Workers of the world, unite!

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J. Stalin

Address to the Graduates from the Red Army Academies

Delivered in the Kremlin, May 4, 1935

Comrades, it cannot be denied that we have recently achieved important successes both in the sphere of construction and in the sphere of administration. In this connection there is too much talk about the merits of chiefs, about the merits of leaders. All or nearly all our achievements are ascribed to them. That, of course, is wrong, it is incorrect. It is not merely a matter of leaders. But it is not of this I wanted to speak today. I should like to say a few words about cadres, about our cadres in general and about the cadres of our Red Army in particular.

You know that we inherited from the olden days a technically backward, impoverished and ruined country. Ruined by four years of imperialist war, and ruined again by three years of civil war, a country with a semi-literate population, with a low technical level, with isolated industrial oases lost in a welter of minute peasant farms—such was the country we inherited from the past. The problem was to transfer this country from the lines of medieval darkness to the lines of modern industry and mechanized agriculture. The problem, as you see, was a serious and difficult one. The question that confronted us was that *either* we solve this problem in the shortest possible time and consolidate socialism in our country, *or* we do not solve it, in which case our country—technically weak and culturally unenlightened—would lose its independence and become a stake in the game of the imperialist powers.

At that time our country was passing through a period of acute famine in technical resources. There were not enough machines for industry. There were no machines for agriculture. There were no machines for transport. There was not that elementary technical base without which the industrial transformation of a country is inconceivable. All that existed were isolated preliminary requisites for the creation of such a base. A firstclass industry had to be created. This industry had to be so directed as to be capable of technically reorganizing not only industry, but also our agriculture and our railway transport. And for this it was necessary to make sacrifices and to impose the most rigorous economy in everything; it was necessary to economize on food, on schools and on textiles, in order to accumulate the funds required for the creation of industry. There was no other way of overcoming the famine in technical resources. So Lenin taught us, and in this matter we followed in the footsteps of Lenin.

Naturally, in so great and difficult a matter unvarying and rapid success could not be expected. In a matter like this success comes only after several years. We had therefore to arm ourselves with strong nerves, Bolshevik grit and stubborn patience in order to counteract the first failures and to march unswervingly towards the great goal, without permitting any wavering or uncertainty in our ranks.

You know that we set about this task in precisely this way. But not all our comrades had the necessary spirit, patience and grit. Among our com-

rades there proved to be people who at the first difficulties began to call for a retreat. Let bygones be bygones, it is said. That, of course, is true. But man is endowed with memory, and when summing up the results of our work one involuntarily recalls the past. (*Amusement.*) Well then, there were comrades among us who were scared by the difficulties and began to call on the Party to retreat. They said: "What is the good of your industrialization and collectivization, your machines, iron and steel industry, tractors, combines, automobiles? It would be better if you gave us more textiles, if you bought more raw materials for the production of consumers' goods and and gave the population more of the small things which adorn the life of man. The creation of industry, and a first-class industry at that, when we are so backward, is a dangerous dream."

Of course, we could have used the three billion rubles of foreign currency obtained as a result of the severest economy, and spent on the creation of our industry, for the importation of raw materials and for increasing the production of articles of general consumption. That is also a kind of "plan." But with such a "plan" we should not have had a metallurgical industry, or a machine-building industry, or tractors and automobiles, or aeroplanes and tanks. We should have found ourselves unarmed in face of the external foe. We should have undermined the foundations of socialism in our country. We should have found ourselves in captivity to the bourgeoisie, home and foreign.

It is evident that a choice had to be made between two plans: between the plan of retreat, leading, and bound to lead, to the defeat of socialism, and the plan of advance, which led and, as you know, has already led to the victory of socialism in our country.

We chose the plan of advance and moved forward along the Leninist road, brushing those comrades aside, as being people who saw something only when it was under their noses, but who closed their eyes to the immediate future of our country, to the future of socialism in our country.

But these comrades did not always confine themselves to criticism and passive resistance. They threatened to raise a revolt in the Party against the Central Committee. More, they threatened some of us with bullets. Evidently, they reckoned on frightening us and compelling us to leave the Leninist road. These people, apparently, forgot that we Bolsheviks are people of a special cut. They forgot that you cannot frighten Bolsheviks by difficulties or by threats. They forgot that we were forged by the great Lenin, our leader, our teacher, our father, who did not know fear in the fight and did not recognize it. They forgot that the more the enemies rage and the more hysterical the foes within the Party become, the more red-hot the Bolsheviks become for fresh struggles and the more vigourously they push forward.

Of course, it never even occurred to us to leave the Leninist road. More, having established ourselves on this road, we pushed forward still more vigorously, brushing every obstacle from our path. It is true that in our course we were obliged to handle some of these comrades roughly. But you cannot help that. I must confess that I too took a hand in this business. (*Loud cheers.*)

Yes, comrades, we proceeded confidently and vigorously along the road of industrializing and collectivizing our country. And now we may consider that the road has been traversed.

Everybody now admits that we have achieved tremendous successes along this road. Everybody now admits that we already have a powerful, first-

class industry, a powerful mechanized agriculture, a growing and improving transport system, an organized and excellently equipped Red Army.

This means that we have in the main outlived the period of famine in technical resources.

But, having outlived the period of famine in technical resources, we have entered a new period, a period, I would say, of famine in the matter of people, in the matter of cadres, in the matter of workers capable of harnessing technique and advancing it. The point is that we have factories, mills, collective farms, Soviet farms, an army; we have technique for all this; but we lack people with sufficient experience to squeeze out of technique all that can be squeezed out of it. Formerly, we used to say that "technique decides everything." This slogan helped us in this respect, that we put an end to the famine in technical resources and created an extensive technical base in every branch of activity for the equipment of our people with first-class technique. That is very good. But it is very, very far from enough. In order to set technique going and to utilize it to the full, we need people who have mastered technique, we need cadres capable of mastering and utilizing this technique according to all the rules of the art. Without people who have mastered technique, technique is dead. Technique in the charge of people who have mastered technique can and should perform miracles. If in our first-class mills and factories, in our Soviet farms and collective farms and in our Red Army we had sufficient cadres capable of harnessing this technique, our country would secure results three times and four times greater than at present. That is why emphasis must now be laid on people, on cadres, on workers who have mastered technique. That is why the old slogan, "Technique decides everything," which is a reflection of a period we have already passed through, a period in which we suffered from a famine in technical resources, must now be replaced by a new slogan, the slogan "Cadres decide everything." That is the main thing now.

Can it be said that our people have fully understood and realized the great significance of this new slogan? I would not say that. Otherwise, there would not have been the outrageous attitude towards people, towards cadres, towards workers, which we not infrequently observe in practice. The slogan "Cadres decide everything" demands that our leaders should display the most solicitous attitude towards our workers, "little" and "big," no matter in what sphere they are engaged, cultivating them assiduously, assisting them when they need support, encouraging them when they display their first successes, advancing them, and so forth. Yet, in practice we meet in a number of cases with a soulless, bureaucratic and positively outrageous attitude towards workers. This, indeed, explains why instead of being studied, and placed at their posts only after being studied, people are frequently flung about like pawns. People have learnt how to value machinery and to make reports of how many machines we have in our mills and factories. But I do not know of one instance when a report was made with equal zest of the number of people we have developed in a given period, how we assisted people to grow and become tempered in their work. How is this to be explained? It is to be explained by the fact that we have not yet learnt to value people, to value workers, to value cadres.

I recall an incident in Siberia, where I was at one time in exile. It was in the spring, at the time of the spring floods. About thirty men went to the river to pull out timber which had been carried away by the vast, swollen river. Towards evening they returned to the village, but with one comrade missing. When asked where the thirtieth man was, they uncon-

cernedly replied that the thirtieth man had "remained there." To my question, "How do you mean, remained there?" they replied with the same unconcern, "Why ask—drowned, of course." And thereupon one of them began to hurry away, saying, "I have got to go and water the mare." When I reproached them for having more concern for animals than for men, one of them, amid the general approval of the rest, said, "Why should we be concerned about men? We can always make men. But a mare . . . just try and make a mare." (*Amusement.*) Here you have a case, not very significant perhaps, but very characteristic. It seems to me that the indifference shown by certain of our leaders to people, to cadres, and their inability to value people, is a survival of that strange attitude of man to man displayed in the episode in far-off Siberia just related.

And so, comrades, if we want successfully to overcome the famine in the matter of people and to provide our country with sufficient cadres capable of advancing technique and setting it going, we must first of all learn to value people, to value cadres, to value every worker capable of benefiting our common cause. It is time to realize that of all the valuable capital the world possesses, the most valuable and most decisive is people, cadres. It must be realized that under our present conditions "cadres decide everything." If we have good and numerous cadres in industry, agriculture, transport and the army—our country will be invincible. If we do not have such cadres—we shall be lame on both feet.

In concluding my speech, permit me to offer a toast to the health and success of our graduates from the Red Army Academy. I wish them success in the cause of organizing and leading the defence of our country.

Comrades, you have graduated from the academy, a school in which you received your first steeling. But school is only a preparatory stage. Cadres receive their real steeling in actual work, outside school, in fighting difficulties, in overcoming difficulties. Remember, comrades, that only those cadres are any good who do not fear difficulties, who do not hide from difficulties, in order to overcome them and eliminate them. It is only in combating difficulties that real cadres are forged. And if our army possesses genuinely steeled cadres in sufficient numbers, it will be invincible.

Your health, comrades! (*Stormy applause. All rise. Loud cheers for Stalin.*)

Ivan Kataev

Heart

Excerpts from a Novel of Soviet Cooperatives

The clock struck busily and long. What time is it? What! twelve already? There's a board meeting and I have to go to the District Soviet about renting store rooms. I'll have to call Palkin and tell him I can't make it before two.

2-04-58 Busy. Hm! have to wait.

2-04-58 Busy! It's beginning to get on my nerves.

2-04-58 Busy! Hell! What's the matter with that telephone? Here comes Motya with a glass of tea for me. Then next to it she puts something wrapped in a piece of paper.

"But what's this?"

Motya looks at me, smiles and blinks her eyes.

Strange how small and thin women are created for the struggle for existence. Or maybe life makes them that way? And in Motya's hair gleam streaks of grey.

I take the package and out fall three little buns smelling of sunflower seed oil.

"Why did you do that?"

She smiles guiltily, confused.

"That's for you, Alexander Mikhailovich."

"For me? But I haven't asked for it."

"But I—I—Alexander Mikhailovich, eat it! Because I've seen how you go without food from morning till night every day. People can die that way. So I—"

She turns and almost runs away, her sandals tapping. I catch up to her and slip her some money.

"Take it, Motya."

She hides her hands and steps back.

"No, no, Alexander Mikhailovich. I did it . . ."

"But Motya, you make me feel badly. Take it, take it, or I shall be angry. That was nice of you."

She takes it. Her eyes lose their sparkle and she goes out.

Gee! Life is good! What a sunny day. The world is still so young though it makes believe to be old. Ridiculously young! Like an older sister, herself so pink, smiling at a youngster's doll.

"2-04-58. Thank you! Palkin, Djuravlov speaking. How are you? It may not suit you but I can't be there before two as I have a board meeting—Yes, yes, absolutely. How is construction going? Listen Palkin, keep our fellows in mind. Kulyabin still lives in some sort of hole. Alright, we'll talk about it. So long."

The board members are gradually assembling, so I move over to the conference table. Almost everyone present has been to see me today one by one, each one with his perplexities and daily catastrophes. I poked into their affairs as a watchmaker into a tangle of wheels and screws trying hard to put them in order and start them going. But in the midst of all the business, once more I forgot to notice the people themselves. But now they are

gathered together looking over material, shuffling pages, silent, and I can look at them as people.

For some reason or other I am filled with a happy tenderness toward them. Tenderness and pathos. If I could only share my thoughts with them. No! There would be astonishment, irritation, fear. Otherwise I would say:

"Friends! You have plunged busy noses into problems and accounts. You might better be looking at yourselves and at each other. You are all astonishingly fine people. A splendid and unmarked friendship unites you. It is the friendship of Red Army men on a scouting expedition, of batchelors sitting in a noisy cafe, of a football team before the match. The cosiness of cooperation. You are united in business activity which cracks and jumps under your feet as it conquers the heavy waves of the market, the storms of money shortage, the shoals of polite unconcern. You may have thousands of well-wishers, but only you can convert them into real collaborators. It all depends on you. You understand that. Each one of you devote to your work your most precious possession—your waking hours. You cannot look into the eyes of your wife as much as you desire; you cannot pick mushrooms and wonder about the greenness of the grass. All your thoughts, all your activity is for your cooperative."

But instead of all this, I say:

"Well, comrades, it's time to begin. The main points to be discussed are as follows: first, the possibilities of union with the cooperative 'Red Tobacco' and the methods of further work on a district scale. Second, the total services on a district scale. Third, cloaks and suits for the autumn season. Fourth, current affairs. Is there anything else? Changes? Corrections? No? Comrade Anosov will begin the report."

And I whispered to him, "Please, Vassia, make it short as I must leave at two."

But my thoughts ran on:

All day long, for half your lives, your brains are mobilized, and yet you neither become dulled nor dried out; and from each one of you comes the warm smell of fermentation, swelling and growing as from a muffled kneading through. Sometimes your eyes scowl wrathfully, sometimes squint into a sneer; you shrug your shoulders, nervously crackle your fingers; a ray of humor hovers around the corners of your lips, those same lips which a beloved kisses as she kisses the corners of your eyes. Each one of you carries this richness in the work given him to do. Indeed, if it happened that tomorrow one of you were transferred to some other work in a different circle of people, the very same moment he would call this new work his own. He would crawl in as a bee into his hive, protect it, make it famous, be puffed up over it, and might even dupe his old business should it be necessary. But what's the difference! Today we are here, today we are part of this chain, long live every link of it! There he is—our comrade. Admire his oaken qualities. Steep your eyes and heart in his greatness.

There is Kulyabin, the chief of our food department. He is heavy, swarthy, shaggy-haired. Besides that, he is perpetually wretched. Street cars, pencils, chairs, women, sidewalks, house committees, the whole earth are uncomfortable for him. All these crack, break, cause scandals—are simply in his way. They mean bruises, fines, mockery and sorrows. They all ought to be changed for Kulyabin. Revolution and the factory, these more or less suit him, as he says himself. The revolution had given him the desire to live and provided him with a hundred million reliable comrades. He has no use for life abroad

and likes to say, "He laughs best who laughs last." The factory had taught him to work, watchfully, persistently, until his bones ached. But now the revolution is like a narrow sidewalk, where one can't shove through, but must walk circumspectly. The factory promoted him from the foundry where sparks disappeared in the black clouds of his hair, where his leather apron curled up like a birch leaf in the heat, promoted him to the position of a responsible worker in the cooperative. Now he is a manager, a member of the board and controls a three hundred thousand ruble turnover. Through his stony hands passes the finest, the most aromatic goods—soft flour, clear marmalade, cocoa, delicatessen, wine—everything for the discriminating palate. Yes, perhaps poods of salmon are rotting on his hands, sugar melting in the dampness; but look at him when he reports such matters to me, how his knees tremble, how his face darkens; watch him, late in the evening, as he runs about inspecting store after store, his collar up around his ears. But it won't happen again, he'd rather be drenched himself and rot to the bone. Last week Kulyabin came to me and told me, as he always tells me about everything, about buying a folding bed on the open market. The bed cost six rubles, so he gave the peddler ten rubles and received four rubles change. Later he discovered he had given him a thirty ruble bill. And the very first night that twenty-six ruble piece of linen trash fell apart under his bony frame. The following day he gave a fifty ruble bill to some sort of swindler who promised him a room. The fellow vanished and hasn't shown up since. And that was all the money Kulyabin had left from his pay. The following night in a lane some hooligans robbed him of his gold watch which had been an award at the front, and the only elegant thing he had ever owned. Kulyabin told me all about it, gazing downwards and tapping the floor with the toes of his enormous shoes. He didn't ask for an advance, though I couldn't have given it to him anyway because the cash as usual was low. I slipped him a five ruble bill of my own, scolding him, a cooperator, for not having more sense than to buy on the open market, and for having room dealings with riff-raff. He begged me to tell no one of his discrepancies; he would be teased. But I want to tell you all frankly about this and advise you to pat Grisha Kulyabin on his shaggy head, to ask that solitary fellow to your homes, let your hospitable wives serve him tea with jam and let him amuse your *oktyabriata* with funny faces. He does not realize it but he is very much in need of just this.

Vaska Anosov, you are discontentedly glancing at me out of the corners of your eyes and thinking that I'm not listening to your clear tenor. No, I'm listening. Yes, yes, I know, without trade connections with "Red Tobacco" the district cannot be served, instead there will be parallelism and unhealthy competition. I know that they are protesting two of our drafts and that they have an oversupply of dried fruit, shoes and handicraft goods. Didn't we compose the outline of the report together! But today your personality is much more important to me than all the parallelism and dried fruit. And now your soul is blossoming before us, the soul of our great organizer, your cool, suspicious and honest soul. You also came here from a machine, you, the secretary of the Party nucleus, excommunicated by the opposition; but the book is lying in your head as on a pulpit and its leaves are rustling. You are a doctrinnaire; you are a walking encyclopedia on Marx, a quotation in pants. However did you manage to acquire that exactness, that accurate graphing of schemes and calendar plans when in 1917 you were only a tongue-tied cutter, and in 1919 an agitator in the political department of the army. I know that after this you glided through some sort

of high-speed course. You probably swallowed the pages in freight cars, holding the pamphlet so that the light fell on it from the red-hot jaws of the stove; or in hospitals, stealthily sneaking the book from under the mattress when the nurse wasn't looking, or during long conferences, hiding it between your knees. And now your sentences are smooth like your yellow hair. Besides that, you are a master of planning with perspective. You stay by each job given you as one does by a chess game, knowing in advance all your moves and those of your opponent. You can organize everything —a cooperative, a group of political schools, a two-week fight with a cold in the head—in seven moves, in sixteen, in thirty-eight. But you trust no one but yourself. According to you, everyone in the world is a loafer, a bureaucrat, or an embezzler. According to you everybody merely wants to carve out a career for himself, or, at least idle away three months in a Crimean sanatorium.

And you whip all these imaginary armies of loafers with citations from the whole twenty-three volumes. At a meeting you listen to somebody's well meaning outpourings and a sly wrinkle lines the corner of your beautiful mouth. Now you are going to pique and disillusion us with your statistical figures. All right, Anasov. Tomorrow at the cell meeting I'll get you, and you'll again reply smilingly: "Comrades, only infants may be fed on this demagogy." But today I look at your sharp, clear profile and reading from the faces of those present, I thank you for being alive. I thank you for being with us, loving us, perhaps secretly mocking us for your somewhat dry, deadly honesty, for your courageous skepticism, without which it would have been indeed difficult to carry on.

And there is our third pillar, our Burdovski. "Any questions on the report? Let's go on with the discussion. Who? You want the floor, Kulyabin? Go on."

So Burdovski, king of popular merchandise and shop windows. You cannot overlook Burdovski with his loquaciousness and enthusiasm. But do you admire him as much as you should, do you love him as much as he deserves? Here he comes leaning on his wooden leg and jovially hollering: "Do you know what sort of little machine I saw yesterday in the Amtorg calendar? It's a joy, a blessing from heaven! That little scamp not only weighs and packs automatically but also shows the price. We ought to order it immediately and put it in all the stores." We are greeting you today, the grave-digger of Asiatic retail methods. Your battle cry is "Down with filthy markets, primitive fairs, rotten little booths and kiosks and long live huge department stores." You rave about palaces full of merchandise a-hum with smooth-running lifts, a-rustle with fountains and goods, luring the customers. You are sad because you want people not only to shop there but also to dream, write poetry, make love to each other and do a little self analysis. America, twenty Americas, America to the tenth degree, that is your will. Meanwhile you are beautifying the shop windows. You pour a cataract of textiles on the heads of bewitched pedestrians; you build a Babylonian tower of glossy trunks and suitcases; you create phantasies of plates, lamp bulbs and meat grinders. The window display must be changed every week according to our indefatigable stage-manager. Last night I came to a dead halt in front of our first department store. There in that little window, cut in two by the shadow of a huge, green-fringed lampshade, a pink-faced dummy sat at a tea table. Legs crossed, he lounged in an easy chair and read *Izvestia*. The dolt's wife sat across from him drinking coffee from a thin China cup, and curling her waxen finger. The coffee-pot glistened on a snowy table cloth in the midst of the napkins, tea plates, milk pitchers

and trays with cookies. The place was overflowing with THINGS, on walls, tables, and floors; high-backed chairs, tea-tables, gleaming trays, crumb brushes curved like scimitars, wooden platters with "You are welcome" burned into them, shelves, statuettes, and panels carved with black grouse and bream. Little rugs and rag carpets stretch out under the feet of the matrimonial pair and a stout, carved buffet like an over-fed abbot, lazily blessed them. "Choke yourself with THINGS," the window was bawling; "barricade your life with wood, glass and cheap silver; let these be your law and prophet, your happiness and peace." And so Burdovski, this morning I directed you to destroy immediately this sort of family happiness and to create something else in its place. But you can't resist it! We all know that you eat potatoes with cotton-seed oil in order to wear an imported serge suit; that you smell of perfume a block away; and that your old-fashioned wife is cluttered with karakul fur, false pearls, fluffy feathers and a crocodile purse. You ornament her like a department store, with love and solicitude, because you are the artist and public crier of THINGS. Of course we all know that you want everyone to have everything.

You are a communist, Burdovski, a social worker and scribbler. Every single night with your bead-like handwriting, you write very long articles on the Americanization of the retail system, on the mechanization of storage economy. In ecstacy you screw out your wooden leg because it interferes with your thinking; you jump up on one foot, gesticulate wildly and read the article to your wife for her praise. As you know, the Soviet economist must let his every step be controlled by the masses, that's your law. You aren't annoyed that your articles usually find their way into the editor's waste basket. A busy and intensive life overflows you; you warm us with the breath of your geniality and cheer us with your self confident laugh. We thank you for that.

I have drawn your attention to only three, but how many more of such creators surround us. Take, for instance, our Ginden, finance manager, what's wrong with him? Remember that he has been married only a month and a half to a little brunette medical student with gleaming white teeth and he's never more than half an hour late for work. And don't worry, in his dreaming he's not going to overlook the drafts. And that woman Ivanova, the mass work she does! Burdovski calls her our female squadron because she's clickety-clacking all day long throughout the district. And our fat Bruk who handles the public kitchen—he's the custodian of divine cooking traditions and a chess addict. And those at the end of the table, Golubeva, Krivenko, Poplelukin, everyone of them is a complete world, or, if you like, a cooperative in which. . . .

But now I must stop my musings, for it is time for the concluding words.

"Well, comrades, does noone else want the floor? Anosov, I hope you're not expecting the last word? I'll do that for you as I have to rush away to the District Soviet. You all see clearly now, comrades, that the "Red Tobacco" is no help to us in serving the population, but only a hindrance. "Red Tobacco" moves along a former much mistaken line; it is a petty, almost family cooperative and begets localism and separatism. On the other hand after joining the cooperative named after Smirnov we became three times as large as "Red Tobacco" and a half-year's experience showed us that enlargement and centralization is the only way to recover from the bad management and corruption in cooperatives in our district. The conditions of work are very difficult for us because we came here to rebuild the ruins of three organizations which had lost the confidence of the workers and also of

the leading organs. And still we are managing somehow. Everything that Comrade Kulyabin said about the failures of the restaurants connected with the "Red Tobacco" factory is really the failure of public supply in general; and Comrade Bruk was correct when he said that it is wrong to approach this matter only from the commercial point of view. We are choked by a lack of our own means and exist only by means of credits; so that union with "Red Tobacco" and the resulting growth of members will permit us to pull through the campaign for shareholders. Let me tell you that the presidium of the board has already petitioned the State Cooperative Association in regard to the union; we are supported by the District Soviet and I presume that the question will be solved satisfactorily. The zealous self-protective attitude of the tobacco people obviously is caused, as is usual in such cases, by narrow patriotism and the desire to have their own trademark and signboard. But it is doubtful whether the State Cooperative Association will consider that. In a word, "Red Tobacco" must unite with us, and then at the ninth anniversary, as has already been planned, we shall have a gala opening of our united, working District Cooperative. We'll give it some new stores, bread factories, restaurants, rest rooms for mother and child and so on. Very little time is left, comrades, less than two months and we must act as speedily as possible. If any one of us delays it will spoil the whole orchestra. As far as the practical propositions of Comrade Anosov are concerned, they are well thought out and I recommend their adoption as they stand. No objections? Well, I'm running, Anosov, you take the chair and I'll be back in half an hour."

As I hurry down the corridor, I see a tall figure, with a pale face, pointed beard and unshaven cheeks.

"Shura—Alexander Mikhailovich," says he stretching out his hand.

"I don't seem to remember you—"

"That's not surprising," he smiles, "we haven't seen each other for eight years. Sergei Tolokontsev."

"Oh, yes."

A forgotten, habitual joy seizes me. I almost throw my arms around him —but—no.

"Where are you from now? What are you doing?"

"What am I doing? Unemployed for the time being. I have no privileges in regard to work in this country."

"And where is Sonya Nikholayevna; still acting?"

"She is here with me but she has lost her voice. And besides what's the use of monkeying around on the stage for this new public—"

"Have you come to see me on business?"

"Why, isn't it pleasant to meet a friend of your youth? How strangely you speak to me Shura—"

"I am frightfully busy, Sergei Nikholayevich, I must go."

"Oh, yes, you're busy, that's natural. Can you offer me a job in your establishment? I'm willing to play any role from manager down to errand boy."

What can I say to this man from another planet!

I answer sternly:

"There are no vacancies at the moment."

"Oh, so, no vacancies. Still, you have known me from boyhood. And what's more, I was your comrade in a former party, a party which you haven't completely buried in your past. In any case your dry-goods and

herring, as you understand yourself, is too narrow a field for any agressive activities on my part."

"I can no longer be of any help to you."

"All right, I'll tell Sonya how things stand. Sonka is the one who compelled me to come to you. Sonka is the one who said, 'Go to Shura, he has such a kind heart, and he used to love all of us.' "

"I have no more time to listen to you, goodbye."

Do I pity him or not? God damn it, I do.

II

I stretch out from the couch to shut the window. I see a bit of darkening sky and great, quiet stars. The golden cupola of a church faintly gleams, but whether from stars or moon—For some reason a gleaming cupola in the evening sky always arouses in me that happy restlessness of springtime. Maybe it is because I first saw it in the early spring when I went out one night to chop wood and the snow was melting underfoot. I looked at that melting snow and thought, for the last time I'm chopping wood; springtime is here, and life, unknown, lies before me, boundless as the sky. And now this same feeling stirs me although it is autumn and I am almost thirty-nine. I stretch to shut the window but Yurka says:

"Don't shut it, Pop, wait till I finish sweeping so that the dust can fly out."

I obey.

The handle of the broom is longer than Yurka and it seems as if the handle is moving him about the room. My, what thin legs he has! When I was his age I was already wearing long trousers and was a fat fellow in the gymnasium; in my long trousers I felt as respectable as Uncle John, a clerk in the archives of the legal department. But these youngsters nowadays wear much less clothes; they're lighter; their legs are sunburned, and covered with bruises and mosquito bites. But he wears his red tie with the same pride that I used to wear the emblem on my uniform. Suddenly I feel embarrassed that I am lying down while he is diligently sweeping the room.

"Tell me, Yurka, do you sweep the room every day?"

"Not exactly. I like it when there's lots of dust, then you can see what you're sweeping. I should have swept this morning but I went on the excursion to the Botanical Gardens. I got home quite late, but thought I'd better sweep because the house committee people are coming soon. Oh, yes, I forgot to tell you that they were here just before you came and told me to tell you not to go anywhere because there's a conference tonight."

"Yes, I know . . . This is what I have decided, we'll take turns. One day I'll sweep, then Mother, and on the third day, you. We mustn't exploit you."

"Yes, you're right, Pop. School begins on the fifteenth; I'll be busy in my group and be absent all day. It'll be handy to take turns."

He pompously takes the big pile of rubbish and disappears into the corridor. I go back to my reading. Yurka comes back and asks:

"Do you have your study group tomorrow?"

"Not tomorrow, on Monday, but I won't have any more free evenings to spare for it."

"Well, read then . . . but wait a minute . . ." he runs over to me, kneels on the couch and gazes at me fixedly.

"What's the matter, Yurka?"

"What? Tell me, did you have dinner today?"

"Dinner? Oh, yes, I had a bite."

He shakes me.

"No, don't bluff me, did you have dinner? A regular dinner with soup and meat and dessert?"

I laugh.

"Well, alright, I'll confess—I didn't. You see, I was awfully busy today. But I'm not very hungry."

Yurka looks at me disgustedly.

"Again no dinner . . . Pop, but you'll die . . . I've told you so many times . . ."

That's his mother in him.

"Oh, maybe not. I'll try to live a little while yet. But listen, if you'd like to run over to the store and get something, we'll fix supper. Maybe mother will come. The money is over there in the side pocket of my coat."

"I don't need any money. I have some left over from my dinner money. I'll treat you today."

With a skip and a jump he runs out.

A fragile silence falls. My watch ticks. The vibration of the street cars shakes the walls and the honk of automobile horns cuts the silence.

I can't read.

The ceiling above me is a dirty gray. In the corners out of Yurka's reach there are cobwebs. It should have been whitewashed. Funny! The two of us make more than enough money, but where it goes nobody knows. We simply have no time to think about such things as the ceiling. But perhaps that's just old Russian carelessness. No, it's lack of time. Neither of us has any time. Nayda used to pay attention to details and make things cosy. But now she has thousands of children on her hands, hundreds of ceilings in her head, provisions and alterations. How can she take care of her private affairs! Her enthusiasm for proselytizing will kill her. It's different for these thirty year old converts. To them everything to which we have become accustomed is a discovery That's why they run hither and thither with feverish eyes, a bit abruptly. I remember in '21 when she first joined the trade union, how happy she was—now she had found her place. Not just an ordinary citizen, out for herself, but a comrade. And now she has gone far; she's already a member of the Party cell, a director of children's homes; but still she has the enthusiasm of a new convert.

Yurka comes back and begins to prepare supper. He skilfully cuts the cucumbers, tomatoes and baloney into rings.

"Where did you learn to do that?"

"At camp," he answers in a business like manner, already munching at something.

We sit down at the table. Yurka is contented, but in spite of his importance as housekeeper, plays with his fork and swings on the chair. And now I don't know whether to check him or not; I see so little of him and he grows in such jumps that I'm afraid to say something out of place. Sometimes, absent mindedly, I speak to him as to an infant and he looks at me with astonishment. It's embarrassing.

"Shall I make some tea?" he asks, ready to do anything in his good mood.

"No, it isn't worth while. The people are coming right away."

"By the way, Yurka, did you read the book by Jules Verne that I brought you the other day?"

"I haven't finished it yet. And besides I don't want to. I think it's trash.

I asked one of the men in the military museum if such a cannon existed, one that can fire to the moon. He said it was a phantasy—and a phantasy means lies. Not interesting. Maine-Read's *The Desert Dwelling* isn't so bad. There are officers in it, but they are building something like a sovkhoz, doing everything for themselves and they succeed . . . But bring me somemore anyway, maybe I'll like one of them," he consoles me.

How surprisingly little he reads. He doesn't know the sweetness, the greedy delight of throwing everything to the winds and hiding in the corner with his book, like a dog with his bone, and of curling up, almost gurgling with delight, as he eagerly turns over the pages. I recall the days when I wouldn't go to sleep even though it was long past my bedtime, but kept pleading. "Just another five minutes, just let me finish this chapter." To get me to sleep my mother had to take my book by force and lock it in the cupboard. But I was still dazed from floating in a boat or wandering on the lonely heaths of Scotland; I had forgotten that tomorrow was coming and with it another dark morning and the icy corridors of the school; so I ran to the cupboard almost crying and tried to open the locked drawer with my nails. But Yurka . . . Yurka doesn't seem to be very fond of reading, and when he does read it's more like a working through of material. He doesn't read because he doesn't like to be alone. It's strange too, how he can live without some solitude, without that more than sweet sadness of non-participation, of roaming on the damp spring fields swinging one's arms and crying to the wind, *O dim distance, O the piercing call of thy flute!* But perhaps the youth nowadays have no need of it, they have so much more that we didn't have. Still, it's a pity; let them gain something new, but why should they lose the treasures and joy of the past?

Yurka clears the table, takes the dishes to the kitchen and washes them there. Finishing, he returns.

"Listen to this, Pop, I want to tell you again. I think Christov ought to be put out of our house. Yesterday he acted in a filthy way in the corridor in front of our door. When I scolded him and asked him why he made a toilet there, he threw himself at me and shouted that he would choke me. I just barely got away. And everybody says that he's a dirty old man, that he should have been put out long ago. We can't bear it any more."

"It's not necessary to bear it, but we must shame him once more and act through the house committee."

"So it means that you don't want to put him out?"

"But I always told you that."

"It's strange. He is a bourgeois and ex-landlord; why should we be ceremonious with him? That's called compromising."

"You're talking nonsense. To begin with, he used to be a landlord. Now he is working. He carves puppets to make his living. Besides he has no relatives or friends, which means he has nowhere to go. We can't throw the man out on the street."

"Huh! It's funny to listen to you. You yourself used to say that we can have no mercy on the bourgeois. And now you are drifting . . ."

How shall I explain to him?

"I said that the bourgeoisie are to receive no mercy when they do harm to the revolution, government or any group of people, workers or peasants. Do you understand? But Christov does no harm to anyone but us. He is angry at me and at mother because we are Party members and we were the first ones to reduce his house space. Besides I am president of the house

committee. That's why he behaves so outrageously. He wants to protest in some way or other because he, a rich man with cooks and race horses, is now compelled to live in poverty. And he can protest in no other way but in being nasty before our door. But he doesn't bother anybody else?"

"Nobody."

"So you see, we—I, you and Mom, mustn't ruin a man's life, even if he is bad, only because three of us are uncomfortable. We must try to placate him, and I will try to do it."

Yurka is silent for a minute, then says with resolution:

"You do as you like, but I'm going to notify the house committee that he should be put out. I'm also a tenant and have my rights. I wouldn't clean the floor after a bourgeois. If anyone in my division knew it they would tease me to death, even expel me. The court will accuse him, and let him go to the devil with all his puppets and ikons."

Someone knocks at the door—the house committee people, I greet them and ask them to sit down. As usual Somsonov and Ptitsin move timidly around the room and sit down as if the chairs were made of glass. Funny people! They still feel bashful in my presence, in my room, in spite of the fact that my room is poorer than theirs. Samsonov is a painter and Ptitsin a shoemaker. It is because they still regard me as one of the intelligentsia and therefore a baron. Serafim Petrovich takes a paper from his folder and gives it to me.

I begin to read the calligraphic handwriting.

1) On the part of Citizen Ugrumova, apartment 26, we have noticed a lack of sanitary. . .

2) Some tenants shake their carpets out of the windows. . . .

3) Citizen Pirogov's dog bites the chidren . . .

4) Comrade Krashchik's baby was scared to death by Citizen Ugrumova's dog. . . .

I strive to read it—strain to pronounce the words. But once again I feel my heart slow down; it seems to jump out of its bag; it beats rapidly, irregularly Oh, hell! This hasn't happened since spring and I thought it was all over. . . . But to live at this minute is impossible. My heart has jumped from me and is lying there trembling beside me. I know what to do. I must lie down flat on my back. I get up and everybody rises with me, not taking their frightened eyes from me. I must be very pale.

"Alexander Mikhailovich, what is the matter with you?"

Serafim Petrovich is trying to support me. Oh, but they don't understand! As usual a torturing irritation seizes me. I tear my arm from his. I go over to the couch and lie down. Well, heart, go back to your place, I'm waiting. Funny people, what are they bustling around for? Why are they opening the window? Why are they pushing that water at me? I brush them away. Yurka is the only one who is quiet because he knows all about it. I watch him. Ah, quiet, quiet . . . it's coming back into place. No, I've lost it again. Why is it so long this time? I can't stand it any more.

"What is the matter with you, Alexander Mikhailovich," asks Ptitsin, almost crying.

Why do they have to bother me?

"Yurka explain to them."

Yurka steps forward with gloomy importance.

"It's an attack of nervrosis."

"Neurosis," I correct him in a whisper.

"Don't be worried, it doesn't pain, it will afterwards. Now he feels uneasy,

for his heart feels as if it had caught on something. He told me about it. And it's awful at that moment because it seems impossible to live. But it will pass; he's not unconscious."

Everybody looks at Yurka with respect. Samsonov even keeps his mouth open. Now, I think my heart is quieting down. It is quivering just a little. Already I can think again, I can live.

Now it's quite quiet again. It is beating evenly as usual, one, two, one, two. That even beat is such a relief, such a joy. This alone could make life a delight, but we never notice it—one, two, one, two . . . But I must lie still a little longer so that it will be completely calm.

"Well, comrades, carry on, I can hear you all right."

They exchange worried looks.

"I guess we'd better go, Alexander Mikhailovich, let's postpone it."

"No, no, let's not postpone it. I don't have any more free evenings this week. Let's finish up."

They all sit down again. Serafim Petrovich straightens his spectacles and clears his throat.

"1) And therefore, in order not to go to the court. . . .

2) We have to put an end to unsanitary conditions. . . .

3) We ought to suggest that Citizen Ugrumova buy a muzzle for her dog. . . ."

Far off at the end of the corridor, I hear a door shut, I hear familiar quick steps. They come nearer and nearer. I know it's Nadya. She always hurries as if someone were behind her.

The door behind me is thrown open. I can't see her, but I feel the happiness of her nearness. In a second she is on her knees beside me, my head between her palms.

There is alarm in her eyes.

"What is it Shura? Again your heart?"

I hasten to calm her.

"It's all over. I've been overworking a little lately. I guess we've all become a little sissyfied."

I try to smile.

Nadya smooths back the hair from my forehead. She smells of fresh air and of that dear, old rubber raincoat. She says to the house committee people:

"Now listen, comrades, let's postpone business. He must take a rest."

I want to stop Nadya but she pays no attention to me. The committee members apologize for some reason or other, hurriedly pick up their papers and go. Nadya turns to me and sternly says:

"Tomorrow you are going to the doctor."

"Yes, certainly, I thought I'd better go, too . . ."

"Tomorrow morning I'll go with you on the way to work. When you're ill you always intend to go but the moment you recover you think you can pull through somehow."

She puts her hat on the cupboard and is about to take her coat off when a sudden thought strikes her and she stops in the middle of the floor:

"Oh, yes, Shura, you can't imagine what happened today at the conference . . ."

She smiles merrily at the memory of it, and forgetting about her coat, sits down on the couch beside me.

Nadya talks quickly, her eyes shining. I hold her warm hand in mine. Yes, her bobbed hair would make her look much younger, twenty-five or six, not more, but for those faint wrinkles around her eyes. Her words, quick, rounded

happy, fall on me like golden seeds from a bag. Yurka goes on with his drawing, bare knees on the chair. He doesn't listen, he has his own business to attend to.

Night. The darkness swims before my eyes. I feel my heart again. What could be more torturing than to feel the heart. It beats dully as if it were wrapped in cotton wool, as if it were beating against the soft mattress. That constant disturbance is still going on—something that sticks there, something that presses, and moves around. It isn't so bad though, I can try to sleep. But as I begin to doze, to float into obscurity and quietness, my heart gives a tug, and begins to beat faster and faster. Then it calms down and I happily catch my breath, but sleep has eluded me. My heart is like a nimble, slippery mouse, impossible to hold. I put my palm over it. There it is, close to me under the thin, warm skin. What's the matter with you, haven't you enough room? Why don't you beat regularly against the ribs? Like this, one, two,—one, two,—If it's easier for you, I'll turn over on the other side. There—that's better, it's warm and quiet. The long body is resting, clinging closely to the sheets. The tiredness oozes down through me and out as rain through the earth.

Nadya is sleeping, her face to the wall, her round shoulder gleaming in the dark.

We should really buy another bed, two would be more comfortable.

The silence swallows me.

III

We came out of the dining room of the collective together. Ivanova and I usually part here on the square. As usual she hasn't said a word the whole way. During the day she chatters endlessly till one is tired of hearing her, but once away from work she is silent. But why does she like to come with me? At the end of the day she runs into the office; and in the dining room she sits at my table.

"You turn to the left, here, Ivanova? Well, so long . . ."

"Wait a minute!"

She stands there, gazing to one side, playing with the flap of her brief case. What in the world has she put in it to make it as round as a football?

"Wait just a moment, Djuravlov—I have some business with you—important. Let's go and sit down in that little square."

"What sort of business? Why didn't you tell me about it on the way? You see, Ivanova, I'm in an awful rush, I have to go to the District Committee."

"You'll get there—it won't run away. And I've wanted to talk to you for so long. Let's go."

She starts off, and taking a deep breath, I follow her. I know ahead of time what she's going to talk about, about Lunkin, the chief of the eighteenth store. He's rather a hasty fellow and has become a little snobbish, but in general he's a good fellow—even talented. Under no circumstances am I going to agree to his transfer. They'll have to make peace.

We sit down on the bench. What solemnity!

Women are so implacable; actually they are ten times more intolerant, more touchy than men. We are more good natured in business.

"Now then, Ivanova, cough up! What is this important business?" I smile knowingly and rub my knee.

"First I'll light a cigarette," she said taking the box from her pocket. She

blows a wreath of smoke through full, pursed lips, in feminine fashion. Under the almost mannish, felt hat, her dark face resembles Commintern comrades from the south.

She smokes in silence.

At this hour the square is practically deserted save for a few mothers and nurses with babies.

Ivanova looks at them absent-mindedly and throws her cigarette away. Leaning back, and putting her hands in her pockets, she begins speaking in a slow, deliberate voice:

"It's like this, Djuravlov, I wanted to tell you . . ." She slows down again . . . then says abruptly:

"In a word, I love you . . . for a long time . . . since spring time. That's why it's so difficult to work in the same office with you. But I couldn't leave my work, it's too dear to me. That's all. What do you say to that?"

I look at her in amazement. Whatever did she say? What nonsense! She completely knocked me out—why, I can't collect my thoughts! And here I thought it was about Lunkin. I never thought—never suspected—Why it never entered my mind! But I must answer her in some way.

Ivanova turns to me with frightened eyes and pressed lips. She is wondering what in the world she has done. What can I say to her? What does one say in a case like this? I simply can't look at her eyes.

Seized by a torturing awkwardness and a fear of what I might say, I speak in a disgustingly strange, thin, unnatural voice:

"Ivanova dear, you astonish me—It is difficult for me to answer you to the point To be frank, I simply never thought about it. I'm no longer young, rather on the decline. This side of life has somehow slipped away from me —I looked at you as a comrade, as a co-worker."

Ivanova half smiles.

"I know it."

"Yes, I look at you as an excellent worker, devoted to our business. And you know in our rushing life it is difficult to think of a person in any other way—"

I catch myself—this isn't true! I did think of the others!

"Well, and so," I continued with an effort, "this is rather our misfortune that in the process of work we don't see the person himself."

"That means you haven't noticed me?" her voice rang with agitation.

"No, no, of course not! You misunderstood me. How could I not notice you when you are so precious to every one of us. I simply didn't get to know you more intimately."

I glance cautiously at Ivanovna. She has taken out her handkerchief and is biting at it.

It's impossible not to offend her. It tortures me. But what can I say that will offend her as little as possible?

"you ask me, Ivanova, what I have to say; I don't known what to advise you."

She straightens up.

"I don't ask for advice."

"But I have to answer, don't I?" I exclaimed in despair and immediately understood that I have been unbearably stupid.

"You don't have to answer."

We are both silent. She takes a cigarette, twists it in her fingers till it breaks, then throws it on the sand.

"Yes, you don't have to answer. As a matter of fact you've said everything already. Really, what I confided in you must have been very mad and queer. An instructor speaks of love to the president of the cooperative outside of working hours. I understand your surprise; I expected it, for I had no hope. Why did I tell you about it? I thought I'd feel relieved. But now everything is over. Don't be afraid, I won't disturb you any more. I hope you'll forget about it just as if nothing had happened. Well, I guess I can go."

She starts up and clumsily gives me her hand.

"No, no, please don't go with me," she almost screams when she sees that I'm about to escort her.

She walks off, large, shapely, and important. She doesn't look back.

Here is something else passing me by. It seems that love does exist in the world. And just as ever painful, inharmonious and precious. Once more it has crossed my life probably for the last time and I don't know what to do with it.

The sun is setting in the distant gardens there at the curve of the street. A cloud of cold, dry dust sweeps down the road. The colors fade.

I must go to the District Committee.

The thought of the crush in the street car is unbearable to me; it means to part with that clear, cool feeling which grows in me. What's the difference! I'll be late for once, I'll walk . . .

Heavens, I'm late! I go up to Tanya timidly.

"Hello, Tanechka, is everybody here?"

"Only two! You people are the world's worst at being late. Listen Djuravlov, I have some business with you."

"What a day! Everybody has business with me."

"We've decided to have you lead a group in Political Economy at the Metalloshtamp factory. Here, take down the address and telephone and speak to the secretary."

I stiffened.

"A group! But I have a group already."

"In what subject?"

"In Leninism as you very well know."

"Well that doesn't matter, you'll have another in Political Economy."

"What's the matter with you, Tanechka, where do you think I'm going to get the time? I've eight different kinds of social work, not to mention all the cooperative business that engulfs me. I've been figuring it up."

"Never mind, you'll make it. We all know how busy you are, but honestly, there's no one else to send. Some people aren't back from their holidays and the others don't know the subject."

"I don't know it either. It will take me three months to prepare for a group."

"Don't try to bluff me. What you know is quite well known. At the last meeting of the method bureau, weren't you criticising just like a professor? No. this is already decided, Gazenshtov isn't going to change it, take it—"

"Tanechka, I absolutely refuse. Tell your Gazenshtov just that. You can't ride a good horse to death. It's outrageous! The chief thing is that business suffers from it. One can't do anything well. No, this time you must have mercy on me."

But Tanechka's eyes are merciless.

"Stop talking nonsense, Djuravlov. You ought to be ashamed. The best propagandist, and leading only one group! In our district everybody leads two—look at Kirilov, Dagover and Yasnopolskaya."

"But I have the method bureau, District Committee, the trade section of the District Soviet, the October Commission, the commission on—"

"You haven't scared me! That's no work, one conference in three months and then not regularly. Now listen here, Djuravlov, we've had enough discussion. You take the job now and I promise to put someone else in as soon as possible."

"I know your promises. Will you keep your word this time or not?"

Tanechka smiles enigmatically.

"Alright, alright, take down the telephone."

What could I do? One shouldn't refuse Party obligations. I take down the number and go wearily in to the conference.

IV

The advantage of my present business is that it is concrete—tangible—that's why I love it. In the government planning bureaus or in the factory I didn't find it so amusing; they are too far from human joys. Certainly the planning of housing construction and boiler works is necessary. But between the plans and the person who turns on the light and delightedly gazes at his cosy little room is much too great a distance. My boilers (and it can't be denied they were remarkable boilers) left the shop and in three days disappeared from my sight. I know they went to the storage of the Metal Syndicate, and then with the solemnity of a foreign delegation scattered all over the country. But still and all that rough, black boiler, as perfect as it is, can draw a happy smile only from the director of the factory where it is going to be placed, or from the head mechanic, or from the assembler and from noone else. I need a million smiles, the most stupid, the most kiddish, the most selfish. Now I have them, now I am a generous Santa Claus—no, I am the organizer of a gigantic Christmas tree and I take the gifts from the tree to distribute them from hand to hand in the mob around me.

In the morning a man sits down on the edge of his bed to put on his shoes, shoes that he bought in our store yesterday; their shining surface reflects the window—they cloud at a breath. He stands up and rocks on his heels and toes. They're a bit tight, but he doesn't mind. Excellent! He recalls his discarded shoes—their worn-down, unsteady heels, the damp and putrid toes, the knotted laces breaking five times a day. He was defenceless—but that is the past. Now he is skilful and strong. His shoes are shining and his eyes are shining.

A grouchy bachelor whom nobody wants came to our restaurant. He had nowhere to go. Slowly and sadly he swallows our fifty kopeck dinner of two courses. Meanwhile he listened to the music of the string orchestra. What's wrong with him? After all he's young, healthy and his future's before him. Now good natured and generous, he smoothed his mustaches, lit his cigarette and looked around him—and over at the little girl in the blue hat—she wasn't bad. He left the restaurant, went to visit a friend and out of sheer good humor gave him a pocket knife with a cork screw.

We conquerors of dreadful years know how important this is. To begin with, we have to feed them full to the neck—then the rest will come—good naturedness, refinement, art, will grow and bloom of themselves.

Fourteen thousand shareholders who have entrusted me with their five

ruble bills have instructed me to feed, clothe and shoe them—and they are waiting. They not only wait, they control us, scold us, poke their noses into every detail—we cultivate this in them. And we haven't done badly so far. The balance will be ready only in a month's time, but now I can say definitely that the second half of the year is ours. Where is that Ginden with his calculations?

'Motya, call Ginden."

I wait.

Instead of Ginden the bald head of Trofim Yegorich slides round the door.

"May I come in, Alexander Mikhailovich?"

"Yes, yes. please. But I asked for Ginden, where is he?"

Trofim Yegorich doesn't answer, he must shake hands first—to him that's a ritual. Bowing down, he comes mincing towards me. From his left hand flaps a folder of orders, while his right is stretched forth to me cautiously as if he were going to pluck a rose. Only when he finishes his greeting does he report that Ginden had gone to the city bank.

"Alright, Trofim Yegorich, when he comes back, tell him I want to see him."

"But the orders, Alexander Mikhailovich? Kindly be good enough to sign them."

I hastily sign the pink and blue slips. It's pleasant to sign incoming orders, but how heavy one's hand gets at the mere sight of orders for expenditure.

No sooner do I get down the last letter of my signature on each order than it is caught up skilfully—and respectfully—by Trofim Yegorich, and pressed to the blotting paper.

"Trofim Yegorich, let me blot it myself."

"No, no, Alexander Mikhailovich, why should you go to that trouble?"

Every time I see Trofim Yegorich I try to puzzle him out, but he still remains an enigma to me. That his obsequiousness conceals no ulterior motives, I was convinced long ago. With his subordinates, with the third rate bookkeepers, he's just as meek and fawning. It's just habit with him, the Old World attentiveness towards people! Yes, yes, that's it. His co-workers love him; he's a permanent member of the local trade union committee; he fulfils his social duties with quiet enjoyment—with real enjoyment as of the most honorable and satisfying work in life. In the wall newspaper he is a most zealous co-worker, even bursting into poetry occasionally.

But why then does he behave so badly to his sister? Burdovski, who has know him for a long time, tried to convince me that he is altogether different at home; that he terrorizes his dried-up sister, a poor tearful creature; that this most quiet of men keeps her in fear and trembling; in the mornings he compels her to put on his socks and lace his shoes for him. I can't believe it, Burdovski must be lying.

The process of signing the orders is over and Trofim Yegorich leans over to me, as usual, in order to talk about literary affairs and to show me the comments he has prepared for our newspaper. But over his shoulder, somebody is urgently bowing and smiling at me. Oh, this must be the fellow from the former Smirnov Cooperative. It's difficult to recognize him. He has shaved off his mustaches and let a shovel-like beard grow, which makes him look like a Dutch skipper.

Trofim Yegorich steps back, folds up his papers and leaves.

The skipper shakes my hand endlessly.

"Good-day, dear Alexander Mikhailovich, I dropped in to say goodbye and, er, by the way, to report that your commission finally finished the calcula-

tions and the goods are delivered. We have turned in our account and all the disputable questions are, er, a—settled."

The crease in his trousers bothers me—it's so perfect that it seems as if he can cut himself on it. I wonder how he will sit down.

"Please sit down."

Like lightning he draws up a chair, pulls up his trouser leg and sits down, his legs wide apart.

"Where are you off to?" I ask in order to say something.

"To the Crimea, to the Crimea," he cries excitedly, "straight to the Crimea. As the saying is, 'all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.' I have a place in a Rest Home for two months. And what difficulties I had getting it. And if it hadn't been for Yevgeni Nikolayevich—you know Yevgeni Nikolayevich—of the Central Sanatorium Administration? Why, he's the most marvelous and attentive person! And undoubtedly world famous. I need major repairs. My nervous system is completely out of order. And the nightmares I have! Of course, it's understandable, that liquidation period wasn't so easy for me. It hurts me, Alexander Mikhailovich, it hurts me to see in ruins the business in which I invested so much care and nerves. It's the situation, the pressure of the market elements—nothing to be done. But it's a difficult—"

He screws up his eyes, shakes his head and then breaks into a broad smile again.

"I won't conceal from you, Alexander Mikhailovich, your commission is certainly hot-headed. Ha! Ha! They are all young people and consequently excitable and suspicious. Could you believe that it entered their minds to be suspicious of me, an old cooperator, to try to catch me over two or three meters of lace or a few suspenders? Of course, I merely shrugged my shoulders and immediately presented the documents. They retreated in shame. By the way," and he edged nearer to me, "I must warn you, respected Alexander Mikhailovich, about Comrade Anosov. Undoubtedly he'll speak to you—God forbid that I should say anything bad about him! No, no, indeed no, he's a wonderful Party member, good comrade, but what lack of self control, a frightful lack of self control! And besides, on economic problems, he's a complete child. He can't seem to calm down over those one hundred and seven pieces of covert coat. As if we cooperators would sell our goods to a private tradesman! To do a thing like that when there is goods-hunger on the street and lines in the stores! Why should we do it? What for? Why this is nonsense, respected Alexander Mikhailovich, absolute nonsense—And if that excellent Comrade Anosov says anything to you, please—"

"Alright, alright, Comrade a—"

"Potadjitski, Stanislav Antonovich Potadjitski . . ."

"Alright, Comrade Potadjitski, I'll take care of it."

"You'll take care of it, yes, just that" he said ecstatically. "If would be very, very good if you'd put in an authorative word. We Smirnov people have always heard the best about you personally. Alexander Mikhailovich. We know what a devil of a lot of work you have and the difficult objective conditions and still and all—By the way when do you expect to leave?"

'Leave for where?"

"On your leave, to stretch out, so to speak, your responsible bones. You haven't had leaves yet?"

"No, and I don't know when."

"But you will be too late! Now is just the best season, with grapes, good air, young women—besides we could go together—"

The telephone rings.

The skipper jumps up. "Well I won't detain you any more, but let me wish you the best—" He bows and scrapes and is off.

I hear a voice on the telephone and mechanically say: "Yes, yes."

"Who, who? Impossible! Gushin! Where did you fall from? You don't mean it, that's fine! Yes, I've been here now three years ,at first in the regional bank, then in the factory and here for six months. Yes, yes, that's fine—And where are you working now? Oh, so you're a big man now—It seems we're in the same line. Of course, of course, I'll be over to see you."

I put his address and telephone number down on the calendar.

As I talk to him a queer looking figure appears at the door, with unbuttoned shirt and hairy chest. His cap has the peak half torn out of it but his shoes —they are high pointed, patent leather. But what has he under his arm? Strange—A watermelon, a big round watermelon with the top cut off. In his other hand he's holding the rest of it by the tale. When I put down the receiver he staggers over to me. He is drunk and his face is pale and grouchy. He puts the top back on the watermelon, takes it in his palms and swings it down on the table. The watermelon cracks and the pinky-yellow juice oozes out.

"Well?" I ask quietly, "a watermelon?"

"A watermelon," the visitor whispers with satisfaction, and sticks his finger far into it. It's as soft as jelly and scarlet colored. He scoops out a piece and puts it to my nose. "Gorge yourself with such a watermelon, and give us our money back. Money back!" he screams suddenly, glaring at me and striking his fist on the table.

"Wait with your yelling, where did you buy it?"

The man suddenly wilts; dropping his hand in a drunken gesture he begins to moan.

"See here, citizen, on what filth do you expect us to feed?"

"I'm asking you, where did you buy it?"

"Where? In a place in front of the drug store. The working class has to take a nip in the morning after a night's drunk. Hasn't it?" He falls all over me. "So me and Petka went fifty-fifty on vodka and he bought a herring and I bought the watermelon. All the trimmings."

"When did you buy it?"

"When and how! I told you, today! Me and Petka bought it together, today."

"Did you complain in the store about it?"

"In the store? What's a store to us? Don't we know the way to the chief office! We want the chief cashier to pay us for the outrage."

"And you, dear citizen, don't be carried away just because you're boss, or we'll break everything up," and he shook his finger threateningly at me.

"Why do you threaten me? It does no good. Where do you come from?" He straightened up with importance.

"We are factory boys—and strict about such things. We like order. Once there's cooperation we want good quality."

"If you like order, why do you loaf around in the morning?"

"You mind your own business, we don't loaf on your money. And maybe we don't drink from happiness but from the irony of life."

Meanwhile Kulyabin comes in. The visitor looks at him and suddenly throws his arms about him and tries to kiss him.

"Grisha! My friend! What's the matter with you, you son of a gun?"

Kulyabin frees himself from the fellow who sways on his feet and looks at him with dull eyes.

"What are you making a fuss around here for?" asks Kulyabin, crossly. "Again you're loafing around. Wait till they kick you out of the factory—then you'll learn something."

"Look here, Kulyabin," I interrupt, "write him an order on store number 23 for the return of the money he paid for that watermelon. It's really over-ripe and sour."

"Stop that, Djuravlov," says Kulyabin, irritably. "I know this fellow, he's from our factory, he's a drunkard and a loafer.'

"Never mind, never mind, write out that note and then come back to me."

Kulyabin silently grabs the fellow and pulls him over to the door. The man resists and hollers:

"Are you a commander here, my dear fellow? You got all puffed here, you son of a bitch—you grow a big jaw here on easy bread."

Finally they disappear through the door.

In a few minutes Kulyabin comes back.

"Sit down," I say drily. "Do you recognize the watermelon?"

Kulyabin coughs.

"I do."

"Are the whole lot of them like this?"

"Yes," he brought out hopelessly.

"Why haven't you been on the job? And more important, once knowing the melons were rotten why did you put them on sale? Why didn't you come to me and tell me about it? Did you think I would hang you for it?"

"It was only yesterday that the manager of the store told me they were sour. When I asked if there were many more and he told me no, I said to let them go to the end."

"What do you expect? That all this rot you let through should be dropped here on my table by the consumer? That there should be scandals here? And you think this is propaganda for cooperation? Oh, Kulyabin!"

Kulyabin stands up, gazing off to one side and says sadly: "Sasha, let me go back to the factory—I'm no commercial man; I have no experience in it—I'm incapable—you see that for yourself."

"Look here, my dear friend, stop that whimpering. I know all about your capabilities. If it had been necessary I'd have shipped you off long ago. You'd better tell me, do you want to make good here?"

"Yes."

"That's sufficient—in time you'll acquire the necessary skill. Otherwise this experience would be too costly, because during the six months we've kept you here you've brought us so many losses; and then to go off without learning anything—the Party will like that a lot. It didn't gain a trained worker, it stood the losses; and now will have to give another man who might be worse than you. So please shut up about going back. Look out and don't be a boob! You've been going round in a daze lately. We'll have to marry you off."

Kulyabin smiles faintly.

"Alright," he mumbles, "I'll do my best."

Ginden flies in.

"Chernishov told me in secret that our question was discussed in presidium last night and was practically decided against us."

"Impossible!"

"And not only that, the tobacco people accuse us of god knows what—of existing at their expense."

"What a frame-up. Kulyabin, see that no more of those watermelons are sold. I'll cross that out. But what to do about that damned tobacco factory!"

I take down the receiver.

"Gushin, this is Djuravlov. Everything has changed and I must see you today—something very important—you might call it protectionism, but nothing personal. I'll call in around ten. Yes, yes, so long."

V

"So you're going to arrange all that, Gushin?"

"O. K. It will be done. Your part in the business is quite clear and just. Tomorrow I'll speak about it. Wait, wait, are you getting ready to go? But you're crazy, we haven't had a chat yet. Katusha, tell that man not to be so foolish, hold him by the neck."

"You see, Gushin, I'd better come to see you another time. I've a hell of a lot of work tonight—and to be frank—had it not been for the business I'd not have come tonight. I must be up early tomorrow, at seven in the morning—"

"No, no, don't give us a line like that! Why you're mocking us. We haven't seen each other for four years and here you are—if you go, I won't speak to anyone about your business tomorrow! How do you like that? You'd better sit down and I'll see if we have something to drink."

It's hard to resist him.

Gushin holds up a bottle of vodka triumphantly.

"Katusha, please fix up a salad of cucumbers and tomatoes."

"Pavel, you're beginning to take these little drinks too often," says Katya reproachfully, but with a kindly, serious smile, as if she were listening to a voice within her.

"Oh, what's the matter with you, dear? At a meeting of two old army comrades, not to take a drink!"

"But don't you see, Gushin, I don't drink vodka in general."

"Well brother, you've become very stiff, trying to run away from old comrades by pleading business, and now you won't drink."

I try to explain and apoligize.

"I don't know why, my heart doesn't seem to take it, and my heart's a little out of order."

"Heart! Why vodka cures all ills. Here!" he taps the bottle, "here is something for the ladies, so mild they bathe babies in it."

Bustling about, he fetches glasses, pours the drinks and grumbles.

"What a nuisance these intelligentsia are. They're bores, and no company for us proletarians. You've always been a sissy. You were notorious in the whole brigade for your strict conduct and now I find you dried up completely. We'll moisten you up a little. Katusha, you too, this time I'll permit you. Let's go! Here's to a happy meeting."

We click glasses and drink. Gushin drinks as if he were drinking milk; I with the rapidity of fear; Katya sedately drinks half a glass to keep us company. Little by little the conversation warms up to that joyful, orderless chatter only possible in the presence of a bottle between people bound together by place and time.

I feel fine. Excellent! Gradually I am seized with a familiar feeling of admiration for the clearness, orderliness, for the completeness of Gushin's character. Naturally we get choked up by recollections. For Gushin and for me, as for all Party people who went through the civil war, the past seems

more important than the present. We judge everything by the standards of those days, and above all, every new man. There's nothing surprising in this, for those were years of regeneration for us; they compelled us to test ourselves; they showed us the best people in the best activity that has been within a man's reach.

After the fifth drink Gushin waves his fork in the air and hollers.

"And do you remember Fetka Pujlo, that sonofabitch with his toothless jaw—do you remember Fetka Pujlo?"

"Which Fetka?"

"The fellow who used to go round with a gun all the time—"

"No, I don't remember! There was that scandal just before demobilization when he arrived on a troika."

Katya, who has been sitting listening to us with flushed face, goes on:

"Don't you remember the man who wanted to steal that Lettish girl? Such a gunny fellow."

"Oh, yes, yes, I recall now, a hearty fellow."

"But listen to what happened to him," growls Gushin. "Last year in Ivanova I went to the Regional People's Commissariat and who was there posing in front of me but Fetka Pujlo! And what a sight! In a derby! Yes, yes, in a derby, hands in his pocket and a chain across his vest. I was stunned. What in the world was he doing there? He came up to me and began to gab. 'Well we two old veterans are here and now we are working on the economic front.' In a word, he offered me some private business!"

"Private business! But he is a Party member!"

"Well, as far as the Party's concerned—he was kicked out in the cleaning of 1921. Gee, I got mad. 'Roll out of here while you're still alive,' I said. He immediately slid to the door, saluted with his hand to his derby hat, and disappeared. In a weeks time we read in the newspaper that he had been arrested as a crook. There is your 'hearty fellow!'"

"Oh, yes, and where is Rijik?"

I look around the room and under the couch, but Gushin and Katya sit with their heads down.

"He's gone! I had to shoot him—he was bitten by a mad dog."

I don't ask any more questions for I know what Rijik meant to them. But Gushin says.

"Rijik is nothing! At the same time our baby boy died. You didn't know about him, he was two years old. That was last year. I had shot Rijik, and in two weeks' time scarlet fever finished Vovka—a nice little fellow with his turned-up nose. And now she and I are all alone. After this we got fed up with Ivanova. I began to ask for a transfer to Moscow as we'd both decided to study though neither of us are young. It was a long story, but finally they transferred me. She has begun, and I expect to begin in the fall. In the meantime I study in the evening. Here, do you see, Sasha, life has turned out quite sadly. But, at any rate, it's never too late to cut it a different pattern."

For a little while a sad quietness hangs over us. Katya, her head bent over the table,draws designs on the tablecloth with her forefinger. Then Gushin shakes himself.

"Well, fellows, don't hang your heads down. Another Rijik isn't to be found but I don't want one. As far as children are concerned, that's something we can get, isn't it Katusha?" He winks at her.

Katusha weakly smiles.

"Well, what about another drink?"

And again and again we plunge into those endless:

"Do you remember—? Do you remember—?"

I'm being sufficiently affected by the alcohol. I'm wrapped up in a nice, cosy fog. I'd like to sit on this little divan endlessly; listen to that broad voice of Gushin; gaze at Katya's light eyes behind which lies the same path of life as mine, that great path—political departments, cattle cars, baggage trains, the snow-covered steppes under a smoky moon and those gone, unforgettable faces.

Gushin sits before me singing: *Oh, my garden, garden of mine,* and beats time with his hand.

I look at them through tears. Long live the love that never fades in this world. Long live our tender and fearless girls.

Katya and I are not drinking. We stopped long ago. Only Gushin doesn't quiet down. Disregarding us, he pours a glass, clicks the bottle and tosses it off. But he gets drunk very slowly; wine seems but to emphasize his qualities. His voice deepens and his movements become more plastic, broader. His whole nature has reached completeness of being; the mutes are removed and life sounds as from an orchestra.

But it's time to leave. I get ready to go, refusing their invitation to stay the night. Gushin shakes my hand cordially, while Katya fetches my cap. looking at me affectionately. I sincerely promised to see them very often, to go to theatres, concerts and museums with them. And I leave.

A long, dimly lit corridor pulls me; innumerable doors with their white numbers flow toward me. Behind those doors, life sleeps and fates are hidden; shirts and blouses helplessly hang over the backs of the chairs. There is the staircase which is about to clutch me and suck me into its depths. Below, a beam of light guides me to the wideopen glass door. The last night of September. Beloved city of mine, the hope of the world, wearily breathes. This city is the manly heart of the country lying between four seas and two oceans. The country begins there beyond the railway stations from which the cold, shiny rails diverge in all directions. At this moment my country finishes a year's round of labor. She has done all she could; the mountains of grain flowing into the elevators, the soft flax and raw hides in storage, the sweet-smelling apples packed in straw, the silvery fishes in cans, all start off, circle around, and rush in freight cars and holds to all points of the compass. To us come coal and tanks of oil; students using their books for a pillow; sunburned people from rest homes and sanatoriums; the whole country is on the move. Everything is supplied to this city, only in the hope it will not deceive, that it will teach, make over minds and hearts, reconstruct life so that it will be a million times dearer and better. And the city will not deceive. Here it is resting, peaceful and fertile. I know all of its sorrows and hopes. I know its torturing past and its new courageous leaders. I know they will make good, a little laboriously, with a little delay, with slight losses, but they'll make it. Here I am, an insignificant man, but a loving and true son of my country, devoting my life to it.

My heart crumbles with all the weight, dread and pain that are so familiar. I pull the first door, which opens with a musty squeak. Supporting my heart with my hand I crawl up the stairs to the first landing, and carefully lie down on my back. Thick obscurity surrounds me, crawls in my mouth, drugs my consciousness. But I am glad—swallow me, swallow me completely, destroy me, only take away this torturing, dreadful uneasiness. It is imposs-

ible to live when the heart is torn away and hangs by a thread. Obscurity, emptiness, dead silence and the only thing that exists sways and climbs. Oh, it seems to be calming a bit. But as I strain to rise on my elbow, it flies off and falls. I must lie quiet,and I will lie quiet because I must live.

I fall into a strange unconsciousness. I dare not move, I don't want to move, because everything will fall apart. I don't sleep; sly thoughts are slowly crawling around on their stomachs. This stairway is quite familiar to me.

Something creaks and slams. It is the door below. Someone comes up .

What shall I do? Some situation! Get up?

But it is too late, the man stumbles over me and cries out:

"Who is there?"

I want to reply that I am ill, but the words won't come out. The man breathes heavily and hastily lights a match. It is Sergei. Alright, so be it. I didn't expect it. He bends down, looks me over, and recognizes me.

"What the hell! It's you, Djuravlov; how did you get here? Why are you lying down?"

I am seized with giddiness.

"I apologize, Serioza, but I am ill. I have a heart attack." He is silent, the match goes out.

"A strange story," says he, skeptically. "But why are you here?"

He irritates me!

"What is there surprising about it? I was passing by, felt badly and had to come in to lie down. I couldn't lie on the street. Excuse me, it's so difficult for me to speak."

"Well, then, something should be done for you. I'll go for a doctor, there's one near here. Do you suffer much? Can you wait a little?"

He lights a match again and bends over me, stroking my hair. It annoys me; I shudder and say with hatred:

"Please leave me alone! I need no help! Go and sleep! I hope that—"

Suddenly he darts back and stands up.

"You bastard!" says he slowly with horrible repugnance. "You're simply drunk. You smell like a barrel of wine, and here I am trying to be nice to you."

I want to interrupt, explain, try to get up, but my heart gets into such an impossible dance that I fall back again. Oh, what's the difference, let him think what he will. If I could only get rid of this suffering! But Sergei laughs, hee-hawing evilly, hidden in the darkness.

"So that's how you spend your spare time my dear. Resting from your hard labor. You plunder, and then drink it up. What a perfect scoundrel you have become. You're fit for an exhibition. I confess this is a surprise to me. I wasn't even angry with you when you refused me work and scarcely spoke to me; I concluded it was a pure political calculation. After all, why let a suspicious person into your business? It's no time for friendly sympathy. You are a zealous administrator, a statesman—why should you stoop to such nothingness as I! But these statesmen, look at them! They are not free from little human weaknesses, from ordinary swinishness. You've been making the rounds of the taverns, I guess. In a motor car, eh? With street girls? That's nice."

"Oh, you villain," says he with grief in his voice. "I'd slap your face but I don't want to dirty my hands. Perhaps I'd better get a militiaman. That's a good idea. Must I fulfil the duty of a citizen once in my life! Gee, what a sensation that will be—brave communar, Comrade Djuravlov, hangs around the corridors soused to the eyes. And maybe a little defalcation will be revealed,

and I'll be rendering a service to the Soviet Government. And how! Excellent!" He runs down stairs, but immediately comes back. Kneeling down beside me, he speaks in a different voice, harsh and hoarse, almost whispering:

"But if you haven't squandered away all your money I can get you Sonka. There she is wandering around on the square the third night running. I just watched it going on, it's very amusing. At her age she should be sitting by the samovar, wrapped up in a fluffy shawl, embroidering night slippers for her husband. But instead of that she's all painted up and running the streets. She isn't bad, she'll do yet; only don't speak to her, her voice—So Alexander Mikhailovich, I assume you wouldn't object? There was a time when it sounded very fascinating to you; I know you had quite a little affair with her. And it will be a help to the family too, to our mutual satisfaction, eh?"

He lights the match again and looks into my eyes.

"Ah! You damned bastard! You skunk you!" he screams, trembling, and spits in my face, once, twice, three times. Then he jumps up and runs up the stairs.

I also struggle up and swaying, start down. With an effort I open the door.

It's dawn. The stars have melted away in the sky, in that pale, milky and indifferent sky. The by-street is deserted, the morning breeze is its mistress, swirling the papers and the dry leaves.

"In such a city," I mutter, supporting my heart, "in such a city."

VI

The Regional Union's automobile is waiting for us. We're all ready to go. On such an important occasion as this, why shouldn't the Board of Directors ride in a car! It's the final inspection of their new bread factory.

"Ivanova, you haven't seen it yet," said Burdovski, "so why don't you come? It's so much more pleasant with a woman along."

Ivanova looks at me questioningly.

"Yes, do come, there's plently of room."

In the automobile she sits next to me. Anosov digs some papers out of his brief case for me to look over. The car jolts along. Only a month until the opening of the bread factory, and we have so much to do yet. Even if I have to work everybody to death, it must open by the seventh of November. Strange, but it seems to me that Ivanova is resting her shoulder against mine—no, it's simply the movement of the car. But I avoid meeting her eyes.

Here we are.

We plow through the mud to the office. Ivanova loses one of her rubbers.

"Don't worry, the yard is going to be paved. But look at the factory, it's a good job, isn't it?"

Everybody agrees that it looks majestic.

In awe we enter. I explain to the board the whole process of bread-making.

"This is mechanization," says Burdovski, "this is America!"

Ivanova doesn't remove her moist, shining eyes from me. I'm very glad the problems of bread-making are exciting her.

A boy runs up shouting:

"Which is Djuravlov? He's wanted on the telephone."

We all go to the office.

"Who? Kulyabin? Good. Excellent. Tomorrow? Alright, goodbye."

Happily I turn around and say:

"Well, friends, congratulations. The Regional Union has agreed to reconsider the matter of the Red Tobacco factory. Let's go."

In an hour we are all separated again.

Strange, I discover I have a free evening and nowhere to go.

Gushin won't be home, it's too early for him yet, and there's no use my going home for Nadya has a conference.

I feel quite strange having nothing to worry about tonight. Everything is done, everything is settled. But still, where shall I go? The movies? There's been quite a furore about that new picture. It's so long since I've been to the movies. The last time I saw Mary Pickford. Not bad, interesting but with that American sugariness. But it's time I saw something of our own pictures. And before I know it, the crowd pulls me into that kingdom of light, of warm stuffiness and the perfume of women.

I go out again into the rain.

What an actress! I knew her long ago, an excellent actress. But how could, she, a society woman, with her most refined and limited circle of friends, change so completely? She plays that down and out, meek, little, old woman as if she herself had been born on the outskirts of a factory. So you have changed too, my old friends. And we are all working toward the same end.

I remember that I must buy some things for supper. The store is crowded. As I go to pay the cashier, the glass booth swims away from me; the walls sway; the rays from the light float toward me like shining cobwebs; and the shame of it chokes me almost to tears.

"Excuse me," I gasp.

My heart leaps out from me, absurdly palpitating with a new, unknown. terrific pain. About to fall, I lean against a pillar. Someone assists me to the door; the package is stuck into my pocket; I'm asked where I live, and put into a droshky. A broad back screens the world from me.

I recover quickly. My heart beats quietly and steadily. How quickly it passed; I didn't even have to lie down. Oh, my heart must be getting better! Wouldn't that be wonderful! My life is so rich, so broad, if it weren't for this illness!

VII

"Well, has everybody arrived?" Kulyabin asks, excited as never before. "Why are you looking so bad today?"

"Oh, never mind, let's go."

I pick up the papers and we all go to the conference hall. What a dark, wet morning!

We sit down at the presidium table and look around at all the familiar, dear faces. They are our active workers, our pride. Soon I shall address them on what to me, is the most important most sacred duty—social obligations. We don't run a small retail store; we are not bargainers; we are a cooperative. We must make sure that our shareholders are not grumbling buyers but solicitous partners in the business; that the housekeepers don't gossip around their stoves about our inefficiency, but themselves help to improve things by working in our organization.

Anosov opens the conference.

"The first speaker is Comrade Djuravlov."

In the hall there is a slight rustle; newspapers are folded away, chairs moved; the audience is all attention. I get up.

"Dear comrades," I begin, trying to put into that splendid and fadeless

word as much tenderness and pride as possible. And I grow silent. I feel an abrupt, imperative jerk within me.

The walls, the faces of the audience, the whole hall is struck by a crimson light; a crash splits it. The green table cover, the ink stand, the blotter, fly to meet me.

A long red coffin rests on a dais. The guard of honor constantly changes. At the head of the coffin stands the widow; her eyes are sharp and dry. Beside her stands their son, a Pioneer.

The silence in the hall reaches the utmost purity.

There is the tense hum of the ventilator.

VIII

NEW UNITED COOPERATIVE

23,000 Shareholders. New Stores and Restaurants. Eve of Bread Factory Opening

On the twelfth of December, 192—, the solemn opening of the District Working Association of Consumers took place. The turnover of the Cooperative runs up to about a million rubles. The crowded conference was opened by the President of the District Soviet, Comrade Palkin. At his suggestion the audience rose in a body in honor of the late Comrade Djuravlov. The speaker announced the opening of three new cooperative stores, a large dining room at the factory, "Path to Victory," and three rest rooms for mothers and babies. In the very near future a new bread factory will open with a productive capacity of 3,000 poods of bread a day.

A concert followed the reports.

Translated from the Russian by Eugenia Tronik and Flora E. Hurst

V. Borokhvastov

The Tiger

A Soviet Short Story of the Far East

The weather was on parade before Nature that day. The sun led the procession in all his dazzling glory with a golden march. After him came the heavy artillery of the thunder. Then the wind howled like the siren of an interceptor. Then the slow bombers, the clouds, rolled up, and after that a steady downpour of rain marched by the windows.

It lasted a long time, the drops keeping step evenly and regularly. It smoothed out the ruts and creases of the roads, picked out high lights on the trees. It tarried.

The parade concluded with the rain. Days like this are not uncommon in the Far East. Towards evening the sun shone out from behind the hills and splashed the tree-tops with light till the earth looked as though it had been plunged into the depths of the merciless blue.

Nature seemed to have been freshened with a spray. Everything gave off a sharp, unexpected odor. The scents were strong and sticky. Even the iron roof of the house where the frontier troops were quartered emitted its own peculiar smell.

The men were sitting peacefully cleaning their rifles and standing them, with a tug at the strap, like horses in their stalls for the night.

By the window, at a table as long as a file of soldiers, sat a seasoned fighter named Devitsin. He was holding part of the rifle-lock in his hand. It looked like the bolt of a casement window. Then he began to test the sear-spring.

Opposite to him sat the platoon commander Brikin, who had only lately arrived from distant Kazan. Another of the men was crawling about on the floor, looking for a swab he had dropped.

Outside the window the moon hung like a target. The men aimed their rifles at it and peered down the barrels. The screwthread wound like a corkscrew right up to the steady attentive eye. The barrels were clean.

The door opened, admitting the night scents, the commander of the frontier defence corps, and a woman. Devitsin gave the man who was kneeling on the floor a little nudge with his foot and said:

"Somebody's come to see you, Vanya."

"No, indeed I haven't," said the woman. "I've come to see the commander."

"That is, not to see me, but Comrade Devitsin," explained the corps commander.

Devitsin rose and laid his rifle aside.

"At your service," he said.

"Well, it's like this—there's a tiger annoying us again out at the collective farm," the woman began. "It stole a calf last night. It's got so that the cattle have no place left to breathe. Well, so at the general meeting they picked me to go and talk to your chief about it and he's sent me to you"

"Oh, all right, then," replied Devitsin, picking up his rifle once more. "It won't be the first time I've taken on a job like this. See those over there!"

He pointed in the direction of the Red Corner, where three tiger skins, his trophies, hung on the wall.

"Maybe, Comrade Devitsin, you wouldn't mind going tonight—it would save a head or so of cattle, eh?" said the chief.

"All right, Comrade Commander," replied Devitsin. "I'll start getting ready this minute."

He finished the cleaning of his rifle. Brikin unexpectedly hurried over the cleaning of his, too. When Devitsin stood up and stretched himself, putting his great body to rights, the platoon commander was already fitting the lock in his rifle.

"Take me along with you, will you?" he asked.

"Right. Come on."

"On one condition, though: give me a chance to kill the beast. I want to send my wife the skin as a present."

"Right. I'll charge you a cigarette for that," Devitsin said. "If I should happen to kill it, it'll be yours all the same. I've got enough of them."

People said of him jokingly that he began to play with things like flatirons when he was ten months old. Nowadays, if the piano had to be moved from one place to another, Devitsin managed it alone, to the accompaniment of the men's jokes.

While they were completing the cleaning of their rifles, the conversation turned on tiger hunting.

"Where's Lavrukhin these days?" asked Brikin. "I've heard a lot about him."

Lavrukhin had been famed throughout all the army as the very best marksman. His eye was absolutely true; his hand as steady as a rock. It was said of him that while he cocked the trigger, he not only held his breath, but could even stop his heart beating.

With a shot-gun he could knock out a row of matches stuck in the ground at a distance of ten paces and not miss a single one, beginning from the right.

"Yes," replied Devitsin sadly, oiling the outside of the lock. "He was the best tiger hunter in these parts. He always shot his game in the eye, so as not to spoil the skin. I learnt the trick from him. You should always aim at the eye."

"And where is he now?" asked Brikin.

"Dead."

"What did he die of?"

"That's a long story."

"Tell me, though," Brikin persisted.

"You see, it was like this," Devitsin began, testing the lock once more. "If you come across a tiger and start to track it down, it'll start to track you down, watching for a convenient moment to attack you. It knows that it's easier to attack from the rear. Or for instance, if you kill either the male or the female, the remaining half of the family is certain to track you down and fall on you from the rear. That's what happened with Lavrukhin. He killed a tiger and as he was on his way back, the other got on his scent and killed him."

"Was it a male or a female that killed him?" asked Brikin.

"It was a—a male," replied Devitsin, stammering for some reason or other. The other men, who knew the story of Lavrukhin's end, sat with bowed heads cleaning their rifles.

No one spoke.

Nothing disturbed the silence but the sharp smells of the night and the energetic rubbing of the men at the rifles.

"Well, let's go, shall we?" said Devitsin, bestirring himself.

"Come on," said Brikin, giving a twitch to his Russian blouse.

2

They wandered about for a long time over bumpy, cut up ground. They endeavored, military fashion to keep out of the moon-light and in the shade of the trees. On his back Brikin carried a knapsack containing a small pig which was to serve as a decoy for the tiger. The darkness and the unevenness of the ground under the feet of the man carrying it terrified the pig and its squeals rent the silence of the woods.

"And what if the tiger should mistake me for the pig?" asked Brikin of Devitsin, who was just ahead of him.

"It might easily happen. Have a look round from time to time."

They both kept their rifles ready. The iron was pleasantly cool to the touch, the feel of a faithful rifle quieted all alarms and kept the pulse normal.

They moved noiselessly along like scouts. Only the pig betrayed their presence, he tossed about, gnawing the sack and squealing. The track they took was only for the experienced. No outsider could have found it for it was almost imperceptible. Brikin wondered about it as he tramped on silently. At first he thought Devitsin was going at random, but after a while he realized that they were making in a definite direction all the time. Devitsin would suddenly halt from time to time and give a rapid glance round. All was quiet. The forest was full of inexplicable night sounds: cries that resembled the voice of neither bird nor beast followed by a kind of variegated hissing and sucking and clicking and squeaking. And occasionally the almost inaudible sigh of the wind.

Brikin was only a step behind the other man, so that every time Devitsin halted unexpectedly, Brikin involuntarily bumped into him. Each time he gave vent to some exclamation, such as:

"Back hoss!" or "Hey up, a train smash!"

When they had ascertained that there was no sign of pursuit, they went on further. The track wound among the trees. Even a very experienced hunter could only guess at it. But Devitsin had been reared in the Volga forests and learned to hunt from childhood. The forest had no secrets for him. He might lose his way in a town, but in the woods—never.

"They make good violins out of this wood," he said, tapping the trunk of a tree as he passed.

Brikin glanced at the top of it, but could not say what kind it was.

"How do you know that?" he asked.

"I'm a joiner by profession. And I do a bit of wood carving—just for love of the thing. I like to do small, delicate stuff in my spare time. Minute work. I read up about violins. Stradivarius—he was a good craftsman. He used to saw up the wood for his violins himself and only used the side of the trunk that caught the sun. He threw away the rest."

"Imagine that!" said Brikin, surprised. "I'm a blacksmith myself. There's nothing delicate about our work. Strength is mostly all that's wanted for it."

The night called for silence. The men obeyed. Only the little pig resisted the silence. He kept trying to jump off the divisional commander's back and thus at times was no weight at all. Whenever he jumped, he gave a squeal that pierced the stillness. Whenever he ceased, the stillness became almost tangible.

It was oppressive.

"Have we a long way to go yet?" asked Brikin.

"Well, about two kilometres. The woman said that it was mostly on the

eastern side of the farm that the cattle were lost. I believe there's a path. We'll lie in wait on it. The tiger can't miss us."

The forest grew denser, more ancient . The almost invisible track they followed was strewn with dead trees that kept their shape like wooden mummies, as they rotted. Like human beings, they preserved their outer shell, while inwardly rotting.

The track of the hunter's prey lay through the hosts of the fallen. The mouldy wood gave off a rather pleasant smell that smothered all others. It was the smell of centuries. Ancient churches, towers and castles smell the same.

A snake rustled underfoot, unseen. Only the grass undulated where it passed. Devitsin gazed after it.

"Everything living is rounded," he was thinking. "There's no such thing as an angular creature."

Brikin could think of nothing but the tiger. He was longing to kill the King of the Jungle of whom he had read so much. He called up a picture in his mind's eye. His wife would receive a huge parcel from him by post. She would open it and give a gasp of astonishment, and then rush off to her mother and then to the neighbors.

She would invite all her relatives, friends and acquaintances to see her. Then she would spend all day trying to hang it to the best advantage. And. having hung it at last, would step back to admire it, as if she was at a picture exhibition.

She would even run out into the yard, to observe the effect through the window.

Brikin glowed as he stared at the picture he had called up. He walked as if in a dream, clutching his rifle tightly.

Reality squealed again behind his back, Brikin came to himself and looked about him.

The stars glimmered like spikes in the sole of a boat. Falling stars went out like matches. Clouds screened the face of the moon. There was a mirage-like radiance but the source of the light was hidden. It lost its color as it filtered through the wooly clouds.

The forest was wrapped in twilight. The trees lost their contours.

"That's bad," said Devitsin. "You'll have to wait till you see the eyes flash before you take aim, otherwise you won't be able to distinguish a thing in this dusk. It's terrible."

"All right."

They moved on blindly. The shrubs looked like animals, the tree stumps, like people. Fancy supplied any trifling deficiency in the resemblance.

Devitsin came to a sudden standstill glanced down between his feet and said:

"Here."

As Brikin took off the knapsack, the pig let out a blood curdling shriek. He knew what that word "here" meant; he had heard it before. He was tired of being a decoy. He wanted to be a tiger for a change. this little pig was covered with as many scars as a warrior who had seen much service.

Devitsin always took great care of his decoy. He shot the tigers when they were about to spring, so that the pig got nothing more than a little mauling while the beasts were in their dying convulsions.

The decoy knew well how to squeal with terror, and tigers came at his call. With every beast that was killed the pig grew wiser. While he was being tied by the leg, he ceased squealing. He knew that the tiger might come any moment.

It was the same now. As soon as Brikin pulled him out of the knapsack by the leg, the pig grew dumb. He struggled and tried to escape on his three ridiculous legs, but all in a desperate silence.

Brikin tied him to a tree stump.

"Now let's climb a tree," said Devitsin.

They moved away to choose a convenient tree to climb, while waiting for the tiger.

"Let's try this one," said Devitsin.

They climbed it.

The pig had grown accustomed to his surroundings by now and wandered under the bushes.

"The scamp!" growled Devitsin.

"Who?"

"That pig. He's gone and hidden himself in the bushes."

Brikin looked in that direction. The pig was a vague spot of grey in the thick dusk. There was no moon. A dim, fitful light filtered through the clouds.

"Shoot when I give the word," Devitsin warned Brikin. "If possible, aim at the eyes. You'll save on cartridges and you won't spoil the skin."

"Alright."

They perched like birds on the boughs. The alert barrels of the two rifles were directed to the grey patch that indicated the whereabouts of the pig.

Brikin was excited. He breathed heavily as he fidgeted about trying to find a more comfortable position. He kept shifting his rifle from one hand to the other.

"The dirty, little blackguard," said Devitsin. "He'll ruin the whole show for us that way."

"Who?" asked Brikin once more, absently.

"Why, the pig, of course. Look at him, he won't even open his mouth, the rogue!"

"I'll just go down and tease him a bit, shall I?" Brikin suggested, starting to climb down.

The pig unexpectedly uttered a squeal without waiting for Brikin. Terror had overcome fear. Devitsin clutched Brikin by the shoulder.

"Sh—sh!"

Brikin, who was half-way down already, stopped dead, and dropped his cheek to his rifle barrel, steadying it on a branch. The pig was twisting and turning; its tether had got entangled in the bushes. The forest was silent.

"Look out!" whispered Devitsin.

Out of the gloom of the bushes rushed a shadow that swallowed up the grey spot of the little pig. He uttered a piercing shriek that died out almost immediately.

A greenish phosphorescent eye gleamed in the darkness.

"Fire!" ordered Devitsin.

Brikin fired. Then both the men all but lost their balance out of sheer amazement. For the shot was followed by a tinkling of broken glass, and the eye disappeared.

"What the devil's this!" Devitsin cried in amazement. "It's the first time in my life I've ever met a tiger with a glass eye. Shoot again!"

Brikin fired, aiming this shot at a sound like a death rattle. The tinkling was not repeated, and neither was the hoarse gasp.

"Let's go down and have a look," suggested Brikin, unable to contain himself any longer. He jumped down.

"Where are you going? Are you mad, or tired of life, or what?"

The other man pulled up short.

"In their death agony tigers usually rip out the insides of hunters like you," Devitsin explained, pulling out his electric torch.

He flashed the light on the spot where the pig was, and gave a gasp of astonishment. Then he leaped down and rushed towards the bushes before Brikin had time to move.

A dead man lay there, flat on his back. Near him they saw a knife and the dead pig.

Devitsin flashed his lamp on the man's face.

"A real tiger, it seems," he remarked.

He turned the body over, searching for a clue to the riddle of the tinkling glass. It appeared that the first bullet had struck the camera straight in the lens, which had glittered like an eye in the moonlight, and passed through the man's chest. The second bullet had gone through his head.

3

In the barracks on the frontier, the film found in the camera was duly developed, and proved to be a photo of the railway bridges and fortification in our frontier zone.

After the corpse had been examined, it was discovered that the man had eaten nothing for five days. He had evidently lost his way in the Soviet forests. His stomach still contained undigested grass.

As they were burying the corpse, Devitsin said to Brikin:

"It was this kind of a tiger that killed Lavrukhin. He'd shot a female tiger and was on his way home when some blackguard tracked him down and finished him off in a secluded spot."

Translated from the Russian by Anthony Wixley

Adam Scharrer

Two Suitors

A German Short Story of Peasant Life

The harvest was a success; the weather, excellent, so that even people from other villages came to the church festival in Heiligenhain. The swing and and carousel owners did a fine business. The man at the grilled sausage stand, had his hands full. The whole village was filled with music.

But in the Zander house, the one on the right of the two farm houses on Kulmbacher Strasse, no real holiday spirit prevailed. The peasant, Zander, stamped angrily around the house because his daughter, Karin, had refused to go along to the church festival. The aunt and uncle looked embarrassed. Her cousin tried to cheer Karin up through a bit of banter. "I was tickled to think I'd dance with you more than with the others," he said. "At least don't spoil my whole holiday, girl. The old ones won't stick it out so long. And we have to get what's coming to us!" But at once it was clear that the joke was out of place. "Why do you bother me when I don't want to go?" Karin answered, getting up, and leaving to go to her own room.

Zander put on his coat and reached for his hat. The guests, too, prepared to go. Karin stayed in her room. Thoughts chased wildly through her head. These concerned the entire history of the Zander household, and locked up here lay the basis for Karin's conduct.

Even her grandfather had been known as a surly and eccentric fellow. Excepting his immediate relatives, no person was allowed to enter the house. When he died, not many tears were shed, and he died a peculiar death.

He had sold a sow and was driving it to Kulmberg to the dealer. It was in the fall. During the night the thermometer dropped a few degress below zero. The dealer counted out the money for the cow on the table and asked the old man if he wasn't going back by train because he was carrying so much money. The old man pointed to his dog: "He'll see that nothing happens." The cattle dealer poured him a glass of whisky. The old fellow drank one, then another, then still another. The whisky went straight to his feet. On his way home he decided to rest a bit when he reached the bench under the oaks on the Oberndorfer Road. There he fell asleep. When a cyclist passed him, he lay in front of the bench, his hat and cane near him. The cyclist wanted to help him, but the dog growled threateningly. The cyclist rode to the village to get help. Too late. The old fellow was dead. A stroke, was the doctor's verdict, and frozen to death.

The village people thought otherwise. "His own greed choked him," they said. "If it had cost him anything, he wouldn't have swilled three whiskeys one after another."

Only then did the younger Zander become master of the household. This had long been transferred to him, but the old fellow wouldn't surrender his sovereignty for a moment, though his son was already father of three children. Karin was six; her brothers, Kaspar and Christian, were eight and eleven.

The younger Zander attributed the family's unpopularity to envy and jealousy. In his relation to the people of the village there was no change. When the water supply was installed in the village, Zander and his neigh-

bor, Sterk, were supposed to pay for a few hundred extra metres of pipe because their homes lay quite far from the village. Zander refused, so Sterk's bill was even higher. Still Sterk decided to let the pipes be drawn. But he would have to pass through Zander's field if he wanted to avoid a roundabout route. Zander wouldn't consent. This made the enmity between the neighbors grow more bitter. Whether a calf was born, or some measures of hay or corn were threatened by thunder showers, neither of the neighbors called on the other for help. The children, too, were stricty forbidden to have anything to do with one another.

Still this commandment was often broken. One day Ludwig Sterk was riding on his bicycle to Kulmberg. Karin was tending the cows not far from Kulmberger Strasse. Ludwig had promised Karin to bring back marbles. He kept his promise. He brought a whole bagful of brand new polished marbles, two of them big colored glass ones. He poured the whole treasure into Karin's lap and smiled excitedly at her. And suddenly, before Karin had finished counting, Ludwig had pressed her to the ground. Only when she felt his hands between her thighs did she understand what Ludwig wanted. She bit, scratched, tore herself away, jumped up and grew even more frightened when she saw how Ludwig looked standing in front of her: eyes like an ox, ears like a donkey, arms and hands like a monkey. Like a hunted animal she ran from the woods to her cows. From that day on she no longer needed her father's admonition to avoid Ludwig's company. Ludwig was then 13 years old, Karin 11.

When Karin finished school, Zander sent the servant girl away. Christian took the place of the farm hand, and Kaspar worked in the slate quarries. Zander used the money Christian earned to pay the day laborers needed at harvest time. His savings-bank account grew from year to year. And when it was necessary to defend his house and land against the treacherous hereditary enemy, coming so suddenly, at first it was really inconceivable to Zander. But later he took it as a matter of course.

Christian fell in Poland, Kaspar in Belgium. When Zander got word of the death of his second son, he didn't cat a bite or say a word all day long. His wife set the pictures of her sons on the bureau in the bedroom, flanking them with two long fat candles. She prayed many times a day, loud and long. Zander stood motionless, looking at his wife in amazement. She pointed to the door and when he refused to go, she screamed at him, "Get out you, Satan, you!"

Zander left the room frightened. His wife locked the doors and went on praying aloud. She did no more work, cooked no more food. One day she attacked the old Sterk woman with a kitchen knife. "Now I'll give it to you," she screamed. "It's your fault, you're to blame for everything. You're the witch. Yes, you're the witch!" Old Mrs. Sterk ran to the barn and shouted for help. Zander had to use force to tear the knife from the frenzied woman.

One cold winter night she ran out without being noticed. She ran towards the lights of Kulmberg station which could be seen all the way down the street. The large green one, she thought, that was the spirit of Christian, and the big red one, that was Kaspar's. She ran straight out never noticing that the street made a turn, got lost in the snow and when Karin and her father found her, she was cold and stiff.

Many people who were not friends of the Zanders, came to the funeral. The Sterks came too. Ludwig had gone into the Reichswehr after the war. He was now home on leave. Old man Sterk went up to Karin's father, as she was taking him away from the grave, shook his hand said, "I suppose,

neighbor, you won't refuse to let me shake your hand at least." Zander shook his hand and said. "Thanks, neighbor." Then they went together to the burial feast.

Sterk had less land than Zander and only two children, Ludwig and Margaret. Margaret's marriage prospects were slight because of a harelip. Sterk figured that if Ludwig gets out of the army with a few thousand marks compensation and takes over the Zander household, he and his wife and daugther could manage the Sterk farm. Zander would have nothing against it because afterwards Ludwig and Karin would get all of it.

Under these conditions, Zander too agreed to the marriage. He would know how to protect his old man's share and still be master. If no male Zander should be born at the Zander homestead, at least there would be a female Zander, so that the Sterk family would vanish completely. But the neighbors didn't say a word about these details. They only said that Ludwig and Karin were a handsome pair.

Still Ludwig couldn't get within an inch of Karin. Once when he tried to embrace her in the cow barn, she got so frightened that he let go at once. She looked at him with stony face and said, "Neighbor, you mustn't expect that, not that." She left the barn and Ludwig remained hurt and disappointed and didn't visit the Zander house for weeks.

Old Sterk, meantime, let Zander know that Ludwig, not only could get as many women as he wanted, but that he could get women who were easily a match for Karin, even as far as dowry was concerned. Zander answered thoughtfully, "She's gone through a lot, the girl, and Ludwig must have a little more patience than with the first girl that comes along. You see she has a strong inner life. A good wine ferments slowly." And to Karin, Zander said, "I don't think it's right, Karin. I really don't know what your idea is about the future. It bothers me to think that I'll close my eyes and leave you all alone. Ludwig isn't a bad chap, and he always waits for a kind word from you and doesn't look at any other girl. Not everyone would do it. But he'll lose his patience someday. Perhaps you'll feel different afterwards, when it'll be too late."

"You won't die for a long time, father. And to think that I should marry for that reason, that would make me feel bad. I really feel no desire for it. If it doesn't come of itself, it doesn't bring any happiness later. And we have enough bad luck behind us. Now we're our own bosses, and what comes later we don't know. Why should we worry now simply because we can afford to?" Old Zander went silent and thoughtful to his bedroom. Gossip had it that Karin had a hereditary taint on her mother's side for she was extremely reserved and reticent and didn't want to have anything to do with men.

Besides Karin and her father, the only other person who slept in the house, was the servant girl and she was hard of hearing. When there was much work Zander hired day laborers who came in the morning and left in the evening. That's how Thomas Schramm of Oberndorf, came to the Zander house. After a few days Zander was sure he had hit it right. Thomas was a man of few words, industrious and prudent. He knew how to manage the horses and never forgot to grind the beets in the machine before he left, because that was too hard for the women. Without being told to, he would throw the dung out of the cow stall in the course of the day's work

and split chips for firewood. When he drove out into the fields with Karin, or into the woods, he always laid a clean sack in the wagon for her.

One day they were bringing pine needles home. They had to carry them in baskets far down an incline. Karin wanted to help, but Tom said. "That's no work for you, Karin. Go up on the wagon and load it." Tom dragged twenty-two baskets full down the hill. It was a wagon load piled high. They had to put up a framework of poles on both sides. The taciturn Tom and the taciturn Karin worked enthusiastically together, so that they forgot everything that was strange between them. Sweat rolled down Tom's face. As the rocking wagon reached the paved street, Karin said, "Dry yourself, Tom." She gave him her apron. Tom gave the apron back to Karin and looked her in the face, meditatively. "Why are you looking at me like that?" Karin asked. "May I tell?" "Yes!" "I'd like to see you really laugh sometime, Karin, right from your heart. Does that misfortune with your mother still bother you? It'd be a pity for you to spend your whole life mourning, Karin." And then Tom laid his hand on her shoulder and Karin remained quiet and speechless. Everything hateful, everything that used to repel her in the touch of a man, vanished. She slept badly that night and many nights after. This hiding things from her father, this sitting dumbly together at mealtime, this knowledge of the imminent separation the coming winter were too bitter. They had no moment to themselves, and in one of the few hours that chance granted them, they "forgot" themselves.

Tom wanted to tell Zander the whole truth, but Karin prevented him. "He'll kill you on the spot. When you're gone, I'll talk to him. But you musn't say a word or there will be trouble. Promise me, Tom!"

Old Sterk still kept coming, and often, to the Zanderhof, and he made no secret of the reason. "If one notices," he said, to Zander, "how those two work together, one doesn't need to ask why Karin favors Ludwig with no friendly word."

"But neighbor," said Zander, indignant, "that's really a joke. Karin and that man! She may like him because he works like a horse and doesn't open his mouth. That and nothing more!" But Sterk laughed slyly through his yellow teeth. "The language of the eyes, is enough for that! And what else they've been doing, they certainly won't let on. If one watches Karin's behavior when she works with a man and how she behaves when Ludwig speaks to her, it's the difference between a hot water bottle and an icicle. I wouldn't have said a word, neighbor, but that you should be deceived by anyone like that, that gets me. And for Ludwig to be jealous of a day laborer that would really be a joke!"

From that day on Karin and Tom definitely noticed that Zander too had become suspicious of them. There was still fresh bedding-hay to be cut up. Zander put his chopping block between Karin and Tom. When Tom was in the still, the door would often open and in would come Zander. The last job was splitting wood and piling it up. Zander helped from morning till night. He and Karin sawed, Tom split. And if they ever were alone, over in the neighbor's garden there was sure to be old Sterk, or his wife, or Margaret, listening to every word. If they worked in the barn when Zander was away, they couldn't be sure for a moment that Sterk or his wife wouldn't come in to borrow the carving knife, or the drill, or a pair of weights. One day a heavy snow fell. In the evening Zander said to Tom at the table, "You needn't come in this weather, for the present. When we

need you again, I'll let you know by mail." Then Zander counted on the table, the pay that was coming to Tom and went out of the room into the yard.

"If I go now," said Tom, after an oppressive silence, "I take the blame on myself and then they'll really use it against me. They'll say afterwards that I'm a coward. I won't have a moment's peace anymore." Karin tried to old him back, but Tom remained obdurate. "I'll tell him how it is, no matter what happens. He must be told sometime or other. And—at least he shouldn't think me a good-for-nothing." Tom went into the yard. The old man stood at the fence and looked across the snowcovered meadows. He turned round only when Tom said, "Before I go, Zander, there's one thing I'd like to talk you about."

"You—with me? Talk about something?" Zander asked astounded.

"I'd like to talk to you about Karin."

"You, about Karin?"

"Yes," said Tom with emphasis, "I like Karin and she me too. . . ."

"Then it's just about time that you beat it," Zander interrupted bruskly, "otherwise you tramp . . . !"

Zander ran to the kennel to let loose the dog. Tom ran after him and held him back. "Don't do anything foolish, Zander!"

Then Zander began to get really angry. "You'll lay hands on me!" He bellowed. He tore himself loose and hit Tom with a lath. Tom seized the lath and held it tight. Zander ran for the wood shed and got hold of a log. Then Karin came out of the house and held Zander fast from behind. "Father, what are you doing? He hasn't done anything wrong."

Zander struck out wildly and hit Karin so hard that she collapsed and lay groaning. Then Zander hurled himself on Tom, but Tom caught him and threw him off. Zander landed heavily on the ice near the well. "Tom!" cried Karin suddenly, "Tom, look out!"

Tom turned around, old Sterk had sneaked around the woodshed with an axe in his hand but when he saw he faced Tom alone, he lost courage. Silent and nimble, he crept through the fence again and ran back. Karin got up and took her father into the house.

Tom remained at the gate. Karin came out again after a while. "You've got to go for a doctor" she said, "His whole knee is broken open and his sock's full of blood. O God, Tom!" Tears came into Karin's eyes. "How did it all happen?" She stopped short and clasped her belly. "I've hurt myself so badly."

"It's the last thing I can do now," said Tom, "to go for the doctor."

"Why the last, Tom?"

"If you want to belong to me and I to you, Karin, you'll get as much of the Zander estate as I—nothing. Think it over. Write!"

In the room Zander was shrieking.

Tom gave Karin his hand. "Good-night, Karin!"

"Good-night Tom!"

Thomas Schramm was taken away by the gendarmes. After two days he was released. He learned that Karin and Zander lay in the hospital and he wanted to visit Karin. "The patient is still too weak to receive visitors," they told him and put him off for a week. Tom went to the hospital a second time. Now he learnt that Karin had been released the day before.

Karin didn't want to write from the hospital and couldn't. What she had experienced had shaken her to her depths. Shortly after Tom's departure,

she had collapsed in the house. When she was admitted to the hospital, she was unconscious. She remembered vaguely that men in white smocks were standing around her and she thought she could still feel these men poking around her body. A few days later she learned that her father lay home in a plaster cast. Then a man came to visit her, to question her about the details of the accident. He was from the police and was prejudiced against Tom. Karin didn't let herself be influenced. "He's innocent," she persisted, "he's altogether innocent!"

Perhaps her letter to Tom would be opened, if she wrote him. No, she couldn't write now. She must first see the thing clearly and then decide what to do.

Zander had had Karin placed in a first-class ward and had her brought home by auto. His sister had come to help the servant, and to take care of him. Zander offered Karin his hand and said, "God bless you, Karin. Have you gotten over it all?"

It seemed to Karin that her father had grown ten years older and grayer. "It'll be all right again," she said. "But you, your leg will stay stiff, won't it?"

"That's nothing," Zander said, "the most important thing is that you get well again." Karin could feel him squeezing her hand. "After this we'll fix things up, Karin. Better!" He had chocolate, cakes, fresh meat and wine sent from the village. "You mustn't take everything so hard, Karin," he encouraged her a few days later. "We must forget the whole business."

Karin looked up and spoke as in a trance: "I can't forget Tom."

"You must forget him," the old man answered, again in the tone of voice that brooked no opposition.

Meantime Zander learned who this Schramm was. A bastard! Tom had known his father. He had been a soldier and had been transported to China. There he died. His mother had been a servant girl in a peasant household His grandfather had owned a small house which he had built himself out of rough stones. It was so tiny that looking at it from the street one could mistake it for a baking oven. The lot and some wood—these had been the grandmother's dowry.

His grandfather was a carpenter, but had given up his trade by the time Tom was born. He was already too old for such hard work. He made brooms and bird houses. Grandmother rode around the country and sold the wares to the peasants. Tom was four years old when he drove out with his grandmother to trade. They got bread, often a piece of bacon, or eggs and brought the food home for the next day. When they made so much cash that they could buy grandpa a small package of tobacco, it was a good day's business. The money for a bird house, a comb, or a sewing basket, which grandfather worked on through long winter evenings, would be put aside for next winter when the frost and high snow would prevent their traveling over the country.

A few years later business would have been impossible without Tom. Grandmother had had chilblains on her feet. She, too, had been a servant for peasants and had been left with frost bites. But now that Tom could pull strongly, he dragged grandma along even when she could no longer walk. Many a day Tom went out alone. His grandfather had also given him a good apprenticeship. When Tom sold the first sewing box he had made, he was ten years old.

And now it proved to be a good thing that Tom was able to do his grandfather's work. Grandfather got sick. He lay in bed for several days with high

fever, mouth and throat swollen and inflamed. Outside a snowstorm was raging. Grandfather struggled for air, a rattle in his throat. The barber-surgeon who came every day, to paint his mouth with healing water, stood near the bed helpless.

Tom set out to the doctor at Kulmberg. Hours and hours he battled against the storm. Often he sank up to the waist in snow. He went over the hills because it was even further to go round the hill through Hühnerfeld, and no train went at night. When Tom reached the city, he felt his grandfather was saved, because the road around the hill was easily passable and the doctor's horse would whiz the sleigh along like lightning. Tom pressed the night-bell, three, four, ten times. Not a sign of life. Tom was frightened—was if possible that the doctor wasn't home? He called out loud and threw a snow-ball at the window.

"What's the matter?" a voice cried suddenly from above. "Are you out of your mind!" Tom told about his sick grandfather in Oberndorf. The doctor asked how long he had been sick. "And of all times today, and in this weather, you come now in the middle of the night!" he said, "When one wouldn't put a dog out!" Then Tom heard something like, "tomorrow" and "with the train" and the doctor closed the window again. Tom went home again. Two hours after his arrival, his grandfather was dead. He had died of suffocation.

Now started a bitter time in the Schramm hut. Tom had acquired rather considerable skill, but grandmother couldn't ride around the country alone. She could barely get fodder for the goats, and she couldn't go out for wood anymore. She could no longer go to the "Larks-Basin" where they had a few strips of land. Tom couldn't take care of all this after school.

In their journeys over the country, his grandmother and Tom had made the acquaintance of wanderers and many a one had spent the night in the Schramm hut, always free. They kept coming as before and grandmother let them sleep in the room on the floor. This news soon spread round. In the inn it cost two groschen. If they had no money, grandmother let them sleep for the bread they had begged. Besides there was a cup of coffee, out of burnt grain, for them in the morning. Some days this brought in two or three groschens and a few pockets full of bread. Tom took care of the firewood and the fodder for the goats.

His teacher, however, was not at all satisfied with Tom. Tom couldn't keep the birthday of Emperor Barbarossa in his head, or the names of the holy apostles, or the heroic deeds of General Schweppermann. His mind was always busy thinking how he could sell a broom, a basket, or a bird-house. Because with this money he could pay for his graduation suit. For the same reason, Tom never had lying on his desk the three long, well-sharpened slate pencils required by regulation. His slate was practically written through. Tom never thought of buying a new one. When the others, the model pupils, made fun of him for his poverty he spoke out frankly, saying that he had the groschens for a slate, slate-pencils, a new sponge, and a notebook, but that he wouldn't spend for the old "Dodo".

This angered the teacher so that he decided to show this wild lout how far freedom may go. The punishment was administered in this fashion: the sinner had to lay himself on the bench, face down. Two of the strongest boys in class held his arms. The teacher pulled the trousers tight, then deliberately lashed the rod several times in the air, so that the sinner could heard the hazel-rod whistle. After the first well-aimed blow, followed several lashes in the air and then again the beating, according to the whim of the teacher,

one, two, or even three blows, one after the other until a half or a whole dozen were complete.

With Tom, this time, he got to the first blow. Then Tom whipped his legs over the bench and got one arm free. He punched the pupil still holding him in the nose so that blood spurted out. A few others tried to hold him, but Tom was in a rage and he was one of the strongest in the class. He struck one over the head with a pencil-box till the splinters flew and he grabbed one of the very zealous fellows by the throat and pulled him to the floor. One could see by the feverish faces of several students that they would have liked to join Tom in attacking the others. The teacher feared an open mutiny, grabbed hold of Tom by the nape of the neck, and gripped Tom's head between his legs. Now the punishment was to proceed with multiplied force. He had just lifted the rod, when he suddenly jumped up with both legs at once. "Ouch!" he cried, and stood before Tom with face distorted and beard hanging down. Before he had recovered from the shock of the bite in his thigh, Tom was out of the door. The teacher never attempted to beat Tom again. He punished him with scorn. Tom had to sit in the dunce's seat until graduation, and received the mark "Unsatisfactory" in all his subjects.

Now Tom traveled with a dog over the country. He mended pots, umbrellas, and did the peasants' buying for them in town. He also repaired sewing machines and bicycles. He had turned his small room into a workshop. At the age of 19 he went to war. One year later, his grandmother died. When Tom returned on furlough from France, it was evident, more than ever, that he was not to be trifled with.

His mother still worked for the peasants, but slept home. Tom saw that his mother too had sore feet. Her stockings stuck tight to her flesh after she had worked in the wet fields and meadows, in the barn, at watering the cattle, and then outside in the winter cold. Tom said, "You stay home, mother, till your feet are healed again. Do you want the same thing to happen to you as happened to grandmother?" The mother answered that it couldn't be done. What should she live on? How could she sometimes send him a food packet? Tom asked his mother if she got war relief. "No," the mother said, "the burgermeister says I get nothing."

Tom went to the burgermeister and asked him the reason for the refusal. The burgermeister answered that the war relief wasn't there to help some people get rich. In reply Tom gave the burgermeister a box on the ear, so that he sat down on the bench and sayed there, so surprised was he and so scared of a second one. Tom complained in the relief office in Kulmberg and the burgermeister ran for the gendarmes. But they advised him that he had no right to reject relief applications, all on his own. They refrained from arresting Tom because the jails were already overcrowded with mutineers and deserters. During the days when Tom was home, more than one came to him to get advice and many said, "It was about time somebody raised hell." They take the last bit of butter from us small people and for the fat-heads the war is a business and nothing else."

After Tom returned from the war he began to work in a wagon factory in Kulmberg until the factory was shut down. Then he found work with the Zanders. A few weeks after he left the Zander farm, he found work in the slate quarries.

Spring came to the countryside again. Zander had hired a farm hand and a servant girl. He had had his house freshly decorated. Now he went more often to the "White Deer." There he sat at the table reserved for regular

guests, with the royalist peasants who were members of the "Shooting Society," and the "Bavarian Peasant League." The younger ones had already joined the Hitler Party in large numbers.

Soon the peasant won't be master of his own land, they said. If the state pays unemployment relief, which is higher than former wages were, how should the peasant get laborers? That really makes a trade out of idleness. And then besides there are always new taxes and the people's money, plundered from them, is handed over to the French in tribute payments. This government is ruining the whole German people. The country can have no peace until this government is swept away and law and order are restored again.

These debates received a strong impetus through the attitude of the workers in the quarries. There they were working full-time, for at that time German money dropped sharply in value. That's how the peasants got rid of their debts and bought machines, pianos, had old houses and barns pulled down and new ones built. But the workers' wages barely enabled them to eat their fill. That is why there had been several stoppages in the slate quarries, already. The workers called meetings, had speakers come from Kulmberg, and some said quite openly that at last the revolution had to be made in earnest. So long as the factories and the land belonged not to the people but to individuals who did what they pleased with them, the workers would keep sinking deeper and deeper into poverty. Tom was one of the most zealous of the strike leaders, and a speaker whom no opponent could match.

But just for this reason, Zander thought, Karin would see that she could have nothing in common with this person, and therefore he made a new attempt to go to the church festival with her and the nephew and uncle. Old Sterk and Ludwig were there too and the rest would take care of itself. But once more, he had to make it plain to old Sterk that it wasn't the "Slovak's" fault (the name by which he called Tom) that Karin was so different from other girls. That it's much deeper, from her childhood days, from her mother and brothers. That one must have patience. Ludwig still had a few years of service ahead of him. Sometimes he himself believed what he told Sterk. The young clergyman, the vicar, who had often visited Zander during his illness, and later was glad to be invited, confirmed this too. He now came regularly once a week. Karin made coffee and most of the time the vicar stayed for supper. The vicar said that in these days of outer storms, inner peace is more necessary for man than ever. Only absolute belief in God could give people the inner strength and self confidence to resist all the temptations of Satan, in whatever form or whatever way he seeks to approach them. Frequently Sterk and Ludwig were there too. Karin served them all quietly and without a word. One evening the guests started discussing politics. Sterk expressed the fear that Germany was approaching "Russian conditions." Ludwig disagreed. "If it once comes to a show-down and there's real shooting, the pack will scatter like a flock of geese," he said contemptuously. "They can only make trouble and stir up people so long as things aren't really taken in hand because the government stiffens the gang's backbone, since that's the only way it can stay in office. But it won't be long and the pig-sty will be cleaned out, and all is over with the atheist trouble-makers!"

"God grant it!" said the vicar. Then they drank their wine and said goodbye. Before going the vicar always offered Karin his soft warm hand and looked into her eyes encouragingly.

Zander looked not with disfavour on the visits of the vicar, who was unmarried. When he thought over the question of whom he preferred as son-

in-law, the vicar or Ludwig, the comparison was overwhelmingly in the vicar's favor. He wasn't so much annoyed with Karin as before, for being reserved towards Ludwig. He was convinced that if the vicar asked Karin to marry him, she would not refuse.

But another worry occupied Zander's mind at that time, and not only Zander's. The government planned to lay out as an artillery practice ground, many hundreds of acres in the "Larks Basin" in front of which the mountains came together like a great horseshoe. Zander owned most of the land there and therefore ran the greatest risk if he should sell. Still, the government paid monstrously high prices. When Zander started figuring, his head began to swim. It's true that no one knew how the money situation would work out, still Zander was sure of one thing: that the value of German money would be restored somehow and sometime. If "Russian conditions" should really break out then everything is lost anyway. The host of the "White Deer" was also in favor of selling. But he didn't have much land in the "Larks Basin." Many other peasants from Oberndorf and Hühenfeld were for it, because the land lay too far from the village. Others, workers, planned to build little houses for the millions that they would receive for their land.

The men at the head of the "Shooting Society" and the "Bavarian Peasant League " said it was a "patriotic duty" to restore the Fatherland to such a state of defence that it would be able to throw off the foreign yoke imposed on it. Zander didn't wonder that Sterk advised against it. He already regards my land as his own, he thought.

Zander further planned to send Karin to a domestic-science school, so that she'd be equal to the new conditions, if she should sometime find herself in charge of a high-class household. Zander also wanted to buy a piano and she was to learn to play. The vicar thought these suggestions good. Zander was firmly convinced that the man knew what he meant by that and that the vicar wouldn't encourage him, if he didn't have honorable intentions towards Karin. Zander never realized that the vicar couldn't and wouldn't oppose the town authorities, who in this matter were on the side of the government.

At last Karin decided to write to Tom. She didn't want to invite misfortune by an open break with her father ,she wrote him. She took the separation hard. but otherwise she'd cause her father's death. She couldn't buy her happiness at such a cost, after all she had gone through with her mother and brothers. "Understand and forgive. Tom. I'll never forget you."

That same evening Zander again asked Karin what she thought of his plans. Karin didn't want her father to know so definitely how little interested she was. "It's all right for me, as it is," she said. Now a terrible suspicion began to consume Zander. Will Karin wait until he dies so that Tom becomes master of the Zander house, after all? Perhaps that's how it's been arranged? Isn't Karin's whole behavior a low-down bit of trickery?

It was still up to Zander alone whether the village's negotiations with the government would lead to a positive result. The town authorities were unanimously for it.

"In your place, I'd sell," said the burgermeister. "With things as they are for you, I wouldn't work myself to death on that land. You've so much land around your house. And if you bring your money to the State Bank, right away, nothing can happen to you. The government guarantees that no one is cheated in any case. It's better to come to a friendly agreement."

Three days later Zander sold out and all formalities were settled.

Zander suddenly felt as if he had written his own death sentence. In vain

he counted his money in the millions. He couldn't buy a hundred-weight of hay with it; a few months later, not even a sickle.

Then the old money went out of circulation and new money was introduced. In the quarries half the workers were laid off. Tom was among those fired. Since the treasury's finances were in a bad way, the government leased out the land to the peasants. This made for new bad blood. "What, pay rent for our own land?" the peasants protested. If an ordinary person swindled that way he'd be put in jail, right on the spot, and we're supposed to pay a premium to the swindlers? They ought to be shot, the crooks!"

Still the burgermeister and the host of the "White Deer" and the rich peasants who had sold no land, or little, thought otherwise. The surveyors, officers, and civil service officials were always guests at the "White Deer" and the burgermeister and the gentleman of the "Peasants League" and the "Veterans Society" were very defferential towards them. The vicar stopped coming to the Zander house after Zander had said he'd had enough of a fatherland which takes everything—his sons, his wife, and now his land, and gives nothing in return but beautiful words.

Then Ludwig came home. He had become a Storm Troop leader in the Hitler Party and since he knew how to contact the authorities and to write official documents (sometimes he even wrote articles for the paper) he became a person of some importance in a short time. Tom again traveled around the country, selling. Many who wouldn't let him into their houses before, trusted him now.

Zander's hair had turned white, his face gray and shrunken. He ate less and less. At night he lay awake in bed. Karin noticed the change in her father with growing anxiety. Still, whom should she turn to for advice?

Tom?

Tom still occupied all her thoughts. He was the only person who could give her advice, if there was any to give.

Karin wrote.

They met at Johannisberg and sat down together on a felled log. "How are you, Karin? Have you any good news for me?" Tom began. "I can't bring you that," said Karin, and turned her face away. "I wanted to ask you what you think will happen with our land. If we'll get it back again, or if it's been taken from us forever."

"You came on account of the land?" Tom looked straight ahead, disappointed. "Yes," said Karin, "I'm worried about father." "I understand, all right," said Tom. "About the land, I don't think I can give you much encouragement." "So it's gone forever?" "So long as those who are fleeced keep apart and not together, don't protest, and don't put an end to such conditions, so long will they be fleeced and trampled under foot. If it's to be changed, the workers and peasants must get hold of what's theirs and take the helm into their own hands. Afterwards it won't be hard to destroy poverty and injustice, because no one will profit by them any longer."

Karin was silent. Suddenly she stood up. "You won't be angry with me. Tom, that I came for that?" "Don't talk like that, Karin, you can come to me always and at any time!" "Are you still in the quarries?" "No, I'm a pot-mender again!" Then Tom shook Karin's hand. "Good-bye, Karin. If you ever need me again, write." "God bless you, Tom!"

Karin went through the village to do her shopping. It was twilight when she got home. Old Sterk was in the house. For a long time Zander had been giving chilly answers to Sterk's questions about getting back the land. Now they were talking again. The government had terminated the leases. "And

still," Sterk said, "it wouldn't be half so bad if Karin didn't act as if she weren't your own child. Only today, Ludwig said, if she'd only favor him with a word. But he wouldn't stand it long. He told me so already. He's right too. In a home where the wife drives laughter away, he won't get much warmth. He'd only be inviting his own misfortune. But I don't understand Karin's living along side her own father, as if she were blind and never thinking of helping him and she could do it without any sacrifice."

Sterk went home. Zander remained sitting in the room. After a while he called Karin. "Sit down, here, Karin, I'd like to talk to you." Karin sat down. "You know, Karin, how things are with us. Our whole life we've wrestled with hard luck and always gotten the better of it. Now only you can help. Our neighbor has asked again, and for the last time, if you'll say 'yes' to Ludwig." Zander's voice sounded solemn and hoarse.

Karin sat silent and frightened. She wanted to scream but controlled herself. "Ask what you want, father, only not that. Only not that," she said dully.

"I only wanted to ask you, Karin," said Zander, "I don't want to force you!" Then he went out in front of the house and sat on the bench. Karin lit the lamp in her father's room. He always went to sleep at ten sharp, but he kept sitting and sitting and it was a cold autumn evening.

"Come in father," Karin begged, "you'll catch cold."

"I'm not cold," Zander answered. "Go to bed, Karin, I'll come soon." Karin got into bed, but lay awake. After a while Zander went through the threshing floor into the yard. There he talked to the dog. Then the barn door opened. Seized by a terrible thought, Karin ran to the barn. A terrifying rattle and a rustling along the wall, confirmed Karin's suspicious. Zander hung by a rope from the beam. He had shoved the ladder away. Karin ran into the house, got a knife, set up the ladder, cut the rope through, fell from the ladder with her father and loosened the rope. Then she brought a light. Zander's breath came quieter and now he recognized Karin's face above him. "Why'd you do it Karin?" he asked. "Everything would have been over by now."

"Don't talk like that, father!" Karin said. "Everything will be different now!" Then she took him into the house and put him to bed.

A year later Karin and Ludwig were married.

Ludwig Sterk was a member of the district leadership of his party and was also nominated as candidate for the Diet. He was often out speaking at meetings, frequently several days in succession.

Nevertheless, in Heiligenhain and in the neighborhood around it, the agitation of the Hitler party met with strong opposition. The trial of the peasants cheated of their land was dragged from court to court. The small peasants had gotten themselves a committee and set their demand: unconditional return of the land to its former owners. Many workers were now unemployed and were more dependent on their land than before. Tom was also a member of this committee. The speakers of the government parties and of the National Socialists were in a tight fix. Many of their meetings ended in complete failure.

There were often meetings of the Nazi party in the Zander household, sometimes until late into the night. On a gloomy winter evening a few members gathered together earlier than usual. When Karin stepped into the room, the young fellows stopped speaking and sat at the table looking important. At eight o'clock Ludwig told Karin, she could go to bed. Since Karin's marriage old Zander slept in the attic room.

Karin went to the bedroom, opposite the living room. Then she heard the

living room door being locked from the inside. She left the doors ajar, turned back the bed covers, threw some coals into the stove, put out the light, and sat down on a chair near the door.

Soon a motorcycle rattled up. Its rider jumped off in front of the house and knocked on the shutters. Ludwig opened the house door, then the doors to the room, and closed them again. Karin heard how the motorcyclist excitedly reported: "He's here. They're at Binder's. He just got into the house." Karin's uneasiness turned to terror. Binder was chairman of the committee. The next day two meetings were to take place in the village. The peasants from Obendorf and Hühnerfeld had already decided to march to Kulmberg and so lend weight to their demand for the return of the land. The day and the time for the march were to be fixed at the meetings in Heiligenhain.

The person who went to Binder's house is Tom, no one but Tom! Karin took off her shoes and put on her house shoes. Then she stole to the door. What she heard there made her blood run cold.

"You ride back again," Ludwig ordered, "and watch to see when he leaves the house. Come back at once and honk three times. That's all. And you all go through the woods over Hens' Ridge. You'll be up there long before he gets round the street. And afterwards no time wasted. Break the ice, put a stone round his neck, and into the pond. By tomorrow morning it'll be frozen over again and the fish will have something to eat this winter. And then come back again and honk twice so that I know that everything's all right. And if some people should get curious: we were all here in my house and afterwards you went home. There are witnesses. You needn't worry about it."

Then the moving of chairs could be heard. Karin rushed to her room. The motorcyclist left the house and rode off. Karin wound a shawl around her body and put her coat and house shoes on. She must pass through the yard without a shawl on her head so that she could say, if necessary, that she was going to the out house. But after she had passed through the back door to the garden, she would have to put the shawl on so that no one would recognize her. A few minutes later she knocked on Binder's window. "You, Karin?" said Binder, astounded as Karin stepped in. "Is Tom here?" "Yes." "He mustn't go home tonight, most certainly not, and don't say I was here." In the black of night Karin returned to the house, unnoticed.

But still the motorcyclist returned and honked three times as arranged. The group of young men in the room broke up. Ludwig closed the house door and lay down in the bed next to Karin. And after long anxious hours the motorcyclist came, knocked twice and raced away.

Hadn't Tom heeded the warning? The hours until morning seemed an eternity. And the first report that Ludwig brought from town was this: a railroad man who had gone from Hühnerfeld to Obendorf during the night was reported missing. His lunch box had been found, his cap, and traces of blood. Binder and Tom were arrested on suspicion of murder, for the railroad man was a member of the Stahlhelm, one of Binder's and Tom's political opponents. On the night of the murder Tom was in Heiligenhain. At ten o'clock the railroad man had left Hühnerfeld. They didn't believe that Tom and Binder had gone to a comrade, Robert Veidt, to put a leather washer on a water faucet. On the contrary: Robert was close to the Communists too and was also arrested. The announced meetings were forbidden. By midday the whole village had been informed in full detail that no one but the "Schramm" band had killed the man and that it would soon be discovered where they had dragged him. "Sad enough," said Ludwig at table, "that it took such

proof to convince some people what hoodlums they are! But now their dirty work will be stopped and it's about time."

On this day Karin hadn't spoken a word to her husband except the morning greeting. He went to the village early in the morning. He came back important and excited.

"But nothing has been proved," Karin said. These were the first words that she spoke to her husband that day. "What hasn't been proved?" Ludwig lost his temper. "That the men arrested are guilty!" "What are you talking about? Otherwise you never open your mouth and now you want to take sides with these good-for-nothings."

"Ho, ho!" Zander interrupted. "She can say a word if she wants to. It's a long time now, I don't like your bossing."

Ludwig banged on the table. "If I say keep quiet, she keeps quiet!" "And if I don't keep quiet?" Karin looked straight into Ludwig's eyes. "You have a bad conscience?"

Ludwig wanted to jump at Karin. Zander sprang between. "So long as I live you don't strike her. You understand?" Ludwig tore himself loose. Out in the yard he attacked Karin again and started choking her. Zander grabbed a club and beat Ludwig. Ludwig let go of Karin, grabbed old Zander by the chest, and hurled him backwards over the chopping-block, so that he was left lying there with his back broken. An outcry, then a whimpering moan, then Zander's face became distorted and his eyes seemed to roll.

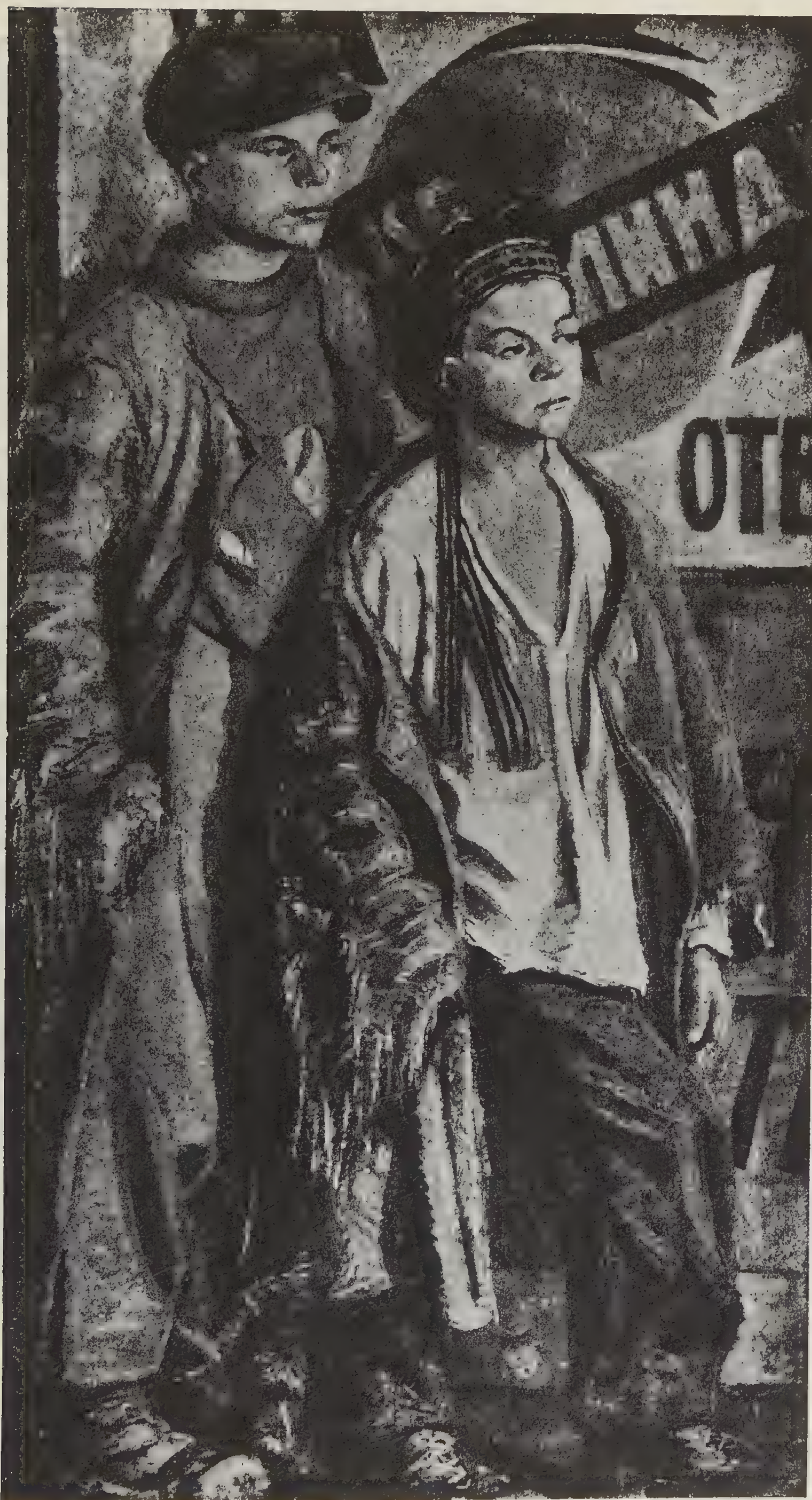
"Father, father," Karin cried, throwing herself on him. A spasm passed through Zander's body and a stream of blood gushed from his mouth onto the snow. All at once old Sterk stood in the yard and looked with ash-pale face at his dead neighbor. Ludwig ran into the house, piled together all the money in sight, jumped on his motorcycle and rode off. Karin and old Sterk carried dead Zander into the house. Then Karin rode to Kulmberg to report the murder to the police. Zander's burial turned into a huge demonstration of the workers and peasants under red flags.

A week later Binder drove up to the Zander house. Karin had packed her things, her mother's and a few momentoes in the two old chests and in her wardrobe. Then she went to get old Sterk and said, "Look and see what I'm taking along. You must take care of the house and cattle for the present until everything's straightened out by the court."

Then they loaded the things on the wagon. Binder drove them to Karin's uncle. Karin went ahead through the woods. Tom was waiting for her.

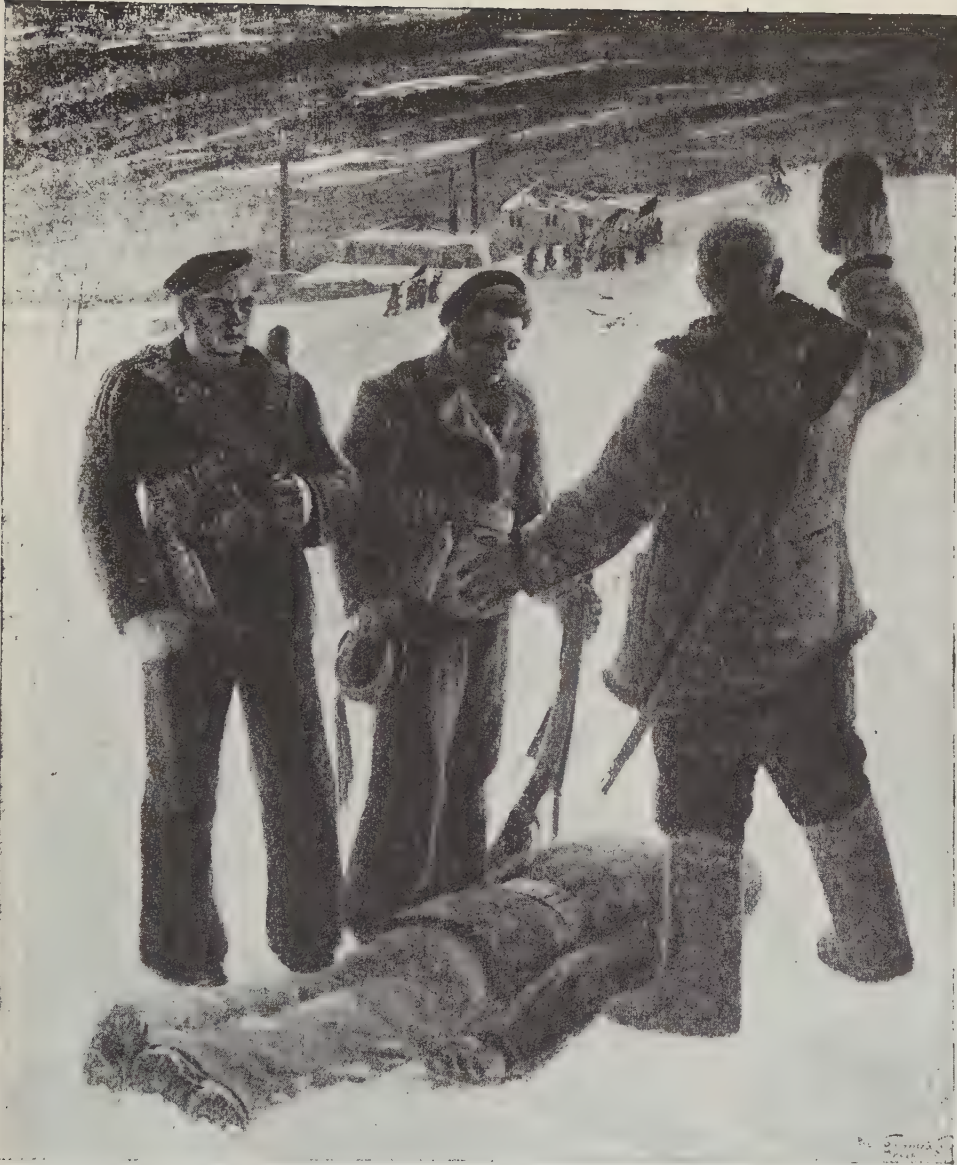
Translated from the German by Anne Bromberger

Five Soviet Paintings by F. Bogorodski



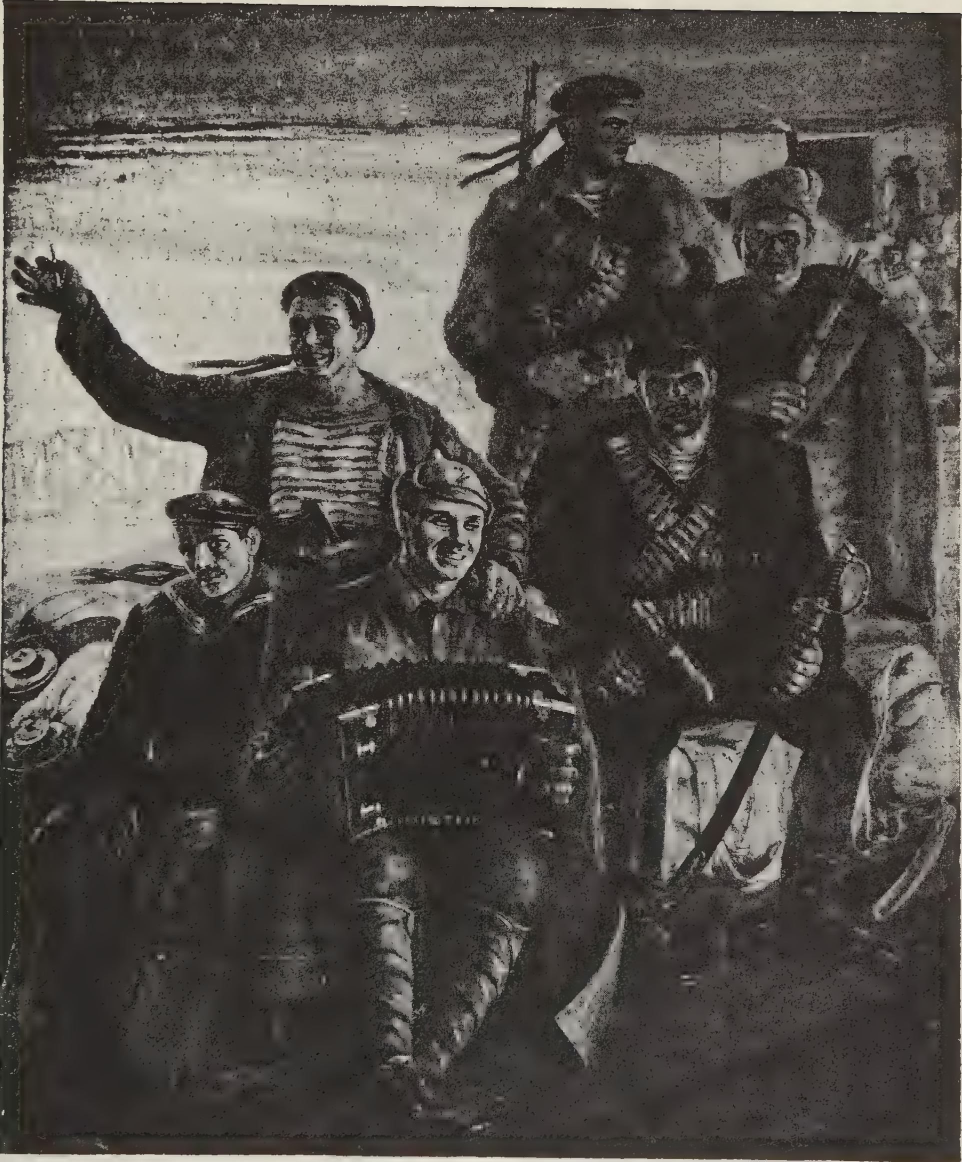
Bezprizhorni

Father and Son



We've Found a. Comrade!

In the Photograph Gallery



On the Way to Fight the Whites

R E P O R T A G E

Anna Seghers

Koloman Wallisch's Last Journey

In the Footsteps of The Heroes of the Austrian Uprising

Ten weeks after they hanged Koloman Wallisch in Leoben. I traveled on a weekday morning from Graz to Bruck an der Mur. A wealth of lilac and chestnut sprawled over the Austrian landscape.

It is hot and crowded in our compartment—peasants, craftsmen, a lumber dealer from Bruck, two traveling salesmen, and I. The salesmen ask the lumber dealer how business is getting on. The lumber dealer slowly turns round and crowds us all with his broad leather back. He complains. The damage done his mills by the shooting has not yet been compensated. It's true, of course, the mills stood idle before. Possibly the treaty with Italy will set them going again. We stop at Frohnleiten. The sunny, green quiet of the mountainside enters our compartment and reaches even the lumber dealer. He says, "How quiet it is everywhere, and how noisy it was."

The tall traveling salesman says, "Here's where he roared away, that man Wallisch, till they tightened a rope around his throat. Freedom, he roared, that man Wallisch. They twisted freedom out of his mouth and packed sand in instead." The shorter traveling salesman says, "One thing you must grant the man: he had courage in dying." The lumber dealer is annoyed. "Why shouldn't he have courage in dying when he drove the others to their deaths; such an agitator as that man was, such a Communist, such a Bolshevik."

The people watch the lumber dealer cautiously, out of drawn eyelids, some agreeing, some sullen; some amused, others gloomy. (This morning in Graz in the white-walled kitchen of my comrade, while his wife was spreading plum jam on our bread, we hunted through old newspapers to find one—*Hyenas of the Labor Movement*. This, I believe, is what Wallisch wrote against us when the Society of the Friends of the New Russia was holding its last meeting here in Graz. "What a Communist eater he was, that man Wallisch, what an anti-Bolshevik.")

The lumber dealer tells a story of a Catholic priest in Bruck who came to him to order a fence for the cemetery, not around the cemetery, but straight across it to separate the Catholic dead from the Protestants; he didn't know that the lumber dealer expected to find his final resting place on the other side of the fence. The lumber dealer noted down everything and then demanded a huge sum for the job. The priest was scared and left the dead together. Everyone in the train laughs, even the Catholic peasants.

The lumber dealer and I get off at Bruck.

Wallisch had promised the people in Bruck to come over from Graz as soon as things got serious. Word of the general strike was passed along. Wallisch called his wife, and they set out. In Bruck the general strike was complete, the power house was at a standstill, the people of Bruck had walled in weapons in their cellars and their houses since January, armed groups were in readiness; barricades grew up in front of Pernegg.

The river keeps one from entering the city at once, a mountain stream un-

usually fast and loud flowing, combed into a smooth stream here and there by the mills. On the main street I still see the lumber dealer from behind, his heavy-set figure, the childish, heart-shaped leather patches on his sleeves, at the elbows. Laughing, he remains standing before a group of people who laughingly watch a number of young fellows cleaning the street with huge brooms. Gendarmes, rifles grounded, smilingly guard the street cleaning. No need to ask anymore—one sees it in many of the provincial towns—they sweep together the paper swastikas that they themselves scattered about the evening before, or convert the swastika symbols painted everywhere into gates, by adding a few strokes.

The large red house back of the chestnut trees is the People's House. The gendarmes, rifles grounded, do not smile. They force me to take a roundabout route; one can't get close to it. The men arrested in Bruck in February are locked up in the People's House. All too coolly these People's Houses thrust their big, tidy facades in among the splendid old buildings: the churches, theatres, and court-houses. In Leoben, in Bruck, in all the provincial cities, the smalltown bourgeoisie now locks up its prisoners in the People's Houses.

The riddled gendarmie barracks show that the orders were different in Bruck from the other cities: attacking not entrenching. But the "Go-Betweens" functioned badly. Lackner, the only one who knew where the weapons were hidden, was still in prison in Frohnleitnen; the Schutzbundlers were bleeding to death in a fruitless attack. On the church doors are large signs: *Catholics of Bruck! Everybody join the pilgrimages to Mariazell! This year you have more reason than ever to offer thanks.*

Over the roofs stands the Schlossberg. Whoever had the Schlossberg had the city and its approaches. On Tuesday night, the thirteenth, it was stormed by soldiers and Heimwehr, cannon against guns. Wallisch gathered his men on the left band of the Mur. He planned to outflank the enemy and attack the artillery from the rear.

I buy a map of Upper Styria. "The evil spirit of the whole undertaking"—compare the map with the report of the indictment, the report that closes with the news that sentence had been executed—"the evil spirit of Upper Styria, Koloman Wallisch, had discussed the matter with the Schutzbund leader, Ruhs, and now it was up to Wallisch to draw together in Bruck the troops from outside. Ruhs, supported by Wallisch, ordered one company to storm the gendarmerie barracks, another the forestry school, still another the Felten and Guilleaume office building. . . ."

When the situation grew untenable, Ruhs and Wallisch together with the Schutzbundlers marched off along the left bank of the Mur, on the morning of February 13th, towards the Utschgraben and climbed towards the Hochanger.

While the road towards Kapfenberg lay under fire, Wallisch had to make his way here with his wife and four hundred men. The snow lay a meter deep on the mountains. Wallisch hadn't learned to ski—he handn't become that much of a native since coming here in '21. "The ideal of a Soviet dictatorship lay before him as he had experienced it in Hungary, and as he had wanted to set in up in Bruck in '27," the prosecuting attorney believed. (But what did Wallisch believe?)

I cross the railway tracks and come to the lumber dealer's cemetery. I don't find my way about all alone in the cemetery on a weekday morning. I don't find the graves of the dead. It's harder to find the February dead in the provinces than in Vienna. In Graz they sewed them into sacks in two's, pressed them into shallow ditches anywhere, trampled the graves down with

their shoes, they forbade name plates or flowers to be placed on the graves. By oneself one can't tell whether these patches of grass are graves or not. On the highway I ask a bicycle rider where Utschgraben is. He's going the same way and pushes his bicycle along. This small, limping twenty year old boy in torn shirt and spotted trousers is the unemployed son of a railway worker. He frankly tells how he spent the rest of February in the woods. He doesn't live in Bruck either, but some place outside on a farm. He had been lucky.

The Struggle

"My father is a decent man, but he didn't take part in the thing. He didn't have any confidence in it." Just before, the railwaymen had lost their big strike. "They sold out on us, and they'll sell out on us again this time. Wallisch? We urged him all year to start the attack, but he didn't want to shed any blood. Blood was shed anyway, at the wrong time, and the wrong blood. We said to him, 'You're no compromiser by nature; why do you trust them and their pacts? Make the first attack, Comrade Wallisch, then Bruck will be the first to attack. Now it's turned out." he says standing still, "that we in Bruck have the highest percentage of dead. Just as they caused the most blood shed here, they could have gotten their first licking here."

The street continues. Wallisch's men had a sharp wind blowing in their faces. They were hot from pulling. They had not reached Utschgraben when they realized that the Schlossberg had already been taken. They wanted to break through to Frohnleiten, free Lackner, fight on with fresh weapons.

"Wallisch had a following in this neighborhood, and among the peasants too, which had always been hard for the party. What Wallisch would do now, if he had had more than one life? Would he be sitting in Brünn with the others? Would he also be selling out? I don't think so. There was much of us in the man."

Here the snow was still endurable. Wallisch's men could grapple with it; their marching feet tramped it down.

The thin white swastikas under our feet have already been converted into barred windows. "The Nazis? We have a few who are joining them now, a few dumb kids who were never worth much; there are the athletic fellows, for instance, who go over to them because the Nazis still have gyms. And ours are closed. And the Nazis let them swing on their horizontal bars. Others feel, if things start going, devil cares with whom so long as Dollfuss gets one on the head. As if the Nazis wouldn't open the prisons in the morning just for show, and lock up the same people again in the evening."

"The best among us have gone. We were always opposed to Vienna. There used to be forty or fifty Communists in Bruck."

"What always bothers me is the thought that Wallisch would have come out of it alive if his wife hadn't been with him. She had the habit of being with him always at meetings, and she wanted to be with him at the end, too. He should have left her in hiding with us somewhere. Because of her he couldn't get through the mountains in the snow on foot. Because of her he had to take an auto."

Near the big wood pile I must climb along the brook that drops down here to meet the Mur. Wallisch's men got their first taste of climbing. They dragged their legs out of the snow. Under no condition were they willing to leave their machine guns behind. They climbed and pulled, their arms weak with hunger and cold. They already had days and nights of fighting behind them.

At the entrance to the narrow Utschgraben a village begins. In front of an

attractive house, freshly painted a strong old fellow sits among the lilacs and smokes. Above the door is the text:

I built this house
But I can't live in it forever.
Who follows me must leave it, too,
Death won't spare him either.
And after him comes number three
O tell, whose house will this house be?

Untouched by fear of his death house the rightful owner enjoys his lilacs, his pipe and his morning sunshine.

I ask for the inn. But at this inn on weekdays there is neither beer nor milk, neither bread nor butter. At the end of the village near an idle mill is a house where a peasant woman sells bread and white cheese. There are six grown-up men in the room, and the peasant woman, their pretty sister, heavy-braided and pleased with her own beauty. On the wall hang antlers, a mirror, an oil painting of the mother of God. One of the men says, "So you're a German, eh? How is it there? One hears such different stories. One fellow was there and he says it's just like in the Bible, same as everywhere: to him who hath it shall be given and from him who hath not it shall be taken. Wallisch? Yes, he came through the Utschgraben. Yes, about four hundred men. Yes, his wife, too." Nothing else is said. In this silence there is no crack through which one can see what is hidden beneath. The peasant woman is happy when I pay. She even steps up to the door, twists the apron round her hand, and shows me the way.

The snow reached up to the chests of Wallisch's men. They could feel how the mountains to which they were clinging wanted to shake them off. Their frozen jaws were forming the first, "Impossible." Wallisch laughed and told them nothing remained but this march. It did remain, too, long after the span of their lives.

After an hour's mountain climbing through the forest—back of the village there is only one big farm, high overhead on a projection on the mountainside with many white, twisted fruit trees crippled by the wind—comes a hut on a fenced-in plot of grass. Seated around a table, out in the open, are a red-bearded peasant, a man in hunting clothes, a man in uniform with a pistol holster, and a woman in a white shirtwaist. It's not an inn, but they immediately invite one in. "A German?" They fetch Rhine wine from the cellar, pour it into Styrian porcelain jugs. The hut has a well-stocked cellar. The red-beared peasant is only the keeper. The lord and master is hunting grouse on the Hungarian border tonight. Quiet, quiet, thank God, quiet all over the mountains. In the city below the godless pack has been forced into quiet. Yes, of course, even in the villages here there were Social Democrats. You can tell it in the way the children greet you; yes, you can see it in the men, even from behind. High up on the Alps you can tell by looking at a man whether he climbed up from a Christian Socialist village, or out of a Social Democratic one. Wallisch and his wife and men came along the very same road in February as the honored lady. They threw their weapons here in the snow, where there's grass now. His wife lay down to rest a bit. Wallisch ordered milk—he couldn't even drink, the good-for-nothing. Then they went on to the mountain shelter, where the figure of the Holy Mother used to stand. But the sons-of-guns don't take care of anything; they destroy everything. There they turned off, opposite the Hochanger, towards Frahnleiten; they found the gov-

ernment already on the Hochanger, and in Frohnleiten too; and Wallisch had to beat it, and many of his men got lost in the mountains. Who knows if some of them aren't still hidden there. Now his agitation is over, the agitator, the evil spirit of Styria.

"His agitation is over," says the gendarmerie captain. He is gay, and a bit drunk, and grabs hold of his young wife. "I was there myself, in Leoben, when they hanged him on the gallows. He had courage, all right," he says suddenly, quite astounded, as if the idea had never occurred to him before, "although it was used against us and ours. Good God, where he ever got the courage, I don't know. I myself simply couldn't believe he was dead; he'd just been shouting freedom; that was Wallisch all right. And then two fellows, right and left, were hanging on his shoulders. They clung to the hanged man's shoulders, you understand, to make him heavy enough. You understand, honored lady, so that the rope chokes him properly. What a sadist he was, that man Wallisch, a regular Bolshevik. My, but it's nice that the honored lady is a German, and came right to our hut. It must be grand in Germany, must be swell in Germany. Ssh—don't tell on me, a man in uniform, but I know deep down in my heart that life in Germany is altogether different, and rather today than tomorrow."

I go up, further up the brook, a blameless little blue thread on the map. The snow reached as high as the breasts of Wallisch's men. Many trickled off to Bruck and the surrounding villages. The three machine guns always had to be pulled out of the gulleys. Wallisch urged his men to keep together at any price. In Vienna the uprising was gaining. They had to break through to Frohnleiten, and keep on fighting, with new weapons and auxiliary troops.

Where Wallisch Climbed

There were no more houses for a long stretch. The sound of wood chopping can be heard from a distance, now and then. But here on the mountainside logging is over. The giant trunks of felled fir trees hang over the mountain slopes, the cut surfaces shine brilliantly in the sunlight and give the mountains a peculiar light all their own. Then the woods recede, the brook gets more pebbly, more sandy. Pasture land begins; animal stiles bar the way. On the grassy slope stands a slanting house, bare, without steps. I enter. The table and baking oven are the most important things in the large, bare room. The floor is without boards, rough, sandy. The peasant woman's small child wears only a flannel shirt. Behind the table sits an engaged couple holding hands. We all play with the child. I let them show me the stove that is heated from outside. The grownups are talking about the pilgrimage posted on the church doors in Bruck. The women arrange to go. Where do I come from? So, I had gone past the hunting lodge? So, he was shooting grouse? I say, "They told me down in the hunting lodge that Wallisch had stopped there in February and gotten milk to drink." The wife calls out quickly, "From them? No, he got nothing to drink from them. They gave him nothing, those people there. It was at our place that he got milk." The bridegroom back of the table says, "Milk and three loaves of bread. They were weak with hunger. But they paid before taking a bite. They laid their money on the table before they reached out for the bread." The wife said, "If you spend the night on the Hochanger, you'll be in time to see them drive the cattle up the mountains early tomorrow morning."

I climb on towards the Iron Pass. Wallisch's men had crumbled away until only a hundred were left. Their only hope now was to get across the border to Jugoslavia with their weapons in their hands.

After midday tomorrow the hillside will ring with bells. Now the silence is unbroken. Smoke still rises from the herdsman's hut. In many spots, where a tongue of the forest stretches into the pasture land there is still snow. The mountainside is warm. After a while someone comes climbing up, the bridegroom from the peasant hut. He, too, wants to go to the Hochanger; he wants to be there tomorrow morning when the cattle come up. His brothers are lumbermen. His father has some land and cattle in Frohnleiten. Yes, he was in the neighborhood in February too. How did Wallisch get his following among the peasants? Through the tenant protection law. Wallisch at the time made the tenant protection law and allowed nothing to change it. The tenants couldn't be driven from their land; the fixed rent couldn't be raised. He was a lawyer through and through, that man Wallisch. If you went to him, if you asked his advice, he had all the paragraphs at his finger tips. He knew such paragraphs for the poor man that they couldn't put anything over on him. Now, of course, they'll tear up the laws that contain such paragraphs.

We reach the open shelter huts. On the left is the way up to the Hochanger. The deep valley back of the Hochanger is encircled by a thick forest. On the right is the way to Frohnleiten, a two or three hour journey. Ruhs volunteered to go out scouting. The men had a breathing spell and waited. Ruhs never came back. He got to Graz by a roundabout route and made a complete confession to the director of public safety. The Schutzbundlers in the mountains sent out new scouts. Now they learned everything: Ruhs' treachery, the defeat, the courtmartial. Wallisch hammered away, urging them to believe in their victory, not their present victory, but their final one.

"They were a long time trying to ferret out where Wallisch spent that night," said my escort. He lay down there in the valley, in the herdsman's hut. The government stood up on the Hochanger and asked whose hut it was. "Whose should it be, a herdsman's hut like that. K, the cashier, has rented it for skiing. We saw to it that no smoke came out of the chimney."

We pass around the valley. The forest ends; we reach pasture land again. Suddenly the house on the Hochanger is closer to us. On the other side of the furrowless hillside, smoothed by the evening light, came the first skirmishes with the Frohnleiten gendarmes. Wallisch's men, only a small group, about forty by now.

The host on the Hochanger had been expecting my escort. He is surprised at finding two of us. There are a few older lumbermen in the room, besides us. We get bread and soup. "They set five thousand shillings on Wallisch's head, and who couldn't use that much! But we told our wives and daughters not to look down in the valley, so there'll be no chance of seeing the man and having their consciences bother them. If you got the money, and bought yourself a pair of pants with it, and if they were too tight across the bottom, you'd see the gallows right away. If you bought a sheet for your bed, and got into bed with your wife, you'd also see the gallows right off."

Early in the morning we walk a bit towards Bruck to meet the cattle. We sit down on the grass; the ground is warm, even at this hour. Deep down in the forest the faint tinkle of bells can be heard. "The people of Bruck are forbidden to enter the forest on the First of May. On Hitler's birthday the Nazis lit up the mountains. I won't let myself be blinded. The stories they used to tell about Italy. I decided to go down to Italy myself last year. The first day I could find no one who was willing to give me any information. Then I found someone who took me by the hand, took me

quite a way out, sat me on a chair, told me this and that, and showed me what nobody is shown. I won't let them put it over on me. I'm saving my money; next year I'm going to Germany. There I won't look where they turn my head to look; I'll look where I please."

Going down I get in among the cattle coming up. From Bruck to the Hochanger a line of brown cows' backs wind along. Here and there among them are pigs. All living things come up out of the stalls for the summer.

A few hours later I stand at the railway station in Leoben. The freshness of the mountain is gone; a stale, musty, provincial smell lies over the railway station. On the evening of February 17th a young man stepped out of the railway station up to a taxi chauffeur and arranged to have him come to Oberaich Sunday morning. Perhaps the traitor, the little railwayman, sighed on the way to the inn as he looked at the five thousand shilling poster. He had no idea how soon his own life would be tied up and lost with the other's. Sunday afternoon the triumphal procession drove through the city of Leoben, enjoying its roundabout way round the streets. Wallisch and his wife sat on an open bus, chained, soldiers and police before and behind them, the citizens lined up on the curb, left and right. Citizens showed their wives the chained pair in the bus. The women stare at the chained woman in the green dress who had followed her husband into the fight, and finally through days and nights of flight through the mountains.

As I enter the city, a sentry drives me from the sidewalk in front of the large corner house. From the small barred cellar windows over the pavement come shouts. The February prisoners in Leoben are stuck in the cellar of the Chamber of Workers and Clerks.

Immediate Sentence

"The sentences in Leoben are hard and hateful," the unemployed say in front of the county court in which the public offices are also housed. "We were locked up here when they dragged Wallisch and his wife in. At night there was a certain restlessness about the place. We prisoners felt that something unusual was happening, but we never dreamed that they were hanging our Comrade Wallisch. Twice a terrible cry pierced the whole prison. That was when they brought Paula Wallisch to her husband and then dragged him away."

The hangman was a pork butcher from Vienna.

At the trial the whole neighborhood was roped off by Alpine troops.

That was the Eleventh Regiment from Klagenfurt.

You have to finish high school to be in the Alpine Regiments.

Shortly before the trial, the jurors were standing together here, for they were taken in together from here. Suddenly a man drove up on a motorcycle, pressed a letter into each one's hand and was off. The letters were from the Red Aid. The letters read: "The jury must stand solid with the defendants."

After some trouble I succeed in getting a peep into the courtyard out of an office window. The gallows has been taken down. Three meters deep the prisoners had to dig the hole into which the post was set. From here you can see far over the flat land, over to the distant mountains. The dirty courtyard is full of wood and straw. Criminals are filling sacks.

The endless hot street to the cemetery is marked here and there with swastikas. Hammers and sickles can be seen on wooden fences and on the

backs of houses. After these days more and more are seen on the wooden fences, on forest paths and highways.

I go to the hot cemetery and look around for men and women who look as if they are visiting the grave. The Leoben cemetery is spied on like the Vienna cemetery. The Wallisch grave is flatter then earth, covered with grass. A few crushed buttercups lie on it. "They trampled it with their boots." says a visitor to the grave who stares down at the crushed flowers with furrowed brow as if they were an inscription. "Anyone who lays flowers on it, gets fourteen days in jail."

I think to myself — this is the end of Wallisch's journey. But the visitor to the grave says. "What lies here is only the trunk. They say because Wallisch had been active in Soviet Hungary, Dollfuss sent his head to Horty." In the afternoon, five or six of us are sitting in a small inn not far from the main street. White and red chestnut blossoms dot the tables and fall into the glasses. Today Leoben expects the Italian officers whom Dollfuss has invited to Vienna for the First of May, to change the name of Matteotti Hof to Gio Hof ("Gio murdered by Marxists in the town council of Bologna") The highways were covered with nails for these guests; they had to change tires ten times before they reached Semmering.

"The freedom we mean now is an altogether different kind of freedom from that they choked out of Wallisch's throat. Democracy is dead, yes, dead and choked and trampled on by shoes; it mustn't rise again."

"How can you speak that way about a dead —"

"But he was a compromiser. And if he had to bleed, it's always been that way: you have to sign pacts with your own blood."

"For you to talk like that about the dead," says someone else, "that's just like you. Have you the faintest idea who Wallisch was? From his childhood he fought, first as a mason's apprentice at home, and later in the guilds' strike in Trieste; he was party secretary in Szegedin and he fought for Soviet Hungary. And then he started things in Marburg. You don't now anything. Then he fled on foot to Graz, he and his wife." We are interrupted by the hum of the Italian motors. A few withered hands flutter over the thin cordon of citizens lining the curb.

"And a dead man who lived as he did and died like him . . ."

"Stop, he's not that dead, that man Wallisch; Wallisch isn't so dead and buried, so dead that you can't argue with him, that you can't find out where he fought, and where he compromised, where he was wrong, and where he was right. I know, without your telling me, that the man was flesh and bone of the working class that they tortured; that it was *our* neck they strangled, that the red marks are on *our* neck. And because it's so, and because we know it's so, that's why the man is not dead and holy, but subject to error and alive."

Translated from the German by Anne Bromberger

LETTERS and DOCUMENTS

A. Lunacharski

Lenin and Art

Lenin on Propaganda in Sculpture

There exist very few utterances by Lenin, direct or indirect, on the role of art in socialist cultural construction and on the practical steps of an artistic nature to be taken in this direction.

That is why I should like to call attention again to the remarkable thing initiated by Lenin about the winter of 1918-19, if I am not mistaken. This was very effectual at the time but was, unfortunately, somehow side-tracked later on.

It gives me so much more satisfaction to speak of this now, when we are approaching a time and circumstances when the idea then broached by Lenin can be realized on a much broader scale, and much more effectively than in those first cold and hungry days during the civil war. I take the liberty of reproducing our conversation in the form of live dialogue. Although I cannot of course vouch for the accuracy of the exact wording, I take full responsibility for the accuracy of the general trend and the meaning conveyed.

"Anatoli Vassilievich," Lenin said to me, "you no doubt know many artists who are quite capable of doing good work but are in sad straits now."

"Of course," I said, "there are many such artists both in Moscow and Petrograd."[1]

"I have in mind," continued Lenin, "sculptors, and to some extent, perhaps also poets and writers. I have been harboring the idea I am about to mention to you for a long time. In his *Civitas Solis (City of the Sun)*, Campenella speaks of frescos on the walls in his imaginary socialist city. Those frescos were supposed to serve as vivid lessons to the young in natural sciences and history, were to awaken their civic consciousness, in other words, were to take a vital part in the education and upbringing of the new generation. Now it seems to me that this is not at all a bad idea and with certain modifications we should be able to realize it even now."

It goes beyond saying that I was keenly interested by this introduction. In the first place the question of socialist orders to be placed with artists was a burning one to me. And then the utilization of art for such a grandiose purpose as educational propaganda or our great ideas was in itself very attractive.

And Lenin continued:

"What I have in mind is something I should call propaganda by monuments. You would first have to get in touch with the Moscow and Petrograd Soviets and then organize your artistic forces, choose proper locations and so on. Our climate is hardly suitable for the frescos dreamed about by Campanella. That is why I speak primarily of sculptors and poets. Concise,

[1] The original has "Leningrad." Since Lenin further refers to "Petersburg" it must have been before the name of the city was changed to Leningrad but after the February Revolution, hence we use "Petrograd."—*Tr.*

trenchant inscriptions showing the more lasting, fundamental principles and slogans of Marxism should be scattered on suitable walls or even specially erected pediments in prominent places, to this could be added succintly formulated accounts of great historical events. Please don't think I have my heart set on marble, granite and gold lettering. We must be modest for the present. Let it be concrete with clear, legible inscriptions. I am not at the moment thinking of anything permanent or even long lasting. Let it even be of a temporary nature.

"Even more important than inscriptions, I consider monuments: busts, full-length figures, perhaps bas-reliefs, groups.

"A list should be drawn up of the forerunners of socialism, its theoreticians and fighters, as well as of those leading lights in philosophy, science, art, etc. who, though not directly connected with socialism, were nevertheless genuine heroes of culture.

"Orders should be placed with sculptors for works in plaster or concrete, in accordance with this list. It is important that these works should be intelligible to the masses, that they should catch the eye. It is also important that they should be designed to withstand our climate, at least to some extent, that they should not be easily marred by wind, rain and frost. Of course, inscriptions on the pedestals of monuments could be made, explaining who it was and so forth.

"Particular attention should be paid to the ceremonies of unveiling such monuments. In this, we ourselves and other Party comrades could help, perhaps also prominent specialists could be specially invited to speak on such occasions. Every such unveiling ceremony should be a little holiday and an occasion for propaganda. On anniversary dates mention of the given great man could be repeated, always, of course, showing his connection with our revolution and its problems."

To tell the truth, I was overwhelmed, almost stunned by this proposition. I liked it immensely. We immediately set about realizing it. The realization, unfortunately, went awry to some extent. But a number of inscriptions were executed in various places. Some of them are still in existence. We also put up quite a few monuments, the work of some of the older and a few young sculptors, in Moscow and Leningrad.

Not all monuments, by far, were successful ones. As far as I am aware, only the statues of Radischev and Lassalle were made into permanent ones and at that the former stands not on the spot originally picked for it—the quay side of the Winter Palace—but on a Moscow square. There are probably some other of these statues in existence. Some were rather good, as far as I now remember, like the ones of Shevchenko, Gertzen, Chernishevski. Others were less so—like the Moscow statue of Marx and Engels which the Moscovites dubbed the "Cyril and Methodius" because it made them really look like a couple of saints—just emerging from a bath-tub at that.

Our modernists and futurists especially went wild. Many were horrified by the unhuman semblance given to the figure of Perovskaya. And Bakunin, the work of the now mature artist Korolev who has made such excellent statues of Zheliabov, Baumann and others, then came out so horrible that many claimed horses shied at it in passing—though it may be mentioned this statue of Bakunin only peeked out through some poorly knocked together boarding and was never unveiled.

Thus matters went along getting neither here nor there.

The unveiling of monuments went on much better. I unveiled the statues of Radischev, Gertzen and Chernishevski myself, I remember. Many other

prominent Party comrades took part in such unveiling ceremonies. A permanent monument to Marx was decided upon. After a rather wide contest, the design of the sculptor Alexhin was approved by Lenin. I cannot but express my disappointment that this monument, to my mind, more than highly satisfactory and entirely completed in plaster, has for some reason been rejected.

The spot chosen for this monument, at the time, was Sverdlov Square. Lenin himself initiated the ceremony of placing the podium and made a remarkable speech on Marx and his flaming spirit which now permeates the proletarian revolution first outlined and forecast by him.

Now that we are doing so much construction, I ask myself why couldn't we return to this idea of propaganda by monuments and erect, still perhaps temporary, monuments and provide surfaces on which to inscribe the great sayings of our teachers, in new buildings going up.

Considering socialist architecture profoundly organic and inclusive of vital human elements, I think sculpture should be one of its most enriching features. It should, of course, be organically embodied in the structure, the square, the lane, street corner, etc. It has reached me that the Moscow Soviet is thinking on similar lines.

A couple of years ago I was visited by a group of sculptors who seemed to understand these problems very well, but I have not heard of any further developments in this respect.

I do not as yet expect marble and granite, gold lettering and bronze—so appropriate to socialist style, culture. It is too early as yet for this—but, it seems to me, a second wave of propaganda by monuments, more lasting and more mature, also more effective, could be instituted now.

1933

Editorial Note: *Only a year and a half have passed since these reminiscences by A. V. Lunacharski first appeared, and very much has been done already to beautify Moscow architecturally, by monuments, etc. This work is now being extended and is assuming gigantic proportions.*

II

Further Reminiscences

Lenin was too busy all his life to take up art seriously and he always admitted himself a layman in this respect. As he had a horror for dilettanteism he was loath to express any opinions on art. His tastes, however, were definite. He loved the Russian classics, liked realism in literature, in painting and so on.

In 1905, during the first revolution, he happened to spend a night at the home of Comrade D. I. Leshenko, where among other things, he came upon a complete collection of Knackfuss publications on the greatest artists of the world. Next morning Lenin said to me: "What an attractive field the history of art is. How much work there for a communist. I could not get very much that I have never had and never shall have the time to occupy to sleep all night looking over one volume after another. And I regretted myself with art." These words of V. I. Lenin impressed themselves on my mind very clearly.

After the revolution I met him several times on questions of various artistic matters. Thus, for instance, I remember him calling upon me to

go with him and look over some designs of monuments to replace the figure of Alexander III taken off the luxurious podium near the Church of Our Saviour. Lenin examined all the designs very critically. He liked none of them. He was particularly amazed at one monument of a futurist bent, but when asked for his opinion, he said: "I don't understand anything about this, ask Lunacharski." When I declared I did not see there a single worthy design he was very happy. He told me: "I was afraid you would put up some futuristic scare-crow."

Another time the question was about a statue of Karl Marx. The well known sculptor M. was very insistent. He proposed a great project: "Karl Marx, standing on four elephants." Such an unexpected motif struck us all as strange—Lenin also. The artist made his model over and over again, three times, refusing to reconcile himself to the idea of losing out in the competition. When the judges of the contest, under my chairmanship, finally rejected his design and decided in favor of a design by a group working collectively under the guidance of Aleshin, the sculptor M. came storming to Lenin's office. Lenin sympathetically listened to his complaints and called me on the telephone asking me to call a special session of the judges of the contest and saying he will come personally to look at the Aleshin design and the design of the sculptor in question. He came. He was very pleased with the Aleshin design and rejected the design of the sculptor M.

That same year, the Aleshin group built a small model of the Marx monument on the spot selected for it, in time for the May 1st celebration. Lenin went there specially. He circled the model several times, asked about the actual dimensions and finally approved it, remarking however: "Anatoli Vassilievich, please tell the artist particularly to make the hair more nearly right, to produce the impression of Karl Marx one gets from good portraits of him, otherwise the resemblance is very poor."

As far back as 1918 Lenin called me to him and told me it was necessary to push art as a means of propaganda, proposing two schemes. One was to decorate buildings, fences, etc. with revolutionary inscriptions instead of the advertising posters usually there.

This scheme was taken up most thoroughly by Comrade Brikhnichev when he was in charge of the Gomel Department of Education. I found Gomel literally covered with such inscriptions, fairly good ones too. Even the large mirrors in restaurant buildings turned into educational centers, Comrade Brikhnichev had covered with sayings.

In Moscow and Petrograd this idea did not take, not only in the exaggerated form practiced in Gomel, but not even in the form corresponding to Lenin's idea.

The second scheme was to erect in Moscow and Petrograd, on a large scale monuments to great revolutionists, monuments of a temporary nature. out of plaster. Both cities responded well to my proposal to realize Lenin's idea, which included solemn unveilings with appropriate speeches on the given revolutionists and explanatory inscriptions on the pedestals. Lenin called this "propaganda by monuments."

In Petrograd this "propaganda by monuments" was rather successful. The first monument was one of Radischev-Sherwood. A copy was erected in Moscow. Unfortunately the original in Petrograd was broken and never replaced. The majority of the best monuments in Petrograd were of such material that they could not stand long—and I remember some monuments that were not at all bad—like those of Garibaldi, Shevchenko, Dobrolubov, Gertzen and some others. The monuments made by "leftist" artists were not so good

—when the cubist, stylized head of Perovkaya was unveilled some people were absolutely horrified and Z. Lidina demanded in loud tones that the monument be removed immediately. I also remember the statue of Chernishevski seemed too florid to many. Best of all was the monument to Lassalle. (By the artist Zelit) This monument placed near the city hall has remained there to this day. I think it has been cast in bronze. A very succesful statue of Karl Marx in full height was made by the sculptor Matveyev. Unfortunately the figure broke and was replaced at the same place—near the Smolny —by a bronze head of Marx of the more common type lacking the original plastic treatment of Matveyev.

In Moscow, where Lenin could see the monuments himself, they happened to be unsuccessful ones. Marx and Engels were shown in some sort of basin and the monument was dubbed the "whiskered bathers." The sculptor K. out did them all. For a long while people and horses passing on Myasnitskaya street were frightened by a mad figure luckily hidden behind boardings. That was supposed to be Bakunin as the worthy sculptor saw him. If I am not mistaken the staute was broken up by anarchists immediately after it was unveiled—with all their unconventionality the anarchists would not stand for such a "mockery" of their leader.

Satisfactory monuments generally were few in Moscow. The best of them was perhaps the statue of the poet Nikitin. I do not know whether Lenin had looked at them all, but he somehow expressed his dissatisfaction to me that nothing seemed to have come of the propaganda by monuments. I replied by referring to the successful campaign in Petrograd. Lenin shook his head in doubt and said: "Has all talent gathered in Petrograd and only ungifted ones have remained in Moscow?" To this I could make no answer.

He was somewhat doubtful of Konenkov's memorial board. It seemed to him lacking in power of conviction. Konenkov himself, not without some wit, referred to this work of his as a "virtually real board." I also remember an instance when the artist Altman presented Lenin with a bas-relief of Khalturin. Lenin liked the bas-relief very much but asked whether it was not somewhat futuristic. He did not like futurism generally. I was not present when he visited the living quarters of the Vukhtemass workers where some relative of his, if I am not mistaken, lived. But I was told about the long talk he had with the Vukhtemass artists, mostly leftists, of course. Lenin joked with them but told them that he could not discuss those matters with them seriously as he did not feel competent on the subject. The youngsters he thought very fine and was glad they were communistically inclined.

In his later life Lenin had little opportunity to enjoy art. He went to the theatre a few times, only to the Art Theatre, I think, which he held in high regard. He was almost invariably favorably impresed by the performances at this theatre.

Lenin was a great music lover, but music distressed him. At one time good concerts took place at my home. Chaliapin would sing. Meychik, Romanovski, the Stradivarius Quartet would play, Kussevitski on the double-bass, and so on. I invited Lenin many times, but he was always too busy. Once he told me: "Of course it is a pleasure to hear good music, but imagine—it distresses me. It seems to work on me too much." I remember Comrade Tsurupa telling me that he succeeded in persuading Lenin a couple of times to come to his house to hear Romanovski play the piano, and that Lenin enjoyed the music very much but was evidently wrought up by it.

Ti this I may add that Lenin was very nervous about the Bolshoi Theatre. (The opera—*Tr.*) I had to intercede with him several times, pointing out that

the Bolshoi Theatre costs us comparatively little, but he insisted the subsidy had to be cut down. In this Lenin was guided by two considerations. One of them he stated directly: "It is unseemly," he said, "to maintain such a luxurious theatre at great cost when we haven't enough money to maintain the most ordinary schools in the villages." The other consideration he brought out when, at one meeting, I argued against his attacks on the Bolshoi Theatre I pointed out the unquestionable cultural value of this theatre. Then Lenin squinted slyly and said: "Yes, but it is a portion of purely landlord culture. and this is also unquestionable."

It does not follow from this that Lenin was generally inimical to the culture of the past. The pompous, courtlike tone of the opera seemed specifically of a landlord nature to him. The art of the past generally, particularly that of the Russian realists, Lenin regarded very highly.

These are the facts I can recall. I repeat Lenin never made guiding principles out of his esthetic sympathies or antipathies.

Comrades interested in art will remember the address of the CC (Communist Party—*Tr.*) on the questions of art, which came out rather sharply against futurists. I have no data on this, but I imagine Lenin had a good deal to do with this. At that time Lenin considered me, entirely unjustly, if not an adherent of futurism, at least a strong uspporter o fit and that was probably why I was not consulted before this CC proscription was issued as it was, in his opinion to correct my line.

Lenin disagreed with me vehemently also on the question of Proletcult. Once he even upbraided me strongly. I must say, first of all, that Lenin did not at all deny the usefulness of literary circles of workers to discover writers and artists among the proletariat and considered the federation of these circles on an all-Russian scale advisable,—but he was very much afraid of the attempts of Proletcult to work out proletarian science and proletarian culture generally, in its entirety. This seemed to him in the first place, an altogether untimely undertaking exceeding their powers, secondly, he thought that the proletariat would be drawn away from study and the acquiring of the elements of science and culture by half-cocked inventions; and, thirdly, Lenin was apparently also afraid political heresy might weave itself a fine nest in Proletcult. He was, for instance, rather suspicious of the great role A. A. Bogdanov then played in Proletcult.

At the time of the Proletcult convention, in 1920, I think, Lenin entrusted me with the mission to go to that convention and point out definitely that Proletcult must be subordinated to the Peoples Commissariat of Education and consider itself one of its institutions, etc. In other words, Lenin wanted us to draw Proletcult closer to the government and at the same time steps were being taken to draw it closer to the Party. My speech at the convention I composed rather evasively and conciliatorily. It did not seem right to me to make any attacks and hurt the feelings of the workers assembled there. The contents of my speech were made even milder by those who told Lenin about it. He called me before him and upbraided me severely. Later Proletcult was reorganized as indicated by Lenin. I repeat, he never had any intention of dissolving it. On the contrary he was even sympathetic to its purely artistic preoccupations.

The new artistic and literary groupings that took place during the revolution did not in most instances attract Lenin's attention. He had no time to occupy himself with them.

Translated from the Russian by S. D. Kogan

ARTICLES and CRITICISM

J. Kashkeen

ERNEST HEMINGWAY: A Tragedy of Craftsmanship

We have never seen Hemingway. In his wanderings over the world he has never visited our country and in order to imagine what he is like we have to rely, though not without reservation, on what others say. And from what they say there arises a legendary figure: Hemingway—the hero and favorite of the young literary crowd in Paris and New York, "one of the gang," a boon companion at the Dingo Café in Paris or at Greenwich Village bars. Here is the evidence of his English friend, the well-known Ford Madox Ford:

"Into the animated din would drift Hemingway, balancing on the point of his toes, feinting at my head with hands as large as hams . . . At last Hemingway extended an enormous seeming ham under my nose. He shouted. What he shouted I could not hear: under the shadow of that vast and menacing object."

Other witnesses recall Hemingway taking part in Spanish bullfights and the memorable fiesta when he had the good luck of rescuing that clumsy amateur-torero John Dos Passos from a "sudden violent death."

They recall skiing parties in Switzerland, the sensational knockout at the *Salle Wagram* Hemingway gave a boxer for foul play. And while reading such testimonies you fancy a strong, fullblooded athlete, an excellent tennis-player, a first rate boxer, an inveterate skier, hunter and fisherman, a fearless torrero, a distinguished front line soldier, an arrogant bully, and in addition to all that—on second thought as it were—a world famous writer. And under this impression of the legendary hero, the famous "Hem the Great" of a "lost generation" you open his books.

You read the joyless tale of Hemingway's favorite hero—ever the same under his changing names—and you begin to realize that what had seemed the writer's face is but a mask, and by degrees you begin to discern a different face, that of Nick Adams, Tenente Henry, Jake Barnes, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Frazer.

Then you think of another testimony of Ford Madox Ford's:

"When, in those old days, Hemingway used to tell stories of his Paris landlords he used to be hesitant, to pause between words and then to speak gently but with great decision. His mind selecting the words to employ. The impression was one of a person using restraint at the biddings of discipline. It was the right impression to have had."

And you imagine the man, morbidly reticent, always restrained and discreet, very intent, very tired, driven to utter despair, painfully bearing the too heavy burden of life's intricacies. This conception of "Hem the Tragic" may be legendary as well, but such we see him in his books and one-sided as this conception may be it affords the possibility of a different sidelight

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Editorial Note: Hemingway is so perfect and evident a representative of his time and milieu lately dealt with in a number of articles and books on the "Lost Generation" that for considerations of space we have found it possible to omit from the original Russian version of this article its introductory part treating of the post-war American scene and to confine ourselves to an analysis of Hemingway's work only.

on Hemingway and his writings. We accept it merely as a working hypothesis that might help us make out what he is actually like.

Hemingway shows us how complicated he is by his very attempts to be simple. A tangle of conflicting strains and inconsistencies, a subtle clumsiness, a feeling of doubt and unrest are to be seen even in Hemingway's earlier books as early as his presentation of Nick Adams's cloudless young days, but as he proceeds on the way of artistic development these features show increasingly clear and the split between Hemingway and reality widens.

Closely following the evolution of his main hero you can see how at first Nick Adams is but a photo film fixing the whole of life in its simplest tangible details. Then you begin to discern Nick's ever growing instinct of blind protest, at which the manifestations of his will practically stop.

Home with its bible, a copy of *Science and Health* on the table, Indians wrangling with Doc about logs he is supposed to have stolen, his mother's sugary, "Are you going out, dear," and the stench of the fire in which during a fit of housecleaning she destroys the collections of snakes and other specimens treasured by Nick's puerile father. In a word—the stuffy, stale atmosphere of provincial existence.

And beyond home—the meeting with the prize-fighter, the trip to the Indian camp, the sight of that living corpse Ole Andreson and the consequent longing "to get out of this town" into another mysteriously alluring world of boxers, killers, soldiers. And soon we see Nick along with many boys of his age escaping to the front.

Of his youthful impressions there remain the memories of the time when "he felt sure that he would never die," a liking for sound, simple people (Indians, the battler's Negro companion, and later—Romero, wrestlers, torreros); there also remains the hunter's sharp eye and the firm grip of the future artist.

Tenente Henry—the next incarnation of the same hero is Nick Adams, grown into a man wearing a uniform. His relations with Cat are still youthfully fresh and spontaneous. When he recalls his past ("Now I Lay Me") it bears a striking likeness to the past of Nick Adams. At the front he is glad to find everything so simple. "It was simple and you were friends."

Tenente Henry enjoys the definite, clear-cut relations between people, the good comradeship "We felt held together by there being something that had happened, that they did not understand," and the feeling of risk while it lasts.

But soon along with the debâcle at Caporetto he finds himself faced by the cruelty of the rear, choked by its lies and filth, hurt by the hatred of the working people to *gli ufficiali*. And as his shellshock had lost him his sleep so does the stronger shock of war make him a different man. By the time the war is over he has learned to discern "liars that lie to nations" and to value their honeyed talk at what it is worth.

> "I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, and sacrifice and the expression in vain. We had heard them, sometimes standing in the rain almost out of earshot, so that only the shouted words came through, and had read them, on proclamations that were slapped up by billposters over other proclamations, now for a long time, and I had seen nothing sacred, and the things that were glorious had no glory and the sacrifices were like the stockyards at Chicago, if nothing was done with the meat except to bury it. Abstract words such as glory, honor, courage were obscene beside the concrete names of villages, the numbers of roads, the names of rivers, the numbers of regiments and the dates." (*A Farewell to Arms*).

His illusions about the war gone, Tenente Henry means to get through with the "glorious conflict."

Disgusted with the rôle of a mute in this infamous show, unwilling to be used as cannon fodder in the Caporetto slaughter, the man admittedly brave, now feels rising within him the instinct for self-preservation, and fiercely struggles to save life by every means possible down to desertion. Catherine's tragic death puts a sudden stop to the short lived idyll of life's simpler joys.

Nick's youthfully fresh outlook on life is now overcast by the ghastly shadow of a close acquaintance with death in its ugliest forms, his mind is laid waste. The man of the front has no hopes or faith left.

Such he comes back home only to be immersed once more in the old familiar but now hopelessly alien things. "Nothing was changed in the town. But the world they were in was not the world he was in." Everything was awfully mixed up and one had to keep lying, lying about the war, about heroism, about the German machine-gunners chained to their guns, and one had to kneel by mother's side and pray God to make him a good boy again. Was this then the way to keep the promise made in the trenches of Fossalta? Really things were awfully mixed up.

After a stay at home, Hemingway's contemporary flees to Europe again, to wander, to live a bohemian life. But there also life seems too complicated after the front and the new milieu is barren and revolting, Hemingway knows this milieu to perfection; he depicts "our boys abroad" with a pity alternating with lashing irony. Every line of Hemingway's poignantly reserved story about the Elliots is an insult flung at their bourgeois-aesthetic marriage and in his "A Canary for One" he mockingly offers the lonely and languishing Juliet a caged canary by way of substitute for a glimpsed Romeo. Hemingway's hero has no use for happiness, he is busy getting through his divorce-suit and when in 1933 Hemingway himself recalls this time in his triptych "Homage to Switzerland," he seems to see this philistine Eden as a sort of theatre stage with puppet-people acting in it, their dialogue adopted from Berlitz's *Spoken English.*

The grave bitterness of the middle panel of the triptych is further accentuated by the figure of Mr. Wheeler—that prudent bourgeois tourist,—and by the brutal practical joke played on that harmless crank, the geographer.

Hemingway knows the value of the *plaisirs at les jeux* of the rich, he tells about them with undisguised sarcasm. But as for making sure of his own position, as for drawing the necessary conclusions from his instinctive disgust at the world of the philistine—that he cannot do, it is all too complicated.

What is left him is to wander over the world, "look at things and try new drinks." What is left him is surely the wrong path—simplify things as much as possible, play a solitary game of hide and seek, "eat, drink, copulate, fight the bull, take the dope"—in a word—be just like everybody.

The well trained athletic body is full of strength, it seeks for moments of tension that would justify this sort of life and finds them in boxing and skiing, in bull fighting and lion hunting, in wine and women. He makes a fetish of action for action, he revels in "all that threatens to destroy." (Pushkin).

But the mind shocked by the war, undermined by doubt, exhausted by a squandered life, the poor cheated, hopelessly mixed up mind fails him. The satiated man with neither meaning nor purpose in life is no longer capable of a prolonged consecutive effort. "You oughtn't to ever do anything too long" and we see the anecdote of the lantern in the teeth of the frozen corpse ("An Alpine Idyll") grow into a tragedy of satiety when nothing is taken in earnest any longer, when "there is no fun anymore."

As the process of decomposition goes on, strength itself, unapplied and unnecessary, becomes a weakness and a burden.

Action turns into its reverse, into the passive pose of a stoic, into the courage of despair, into the capacity of keeping oneself in check at any cost, no longer to conquer, but to give away, and that smilingly. The figure of Jake mutilated in the war grows into a type. It is the type of a man who has lost the faculty of accepting all of life with the spontaneous ease of his earlier days. And taken from this point of view the otherwise normal characters of the story "Hills Like White Elephants" may be said to stand on the verge of a similar moral disaster. Every last bit of effort now goes into hiding their pain, into keeping the stiff upper lip, into being the "undefeated" as before, though secretly they know that their strength is not what it used to be. Sick old Belmonte puts into his toothed wolf-jawed lipless grin all his pain and hatred, all his contempt for the mob ever crying for blood and impossible victories—and then goes out to kill another bull.

This "grin and bear it" attitude towards danger and death calls to mind the conception of the heroes in ancient tragedies. We know from the very first that there is no hope for Oedipus, the chorus knows it, he himself comes to know it, we see how inexorably things rush to the destined doom.

Though doomed the heroes continue their fight, and attain a tragic beauty and repose, facing the unavoidable bravely and in full armour. But Hemingway has no pity, he leads us onto the next stage. "The undefeated" are followed by the "baited."

Like the mob round the arena, like the obliging friends—the killers—life has no mercy, life relentlessly and steadily drives the weak into an impasse, turning the pose of the stoic into the "lie down and have it" torpor of the giant Ole Andreson with his hopeless "There ain't anything to do now."

And then there are those whom life has ensnared, and those who shun it. Disbelieving their power to affect what is bound to happen the weaker ones commit a number of accidental, inconsistent acts.

What's the use—there's no escape anyway.

The incapacity to find his way through questions he cannot solve, his reticence the admission of his own weakness,—those familiar steps on the path of the individualist—bring Hemingway's contemporary to desertion on principle. The theme of desertion is not new to Hemingway. Long ago Nick Adams fled from his home town, then he fled to the front. But here too the brave arditti decorated with all sorts of medals is a potential deserter at heart.

The wounded Nick says to Rinaldi "You and me we've made a separate peace. We're not patriots." Tenente Henry kills the Italian sergeant when the latter, refusing to fulfill his order, renounces his part in the war, but inwardly he is a deserter as well and on the following day we actually see him desert. "In the fall the war was always there, but we did not go to it any more." ("In Another Country") This theme of sanctioned treason, of desertion in every form, so typical of the extreme individualist, recurs throughout Hemingway's work.

The mental confusion and vacuum of Hemingway's contemporary, and his self absorbsion logically lead him down to the last form of desertion. The task of saving the world is either impossible, or else too much for him to shoulder. Then let it be saved by those who wish,—Hemingway's characters say,—as for us—let's have some lunch. And here is what Hemingway himself says:

"Let those who want to save the world if you can get to see it clear and as a whole. Then any part you make will present the whole if it's made truly. The thing to do is work and learn to make it." (*Death in the Afternoon*).

But to learn to do it is no easy job, especially for one whose sight is limited by the blinders of sceptical individualism. Life is too complicated and full of deceit. The romance of war had been deceit, it is on deceit that the renown of most writers rests. The felicity of the Elliot couple is but self-deceit; Jake is cruelly deceived by life; for Mr. Frazer everything is deceit or self-deceit, everything is dope—religion, radio, patriotism, even bread. There is despair in the feeling of impending doom, and morbidity in the foretaste of the imminent loss of all that was dear.

"Madame, all stories if continued far enough end in death, and he is no true-story teller who would keep that from you. Especially do all stories of monogamy end in death, and your man who is monogamous while he often lives most happily, dies in the most lonesome fashion. There is no lonelier man in death except the suicide, than that man who has lived many years with a good wife and then outlives her. If two people love each other there can be no happy end to it." (*Death in the Afternoon).*

The theme of the end recurs in Hemingway's works with a growing persistence, the obsession of death is there, not to be driven off.

"Now Catherine would die. That was what you did. You died. You did not know what it was about. You never had time to learn. They threw you in and told you the rules and the first time they caught you off base they killed you. Or they killed you gratuitously like Aymo. Or gave you the syphilis like Rinaldo. But they killed you in the end. You could count on that. Stay around and they would kill you." . . . "The world breaks every one and afterward many are strong at the broken places. But those that will not break it kills. It kills the very good and the very gentle and the very brave impartially. If you are none of those you can be sure it will kill you too but there will be no special hurry." (*A Farewell to Arms*).

The best of them are gone and in his memories he is among them. This business of conversing with friends that are dead is a gruesome affair, and one can't live on it long. Unless death be welcome—and one still holds on to life by instinct—one has either to find some definite purpose that would make life worth living or else look for stable values, for firm ground to stand on. "If he is to lose everything . . . he should find things he cannot lose." ("In Another Country")

In pursuit of solace Hemingway's hero seeks support in Catholicism. 'Technically' he is a Catholic, only he does not know what that really means. He regrets being such a rotten Catholic, he wishes he could feel religious, expects to become more devout as he grows older like Count Greffi does, or to become a tin saint, like his nun. But somehow it does not come. Somehow we put little faith in the faith of this sceptic. "With a disposition to wonder and adore can no branch of Natural History be studied without increasing the faith, love and hope," Hemingway quotes from Bishop Stanley and he shows us one of the branches—studying the dead—which has filled him with unbelief and scepticism. For Hemingway "One of the simplest things of all and the most fundamental is violent death," but in his "Natural History of the Dead" we see this last thing wickedly stripped of all halo.

Even a Harry Crosby could hardly lean on such a notion of death. Love is another thing of value but for Hemingway it is of short duration and involves the inevitable loss of the beloved. And besides he is always prepared to question the feeling, however sincere or poetical, and seeks to degrade it in a way that verges on mania.

And so the ultimate value—"A clean well lighted place." There should be a place for a man to go to, mustn't there? And he pictures a neat and

cleanly cage where he could hide from himself. But it appears that in that clean and well lighted cage things look dark and doubtful. Well, then every thing under the sun is nonsense or Nothing. Nada on earth. Nada in heaven as well. "Our Nada who art in Nada." Perhaps there is rest to be found here, the sort of rest that comes after despair and the frustration of all hopes, but you see that Hemingway's hero unlike the waiter of the just quoted story, doesn't rest here. He goes on. Mr. Frazer, and the characters of the story "Wine of Wyoming" show us glimpses of acknowledging their past mistakes, of regretting things they have spoiled and broken, things that are gone never to return again. All the long sought values lose their worth when we see included among them the cheap solace of the sovereign bottle, while the very search for values results in their successive degradation and denial, in the scepticism of the cynic.

Each of Hemingway's stories is a perfectly-finished work of art. But perfect as his stories are when taken separately, their full meaning and depth appear only when we take them in connection with all the rest of his work, and include them in the main stream of his artistic evolution. "A Very Short Story" acquires a new meaning after you have read *A Farewell to Arms*. The suite: "Hills Like White Elephants," "Cat in the Rain," "A Canary for One," "Homage to Switzerland" can be fully understood only when placed against the settings of *The Sun Also Rises;* the stories about Nick form a natural cycle, each of them being a self-sufficing sketch for an unwritten novel.

If on closing Hemingway's books you recall and assort the disjoned pieces of the biography of his main hero you will be able to trace the decisive points of his life. Nick—first a tabula rasa, then turning away from too cruel a reality; Henry struggling for his life and trying to assert its joys, Jake and Mr. Johnson—already more than half broken and Mr. Frazer —a martyr to reflection and growing passivity. So we witness both the awakening and the ossification of the hero whose psychology is so intimately known to Hemingway himself, and as opposed to it a file of brave and stoic people—the Negro in "Battler," the imposing figures of Belmonte and Manola, the broken giant Ole Andreson; in a word—those people for whom Hemingway's double has so strong an instinctive liking, first worshipped as heroes and then brought down to earth.

Those brave and simple people seem to be living only in so far as Hemingway's main hero retains his vitality, and although placed in a different higher plane, to walk the way he walks. A way from an assertion of life however elementary, to the pseudo-stoical scepticism of despair. And as you turn the last page of Hemingway's latest book, as you recall his "Natural History of the Dead," the thoughts of Mr. Frazer and Mr. Johnson, the prayer "Our nada," the talk between Nick Adams and his son in the story "Fathers and Sons"—you see the face of the hero stiffen into a horrible grimace. What had seemed to be prosperity in the case of Richard Cory and Henry Crosbv turned out but a show. It will deceive no one any longer. When the mind is fatally injured, the body however strong it might seem turns into a well embalmed mummy, a walking corpse that needs but a slight push to fall to dust.

"It was not the undertaker that had given him that last face. The undertaker had only made certain dashingly excuted repairs of doubtful artistic merit. The face had been making itself and being made for a long time." ("Fathers and Sons")

Hemingway's hero wants to be simple and sane, but the sore trial to which he subjects himself doesn't pass unavenged.

The artist's power to see is perverted and broken by the obsession of death. His what-the-hell tone, his affected stoicism, his would be indifference —are nothing but a pose taken on to hide the weariness, the refined scepticism, the despair. It is by them that Hemingway is driven to mere craftsmanship, often aimless and to our mind following the wrong trend.

> "Pamplona is changed, of course, but not as much as we are older. I found that if you took a drink that it got very much the same as it was always. I know things change now and I do not care. It's all been changed for me. Let it all change. We'll all be gone before it's changed too much and if no deluge comes when we are gone it still will rain in summer in the north and hawks will nest in the Cathedral at Santiago and in La Granja, where we practised with the cape on the long gravelled path between the shadows; it makes no difference if the fountains play or not . . . . We've seen it all go and we'll watch it go again. The great thing is to last and get your work done and see and hear and learn and understand; and write when there is something that you know; and not before; and not too damned much after . . .. The thing to do is work and learn to make it." (*Death in the Afternoon*).

This is not the devil-may-care, the *apres nous le déluge* attitude, whatever Hemingway himself may have said a few lines before; it is merely the statement of the fact that his powers are limited. And it is not the apology of quietism, but rather the familiar gesture of hopeless simplification. Not to save the world, but so see it and to remake at least a tiny part of it that's what Hemingway wants and calls upon others to do. *Il faut cultiver notre jardin,* he seems to repeat after Candide and as his aim he selects the attainment of craftsmanship. In this he radically differs from his idle heroes. but nevertheless for an artist of Hemingway's scope, for the head of a literary school to turn his back on really important themes and problems may only be qualified as an escape into seclusion, as desertion.

Still it is a good sign that in working for the sake of work, in fulfilling the prisoner's task he set himself, he remains the ever scrupulous professional. And it is this honest attitude towards his work, blind though it may appear to us, that has earned Hemingway the right to be classed among the masters.

2

In the best of his works Hemingway attains the simplicity of a great master. You believe in the simplicity of the pathetic Negro, in the imposing and genuine simplicity with which Belmonte, Manola and the entire fiesta is presented. You even believe in the ultimate primitiveness of the youthful memories of Nick Adams. We are all in favor of simplicity; we have been, for a long time.

> "My straw hat was almost filled with nuts, when I suddenly heard a noise. I looked round: Indians! An old man and a young one took hold of me and dragged me away. One of them threw the nuts out of my hat and stuck it on my head. After that I remember nothing. I probably swooned, for I came to under a tall tree. The old man was gone. Some people were arguing animatedly My protector shouted. The old man and four other Indians came running. The old chief seemed to be talking very severely to the one that had threatened to kill me."

Who is it all about? Hemingway's Indians? No, as early as a hundred years ago this simplicity was noted by Pushkin who included in one of his articles long passages from the memoirs of John Tanner.

We highly appreciate the intentional indigence born out of abundance, the

costly simplicity of the Leo Tolstoi—the artist. In his *Cossacks and Hadji Mourat* he is as simple as his hunters and mountaineers whose dandified rags worn with the huntsman's peculiar smartness only serve to accentuate the necessary luxury of their expensive arms. We know that this sort of simplicity may be the result of either ancient culture or personal genius. The culture of the mountaineer, the genius of Yeroshka, the culture and genius of Tolstoi himself. We were highly pleased to read that Chekhov thought the best definition of the sea the one given by a schoolgirl—"The sea was big." We have seen Gorki resolutely strip the later versions of his early stories of all the romantic adornments and work out the cleansed style of his memoirs, or of *The Artamonoffs*. We shared the joy of the journalist Koltsov when he was telling us, how after casting about for all possible attributes for "snow"—the snow was marble, the snow was violet, the snow was blue, the snow was like sugar—he delightedly caught at the "delicious white word" "the snow was white" and rejoiced in the joy of his future readers. We couldn't remain indifferent when reading bolshevist documents of such highly-convincing simplicity as the January 1905 proclamation or speeches by Lenin and Stalin. They, as well as our best masters of literature, are in favor of simplicity, that costly synthetic simplicity of socialist realism, which necessarily implies a high degree of professional craftsmanship. But there also exists another sort of simplicity. We know the affected simplicity of a Shklovski, a Hausner, a Gabrilovich, tortured, strained ever in search of new forms of conception and style. But Gabrilovich and Hausner have a purpose. They know what they are after, when stamping out the inertia of verbosity. They want to find a new language for the new themes and the new experiences of man in second birth. It is the simplicity of the period of transition.

Even in the elaborate, naive simplicity of John Dos Passos, by means of which he occasionally tries to cover up his helplessness and his inability to find his way through the complexity of our time, even in this helpless simplicity we can detect a desire to see and understand those who are out to save the world and those who desperately interfere with their efforts.

In this respect Hemingway's simplicity is often affected, not unfrequently vicious, and always hopeless.

Hemingway's perception of the world is keen to the extreme, but his understanding of it as reflected in his works is intentionally primitive. It is a sort of muscular and tactual perception. He feels the world as the weight of a trout pulling at the line. "Ag was cool and fresh in the hot night." "The grass was wet on his hands as he came out"—this to mean that Nick has just got out of the tent on all fours, in a word—"The snow was white." And this is not bad at all.

His crudity is not bad in itself either, the more so as it is only seeming: "If is awfully easy to be hard-boiled about everything in the daytime, but at night it is another thing." (*The Sun Also Rises*). "Hardboiled but mild-hearted"—Hemingway certainly is, and if the latter quality shows particularly in his novels, he seems to be trying to make up for it in the short stories. In most of these he is above all afraid of sounding sentimental and strives to be utterly simple, dry and affectedly clumsy. Let's open one of his books at randoms, and we are sure to bump into something like this:

"Let's get drunk," Bill said.
"All right," Nick agreed.
"My old man won't care," Bill said.

"Are you sure?" said Nick.
"I know it," Bill said.
"I'm a little drunk now," Nick said.
"You aren't drunk," Bill said.
He got up from the floor and reached for the whisky bottle."

After reading Hemingway's parodies of himself like the one just quoted we see how easy it must have been for Curtis H. Reider to ridicule his affected clumsiness.

Indeed, such a dialogue by Reider as:

Then I turned and saw Gerty.
"Hello," she said.
"Hello," Ernie said.
"Hello," I said. . . .
"Tweedleboom the rumdum," Joyce said.
"Hello, I said," Ernie said. . . .
"Sit down down," Gerty said.
I sat down. Ernie sat down. We all sat down.

is but a cliché of many similar passages from Ernie Hemingway and his forerunners. Stopping to look more attentively you will see that Hemingway's clumsiness and audacity hide the wary reticence of a man whose nerves are taut, a man shellshocked by life and ready to scream on the slightest provocation. He can talk of the simplest things alone and that only in undertones, if not a whisper. Even when all is boiling within him, even when like Jake he has just given away his love to another man or has hopelessly twisted his own life as his heroes so often do. At times this reserve becomes merely infantile simplification, or, as in the case of Krebs—downright crudity.

Hemingway's heroes are infantile American fashion. Theirs is not the weak-minded lisping of the "ramolis" admirers of pseudo-childish nonsense, it is simply the fancy of a strong and healthy youngster for the playthings of men—the pipe, the gun, the bottle, the fishing nets, the brothel, to a certain point the badge of an arditti. Which alone would not matter so much. What matters is that these whims blind him to the greater, the truer problems of life, that they screen out life itself by the blinders of self restriction, the devil-may-care tone, the resort to gastronomy. "Say, said John, "how about eating?" "All right," I said—this being the solution Hemingway professes to offer for many a truly tragic situation. What matters is that as time goes on we perceive more and more of the snobism of the too-subtle primitive in Hemingway's treatment of the hopelessly tangled complexity and the cynically stripped image of death. More and more often we see him present horror and perversion in pseudo-simple tones. And in the long run this simplicity turns into its reverse—into a desperate complication; Hemingway no longer deals directly and simply with things either simple or complex, but deliberately simplifies things making them yet more complicated.

Hemingway's simplicity is nothing new to the American reader who has his own tradition of honest simplicity. When reading the manifestoes of the imagists, the interpretations of American culture by Waldo Frank, Mumford and others one is ready to believe that the spirit of Thoreau is alive in American literature and his influence will yet bear fruit. In our days the wanton growth of the machine age, disfigured by the clutches of capitalism and the sinister ghost of philistine comfort and contentment have driven the American intellectual to Rousseauism, to intellectual vagabondage, to the simple life.

A liberation from abstract rhetoric and convention was advocated by the

American imagist poets as early as 1912. Even earlier than that Gertrude Stein made her first experiments with analytical prose. Immediately after the war Sherwood Anderson produced specimens of lyrical prose of the same pseudo-simple sort.

But imagist poetry was food for writers and poets only. Gertrude Stein was hopelessly unintelligible. To go through the boredom of reading her affected sing-song incantations was a hard job, they were a revelation of a new art fit only to be studied by professionals. Sherwood Anderson was obsessed by the mysticism of sex, was floundering in the swamp of static psycho-analysis, thus screening from sight his new, though not consciously realised intonation and manner. In Hemingway's writings one hears at times both the artless intonation of Sherwood Anderson, and the complicated primitive of Gertrude Stein, but the thing to be noted is that this technique, so deliberately and brilliantly assimilated, is part and parcel of Hemingway's intrinsic self. Nick Adams, still alive in Hemingway, wields this technique in an easy and natural way thus bringing the experiments of Gertrude Stein and the psycho-analytical studies of Sherwood Anderson into the sphere of genuine art.

Maybe it is just the Nick Adams part of Hemingway that is so much in arms against the bloodless scholastic simplicity of the neo-humanists, wearing the garb of antiquity and reactionary ideology; also against the cold-blooded virtuosity of that specialist in nightmares Faulkner and of his kind. In *Death in the Afternoon* Hemingway draws a definite line beyond which he leaves both "the long preserved sterility" of the "children of decorous cohabitation" and the prolific thrill-monger William Faulkner. Coming as it did in the post-war years, the simplicity of Hemingway was very much to the taste of American readers who, their eyes now open to the reality and deceit of the Wilsonian era and starving for simple truth, were delighted to welcome the precise, laconic, lucid and refreshing stories of Hemingway's first book, stories that, like the icy water from a brook, made your teeth ache. Hemingway became the pet and the prophet of the Lost Generation but nothing could make him swerve one inch from his lonely path. He did not care for permanent seclusion in the "ivory tower" of the esthetes; settling in it for a time only he cut the windows wider, hung the walls with fishing-nets, rods, hunting bags, boxing-gloves and banderillas; but he used it only as his working-room, and didn't stay in it long, for he was busy hunting and fishing and boxing and wandering all over the world. Still he didn't make a single step to meet the tastes of the readers of the *Saturday Evening Post.* He didn't lower his art. He didn't condescend to provide explanatory notes for his transparently-clear cryptograms.

Year after year Hemingway steadily elaborated his main lyrical theme, creating the peculiar indirectly personal form of his narrative (Soldier's Home, Now I Lay Me), sober on the surface, yet so agitated; and as the years went by, the reader began to perceive the tragic side of his books.

It became more and more apparent that his health was a sham, that he and his heroes were wasting it away. Hemingway's pages were now reflecting all that is ugly and ghastly in human nature, it became increasingly clear that his activity was the purposeless activity of a man vainly attempting not to think, that his courage was the aimless courage of despair, that the obsession of death was taking hold of him, that again and again he was writing of the end—the end of love, the end of life, the end of hope, the end of all. The bourgeois patrons and the middle-class readers tamed by prosperity,

were gradually losing interest in Hemingway. To follow him through the concentric circles of his individualistic hell was becoming a bit frightening and a bit tedious. He was taking things too seriously. In early days both critics and readers had highly admired the "romantic" strength, the "exotic" bull-fights, "the masculine athletic style;" but now Hemingway's moments of meditation, his too intent gazing at what is horrible, his self confessed weakness, the tenseness of his despair disturbed their balance, so essential to them "in the conditions of the crisis they were living through." They were not long in discovering new pets. They found the icily-academical Thorton Wilder and that cold virtuoso Faulkner more to their taste. Hemingway was perfectly aware of this coolness. In *Death in the Afternoon* we find a few significant dialogues with the patronising old lady. In the end of each chapter Hemingway entertains her with stories and talk. At first the old lady is interested and asks quite a number of questions; but by and by she gets bored with Hemingway's professionally honest attitude to the cruel Spanish sport and his too frank exposition of its seamy side. She makes faces and begs to be told something "amusing yet instructive." Hemingway makes her listen to a chapter of his "Natural History of the Dead." In answer to a similar request from the "jolly critic"—

> *Why do you frown? Now leave this freakish strain*
> *And with gay songs the people entertain*—

Pushkin said in his "A Joke"—*Look what a view is there* and proceeded to draw a nihilist picture of the bare and stripped country-side. Hemingway's cruel parody of "A familiar history of the birds"—his blood-curdling Natural History of Cannon-Fodder is in its way still more nihilistic.

On hearing it to the end the old lady acidly remarks: "This is not amusing at all. You know I like you less and less the more I know you," and soon she disappears for good from the pages of *Death in The Afternoon* accompanied by the author's "aside." "What about the Old Lady? She's gone. We threw her out of the book finally. A little late you say. Yes, perhaps a little late."

Hemingway's latest books in which he has given up entertaining old ladies and is developing his main lyrical theme with a frightening seriousness are no longer enjoyed by old ladies, or critics or the bourgeois readers in general. A vacuum is forming about Hemingway. He has squared his accounts with the philistine, has given a good dressing down to the Neo-humanist esthetes; he hasn't the courage to join the ranks of his former brothers in arms—now "proletarians of art"—for they have taken upon themselves the tremendous and for him unbearable task of saving the world. Solitude, a path through the vacuum—lion hunting, dwelling on morbid subjects, the motto: *Winner Take Nothing*. And we see the book thus entitled met with indifference by the critics and readers and with a sense of alarm by those who are fond of Hemingway and realise which way he is tending. And it is exactly "the proletarians of art" whom the crisis has taught many a lesson that realised it most painfully. The erstwhile esthetes are now members of writers' committees; they have visited the mining districts of Kentucky, they have received a piece of first hand knowledge of the theory and practice of class-struggle. It is the first time that the "proletarians of art" have clearly understood that class struggle is no "idle invention" of Karl Marx's, that it is bound to draw them in and to grind them between its mill-stones. And having understood that much, many of them have decided to cast their lot with the real prole-

tariat, with the working class: their first step was to change from non-social esthetes to radicals. And for these who had once been in the same camp with Hemingway, his books acquire a new value, that of a document fixing and condemning the wrong course that brought the writer to an impasse. For this class of readers Hemingway's books are a warning of the peril that threatened their own artistic growth. They are a memento that in our time even a perfectly sound man is in danger of social and artistic decay if he follows the individualistic way and remains within the confines of bourgeois society; that new courses and a new way out of the impasse are now to be sought.

First the pet of the American youth that had seen the war at the front or in the rear,—then the prophet of the "lost generation" and the impertinent favorite of his bourgeois patrons—then a maniac alarming with his growing unrest and finally a vicious degenerate and a bogey for some, and for others —a man in supreme distress, sending out SOS signals. This is how from far away we picture the evolution of Hemingway in the eyes of his American readers.

Is there really no way out of the impasse to which Hemingway has come? His writings of the last years are few and strained, or else extremely special, such as his treatise on bull fighting. Another circle has come to completion. The question is which way Hemingway will turn now. Will it be another concentric circle of his individual hell or a step up leading from under the ground to the open spaces of realism to which he is obviously tending. In the story "Fathers and Sons" there is a promise of a novel about his father and his own boyhood. Even if in writing it he should embrace the course of naive autobiographism as so many American writers have done, his craftsmanship, applied to simple and well-known material is in itself a pledge of success: and one might "wish him luck, and hope that he will keep writing," a wish he vainly expects from his bourgeois critics; still writing not about Death, alone, but about work and craft and life as well.

The Nick Adams in Hemingway is an incorrigible realist. He can stand no lie or sham—either in life or in art.

"If a man writes clearly enough any one can see if he fakes. If he mystifies to avoid a straight statement, which is very different from breaking so-called rules of syntax or grammar to make an effect which can be obtained in no other way, the writer takes a longer time to be known as a fake and other writers who are afflicted by the same necessity will praise him in their own defence." (*Death in the Afternoon).*

Hemingway himself, when he finds it necessary, has courage to break the traditional intonations and forms. He knows every device of his writer's trade to perfection but in this case he is an idealist like his Mexican gambler, who unfortunately for himself loves the risk of an honest game for its own sake and "suffers great losses thereby," at least in the opinion of the orthodox modernist innovators, who don't seem to relish Hemingway's taste for intelligible simplicity.

When necessary he knows no fear or compunction whatever. No theme however risqué or repulsive can become obscene when handled in his straightforward and precise manner. And this first of all because he doesn't wallow in it. Hemingway's indecency is either an experienced nightmare which he must put on paper in order to get rid of it or else a deliberate insult at all the old and young ladies and gentlemen that turn up their noses at the Chicago and Verdun stockyards alike. He points at what he feels must be pointed at and does it straightforwardly. "So far, about morals, I know

only that what is. Moral is what you feel good after and what is immoral is what you feel bad after."

But the trouble is that his courage is limited and in some fields as for instance the social one, deliberately so; his values are as profoundly sceptical and cynical as bourgeois society itself.

A bull has gored a picador's horse and the entrails hang down between its legs in a blue bunch, while blood pumps from the gored belly. "I wish they didn't have the horse part"—Hemingway makes one of the spectators say. "They are not important"—his companion answers, "after a while you never notice anything disgusting." Hemingway's sight is confined to his walled in world. He is wearing blinders.

When in his first book he makes an attempt at sketching the portrait of a Hungarian revolutionist you hardly recognise Hemingway, so flat the result is. But within his chosen field he is invulnerable.

He knows how to name things, how to make us feel them, how to reveal new features in them. His books can teach you the technique of trout fishing, skiing or boxing, bullfighting and above all—the trade of a writer.

"The Old Newsman" Hemingway relates that in the days of the Greco-Turkish war "his correspondent's output—something on this order: 'Kemal inswards unburned Smyrna guilty Greeks,' was to appear as, copyrighted by Monumental News Service, 'Mustapha Kemal in an exclusive interview today with the correspondent of the Monumental News Service denied vehemently that the Turkish forces had any part in the burning of Smyrna. The city, Kemal stated, was fired by incendiaries in the troops of the Greek rear guard before the first Turkish patrols entered the city,' " you could almost believe that Hemingway is unconsciously comparing his crisp and weighty stammer to the trite academical verbosity of Booth Tarkington & Co. Like Hemingway the reporter of the olden days, Hemingway the writer is now sending us telegraphic versions of his stories. And back of the sober and dark grotesque of his puzzling text you often hear a cry of despair or at least a signal of coming disaster.

This newsman, unlike the free and easy know-nothings of the editorial offices, is very exigent to himself.

"The trouble with our former favorite is that he started his education too late. There is no time for him now, to learn what a man should know before he will die . . . First you have to know the subject; then you have to know how to write. Both take a lifetime to learn." ("Old Newsman Writes")

Hemingway takes up an extremely honest stand with regard to his material, he spares no pains in order to approach it closely just as the brave and scrupulous matador is not afraid to work "close to the bull." This is adequately illustrated by his depressingly-conscientious treatise on bull fighting. At first it seems a pity that in order to master a subject like that so much labor should have been wasted. But then you remember the remarkable though peculiar literary qualities of *Death in the Afternoon.* You remember that it was while studying bullfighting that Hemingway found the material for many an unforgettable page in his other works, you remember the description of the fiesta in *The Sun Also Rises.*

And you see that to be able to produce these pages he was bound to go through the strenuous laboratory work which he describes on page 10 of his treatise: *Death in the Afternoon:* I was trying to write . . . mentally shut his eyes.

Hemingway is reserved and frugal—he keeps to the strict self-discipline of the exacting master. He is never tired of pruning off all that can be dispensed

with: convention, embellishment, rhetoric, leaving only what is essential and indispensable. You won't find one ounce of "metaphorical fat" in the prose of this sportsman. You won't find more than one image or simile in a whole story, sometimes in a whole novel.

Hemingway knows how to be brief. In his story "The Killers" he might easily have told at great length what offense it was the obliging fellows had come to avenge or how they ran Ole Andreson from town to town, from state to state. But Hemingway has no wish to do so and produces a theory to explain why he usually drops a number of links that go to make his stories. See *Death in the Afternoon* page 183 ("If a writer of prose. . . . . hollow places in his writing.")

He has no faith in the power of the word. Whatever you say and however you say it you will express nothing anyway. A good formula for this idea that Hemingway never put into words is Tyutchev's line. "Each thought when utter'd, is a lie." (Silentium).

The application of this theory is Hemingway's method of using the strictly worded hint, the combination of precision and laconicism, of *demi-mot* and *mot juste;* it is the canonization of expressive suggestions that he uses to avoid the necessity of either giving up the world for good or definitely accepting it. He doesn't adhere to the pure keys of the literary "well-tempered Clavichord". He is in search of new harmonies, unstable yet convincing, of novel means of expression by hints, by merely fixing external gestures and situations. Whole stories are nothing but a euphemism, the entire story "Hills Like White Elephants" for instance, pivoting on one unspoken word

The awkward tone of everyday talk, halting and hesitating, is the best way to tell of an intimacy about to be broken, or of the increasingly painful feeling of life and love going, with the sensation that "we are cut of it all," and that all that is left is "look at things, and try new drinks." The talk is over. The low mild-looking wave has passed leaving nothing but a swell, but somewhere at the shore it will turn into a fierce surf. And it will catch up the boat and hurl it on the rocks.

Only a writer of Hemingway's rank can thus convey the most intimate, the most subtle moods by an accumulation of external details; not by the word which is powerless, but by an opposition of words; not by directly expressed thought which is inexpressible, but by an impulse, by pulling a bell that is to reverberate later in the reader's mind; by a scrupulous selection of external and trivial things, i. e. in fact by straining to restrict his power to see.

Even the reader, used to the obviously unintelligible style of Joyce or Gertrude Stein wants a key to solve Hemingway's puzzles simple though they look on the surface. Even to him this puzzling question may occur: "What's it all about?" Hemingway supplies the key though it is not easy to find it. The accumulation of detail in his stories looks unnecessary—naturalistic until suddenly you perceive a phrase thrown in as if inadvertently blend the "unnecessary" details into a single logical chain thus creating a complete and very essential background. The main theme shows through the trivial talk and it is in most cases an uncanny and significant theme.

On careful reading you are sure to find in most of Hemingway's works such a key disclosing the hints and the implications of this or that story. Take the unspoken word "abortion" in "White Elephants"; or the casual remark "You oughtn't to ever do anything too long" (An Alpine Idyll), or "He didn't want it. It wasn't worth it . . . While the boys are all settling down" (Soldier's Home). and so on. But in their own way the average readers who

fail to find this key and reproach Hemingway with writing on nothing are still right. So are the shrewder readers who accuse him of deliberately veiling his meaning. Hemingway is indeed to be blamed, for he doesn't care for being easily understood, he wishes to meet his reader on equal terms, to lift him up to the heights of his own shrewd art.

The same theory of expressive suggestion leads Hemingway to project the dénouement of his stories into the future as if expecting the reader himself to supply the end. And this is certainly not the right thing to offer to bored readers like the old lady we have already met; the natural question for them to ask is, "And what then?" On hearing out one of the stories the old lady drops the disappointed remark:

> "And is that all of the story? Is there not to be what we called in my youth a wow at the end?"—Ah, madame, it is years since I added the wow to the end of a story. Are you sure you are unhappy if the wow is omitted? (*Death in the Afternoon*).

The typical American story with a plot, like those of Aldrich, O'Henry and others may be compared to a box of surprises, to a thrilling chess game with an intriguing opening, a tense mid-play and a brilliant and unexpected end-play. We are sure to see their denouement for the social function of this sort of story is to captivate, divert and lull to sleep whether, by admiration or pity, by genuine harmony or by harmony that is false. Now the surprises that Hemingway's stories contain are not in their plot but in their psychological development. They are rather like chess problems—the chessmen being practically brought up to the decisive point but the problem ending in what looks like a stalemate. Actually however they imply a mate and in most cases the mate to the hero is so well prepared dialectically that any trifle can supply the decisive impetus and once the impetus is given and things have been set in motion, the mate is inevitable at whatever move the author chooses to stop the game.

The social function of such stories is not to solve or even to set any questions but rather to evoke them in the reader's mind. They convey the unrest and confusion that obsess the author and there can be no harmonious solution. Most of the stories break off at half-time. In "The Killers" for instance, the chessmen are shown in the "endplay," without any digressions into their past and the game begins with the check to the hero. Any moment he may turn up in Henry's lunch room to meet the instantaneous mate. But the game is artificially prolonged; unlike the traditional "murder story" this tale has no apparent ending although the end is clearly foreseen. Whatever will happen—whether or not Ole Andreson is ultimately run down by the Killers—he is a finished man, the passive anticipation of death has already killed him.

Hemingway has really learned to construct his stories. His very short stories are not loose sketches but sometimes *very* short novels.

He has parted with metaphor only to pay the more attention to composition. "Prose is architecture, not interior decoration, and the Baroque is over."

There is a solid backbone to all of his stories. At about the time when Dos Passos wrote *Manhattan Transfer*, Hemingway, too, introduced into American literature—the type of book interspersed and held together by impressionist epigraphs.

At first sight there seems to be no connection whatever between the epigraphs of *In Our Time*, and the basic stories that go to make that book, but

then you begin to perceive that a certain connection actually exists between them, sometimes based on analogy and sometimes on contrast.

For instance in Chapter I what might connect the story and the epigraph is the theme of expected and much dreaded death and the different ways men find to escape the fear. Darkness for the adjutant; death itself for the Indian.

In Chapter VII in the epigraph the shock of war and a fit of naive religious feeling imbibed in early days; in the story—Krebs feeling an alien at home as a result of the shock and a conscious revolt against the false prayer that is being imposed on him.

In Chapter XII—the acme of craftsmanship and technique—a praise to bull fighting and skiing.

In Chapter XIV and XV—the greatest contrast imaginable between the grim epigraph and the idyllic story.

The book as a whole is held together by the introductory epigraph and the tail-piece. In the epigraph the author's American friends question him about Europe and the French girls. In the tail-piece Greeks want to go to America; an ironical transfusion and the emphasised vanity of meeting aspirations.

The same function of compositional clamp is borne by the identical setting recurring three times in Hemingway's triptych "Homage to Switzerland" and by the numerous parallelisms in stories such as "Soldier's Home" and "Cat in the Rain."

But besides serving as backbones these persistent repetitions of external details fulfill a psychological function as well. They are a means for the author to reflect in his style the utter boredom of the philistine Eden: "I want a cat" (Cat in the Rain, "He didn't want it. It wan't worth it (Soldier's Home), "Would you like a drink of something" (Homage to Switzerland). and similar intense reiterations recur again and again taking the place of psychological analysis.

The leit-motif is the principle on which Hemingway builds all of his works, or rather all of his art. Hemingway's leit-motif is either his general basic theme—the theme of war, the theme of the end of human relationships, the theme of death and void, or else it is the special backbone of this or that work. Thus repeated fragment of the phrases "everybody was drunk," "going along the road in the dark" hold together the first epigraph of the book *In Our Time*. Thus the story "Cross Country Snow" seemingly so simple is held together by the parallelism—the pregnant girl at the inn and Nick's pregnant wife—and by the basic theme of free snow-swept spaces, all of it being but a prologue to the impending complication—the skiing trip over, back to the States, the kid born—farewell to freedom. The mournful "there ain't anything to do now"—is the burden of "Killers"; so is the ominous sound of the rain in "Cat in the Rain" and especially in *A Farewell to Arms*. Hemingway uses this method with great skill, but even here the skill turns into weakness. His themes are few, they break into fragments.

Book after book brings him to his starting point, the concentric circles lead back to the underground. "An Alpine Idyll" repeats the motifs of "Cross Country Snow," "White Elephants" shows the explosion of what you felt brewing underneath the inaction of "Cat in the Rain." The theme of the loss of things most dear, the theme of death is to be found in nearly every story. True, each time the theme recurs, it gains in depth and intensity but to break free of the enchanted circle either the force or the wish is lacking.

There was a time when Hemingway knew how to laugh. Let us remember for instance the softly-humorous scene, when Nick Adams thoroughly drunk but thoroughly practical converses with Bill on a "high plane" in the story "The Three Day Blow," or the amusing tippler Peduzzi in "Out of Season." But as the years go by we see Hemingway more and more often, basing his restless stories on a pointed contrast, verging on a ghastly grotesque.

If they still have any humor left it is a direful and morbid humor. We may say of Hemingway what Victor Hugo once said of Baudelaire. *Il a creé un nouveau frisson,*—the shudder at the simple horror of everyday existence.

In line with his book *Men Without Women* where female characters indeed appear in only two of the stories, Hemingway writes a book about the poignant love affair between the mutilated Jake and a woman of Brett's temperament.

Even in his earliest stories he liked to oppose the keen sensation of life to the sudden intrusion of peril or death. (Indian Camp); his later stories remind you more and more often of grim jokes, suffice it to recall "The Killers," "An Alpine Idyll," "Homage to Switzerland."

Most of all Hemingway is interested in people. "The hardest thing in the world to do is to write straight honest prose on human beings." He makes but a sparing use of settings giving only as much as is necessary for action to develop. As a rule his landscape has a psychological function to fulfill. In "An Alpine Idyll" Hemingway wants to show people incapable of sustained purposeful effort, people who seek to avoid questions that cannot be solved, who want to be lulled to sleep. And we see all the setting, every detail of it taking part in the lulling.

You are tired of skiing, blinded by the snow and the sun, hypnotised by the sawmill you see from the window with the saw constantly moving back and forth, by the drowsy crows, and by the sun reflected in empty glasses; you are stunned by the appalling anecdote about the lantern in the teeth of the dead woman and dulled by the dinner with its inevitable dose of wine; and from a certain point of view all this is not so bad for it leaves no time to think.

The landscape in *A Farewell to Arms* is in itself an acting character—it is the ominous rain. In other cases it is the Maritza "running yellow almost up to the bridge," and the rain again, as a background for the stream of refugees flowing along the muddy roads. Or a car-window view of France in the story "A Canary for One," the arrivals and departures of which remind you by the laconic and impetuous manner in which they are presented of similar arrivals and departures in the books of John Dos Passos. But in the rare cases when Hemingway develops his method of description to its full length it is apt to tire the unhardened reader. After following Nick four of five times down the hill or passing a dozen bends of the river in search of trout you begin to feel as tired as Nick himself, much as you admire the author's perfect precise manner of fixing the stream of perceptions.

Hemingway's art is as contradictory as his nature. He stubbornly adheres to his creative principles with no guiding idea to relieve them, no high purpose to justify them, no faith in victory to quicken them. So he often slips into a parody of himself, he comes to an impasse. Art for art's sake only serves to reveal and emphasise the void and desolation that have formed within him.

3

Summing up we see in Hemingway: his affirmation of life and a torpor at the vision of death, his fullblooded pessimism and his restrained despair, the cynical sincerity of many of his pages and his sceptical Catholicism, his skillful clumsiness and complicated simplicity, the tautological brevity of his dialogues and the precision of his hints, finally his mirthless spasmodic smile—all this tangle of conflicts has its roots in the tragic disharmony *mens morbida in corpore sano,* the mental discord that threatens to bring about the disintegration of the body and its decay.

A latent supply of reticence and of optimism not yet fully spent distinguishes Hemingway from the "writers of hatred," "engineers of death." There is not much in him to be compared to the blaspheming Celine sadist frenzy and his affected longing for nonentity. Hemingway merely looks unblinking at what awaits us all—at death. He has seen the front. He knows the taste of death too well to relish it. And perhaps it is Aldington, that other, even more harassed and sophisticated man from the front who of all the writers of this group may be placed nearest to him.

And then again he may have moments of envy at the quiet ironical hopelessness of T. S. Elliot who has taught him more than merely quoting Andrew Marvell.

The orthodox innovators have for Hemingway a feeling of wary distrust. They particulary dislike the taste this rebellious disciple shows for intelligible simplicity. "He looks modern, but smells of museum," says Gertrude Stein who on the whole is very fond of him. Hemingway has known a passing infatuation for decadent art, but he realises perfectly well that it is impossible to approach the problems set and solved by the classics if one's method and possibilities are those of decadent art.

Is it not this that he means when speaking of the modern style in bull-fighting: "In the old days the bulls were usually bigger than they are now; they were fiercer, more uncertain, heavier, and older. They had not been bred down to a smaller size to please the bullfighters, and they were fought at the age of four and a half to five years instead of three and a half to four and a half years. Matadors often had from six to twelve years of apprenticeship as banderilleros and as novilleros before becoming formal matadors. They were mature men, knew bulls thoroughly, and faced bulls which were brought to the highest point of physical force, strength, knowledge of how to use their horns and general difficulty and danger. The whole end of the bullfight was the final sword thrust, the actual encounter between the man and the animal, what the Spanish call the moment of truth, and every move in the fight was to prepare the bull for that killing. . . . It is the decadence of the modern bull that has made modern bullfighting possible. It is a decadent art in every way and like most decadent things it reaches its fullest flower at its rottenest point, which is the present. It is impossible, day in and day out, to fight bulls that are really bulls, huge, strong, fierce and fast, knowing how to use their horns and old enough so that they have their full growth, with the technique that had been developed, starting with Juan Belmonte, in modern bullfighting. It is too dangerous." (*Death in the Afternoon*).

While fully appreciating the high skill of the modern matador and the modern decadent poet he himself keeps aloof of the tasks the decadents are out to solve. In his best works he has shown that he can be genuine, simple and integral almost to the point of classicism. But the people he depicts are broken and crippled by life however simple and realistic the method of their presentation. They are in constant search of some support, even if it is only unsuccessful technical Catholicism and what they find is the mental discord, the scepticism and nihilism of a Mr. Frazer. Hemingway wants to see the world as a whole, in that particular tiny part of it on which he is working. But he cannot achieve this aim by fusing the scattered

things he knows into a single unbroken world philosophy. The necessary illusion is created by a gradual chopping off of all the roots holding him to the ground and by a seclusion in the stone cell of the "Ivory Tower."

The balance of the half-healthy man is permanently disturbed, the man has torn himself away from life, he is uprooted and drying up. All that was good in him turns into evil. Art is there, it has been achieved but there seems to be nothing for him to speak about except himself and the void within him. Hemingway's fate is a tragical illustration of what awaits the stragglers, those individuals who have lost their way through the period of transition. In his books Hemingway seems to be more and more hopelesssly admitting that if he should follow this course he will really take nothing even though he win. Hemingway is now facing Flaubert's old problem—the never ending torture of dissatisfaction on the way to achieving art for art's sake. Although he has never formulated his doubts as to his art, or the course he is following, these doubts have for a long time been persistently materialising in his works, in the recurring images of impotence of body and soul and of nihilistic scepticism.

In some of Hemingway's latest works we detect signs showing that for him "the time of stern maturity is nearing" (Bagritski). A mental crisis is at hand, a crisis in his outlook. Thoughts are beginning to obsess Hemingway. True, so far these are but the ravings of sick Mr. Frazer suffering from insomnia, but nevertheless it is a step forward as compared to the nights when that same Mr. Frazer having silenced his radio to a whisper was learning to listen to its murmur without thinking. Now he thinks. Naturally, enough, his thoughts turn on all sorts of dope. We have no delusions whatever.

It would be hard to expect a precise and consistent way of thinking of a man who has just said, "Many times I don't follow myself with pleasure." But time will not wait. Let Mr. Frazer not imagine that the nihilistic nightmares that haunt his sleepless nights are "only insomnia that many must have." The way from the trenches to the confessional, from the bullfighting arena to the ring where even the winner takes nothing, from Big Two Hearted River to a Clean Well-lighted Place—this is indeed a terrible way. The way of Stavrogin that we know so well from Dostoyevski. Let Mr. Frazer not put too much faith in his failing powers.

And to conclude with:—reading Hemingway is a bitter and instructive business. His problem is to us an illustration of how the bourgeois machine uses first-class human raw material to turn out perfectly manufactured and skilfully disguised human waste—a consummate literary craftsman, a perfect sportsman and globe trotter, a man reduced to stupor by having gazed too long at the repelling and yet fascinating mask of Nada.

Sergei Dinamov

The Satire and Humor of Mark Twain

A Soviet View of an American Classic

For decades the world knew Mark Twain as a writer whose works bubbled over with humor. And for decades the world remained profoundly ignorant concerning the real Mark Twain; for his sparkling, flashing, rumbling humor hid the frightful grimace of a man who in private confessed: "I degrade myself—I force myself to play the part of an official jester. This is terrible. I cannot bear it any longer." The irrepressible laughter is interrupted by sudden spasms; the smile of the humorist fades away; the ridiculous is tranformed into the terrible. Yes, the world did not know and does not yet know the "fun-maker," Mark Twain. Twain's biographers love to cite from his letter, written after the death of his daughter: "My temperament has never allowed me to remain in poor spirits for a long time." It is possible that personal misfortunes actually affected him but slightly, but we are not interested in narrowly biographical episodes. The point is that Mark Twain's life and work afford a most striking example of the manner in which bourgeois reality breaks the genuine artist; degrades him, forces him to submit to that which should be destroyed, assent to that which should be denied, keep silent concerning that which should be cried aloud in the face of all mankind; disavow that for which he should struggle. The life of the "fun-maker" Twain was a tragic one.

"In the evening," wrote his daughter in 1886, "daddy and I went to the library, where he told me that he wanted to write only one book—write it or die. And he wrote even more than he intended, and shut it up in a safe and has not had it published." Twain wanted to publish it, but he could not, for in this "secret" work he assumed the role of a satirist, of a wrecker of bourgeois foundations and consequently of his own diverting works and his fame, for bourgeois America never forgives anyone the crime of being a genuine satirist.

For forty years Mark Twain kept hidden the manuscript of his *Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven*—from this same fear of bourgeois public opinion. In one of his stories he drew a realistic picture of the priesthood. This story he handed over for approval to his permanent literary advisers—his wife and the famous critic and novelist, the first president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, William Dean Howells. This "council" would of course not permit the publication of the story. Twain translated it into German, but it was of no avail: the story never saw the light. That is what lay behind the bitter remark: "He who writes for the press fears the public; but he fears himself even more; for he cannot believe himself." His biographer, Paine, cites a short note written by Twain, in which he remarks that it is best not to write for others: "In one's letters one can write with complete honesty and freedom—if one does not show them to anyone else." Only through random scraps of letters, notes and reminiscences can we restore the portrait of this melancholy humorist, for only the future will know the autobiography of Mark Twain.

In Twain's book, *The Mysterious Stranger,* published only after his death, Satan declares to the hero: "You suffer from lack of courage." Mark Twain

spoke of this shortcoming more than once. But the problem was not merely one of the personal qualities of the writer, but rather of the position of his class—the petty bourgeoisie.

II

Mark Twain's first book, *The Celebrated Leaping Frog of Calaveras County*, appeared in 1867. The sixties and seventies of the last century were the years of the rapid rise of American capitalism. This rise was accelerated by the fact that the Civil War of the early sixties had on the one hand retarded this rise, and on the other determined it; inasmuch as it destroyed the economic system of the South, which was founded on slavery and had constituted an impediment to "normal" capitalist development. The country came under the control of one central government, which was in essence the "Execution Committee" of Capitalism.

New banks sprang up; grandiose speculations were executed; new railroad lines were built. Around these arose an "orderly" system of fraud and swindling (misappropriation of immense areas of government land, the granting of huge subsidies without the slightest basis, the issue of worthless stock, etc.). New branches of industry arose; trade rapidly developed. Mark Twain neatly dubbed this period "The Gilded Age." And in reality it was just that —"gilded" and not golden. The precipitous advance of capitalism resulted in intellectual stagnation, narrow mindedness, cultural constriction; for it signified the suppression of all that was socially vital, of all that breathed the spirit of revolt—for capitalism no longer found it necessary to fight with feudalism, in comparison with which it constitutes a historically progressive form.

In his book, *Plain Americans*, the critic Canby takes a leaf from the Calvinist ethic of life, calling it "the backbone of Puritan civilization." There we read: "In all the situations of life the Christian should hourly endeavor to show that he is a godly, righteous man, able to save himself from the fires of Hell only through his god-given sense of the divine." This pompous and cloudy statement meant, in essence, that religious doctrine played a dominant role in the American scheme of things; that no backslidings from that which was generally accepted could be tolerated; that public opinion should cut off any dissenting free-thinker; that no protest against the bourgeois scheme of things would be supported by a single hundred percent American. Horace Fletcher, who formulated a theory of the optimistic attitude towards reality, rephrased this religious thesis in practical language: "Optimmism can be prescribed like medicine . . . The business man can make practical use of it, apply it in his affairs and profits thereby. Optimism means ease, pleasantness, utility and profit." For "the gilded age" optimism became a philosophy of life which dominated men's dispositions. Don't look at the dark side of things; see nothing unpleasant; don't protest; be submissive: regard life with a smile—such was the device of "the gilded age." William Dean Howells, that, in the words of Twain, "critical court of the last instance, from whose rulings there is no appeal in our country," made this "philosophy" the basis of all art, propounding the thesis that "the most optimistic views on life are the most American." This thesis became the basis of the so-called school of "tender realism"—realism without real contradictions; realism without satire; realism without protest.

Bernard Shaw once remarked that America had created only two real men on genius: Edgar Allan Poe and Mark Twain. Let us leave to Shaw's

conscience the soundness of this statement (for we cannot forget Walt Whitman, a more significant artist than either Poe or Twain), and let us consider that which Poe and Twain have in common—their retreat from the contemporary scene. This may sound rather strange, for there exists a tradition that Twain was preeminently an artist of his day. Paine, for example, affirms that Twain "more than anyone else lived in the present." This is both true and untrue: every artist lives in the present, although there should not be the slightest indication of it in his work; for this very turning to the past is caused by his inability either to come to terms with his environment or to denounce it.

"The tacit, colossal lie of 'nation' is the foundation and ally of tyranny, shame, inequality and dishonesty, which grieve the peoples, and it should be assailed with word and stone. But let us be discreet and leave it to someone else to begin," once remarked Mark Twain—that Twain who wrote in a letter in 1887 that whereas in 1871 he had considered himself a Girondist, he now regarded himself a sans-culotte.

This "not a colorless, characterless sans-culotte, but a Marat," this "Marat" Twain nevertheless left it to others "to begin" while he himself multiplied this "lie of nation" with his amusing stories, his professional optimism. The contemporary scene weighed heavily upon him, and to the very end he could not reconcile himself to it. But no more could he attack it, for he was organically bound to the conservative layers of the petty bourgeoisie. Such was the genesis of a number of works in which he escaped from his environment, departing into distant ages and localities. *Life on the Mississippi*—America's past, so romantic, full of stormy episodes and strong men. *A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court*—medieval England, *The Prince and the Pauper*—15th century England, *Joan of Arc*—14th century France, *The Mysterious Stranger*—16th century Austria.

Here Mark Twain raises himself to the dignity of a satirist; he is merciless in his description of the barbarism, coarseness and cruelty of feudalism; he comes to the defence of peasants and servants, and we can understand his condemnatory pathos; because capitalism attacked feudalism professedly for the welfare of all mankind; because the bourgeoisie, fighting for its class interests, proclaimed itself the emancipator of man and citizen, although immediately after the fall of feudalism it showed that by "man and citizen" it meant—the bourgeois. Twain's class affiliations permitted him to assume here the role of a satirist. But to become a satirist of the contemporary scene would have necessitated a shift to other class positions. Letters, leaves from Twain's note book and other documents indicate that Twain recognized the necessity of turning the sharp fire of satire upon his environment. Moreover, the conservatism of the petty bourgeoisie was already being put to a test, for the crisis of 1893 shattered "the gilded age," while even earlier, in 1886, a number of working class actions had taken place. The development of class contradictions inevitably brought American writers into conflict with bourgeois society.

Such, for instance, were: Stephen Crane, who provoked the loud outcry of the conservative press by his realistic portrayals of the Civil War (*The Red Badge of Courage*) and the plight of women (*Maggie, A girl of the Streets*), Frank Norris, author of the novels, *The Octopus* and *The Pit,* and Hamlin Garland, who, like Norris, described the misery of the farming population. Mark Twain was not a member of this pleiad of petty bourgeois radicals. But his story *The Man Who Corrupted Hadleyburg* appeared at just this time—1899. This story indicates what Mark Twain might have been

had he dared to be himself; had he dared to cut himself free from his class as did Theodore Dreiser.

Likewise satirical in character is the story *Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven,* the manuscript of which he kept hidden for forty years. In this story Twain ridicules the ordinary conceptions of heaven. He brings thither inequality and servility; *i.e.* he denies that which the church affirms. Lastly, in the novel *Puddin'head Wilson* appear a number of satirical portraits, in which the stagnation of the American provinces, their narrowmindedness and intolerance to all social innovations are depicted. Through his mouthpiece, Puddin'head Wilson, he makes several extremely passionate comments on the bourgeois scheme of things.

But Twain himself dulls the edge of his weapons; he neutralized the effect of his satire. Thus, in his most radical novel, *Puddin'head Wilson,* he begins with all manner of fortuitous incidents, chiefly of a detective story character, and in conclusion all contractions are made to take on an accidental and unessential character. By revealing the attitude of the small town philistines towards Wilson, who frightens them by his unconvention ality, Twain exposes their dullness and narrow-mindedness. But there is the inevitable happy ending. Wilson receives recognition; the unjust treatment which was accorded to him is shown to have been based on error—and satire degenerates into humor. This is not accidental. The petty bourgeoisie, as such, has never been able to undertake an independent, active struggle against capitalism. Only when fighting shoulder to shoulder with the proletariat does it become strong. And in America such a union has only been effected now, around the Communist Party.

III

Van Wyck Brooks, author of the interesting biography, *The Ordeal of Mark Twain,* considers Twain's most "honest" books to be those extraordinary twins, *Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven, Puddin'head Wilson,* and lastly, *The American Pretender*. This last is to a certain degree a continuation of the novel *The Gilded Age,* which treats of an earlier period, immediately following the Civil War.

In *The American Pretender* Twain develops the struggle between two systems: the aristocratic, in the person of the family of Earl Rossmore, and the bourgeois-democratic, in the person of the former's American relations and a large number of other characters. At first Twain is silent concerning his hostility to certain aspects of bourgeois democracy; the young Earl Rossmore and other characters speak in the most flattering terms of the equality of all before the law; Twain turns Rossmore into a typical ideological representative of bourgeois democracy, and refrains from introducing his own "corrections."

America is described to the young earl as a democratic paradise; where all are equal; where each is free; where genuine freedom of speech exists. But, journeying there, he becomes convinced that American equality is merely a surface form of inequality; that by freedom, in America, is meant freedom for the rich; that the dollar is the driving force of "democracy." The free press, he finds, is a fiction; for the press is bought and sold like a commodity. And Rossmore discards his ideals and returns to his castle.

Mark Twain likewise exposes the lie of democracy in the person of the Sellers Family. We see them fawning before the aristocracy, dreaming of

titles and distinctions, ready to exchange all the blessings of bourgeois democracy for aristocratic advantages. Similar treatment is extended to a number of other characters, notably in the exposure of the bourgeois interior of the "class conscious" worker Barrow.

But Mark Twain could not help neutralizing the effect of these radical utterances of opinion. Having depicted these or other negative traits of aristocratic and bourgeois society, he then cancels, so to speak, one defect with another; for, in the last analysis, he finds in both these social groups certain universal human attributes: kindness, idealism, tenderness, ability, manhood, perseverance. He crosses these two lines—the aristocratic and the bourgeois, and unites them, ending the novel with the inevitable marriage and the happy pair.

Thus in this novel also, Twain remained true to himself and did not pass beyond the orbits of his class . . .

"Everyone, like the moon, has his dark side, which he reveals to no one," once said Mark Twain. We shall remember that side of Twain which was destroyed by bourgeois society, in creating the humorist and annihilating the satirist. At the price of his artistic downfall Twain purchased a place on the heights of fame. At the price of creative sterility he purchased the title of a "famous writer." For us his "dark" side is more valuable than the "lighted" one; for us that which died in him is dearer than the "living." It is possible to forget his laughter, but it is impossible to forget the blows of his satire.

Translated from the Russian by B. Keen

S. Eisenstein

Mei Lan-Fang and the Chinese Theatre

About a Noted Chinese Actor Who Visited Moscow

My introduction to the magnificent art of Mei Lan-fang was through the accounts of Charlie Chaplin, from whom I first heard an enthusiastic appreciation of the subject of this article.

I should like to begin my discussion of this artist, who has been our guest, by recalling one of the graceful, untrustworthy legends that cling about the origin of the Chinese Theatre; legends which abound in accounts of the infancy of any national theatre.

That is the legend of the seige of the town of P'int Ch'eng in the year 205 B. C. (with which is bound the legend concerning the origin of marionettes, although there are others of still greater antiquity).

The troops of the emperor took refuge in this town. They were besieged by Hunanese troops, whose commander, Mao-Tun, surrounded the town from three sides; entrusting the command of the troops besieging from the fourth side to his wife, Een-Shi. The besieged town began to feel hunger, want, and every possible privation. But the defender of the town, General Ching-Chen, succeeded in relieving it from the siege by a clever ruse. Learning that Een-Shi, the wife of Mao-Tun, was of an extremely jealous disposition, he ordered that a great number of wooden female figures, bearing a remarkable resemblance to living women, be prepared. These figures he distributed along that part of the wall which faced the soldiers under the command of the bellicose and jealous lady. By means of a clever mechanism, apparently a complicated system of strings, these figures were brought into action; dancing, moving, and executing graceful motions. Seeing them from afar, Een-Shi, naturally, took them for living women; women, moreover, of extremely seductive appearance. Aware of her husband's amatory inclinations, she began to fear that with the taking of the town his interests would soon shift in the newcomers' direction. This would have dealt a blow to the influence which Een-Shi exercised over her husband, and therefore, she immediately removed her troops from the walls of the town, thus breaking the ring of besiegers and saving the town.

Such is one of the legends dealing with the origin of marionettes. In due time their place was taken by actors, who long thereafter, bore the characteristic sobriquet of "living dolls."

I mention this legend in the manner of a prefatory word to the drama which Mei Lang-fang brought to us; to his artistry, which is bound up with the best and oldest traditions of the great theatrical art of China; which in its turn is indissolubly bound up with the marionettes and their characteristic dance. To the present day this dance preserves its imprint on the originality of Chinese stage movement. Mention of this legend is also relevant in that one of its characters enters into the group of types, unfamiliar to us, which Mei Lan-fang impersonated.

That character is the woman-strategist, the woman warrior. Mei Lan-fang played the role of the war-like maiden with the same unsurpassed perfection with which he represented lyrical feminine types. Such a play is *Mu-Lan in the Army,* in which, playing the title role, Mei Lan-fang depicts the

martial exploits of a girl who assumed the disguise of a warrior in order to take the place of her aged father in war.

The astonishing system and technique of the Chinese Theatre deserve more than a cataloguing of its conventions. They deserve at least, if nothing more, a careful consideration of its premises; an analysis of the ways of thought which produced these remarkable forms of expression. Numerous foreigners, for example, have been astonished by the fact that in Chinese theatres the spectators sit sideways, their faces directed towards long tables running perpendicularly from the end of the stage. But from the point of view of the ancient tradition, which held that the ear, and not the eye should be directed upon the stage, this is altogether proper. The theatregoer of those days went not so much to see the play as to hear it. A similar tradition once flourished and passed away in our country. It was a distinguishing feature of the Moscow Little Theatre during the period of its greatest development. Aged men still remember Ostrovski, who never viewed his own plays from the auditorium, but always listened to them from the wings, judging the excellence of the performances by the perfection with which the text was recited. Here, perhaps, is the place to mention one of Mei Lan-fang's greatest services.

Preserving the Art of the Ancient Theatre

In the most ancient period the performance was synthesized: an indissoluble bond existed between song and dance. Later a division took place. The drama began to base itself upon the vocal beginning and movement disappeared. The peculiarity mentioned above dates from this time. Mei Lanfang has restored the most ancient tradition. Studying the ancient stage craft this great artist, scholar and connoisseur of his national culture has returned to the craft of the actor its pristine synthetic character, reviving its tastefulness and complex union of movement with music and the splendor of ancient stage robes. But Mei Lan-fang is not a mere restorer. He has successfully united the perfected forms of the old tradition with fresh, living content. He has striven to broaden its thematic range in the direction of social problems. This is noted by George Kin-lang, who brought forward from Mei Lan-fang's repertory of several hundred plays a number of indications as to their subjects, dealing with the depressed social condition of women. Several deal with the battle against backwardness, religious superstitions and prejudices. These plays, performed in the ancient conventional style, but treating problems of contemporary characters, acquire an unusual sharpness and charm. In Mei Lan-fang's plays the theme of woman receives exhaustive treatment. Still another distinction of the artist is his ability to impersonate a variety of feminine types. A narrow specialization, confinement within the limits of one type, characterize the average actor. Mei-Lan-fang handles practically all types with equal perfection.

Not stopping there, he has brought a number of improvements to the traditional treatment of these types, all in complete and strict uniformity with their style. He impersonates equally well both basic stage feminine types, presenting the virtuous and distressed type, the lively, quick-witted, light-headed girl, as well as the evil-doer and intriguer. In general six main stage types are known to tradition.

1) Cheng-Tan—the type of good-hearted matron, faithful wife, virtuous daughter.

2) Huan-Tan—generally a younger woman than the above type; loose in

her ways, sometimes a house maid. In general, Cheng-Tan is a positive and virtuous type, and lyrical and melancholy elements predominate in her singing, while Huan-Tan is a young woman of doubtful character. Her role constitutes the play's center of gravity, in the liveliness and dash of the stage play.

3) Kuem Men-Tan—an unmarried girl, likewise a graceful, elegant and virtuous type.

4) Vu-Tan—unlike the above mentioned type, this is a heroic and warlike character—a woman-warrior and strategist.

5) Tsai-Tan—the heartless woman; an intriguer, often treacherous; a housemaid. Endowed with stage beauty, she is negative in her actions.

6) Lao-Tan—the type of aged woman; often the mother. Played with great feeling. The most realistic character of all.

In all these names occurs the hieroglyphic, denoting "Tan." Ordinarily this word is translated, "performer of the woman's role" or "he who impersonates women." Such a translation, however, does not at all give the implied meaning. The above cited Kin-lang strongly emphasizes that this denotation has a quite specific sense, excluding completely the conception of a naturalistic reproduction of feminine characters. It primarily denotes an extraordinarily conventional structure, which aims above all to create a definite, esthetically abstract image, stripped to the utmost of all that is incidental or personal. It aims to produce in the spectator esthetic satisfaction through the depiction of the idealized, abstract, generalized qualities of feminine charm. The naturalistic representation or reproduction of ordinary, life-like women is not part of its purpose. Here we come across the main peculiarity of the Chinese Theatre. Realistic (in its special sense) in content, treating not only the universally known episodes of history and legend, but also social, everyday problems, the Chinese Theatre is in form highly conventional, from the subtlest elements of character treatment to the most insignificant stage details. In fact, if we take from any description of the Chinese Theatre an inventory of its conventional elements, we shall see that each element bears that same imprint of original interpretation which is noted by Kin-lang in commenting on the approach to the impersonation of women's roles. "Each situation, each object is immutably abstract in its nature and often symbolic; pure realism is absent from the performance, and realistic situations are banned from the stage."

Symbolism in the Chinese Theatre

I shall cite a number of examples from the traditional attributes.

An oar may by itself signify an entire boat.

Ma-Pien—a horse whip. An actor holding a horsewhip in his hand is conceived to be riding on horseback. A brown horsewhip signifies a brown colored horse. White, black, fiery-colored whips signify horses of the corresponding color. The actions of mounting and dismounting from the horse are rendered by set, conventional gestures.

Ling-Chien—The messenger's arrow. In the past, when the military leader dispatched a messenger, he gave him an arrow as confirmation of the authenticity of the news which he bore. This action also signifies that the order should be executed with the speed of an arrow. From here the formula of handing over an arrow in dispatching a decree became a stage convention.

I could continue this enumeration for a long time.

More interesting are those exemples where an object can signify any num-

Mei Lan-Fang and the Stage Setting at the Moscow Performance

ber of things, depending upon its application. Such, for example, are the table, the chair, and the whisk of horsehair. Of these, the table, or Cho-Shzu, more than any other object, can signify the most unlike things. Now it is a tea-shop; now a dinner-table; now a court room; now an altar. When it is necessary to depict a character ascending a mountain or climbing over a wall, the same table is brought into service. The table is used in all positions —upright, on its side, upside down. The same is true of the chair, Ch-Shzu. When the chair lies on its side, Tao-i, it signifies that a man is sitting on a cliff, on the ground, or in an uncomfortable position. If a woman is ascending a mountain, she stands upon a chair. Several chairs together denote a bed. Still broader are the functions of the Ing-Chen—the whisk of horsehair. On the one hand it forms an attribute of semi-devine condition. The right of possessing it was limited to gods, demigods, Budhist monks, Taoist priests, heavenly beings and souls of various categories. On the other hand, in the hand of a housemaid, it could sweep the dust from furniture, serving as an object of domestic use. Descriptions of its functions end with the comprehensive statement: "In general, the whisk is extensively utilized in the Chinese Theatre, and may denote any quantity and any kind of objects."

The Chinese theatre, so to speak, may be considered as the bringing to its limits of one of these aggregates of features which are peculiar to any production of art. That aggregate of feature which in its totality determines the essence of its artistic production, is its imagery.

The experience of Chinese Art in this field should give us much material for study and the enrichment of our artistic methods.

Translated from the Russian by B. Keen

LETTERS FROM WRITERS

ENGLAND

British Artists Go Left

During 1934 the British Board of Education appointed their Staff Inspector of Art, Mr. E.M.O'R. Dickey and H.M. Inspector of Schools, Mr. W.M. Keesey, A.R.I.B.A., to visit the continent to compile information on art education, particularly in its industrial aspect, with a view to discovering how much the state could usefully do to improve industrial design in England.

The results of the visit have been published in a Report, 1934, and cover investigations in Austria, Italy, Germany, France, Czechoslovakia and Switzerland. The conclusions of this report throw into relief the backwardness of methods, organization and results of art education in Great Britain, and the extreme lack of co-operation on the part of British manufacturers with the schools, combined with the loss of valuable trade through out of date design.

The investigators also went into the question of how far regional organisation and co-operation between schools could be effectively planned under central control. Other points included inquiring as to compulsory release of apprentices for day art instruction made possible by complete organisation of industry on an apprenticeship basis, the training of teachers who will understand industrial conditions as well as being good artists, planning of courses which will have relation to industrial requirements, including foremen's courses provision of spacious buildings, up-to-date equipment, studios and workshops and, finally, provision of monotechnic schools to deal with particular industries, such as pottery.

Incidentally, the report reveals clearly the paralysing effect of the Nazi Dictatorship on art training and progress. On the other hand, it places emphasis on the centralised organisation of Italian art schools and modernisation of training; but Mussolini's bombastic remarks about art sound ironic in view of the collapse of trade and wages.

Another point which comes out clearly in all these countries mentioned is the inability, even in cases of the most enlightened co-operation of manufacturers and State, to employ all artists or ensure a high standard of design in any but a minority of productions.

Academicism in Art

The appearance of the report is significant, however much or little is ultimately done to materialise its conclusions. England is very well supplied with art schools, most of which are attached to the technical schools existing in most large towns. These schools are financed partly by the Board of Education and partly by the local authorities. The teaching staff is mainly supplied from the Royal College of Art in London. Originally set up as a British School of industrial design, the Royal College was given no genuine contact with manufacturers and degenerated into an academic institution without adequate up-to-date technical equipment or contact with industrial conditions. This academicism has so penetrated the local art schools throughout the country that it is safe to say that every student trained in them must re-train himself on taking up employment. Modern methods of production and design are unknown in these schools and the teachers are often actually hostile to practical industrial training. Only one school in London, the Central School of Arts and Crafts, makes any systematic attempt at training students for the tasks they must fulfil on taking employment, and even this school falls short of continental standards.

The insularity of British manufacturers and the indifference of the State have led to the complete divorce of the artist from one of his natural fields of activity, industrial design, and the failure to equip him adequately for employment in the industry which uses the major part of art work, commercial advertising and illustration.

In consequence, the standard of British design is appallingly low, and outmoded. Bastard designs created in the last century continue to flood the country to such an extent that the public has become accustomed to accepting the worst conceivable taste and is horrified at anything approaching contemporary ideas in design. Only a percentage of the students manage to obtain employment on leaving the art school and as often as not have to accept low wages while they are learning to do the tasks they should have learnt in the schools.

But at last forces have appeared which are shaking the reactionary complaisance of the Board of Education and the manufacturers. Continental countries shouldered out of the markets by British industrial monopoly and American mass production methods turned their attention to good design and contemporary style. The results justified the move and British manufacturers are finding that in foreign markets their productions, although every bit as good in materials and workmanship, are neglected in favour

of the well designed foreign production. This has led in turn to a revolt among English artists. Without fully realizing the reason for their position, hundreds of artists resent that their continental brothers can create good design and find a market, while they are forced to produce rubbish.

A few enlightened manufacturers have taken the trouble to make use of contemporary ideas in design, but on the whole manufacturers are still thoroughly hidebound.

The feeling among artists is growing and is expressed in the comparatively recent formation of the Design in Industry Association ,which numbers many important artists among its members, and has already done valuable work in breaking down insularity. This association has, at the invitation of the Board of Education, delivered a report on the position of art schools in the country, in which they make constructive suggestions for reorganising the Royal College and the training of teachers which, if adopted, would further break down the barrier between industry and art.

So far, no steps have been taken by the Board. In the Royal College itself, resentment is felt at the lack of adequate money grants to scholarship students and the prospect of unemployment after a long training bearing little or no relation to the needs of the time. This feeling extends also to the Slade School which is a branch of the London University. At this important school no industrial training whatever is given, the course being almost entirely academic—though slightly more modern than that given in the life classes of the Royal College. The third important London school, the Royal Academy School, is a home of reactionary teaching in drawing and painting.

Unemployment being high, students everywhere are resenting the lack of proper training, which places them at such a disadvantage in securing what employment there may be. It is only too common that after years of study the student is forced to take employment in some other occupation. The students, however, are unorganised; no unions exist; indeed, the legacy of romantic individualism cultivated in the 19th century prevents them from considering this side of the question, and their resentment finds no serious channels of action.

Revolt Among the Artists

The professional artists are feeling their position keenly and a definite leftward movement has become evident. A number of indications go to prove that the old ideas of art for art's sake and art being superior to social conditions, are cracking up under the pressure of events. The most progressive artists in most sections of art work are feeling their way towards understanding the issues that are involved.

Thus, in the head of reaction, the Royal Academy, revolt is manifesting itself. Mr. Augustus John, the internationally famous portrait painter, has openly sided with the left wing and is a member of the committee of the Council of Civil Liberties, the organisation leading the struggle against the notorious Sedition Act. Dame Laura Knight, a famous woman artist and academician, implicitly stated her antagonism to war preparations in the newspapers. These artists voice the sympathy of others in the Academy.

David Low, the famous cartoonist, has made one of his rare appearances in public at a meeting organised by the Council against the Act. His cartoons often express his sympathy with the proletariat and the U.S.S.R. Low's ideological position is very important in view of his immense popularity among millions of the workers and intellectuals.

The leaders of abstract art, organised as the Unit One Group, which includes such famous artists as Paul Nash and Henry Moore, are ardent believers in internationalism and find themselves in opposition to the nationalist jingoism of Fascism. A mood is growing among all progressive artists of dissatisfaction with the capitalist class, and it is true to say that the feeling against war and Fascism is very widespread, though this finds expression mainly in pacifism.

In order to test this feeling and to find out how far artists would be prepared to support the Artists International in its work against war and Fascism, the committee recently sent out 20 letters to well known artists, representing definite sections of artists, pointing out the danger of these menaces to cultural progress and inviting their opinion and support.

The response throws an interesting light on the position.

Dame Laura Knight assured us of her solidarity. A leading humorous artist gave his advice on the use of cartoons and expressed his sympathy. Duncan Grant, famous leader of the London Group which inherits the tradition of the post impressionists and holds one of the largest annual shows in London, stated his willingness to support us openly. Ethelbert White, well known modern landscape painter, joined us. A curator of a famous museum expressed his support but pointed out his inability to act openly in view of his position in the Civil Service. Four other artists, two nationally famous, gave clear indications of their sympathy but were not convinced as to organised or political action. The names of these artists cannot be given for obvious reasons.

At the meeting most of the time was spent in clarifying the issues of war and Fascism

Cover of the first issue of an English revolutionary magazine which has now been in existence for one year

without any practical conclusions being reached. Nevertheless, it was clear that a carefully formulated manifesto, protest or broad action would gain the open support of several of these artists.

Further to this, the Design in Industry Association, leading society for progress in Industry beforementioned, recently invited a member of the A.I. to lecture on Art and Artists in the Soviet Union. The lecture was received with considerable sympathy by those who listened, much interest being shown in the examples of Soviet painting shown on the screen.

Another sign is the good work done by numbers of A.I. in the Poster Writers' Section of the Sign, Glass and Ticket Writers Union. The Executive of this union agreed, upon a recommendation from the Poster Writers' Committee and a report on the position of Display artists from the A.I., to include Display artists in a new section of the Union.

The Left Wing Grows

The A.I. Exhibition of paintings, sculpture, etc. held in a large shop in London during last October, registered a definite step forward. Eric Gill, the well known sculptor, Robert Medley, one of the younger moderns, and the wood-engraver Claire Leighton, exhibited alongside members of the A.I. Over 2,000 people visited the show, including workers and artists, and many interesting criticisms were written in a book provided for the purpose. The lectures held during the show, on Revolutionary Proletarian Art, Marxist Art History, etc. were widely attended. The capitalist press sent its representatives but kept silence in their columns. The art press reviewed it sympathetically. England's leading art critic, Herbert Read, in a severe criticism of the work in the *London Mercury*, openly stated that he was on the side of the working class against the capitalist class, and has since accepted an invitation to lecture to our members on Abstract Art.

When the *Catholic Times* used the show to calumniate the U.S.S.R. and Communism, Eric Gill, himself a well known Catholic, took up the cudgels and silenced the reviewers by pointing out that being a Catholic, need prevent no man from taking action against social injustices.

Altogether it is clear that there is a leftward movement growing among progressive artists of all sections. The need of the moment is for the correct leadership and the creation of channels of activity and organisation which will enable these artists and students to unite in action against the attacks of the capitalist class on progress in culture and the approach of fascism and war.

It is this task which the A.I. has set itself, and results already achieved give justification for some optimism.

Betty Rea, Secretary

London

GERMANY

FRIEDRICH WOLF TO THE AMERICAN WRITERS CONGRESS

A Noted German Playwright Addresses His American Co-workers in New York

Comrades and Friends:

I have been charged by the Secretariat of the International Union of Workers Theatres, and the German section of the Union of Revolutionary Writers to bring fraternal greetings to the First American Writers' Congress. I have come so many miles because we have all heard of your great advance on the theatre and cultural fronts. We felt that in all the capitalist world, the American Writers are one of the most important outposts in the battle against war and fascism, determined, as our comrade Anatole France said, "to be the conscience of the world."

As a German writer who has fought for seventeen years on the German and Inter-

national Theatre front for new content and form in the drama—and today that means fighting for the liberation of the working class from all forms of slavery—as such an exiled German writer, I greet this first American Writers' Congress in the name of all German anti-fascist writers who are now being tortured in the concentration camps and jails of Hitler Germany.

I greet you, comrades, in the name of the German revolutionary writers, Bert Brecht, Johannes Becher, Adam Scharrer and Ernst Ottwald, whose books were burned by Hitler, and who fight on undaunted against the betrayal, the slavery and the war-mongering of Hitler.

I greet you in the name of Willi Bredel and Wolfgang Langhof, author of *Moor Soldier,* who were brutally beaten and crippled in the concentration camps from which they finally escaped, only to take up on the very next day their work as writers and revolutionaries.

I greet you in the name of the militant bourgeois writer Ossietsky the famous editor of *Neue Weltbühne,* who in spite of the mistreatment and sickness he suffered in the concentration camp, was drawn by his convictions to fight on for the united front against war and fascism.

I greet you in the name of Ludwig Renn, the courageous and wellknown author of *Der Krieg,* which is translated into all the languages of the world. Ludwig Renn stood last year before the military court in Berlin charged with high treason. When he was asked whether he was a communist, or to which party he belonged, he said to his judges: "I was a communist, I am a communist, and I will remain a communist, even if it means death."

I greet you in the name of Comrades Erich Mühsam and Hans Otto, who were bestially and sadistically tortured to death. It is well known how the war-hating writer Erich Mühsam was beaten with steel rods for months, was forced to stand erect for days in a dark cage because he refused to sing the Horst Wessel nazi song. Our friend and comrade, Hans Otto, one of the best young actors of the Berlin State Theatre, and the leader of the revolutionary Actors' Union, was discharged when Hitler came to power. He continued to work in the movement, and at the end of last year, was arrested. Two days later his body was shown to his wife, skull shattered. The indignation among the actors of Berlin was so great that a deputation went to Goebbels to ascertain the cause of his death. They were forbidden to attend his funeral-that was Goebbels' answer. The next day there lay before the door of the Berlin State Theatre three big wreaths with red ribbons—that was the answer of the actors. Ten actors were discharged and arrested.

Very little news of the heroic underground fight of the Revolutionary German writers trickles through to this country, but from these few examples two things are clear:

1. The class conscious revolutionary writers are not defeated in Germany. They are fighting on to the last breath in the jails, the concentration camps, before the military courts—fighting literally to the last breath.
2. By the example of Ossietsky, Erich Mühsam and Hans Otto, we see that the concentration camps are the smithies where a united front between the left bourgeois and proletariat is being welded. These writers are representative of thousands of others who continue the fight with illegal literature against Hitler and War. But all our work would be for nothing were there not 10.000 other comrades to distributes it. For example, even the German bourgeois newspapers acknowledge that when Hitler gave his recent order to rearm, 10,000 leaflets against Hitler and war were distributed in the streets of Stuttgart alone, although the penalty for each distributor is death.

Before the coming of Hitler I had many good friends among the left bourgeois writers who said: "Comrade Wolf, it was you who formulated the slogan, 'Art is a weapon in the class struggle,' but we want to fight only at the command of art. Goethe said, 'Politics destroys character'."

But today, can we escape politics in art, even in classic art? On April 4th, the New York *Times* carried a story that at a production of Schiller's famous *Don Carlos* in Bremen, the audience applauded so vigorously the line, "Sire, give us freedom of thought," that the nazi commissar of Bremen closed the play and forbade all further productions of it. Today, even Schiller is political.

My friends, however, said: "We are politically neutral and want to remain politically neutral."

Now, after two years of Hitler, every German writer knows that there are only two ways: for or against.

For Goebbels, Goering, Hitler, and all the other little German corporals, at their command to crawl under the table, and to write only what is permitted for the next war.

Against—to fight with ones last breath against this barbarism and for a united front of the left writers with the militant working class which is the first enemy of fascism and which is alone able to conquer it and create a new free Germany, OUR Germany.

And when that time comes—the time for which we are working, we shall invite you to OUR German Writers Congress.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

JEAN GIONO

FRANCE

My father was a shoemaker. He resoled shoes in a wooden stall which still stands in the vicinity of the postoffice in Marseilles. He strangely resembled those ardent, proletarian apostles, noble and enlightened, whom your great Maxim Gorki has often depicted in his novels. In reading them, I have recognized my father several times. He led a life of care, for he had to aid his sister Catherine, who had several children and whose husband was dead. That is why he did not marry. Once he went up the valley of a river called the Duraure. He went from village to village and asked: "Have you any shoes to resole?" If the answer was "Yes," he would install himself under the trees in the village square and remain there until there were no more shoes to resole. If the answer was "No," he took to the road again. He came to Manosque, a fairly large village of 5,000 inhabitants. Here he stayed for some time and was kept very busy, for he was an excellent worker, of which I am very proud, as you may see. In this town he made the acquaintance of a woman who did ironing, and who was at this time 35 years old. He was 49. He was very handsome with his great white beard, but she was still more beautiful than he. They got married and I was born three years later, March 30, 1895.

Jean Giono

There were two free colleges in France at that time. One in Laval and one in Manosque. Thanks to this piece of good luck, I was able to go to college to the end of the first year. But by this time my father was old and worn out; I was 16 and he was 67, and in order to help him, I began to look for work. I would have preferred to do some sort of manual work, to be a joiner or a blacksmith, but above all a shoemaker. I would have liked very much to be a shoemaker. Even today I often feel a longing that I were one. But I had to enter a bank, where I was employed as a messenger boy. That is, I carried letters to and fro. Later on I became a genuine bank clerk. When I say "genuine" you can feel that that is not quite true.

Then came the war. I left with my class at the end of 1914 and remained a soldier of the second class in the infantry until 1918.

Shortly after my demobilization, when I had returned home and resumed my work, my father died in 1920. He was an admirable man. That same year I married a young girl who belonged to my class: the daughter of a hair-dresser whose dwelling faced upon mine. She was the first person to have confidence in me, for I had already begun to write, although I did not show my work to anyone. I used to work in the evening after work and in the morning before work; and I worked so well that by 1928 I had written two novels which reposed in my drawer. I had the good fortune to have a splendid friend, Lucien Jacques by name, who is a great painter and a great poet whom you would like for he is profoundly human in all that he does. It was he who induced me to send my novel *Colline* to the publisher Bernard Grasset. And now it only remains for me to say that since 1929 I have written the following works: *Colline, One From Baumugnes, Regain, The Presentation of Pan, Manosque of the Flat Lands, The Great Herd, Blue Jean, The Serpent of Stars, The Birth of the Odyssey, The Song of the World, Let My Joy Tarry;* and two plays: *The Sowers,* and *The End of the Road.*

I continue to live in Monosque with my mother, who is now 76 and almost blind, my wife who is my collaborator and to whom I owe the peace of my life and my two little daughters, Aline and Sylire, aged eight years and five months, respectively.

Martin Andersen Nexo, Danish Writer. A photograph by the Soviet writer Sergei Tretyakov

DENMARK

MARTIN ANDERSEN NEXO

Autobiographical Sketch

I was born in 1869 in Christianshaven—the oldest proletarian section of Copenhagen—on the upper story of one of those backyard houses from which one has a view of the sky only. The view extends also on a vast blank fire-wall on which mould has inscribed great fantastic maps of countries inhabited and animated by grotesque creatures having armored backs and all too many limbs—slaters and centipees. To make things perfect, a rainspout ran close by the window; dirt collected in it, birds dropped seeds into it and one fine day the child is amazed to see a green shoot coming from there.

I remember very far back. This is a gift the children of poverty receive in the cradle —life engraves ineradicable impressions on their brains from a very early age.

Father was a stone-mason and plasterer, mother wheeled a handcart about and traded in fish, vegetables and such like things. Ours was a large family—I was the fourth of eleven children—and we lived always in great need although the entire family was working. Poverty and hard work were the predominating forces in the world of my childhood. I worked from the day I could crawl—peddling newspapers or gathering wood chips at construction jobs to sell to the well-to-do. For a while I was dry nurse to my little six-month old sister—from early morning till evening, when mother worked out. I was then only five, perhaps six years old, but to this very day I feel that this was the hardest job I ever had.

By the time I was nine and we moved to Bornholm, my father's hometown, I already had to do my bit and many blows—more than are good for a child—fell to my share. Mother's family came from Germany. In Bornholm it was also necessary to work diligently—but here I got an inkling of the beauties of nature while working: in winter helping father at the quarry and in summer shepherding the town's cattle on the vast meadows near Nexo.

After my confirmation I worked a year as hired man on a farm and then wandered to Ronne where I hired out as a shoemaker's apprentice. Six years I spent at this trade and got to know many odd old fashioned folks and customs; then I got tired of my sedentary occupation and went to work as a day laborer on building jobs. Among the jobs I worked on were a tall factory chimney and a church built out of granite; on this last job I made the acquaintance of a German workman who had been

imported to the job for putting the colored window panes in. He was an ardent Internationalist and awakened my proletarian class consciousness. He embraced me once with tears in his eyes imploring that if I ever became a poet I must remain loyal to the working class. I laughed; I didn't know then what a poet was like—but if he should happen to read these lines and remember the Church of Oester Marie and a young curly headed chap there in the summer of 1891 who ran to fetch him some beer, he will find out I have done my duty.

Among Books and Children

In winter when there was no building work going on, I attended the Askov public school and from there I graduated to become a teacher in Odense. Nights I had to work hard on the subjects I taught during the day; and I was completely happy in this life among books and children. My health was nothing to brag about and my mode of living then was not calculated to improve it; so I fell seriously ill. I fell a victim of pleurisy and for a long time hovered between life and death—everyone had given me up for lost. If I eventually did recover it is due only to my well known stubborness. I had carried the heavy end of existence, the end that always is carried by the poor, and I refused to quit just when life was beginning to get a little brighter.

When I recovered enough so that I could be moved the widow of the poet Molbech had me transferred to her home in Askov. For six months she tended me and in the fall of 1894 I went south supplied with 400 marks which she had gotten for me and which I carefully kept hidden close to my body. For twenty months I wandered about Italy and Spain, lived among the people, got rid of the aftermath of my pleurisy and caught dysentery instead, wrote essays and, luckily, never had money enough to return home.

I have often been asked what made me take up the pen to become a writer. Well, who can see what is going on under ground where the tree has its roots? I only know this much—the southern sun overwhelmed me. Up to then I was used to live half frozen in the shadows without being particularly resentful of it. Now the blessed sun arose for me too; and I suffered at the thought of all those that were freezing, all those at home there in the cold and darkness. I knew their bitter existence only too well and I set about to show it in the form of some stories.

But the material was new and weighty—I knew much more about life and people than about literature—so I had to battle for form. And it took a long time before I got so far (1898) that I could publish my first book—*Shadows.*

George Milburn, American Writer

USA

GEORGE MILBURN

I was born April 27, 1906 in Coweta, a small town in what was then the Indian Territory but which has since become the State of Oklahoma. My father was a lawyer there.

My boyhood was spent in Coweta, but I got early glimpses of the outside world by riding cattle trains to Kansas City. The summer of 1922 I went to Fort Still, Okla., an army encampment, as a correspondent for the Pawhuska Daily *Capitol,* my first newspaper job. I graduated from Coweta High School in 1923 and that same year went to work as a reporter for the Tulsa *Tribune.* I started to college, working part-time, but after a year a quart of blood I had sold for $ 50 to get room rent caused me to spend some time in a hospital. I went on the bum in 1925, reached Chicago that winter, and I earned my living there for two years by writing joke books.

While I was in Chicago two short skits of mine were published in the *New Masses.* This was my first magazine publication.

I went on the bum again in 1927, spent two months at Commonwealth College in the Ouchita Mountains of Arkansas, and went on to New Orleans. There I started writing my own stuff, but I couldn't even give it away. I made some money by doing odd jobs around the race tracks and by tak-

ing one trip as a mess boy on the Viccarro Line, but I lived mostly on overripe bananas I picked up around the docks.

I came back to Oklahoma in 1928 and started to the State University. I made a living there by reading proof and by writing jokes for *Judge,* and various humorous magazines. While I was a student there B. A. Botkin published three selections from my work in the first volume of *Folk-Say* his regional miscellany. This book was brought to the attention of H. L. Mencken and he immediately sent for and bought for publication in the *American Mercury* nearly everything I had on hand. Since then I have been making a precarious living by selling my fiction to American magazines.

I was granted, on the basis of my published work, a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1934, and from that time until my return this month (February, 1935) I have been working on a long novel in England and Spain.

I have had the following books published: *The Hobo's Hornbook* (1930); *Oklahoma Town* (1931); and *No More Trumpets* (1933). Translations of my work have been published in Germany, France, Denmark, Yugoslavia, and USSR. I spent the summer of 1932 on a wheat farm in Western Kansas, writing a novel that was a failure. I have yet to publish a novel.

I am married and we have a daughter, Janet, aged two.

I am bitterly class-conscious, but I have no political affiliations.

CHRONICLE

AUSTRALIA

Australian and German Revolutionary Writers

The activities of the noted Australian novelist Katherine Susannah Prichard, and the visit to Australia of the world known German revolutionary writer Egon Erwin Kisch, have stimulated Australian literary circles to new activities.

Of major importance was the organization of the Australian Writers' International, section of the IURW. Katherine Susannah Prichard was chosen president of the Provisional Committee which arranged for a Conference in April. Delegates from Melbourne and Sydney were present.

The Sydney *Morning Herald* reports: "A section of the Writers' International, modelled on the lines of the Soviet literary circles, has been formed in Sydney.

'The Western Australian novelist, Katherine Susannah Prichard, was present at the inaugural meeting, and explained how the literary circles have succeeded in Russia. It was announced that the membership would be confined to those writers and 'would-be-writers' who would present, to their readers 'the real facts of life, who would combat fascism and war, and other forms of suppression.' "

Jean Devanny, author of *The Butcher's Shop* and other novels was chairman.

E. E. Kisch

The Sydney Worker reports: "Katherine Susannah Prichard, Australia's most successful woman novelist, who, with Egon Erwin Kisch, was entertained by the Fellowship of Australian Writers in Sydney, is a convincing speaker . . .. She said that even in far Eastern Russia literature, both local and that emanating from Western Europe, and other parts of the world, is eagerly read. Indeed, she found this literary understanding so pronounced that she felt shocked and sorry that such sort of knowledge is so comparatively scarce in parts of her own Australia. Also, she strongly denounced our literary censorship, which she declared is a disgrace to the people of Australia. 'A definite stand,' she added, 'will have to be taken against it if Australia is to prevent itself becoming a cultural backwater!' "

Meanwhile *All About Books* issued in Melbourne reports about Katherine Susannah Prichard and Egon Erwin Kisch, ". . . it was decided to hold an informal social gathering at which members (of the Felowship of Australian Writers) would have an opportunity to meet them. This was held at the Cafe Salimar and over 80 well-known men and women of Australian letters assembled to welcome the guests.

"In an interesting resume of her recent travels abroad Miss Prichard drew attention to the extraordinary progress made by the literary circles in the Soviet Union. . . *Working Bullocks* (her own novel) Miss Prichard discovered, was being translated into Russian, and Australian works were not entirely unknown in that quarter.

"Herr Kisch, who arrived on crutches (after leaping off the ship to avoid customs officials there to prevent his entry into Australia) asked whether his audience would prefer a good speech in German or a bad one in English. His object in coming was to thank the Australian writers for standing by when a brother was in distress.

"He told of the extraordinary conditions at present prevailing in Germany, due to the stringent Hitler edicts."

An Australian Novelist

Katherine Susannah Prichard, leading Australian novelist, who spent some time in the Soviet Union two years ago, has written a book of her experiences, published in Australia under the title *The Real Russia.*

She has also written a one-act play, *The Thief,* based on an incident she witnessed in a Peoples' Court in Moscow. The play has been presented in Sydney; and in Greenmount, West Australia, home of the author. It has been brought to the attention of American theatrical groups through the IURT (International Union of Revolutionary Theatres).

Katherine Susannah Prichard is also author of other plays, among them *Haxby's Circus,* just translated into Hungarian. Among her novels are *Black Opal, Working Bullocks, and others. Kiss on the Lips,* a collection of short stories, was her last book issued, preceding her new book on Russia.

ENGLAND

Growth of Left Review

Nine issues of the monthly *Left Review* have appeared to date. This revolutionary publication is now definitely established. It does not mean, of course, that all its problems are solved. It does mean however, that from the experience it has had, this organ of the Writers' International (British section of the IURW), can safely look forward to continued growth. *Left Review* now has a

circulation of 5,000 copies,—the largest of any British literary magazine with the exception of the *London Mercury*. Two thirds of its circulation reaches intellectuals, one third, the workers.

In April, at Conway Hall, a meeting of readers, writers and editors of *Left Review* was held. T. H. Wintringham, editor, poet, and one of the leading figures in the work of the Writers International, reported on the progress of the magazine. He spoke on the fact that as yet, *Left Review* was not being received by the workers without criticism. He reported however that *Left Review* began with a circulation of only 2,000, which has grown to its present circulation within nine months; that its largest sale was at Charing Cross; that a good many copies are sold in workers bookshops; that two thirds of its circulation is sold outside of London; that the largest sale at universities is at Oxford;—the most disappointing at Cambridge; (Cambridge University has its own revolutionary journal, *Cambridge Left)* that the circulation in the Dominions and in the United States grows steadily.

From the writers and readers present, criticism was made of the defeatist note in many of the stories printed in *Left Review*. They suggested a closer contact with the class struggle; more on the order of the American *New Masses:* reports of the Committee Against Malnutrition, factory news, etc.

Inclusion of a greater amount of foreign news was pointed out as dependent upon an increase in the size of the magazine to 48 pages.

The result of the conference was that *Left Review* would swing away from its present too "literary" attitude to a closer mass contact.

Meanwhile *Left Review* has many achievements to point to. It has printed articles and stories of exceptional merit by leading British writers. Its artists have displayed a wealth of revolutionary talent. The editors of *International Literature* are confident of a steady growth of revolutionary literature in England—led by *Left Review* pioneer British journal of revolutionary literature.

Cambridge Against War

Cambridge University and War, a documentary pamphlet of the record of this university on the question of war, by its own students, has been issued jointly by the following organizations: Cambridge University Anti-War Movement; University Friends Society; University Socialist Society; University Labour Federation; and University Labour Club. All these organizations are merged in the Co-ordinating Committee for Research into the Use of the University for War.

Beginning with a cover cartoon by the American artist Jacob Burck, showing an officer scooping out the brains of a student into a garbage can—with the caption: "What d'ya need them for!," the pamphlet, after a scathing documentary proof of the co-operation of the bourgeois educators and militarists, concludes with the united action between Cambridge and the American Harvard University with this statement:

"When America declared war on Germany in 1917, the Vice-Chancellor sent the following telegram to the President of Harvard: 'British Cambridge welcomes American Cambridge as brothers in arms.' The reply was received: 'Harvard glad to fight shoulder to shoulder with parent university.' "

The pamphlet concludes with the resolution of the Cambridge University students: "We, Cambridge students, call upon the students not only of Harvard, but throughout the world, to fight shoulder to shoulder with us now. Those who fought in the last World War, steeled themselves to its horrors with the thought that it was the last war. We must make it so. We must join in a concerted effort to oppose war. We must put ourselves in a position to understand and react intelligently to the process of events, instead of being swept away by it."

This note on the pamphlet by no means does justice to it. And we are certain that it will be fully noted by the American National Students League, now the leading American revolutionary student organization. This pamphlet is conclusive evidence that the students of Cambridge are joining the ranks of students in all countries—alongside the militant world proletariat.

MEXICO

Writers and Artists Below the Rio Grande

In an article in the American *Daily Worker,* Isidor Schneider presents a vivid account of the rapid development of the Mexican revolutionary artists and writers. Four delegates attended the American Writers Congress held in New York on April 27. Schneider writes, that while delegates came from Cuba, Canada, Germany and Japan:

"The largest delegation was from Mexico. It consisted of four members of LEAR (*Liga de Escritores y Artistas Revolucionarios*—League of Revolutionary Writers and Artists of Mexico): Jose Mancisidor, novelist and essayist, and editor of the left wing cultural magazine *Rata;* Juan de la Cabada, proletarian short story writer; Renato Molina Enriquez, essayist and economist and Miguel Rubio, a professor and writer on agricultural questions."

The writer gives us a description of these people from Mexico:

"Both Mancisidor, whose reputation as a novelist reaches across the Mexican fron-

Caricature of John Strachey, English writer, by the American artist Peggy Bacon. From the New Republic

tier, and Cabada, who spoke so eloquently at the Congress that he could almost be understood without an interpreter, are powerfully built, rugged men, who give an impression of great stores of vitality. Enriquez is tall and lean; he is gentle in voice and manner, but his features are strongly carved and the flash of his eyes indicates the fire of the revolutionist. Only Rubio, apparently the youngest, is the obvious intellectual type; but when you study him you feel tremendous latent powers and a vivid enthusiasm that is all the stronger for being controlled."

The Mexican delegates to the New York Writers Congress were enthused about it. They also stressed the need for the calling of a Pan-American Revolutionary Writers Congress. Meanwhile they gave a record of their own achievements:

"The LEAR now in existence for four years covers all branches of culture. It publishes two magazines, one, of a more literary character (*Frente a Frente—Front to Front*) the other a more popular magazine circulated among the workers, and printing revolutionary folk literature, workers' stories, and worker-correspondence.

"In addition, the LEAR participates in all fields of the workers' revolutionary movement in Mexico. The writers prepare pamphlets and leaflets, conduct classes and translate Marxist writings; the painters make picket signs, placards and revolutionary cartoons, and teach talented workers the elements of their art; the theoreticians give courses in Marxism and lectures for the trade unions. As in the United States where the outstanding writers are to be found now in the League of American Writers, and the outstanding painters and sculptors in the Artists Union, so in Mexico, in the LEAR, the foremost writers, artists and thinkers are to be found.

"Two organizations recently built up by the LEAR have a great importance in the Mexican revolutionary movement. One is the ATA, Workers Art Alliance, which on the basis of revolutionary art has drawn many fine elements in the working class into the movement. The other is the Alliance of Missionary Workers."

The last named organization is so unusual that the writer points out:

"This interesting organization needs some explanation. The present capitalist regime in Mexico, knowing the revolutionary temper of the Mexican people, uses the most complete and subtle demagogy to be found in the Western world. It pretends to be a workers' and peasant's government. While the generals now in power become the new landlord class, carving the country out in huge estates and in the cities take on the role as the well bribed native police for Yankee Imperialism, the government pretends to be building Socialism by educating the peasants. Teachers are sent into the rural districts as a gesture toward ending the illiteracy of the Mexican peasants. They are called "Missionaries."

"The LEAR has formed large numbers of these Missionaries into a fraternal organization. Its members are pledged to teach revolutionary truths to the Mexican masses. Thus a demagogic weapon of the deceitful Mexican government has been turned against its wielders.

"This is only one of the ways in which the LEAR has defeated the demagogy of the government. Recently the P. N. R., a writers' organization under the control of the government, held what was called a "revolutionary" Writers' Congress. An attempt was made to keep out the real revolutionary writers. Nevertheless, a delegation of the LEAR attended the Congress and by persistent and militant action captured the leadership. Seeing that the drift of the Congress was toward real revolutionary action, the government arbitrarily shortened the sessions. This was met by holding the last session until four a. m. By that time the Congress passed all the militant resolutions brought in by the LEAR delegation. These included a resolution against war and fascism, and demands for the restoration of the suppressed Communist periodical, *El Machete*, for the release of all class war prisoners, and for the recognition of the Soviet Union."

USA

League of American Writers is Formed

The *New Masses* gives us a factual report of what happened at the historical Congress of American writers, held in New York at the end of April:

". . . four thousand people crowded to hear the opening session of the first Congress of American Writers. Facing them on the platform were more than 200 delegates, among them the ablest writers of the middle and younger generation. Sixty-four had come from twenty-four states other than New York. Thirty-six were women—guests and delegates—and twenty-one were Negro writers. Mexico sent four delegates, among them Joe Mancisidor. Cuba was represented by one woman writer and editor, Lola de la Torriente; Jewish literature by Moishe Nadir, poet; and the German revolutionary writers, many of them in the Nazi prisons and concentration camps, sent greetings to the Congress by Friedrich Wolf, author of *Sailors of Cattaro*. Japan sent one woman delegate.

"The next day the delegates began their two days of discussion at the New School for Social Research, which concluded in the organization of the League of American Writers."

These writers came from all corners of the United States.

"Geographically, the membership of the congress was significant. From the far West came the young novelist, Tillie Lerner, and Louis Colman, author of the working class novel, *Lumber. Jack Conroy* represented the Middle West, James Farrell and Nelson Algren, Chicago, and Meridel Le Sueur, whose articles have been outstanding among the contributions to *The New Masses,* came on from Minneapolis. Eugene Clay, young Negro poet, came from Washington; Eugene Gordon from Boston. Josephine Herbst spoke of her people in Pennsylvania, German settlers who arrived long before the American revolution. Grace Lumpkin was a delegate from the far South, Rebecca Pitts from Indiana. There were writers from Arkansas and New Mexico. In background too, these writers differed widely. The overwhelming majority of course, were middle class but Jack Conroy, Michael Gold and many of the younger writers spring directly from the working class. Langston Hughes, the poet of the Negro worker, was unable to be present but a paper by him was read at the opening session."

Electing Waldo Frank, noted American writer as secretary, "The Congress concluded its sessions with the task for which it was called, the organization of the League of American Writers, to be affiliated with the International Union of Revolutionary Writers. The League, under the leadership of

Waldo Frank, author of The Death and Birth of David Markand *and other books, who has been elected secretary of the newly organized League of American Writers*

Waldo Frank begins its career with nearly two hundred members. The work of the League will be carried on by a national council, the Congress elected seventeen members to the executive committee, who will guide the central work of the body in New York. The members of the executive committee are: Kenneth Burke, Malcolm Cowley, Waldo Frank, Joseph Freeman, Michael Gold, Henry Hart, Josephine Herbst, Granville Hicks, Matthew Josephson, Alfred Kreymborg, John Howard Lawson, Albert Maltz, Harold Clurman, Edwin Seaver, Isidor Schneider, Genevieve Taggard, Alexander Trachtenberg."

This factual statement by no means gives an idea of the enthusiasm that prevailed at this historic Congress. Thunderous applause greeted Granville Hicks, critic and author of *The Great Tradition* as he declared the Congress opened. Hicks read greetings from Maxim Gorki and the IURW. He was followed by Malcolm Cowley, literary editor of the *New Republic* and author of *Exile's Return.* Cowley brought a roar of laughter when he began with the statement that:

"The fascist Hitler has shown himself to be the most discriminating critic in the world. Without exception, he has driven

A scene from the Soviet film Love and Hate

every good writer out of Germany and has kept every bad one." He contrasted the decline of culture in fascist countries, with the growth of culture in the Soviet Union.

Josephine Herbst, author of *The Executioner Waits* and other novels, spoke of her experiences in Cuba, and among the farmers of the midwest and in Pennsylvania about whom she had been writing.

Among the great moments in the Congress was the speech of Friedrich Wolf (in this issue of *International Literature*), when, the press reports, he was greeted by a "storm of cheers and applause" with the audience rising to its feet. Dr. Wolf spoke in behalf of the exiled German writers and those who died or are still languishing in fascist concentration camps. He also brought personal greetings from the IURW.

Waldo Frank, elected secretary, said that "Communism must come, and must be fought for."

"Michael Gold, rose to speak, and the audience gave him a long greeting, seeing in him one of the foremost and most steadfast fighters for proletarian culture in this country, a pioneer who blazed trails."

These are the bare details of the American Writers Congress. Further News and analysis will appear in forthcoming issues of *International Literature.*

Workers Book Club Formed

A significant step in the development of American revolutionary literature is the organization of the first American workers book club, the "Book Union." It will issue a volume of revolutionary literature or a book on the theory of Marxism each month at a modest price. It will supply a monthly critical bulletin, reading lists, etc.

The board of editors of the new "Book Union" (381 Fourth Avenue, New York) are Malcolm Cowley, Robert W. Dunn, Henry Hart, Granville Hicks, Corliss Lamont, Bernard Smith, Alexander Trachtenberg and Mary Van Kleeck.

While workers book clubs in various languages have existed in the United States before, this is the first step in the organization of an English language workers book club, which is sure to have a tremendous influence at its very beginning. The audience is there now, and the growth of revolutionary literature can assure the readers of books that rank among the best being printed in the United States. This is an important step forward.

Foreign Revolutionary Writers Visit America

Among the various writers visiting the United States in recent months were Rafael Alberti and Maria Teresa Leon of Spain; Friedrich Wolf, German revolutionary

Henri Malraux, French author of Man's Fate *and other books and Ernst Toller, noted German writer on a visit to a Soviet village*

playwright; and John Strachey, noted English writer.

Alberti and Leon spoke highly of the Soviet Writers Congress of last year, which they attended. Their plans were to lecture on Spanish literature at various workers organizations, and at universities and high schools.

In an interview given to the press, Alberti's work was noted. He is author of the books of verse *Sailors on Land, A Spectre is Haunting Europe* and *Slogans*. His play *Man Uninhibited*, produced an uproar in Madrid in literary and dramatic circles. This play was followed by *Fermin Galan*.

Maria Teresa Leon has published a book of children's stories, has contributed to many publications and was, with Alberti, one of the editors of *Octubre* Spanish revolutionary magazine.

Friedrich Wolf received a specially warm welcome as an exile from Hitler's fascist regime, and as the author of *Sailors of Catarro* which had a three months' run in New York just preceding his arrival. Wolf began a lecture tour which took him through the main cities.

John Strachey Is Deported

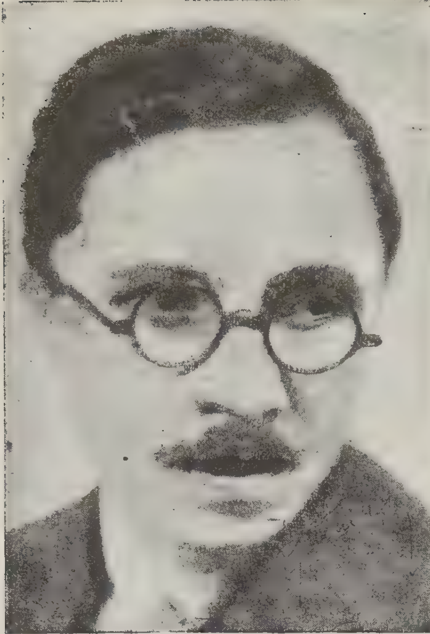
John Strachey, English author of *The Coming Struggle for Power*, and other books has become very well known to American readers. He contributes frequently to American publications, and was on his second lecture tour when deportation proceedings were instituted against him. He was allowed finally to leave the country without charges being pressed, The case attracted widespread attention. *The Nation,* liberal weekly and others protested the decision. Meanwhile *The New Masses*, for which Strachey is English correspondent, presents Strachey's impressions of his trip throughout the country and to Canada.

This item opens with a statement which is one for which deportation charges were being pressed against him:

"The experiences of a Communist drummer—for that is what I am at the moment, peddling Marxism instead of pink pills—have their humorous side.

"Let me say at the outset," Strachey continues, "that, on the whole, the American middle and professional classes appear to me to be thinking far more earnestly and straightforwardly about the crisis of their system than are the corresponding classes in Great Britain.

"The bulk of the questions which I get from American middle-class audiences are anything but foolish and absurd. On the contrary they are the obvious, necessary



Jean Guehenno—well-knowu French writer, a section of whose novel Journal of a Man of 40 *will appear in the next issue*

questions which any intelligent man or woman, beginning to think out the causes of their troubles for themselves, must ask. They deal with such questions as social incentive under capitalism and communism, with the problem of how the transition from one system to another can be effected, and with the nature of fascism."

Strachey found that his listeners, predominantly professional and lower middle class, others upper middle class and high capitalist elements, varied "in inverse ration to their incomes."

He writes: "I was asked, in a city that shall be nameless, a perfect example of the type of question which sometimes comes to me from the richer audiences. After I sat down there was a prolonged, hushed, pause, At last a lady who I was afterward assured, held one of the highest social and financial positions in town rose and said, "But, Mr. Strachey, what would happen to us who have only the interest on our investments to live on," "Madame," I replied, "I am compelled to break the frightful news to you that you might have to do some work."

Strachey found that in Canada, capitalism was developing "with incredible swiftness into its most monopolistic stage, has so trussed up the people of the Dominion that it holds a quarter of them permanently unemployed. Never, surely," he writes, "has the law of concentration of capital, the spiralling of the system into a great, central, consolidated monopoly, operated with the swiftness it has in Canada. Never have all the contradictions of the system come to a head so rapidly."

The author concludes: "Generally, then, my impression is that political fermentation among the American middle and professional classes goes on, and has considerably deepened since I was here in 1933. The Communist Party has enormous opportunities in front of it; but it will need the most consumate political skill to seize those opportunities to the full."

Josephine Herbst Goes to Cuba

Writing "The Soviet in Cuba" in the March issue of the *New Masses* Josephine Herbst, author of *The Executioner Waits* and other novels, begins a series of unusual interest.

The editors precede the series with this note: "This first article of Josephine Herbst's series, 'Cuba on the Barricades,' describes 'Realengo 18,' where the peasants have taken over the land and set up a community described as the first Soviet in America. Her article was smuggled out of Cuba after the Mendieta government declared a military dictatorship and clamped down on the mails. Miss Herbst spent five days on horseback to travel into the mountains to 'Realengo 18.' She was the first journalist ever to have made that trip. She returned to Havana just when the current fighting broke out and wrote up the first eyewitness account of 'Realengo 18' while machine-gun fire raked the streets of Havana and many were killed."

FRANCE

Louis Aragon's New Novel

Although not translated yet into English, much interest is being shown in the United States in Louis Aragon's new novel *Les Cloches de Bâle* (*The Bells of Bâle*) part of which appeared in a recent issue of *International Literature*. Reviewing the book in *Partisan Review,* influential organ of the New York John Reed Club, Samuel Putnam, editor, author and critic, writes:

". . . he has given us a devastatingly mordant picture—such a one, it may be, as only he was in a position to paint—of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century society and the self-destructive forces in that society, down to 1912 (the date of the International Socialist Congress at Basle), or about two years before the World War. It is a picture that graphically and movingly explains the

French bourgeois civilization of today, a civilization which, coming down from Dreyfus to Stavisky, made possible the events of the Sixth of February, 1934."

The critic further points out that "Aragon shows, by a terrible sledgehammer piling up of fact on fact, set off at times by a biting irony in every line, how hopelessly rotting the system, all society, was in those days, how inextricably interlaced the gangrene was, and how nothing could come out of it but catastrophe.

"In this respect," the critic adds, "and the point is to be stressed, Aragon's book is the real article, of which such a work as Romains' *Men of Good Will* is but a shoddy imitation. It is, so far as his reviewer is aware, alone in its field."

The critic concludes "The book is written in Aragon's own superb prose, in an idiom enriched by slang and common speech; but there is not the faintest trace of modernistic posture; it is revolutionary realism of the highest quality."

(As we go to press, we learn that this novel will soon be published in America by Harcourt, Brace & Co.)

USSR

Writers in the USSR

Writers and administrators of the literary fund met at the quarters of the Writers Union in Moscow recently to plan a program of activities for the current year.

The literary fund was created last fall with the aim of lending material assistance to writers engaged in creative work. Half of its budget of two million rubles represents the contribution of the Government; the remainder comes from levies on theatres and publishing houses.

The report indicated a sound financial condition, but showed also that writers were not fully availing themselves of the services offered. These include medical and sanatorium treatment; financing of dwelling construction; purchase of railroad and theatre tickets; maintenance of seven rest homes and a list of other services, not the least of which is the supply to the writers of typewriters.

The object of these activities is to save the writers' time and attention, enabling them to devote themselves completely to creative work.

Attention was directed to the fact that the writers' rest homes in 1934 were not fully utilized.

Considerable medical assistance has been given writers within the last six months. This work is headed by Dr. Belayev, himself an author between professional calls who enjoys great popularity among the writers.

Sanatorium and rest home facilities for wives and children of literary men also form part of the work undertaken by the literary fund administration. Explaining this aspect of its work, Matveyev, chairman of the fund, asserted that the domestic circumstances of a writer's life exercise a direct influence on his work.

"One writer complained that his three-year-old child was restive and caused him considerable annoyance in his work. Children of that age are not accepted in kindergartens. We were useful in making suitable arrangements for the care of the child, with the result that the writer was able to continue his work satisfactorily. We have in many cases arranged to send mothers with their children to rest homes for a season."

Substantial sums also went to assist promising young writers to complete their work. Aid was also offered writers engaged on work requiring considerable time, enabling them to continue undisturbed by financial worries. In the past, writers in such circumstances were sometimes obliged to interrupt their chief work to earn needed money by journalism.

A large percentage of writers who availed themselves of the fund were neither members of the Writers Union nor candidates.

"The fund has been created to assist all writers of genuine promise. This includes first of all, the talented writer who has not yet achieved the recognition that goes with members in the Writers Union," Matveyev explained. "Our work in this direction will be extended."

The Poets of Armenia

Armenian poets and Armenian poetry were honored at a crowded meeting held in the House of Soviet Writers in Moscow. This meeting was an outcome of the All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers held last August, in which it was decided to foster relations between writers of the various national republics of the USSR.

The Armenian poets, Azat Vchtuni, Gurghen Maari, Alazan, Nairi Zarian, Vagarshak Norents, Ghegam Sarian, Sogomon Tarontski, Valuni and Agani, have come to Moscow and Leningrad to give readings of their poems, to lecture, to meet Russian poets and writers and to popularize the literature of Armenia.

The veteran of Armenian poets is Azat Vchtuni, who was present at this gathering. Azat Vchtuni was born in Turkey and brought up in Paris. He arrived in Transcaucasia during the world war, publishing then his first poems of nationalistic inspiration tinged with a revolutionary outlook. Afterwards Azat Vchtuni traveled a great deal throughout Iran (Persial), Egypt, Syria and Asia Minor, and on his return to Armenia in 1932, he published a book of poems on the liberation movement of the Near East

Music — An Unfinished Painting by the Soviet Artist, F. Bogorodski

His most important poem "Ramroyt" develops the theme of the awakening of feelings of class solidarity in a Hindu soldier who was among those ordered by the British forces in Shanghai to shoot a group of Chinese workers. His most popular poem "Djan Azerbaijan," set to music, is an expression of the peace and good feelings now existing between the various Caucasian nationalities under Soviet administration. This poem is sung all over Armenia.

Ghegam Sarian, a Persian Armenian, writes both refined oriental lyrics and poems on themes of socialism. Vagarshak Norents, once under the influence of French symbolists, now shows, particularly in his "Lori Valley," the upsurge of socialist construction and electrification Valuni and Agani are two young Komsomol poets.

Akop Akopian, Bolshevik is the father of proletarian poetry in Transcaucasia, and Elisha Charents is an exceedingly gifted poet who exerts a very great influence on all modern Armenian poets.

Victor Hugo Anniversary

The fiftieth anniversary of the death of Victor Hugo, great writer of the French, romantic school, was celebrated thruout the Soviet Union. There were many literary evenings, meetings, lectures and radio broadcasts. Several of his works were released in new editions.

At the literary evening organized by VOKS (Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries) to mark the memory of this great writer, the opening address was made by M. Charles Alphand, French ambassador to the USSR. He was followed by Arosev, chairman of VOKS. An analysis of Hugo's greatness was made in French by Professor Nusinov.

Later in the evening parts from the play *Marion de Lorme* were performed by a group from the Vakhtangov Theatre, including Honored Artist of the Republic A. A. Opochko, and artists Shikhmatov, Nal and Lobashov.

Special evenings were organized by the Union of Soviet Writers in a number of clubs and literary faculties.

The Academia Publishing House is releasing a new two-volume edition of Hugo's poems. Another volume of his poetry translated by Shengeli; is being issued by the State Literature Publishing House. The same house is publishing a volume edited by Professor Nusinov, containing, *The Man Who Laughs, Toilers of the Sea, Cromwell,* political and literary speeches made by Hugo, excerpts from his speeches in memory of Voltaire and Balzac, and *The King Amuses Himself.*

The Young Guard Publishing House is releasing a full translation of *Toilers of the Sea* in an edition of 5,000 copies.

A drawing by a ten year old child of the Soviet North shown at a recent Moscow exhibition

The Mali Theater, in honoring the memory of the great writer, plans to produce his *Ruy Blas* in the fall.

Chekhov Exhibition

A Chekhov exhibition, to mark the 75th anniversary of the birth of the great Russian writer opened in the State Literary Museum of the Lenin Library, Moscow. Prepared very strikingly, rich in material and splendidly arranged by the artist P. Pavlinov, the exhibition offers a full presentation of the personality and creative talents of the brilliant writer.

The exhibition covers the whole of Chekhov's life from the day of his birth in Taganrog to his death on a stifling July night in Badenweiler, Germany. It occupies two halls. It reflects the most important moments of the writer's life and all the phases in the evolution of his literary talent.

In the first hall, consisting of four sections, we find material characterizing the progress and development of Chekhov's literary gifts: newspapers, journals, books, photographs, manuscripts, notebooks, albums, diagrams, models, placards, portraits, pictures, sculpture and so on. Above the whole of this material is a placard bearing the inscription of Maxim Gorki: "No one has understood the tragedy of life's trifles so clearly and so subtly as A. Chekhov."

The first section is dedicated to the earliest period of the writer's activity (1880-1888) arranged from the viewpoint of the deadly aphorism of Chekhov about the epoch of Alexander III: "Russia is the land of officials." Represented here are all the small journals, humorous publications and newspapers in which Chekhov's early works were published.

The second section (1888-1900) opens with a no less ironical epigram by the writer: "Life, not prohibited by official circular, but also, not altogether permitted." These were the years of Chekhov's transition to the big press and large monthlies. Here are represented the friends of Chekhov: L. Tolstoi, M. Gorki, V. Korolenko and others, Remarkable is the definition of L. Tolstoi: "Chekhov is Pushkin in prose."

The third section introduces us to the creative laboratory of the writer and shows how Chekhov worked over his tales and plays. In this section, one's attention is held by a special album with notices about Chekhov by Lenin and Stalin.

The fourth section is devoted to the last works of Chekhov, the basic theme of which is the crisis of the old forms of life and the striving towards a new life. It is headed by the remarkable and prophetic remark of Chekhov: "A tremendous force is descending upon us, a healthy and severe storm is brewing and is already drawing nigh."

Dos Passos in Soviet Opera

The story of Elizabeth Trent, called "Daughter," in Dos Passos' *1919,* suggested to V. I. Stenich, Leningrad author and friend of the American writer, the plot of a new Soviet opera, for which A. S. Zhivitov, prominent Leningrad composer, is writing the music.

The aim, Stenich told a *Moscow Daily News* reporter, is to create a lyrical social drama depicting the fall of petty bourgeois democratic-pacifist illusions crushed by the Moloch of the war.

With this object in view, Dos Passos' original plot has been somewhat altered, eliminating the element of fate which plays a conspicuous part in his novel. Thus, in the opera, Elizabeth Trent will commit suicide instead of perishing in an airplane accident.

In an ambulance station near the front she meets her friend Jimmie Herf—a character

Another drawing by a ten-year old child of the Soviet North

borrowed from Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer.* This intellectual whom the same illusions drove to Europe dies in her presence.

In the revelling Paris of the Armistice days "Daughter" has lost all her illusions and everything seems hopeless. Finally, she commits suicide. Thus perishes the only simpathetic character of the play, while Savage, who manages to find his way into the suite of President Wilson, is shown on his way to success.

The score of the opera will be ready by 1936. Zhivotov refrains from the use of jazz and folk motives and aims at creating a lyrical emotional music. The opera will be produced at the Small Opera House, Leningrad, in the course of the 1936-37 season.

A Poetess Dresses an Old Opera

Vera Inber, Soviet poetess, listened to *Traviata* and wrote a new libretto for Verdi's 82-year-old score.

V. I. Nemirovich-Danchenko, in his new production of the opera, uses the Inber inspiration—and with amazing success.

One Soviet critic comments: "It's good theatre, but is it Verdi?"

Pavel A. Markov, who produced the opera under the direction of Nemirovich-Danchenko, replied to this challenge:

"The main task, as we saw it, was to get rid of the false in *Traviata,* in the libretto, setting and staging. For the score, we sought to return to the original and pure Verdi. We aimed to reach a complete unity in staging, acting and music—the acting to be in perfect accord with the music.

"After all, it is Verdi's music that is classic, that will live forever, not Pave's libretto. We consider the old plot obsolete, stale and sentimental. It had to have new life and that we gave to it. The old operas need a modern slant!"

The Soviet audience of today demands the classics, along with such contemporary operas as Shostakovich's *Katerina Izmailova,* Markov pointed out, for the classics are as necessary for the cultural development of the people as modern works.

The Films

F. Ermler, noted Soviet cinema director, holder of the Order of Lenin, says of his own work:

"In my pictures I always try to deal with actual concrete problems of present-day life. For example, *Children of Storm,* is built on the theme of mutual relations of our youth. In the same way, *Fragment of an Empire,* deals with the transition of the Soviet Union to reconstruction. *Counterplan* deals with socialist competition and the training of new people.

"And finally, my latest picture, *Peasants,* has for its theme the general Party line in the sowing, organization and strengthening of the collective farms, and the activities of the political department.

"We showed the picture in some collective farms of the Azov-Black Sea province and in Kiev and Moscow provinces. What the peasants themselves, the real live collective farmers, said about the picture, pleased me most of all."

Ermler has some definite ideas about the direction in which Soviet films must go. He says:

"We need three kinds of pictures. First, the defense film of the *Chapayev* type; second, pictures about the country—pictures which will educate the consciousness of the peasant masses, showing the new socialist man growing up in the new country. And finally, we need pictures that will educate the emotions.

"Personally, this third question seems to me to be the most pressing. My next production will be devoted to this theme. I shall make a picture about the famous people of our country. I want my picture to develop new emotions in those who are still psychologically burdened by survivals from capitalist society.

"The picture should show that proletarian nobility is distinctly different from the nobility of the old bourgeois world."

Eisenstein's New Film

S. Eisenstein, eminent movie director returned from Bezhin Lug District (Moscow Province) where he intends to make his next film, *Bezhin Lug.* Eisenstein accompanied by Rzheshevski, a scenario writer, collected the necessary material for his film particularly noting the life of the district during the spring sowing campaign.

Asked what he has been doing recently, Eiseinstein declared, "I have been studying the theory of art and have been giving much of my time to pedagogical work in the State Institute of the Cinema. I was put in charge of a director's course and I tackled the problem of training new young directors.

"My book on the theory of cinema directing will be published shortly. The subject matter for this book is based on lectures which I gave to students of the Institute.

"Many have reproached me for being an 'office scientist,' for locking myself inside four walls. This is incorrect. In studying, I have added valuable information to my present knowledge of cinema theory.

"At the recent conference of cinema workers, I pledged that I would shortly join the others in production work. Three months have passed. Now I have received a really fine scenario. Like other fine scenarios, it is quite simple in idea. Alexander Rzheshevski, the author, took one corner of our great country, which Turgenyev wrote about in his *Notes of a Hunter,* studying those places described by Turgenyev. In his scenario, one sees present-day Bezhin Lug.

"The scenario is dedicated to the bright memory of a great hero, Pavlik Morozov, a Pioneer who was killed by class enemies. *Bezhin Lug* must serve as a means of mobilizing nation-wide Bolshevik vigilance, of mobilizing all our strength for the construction of socialism.

"Not In War — simply sent against the strikers" — A drawing by the American artist, William Groppe1

"I am calling upon prominent stage actors to help me in this film. A number of parts in the film will be given to people working in socialist fields. The grade school of the Turgenyev Village Soviet will play a prominent role in the picture. This school was built by active members of local collective farms on the site of a former landlord's mansion.

"What is still more interesting is that children of this school have read *Bezhin Lug* and are showing keen interest in my work. And it was in this school that the hero of the film studied."

Editor-in-Chief SERGEI DINAMOV

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BY E. CLAY

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