Moscow, and of the stubborn battles waged by the Red Army.

"Comrades, don't listen to the Germans!" Marija would urge the peasants in her strong ringing voice. "Hide the

grain, drive your cows and horses into the forest."

In vain the Germans searched for Marija. She continued to rally the youth for the fight against the hitlerite invaders. She was in close contact with the partisans and often accompanied them on dangerous assignments.

Once the partisans had to cross a shallow but tempestuous river. The crossing was under German fire. Some of the partisans began to waver. Marija jumped into the river and, turning to those who still remained on its bank, called out:

"Drown your fear! Jump into the river! You are partisans!"

They all followed her. The detachment loved her with that great, grim love that only war breeds. She was loved by the people. The song written about her by an unknown poet passed from village to village: "Marija, Marija, you are as brave as a warrior. You are not afraid of death, for you love your people like the glorious, unforgettable Gražina."

July 8th, 1943, Marija led a group of young partisans into battle. They were surrounded by a large German punitive detachment. At eight in the morning the handful of partisans pitted against uneven forces, decided to fight till the last cartridge. Marija had an automatic rifle, a gun and three hand-grenades. In the unequal fight Marija killed seven Germans. Her friends accounted for many more. But the enemy, superior in forces, gradually succeeded in tightening the circle. The fight, which had started early in the morning, continued all day and ended only late in the evening. All Marija's comrades had fallen in the battle, she alone had survived. Her cartridges spent, she began to hurl grenades at the enemy. At last, realizing that there was danger of falling into the hands of the Germans alive, Marija, seriously wounded, tried to kill herself with the last grenade. But she was too weak already, she had no strength to draw out the linch pin. The fascists got hold of her and subjected her to the most refined torture. They broke her fingers, cut her body with a sharp knife, burned her heels and toes with a red-hot iron bar. But Marija had only one answer:

"You may kill me, but I will tell you nothing."

The Germans were after the partisans and underground workers. They promised to pardon Marija, to award her if only she would reveal the names of the members of the organization. But Marija firmly answered:

"Torture me, all the same I won't tell."

Marija Melnikaite

On hearing her death sentence Marija Melnikaite said to her executioners:

"I fought for Soviet Lithuania and now I am dying for Soviet Lithuania. Why have you come here? What are you doing in our country, you German dogs?"

Mutilated and bleeding she was brought to the square of the little hamlet of Dukstas. The local population was ordered to gather at the execution place. Slowly, proudly, Marija Melnikaite the young partisan, the Soviet Gražina mounted the gallows. Glancing at the crowd, she raised her head, threw back her dark hair and shouted in a ringing voice:

"Don't weep, the Red Army will avenge me. Long live Soviet Lithuania! Long live Comrade Stalin!"

With these words Marija Melnikaite, posthumously given the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, breathed her last.

One of the underground organizations formed by Marija cherishes the story of the life and death of Zoe Kosmodemyanskaya copied by Marija. When this story was read at one of the underground meetings, Marija had remarked:

"Should it be necessary we must all act like Zoe."

Marija Melnikaite proved this by all her short but rich life and heroic death.

K. NEPOMNYASHCHY

Coincidences, meetings, battles, incidents. . . A brief account of what the keen observant eye has seen, noticed and remembered. . . The items printed below are leaves from the notebooks of writers at the front. There is no fiction or fancy here, nothing but facts, facts from the soldier's day-to-day life, full of grim humour, hard work and furious, implacable wrath.

NIKOLAI TIKHONOV

THE FLAME OF JUSTICE

On an immense snow-covered field lay dead Germans. There were many of them. There were so many of them that it seemed that they had been deliberately driven to this place for the last judgement. The bodies lay amid charred lorries and smashed guns and mortars.

Everything was cloven and scorched as if a red-hot axe had been at work unceasingly until not a whole German, not a whole machine was left.

Here a retreating column had been caught by our Guards mortars. Brown smoke, forbidding and acrid, curled into the grey winter sky. That was the peat burning, set ablaze by the shells. The smoke of the fire merged in the distance with cordite smoke. And nothing could be made out in the distance save deserted fields. Only sometimes in the south through the curtain of fog something grim and vast set in a ruddy glow could be glimpsed. That was those terrible Sinyavin heights around which the barrage raged.

But the most awful of all were the beds and on them the eye dwelt in amazement. Innumerable beds, iron, black, ordinary beds jutted out of the snow amid the abundance of German corpses. The beds stood in straight lines as if they had been mustered on parade. And they seemed to be something on their own just as the dead Germans seemed to be on their own. There were no ruins or any traces of dwellings on that field, covered with snow and dead.

Everyone riding along the road running along a high embankment by this field of death noticed the black beds which seemed to be stamping on the torn and shattered Germans.

Once the barracks of the peat workers stood here. The Germans burnt them down. The wooden buildings were burnt to the ground. The stone foundations were buried under the snow. But the fire was impotent against the beds. They remained as witnesses of the Germans' cruelty. Maybe the people perished in the burning barracks? Maybe. . . And now the scene was pregnant with profound and grim meaning.

It had been a peaceful work-a-day life here. On such a winter day as this the dry birch wood had crackled merrily in the stoves, dinner had steamed on the tables. The people were cheery and simple. The Germans came and the silence of death gripped this plain. The people were murdered, the barracks burned. But the day of retribution came and the flame of justice descended on the butchers. They fell, pulverized, dead on the spot they had turned into a wilderness.

I could not forget the picture all day long—those black beds on which fell the dry fine snow, and those black corpses laid out in rows seared by the flame of our vengeance.

A. NOVIKOV-PRIBOY

TAKE VENGEANCE, COMRADE!

The bullet hit Lieutenant Pavlikov in the right thigh. He fell, tried to get up, but something scrunched in his thigh and the wounded man fell back limply to the ground. German tanks had broken through and were blazing away with their guns while tommy-gunners were tailing up behind them.

The lieutenant lay prone feigning to be dead. The ground shook, a tank lumbered by near him and then the throb of the engine and the clatter of the crawler-treads suddenly ceased. A minute later Germans were streaming past Pavlikov.

When he opened his eyes and turned his head cautiously he saw a burning tank hit by our anti-tank men and thought: "It's the one that passed by me." Blood welled from his wound, wetting the dry earth. The wounded man decided to wait until night and try to get to a village in the dark. There the peasants would hide him.

Pavlikov came to himself in a hut. The sun was shining through the windows and the lieutenant could not make out

whether it was still the same day or another.

A German doctor entered the hut, looked at the wounded man's swollen limb, muttered something, left and soon returned with surgical instruments. He performed an injection and a minute later the lieutenant lost consciousness. When he recovered he saw that his leg was bandaged and was supported by a ply-wood splint.

That finished the medical treatment accorded Pavlikov. A doctor looked at him again a month later when he lay in a hospital in Kursk.

After the Germans were driven out of Kursk Pavlikov was sent to the rear and in April last year found himself in Hospital No. 5357. What happened to the lieutenant on the battle-field and in the hands of the Germans was told me by the hospital surgeon:

"Pavlikov had a wound in the right thigh, the bone was broken which led to a phlegmon of a somewhat unusual nature. An X-ray photograph showed that a metal splint had been inserted into the marrow tube of the bone. We operated on the lieutenant and extracted this pin. Look, here it is."

The surgeon showed me a steel plate rolled into a tube.

"It is thirty-two centimetres long. Look at this: one end of the pin is flattened. Evidently the German hammered it into the wounded man's bone. The fascist had no compunction—for him the Russian officer was merely an experimental animal, a rabbit, a guinea pig. . . In the case of open fractures accompanied by suppuration such a pin might cause the destruction and infection of the marrow which would obviously be followed by general sepsis and a fatal outcome. But what did the German doctor care about that!

"We succeeded in saving Lieutenant Pavlikov's life but his right leg has been shortened by seven centimetres. We are keeping the pin and the X-ray photograph as a proof of the German's outrageous cruelty. They are evidence indisputable and I'm ready to show them to everyone."

LEO SLAVIN

AN AIRMAN'S VICTORY

The fine fellows I have seen at the front in thirty-two months of the war are numberless. Running through this brilliant gallery in my mind, memory always stops at a Hero of the Soviet Union, Guards Major Alexei Matrossov.

Matrossov is a bomber commander who in 1941 defended Moscow. An incident of those days is described in the major's own notebook. I supplement it with information picked up much later.

"15-12-41. 38th flight. 3 p.m. Station G. Altitude 400—200."

(This was the situation: the Germans were then being driven from Moscow. The lines were choc-o-bloc with their retreating trains.

There was a grand jam at Station G. Matrossov flew straight for the station and began bombing it. At that moment. . .)

"In the first attack an AA gun smashed the tank of 4th starboard group. . ."

(That is the main petrol tank was smashed. Matrossov's plane was enveloped in flames. The machine still had bombs in the racks and Matrossov did not want to leave until he had finished bombing. He made a second attack although his plane was burning.)

"In the second attack both engines conked out (sucking air. . .)"

(The engines stopped. There was no juice. The machine planed steadily down as it burned in the air. Matrossov, in his usual level voice, ordered: "Release the bombs!")

"Planing. Drop the inside bombs. Tank of third port group punctured. Situation critical. Am sending plane into column. . ."

(That means that Matrossov had decided to follow the example of the immortal Gastello—to drive his blazing plane into the thick of a German column. He flattened out and swept along the column and gave the order to fire. The crew blazed away with the machine-guns firing downwards. Little Matrossov had himself well in hand—his present move offered the tiniest chance of bringing them through. The crew were firing. Matrossov notes:)

"Radio operator and gunner firing well."

(On the ground the Germans were scattering to the ditches sheltering from Mat-

rossov's machine-guns. The enemy had to stop firing at the plane. At the same time Matrossov was making incredible efforts to supply the engine from the emergency tank. With one hand he guided the plane, with the other he fired the machine-gun without aiming. And then. . .)

"The port engine draws from the emergency group. . ."

(I broke off reading the note-book to ask: "At what height were you flying?" Matrossov shrugged his shoulders: "Just skimming the ground. Ten metres perhaps." The next note:)

"Start up the starboard engine from the head tank and vibrator. Depart rising into the clouds. . ."

(It was a miracle. But that miracle could be performed only by a man of incredible coolness, by one determined to be victorious, with exceptional ability to keep his head in any situation, a man of courage and amazing resources. He goes on to write with the calm of a chronicler:)

"Bombing effect excellent. Quite a lot done with the machine-guns. 3,000 bullets fired. Plane knocked about a good deal. . ."

(Indeed it had been. The navigator's machine-gun had fused from the intensity of the firing. Matrossov brought the plane home. The crew got out. The plucky fellows looked at each other and kissed in silence as if they had not seen each other for years. Here is the last line of Matrossov's notes:)

"The victory was ours."

There's nothing to add.

BORIS GORBATOV

THE SOLDIER BOYS ARE MARCHING WEST

. . . They sat in the mine and waited. Fighting was raging above ground. The glare of fires had lit the sky over Stalino for three days already. Drunken German incendiaries dashed to and fro through the smoke, set fire to houses, seized men, drove off women and murdered children.

The miners took refuge in an old mine. There were more than two hundred of them sitting with their backs to the damp walls, squatting on their heels miner-fashion. They waited—for liberty or death.

There was a roar overhead and the earth shook. The Germans had blown up the mine. With a groan the shaft fell in just as if a trap had snapped to.

Zadorozhny, a veteran, crawled up to engineer Simonov and said excitedly:

"I've had a look at the workings. . . Phillip Ivanovich."

"Well?" the engineer asked uncomprehendingly.

"Would you believe it, they are still all right."

"All right? What do you mean?"

"Come, I'll show you."

And the old men went off to inspect the mine workings. They had forgotten the Germans, the battle above them and the trap. Their minds were now full of the workings, still preserved by some miracle.

The battle was going on up above. It was still a matter of conjecture how it would end. Would our men get the better of the Germans or would the Germans manage to hold on to our land? But the old men went crawling round the workings dreaming of how they would begin the mine's restoration.

They believed that our army would drive out the Germans. They knew that our forces would prove the stronger.

Perhaps the old men would never get out of the trap. So be it. But they, the workings were safe. Other miners would come to the galleries. Other miners would send up the coal.

I met those old men in those days at the mine and shall never forget them... those unforgettable days of September 1943! The liberation of the Donbas.

In those days I learned the power of thirst: the soldiers' thirst for battle; the miners' thirst for work. It is a great power. It moves mountains.

The soldier-boys are marching west. The builders are coming to the mines. And that is the most moving thing I have seen during the war.

GORKY—A FIGHTER AGAINST PAN-GERMANISM

In many articles written against Hitlerism and hitlerite demagogy, Gorky, exposing its innate banditry content showed the inherent connections between fascism and pan-Germanism. In the striving of the nazi aggressors for world domination, Gorky, with full justification, saw the thirst to enslave other peoples so characteristic of German policy in general. As Gorky wrote, this thirst "had followed a regressive direction from Friedrich the Great to Bismarck, to the half-witted Wilhelm II, and in our day to the completely demented Hitler".[1]

The problem of the pan-German menace drew Gorky's attention from the beginning of his literary career.

At the beginning of the nineties when Gorky made his literary debut, there were already indications in German policy showing that Germany was becoming one of the more aggressive countries of the world. Wilhelm's Germany openly prepared for the coming war, it re-organized the whole way of living along the lines of Prussian barracks. Militarism finally triumphed in Germany. It was with this in mind that Lenin called Wilhelm II "the crowned bandit".[2]

How did Gorky regard what was happening in the German Empire?

Gorky was infinitely devoted to his native land. He detested reactionary militarism and racial intolerance; he observed with indignation the despicable cunning with which Russia's enemies, and Germany in particular, were taking advantage of the inefficiency and stupidity of the last of the Romanovs.

In his *Letters to a Monarchist*, published in 1911, Gorky showed how the autocracy had reduced Russia to utter decay and disintegration—a state of affairs that was very much in the interests of her enemies, "especially Russia's nearest neighbours—the Germans".

"Explain to me," wrote Gorky, addressing the Monarchist, "why the Prussian kings counselled Alexander III and Nikolai II against the introduction of sweeping political reforms in Russia? Why Prussia all the time pushes the Russian government to the Far East, into Asia? . . Is it not because it is in their interests to have as neighbour a state which is culturally backward and incapable of resistance? Is it not with the idea that in Asia we should become involved in a hundred years' war with China, weaken the latter and exhaust our own strength, thereby killing two birds with one stone? Russia would be harassed, her development retarded and menaced by the "yellow peril" which the Germans have long been brandishing in the face of Europe with the direct object of scaring Russia primarily. And while we are bound hand and foot by a war in Asia, Germany will make herself supreme in Europe, consolidate her position and then bring 'order' into our country." "Why was it," Gorky continued, "that Nikolai II, after promising to defend George of Serbia against Austria when the latter was preparing to annex Bosnia and Hercegovina, broke his word, so that the seizure of Slav territory took place, despite Russia having so many times shed the blood of her soldiers on the Balkan Peninsula?"[1]

These questions posed by Gorky in his *Letters to a Monarchist* show that the writer followed Russia's foreign policy with no less attention than her internal affairs. He was quite correct in his interpretation of the inner plan concealed behind the German policy—to

[1] M. Gorky, *If the Enemy Does Not Surrender, He Must Be Destroyed*. 1938. P. 257. Russ. ed.

[2] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XX, p. 146. Russ. ed.

[1] M. Gorky, *Materials and Researches*, Vol. I, pp. 56—57, 1934. Russ. ed.

deflect Russia's attention from European affairs to Asia, and thereby secure for herself a free hand in Europe. This, incidentally, was the object of the famous picture which Wilhelm II drew and sent to Nikolai II, depicting the "yellow peril" allegedly threatening Europe from China, a picture with the following inscription: "Peoples of Europe, defend your sacred national property." But Gorky not only discerned Germany's real aim—he also saw that the kaiser's ambitions went further, and that his Russian policy was one of aggression carefully concealed until the time should be ripe. Gorky had just this in mind when he wrote with regard to German aims: "bring order into our country". Thus, long before the First World War, Gorky forsaw a possible attack on our country by her western neighbour.

To quote Gorky's own words, he "more than once heard very intelligent and cultured Germans—writers and journalists—expressing the wish to 'drive Russ beyond the Volga and the Urals'". [1]

Gorky was well aware that for the Baltic barons the policy of the last of the Romanovs, designed to keep the Russian people in ignorance and oppression, was highly advantageous. In his *Letters to a Monarchist* Gorky put the following questions: "Why is it, Messieurs 'patriots', that your favourite heroes—Gerschelmans, Stackelbergs, Rennenkampfs and others, as many as you please, fought so badly against the Japanese and so well, so successfully and so enthusiastically against the Russian people? . . Why is it that the majority of the Baltic Germans, the barons, play the definite part of hirelings in Russian history, the role of stranglers of the Russian people?" [2]

In contrast to the liberal opportunists, Gorky understood perfectly well that it was impossible to avoid the danger threatening Russia from Germany and to paralyse the harmful German influence on the tsar's policy, without a radical change in the political regime of our country. Only in this way could Russia rid herself from German influence and foreign influence in general.

"As long as we remain what we are," wrote Gorky, "our friendship with Europeans will always be the dangerous friendship of the earthenware pot with the iron kettle. . . To prevent the foreign and—still worse—the internal enemy from robbing us, degrading us, riding on our backs, we must work... for the most elementary civil rights, we must strive to educate the country both literally and politically, we must awaken and develop its will to life." [1]

Thus, in Gorky's opinion, the first step towards ridding Russia of reactionary German preponderance was the destruction of despotism and the renunciation of the anti-national policy pursued by the tsarist government. Gorky showed that the ruling dynasty in Russia was not only deliberately retarding the country's economic and cultural development, but had long been following a political line sharply opposed to the interests of the Russian people.

Gorky ardently loved his people and longed to see them free and happy. The great writer and humanist was a patriot in the true sense of the word, and just for this reason his patriotism was free from the slightest taint of intolerance for other peoples. Never for one moment would he harbour even a thought of the "inevitability" of wars and hatred in the relations between different peoples. Long before fascism raised its head he had come out against the race theory. "I do not believe in enmity between races and nations," he wrote in his article *The Jewish Question* in 1906. "I do not believe in the existence of a specific psychology causing a white man to have a natural hatred for a man of the black or coloured races, or a Slav for an Englishman, or a Russian to feel scorn for a Jew." [2]

In Gorky's eyes, all peoples are equal, irrespective of the colour of their skins or their national characteristics; all are brothers, all faced with the same, common task—to create a life of joy and happiness.

"All peoples," Gorky wrote in 1905 in his article *On the Caucasian Events*, "Tatars, Russians, Armenians, Jews, Poles, Finns—all want one thing: to

[1] M. Gorky, *Miscellaneous literary-critical articles*. Moscow, 1941, p. 62. Russ. ed.
[2] M. Gorky, *Materials and Researches*. Vol. I, p. 52.

[1] M. Gorky, *Articles 1906—1914*. St. Petersburg, 1916, p. 201—202.
[2] M. Gorky, *Early Revolutionary Publications*. Moscow, 1933, p. 115.

live better. And all of them alike lack freedom, lack the right to live according to their ethnographic, religious customs and beliefs. What is the first necessity for the growth of any individual or nation? It is the right freely to decide their own personal and social ambitions, the right to work out the form of their common life unhampered, to provide expanse for the development of their own spirit and that of the nation. And are the Armenians depriving the Tatars of this right? Are not the Russians, Jews, and Poles bound hand and foot by that same force which lies equally heavily upon the Tatars? All of us have the one enemy. . . Let there be equality and brotherhood among us all. Let the light of reason shine through us all, let us merge in one mighty, invincible will, and then—long live liberty!"

Considering the tsarist autocracy to be the main enemy of the Russian people and all the peoples inhabiting Russia, Gorky called upon them to unite in the struggle against the common enemy. In his article *On the Russian Intelligentsia and National Questions*, written in 1912, he states: "We must realize at last that the strength of our enemy lies in our lack of organization and that we must strive for an all-Russian unity. Let each one freely live and till the soil enriched with the ashes of his forbears, beautified by all their labour, and then we shall feel ourselves and our Russia like children at their mother's breast. For each his own, and for all, everything that is good." [1]

Long before the fascists appeared on the scene, Gorky recognized and denounced the predatory tendency in German policy.

A particularly important and telling episode in the story of Gorky's struggle against German imperialism is the satirical interview entitled *The King Who Held His Banner High*[2], written in 1906. In this interview, Gorky characterized wittily and to the point the personality of Wilhelm II and his political tendencies.

This is how Gorky described the kaiser in all his dull and typically Prussian "greatness":

"His majesty entered with the firm steps of a being confident that his palace is solidly built. His majesty's royal deportment was greatly assisted by his bearing: legs stiff as a ramrod, arms rigid by his sides, not a limb bent. His eyes were also motionless, as befits one always moving in straight lines and accustomed to staring into the future."

"The being. . . raised an arm vertically in a line with the body, and pointing to the glass ceiling, stated:

"'The king and God are creators. One! Two! and God created the world. One! Two! Three! and my grandfather created Germany. And I am perfecting it!'"

Wilhelm usually approached God as a confrère, considering him his faithful ally and constant assistant. In the kaiser's opinion, his wishes invariably coincided with those of God. Accordingly Wilhelm looked upon himself as the absolute ruler of the country under his sceptre.

"I am the sole master of German policy, and my country must follow me, wherever I go," Wilhelm stated upon one occasion. [1]

Gorky aptly noted another of kaiser Wilhelm's idiosyncrasies—his cult of his grandfather, Wilhelm I, the first emperor of united Germany. His grandson tried to turn this not very gifted man, who had never claimed any great role, into a great statesman. He did this with the object of encouraging monarchic tendencies among the Germans stating that it was he, and not Bismarck, who was the real founder of the German empire.

In the author's further conversation with the kaiser, the latter's boundless conceit and smug self-satisfaction are plainly delineated. The king states:

"I and that true subject of my forbears, a certain Goethe, have probably done more than anybody else for the Germans. Perhaps I have done a little more than Goethe. In any case I am undoubtedly more many-sided than he. His Faust, after all, was simply a man of dubious morals. I have shown the world the mailed fist. [2] Everyone could understand this at once, which is more than can be said for the second part of Goethe's book."

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[1] M. Gorky, *Materials and Researches*, Vol. I, p. 71.

[2] M. Gorky, *Collected Works*, Moscow—Leningrad, 1929, Vol VII, p. 49.

[1] Bernhard Bülow, *Reminiscences*. Moscow—Leningrad, 1935, p. 148.

[2] "Faust" in German means "fist".

With these words Gorky gives an apt portrayal of the real character of Wilhelm II, the ambition and self-adulation which were unbounded, and greatly in excess of his ability and talents.

With incredible, almost idiotic self-confidence, the kaiser undertook the solution of the most varied problems—scientific, political, philosophical, aesthetic and military. "I need no general staff," he said, "I can manage alone, with my adjutant." [1] Although his education was most superficial, Wilhelm also considered himself an expert on questions of art. He not only gave his opinion on artistic works with the air of a great connoisseur, but himself attempted to be artist and poet. His pictures were distinguished for that same lack of talent as his poems, but this did not prevent their creator from considering them masterpieces.

Nor has this trait of Wilhelm II's been overlooked in Gorky's interview. On asking the kaiser what he thought of art, the writer receives the following answer:

"You should see me on parade to understand how I love all that is beautiful and orderly. . . A sonnet is a platoon of words, with the heart as the object of attack. Bayonet! And a number of lovely sounds pierces your heart! Fire! And a dozen telling words thrill you. . . I say that verses and soldiers are the same thing."

Germany's complete and all-round militarization was the ideal of his successor, Hitler and his gang who have in actual fact succeeded in turning Germany into one general barracks.

If the fascists were able to wean the masses in Germany from the habit of independent thought, this was possible only because long before the appearance of fascism the German people had been prepared for it by their earlier rulers.

Here is the opinion expressed by the kaiser on the subject:

"The best soldier is the one whose brain works not at all. The soldier is moved not by consciousness, but by the word of command. . . Quick march! And he steps out to heaven or to hell, anywhere. Bayonet! And he will stab his own father—if his father is a Socialist—or his mother or brother. . . it makes no difference! He acts until he hears the world—halt! How amazingly great are these automatic actions! . ."

The kaiser does not conceal from his interlocutor his dreams of carrying his Prussian barracks organization into all spheres of life. He says:

"It may be that I shall create the ideal state. . . I or one of my descendants. . . When man ceases entirely to think, then kings will be great and peoples happy. Money! the king demands and all his faithful subjects line up. One!—forty million hands silently delve into pockets. Two!—forty million hands hold out ten marks each to the king. Three!—forty million hands salute, and the people go silently to their work. Isn't that beautiful? You see—*the people need no brain to be happy : the king thinks for them*. The king is capable of absorbing the whole of life. . . This is my aim. . ." [1]

Like the kaiser, the fascist leaders are convinced that a brain is really unnecessary for the people's happiness, that rulers, whether they call themselves king or führer, are called upon to think for their subjects. In this instance Gorky nailed one of the main features of German "education", which has become particularly prominent under fascism. For in just this way the fascists managed to train their soldiers not only uncomplainingly, but even eagerly, to inflict any cruelty, even on defenceless civilians—old people, women and children, wounded and sick. In the nazis conscience has been deadened and every moral concept abolished. . .

Concluding his interview, Gorky intimates that, influenced by his conversation with the kaiser, he feels a longing to visit the zoo, "to look at the wise animals". "After talking with a man sometimes," Gorky wrote, "one has a great longing to stroke a dog, smile at a monkey, and respectfully doff one's hat before an elephant. . ."

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[1] Emil Ludwig, *The Last Hohenzollern*. 1929, p. 174. Russ. ed.

[1] Underlining mine. — *B. K.* — This part of Gorky's interview is reminiscent of Wilhelm's words in reply to a piece of flattery to the effect that Wilhelm was always right. "Yes, that is true," said the kaiser. "In general, the best thing for my subjects would be to do what I tell them; but they want to think for themselves, and all difficulties arise from that." E. Ludwig, Idem Collection, p. 198.

Gorky's interview is a satire directed not only against Wilhelm II, but against the whole German policy of that period. The stern sentence pronounced by this writer concerned not only Wilhelm II, but German imperialism in general.

In 1914 the pan-Germanists went over from words and dreams to actions. The spread of chauvinistic microbes, the open propagation of seizure of territory and the conquest of other peoples, the German government's insolent breach of Belgium's neutrality, the inhuman outrages on the population of captured territory, the deliberate destruction of cultural treasures—all this could not fail to have its effect on the great humanist Gorky. With disapproval he observed the growing savagery not only of the comfortable, non-thinking elements in Germany, but of the intellectuals also. The war which the German imperialists had unleashed seemed to Gorky "a celebration by some sort of monstrous swine, swine gone mad, thrusting their foul snouts into the whole world to destroy it". [1] Gorky understood that the roots of German savagery could be traced back a long way before the beginning of the World War. In 1916 he wrote to M. Pavlovich (Weltman), who worked in his magazine *Chronicles*: "To be frank, I'm a Prussophobe, for when reading history I cannot fail to see that ever since 1870, Prussia's policy has been a real force for evil, hindering the march of culture, not to mention that it is just Prussia which is the initiator of that militarism which is choking the whole of Europe." [1]

Gorky did not live to see the tragic hour when the Hitlerites, outstripping their pan-German predecessors in guile and savagery, cast hundreds of millions of people into the cauldron of a new world war. However, in all his speeches and writings against Hitlerism Gorky repeatedly pointed out the danger of German and international fascism, which threatened the whole of freedom-loving mankind. The writer foresaw that sooner or later the insolent Hitlerites, dreaming of world domination, would attack the Soviet state.

At the same time Gorky always expressed his confidence that the freedom-loving peoples would find the strength to destroy the fascist ulcer. With an innate pride and confidence in the strength of his people, the writer-patriot pointed out the historic role which the Soviet Union would be called upon to fill in this struggle.

BORIS KOZMIN

[1] From a speech made by Gorky in 1917 at the League of Social Education. *Choronicles* 1917, No. 7-8, p. 185. Russ. ed.

REMINISCENCES OF A METALLURGICAL EXPERT*

Academician Mikhail Pavlov is an outstanding scientist with great experience who has taught several generations of metallurgical engineers.

Academician M. Pavlov has an uncommon life story.

He was born in 1863 in the remote corners on the Russian-Iranian boundary, and brought up by his grandfather, a Don Cossack serving on the frontier. Only Mikhail's extreme shortsightedness induced his grandfather to think of any other future for him than service with the frontier guards. The nearest town to the Pavlov's home was Lenkoran, which had nothing more in the educational line than an elementary school. There Mikhail studied for two years. In 1874 he entered the nearest secondary school —in Baku. Baku of the seventies was a town with peculiar features. Caught in the throes of the oil fever Baku was growing economically by leaps and bounds, but was lagging behind culturally. At the time it had not a single college and consequently no needy students. "Coaching," writes Pavlov, "was done by secondary-school boys of the sixth and seventh classes who always found lessons to give." Pavlov was able to get fixed up in Baku because his grandfather undertook to supply a Baku acquaintance with game if he would take in the little schoolboy. Very soon, though, Pavlov had to stand on his own feet. He studied hard and perseveringly and just as perseveringly tried to accumulate funds to enable him to continue his education. Pavlov decided that he could live in Baku on 30 copeks a day, getting his meals mostly in the working-class eating houses—all the rest of his earnings he put by so that after finishing secondary school he could go off to study in St. Petersburg. At last the long-awaited day came. Pavlov and his comrades boarded the train at Tsaritsyn. The young Bakunians felt awkward, for they had never seen a train before.

In St. Petersburg Pavlov and his comrades immediately came up against those obstacles which the tsarist government placed in the way of the advance of Russian science and cul-

[1] *The New East*, 1928, Vol. XX-XXI, p. XXIII.

* Academician M. A. Pavlov, *Reminiscences of a Metallurgical Expert*. State Scientific-Technical Publishing House.

ture. Enrolment at the Mining Institute that year was limited to forty students. The tsarist government regarded universities and colleges as the breeding grounds of revolutionary ideas and sentiments, and did their best to limit the number of students. And do not forget that the Mining Institute then was the only higher technical school of mining and metallurgy in Russia. Later, having become acquainted with the Urals Works and their acute need of qualified engineers, and seeing that in some years the Mining Institute graduated only twenty-two engineers, Pavlov asked himself: "What can this handful do in Russia with her colossal untouched resources of all the essential minerals? Is it not stupid and criminal to limit the number of mining engineers who graduate every year?" In addition, the level of teaching in the Institute was not up to the necessary standard. This, for instance, is what Pavlov wrote of Professor Iosse, a man of German parentage: "As he closely followed foreign literature he gave much that was new at his lectures, but betrayed gaps in his knowledge of Russian literature. To quote an example, at that time the famous Russian metallurgist Dmitri Konstantinovich Chernov was living and working in Russia. As it was, however, students finishing the Mining Institute might well be ignorant of Chernov's existence." Pavlov himself learned of Chernov thanks only to his thirst for knowledge and personal research in the library. "From a French encyclopedia," he writes, "I learned of an outstanding Russian metallurgist."

Pavlov's entire life had been full of persistent unremitting labour and inspired by one idea: to make Russian metallurgy advanced and make its development independent. Practical experience, a firm will, the recognition of his abilities fortified the firm faith of Pavlov in Russian engineers and the Russian worker. Later abroad Pavlov studied Western-European and American developments in metallurgy. He was especially impressed by American blast-furnace production. In particular, as he himself says, he "became and has always remained an admirer of American automatic tipping, which obviates the ardous and dangerous manual labour in loading blast-furnaces". Pavlov studied with an eye to business. From foreign experience he drew lessons for the independent and advanced development of Russian technique.

As a student getting an insight into the practical side of things at the Hughes Works in the Donets Basin Pavlov lodged with a worker's family and became familiar with the workers at the plant. Pavlov often heard their complaints at the disregard of the administration for native metallurgical foremen: "Surely there are people to be found in Russia who could do the job," the workers said to Pavlov. "There are such men, but they won't give them a chance here. They've been smelting iron for 200 years in the Urals and doing it better than here. Why don't they bring some of them here?" The workers could not reconcile themselves to this affront to national pride.

At the Hughes Works young Pavlov observed with astonishment how a foreign foreman "scratched like an old hen" around the blast-furnace, explaining nothing and probably unable to explain anything even if he wanted to.

"No, indeed, I won't leave it at that. I'll understand you, I said mentally, addressing the furnace as if it were a living being." To this aim Pavlov has devoted his life. He learned himself and taught others to "understand" the blast-furnace. In this Pavlov was helped a great deal by the practical experience of Russian workers whom the future Academician began to value highly. "A worker at a plant in Vyatka Province told me something I had never heard at the institute from figure-primed Professor Iosse": that worker precisely characterized the different properties of various kinds of iron.

Pavlov was not isolated from the social life of the students: "I had no ties with the existing monarchical regime and the Revolution seemed to me just and desirable." In the eighties he helped store an illegal anti-tsarist publication and once hid in his rooms a revolutionary whom the police wanted. But his main interest lay in the theory and practice of metallurgy.

Pavlov did not take the easy road which in those years lured many, and at times talented engineers. He chose his path in life very early and never deviated from it. Pavlov's biography is an excellent illustration to many of Gorky's works. The writer often depicted the man of the people who stands at the cross-roads of conventional narrow self-interest tied to a soul-destroying career, and a life wholly devoted to a big creative job important for the whole country. In his time he has known young engineers who have thrown up jobs in metallurgy so dear to his heart because their parents have found them rich wives, and they have preferred a wealthy life of ease to one of hard persistent work. Pavlov has seen money-grubbers who shied at metallurgy as too hard and unprofitable, and have launched into enterprises yielding big and quick returns.

He has also seen engineers who have sullied themselves in the quest of pleasure, gambling and drinking. Pavlov's devotion to his beloved work guarded him from all these dangers.

Pavlov, who highly valued foreign experience in iron smelting, was the more shocked at seeing pseudo-experts come to Russia with the idea of filling their pockets as fast as possible and then making off with the swag. Pavlov himself built and taught others that blast-furnaces should be built in accordance with advanced methods and the rich practical experience of Russian metallurgists. Pavlov summed up the role of pre-revolutionary Russia in metallurgy in these words: "We few engineers were the pioneers in the many years' struggle against the foreign stranglehold on our southern plants. It fell to my lot to continue that struggle as a professor: soon after 1904 my pupils began to make their appearance at the works; several of them worked well with M. Kurako in the South and in Siberia and then with I. Bardin who highly valued engineer-polytechnicians and willingly engaged them. . ."

This outline only goes up to about 1905. It would be very desirable to have these memoirs continued, so that they might show the activities of Pavlov in Soviet conditions when Russian metallurgy has taken a prominent place in the world and one of its founders—Mikhail Pavlov—the grandson of a Don Cossack, has become one of the biggest researchers and practical workers in Soviet iron smelting.

J. ELSBERG

The main thread in the works of the best Russian poets of all times has been love for their people, love of their country, pride in its historical past and faith in its great future. The Young Guard Publishing House has recently brought out a collected volume of verses *Motherland* under the editorship of Prof. I. Rozanov, dedicated to this same theme. This book contains verses by twenty-eight of the best Russian poets, from Lomonossov to Mayakovsky.

It includes the majestic odes of one of the oldest Russian poets, Derzhavin, fragments of verses by that great rebel Radishchev and excerpts from Zhukovsky's poem *Singer in the Camp of Russian Warriors*, where, recalling the glorious past of the Russian people, the poet lauds their military valour and honour; this volume also contains the immortal lines of Pushkin as well as those by poets of Pushkin's days—Vyazemsky, Ryleyev and others, Lermontov's *Borodino* and his lyrical poem *Native Country*. Among the other works published in this book are verses by the XIX century poetess E. Rostopchina, Nekrassov's lines—filled with grieving for the sufferings of the people, Bryussov's famous poem *Russia* in which, addressing his native country, he exclaims:

O'er the gloom thou raised the torch,
Lighting the road for the people.

Other poets quoted in this book are Blok, who sang of his mother country with the tenderest of words and Mayakovsky, whose verses about the Soviet passport and excerpts from his poem *Good*—with which the volume closes—ring forth with the pride of a patriot and citizen.

The works of great Russian poets, so ably collected in the volume *Motherland* are in complete harmony with those feelings of wrath, indignation and valour which today move the whole Soviet people who, as one man, have arisen in defence of their Motherland.

The same publishers are bringing out a series of booklets for young readers under the general title of *Great Men of the Russian People*.

This series acquaints readers with the lives of the most outstanding figures of Russian culture, and includes the life stories of the great Russian poets Pushkin, Zhukovsky and Mayakovsky.

The booklet *Glinka* tells of the first genuinely national Russian musician and describes all the stages in the creative endeavours of this outstanding Russian composer.

Shchepkin—describes the life of an eminent Russian actor, while another booklet in this series—*Repin*—tells of the talented Russian painter-realist.

Besides figures in the world of art and letters this series also include such men of learning as Ivan Pavlov, Climenti Timiryazev, etc. One booklet is devoted to Ushinsky, an outstanding Russian educator of the XIX century, founder of the Russian school of pedagogics. Ushinsky, who all his life championed the democratic re-establishment of the educational system in Russia, was just as famous in his country as was Pestalozzi in Western Europe.

The biographies of several famous Russian tmiliary leaders have also been published, including that of Admiral Makarov, who greatly contributed to the development of the Russian navy. Admiral Makarov perished during the Russo-Japanese War in 1904.

The Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. has published a collection of articles: *Partisan Warfare in the National Wars of Liberation in the West*, under the editorship of Academician Tarle. This book deals with a vital question. Though centuries divide us from the events described here, it has much that is of vital interest and highly instructive for the present day. Nazism, having conquered and enslaved the countries of the European continent, and having trampled underfoot the freedom of these nations and set up its system of unbounded terror, could not break the freedom-loving spirit of the people, who rouse in struggle against the invaders. The participants of the fight for liberation in occupied countries—the partisans of Yugoslavia and Greece, the French franc-tireurs, the Norwegian and Czech patriots are all inspired by the example of the Red Army and Soviet partisans. In their struggle for liberation and independence the peoples of the enslaved countries are also fired by the heroic traditions of the national liberation movement in their native lands: the deeds of the Žižka warriors, of the Belgian gueux and the Spanish guerillas.

The eminent Czech scientist Zdenek Nejedly, at present in the Soviet Union, writes of the *Huss Partisans in Czechia*, describing the battle campaign of Jan Žižka against the Teutonic feudal lords. "The Germans," Nejedly writes, "were the mainstay of feudal oppression in Czechia. . . The Czech people's fight against feudal exploitation and against German violence in the country swelled into a mighty national religious movement." Professor Nejedly dwells on the new tactical and strategic features of contemporaneous warfare introduced by the national hero Jan Žižka.

M. Lesnikov's article *The Gueux in the Struggle for the Independence of the Netherlands* describes the popular movement in the Netherlands, which proudly called itself by the scornful sobriquet of "gueux" (beggars). It had been given, and took as its emblem, a grey cape and a beggar's pouch. This movement was against Phillip II, one of the most powerful rulers of Europe in the second half of the XVI century.

The only force which proved strong enough to stand up against Napoleon in his fight for world domination, until the fateful day when he launched his campaign against Moscow, was, as is known, the Spanish guerillas. The heroic fight of these guerillas is forcefully described in the article contributed to this collected volume by I. Kosorez.

Another interesting article is that by E. Adamov, *The Garibaldi "Thousand" in Sicily*, telling of the fight waged by Italian patriots under the leadership of Giuseppe Garibaldi to shake off the Austrian yoke.

The collected volume under review also includes an article by S. Nikitin *From the Past of Partisan Warfare in Bulgaria*, and Z. Eggert's *Methods of American Partisan Fighting in the American War for Independence*. This interesting

article makes particular note of the fact that it was precisely the partisans who, in the seventies of the XVIII century, formed the kernel of the American army.

The very soil of unvanquished Lithuania burns beneath the heel of the nazi invaders. In a collected volume under the title of *O'er the Blue Niemen*, a Russian translation of which has just been brought out by the State Literary Publishing House, Lithuanian writers tell of their ravaged but unbroken and unbending native land. In his short story *Nightingale*, the well-known Lithuanian writer Petras Cvirka portrays a fearless partisan boy. German rapine in Lithuanian villages, and the plundering "new order" are forcefully depicted in Cvirka's story *The German* and Korsakas' *The Land of Berta Schüss*.

In his short story *The Roads of War* Cvirka gives a poignant and tender picture of a Russian woman. Exhausted with fatigue, a soldier of a Lithuanian division finds motherly care and tenderness in the house of a peasant woman. "Russian earth and Lithuanian earth are one and the same soil—the great, mighty soil of love and truth," he says to her in moved tones, as he bids her good-bye, and these words ring forth like a symbol of the great brotherhood of the Russians and Lithuanians. In his heart he carries the fragrant memory of this woman and her image lights his way in the smoke and flame of battle. "And often, lying on the damp earth in the trenches, I can see that woman's face, softly lit by the glow of the embers, and her great, sad eyes and her tender hands as she gently adjusts the blanket covering me. And I seem to hear her fond whisper:

"'Sleep, my curly-haired one, sleep. . .'

"I love this woman, and I constantly see her face through the fires and smoke of battle.

"And my soldier's bread seems sweet to me, and my heart knows no mercy for the enemy."

The stories of Juozas Baltušis, Jonas Marcinkevičius, Jonas Šimkus and Antanas Venclova are dedicated to partisan warfare and the heroic resistance of the Lithuanian people.

These stories present truthful pictures which call to vengeance, and the appearance of this book is all the more timely today, when the fame of the deeds of "Vilnus", "Grünwald", "For Country" and other partisan detachments has spread far beyond the borders of Lithuania.

In the Language of Fire is the title of a volume of verses by the young Armenian poet Gurgen Borian, brought out by the State Literary Publishers.

This is not his first appearance in Russian translations. Borian's *Song Written in Gori*[1] in 1939—a stirring hymn to Stalin, was printed in several Russian publications.

Civic pathos, characteristic of Borian's pre-war verses, sounds expressively in his war poems. His new book, *In the Language of Fire*, opens with a prologue addressed to his Muse:

> *And in battle where marches death,*
> *Sing only in the language of fire.*

At the front all the time, actively contributing to the front-line press, the poet was tempered in the smoke and flame of war. Borian's verses are a battle call to the country's defence, inspiring love for the country and all its fraternal peoples.

[1] A town in the Caucasus where Stalin was born.—*Ed.*

The second number of the new Byelorussian magazine *Byeloruss*, with its varied and attractive material on the life, struggle and historical past of the Byelorussian people justifies the readers' expectations.

The opening article is *Lenin and Stalin—Builders of the Byelorussian State* by P. Ponomarenko, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Byelorussian Soviet Republic.

Among the authors of the many poems in this number are Yakub Kolas and Peter Brovko, Pimen Panchenko and Maxim Tank, Vassili Vitka and Anton Belevich, the prominent Ukrainian poet Vladimir Sossyura and the young Byelorussian poet Mikolai Gomolko. Prose is represented by Kuzma Chorny's *After the Fire*, Ilya Gursky's *The Meeting*, Mikhas Klimkovich's *Hanna* and Ales Yakimovich's *Brief Tales*.

Of great interest are the sections of Byelorussian history, cultural heritage, and flora and fauna.

The section *Pages of History* has an article by Academician P. Pertsev about Kastus Kalinovsky, the Byelorussian national hero, historical notes on the *Krichiev Insurrection* and *One with Moscow*, about the struggle of the Byelorussians against their enemies in alliance with the Russian people and also an article by M. Dobrynin *The Fame of Our Forbears* on chapters dealing with Byelorussia from *The Lay of Igor's March*.

A large amount of space is devoted to the fearless people's avengers, the Byelorussian partisans. Here are stories about the partisans Konstantin Zaslonov and Vladimir Lobanka and an article by M. Zimyanin, *The Youth in the Partisan Struggle*.

The magazine is well illustrated by reproductions from pictures and sculptures of Byelorussian artists. Among them is a reproduction of A. Grube's famous sculpture "Stalin at Kureika" (a village in Siberia on the banks of Yenissey beyond the Arctic circle).

The magazine *Byeloruss* gives a full and vital picture of modern Byelorussia, its historic past and glorious future.

BOOKS IN ENGLISH

The Foreign Languages Publishing House in Moscow has issued dozens of books in English. They include novels, non-fiction works and biographies. The aim of the Publishing House is to acquaint its readers with the latest Soviet literature and the Soviet publicists. Naturally, books on war subjects predominate. Thus the Stalingrad epic appears in Constantine Simonov's pamphlet *Stalingrad Fights On* and Vassili Grossman's *Stalingrad Hits Back*. The heroic defence of Sevastopol in 1942 was the subject of a collection of sketches by the late Eugene Petrov, Alexei Tolstoy, Ilya Ehrenburg, B. Voitekhov and others. A collection of war stories whose authors include A. Tolstoy, M. Sholokhov, B. Lavrenyov, V. Katayev, N. Tikhonov, L. Sobolev and others gives in-

stances of the heroism displayed by rank-and-file Soviet soldiers. There is also a small pamphlet by M. Shkapskaya *It Actually Happened*, which tells about the crimes of the nazi barbarians. It contains stories of child victims of nazi savagery. C. Simonov's sketch entitled *Moscow* gives episodes from the defence of the capital.

In 1944, the Publishing House issued an English translation of Wanda Wasilewska's *The Rainbow* and Vassili Grossman's *The People Immortal*, both already known to the British public from the translations published by Hutchinson in London.

Then there are the dry unimpassioned lines of a protocol, *The Trial in the Case of the Atrocities Committed by the German Fascist Invaders in the City of Kharkov and in the Kharkov Region*. A terrible picture rises before the reader —burnt hospitals, bodies of women and children, death-dealing machines which kill with exhaust gas—the "gas-waggons". Those who committed these crimes described them all before the Soviet court.

It is not in the least surprising that the theme of hatred for the enemy runs through many of the war stories issued by the Publishing House. *Dawn of Hatred* is the title of a collection of stories by K. Gorbunov, Yuri Yanovsky, Ilya Ehrenburg, M. Sholokhov (whose *Hate* is known to our readers) and others.

B. Lavrenyov's *Stout Heart* about Soviet soldiers and officers will arouse great interest amongst readers.

The famous Field Marshal Kutuzov, who crushed the power of Napoleon, is the subject of a biographical novel, *Field Marshal Kutuzov*, by Mikhail Bragin.

Among the publicist books issued in 1944, we should note A. Fersman's pamphlet, *Twenty-five Years of Soviet Natural Science*. The Publishing House is also issuing a special series of works by modern English and American writers, with the object of supplying students of the language with subject matter, and guiding them to independent reading of English and American magazines and literature. The series so far includes chapters from R. Greenwood's novel *Mr. Bunting in Peace and War* (adapted for study and shortened), novels by "Airman X", George Sava and others.

Nobody would refuse to acknowledge the fruitfulness of the Publishing House's work and to wish it further success in popularizing the most outstanding works of Soviet writers and publicists. A very timely task for them would be the publication of an anthology of modern poetry, all the more necessary because the few collections published in England lately contain poems from the twenties, while the subsequent period is not represented at all.

VLADIMIR RUBIN

A German communiqué reports that the German High Command firmly holds the leadership of the withdrawals of German troops.

FIRMLY HELD WITHDRAWALS

Drawing by Boris Yefimov

IN MEMORIAM

PYOTR CHAADAYEV

(1794-1856)

The intelligent blue-grey eyes of a very handsome man gaze at us from an old portrait. His thin lips curl in an ironical smile while the whole countenance breathes calm confidence. This is Pyotr Chaadayev, one of the most outstanding and original Russian thinkers and publicists of the early XIX century.

"In Rome he would have been Brutus, in Athens, Pericles," Pushkin said of him, thus defining in one bold stroke the self-reliance and the statesman's qualities of his friend's mind.

Chaadayev was born in a wealthy aristocratic family 150 years ago, on June 7th, 1794, in Moscow. Orphaned at an early age, he was brought up in the home of an influential aristocrat of Catherine's time, Prince Shcherbatov, studied at the Moscow University, moved in the most progressive of young circles where he distinguished himself for the originality of his opinions, his learning and independent mind. At sixteen, he was one of the most brilliant young men in Moscow society. After graduating from the university, Chaadayev entered the Leib-guards, and in the Patriotic War of 1812 fought in the famous battles of Borodino, Tarutino and Maloyaroslavets, and later at Kulm and Leipzig.

Russia's victory in the war of 1812 inspired the finest Russian minds, filling their hearts with just pride and national confidence in the future of their country. The first revolutionary wave in modern Russian history—the insurrection of December 14th, 1825—is connected with the victory of 1812. Many of the Decembrists, whom Chaadayev counted among his friends, had fought in the Patriotic War.

In spite of the difference in age, young Pushkin was a close friend of Chaadayev. They had met in Tsarskoye Selo in 1816 when Pushkin was seventeen and Chaadayev twenty-two. Their friendship was founded on community of ideas, a desire for moral perfection and a wish to fulfil their duty to their country with honour. Chaadayev who was deeply versed in the precepts of the French philosophers of the Enlightenment and the English materialist philosophers, Locke in particular, exercised a tremendous influence on Pushkin who referred to him in his poetry as "pilot of spiritual forces" and "the loyal friend" who taught him how to "scorn and hate". They talked and argued on various subjects, but the main topic of their conversation was the common suffering of all these Russians whose souls were alive: the dark oppression of the autocracy, the absence of freedom and the extremes into which the country had fallen.

Pushkin wrote to Chaadayev:

While freedom kindles us, my friend,
While honour calls us and we fear it,
Come: to our country let us tend
The noble promptings of the spirit.
Comrade, believe: joy's star will leap
Upon our fight, a radiant token;
Russia will rouse from her long sleep,
And where autocracy lies, broken,
Our names shall yet be graven deep.

In these early conversations with Pushkin, Chaadayev astounded the young poet's mind with those thoughts later expressed in his famous *Philosophizer's Letter* which created a sensation throughout Russia. The twenty pages of this *Letter* appeared anonymously in 1836 in the magazine *Telescope*. We know now that there were eight *Letters* altogether; however in the thirties of the last century only one letter was known and it proved more than sufficient to rouse hate for the author in some, and respect and admiration in others.

The *Letter* appeared ten years after the defeat of the December uprising, at a time when reaction was raging, and it produced a deep impression on the whole of Russia. Herzen says of it: "It was a shot ringing out in the dark of night; it mattered not whether it was meant to apprise us of the death of something, or whether it was a signal or a cry for help; or news that the dawn was coming or would never come—all this mattered not: one had to awake."

In his *Letter* Chaadayev lashed out at the economic and cultural backwardness of a serf-holding Russia that had been cut off from European civilization for centuries. Chaadayev pointed to the social conditions created by the autocracy as the cause of this backwardness and called upon the most progressive elements in Russia to do away with slavery and bring the people into contact with West-European culture.

Chaadayev's later *Philosophizer's Letters*, which were not published until recently, were also full of protest against the oppression of the common people which reigned in his time. With bitterness and pain he spoke of the "sad state of affairs" in whose grip the people then were. He called serfdom a "crying outrage" and looked upon its abolition as a prerequisite to any cultural or economic development in the country.

The friend of liberty and the inalienable rights of man to freedom, Chaadayev writes with indignation of the oppression of man by man. "What horror the very word 'slave' calls up! Where is the spirit so strong that it will not be stunned by the unbearable sound?"

Chaadayev's stern denunciation of serfdom roused the government to terrible reprisals. The *Telescope* was banned, its editor exiled and the censor dismissed from office. Tsar Nicholas I passed the following judgement on Chaadayev's article: "Its contents are a mixture of insolent nonsense worthy of a lunatic." In accordance with the tsar's "Imperial decree" Chaadayev was officially declared insane. In this declaration the tsar displayed little originality indeed: "omnipotent rulers" of other countries had taken the same course in political conflicts long before him.

We may mention, for example, that Staaps, who made an attempt to assassinate Napoleon in 1809 at Schönbrunn was also certified insane by Napoleon's police, although he was a man with perfect command of his senses.

Chaadayev wrote no major works after the *Philosophizer's Letters* (with the exception of the *Madman's Apologia* in 1837). However, a small leaflet believed to have been written in connection with the French revolution of 1848 is ascribed by some to his pen.

Chaadayev died on April 26th, 1856, leaving behind him an ineradicable imprint on the history of Russian philosophy, social thought and letters.

He was consumed with a passionate desire to change the reality that surrounded him; but he had no conception of the kind of social order that was to take its place, or the path the people were to follow to achieve their liberation.

He was well versed in the philosophies of Bacon, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Kant, Fichte and particularly Schelling with whom he was personally acquainted.

However, he was inclined to seek a haven from the storm of contradictions of reality in religion. He found no solace here either; and this in part is the basis for the pessimism of his views.

He dreamed of a time when all peoples would join hands, "rising above national differences and prejudices in a way that would bring forth a harmonious universal product; and we should, perhaps, see people mutually assisting each other in a deeper realization of the common interests of all humanity". This wonderful dream of Chaadayev, who sought an answer to vital questions of the day in Saint-Simon's teachings and even more in the Catholic religion, was a beautiful, fantastic Utopia, with no basis whatever in the actual forces which moved society.

But Utopian dream as it was, it was nonetheless most progressive: the expression of the longing of the most advanced of political thinkers of Russia in the XIX century, who naturally sought a basis in the struggle of the great Russian people for their liberation. His cry of pain for his country which was at that time passing through one of the most difficult stages in its development was forced from him by true love for his country. "Can a great soul," he wrote, "be devoid of patriotism?"

He called this feeling beautiful. It gives birth, he wrote, to heroes. He said that he loved his country and wished for her glory; but was just in making a distinction between his true patriotism and the false patriotism of the rulers of Russia at that time.

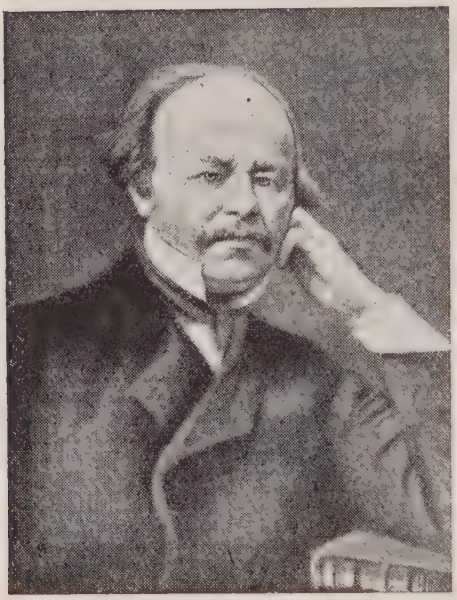
Chaadayev had a deep faith in the inexhaustible capabilities of Russia for historical development. He said that his love for her was that love which Peter the Great taught one must bear for her.

"I am firmly convinced that it is our destiny to solve to a great extent the problem of the social order, to accomplish to a great extent the tasks which arose in ancient societies, and to find answers to the most important questions which have ever occupied the mind of humanity."

He spoke with pride of the "mighty spirit" of Peter the Great, of the "all-embracing mind of Lomonossov" and the "vast genius of Pushkin". As his life drew to a close, he wrote of his country: "It was our wish that she might prosper. . . we knew that she was great and mighty and rich in hope."

A. YELENIN

ALEXANDER DARGOMYZHSKY



The works of Alexander Dargomyzhsky (born February 15th, 1813 and died January 18th, 1869) may be classed as some of the most unusual in Russian classical music.

The son of an official who came from small landowners, Dargomyzhsky was brought up, like most of the aristocratic youth of his time, on French literature and French music. Having moved with his family from their estate to St. Petersburg in his early childhood, the boy came into contact with enlightened dilettantes and listened to much music, including opera. But for an aristocrat, music as a profession was entirely out of the question in those days. There were no music schools and people had to be satisfied with a tutor who came to the house. Dargomyzhsky received his general education at home as well.

In 1833 Dargomyzhsky, a youth of twenty, became friends with M. I. Glinka who at once recognized the talent of the young composer. Dargomyzhsky and Glinka playing duets, went through a great number of operas, overtures and symphonies. In this manner, Dargomyzhsky got to know the best works of the old masters as well as contemporary composers.

Even before his acquaintance with the great composer of *Ivan Sussanin*, the young musician wrote several brilliant compositions for the piano, inspired not only by salon dance genres (contre-danse, quadrille, waltz) but also by Russian folk songs.

In 1839 Dargomyzhsky completed his first opera *Esmeralda* written in the style of a "big Paris opera", after the novel by Victor Hugo *Hunchback of Notre-Dame* and the libretto by Hugo translated into Russian by Dargomyzhsky himself. In this work we do not see all the composer has in him, but the vivid scenes and the striving for dramatic expression hold great promise. The opera, like the opera-ballet *Triumph of Bacchus* after verses of the same name by the youthful Pushkin was not very successful.

In the sixties Dargomyzhsky wrote his famous ballad *The Old Corporal* to the words of Béranger. This is a mighty song of denunciation. It was then that Dargomyzhsky created his best lyric songs (*I Am Sad*, words by Lermontov). The composer's last work was the opera *The Stone Guest* after the text by Pushkin.

The idea for his main work, the opera *Russalka* (Mermaid) was conceived in 1843. By the time it was written, in 1856, the composer's views on realism in opera, of which he was the initiator, were already fully formed. It was the aesthetic expression of truth in dramatic form and in particular, of that truth contained in his words: "I want sound to express the word directly. I want the truth." Incidentally, rarely had anyone before him been so meticulous in the art of putting words, and such words, to music. Dargomyzhsky drew his material from the works of Pushkin and Lermontov. . . The images of *Russalka*, so full of poetic charm, are also astonishing for their psychological truth. Pushkin's story revives the Slav folk legend of a girl of the people, who, deserted by her lover, throws herself into the river and becomes a mermaid.

In Pushkin's story the girl is Natasha, the miller's daughter, and her betrayer a prince who later weds his titled bride. The russalka takes revenge against the prince for having broken his faith. Particularly stirring is the first act of the opera, which expresses in music of the highest artistic finish all the emotions of the heroine, from her modest, trusting tenderness and joie de vivre to the frenzy of her resolution. There passes before the eyes of the audience the entire life of a strong and noble character, the hard life of a woman from the people, a life which is stupidly, needlessly ruined. The image of Natasha was the forerunner of many dramatic images of noble Russian women of strong emotions in classic opera. Suffice it to recall the tragic heroines of Chaikovsky.

Another vital element, satire, is closely linked with realism in the work of Dargomyzhsky. In the sixties, the period of the greatest upsurge of the Russian democratic movement, Dargomyzhsky wrote his musical satires.

which possess astonishing force and vigour. For instance, there was his song *The Worm*, a biting bit of irony levelled against servility amongst the officials; the *Titular Councillor*, a tragi-comic episode from the life of the same circle. One is struck by the composer's subtle perception of social trends and ideas of his time.[1] In his music he always satisfied the most ardent spiritual aspirations of his contemporaries. Dargomyzhsky was one of the first to introduce democratic ideas into Russian music. It is clear that it was precisely this atmosphere of the revival of social, spiritual life that shaped the reforming qualities of Dargomyzhsky's music accepted by Russian composers of the XIX century.

In *The Stone Guest* which is based on Pushkin's version of the legend of Don Juan, the composer preserved the author's text without the slightest variation. This opera, with its new medium of expression, is an inspired work. All the composer's gifts, merely perceptible in his preceding creations, and which had been ripening for so many years, found expression in *The Stone Guest*. The incomparable poetic beauty of the scene at Laura's, the heart-rending episode of the death of Don Juan, the characteristic portrayal of the monk, the sly servant, the courtesanne, the morose grandee; the mature quality of the composer's conception compensate a hundredfold for a certain "dogmatism" of the innovator ejecting from the score of *The Stone Guest* all traces of the traditional opera genres.

The Stone Guest is an opera which, although deprived of all operatic attributes, overtures, entractes, choruses, ensembles and dances, rings perfectly natural. In this original musical drama Dargomyzhsky finds what many composers have sought: true vocal intonation.

Dargomyzhsky wrote *The Stone Guest* during the last years of his life, while he was tortured by a terrible disease. He did not succeed in finishing off the first scene of *The Stone Guest* or achieve the orchestration of the opera. The scene was finished by the Russian composer Caesar Cui and the orchestration of the entire opera is the work of Rimsky-Korsakov.

Dargomyzhsky's creative efforts reached their pinnacle in the years after Pushkin's death. The composer was twenty-three when the great Russian poet died tragically. Pushkin's world of images, thoughts and emotions had a most profound influence on the formation of the composer's talent. All his life he was strongly attached to Pushkin. Out of his four operas, three were written to Pushkin's texts as well as many of the romances and songs. Dargomyzhsky was also much influenced by Gogol and Lermontov.

The distinguishing feature of Dargomyzhsky's music lies in its colourful rhythm. In his operas, songs, orchestral dances and symphonies one feels the living breath of real vocal, dancing, marching and satirical themes; in short, of everything that directly connects music with reality. What dash there is in his ballroom dances, what colour in *Kazachok* which seems to have been snatched out of a folk festival; what profound tragedy in the overture to *Russalka*, and the entire symphonic poem reflecting all the depth and thought of this folk drama. Then there is the carousal at Laura's and her songs. Without these genre episodes, the subsequent scenes of *The Stone Guest*,—Don Carlos in the magnificent night scene and the sudden appearance of Don Juan—would have lost their significance.

In the U.S.S.R. Dargomyzhsky is one of the most popular of the Russian classic composers. *Russalka* is ever present on the Soviet stage. Even in wartime the Soviet radio-listener derives the greatest enjoyment every time he hears Pushkin's immortal lines which have become so integral a part of the profound and tender music of Dargomyzhsky.

ARNOLD ALSHVANG

IN BATTLE WITH A CAMERA

The cameraman has a wonderful job. He is always in the thick of life, always on the move: the events agitating his country and the world are his meat and drink. No wonder the glamour of the newsreel cinema has always attracted the youth. In the course of many years a typical cameraman has emerged: a manly, vital, young fellow hardened by difficulties, who keeps pace with the swift tempo of our life and is able to discern and record the vivid events in which the country of socialism is so rich.

The Soviet newsreel, born in the flames of the Revolution and the Civil War, has risen to the high artistic level of film publicism. Soviet newsreels have done a great deal to bring out the essence of events and trends in the life of the country. These films reflected the historic years of the transformation of Soviet economy, the building of industrial giants, the beginnings and consolidation of collective farming. They showed the new people of the Stalin epoch, the daring pioneers, the transformers of nature, the gallant explorers delving into the secrets of the stratosphere, the marine depths and the icy wastes; builders and sportsmen, collective farmers and teachers, airmen, natural-scientists, livestock breeders and engineers. Newsreels told the world about them. Never for an instant did the cameraman drop out of the turbulent rhythm of creative life. He went by plane, he travelled on land and by sea to study his country. With his keen instinct he discovered the new and progressive, the bright and vivid in life and eagerly peered into it all with his omnipresent eye—the lens of the camera. In this work he developed the feelings and habits which have raised the job of the newsreel operator to the level of a distinguished publicist. Physically too, the cameraman gained strength in the strenuous expeditions over mountains, across ice, desert and forest, on long-distance flights, and sea voyages. He hardened thews

[1] We note that in 1859 Dargomyzhsky became a contributor to the most radical democratic Russian journal *Iskra* (The Spark) for which he wrote articles and commentaries on, among other subjects, "Italomania" and the idolization of Wagner's music.—*A. A.*

and thigh because he knew it would come in handy. It did when the stern days of the National War came.

I remember that day—the first day of war. One after another cameramen rushed to the central newsreel studio. On that bright Sunday the news of war caught some busy with the camera at sports grounds, others travelled up from their country houses. The telephone rang incessantly: "I'll be along in no time" . . . "Coming as soon as the train 'll carry me" . . . Deftly and calmly men overhauled the cameras and loaded the films just as if they were getting ready for a usual job.

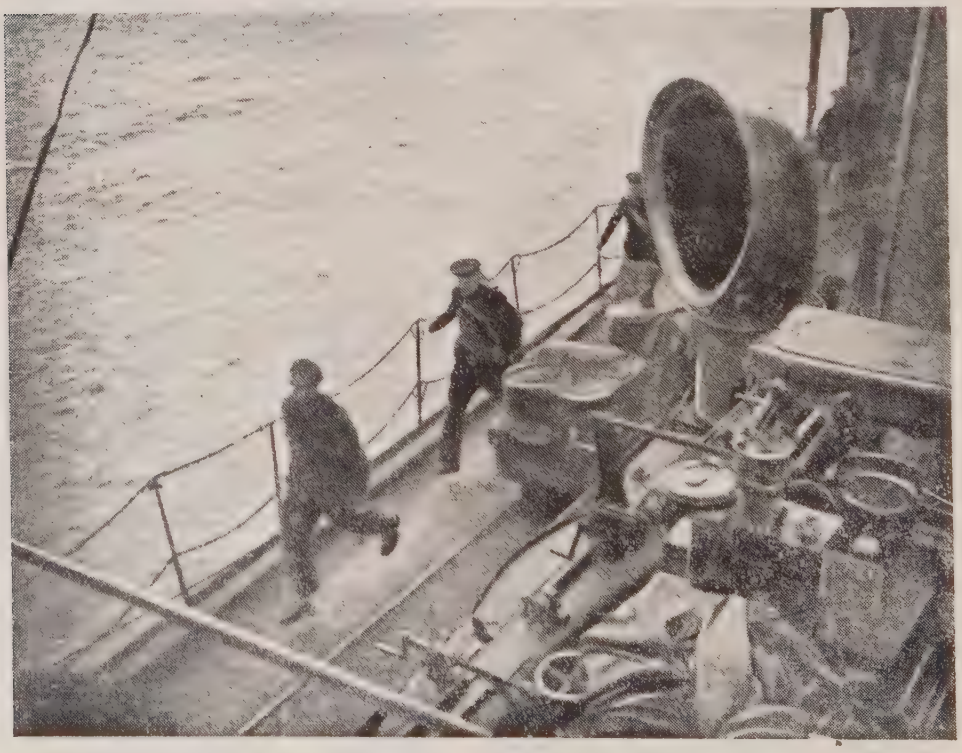
The next day they were on the troop train, in uniform, which fitted them as if they had worn it all their lives. The cameramen were off to the front, to the roar and racket of hard fought battles. They were off to do their duty: to record for the coming generations the great battle of the Soviet people against German fascism. In those days the Soviet camera had to be especially on the alert. Soon films from the front began to pour into the central office which had put all its work on a war footing. A newsreel reflecting the life of the country which had become transformed into a camp of war, began to be released every three days. In the process of work the producers had to increase their store of military knowledge. The newsreel could not lag behind the press and radio, it had to satisfy the eager interest of the country and the world at large in the battles raging on our territory.

Let me recall the first shots from the front. The Red Army was fighting stiff defensive battles. The enemy was paying dearly for every kilometre of territory seized. It was a hard job to shoot the films owing to the enemy's immense superiority in armour, firepower and aircraft. The job was frought with the greatest danger. But the cameramen stuck doggedly to their task. These shots reflect the Soviet people's firm determination to win through, they show the pluck and grit of man and commander.

At that time the partisan movement, which subsequently developed into a weighty factor in our struggle and triumph, had only just begun. I remember the first reel: peasants with rifles held high above their heads are seeing off their wives and children while they themselves are leaving for the woods. They were the first partisans I saw at the beginning of the war. That was July 4th, the day after Stalin's call to the people had rung out over the radio. Stalin spoke of the powerful movement of the people's guard, of the partisan struggle, and the people went off to the woods at their leader's call, went to engage the hated enemy in mortal combat.

A grim last-ditch battle which won the admiration of the world, was fought at Odessa. There, to the very last day of the heroic defence were cameramen Kogan and Troyanovsky—that same Troyanovsky who flew to the North Pole with Papanin and Schmidt. The cameramen left Odessa with the last ship. They had shot the glorious epic of Odessa's defence from beginning to end.

Sevastopol. Years will pass, but Sevastopol's glory will remain undimmed. At the Black



68 *Alarm. Newsreel photograph snapped by V. Mikosha*

Arms in hand. Newsreel photographer A. Krichevsky on the job at the front

Sea Naval Base Soviet cameramen worked under the bombing of thousands of planes, under hurricane shelling. Vladimir Mikosha, Dmitri Rymaryov and others kept the camera going without a stop, recording the defence of Sevastopol. Our descendants will see the blood-smeared, noble faces of machine-gunners in the trenches at Sevastopol's approaches, which all express the one thought: "Only over my dead body can the Hitlerite scum enter Sevastopol!" We saw the amazing shots of the burning town. Dominating all stood Lenin's monument, with arm outstretched, as if leading the men into the attack. I was told that Charlie Chaplin, after seeing the Sevastopol film, sat motionless for a long time after the lights went up. His eyes brimming with tears, he sat holding his spectacles, unable to say a word. The great artist-humanist was impressed beyond words by these living shots telling the unvarnished truth of the heroism, staunchness and valour of Soviet people.

The months of war rolled on, the cameraman turned into soldier. There was no sector on the front without the man with the camera. New forces came to "Kinokhronika" (Soviet Newsreel): young students from the State Institute of Cinematography. Assistant operators became full-fledged operators. There were not enough cameras, sometimes film was lacking, but there never was a shortage of men. Hundreds of applications to be sent to the front were filed by the Cinematography Committee.

Millions of people all over the world have seen Soviet war newsreels.

We have lost many comrades. They died a soldier's death on the field of battle. Many a time in action the cameraman has had to put aside his apparatus and take to rifle or machine-gun. Pechul, a young Leningrad film operator left with a Red Army detachment for the Finnish rear. The detachment was surrounded. The handful fought for life or death. They broke through to their own lines. In that battle Pechul, fighting with grenade and sub-machine-gun, died like a soldier. Cameraman Lamprecht perished in the Baltic during a furious sea engagement. His ship was ablaze. Survivors say that they saw Lamprecht through smoke and flames shoot the scene until the ship blew up. Operator Arkadi Shafran was captured by the Germans but managed to escape. After growing a beard and donning peasant clothes Shafran got across the front and again took his place among front-line cameramen. Many operators have been twice wounded but have again returned to their job.

The cameramen working with the air force have shown unusual pluck and grit. Sholomovich, Krichevsky, Vikhirev, Sher, Ibragimov and others have been out on many a bombing trip behind enemy lines. An interesting incident occurred to Boris Sher while out with a group of stormoviks to strafe an enemy airfield. Sher had taken the place of the gunner on one of the planes. After he had recorded the blazing planes at the enemy aerodrome his own plane was attacked by German fighters. Sher laid aside his camera and turned to the machine-gun, taking on a couple of Fokke-Wulff-190's. With perfect composure Sher released short bursts at the attacking Jerries. Carried away by the heat of the attack, one German pilot unwisely drew to within fifty metres of the Soviet plane. The cameraman gave it a well-aimed burst and the Fokke-Wulff, blazing like a comet, went tumbling to the ground. The other German quitted the field. That feat won the cameraman another order to balance the Order of the Red Banner gained previously for gallantry displayed while with the partisans.

The German monsters threw a blockade ring round Leningrad. The staunchness and courage shown by the population of the besieged city will be remembered as a supreme example of noble, unflinching resistance, of invincible faith in victory. Through a hunger blockade, through savage shelling of streets, houses and population the Germans thought to compel the stalwart Leningraders to capitulate. Months passed—the city did not surrender. The starving, emaciated people held out with a strength of spirit that astonished the world. The city was ice-bound. City transport and the water mains were out of commission, fires raged. But not for a day did oper-

ators Uchitel, Stradin, Fomin, Dementyev, Pogorely and Palley cease their work in the beleaguered city. Disregarding famine and exhaustion, often staggering from weakness they daily shouldered their cameras and rolls of film and went about their job in the city. They shot street scenes, scenes at factories, at the front-line, on the warships frozen up in the Neva. They recorded the truth of those terrible days, the noble deeds, the suffering and heroism. These shots woven into the film *Leningrad in Battle* are a fitting monument to the heroic defenders of Leningrad; they are of special value now that the bright flares of the triumphant victory salute have lit the heavens over the Neva. Leningrad is free, it has again been joined to the rest of the country while the vicious enemy has been driven far from the walls of the city which Hitler wanted to strangle, to bring to its knees. Today the Leningrad cameramen are busy on a new film: the victory of Leningrad. It will include shots showing the crushing defeat of the Germans at Leningrad. The film will reproduce the appalling picture of German barbarity—the remnants of the magnificent palaces of Peterhof, Gatchina and Pushkin. It will also show the picture of retribution. The fields strewn with enemy dead: the Germans buried their crack divisions at Leningrad.

Soviet cameramen recorded the Battle of Stalingrad from the first day to the last. Pressed back to the Volga, the Soviet troops fought in the city streets; with them were the cameramen. The documentary film *Stalingrad* was the result of their work, a work which called for great courage and stamina. Among these operators special mention must be made of Orlyankin, Sofyin, Posselsky, Ibragimov, Krichevsky and Mukhin.

At the Volga the German army suffered an unparalleled defeat. The destruction of Paulus' army was the beginning of the Red Army's victorious westward drive. The Soviet divisions which had won fame in the battles at the Volga, set off from its banks across the steppes, rivers and forests to the west. The peaks of the Caucasus and the fertile Kuban steppes were left far behind. Once more the victorious Soviet banner was raised over the old Russian cities of Kiev, Kharkov, Poltava, Bryansk, Smolensk and Novgorod. Marching in the Red Army van, storming one German fortified line after another, are the cameramen.

Each of us now has two and a half years war experience behind him. The cameraman is thrilled beyond words when he shoots victorious battles at places where two years ago he was recording the bitter episodes of retreat. In those bitter days we knew that our work would not be in vain. We knew that shots of the first days of the war would go into the film of victory. We didn't lose heart, we worked with dour perseverance, without rest. And now the red-letter day of the great retribution has come and the cameramen are carrying on with their big job. Only death in action can stop them. I saw cameraman Lozovsky shot a tank attack. He went in with the leading tank plunging forward to ram the German defences. Lozovsky kept the camera working until three shells had hit the tank. The third set it ablaze. With blood streaming from an ugly wound he jumped out of the machine hugging the film to his breast. That eagerness to shoot the film, come what might, epitomizes the Soviet cameraman.

We feel our great responsibility to history keenly and profoundly and we know that every shot taken amid the flames of the great battle for the happiness of mankind is a contribution to its pages.

ROMAN KARMEN

AT THE WAR ARTISTS' EXHIBITION

In the autumn it will be ten years since the Grekov studio, working under the auspices of the Political Headquarters of the Red Army, was founded. Its aim—training war-painters—is felt to have the greatest significance in present war conditions. Most of the studio's artists are quite young, many of them men and officers of the Red Army who portray the heroic record of the war in their works. They are fighter-artists in the full sense of the word, their weapon is the brush as well as the rifle. Guards Sergeant-Major Daragan, one of the artists of this studio, volunteered for the front and has been decorated four times for outstanding gallantry. He is by no means the only one.

The forcefulness and significance of the works of these artists, exhibited at the Central House of the Red Army in Moscow, lies in their justice and truth to life. The artist portrays on canvas what he has seen in battle, under fire. Many of the artists made their sketches in the front lines, trenches, at the risk of their lives; one of them worked under the very nose of the enemy. It was a well-justified risk: history has received an impression of war as it actually is. All of the studio's pictures breathe the righteousness and patriotism that enable our people to carry on this great war. Their sincerity and depth of feeling excuse whatever technical faults or shortcomings we may find.

A portrait of the Supreme Commander in Chief, Marshal of the Soviet Union, J. V. Stalin, painted by Red Army men N. Denissov and V. Pravdin, opens the exhibition. The Orel etudes, "Evening" and "Evening in Orel" by Pravdin and "Dam" and "In the Centre of the City" by Denissov are worthy of note.

The most powerful and polished piece in the oils section is a canvas by V. Gavrilov and B. Nemensky called "Return": a piece of brilliant colour and firm composition painted in the tradition of the finest Russian artists, depicting people returning to their homes.

A. Gorpenko exhibits a large canvas "Guards Never Surrender" which depicts the heroism of the Russian as he confidently and modestly performs great deeds in his country's cause.

P. Krivonogov exhibits a number of pictures, among them "Cavalry in the Battle for Stalingrad", which is very dynamic and interesting

as regards the subject. The colour is rather drab, the fire of a tank gun, for example, is painted in the same colour as the cavalrymen's cloak. The subject is sufficiently serious to warrant careful, painstaking toil.

G. Prokopinsky's "People's Avenger" gives a masterly depiction of the face of a partisan, which is highly expressive in its simplicity.

Two pictures on the same theme, one by S. Godyna, the other by S. Khinsky, are interesting for their different approach to the subject. Godyna's "Wounded" is powerful in both composition and line, as well as in colouring; while Khinsky's "War Nurse", weaker technically, has greater emotional content.

These are the most interesting works in the painters' section.

Graphic arts are better represented at the exhibition than pictorial.

A sketch for the panorama "Dnieper Crossing South of Kremenchug" by F. Sachko and A. Gorpenko is an interesting and serious piece of work. The theme is worked out in great detail and with deep feeling.

I. Lukomsky exhibits a series of small portraits of men at the front, executed in oils and water colours. His "Senior Lieutenant Marnichenko" and "Portrait of Pazhenov of the Guards" are particularly interesting. Among his oils the most interesting is "Worker".

G. Nikolsky in his "Fritz and Wolf" and "First Class Funeral" is actuated by a deep hatred for the Germans.

The sketches and water colours of the young artist V. Medvedev, in particular the sketches "Paths of War", "Yelnya", "Crossing", are attractive in their sincerity and frankness.

Bagration. By L. Golovanov

G. Khrapak's "Hold It" and "On the High-Road" are works with considerable thematic material and vigour of execution.

Dinner hour. Drawing by F. Sachko

G. Prokopinsky's sketches on the life of the marines "All at Their Posts" and "Return from Battle Assignment" are excellent portrayals of his impressions of army routine.

A. Pavlyuk devotes a series of water colours to besieged Leningrad.

Illustrations and drawings by Stalin Prize winner, N. Zhukov, are given a prominent place at the exhibition. His illustrations to *Reminiscences of Lenin* and *Memories of Marx* are talented and most interesting. Zhukov's work exhibited here includes a number of portrait sketches as well. His series with favourite soldiers' catchwords as motifs ("Slashed to His Fill", "O. K.", "Right", "Tough Starting") reveal the artist's great powers of observation and intimate knowledge of army life.

The artists' work includes posters, picture post cards and leaflets, remarkable for their timeliness, political acumen and appeal.

What is shown at the exhibition is but a small portion of the large number of works by the artists of this studio.

B. KARPOV

An illustration from "Memories of Marx", by N. Zhukov

MUSIC IN WAR-TIME

(Plenum of the Union of Soviet Composers in Moscow)

The creative problems of Soviet music had been quite often discussed in the press and at meetings of the Union of Composers, both in connection with new performances and new compositions. Nevertheless, all musicians have felt the need for a more extensive survey of work done.

It is to this survey that the ten-day plenum which has been held in Moscow was devoted.

In the sixteen papers that were read and in the dozens of speeches that were delivered at the plenum some of the new works by Soviet composers were subjected to serious criticism. Questions of style were discussed, especially musical language and form. The prospects for further development naturally occupied a vital place in the minds of composers, critics and friends of Soviet music.

Although the plenum was mainly devoted to a summary of the work done in 1943, actually all music composed during the war period was discussed.

In his two-hour report on "The Creative Work in 1943", Dmitri Shostakovich spoke of the patriotic sentiments which had seized the whole Soviet land and lent further inspiration to Soviet composers. Shostakovich analysed a number of works composed during the war period. Myaskovsky's latest symphony and quartet, Shebalin's quartets, Khachaturyan's *Second Symphony*, Prokofieff's *Seventh Sonata for Pianoforte* and *Sonata for the Flute and Pianoforte* are compositions of great merit, said Shostakovich.

Shostakovich criticized Prokofieff's *The Year 1941* Symphonic Suite. "It is a weak production, not in any way corresponding to the seriousness and demands of its title," said Shostakovich.

He reprimanded some composers, for instance Gabriel Popov, for having written little. Some people, he said, like to "worry themselves with doubts about small details of musical technique, which distract them from the solution of the main problems of composition". This quite unjustifiable indecision Shostakovich contrasted with the confident mastery of Myaskovsky, Prokofieff and Shebalin.

Noting the outstanding achievements of Soviet music in the realm of symphony, chamber music and song, Shostakovich admitted that opera music was too much neglected.

I would like to add, however, that Shostakovich's accusation should have been levelled at himself; for about ten years he has been writing mainly symphonic and chamber music. Shostakovich's suggestion that writers should work on librettos which could serve a base of musical-dramatic works is perfectly justified.

Great interest was aroused by the paper read by Vissarion Shebalin, director of the Moscow Conservatory, "On Skill in Composition". Shebalin spoke in detail of the process of establishing a musical style. "In examining the style of any artist one can see that his work follows certain laws in the region of method, harmony, polyphony, form, orchestration, and technique. . . One might speak in this way of the style of an epoch, comparing and to a certain extent generalizing the styles of its more important composers."

Shebalin, an experienced pedagogue who has trained many young composers, spoke of individual stylistic failures in several works by Ivan Dzerzhinsky, Tikhon Khrennikov and Valeri Zhelobinsky. Talent, he emphasized, demands of a composer great attention to questions of style and technique.

The third paper, by Academician Boris Assafyev, known also under the nom de plume of Igor Glebov, was on "Soviet Music and Musical Culture".

Supporting his thesis by numerous examples from the classical heritage of Russian music, and in particular on the works of Glinka and Borodin, Assafyev spoke in detail of the folk influence in art, the links between professional art and folk art. This paper, like all of Assafyev's work on musical theory and historical subjects, was marked by subtle analysis and broad aesthetic generalization.

Special papers were devoted to Myaskovsky's *Twenty-fourth Symphony* and *Ninth Quartet*, to Shostakovich's *Eighth Symphony*, to Prokofieff's new works and to Khachaturyan's ballet *Gayané*, and *Second Symphony*.

Some papers dealt with the problem of genre, and it was from this point of view that symphonies by Polovinkin, Popov, Zhelobinsky and Shekhter, quartets by Anatoli Alexandrov, Glière, Shebalin and Assafyev, as well as war songs and vocal chamber music were discussed.

My own paper was given to a review of new symphonic poems, overtures and concertos, on which subject I have already published a number of works in the Soviet Union, as well as in England and the United States (for example, a *Handbook of Soviet Musicians*, London, 1943, articles in *The Musical Quarterly*, *Modern Music* and other magazines). In my paper I paid homage to such splendid works as Shebalin's *Russian Overture*, Glière's *Concerto for Voice and Orchestra*, Julian Krein's *Third Concerto for Pianoforte*, Lev Knipper's Iranian suite *Maku*, and several others. I noted that during the war, Soviet composers had done very little in the sphere of symphonic poems, although the road had been paved for them by Russian classical music (Chaikovsky and Scriabin) and by our modern composers—suffice it to mention N. Myaskovsky's *Alastor* after P. Shelley and *Silence* after Edgar Allen Poe.

I also mentioned two of my own scores which I completed during the war—a symphonic *Overture* and *Lyrical Poem*, dedicated to the memory of my dear pupil and friend, the talented composer Sergei Dobrovolsky, who died in 1943.

The reports and papers were followed by lively discussion, in which many artists and musicians participated. Sergei Prokofieff's brilliant speech was devoted to a criticism of a number of compositions. Prokofieff is displeased with the second and forth parts of Shostakovich's *Eighth Symphony*, which, he said, break up the unity of the whole. Popov's *Second Symphony*, in his opinion, loses by its lack of a sonata allegro with two contrasting themes.

The composer also pointed to the faults of other composers. With his innate wit he analysed several of their works, noting all their good points.

Vladimir Surin, chairman of the Chief Administration of Musical Institutions attached to the All-Union Committee on Arts, spoke of the work of Soviet composers who participated in the contest for the State Anthem of the U.S.S.R.

The pianist Emil Hillels gave his impressions of new works for pianoforte, noting particularly Shostakovich's *Second Sonata* and Prokofieff's *Seventh Sonata*.

Olga Lepeshinskaya, ballerina of the Bolshoy Theatre, said that in the past few years Soviet composers have contributed little to ballet music. She appealed for more work in this sphere.

The atmosphere throughout the plenum was animated and friendly.

The presidium included Mikhail Khrapchenko, chairman of the All-Union Committee on Arts, Alexander Solodovnikov, vice-chairman, the regisseur Yuri Zavadsky and other people prominent in the world of music and art.

Side by side with Muscovites as Myaskovsky, Prokofieff, Khachaturyan, Shaporin, Shebalin and others, there were the Ukrainian composer Lyatoshinsky, the Byelorussian Bogatyryov, the Uzbek composers Ashrafi and Sadykov, Zhiganov from the Tatar Republic and other Soviet musicians.

The speakers made clear the patriotic essence of the works composed during the war. The analysis of methods of musical expression which decide the style of the epoch particularly held the attention of the plenum.

Professor IGOR BOELZA

Since Leonid Leonov's play *Invasion* (see our No. 6 for 1943) was published eighteen months ago it has been staged by leading companies in almost every town in the Soviet Union. This is eloquent testimony to the literary merit of the play, to the vital truth this talented Soviet writer has put into it. The main thing in Leonov's play is not the surface flow of events which have now become history, but the figures he gives us of devoted Soviet patriots with their simple and sterling characters, profoundly true to life, taken indeed from life itself. Leonov began working on *Invasion* in November 1941—in the most difficult period of the war. Nevertheless confidence that the Russians will return, that the Russians always return and never abandon what is theirs by right pervades the play. The author gained that confidence from the people themselves.

One would imagine that the many times the play has been staged had brought out everything in it. Its stage production by Yuri Zavadsky and V. Vanin at the Mossoviet Theatre, however, has revealed many more brilliant facets.

The producers have concentrated the spectator's attention on the two main dramatic clashes of ideas.

The first is between Fyodor and the old Talanovs.

Fyodor is a type often portrayed by Leonov. A man who has gone adrift in life, who lacks ground beneath his feet, who has broken his moral anchorages and is at loggerheads with his environment and times.

The theatre shows the abyssmal depth of Fyodor's fall, the vast gulf formed between him and his parents, honest folk devoted to their country. But old doctor Talanov still hopes to cure his invalid son, slowly dying both from consumption and succombing to spiritual corrosion. And when Fyodor asks him in a fit of desperation for a medicine "that'll burn him inside", Talanov shows him little Aniska, a girl outraged and tortured by the nazis. The spectator watches tensely as Fyodor is cured, watches breathlessly as he makes his sacrifice facing any suffering to do his bit to liberate his native soil from the invader. He assumes the identity of Andrei Kolesnikov, now an elusive partisan leader, giving him the chance to escape. In doing so, by his gallant death, Fyodor earns the people's pardon and recovers the love of his mother.

In the portrayal of M. Astangov one constantly feels, through the guise of clown adopted, Fyodor's unapplied strength, his bruised and injured spirit and duality.

Astangov based his role on unexpected contrasts and sudden changes. One of the most powerful scenes is that of the interrogation. In it the actor brings out in full the main theme of Fyodor, his struggle for dignity, for straightforward purposefulness in life. He faces Spurre, the Gestapo dragon, like a Red Army man at the front-line. Will strained to the utmost, the awakened pride of the Soviet citizen confronted by the hated foe, and extreme agitation for his mother, who is an unwilling witness of the scene—all combine in one general and integral picture of great power and amazing sincerity.

P. Geraga and A. Alexeyeva give an excellent performance as the old doctor Talanov and his wife. Throughout the scene of Fyodor's interrogation they are outwardly calm, but how expressive is their immobility and silence!

The second conflict so well brought out in Zavadsky's presentation is that between Faiyunin, the mayor, and Kolesnikov, chairman of the district executive committee.

Kolesnikov is seen on the stage only three times and then in brief episodes. Not so much is enacted by him as is said of him as commander of a partisan column. Nevertheless the strife between these two characters is one of the central conflicts of the play.

V. Vanin reveals in full the author's definition of Faiyunin—"risen from the dead". Yes, this is a dead man, suddenly come to life, who receives the gift of speech and movement, even the semblance of power and prosperity. But however much he gives himself airs, however much he grovels and fawns before the nazis, the consciousness of the brevity and ephemerality of his earthly existence never leaves him. Hence his cackling, servile laugh and bustling demeanour at variance with his age and position, his constant restlessness and obsequious expression even in those scenes where, it would seem, he is empowered to pronounce sentence of death or to pardon—the scenes with Talanov and the nurse Demidyevna. Faiyunin's poverty of spirit and his sense of doom is felt with special force in the clash between the two heads of the town, the present mayor—"from the dead" and the unbroken and dauntless Kolesnikov.

Kolesnikov (played by V. Sanayev) personifies the strength of Soviet power in the consciousness, hearts and aspirations of the people. He stands disarmed and wounded, a prisoner to Faiyunin. But it is not Kolesnikov who fears the one "from the dead", but Faiyunin who trembles and bows and scrapes before Kolesnikov who turns on his heel and strides out, never glancing right or left, and Faiyunin cannot even summon up the courage to shout to a German sentry to shoot him in the back. . .

Zavadsky made use of the wealth of opportunity offered by the stage—the pause, pantomime and music. All this has been employed not for the sake of extra "decoration" but in order to bring out more profoundly and impressively the playwright's ideas.

A happy stage effect is German martial music heard through the window of Talanov's room. It gives an emotional impulse to Olga's exclamation: "Ah, how I hate them!"

The fourth and final act, generally the least successful in other productions of this play, is superbly done. Zavadsky has given the scene the attributes of the Russian's magnificent optimism, his splendid faith in victory.

Zavadsky's presentation of *Invasion* is one of the most vivid interpretations of Leonov's play.

One of Moscow's youngest theatres—the Stanislavsky Opera and Drama Studio—has

staged a new play *Natasha Moskvina*, by Sergei Mikhalkov, Stalin Prize winner.

The action of the play takes place during the present war. Natasha Moskvina, a Moscow actress, has no news of her husband for several months. Then when she is celebrating her absent husband's birthday among her friends a lieutenant from the front brings terrible news. Natasha's husband, Captain Nikolai Chirkov, badly wounded in action, remained at his post on a hill and fell into the hands of the Germans. . . Overwhelming grief engulfs Natasha. She finds relief in the resolution to go to the front and sing for the men. Somewhere deep within her, too, nestles an inarticulate hope that her husband is still alive, although the facts are so stubbornly against her.

This Russian woman bears her grief bravely. Natasha does not and cannot know that Nikolai Chirkov is alive, that he succeeded in escaping and is now leading a partisan detachment. The spectator sees the life of the partisans—just plain Russian people—a woman, an old man, peasants,—who have risen in defence of the homeland. A German punitive expedition surrounds the detachment and most of the partisans are killed in action. Captain Chirkov manages to break through and reach the regular Red Army units. . .

A theatre troupe, among whom is Natasha Moskvina, comes to the front. There, in a narrow dugout the moving meeting takes place between Natasha and her husband, who was thought to be dead.

That is the plot of the play *Natasha Moskvina*. The author has built it upon one of the actual happenings of our days.

The writer increased the interest of the play by secondary situations which have lent it great dramatic force. Pilot Zemlyanoy, a strong manly fellow, falls in love with Natasha. To him falls the task of delivering ammunition to the partisans. He meets Captain Chirkov, and receiving a letter from him for his wife, learns that the partisan commander is the husband of the woman he loves. He carries out the mission, but not finding Natasha, leaves her the letter. Natasha, thinking the latter is from Zemlyanoy, tears it up without reading it . . . In this way the playwright prevents Natasha knowing of the happiness in store for her up to the very last minute. A certain lack of sufficient naturalness in these situations, emphasized, by the way, by the stage manager, does not however detract from the sincerity and emotional value of this play dedicated to devotion, love and the power of true feeling. . .

The company of young actors of the Stanislavsky Studio has succeeded in giving a convincing performance breathing with inner warmth and feeling.

Readers of all nations love the novel by that genius Cervantes about how Don Juan, a young Spanish noble, falls in love with Preciosa, a clever and beautiful Gipsy girl, and to gain her affections becomes a common Gipsy nomad too, and then it turns out that the supposed Preciosa too is the daughter of high-born parents. Cervantes' *Gipsy Girl (La Gitanilla)* has more than once served as material for a play. Now Cesar M. Arconada, the Spanish writer, resident in the U.S.S.R., has produced another stage adaptation of this novel, which is being presented by the "Romany" Gipsy Theatre.

Arconada has preserved the plot of the novel. In the characters of the play he has transmitted what flows from the essence—the generally human and unchanging—of the work of the author of *Don Quixote*, that which today strikes a responsive chord in our reader and theatre-goer. Constancy in love under trial, profound moral purity, frankness and veracity and human feeling are what emanate from the stage hero and heroine of *Gipsy Girl*.

The scenes with Spaniards and Gipsies—and they are the majority—are played in Russian; the few scenes with Gipsies alone—in Romany. There's a great deal of charm in the poetry written by Professor F. V. Kelyin, one of the leading Soviet authorities on Spanish literature.

The Theatre has scored a success in the staging of this play. V. Yugov, art director, has produced a youthful, vivid and colourful show.

Most impressive are the lyric scene of Preciosa and Juan's night meeting and the enthralling dramatic scene in which Preciosa implores the correjidor (the town mayor) to spare Juan's life.

The young actress O. Petrova is very good as Preciosa. She has great charm, her Preciosa with regard to Juan conveys the emotional wealth of deep and sincere feeling. Very good too is the acting of the old Gipsy woman, the supposed grandmother of Preciosa. This role is played by M. Skvortsova who has won her audience many times before by the genuine dramatism of her performance. S. Shishkov gives a fine impersonation of Juan. Less successful are the actors playing the parts of Spaniards of the older generation. The actress S. Andreyeva gives a good performance as the spirited daughter of the tavern hostess.

Singing and dancing have always been strong points with the Gipsy Theatre and in this respect the troupe has won new laurels: the songs and dances, both solo and group never fail to please.

S. Bugachevsky, the theatre's regular composer is past master not only with the peculiarities of Gipsy melody and rythm but with Spanish too. As in previous Spanish plays staged he takes real Spanish music as his raw material and works it into spirited dance and song numbers. Only the song of the soldier in the venta (tavern) scene is an exception to the general plan—it is an operetta aria.

There are a number of other faults in the play. In the wedding scene, for instance, the old Gipsy woman sits beside the correjidor's wife as an equal—this does not tally with the customs of the time; in another scene the village alcalde (elder) and alguacil (police) are too richly dressed.

M. Sapeghin and N. Segal's settings are not all of equal merit.

This is the third Spanish play staged by the "Romany" Theatre. After giving an excellent presentation of a tragedy and then a comedy by Federico Garcia Lorca (*The Bloody Marriage* and *The Wonderful Woman Shoemaker)* the Gipsy Theatre shows signs of good progress. With its latest play *Gipsy Girl* it

Dina Nurpeyissova, a decorated eighty-year-old dombra player and composer participating in a festival of Central-Asian music

has achieved a fresh and by no means insignificant success.

In the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (R.S.F.S.R.) there are now 277 theatres (dramatic, musical, puppet and juvenile). The works of modern Soviet playwrights about the struggle of the Soviet people against the nazi invaders and the historic past of Russia occupy chief place in the repertoires of these theatres. Last year the theatres of the R.S.F.S.R. staged 1,800 new shows.

Simonov's *Russians* is now running at 111 theatres, Leonov's *Invasion* at 90. Very popular too are Pogodin's *The Kremlin Chimes*, Trenyov's *Lyubov Yarovaya*, Solovyov's *Field Marshal Kutuzov* and Korneichuk's *In the Steppes of the Ukraine*.

Quite a big place in the repertoires is occupied too by Russian and West-European classics, including the works of Alexander Ostrovsky, Maxim Gorky, Anton Chekhov, Leo Tolstoy, Nikolai Gogol, Shakespeare, Molière, Beaumarchais, Scribe, Calderon and others.

A festival of Central-Asian music has just finished in Tashkent, in which 900 people participated—players on various folk instruments, singers, dancers, composers and musicologists. This event certainly showed that the war has not interrupted the progress of music in the Soviet Republics of Central Asia.

Besides well-known people like K. Baiseitova (Kazakhstan), H. Nasyrova, T. Khanum, M. Turgunbayeva, K. Yakubov (Uzbekistan) and S. Kinzbayeva (Kirghizia) each republic brought forward many talented young performers.

A number of monumental works linked with Turkmen folklore have been produced by Turkmen composers. Excerpts from Meitus and Kuliev's opera *Abadan*, Shaposhnikov and Ovezov's *Shakhsenem and Garip*, and also Kuliev's cantata *Salam Stalin*, the text of which is a collective effort by Turkmen writers and poets, were performed at this festival.

Of works by Uzbek composers the most outstanding were a heroic symphony by M. Ashrafi, Stalin Prize winner, and a symphony-rhapsody by M. Steinberg, a pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov's. He has worked fruitfully for many years at musical folklore. A big success was scored by an orchestra of folk instruments playing Uzbek, Kara-Kalpak and Uigur folk songs.

The festival concerts attracted full houses and were also broadcast on the radio and filmed and recorded for a special *Concert-Film*.

S. Mshvelidze, a Stalin Prize winner, the Georgian composer, has written a symphony dedicated to the heroic defence of the Caucasus against the German invaders.

The symphony opens with a bright, joyful theme on string instruments which is then passed on to the wind instruments. Interwoven with it are the melodies of Kakhetian folk songs, rendered by two flutes and the clarinet. The second—tragic—movement of the symphony is based on the Abkhazian *Song of Heroes*, recorded by composers in the mountains of the Caucasus. The third and fourth movements, dedicated to struggle and victory, are based on folk melodies.

The All-Union Radio Committee has recently arranged a series of big concerts of Polish music. The programmes were varied and well drawn up.

The following took part in the radio concerts of Polish music: the big symphony orchestra of the Radio Committee, conducted by Professor A. Orlov, and the outstanding Soviet vocalists V. Barsova, E. Katulskaya, I. Kozlovsky, the violinist D. Tsiganov, the pianists L. Oborin and Y. Flière, and others. Many works by Chopin, Moniuszko, Ogiński, Wieniawski, Karlowicz, Szymanowski, and also Polish folk songs and dances were performed.

Gulliver's Travels, Jonathan Swift's immortal book, is a great favourite with Soviet readers.

Gulliver as a subject is attractive for the dramatist but presents insuperable difficulties for the stage. How to show the giant man among the Lilliputians? How, on the other hand, can the miniature man among the Brobdingnag giants be shown? The first of these problems was solved by the cinema. The film *The New Gulliver*, producer A. Ptushko, was shown on the Soviet screen some years ago. The leading roles in this picture were filled by puppets. It called for patient exacting work. Merely to show on the screen how the puppet opens its mouth ten intermediate

masks had to be made and shot in turn; and there were 3,000 figures in the film who walked and talked, laughed and wept, made love and war—in a word, lived!

Gulliver has also formed the subject of a play by the Leningrad Puppet Theatre, managed by E. Demmeni, one of the first puppet theatres founded in the country. Demmeni turned to Jonathan Swift's tale as far back as 1928. He solved this difficult problem in the only possible way—by introducing a live actor into his puppet show. By this he achieved a convincing contrast between Gulliver and the Lilliputians. The play won immediate favour among boys and girls and in ten years has been shown over a 1,000 times, a figure that can be boasted of but by few "live" shows. Gulliver was played by M. Drojin, one of the best actors of the boards. During the war he and a few companions went to the front to give puppet shows for the servicemen. Drojin was killed during this tour at the front. The puppet theatre played for several months in embattled Leningrad, under Demmeni's direction, and then removed to Moscow. There during the 1943-44 season *Gulliver* was revived.

When the tiny curtain of the puppet theatre rises the young spectator sees Gulliver—familiar to him through G. Granville's illustrations in the Academic editions—relating his adventures to his friend, Richard Simpson. Nothing in that peaceful talk between two ordinary people so far gives any hint of that wonderful world from which one of the speakers has just returned. Then Gulliver opens his note case and out jump tiny lambs and a two-inch dog, giving tongue with a thin penetrating bark—living representatives of the marvellous land of the Lilliputians. . . Further action (in three episodes) unfolds as Gulliver tells his story to Simpson. The onlooker sees Gulliver bound hand and foot by the Lilliputians, sees individual personages of that Tom-Thumb people—ministers, cavalrymen, the king and queen. Hits are made by the enactment of moments memorable to all from the book: the Lilliputians draw out of Gulliver's pocket a big gold box, full of branches and twigs which make them sneeze—snuff; they can't make out the use of an enormous wheel inside of which somebody is knocking—a watch; they roll on the ground in terror, deafened by an incredible thunder—Gulliver had fired his pistol.

Within the limits of the tiny puppet theatre, of course, it is difficult to reflect all the variety of the panorama which has flown from the pen of Swift, the thinker and philosopher. Nevertheless the show achieves its object: it acquaints the young spectator with one of the most popular heroes of world literature, whose adventures have amused the reading public for more than 200 years.

SMUGGLERS

The foreign press reports that wolfram is still being brought to Germany from Spain by smugglers.

Latest staging of "Carmen". Mountain scene. Don Jose — Franco. Carmen — Hitler

Drawing by Boris Yefimov

NEWS AND VIEWS

In Cracow on March 24th, 1794, Tadeusz Kosciuszko, the Polish national hero, raised the banner of revolt against the foreign invader and home reaction. Tadeusz Kosciuszko gave his whole life to Poland's freedom. To this very day his heroic figure inspires the Polish people. His glorious name is borne by the First Polish Army in the U.S.S.R., waging battle against the German fascist hordes shoulder to shoulder with the Red Army.

That significant date in the Polish people's history, the 150th anniversary of the national insurrection for liberty, was observed at a celebration meeting in Moscow convened by the Union of Polish Patriots in the U.S.S.R. and the All-Slav Committee. The memory of Tadeusz Kosciuszko was honoured by prominent Polish figures, representatives of the Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian and other Slav peoples, generals and officers of the Polish Army in the U.S.S.R., the Czechoslovak and Yugoslav army units formed on Soviet territory.

In opening the meeting Andrzej Witos, vice-chairman of the Union of Polish Patriots, said: "The Polish people has friendly relations with the fraternal Russian people. This friendship is the source of our strength. Today we have gathered in the spirit of fraternal unity, knowing that concord and friendship among the Slav peoples is the one guarantee against further attacks by the blood-thirsty German beast of prey."

Stefan Jędrychowski, a Polish public figure, made a big speech on Tadeusz Kosciuszko's deeds and the struggle of the Polish people.

Lieutenant-General Gundorov of the Red Army, Chairman of the All-Slav Committee, declared amid prolonged applause, that the fraternal peoples of Poland and Czechoslovakia hear the victorious roar of the Red Army guns and are rising to meet it, spurred by the hope of imminent liberation.

Close attention was paid to the speech of the veteran scientist, Hero of Socialist Labour Alexander Bogomolets, President of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, who stressed that the main reason for the failure of the Polish people in their centuries-old struggle for national liberation was the treachery of the ruling cliques who subordinated the interests of the country to their personal interests.

Božidar Maslarić, Serb public figure, conveyed fraternal greetings to the Polish people on behalf of the fighting peoples of Yugoslavia. Lieutenant-Colonel Vladimir Přikril, from the Czechoslovak Brigade in the U.S.S.R., conveyed greetings on behalf of Czechoslovak armymen.

The meeting heard with warm sympathy the story of Hero of the Soviet Union Major Juljusz Hübner of the Polish Army about the fighting done by the Tadeusz Kosciuszko Division and other Polish Army units, battling for a free, independent and democratic Poland.

A brilliant speech was made by Lieutenant-General Zygmund Berling, commander of the Polish Army in the U.S.S.R.:

"Our strivings to create a strong, genuinely democratic and independent Poland are based on close friendship with the Soviet Union—our nearest neighbour—and with all the freedom-loving democratic states. . ."

Others who spoke were Maxim Tank, the Byelorussian poet, and Nikolai Tikhonov, the Russian writer and Chairman of the Union of Soviet Writers of the U.S.S.R.

The meeting adopted a call to the Polish people, Polish soldiers and Polish partisan men and women. One passage in the call runs: "Passivity today is national suicide. Remember that only the armed struggle of the millions can bring the Polish people rapid liberation. To arms!"

Well-known Moscow artists took part in a concert of Slav music after the meeting closed.

In low warm rooms sitting at tables covered with glass you will find the restorers at work. A man with a scalpel cleans with careful patience several sheets of time-worn paper. He passes a soft brush over them, removing the dust, mends the fragile edges that have been torn and strengthens the paper with a special solution.

A brittle parchment was brought that was difficult even to open. Its "cure" would take months.

Donning a gas mask another worker of the restoration shop takes one of the parchments infected by a sort of beetle to a vacuum-formaline chamber from whence it would return cleansed of the pest.

At one of the tables materials about General Suvorov relating to the period of the first Turkish war are being rebound. Originals of Pestel's *Pravda* and a Leo Tolstoy's manuscript that had been buried for a long time, fragments of old maps, notes in Garibaldi's hand are just a few of the items that after passing under the skilful touch of the restorers, will be returned to the repository as good as new to "enjoy" another long lease of life.

Sitting beside the restorers are chemists who investigate the causes of decay.

How to find out what will become of a paper in about thirty years, how far it will be preserved, what it will look like? Will the ink fade? In the laboratory it is subjected to a test known as "the acceleration of age".

Here the paper is "aged" by light and warmth. For seventy-two hours the paper is subjected to the action of temperatures up to 100 degrees centigrade. After that the paper has "aged" by thirty to fifty years. The paper industry is also interested in such research because its aim is to find ways of making paper of greater durability.

The valuable documents and manuscripts are kept in four central state archives.

One is the archive of manuscripts of XVI to XVIII centuries. The Literature Archive contains annals and originals of Russian classic and Soviet writers. Precious materials on the history of the Soviet state are kept in the Archive of the October Revolution and Socialist Construction and the Red Army Archive.

In the past few months many more interesting documents have been acquired from various collections and arranged. Among them are twenty-five unpublished letters of Chekhov, the rough copy manuscripts of several stories by Saltykov-Shchedrin, fragments of the manuscripts and letters of the Russian poet Fet and Leskov, the writer, and the archives of the brothers Alexander and Nikolai Turgenev, prominent public figures of XIX century.

Not long ago the archives received a literary treasure from the first half of the XVII century, *The Russian Annalist*, of great interest for the history of the Russian state. It is a manuscript of 192 pages bound in thick, leather-covered oak boards and is in an excellent state of preservation. The archive has also received the family album of General Peterson, who fought in the war of 1812. The album contains an unpublished letter and items from the note-book kept in St. Petersburg by Adam Mickiewicz, the poet, on his study and translation into Polish of Russian fables and poems, Taras Shevchenko's autograph, drawings by the battle-piece artist P. Kovalevsky, the original of a French translation of Lermontov's *The Mountain Peaks Slumber in the Dark of Night* by Alexander Dumas (the father).

The Literary Archive has acquired an interesting collection of 2,083 letters sent by Russian composers to P. I. Jurgenson, the founder of the biggest music publishing house in Russia. Among them are letters from Balakirev, Borodin, Chaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, N. Rubinstein, Rachmaninov, Scriabin and the well-known critic V. Stassov. There is a very interesting letter from Liszt about his transcription of Chaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* and Dargomyzhsky's *Slavonic Tarantella*.

The Central Archive of the Red Army is often visited by men sent from divisions and regiments asking for help in unravelling the history of their units during the Civil War and they do not go away empty handed.

Among regular visitors to the archive reading rooms are Academician Tarle, Professor Korobkov, who is studying materials relating to the Seven Years' War and Professor Zvavich working on the diplomatic activities of General Kutuzov and other Russian Army leaders in 1812. Here the writer Yuri Slyozkin is studying the personal papers of General Brussilov. People of the most varied occupations make wide use of the archive collections.

Honoured Artist Suren Kocharyan, one of our best reciters, has compiled a composite poem of excerpts from Shakespeare entitled *For Country*.

Listening to the recital, so well given by Suren Kocharyan, you feel that the heroic poem belongs absolutely to this day, a significant reflection on Shakespeare's vitality.

Kocharyan's work is not only of artistic but also of informative interest. Love of country is Shakespeare's leading theme. It inspired his brilliant historical chronicles. With it Shakespeare linked indivisibly the theme of struggle for humanity's ideals against the dark forces of misanthropy and evil.

In radiant light Hamlet, Desdemona and Cordelia appear before us; peering at us from the gloom are bloody Richard III, criminal Claudius, insidious Iago, and Lear's avaricious daughters, Goneril and Regan.

S. Kocharyan's composite poem is charged with hatred for these monsters of crime. Shakespearian in subject and text this talented and original work truly reflects Shakespeare's style also by its emotional richness and manly resonance. It helps us to a profounder understanding of the essence of Shakespeare's humanism. On the other hand Kocharyan has succeeded in showing how akin to us Shakespeare is today.

What gave most amazement and pleasure to the spectator at the final concert of the review of amateur art of Moscow Trade Unions was the widely varied inclinations, interests, tastes and enthusiasm of its participants. All day long they fill urgent orders for the front and then in the evening turn for recreation to music, poetry, dancing and singing.

The repertoire they have chosen is enough to show their variety of musical tastes. Ober's *Bursts of Laughter* was rendered by N. Alexeyevskaya, a girl student of the Moscow University, Benedict's *Winged Girl-Friend*, by E. Naumova, a woman worker at the Stalin Automobile Plant; Ippolitov-Ivanov's *Romansero* was sung by L. Mikhailova, an inspector at the Vladimir Ilyich Factory, while Z. Shutenkova brought to the listener the profoundness of Glinka's romance *Doubt*. Then P. Zabotkina, a woman tunneller of Moscow's underground, gave the rollicking old Russian song *At the Well*. We heard at the concert the silver cascades of the coloratura soprano, the folk song and the Spanish love song.

Applause greeted the rise of the curtain after the interval. On the stage was a chorus very nearly a thousand strong. Chequered Russian aprons, vivid tunics, figured kerchiefs and rainbow-hued embroidery dazzled the eyes. Then the conductor V. Zakharov mounted the stage, and at a wave of the baton that huge concourse broke into song. In astonishing union this chorus composed of singers from many Moscow factories gave us three songs: the Russian folk song *Little Wood*, V. Zakharov's splendid song *Roaming in the Gloaming* and the folk dance melody *Early in the Morning*.

Vinogradov and Mironov, of the Central Telegraph, gave us some freak dancing every round of which drew a burst of merriment from the audience. They were followed by Ukrainian lads and lasses, dancers drawn from workers of various factories. The huge stage became a vortex of rythmic, undulating colour. The audience was held spellbound. But when the master of ceremonies announced the troupe of the Moscow Bakeries and young girls circled in a gay and spirited dance, a warm smile lit the face of everyone and a rumble of approval rolled through the hall.

Among the hits of the evening were acrobatic turns, the climax of long and persevering

training. The *Acrobatic Etude* performed by V. Ivanova, of the N. factory, was a poem of grace and movement. Victor and Alexei Levin, fitters of the "Burevestnik" factory, and their sister, gave an acrobatic display adhering to all the rules of circus art, but with the ease and artlessness of youth that gave it charm. With the same simplicity Anatoli Sinko captivated all with a trumpet solo of the *Neapol Song* from Chaikovsky's ballet *The Swan Lake*. He was accompanied by the Stalin factory's brass band.

Martha Shchepkina, an associate of the Moscow Historical Museum, delivered a report on the cultural life of Russia during the second half of the XVI century.

A number of highly interesting literary-historical records have been preserved of this period when Ivan IV (Ivan the Dread) reigned. These unquestionably include *The Collated Annals of Ivan the Dread*—a manuscript of *Universal History* in ten immense and richly illuminated folios.

Strange as it may seem, despite the difficulties of compiling such *Annals*, which, naturally, involved the work of many scribes and artists, no documental data or information is available as to who compiled this historical manuscript, which outstanding craftsmen were responsible for its illumination and in general who commissioned this work. Although we therefore cannot directly point to the tsar as being the main initiator of this undertaking nevertheless there can be little doubt that this enterprise was launched at his request. In those days such a commission, involving considerable expense, could have come only from the tsar himself. Suffice it to mention that some nine thousand sheets of costly paper went to the making of the *Annals*! On the basis of watermarks, the late N. Likhachov, a well-known palaeograph, established these sheets to be of French origin, dating to the middle of the XVI century. On similar paper are to be found the authentic autographs of a number of French monarchs of that period.

The first sections of these *Annals* are based exclusively on the Bible. Then follow outlines of the history of Alexander the Great, of the Roman Empire, the Byzantine period and, finally, the history of the development of the Russian state.

The heavy folios of the *Annals* fell into a lamentable condition when the newly founded city of St. Petersburg became the capital instead of Moscow. The Kremlin palaces, where these *Annals* were probably kept (there are indications that the *Annals* were employed in the education of the future tsar Peter I when he was a boy), fell into disuse and neglect and, by the close of the XVI century, even into partial ruin. As a result, separate volumes of the *Annals* found their way into private collections. At the present moment the various parts of the *Annals* are preserved in the four biggest public libraries in the Soviet Union.

In *Royal Book* of 1769, Prince Mikhail Shcherbakov, the Russian publicist and historian, was the first to draw attention to the significance of these *Annals*, after which they were often mentioned by many historians. Opinion greatly differed as to the date of the first appearance of the *Annals* until Likhachov established that it dealt with the reign of Ivan IV.

As regards the illumination of the *Annals* it is enough to say that the coloured miniatures interwoven in the text number sixteen thousand! This gives an idea of the magnificence of this valuable manuscript and of its rich artistic finish. Not all the miniatures reach the same high standard. It is evident that they were the work of different artists whose names, unfortunately, have not been recorded, although it is quite possible that they belonged to the Pskov school of icon painters.

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CONTENTS

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