International Literature

5

1943

THE STATE LITERARY PUBLISHING HOUSE
Printed in the Soviet Union

CONTENTS

No. 5 May 1943

TOPICS OF THE DAY

ILYA EHRENBURG — The Fate of Europe 3
NICHOLAS TIKHONOV — Leningrad—Volkhov 7
ILYA BACHELIS — In the Donets Basin 12
ARKADI PERVENTSEV — In the Freed Lands of the Kuban. 15

BELLES-LETTRES

LEONID SOBOLEV — A Battalion of Four 18
ALEXANDER DOVZHENKO — His Mother 24
VILIS LACIS — It Happened at Sea 28
FYODOR PANFYOROV — His Little Daughter 33

POETRY

JOHANNES BARBARUS — Night 39

FRONT AND REAR

ROMAN KARMEN — The Last Hours 40
A. KALININ — In the Wake of the German Butchers. 45
A. SOFRONOV — A Formidable Force 52
K. ALEXANDER — The Germans in Kalinin 56
NINA IVANTER — Children of Our Time 59

BOOKS AND WRITERS

LEONID TIMOFEYEV — Karl Marx on Literature 63
R. MILLER-BUDNITSKAYA — "Unconquerable Caucasus" 66
JANIS NIEDRE — Latvian Literature During the Great Patriotic War 69
NATALYA KAMIONSKAYA — Unsubdued Norway 70

IN MEMORIUM

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH — Rachmaninov 72
SERGEI BOGOMAZOV — A Life Devoted to Art 73

NEWS AND VIEWS 76

Address: "International Literature," P. O. Box 527, Moscow
Cable address: Interlit, Moscow

THE FATE OF EUROPE

I paid a visit to the Gzhatsk district which has been liberated from the Germans. The word "desert" is hardly adequate to convey the spectacle of a great cataclysm, of a terrible catastrophe, that meets the eye as soon as you reach places where Germans have ruled for seventeen months.

This was once a thriving, cheerful district. The milk from its pampered pedigree Schwyz cows was sent to Moscow. Tailors and needlewomen, pastmasters of their craft, used to come from Gzhatsk to the capital. Ancient and modern were always curiously intermingled in our country. Here in Gzhatsk side by side with the old cathedral of the Virgin Mary of Kazan and the dark squat little wooden houses towered spacious new buildings, the school, the club, the hospital, flooded with light. In Gzhatsk there were the most qualid of miry alleys, and there were lads who dreamed of flight to the stratosphere.

Now, in the place where the town once stood, there is only unsightly monstrous pile of broken iron girders, smoke-blackened stone, crushed rubble. Gzhatsk is still marked on the map, it is still imprinted upon human hearts, but it has gone from the face of the earth. It has been destroyed by the most up-to-date technical methods applied by the vandals of our time. They blew up nurseries and churches with explosive. Bursting into the houses, they smashed the windows, poured petrol over the walls and delighted in the new kind of "Bengal lights" they had produced. Gzhatsk burned. Half the villages in the district burned too; only ones to survive were those from which the Germans had taken to their heels under the pressure of the advancing Red Army.

The people who survived were few, for the Germans had driven six thousand Russians from Gzhatsk to Germany. Visions of the Dark Ages, of the dawn of man's history involuntarily pass before the mind's eye. Vain were all the mothers' attempts to save their children from the German slave-traders. Mothers buried their boys in the snow; they froze to death. Mothers hid their little girls in the hay, but the Germans plunged their bayonets into the stacks. Through the streets of Gzhatsk went lads of twelve and thirteen, urged on by German rifle-butts; the Germans were driving children to slavery. Sometimes they drove away whole families, whole villages. The rural district was soon deserted. Hunger, jail fever, diphtheria and the Gestapo torture-chambers did their work.

But, perhaps, no less frightful than physical extermination is the moral crushing of human dignity. What frightens you when you enter a town just liberated from the Germans is not only the sight of ruins and corpses: what frightens you is the sight of human eyes in which all the light seems to have been quenched. People talk in whispers, start at every footfall, recoil from every shadow.

That is what I saw in Gzhatsk. That is what I saw, too, in Kursk. At the outbreak of the war newspapers talked of what fascism was bringing the world. Now we see what fascism has brought the regions captured by the Germans. The word "death" belongs too much to life; here it is out of place, it is better to say extinction, the abyss; and the old peasant woman was right when she told me mourn-

fully that the Germans were "worse than death."

Looking westward, you see frightful scenes, somewhere far away lies another Kursk, another Gzhatsk like this. At first they are called by names familiar to us, Minsk or Chernigov. Later the names alter. That charred pile was once the French city of Arras. Those people who were shot have been brought from the Czech town of Tabor. In the extreme west of Brittany, there is a cape of Europe jutting out to face the New World. The French called it by the Latin word "Finistère" (finis terrae) which means the end of the earth. From Gzhatsk to Brest and to Finistère reigns the same night, the same desolation, the same scenes of ghastly mockery, slaughter, barbarity. The "earth's end" has become the end of the vast European night.

We are passionately attached to our land, our sources, our history. We are proud of our Slavonic Hellas—Kiev Rus, of the grace of the cathedral of St. Sophia, the Lament of Yaroslavna, the classic, clear-cut quality of Andrei Rublyov, Novgorod's civic liberties, and the military renown of Alexander Nevsky and Dmitry Donskoy. But we have never drawn a dividing line between our culture and the European; we are linked to it not by wires and railways, but by a system of blood-vessels and convolutions of the brain. We have been both the diligent pupils and teachers of Europe. Only an ignoramus could present Russia as a child, admitted only some two hundred years ago to the school of culture. The testament of ancient Greece, cradle of Europe's consciousness, reached us not by way of Rome of the conquerors and legislators, but by way of Byzantium of the philosophers and ascetics. We have only to compare the paintings of Andrei Rublyov with the frescoes of the early Renaissance masters—Cimabue or Giotto—to see how much closer the old Russian art was to the spirit of Hellas with its clearness and gaiety.

When Russia astounded the world in the nineteenth century with the heights of thought and word, this was not a birth, this was maturity. Who shall say what moved Pushkin more: Byron's verse or the fairy tales his old nurse Arina told him? The progressive minds of nineteenth century Russia, ardent patriots as they were, shared Europe's passions, her hopes, her woes. They contributed to European consciousness strong Russian emotion, truthfulness, humanity. In Belinsky's "vehemence," in Chernyshevsky's asceticism, in the Russian revolutionaries' heroism, we discern not only the gifts of the West, the heritage of humanism and the French Revolution: we feel also the search for truth that was the historic path of Russian culture: "the seekers of the city." That is why Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky and Chekhov, Chaikovsky and Moussorgsky enriched any cultured European, gave profundity and breadth to the very conception of Europe. That is why Lenin lives as the example of State genius of Russia and the peak of European and human thought.

Not only because we have our Gzhatsk, Kharkov and Minsk do we understand the sorrows of France, but also because the fate of European culture is infinitely dear to us. We remember that the Decembrists were inspired by the "Declaration of Rights," that Turgenev was the friend and inspirer of France's best writers. We are not mere onlookers at Europe's tragedy.

For a thousand days the Germans have been trampling the European countries they have conquered. A thousand days, I repeat. Terrible now is the continent that until a short while ago was so flourishing, so varied. Death is monotonous. The sight of Voronezh, Vyazma, Istra, is sufficient to give an idea of innumerable European cities. Neither the Germans nor their henchmen can restore what has been destroyed: all their efforts are directed towards further destruction. Thus, to this day Spanish Guernica is only charred ruins, Almeria's streets are rubbish-heaps. In these five years General Franco has never been able

to rebuild Barcelona or Madrid. The Spaniards cannot put their house in order because they are obliged to wait upon the German administrative service and die outside Leningrad for the sake of Berlin. The ruins of Rotterdam are twins of the ruins of Belgrade. Northern France, which was once reminiscent of a stone ant-hill where the streets of one town led into the streets of another, has become a stony desert. The towns on the Atlantic seaboard are shattered and burnt.

And what has become of the people? A Gzhatsk woman whose four children had been carried away by the Germans, and whose home had been burned down, said to me: "A house can be got, but you can't go on living without children." The Germans have encroached not only upon the ancient stones of Europe, they have trampled her body, her youth, her children. People have been deprived of the most elementary right, the right to live on their native soil. *La Voix du Nord*, a French paper published illegally, informs us that in Lille and Valenciennes professors of Kiev University and girl students from Kharkov and Minsk are doing penal labour. French engineers and workers brought from Paris by the Germans are pining in the munition works of the town of Zaporozhie. Hitler is driving a trade in slaves. He has sent Poles to the Finnish forests and Slovenes as navvies on earth-works in Poland. Alsatians are sent to the Ukraine to build German roads. Belgian lacemakers are digging Lituanian soil. Germans carry out street-raids in French towns, seize all the able-bodied and drive them eastward into slavery. Ten thousand captives are carried away daily from France. The lament of Gzhatsk mothers resounds like an echo in Lyon, but it is not an echo, it is the lament of the mothers of Lyon.

"Our times can only be compared to the years of plague and black-death in the Middle Ages," writes the *Journal de Genève*. There was once a French king who said: "I wish that every peasant may have a chicken in his pot on Sundays." Before the Germans came there were thirty-seven thousand fowls in Gzhatsk. Now there are only a hundred and ten. . . A short time ago I read a very detailed article in a German economic journal on the disappearance of eggs in Europe. Some "herr doktor" or other analyzed the question of the position eggs occupied in international trade, and concluded gloomily: "New exports must be found for Denmark, France and the Protectorate." These "exports" have been found: they are slaves. It is worth while noting, however, that in considering the reasons for the disappearance of eggs from Europe the German "scholar" omitted to mention one: the chicken-eating German soldiers.

What do the people of Europe eat these days? The French have eaten all the stocks of fodder-turnips, they have eaten crows, they have eaten sparrows too. In the South people eat grass, which they call "Salade Laval"; in the North they subsist on acorns and tree-bark ground fine. Maddened by hunger, the people of Greece are devouring shrubs. Phantoms roam the streets of Athens: shadow-like scientists, workers, artists and artisans. They are not taken into any employment because they have not sufficient strength even to lift a spade. They beg for charity, and the German soldiers kick them away like dogs. There are no more dogs, by the way: they have all been eaten.

Deadly diseases strike down those whom the slave-owners have left in their own country. For, like plague-bearing rats, the Germans have brought infection with them. In what was once well-fed, rosy-cheeked Holland, the country of "Van Houten's Cocoa," tuberculosis has spread on a truly formidable scale. In the Hague alone seventeen thousand cases of an acute form of tuberculosis were noted for the first nine months of 1942. In France, according to figures quoted in the controlled newspaper *Sept Jours*, there are one million persons suffering from an acute form of tuberculosis. The

number of those suffering from syphilis has increased twelve times, the number of those suffering from skin-diseases, thirty times. There is no soap. There are no medicines. There is no bread. One-third of the population of Greece has been swept away by hunger and epidemics. Diphtheria has attacked Poland and Czechoslovakia, there is no inoculation, and sixty percent of the children die.

But more terrible still is the life of those Europeans who have been uprooted by the Germans. Half-a-million French slaves have died already in Germany, two million are awaiting death. "We are living in a horrible barrack among human excrement and lice. We are given broth brewed from potato-peelings to eat, and beaten across the back with sticks," says a Frenchman who escaped from Germany. (See *Le Document*, March, 1943.) The German *Danziger Vorposten* recently reported that two Serbs had been sentenced to imprisonment for what it termed "a barbarous act": they had eaten a kitten belonging to a Danzig woman.

Europe is over-run with street-waifs. A correspondent of the *National-Zeitung* writes that in France he encountered "mobs of wild children, who fled shrieking whenever anyone approached them." In the Salpetrière Hospital, Paris, there are 286 girls between the ages of nine and fourteen suffering from syphilis. Two boys, one aged eight, the other eleven, were arrested in Marseilles on a charge of committing several murders. In Serbia these waifs roam the streets in bodies of twenty or thirty. Instances of cannibalism were noted among street-waifs in Greece.

Is it necessary to speak of the cultural relapse? Schools and universities are either closed or turned into hotbeds of hitlerite ignorance. In the *Marseillaise*, there is a description of a lecture by a "professor" of the Collège de France. "He explained at some length that when the chin was not clearcut and the line of the oval somewhat wavy, it was a sign of impurity of race. This took place in the halls where once the mathematician Poincaré, the chemist Perrin, the physicist Langevin lectured. The *Dépêche de Toulouse* remarks dolefully: "Among the young men who passed the graduation examinations, the standard of education observed is deplorably low." After the hitlerite "purging," the book stocks of Czech libraries were reduced seventy per cent. I happened to see some of the books published in France during the German occupation. Of the ideas they contained I shall not speak. Even the books on philosophy are full of that cattle-breeding feeling that seems inevitable in "neo-Europe." I am speaking of something else: these books were written by savages. Every schoolboy in France used to express himself able and well. Now even "writers" in France are unable to say what they want. For a thousand days is a fairly long time. In a thousand days you can learn a great deal and you can unlearn a great deal.

The institution of hostages, the spectacle of executions and torture, deform the souls of the weak. Children see the gallows. Adolescents are bullied: "If you betray your father, you will receive a tin of food and a bottle of wine. If you don't, we'll take you to the Gestapo, where they know how to drive pins under your fingernails." Terror deforms people. Some become cowardly, some pathologically cruel. Standards of behaviour disappear, the foundations of any social life are shaken. Europe is thus exposed to infection, ready for corruption of the tissues to set in, ready for anarchy.

Europe does not want to die. Spilling their blood freely, the partisans of France and Yugoslavia fight on. There are still many sound, healthy cells. The red corpuscles are struggling against the leucoemia. The heritage of the centuries, Europe's splendid past is resisting the brown plague's onslaught. Europe can be saved. But time is preciou . It would

be absurd to think that the nations who have endured a thousand days can endure another thousand. This spring the defenders of life and culture, the nations who are fighting fascist death, are confronted by one formidable word: time!

Regarding the ultimate victory of the anti-hitlerite coalition, no one entertains the slightest doubt. Stalingrad was its brilliant prologue. The Red Army and the country supporting it showed their spiritual strength and resolution. We know that with our allies we are dealing the hitlerite war machine its death-blow. But the Sleeping Beauty must be set free from the thrall before she is a dead beauty: I am speaking of Europe held in fascist thrall. Victory is not sufficient, we must preserve those vital forces that will enable Burgundy's vinegrowers to plant their vines again, Norway's fishermen to cast their nets again, Europe's stone masons to rebuild cities and scholars to hand on the half-extinguished torch of knowledge to the new generation. Bitter indeed will be this dearly-won victory if there are neither doctors, nor artists, nor wine-distillers, nor electrotechnicians left in France! . .

In Smolensk, Orel and Kursk districts I have seen villages that survived because the Germans hadn't time to burn them. The Red Army saved many precious things from destruction. It has saved millions from physical or moral death. The armies of the anti-hitlerite coalition could save Europe, her people, her culture, her soul. There is something dear to all the enemies of fascism. The scholars of Oxford and Leningrad know what the Sorbonne and the Pasteur Institute mean. In London people like Čapek's plays, but without Prague alive and free there can be no Čapek. Without a France alive and free Americans can never see pictures by Matisse or Marquet. No matter how this or that State thinker may conceive the future of European States, this future can only rest on culture, on standards of social life, on human dignity. Houses of widely differing architectural styles may be built out of stone. But there is no stone in a desert, there is only sand, and nothing can be built out of sand.

Never before has spring time wrought so strongly in the blood of old Europe. The spring of 1943 comes to Europe not only as a change of season, as a flood-time of cosmic life. Spring time arrives like a summons to the last decisive conflict, like the dawn of resurrection-day.

ILYA EHRENBURG

LENINGRAD—VOLKHOV

It was a bleak morning, in January, when we set out from Leningrad.

Nebulous wisps of mist were drifting over the ground, gathering into dense masses, then floating apart suddenly to give momentary glimpses of scraps of scenery, stern symbols of war: buildings blasted by bombs, the wooden fixtures wrenched off for fuel, the white turrets of tanks on their way to the front, columns of marching tommy-gunners, ski troops gliding silently over the white expanses of the fields, covered lorries with their Red Cross plainly visible. We passed what had once been a grove, part of the green belt around this northern capital; the trees had now been felled to the ground, this had been done by the women of Leningrad. The timber had been used for gun emplacements, blindages, and for roads across the swamps over we've just passed on our way to one of the crossings over the Neva.

The crossing! Such a simple, everyday word! But on the Neva from September, 1941, this word had stood for battles, or for the explosions of shells, the scream of bombs, and the heroic efforts of thousands of fighting men. Smashed boats and

dead bodies would float down the river. Both banks of the Neva were about on the same level, and to reach the water safely from this height was impossible. The road ran parallel with the river bank, but no sign of life was there on it. People passed along the communication trench running alongside it, their heads level with the surface of the road skimmed by whistling bullets. In winter time, lumps of broken ice would fly through the air, and only through the glass of the stereoscopic tubes could one catch the sparkle of similar tubes from the enemy's observation posts. The right bank rose like a fortress wall, apparently as void of life as the left. A white pace of death hung over the frozen river.

The first sign that brought home to us the sharp realization that the blockade was broken was the matter-of-fact movement of the man regulating the traffic, the little red flags indicating the way to the crossing. The sappers have built a road down the high bank to the river. It is not a difficult road to take, but the driver has to be careful, especially at night. There are many crossings like this. Our car drove onto the ice and crossed to the left bank. It was the same path our men had followed when they had stormed the position. These nine hundred yards they had had to cross in four minutes while bullets whistled and shell burst all around. To lie flat on the ice was fatal. Some companies lay down, unable to bear up under the hurricane fire, and suffered heavily. Reaching the bank, the men were faced with a steep wall of ice dotted with low bushes up which they clambered as up the buttress of a fort.

Coughing and creaking, the machine scaled the left bank, and we entered the forest filled with traces of yesterday's battle and echoing with the thunder of the cannonade still continuing not far away.

For sixteen months the Germans had occupied this forest, had had things all their own way there.

This plundered land of the Neva has known all the horrors of fascist barbarism, but it has also known the sweetness of vengeance. Leningrad army men passed here on their drive to join up with the men of the Volkhov front. Here, on this high bank of the Neva, they moved down the Germans with bullet and cold steel. There are the bodies of enemy gun crews, half covered with the drifting snow, the bodies of Huns who had called themselves grenadiers, the bodies of Pomeranians who had come to plunder Russian land. The Pomeranian camp, as it was called, in this forest contained hundreds of lorries, great piles of sacks containing flour and oats and bearing the accursed swastika, motor-cycles, stacks of weapons, shells, cases filled with cartridges and more shells, with tinned food, cigarettes, and "ersatz" of various kinds. All this the Germans had abandoned when they took to their heels.

As our car moves on, a solid block rises from the ice of the Neva on our right, like a building erected by giants: the Schlüsselburg fortress. It is of the eighteenth century, with high walls and towers, but there is little of the old-time military romance apparent now in this heaps of ruins, battered yet indomitable. The fortress withstood the enemy's pounding like some gigantic blockhouse, and all force of hundreds of shells and bombs could not shake the resistance of its defenders. The Baltic marines and the Leningrad infantry held the fortress.

About two hundred yards away is the town of Schlüsselburg, or, rather, all that remains of it. Thousands of its inhabitants have been driven off to the slave markets of Germany. The majority were killed in the Gestapo torture chambers, and the two hundred and sixty people who remained were driven to the outskirts of the town and out to forced labour. Up to two o'clock

they were allowed to move about in the neighbourhood of their huts; after that hour any appearance on the street was punished with instant death.

With the town in their hands, the Germans considered that they had locked the gates to Leningrad and put the key in their pocket. From here they held the Leningrad road under fire, and it was here that they awaited the capitulation of the mighty city.

Commander Trubachov's men broke into the town from two sides. On the streets bitter fighting raged and among the ruins of the calico factory, along the canals, on the landing stages with their open style of construction that make them look like gigantic summer houses. The Pomeranian grenadiers were ferretted out of all their corners, and in the end made a dash for it. Units advancing south-east of the town caught them in the rear, and frozen bodies littering the streets and fields bear witness to their end. Drunk, they fought with a ferocious desperation, and were killed like mad dogs. There they lie, snow drifting into their gaping mouths. Our men passing by, eye them with disgust.

German heavy artillery still hammers away in helpless rage, but the roll of its thunder grows ever weaker, drowned by the continual roar of our guns. Our car passes along the Schlüsselburg streets, swings over a hump-backed bridge and comes out on a straight road that disappears far in the snowy distance. The path to this road was bought at the price of hard fighting, with blood and iron, with skill and courage. On the right is the place of that historic meeting of the fighters of the two fronts. Masters of all forms of art will return again and again to this spot. For this is an event that will never fade from the memory of the Russian people. Commanders and men of the two fronts embraced on this snow-covered field strewn with enemy dead and the mangled wrecks of his weapons, amid the bursting of shells, in the thunder of battle gradually drawing away to the south. It was a terrific effort. This was a victory of which the whole world speaks with admiration for the heroism and staunchness of Soviet fighting men.

The road stretches ahead into the distance, empty of traffic. Only one or two cars have passed this way so far, we are one of the first to take this road along Lake Ladoga. Only the previous evening the last fifty mines had been removed from here, fifty of the four thousand odd that had been found in the environs of Schlüsselburg. On the right is a deep snow-filled hollow, then a high bank, then another hollow. These are the old Ladoga canals. The black bow of a boat rears above the snow, there is a small tug, barges, little bridges. The snow stretches an unbroken blanket of white. No trace of human life is there in all this desert expanse, only a flock of blue-black crows, gorged with carrion, flutter silently over the empty wastes. A primeval silence seems to envelop the road on both sides.

Fishermen, small handicraftsmen, potters, pilots and porters used to live in this district before. In the summer the place was full of life; in the winter lorries raced along, and the snow crunched under the runners of collective-farm sleds, while turf-cutters from the workers' settlements made their way on foot to the town. The Germans have driven all life from this place.

We are passing along a neutral zone, for the men of the two fronts, the Leningrad and the Volkhov, are now fighting further south. Suddenly there appears at the cross-roads a figure in a snug jacket with a traffic-regulator's hand on the arm-band. The figure approaches, and we can see a girl's merry eyes and bright cheeks reddened with the frost. A traffic regulator of the Volkhov front. On the banks of a canal to our left rise cottages of the village of Lipka, tak-

en by the men of the Volkhov front, while ahead of us stretches the road, the free road, which could take us straight to Moscow if we wished.

Here are the gloomy, treacherous forests and swamps south of Lake Ladoga, where one not intimate with the paths could drown in summer time, or be caught and sucked under in the sticky, impassable moss-covered mud. Thick rings of trees, reminiscent of a tropical jungle, surround deep hollows. There are no landmarks, one patch of swamp is exactly like another. Even in winter, not all of them are frozen through, and on the stony hillocks the Germans had constructed a deep line of dug-in positions. The men of the Volkhov front stormed and pierced this fortified line, fighting day and night up to their knees in snow, sleeping around camp-fires in the hollows, commanders and men together, and in the end smashing through the German defences with fire and steel.

Furious battles raged here in the bitter frosts and the biting Ladoga winds, and here once again the fighting qualities of the Russian soldier and the shattering might of our artillery showed their worth. The Germans dashed about the frozen fields in panic, flinging themselves this way and that in a vain effort to escape our withering fire, abandoning the wreckage of their guns and smashed lorries, hurtled hither and thither by the explosions. The Germans had constructed blindages, had burrowed underground, had brought furniture, cooking utensils, blankets, cushions, doors, windows, stoves, everything they needed, in a word had made themselves thoroughly comfortable. They had made themselves nice and cosy, but all these underground lairs were filthy and lice-infested to the last degree. They did not get far from these blindages, they were accounted for in the snow and the swamps. But in their flight they did not forget their cunning. The headman of a workers' township captured by our men admitted that the Germans had left a battery of heavy guns in perfect order in the forest, just in case they returned. That "in case" will not come off! The battery is finished with, just like the enemy division which held this line. German cunning was not successful.

There was the familiar sight of German horrors: a deep pit half-filled with snowdrifts, surrounded by barbed-wire entanglements over six feet high with twisted spikes on top. In the corners of the pit are shields made of plywood, the back walls are also of plywood, the roof of plywood, but there the sides are open. The whole thing is like a cage in a zoo. This is where our Soviet war prisoners lived in the winter. Here the Germans brought people to slow and certain death. It is hard to believe one's eyes, but the rags and remains of footwear and other scraps of rubbish show plainly that not long ago people were sitting on this plywood, people on the verge of death, who were rescued by our men.

This is a sight to bring our men's fighting spirit to white heat! One's fingers itch to kill the dead Huns a second time, to impale them, burn them and scatter the ashes to the winds. It was a hard battle that the men of the Volkhov front fought, but they smashed through all obstacles and pushed forward to free Leningrad. Not one was there who flinched, whose courage failed him. The spoils of their victory can be seen everywhere. On one side is a long column of abandoned lorries, on another a battery, further on a stack of cartridge cases in straw containers, abandoned dumps.

Our men clad in their warm jackets and felt boots pass the stiff bodies of the Germans, glancing at them with loathing. The Germans are clad anyhow: the soldiers in boots, the officers in jack-boots, their heads swathed in scarves or rags, blankets round their should-

Men and officers of the Leningrad and Volkhov fronts meet

ers under their white camouflage suits, their boots wound round with straw, some of them wearing "ersatz" felt boots or thick leggings, more like old men suffering from gout than soldiers. They fought with the desperation of bandits who see their end approaching. When the German blindages were captured during the night, heavy German fire was turned on the district. Evidently, there was someone correcting the aim. Our men combed all this underground labyrinth and found a radio-operator, his face distorted with rage, who had thought to draw the fire on the blindages, force our men to withdraw, and himself escape. That trick did not come off, and the shooting ceased as suddenly as it had begun.

If you stand on the huge rampart beyond which the wide peat-covered plain extends, cut by dozens of canals and narrow-gauge railways, a scene of bitter fighting unfolds before your eyes. The cold grey wintry skies vibrate with the roar of engines and the bursting of shells, as air battles rage incessantly overhead, while the black smoke from AA guns hangs motionless as though frozen along the heavy clouds in whose lower strata the fire of the battle raging below is reflected as in burnished metal.

One major whom I knew showed me a silver wineglass, saying:

"You know, this isn't just an ordinary wineglass. Last winter, when things were so hard in Leningrad, I was in the city and learned quite by chance that the girl next door was dying. She was extremely glad when I went to see her, saying: 'Now I can die happy, since in my last moments I can talk to one of those defending our city.' I sent for the doctor and helped her all I could. The girl recovered. Through my brother, who is working in Leningrad, I received this wineglass from the girl on my birthday, with a note: 'A souvenir and earnest of the day when we shall meet again in liberated Leningrad and drink to victory.' I have treasured this wineglass, and I am confident that we

shall meet again when Leningrad is finally liberated."

The blockade is broken, but it is not yet lifted. The steel web which the brown gnomes have woven around the valiant city must be smashed and smashed again. But the road, the road to and from Leningrad is already free from the Ladoga side. The forest shakes with the barrage. Red streaks flash between the trees, small sparks wink on them like mysterious signals: electric lamps giving the direction for firing at night. Huge boulders seem to poke out from the bushes, boulders with the barrels of guns protruding from them. These are no boulders, these grey shapes are tanks ready for action. Silently, like spectres, tommy-gunners pass by, their white jackets merging with the surrounding snow a few paces away.

A night battle is on. But no longer on the Volkhov front. It is the Leningrad front again. These two fronts are one now. Beyond the forest is a plain covered with bushes, seething with the explosions of artillery and mortar shells. The Germans drop flares. The forest is alive with the night fighting. The tensity of battle is in the scouts creeping amid snow-drifts and hollows, in the headquarters' blindage where the red arrows indicate our units' advance.

And while this tense night battle goes on, there is one word which returns again and again to the minds of commanders and men, the word "victory." It has been attained in hard-fought battles, and here they are on the left bank, with whole caravans of lorries passing over the Neva ice, men passing to and from the rear, the traffic regulator directing the traffic on the bank where for months no living being had been able to show his nose without getting hit. Each one, as he treads the liberated Neva soil, as he continues the fight, remembers that the blockade is broken but not raised. To win complete liberation for the great city, this is their task, their duty, their objective. Nevertheless, there is a great joy in the thought that the Leningrad—Volkhov road is free, that one can travel from Leningrad to Moscow, to any city in the Soviet Union, that the blockade ring is broken, smashed. And when our car returns again to Leningrad under its night sky, this joy surges up with a fresh force. Leningrad fights on, and in this fight it will gain final and complete victory.

NICHOLAS TIKHONOV

IN THE DONETS BASIN

There it is, that splendid Ukrainian land stretching away beyond the Don steppes. You arrive in the wake of recent battles which have left behind them the still strange hush of the rear, light in the cottages, and peace beneath those roofs where for months dwelt bitterness, alarm, resentment and hatred.

The land that has been freed stretches for hundreds of kilometres, and the people here who were under the Germans still cannot believe that quietness of the rear, which came suddenly like recovery after the crisis of a serious illness.

The tidal-wave of the front swept over them and sped far ahead.

Road-marks trace throughout the snow-covered Don steppes, poles surmounted by bunches of straw, the steppe beacons show the way between village and village. Now the steppe has changed its "road-marks," has strung out along the roads the charred remains of various machines: burnt-out "Mercedes" and "Fiats," the wreckage of overturned, crushed, and battered engines of war ranging from guns to planes. The road presents a strange appearance. Hard-driving men are at the wheels of heavy,

elephantine lorries, spoils of war; nimble army cars whizz by with their German numbers still showing and their German identification marks unobliterated. The machines sweep on to the cross-roads where the yellowing German sign-posts still stand, and continue on their way guided by the wreckage along the roadside.

Villages flash by, and you get glimpses of window shutters with inscriptions in Gothic characters, thriftily made from packing-cases left by the Germans; or at a tiny hamlet where there are half a dozen cottages in all, your eye is caught with the unexpected word "Casino" in Latin characters.

The road leads to the west, the road along which the Red Army is driving the Germans. The road of the Red Army offensive!

A short month ago it was measured only in kilometres. In the units Red Army men spoke of their advance:

"D'you know how far we've come from the Don? It must be over four hundred kilometres."

Now they's an additional measuring scale:

"We passed through places the Germans had occupied for four months, then we took towns and villages the invaders had held for six months. Now we're driving them from places the scum have been at even longer. That's our present style of mathematics," explains Private Lisitsyn of the unit which took Krasny Liman. Ground gained is reckoned in calendar periods.

Women have still not wept all their tears, and are relating episodes from the fearful days under the Germans, fanning the men's anger. From them you hear how at the hamlet of Grizinov the German shot all the male population, 261 men. The nazi tommy-gunners drove them into a trench shouting: "Lie down quick! Closer, closer!" The men lay down in the grave themselves, and the tommy-gunners poured lead into them and placed the next victims on top. Then they drove out all the women and set fire to the hamlet. The Cossack wives will tell you of the massacre at Krasnovka, near Millerovo, in which hundreds of Soviet people perished.

The wounded Russian heart heals slowly, painful memories keep the wound open. The steppe alone has forgotten all and is basking in the sunshine, vast flat, its face shining like a child's. Rest has returned to it after all it has been through.

A rabbit hops calmly along the roadside on business bent, unafraid of the car, not even glancing round at the hum of the engine. The chauffeur tries to scare him with a shot, but fails to ruffle his serenity. He's used to shooting, too. That means it wasn't rabbits that were hunted here. In Millerovo children at play climb on the "Messerschmitts" and "Heinkels" the Germans hid in the yards, so far they are still there.

In Bolshaya Kamenka a peasant woman with a quick grasp of things explains:

"The Germans were advancing, transport columns one after another passed through our village, eighteen in all. Only two came back. We immediately realized what had happened. . ."

In the cottages the men are telling the tale. The battalion commander gives me tea and adds:

"Sorry I can't offer you lemon from the Caucasus, but you're welcome to Italian lemon."

Everywhere there are small, curious, but unmistakable signs of the offensive. German lorries, tanks and guns on the roads, innumerable trophies reveal the power and impetus of our offensive. And if in the steppe you meet two Cossack women in a mule-drawn sleigh, don't be astonished at mules on the Don.

The road of the offensive stretches from the Volga across the Don to the Donets and further to the west. The steppe becomes hilly, the car dives into a ravine and climbs the

first spurs of the Donets ridge. This is already the Ukraine. Our troops are steadily penetrating deeper into its expanses, daily regaining for the country town after town and village after village. The troops are fighting their way through the Voroshilovgrad and Stalino regions. At halts Red Army men improvise catchy rhymes:

To the Donets came Fritz,
Blitz, blitz!
We scuttled his boat
And he couldn't float.
That ended the Hun,
The scum!

The first outlines of the industrial Donets Basin come into view. Here is the boundary of the Donets Basin, a town, the gateway to the precious land of coal and iron. Factory chimneys stand out, silhouetted sharply against the sky-line, as yet uncrowned with smoke. The many-storeyed buildings of the department stores, clubs and institutes look at us, as it were, with blind eyes. Krasny Liman with its junction of railway lines, once a distributing centre through which passed powerful streams of freight, opens the first gates to the Donets Basin. Our units have already gained possession of Kramatorskaya, the first citadel of southern industry, a large centre of heavy machine-building. Ukraine, your heart is beginning to beat, the muscles of the Donets Basin are making their first movements and will soon drive the life-blood to colour your cheeks, and a sigh of relief will burst from your bosom.

Yesterday I was in Novo-Aydar, the birth-place of Pasha Angelina [1], the birth-place of the glorious women tractor-drivers' movement. At present our forces are cutting a road to the railway yard whence driver Krivonoss' engine once ran out and cheerily rattled over the whole country. And the turn of Irmino, the birth-place of the Stakhanovite movement, will also come. The battle in the Donets Basin is going ahead, and as a clever, gifted commander said to me, looking at the map:

"Our troops are carving out the Donets Basin as a Stakhanovite carves out a monster boulder from the coal-face. It's a kind of Stakhanovite method in strategy, a new revolutionary, super-fast method. We are already at the Germans' defence line of last year. The enemy has lost a year. More than that: he's lost the future."

But the enemy is stubborn, twisting and turning, darting from point to point, now here, now there, seeking a chance to make a come back. He's giving battle for the Donets Basin, and that battle is on today, and will continue tomorrow.

A German reconnoissance plane circles over Voroshilovsk. It is occupied by our troops, and the women in the cottage are busy with the children. Now the target-spotter has flown off the bombing will start. The nazi planes are haphazardly bombing villages, roads, woods, crossings, the ice on the river. They don't know what they are looking for and strike at random. At night several German tanks ranged along the road, first one way then the other, sometimes switching on their headlights, at others disappearing in the darkness; they ran up to a small village, fired a couple of rounds and hastily decamped. Fear is unsettling them completely. The Germans are rushing reinforcements from one sector to another. When street fighting was on in Krasnoarmeiskoye, the Germans bawled an "ultimatum" to our men:

"Clear off, or we'll pulverize you!"

Our battalion commander shouted back:

"We're not bad hands at that game ourselves, look out!" And Germans were soon hanging limply over the window-sills, hit by Soviet tommy-gunners.

While the fighting is still on, the howitzers bellowing, bombers circl-

[1] Soviet woman tractor-driver, a Stakhanovite in her branch.

ing above the road, and signal flares leaping into the air, people are wending their way over the newly beaten track in the snow, trailing behind them sledges laden with their scant belongings. They are moving westwards along the path of our offensive. in the wake of our forces. These people are returning to their homes after hiding from the Germans in the villages, in the forests, or wandering from village to village.

Now they are going home, to the boarded-up cottages over which tomorrow will drift the smoke of a warm hearth. The people move in unending succession along the highways and by-ways, without giving so much as a glance at the planes or halting at the shattering roar of a bomb. They march straight ahead, part of our offensive. Above the entrance of a familiar house they see a small red flag: the village Soviet is already in charge. Soviet government has here returned to the captured Ukrainian soil.

It has been sorrowed over, saturated with tears and blood, that generous land bearing grain and coal, apples and ore, and lilting free-flowing song. The grain is still hidden from the foe, the coal has shrunk back into the demolished pits, the apple-trees are awaiting spring, song was stifled in captivity. But already the tractors are being got under cover, plans for the spring sowing drawn up, and the railway lines restored. The heart of the Donets Basin will beat again, the song revive. For that the battle is being fought in the work-a-day Donets Basin, in the splendid Ukrainian land.

ILYA BACHELIS

Back in their village cleared of the Germans

IN THE FREED LANDS OF THE KUBAN

Insulted and abused, scorched by suffering and burning with hatred, a great joy has at last come to our Kuban country. After Cherkessk, Armavir, Kropotkin, Tikhoretsk, Maikop and Eisk, Krasnodar, the Kuban's age-old capital, has been recaptured.

When in those never-to-be-forgotten days of August and September our troops, fighting a rearguard action and hitting back at the oncoming foe, withdrew to the mountainous part of the country, to the Terek and to the sand-hills of West Daghestan, the flame of heroic Stalingrad was lit in the hearts of the men, filled with both valour and bitterness.

The unprecedented resistance put up at the bend in the Volga indicated that it was from there, as in historic days, that vengeance would strike the enemy.

We believed in the city of Stalin, we remembered that city. Twice it saved our Soviet region from slavery and death.

In 1918 and the beginning of 1919 the unparalleled resistance of Tsaritsyn to the furious onslaughts of the white-guards infused courage into the troops of the North-Caucasus Republic, who were half surrounded and cut off from the railways, while direct aid from Stalin in the form of men, advice and guns made it possible for hundred of thousands from the Kuban and Stavropol to escape destruction and retire to the Volga, into Soviet Russia.

The Kuban people also remember that the invasion of the Kuban failed to take place not only because, in the first place, the people's guard of men of the Kuban, Stavropol and Terek, organized at the call of Lenin and Stalin, moved to meet the foe, but because, secondly, the formidable stronghold of Stalingrad (Tsaritsyn) stood on the flank of the German generals' "Indian" campaign.

Last autumn the Red Army halted with its back hard up against the Caucasian range, at the rocky banks of the Terek; under no circumstances were the mountain passes and the road across the Caspian to fall into the enemy's hands. By an immense effort our country's patriots not only threw up strong fortifications at the passes and their approaches, but also in the lowlands. Just as in ancient times, so now the "iron gates" of Derbent were firmly closed. Still the main "fortifications" were men who had tasted the bitterness of retreat, who had aged several years in that one bitter summer.

The whole country, indeed, the whole world, followed the battles at the Terek in Kabardino-Balkaria, in the mountain passes at Tuapse and Klukhor. The Germans were halted, but they were still strong, and the blow they were to be dealt was thoroughly prepared. The power of the blow can now be clearly estimated by its results. The Germans resisted furiously. Those who know the theatre of hostilities in the North-Caucasus know also what herculean efforts, valour, military skill and experience were needed to break the enemy's resistance, drive him out onto the plain, and, ably employing deep raids, pincer movements and detours, dislodge the enemy from these areas. A tremendous military task fell to the lot of our men. We people of the Kuban may doff our caps and bow before the heroes of the North-Caucasus front.

Side by side with the infantry, tank and aircraft divisions fought the Cossack units who have written splendid new pages in the history of our country and the history of Cossacks.

The offensive begun at the signal of Stalingrad, according to the plan of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, the storm of the huge territory from Kazbek to the Azov sea and the Don, began in winter time. And through the snow blizzard, the "shurgan," lord of the winter steppes, the famous Cossack guardsmen cut their way through to their native stanitsas (Cossack villages). The stern-browed riders, sons of a new, tumultuous glory, borne forward by unappeasable hatred for the enslavers, fought their way over an expanse truly stupendous for cavalry. "Cossacks!" the Germans cried in terror, as the riders swept out of the snow-storms.

Families, harassed and suffering, awaited their champions, their men. But before them was a high objective, to free from the German tormentors the entire Soviet country, which had become a thousand times dearer after all the grief and suffering borne. "My wife rushed from the cottage," wrote a Cossack of a Kuban division to me recently, "she had only Kolka, our younger child, with her; the second, little Ksyusha, you remember her,

wasn't with her. We had to dislodge some Huns who were entrenched in the shop and the granary, and I couldn't pause for a second. I shouted as loud as I could: 'Liza, where's Ksyusha?' She threw up her hands, and I believe she fell. I couldn't be sure as I galloped past, I had to get at the Huns. And then we swept on in pursuit and the command to halt didn't come till we reached the hamlet on the Buzinka, a collective farm-hamlet ten kilometres from ours. So we didn't see each other, and I did so want to. Afterwards I learned that when the Germans were coming my little girl clung to somebody and got lost. Evidently she got swept away in the crush, and she'd have been just eleven come May. . ."

I've quoted this letter, written by a rank-and-file Cossack, not only to portray his grief, but his strength of spirit and sense of duty. Don't be sad, Cossack women, wives and mothers, if in the heat of battle your dear man, whom you've so long awaited, sweeps by and can't spare a moment for you. Ahead are the stanitsas of the Sech and Azov regions which are still polluted by enemy's presence, which your man must liberate, ahead are Novorossiisk, Anapa, Taman, Temryuk, and the bountiful Ukraine, groaning under the hated yoke of the foreign invaders.

There will be another hour of general rejoicing after the complete liberation of the Kuban, and the Don, and the Ukraine, and other of our brother regions and republics. We'll celebrate the destruction of the hitlerite army of black-guards and ravishers, when the bright dawn of long awaited peace and labour breaks over our beloved country.

The warriors of the Kuban will fulfil their sacred duty. Burning hatred bears them on to ever new deeds of daring for the glory of the country, for the glory of the Cossacks.

Our fertile soil must again bring forth golden harvests, the sun-flowers and tobacco must again blossom, seas of corn and barley surge over our collective-farm fields, and water trickle through the re-made ditches to the rice plantations. The songs of the girls busy with the hoe must again ring out in our fields. The free migratory birds which will return this summer must again come to roost on the waters of restored Tshchik. . . There's a great deal of heroic and stubborn fighting ahead. Let the great word "Victory" not only fly like an eagle over the fields of battle but over the peaceful fields of spring and help to scatter the brutal hordes.

ARKADI PERVENTSEV

LEONID SOBOLEV

A BATTALION OF FOUR

This battle began for Michael Negreba with a leap in the dark, or, rather, with a friendly, but very perceptible nudge on his shoulder which helped him to bale out of the plane when he got stuck in the doorway clumsily holding back the others.

He dropped a long way through the darkness before daring to pull the ring: this was his first jump, and he was afraid his parachute might become entangled in the tail of the plane. The 'chute opened, obedient to his will, and had Negreba been able to see his friend Korolyov dropping alongside, he would no doubt have winked at him, saying: "Well, we've got it our way, after all!"

It was a fortnight ago that a detachment of volunteer parachutists was formed in Sevastopol. Of course, neither Korolyov nor Negreba would ever miss a chance like this, and when asked whether they had ever jumped from a plane, replied proudly: "Of course... in the air club, seven jumps." They could of course have said twenty times, to make doubly sure that they were enrolled, but then they would probably have been appointed as instructors, which would indeed been a very unwise thing; as it was they had a hard time with their initiation: for a long time both were turning over the quaint looking bags (as if critically inspecting them with an expert eye), at the same time looking curiously at the others to see how the parachutes were adjusted and strapped.

However, all this went off smoothly, and now Negreba floated in the nocturnal skies, wondering at the prevailing quiet. The roar of cannons barely reached them, although the flash of fire could clearly be seen below, surrounding Odessa with a flaming belt, while ships' guns pounded away from the sea in support of the landing of a marine regiment with which the paratroops were to join forces, after a march from the rear to meet it. A blood-red glow rose from the ground, as a fire broke out in the city, the flames spreading higher and higher. But the spot where Negreba was to land was enveloped in darkness.

Soon, however, he observed lights there too. It seemed as if he were looking down upon the forecastle of a battle-ship with many men furiously puffing away at their cigarettes. This was the front-line, and he was to land behind it, behind the lines of the Rumanian troops. He pulled at the straps, as instructed, and glided away from the battle.

It looked as if he had landed far from the battle-field, for he crept through the darkness for a full hour without encountering a soul. Then suddenly something gripped him by the throat, and he thrust the dagger into the darkness. But it was only a telephone wire. Negreba produced a pair of pliers from his bag and, creeping along the wire, cut it in several places. Then it dawned on him that this wire might lead him straight to a Rumanian unit where he could work havoc with his tommy-gun.

An hour of following the wire brought him to a grove. Day was just breaking, and peering into the paling gloom Negreba beheld three horses and a little way off also a sentry. Scenting the presence of a man, the horses began to snort, and he had to bide his time until they grew accustomed to him.

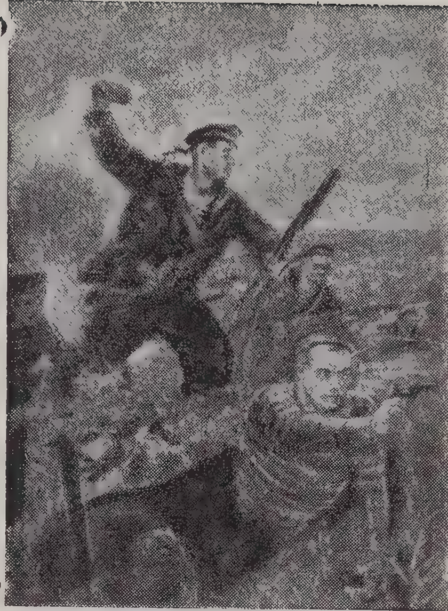
While waiting Negreba worked out a plan. He would remove the sentry, mount a horse and gallop through the village firing his tommy-

gun. Slowly he crawled towards the sentry, the tommy-gun in his left hand and his right hand gripping his dagger. Suddenly he sank into some incomprehensible pit, and then his hand felt something soft. Tense with excitement, he remained rooted to the spot. Loud voices reached him from under the ground.

Finally he understood: the soft and elastic obstacle was a blanket pulled over an air-hole of a cellar. Below he heard the hum of conversation in a foreign tongue, the click of spurs, a rattling typewriter. Cautiously slitting the blanket with his dagger, Negreba peered down into the cellar. He had apparently strayed into the headquarters of a battalion, or, perhaps, even a regiment. Rumanian officers crowded around a table with a map on it, where a middle-aged officer clearly irritated was pointing to something on the map. Squatted in the corner were telephone-operators. They nodded to one of the officers and he began to shout into the receiver. Taking advantage of this noise, Negreba pulled a grenade from his bag. But it seemed to him that one was not enough. When conversation again rose high in the cellar, he produced a second and then a third one and tied them together. He was about to drop them inside, when he heard the beat of horses' hoofs, and two horsemen galloped up to the cellar. Negreba let them pass and immediately approved of his own action: all the officers in the basement rose to salute; apparently one of the newcomers was a big chief.

Negreba threw in his grenades and rolled back into the brush. The sentry cried out, but just then there was a loud explosion in the cellar and the sentry vanished without a trace.

It was already light when Negreba reached the rear of the main line of the Rumanian trenches. Hiding in a hay stack, he waited. A lone horseman passed by. He galloped for all he was worth, frequently looking back and bending his head close to the horse's neck. Negreba trained his tommy-gun



Sailors defending Leningrad. By V. Serov

but before he had time to fire, the rattle of another gun was heard nearby, and the rider dropped from his horse.

Negreba was overjoyed: probably one more of our parachutists hidden nearby, he thought. Again the tommy-gun opened up, and Negreba realized that it was firing from the brush near him.

He decided to crawl through the corn-field to his comrade (after all, two are better than one), but soon he heard the howling of mortar shells, which began to burst near the brush one after another, and the rattle of the tommy-gun died down. Then a few Rumanians appeared from the hollow, firing all the time at the brushwood where Negreba's unknown comrade was hidden. Negreba pulled the trigger and joined in the chorus. Several Rumanians dropped, and the rest dived into the corn. Once more quiet set in with nothing to disturb it but distant shooting.

He crawled into the brush and found Leontyev hugging the earth. He had been wounded by a mortar-shell. Negreba turned him over, and Leon-

tyev opened his eyes only to close them at once and whisper quietly:

"Michael. . . please finish me. . . I'll never get out of here. . ."

Negreba looked into the deathly pale face and suddenly realized that here, in this brush, he too would meet his end; it would be impossible for him alone to take Leontyev across the front; neither could he abandon him nor comply with his request. He felt himself growing cold with anger and despair, what a fool he had been to creep here. . . If he were to go on his own way, strong and intact, he would get through. . . But although his heart contracted with pity for himself, for his own life, from which he was about to part for the sake of another man, he bent over Leontyev, saying as cheerfully as he could:

"Never mind, pal, it's never too late to die. . . Let me dress your wound to begin with. . . We'll watch our chance; two are better than one. . ."

He used up both his own and Leontyev's first-aid packets for the bandage. Leontyev seemed to feel better. Negreba made him comfortable, pushed a tommy-gun into his hand and said:

"You'll be the dagger battery. Just lie quietly and pull the trigger, that's all! We'll fight them off. Hear that: our troops are not far away."

And, indeed, furious fire was heard beyond the Rumanian trenches. The air-borne regiment must have attacked the Rumanians. But this did not make matters easier for the two men: soon the Rumanians, ousted from their trenches, would roll back, and the brush where the two marines were hidden would lie on the route of their retreat. It was necessary to prepare for this. Negreba put grenades in front of him, as well as a spare cartridge belt for his tommy-gun, and turned to Leontyev:

"Got any grenades?"

"Yes," replied the wounded man, making an effort to see if he could use his tommy-gun. "Three of them. Take the grenades, but don't touch my cartridges. I will do my own firing. . ."

The din of the battle came nearer and nearer, and shots rang out closer and closer. The sun rose higher, and the warm, bitter scent of grass came from the ground. Waiting for the final battle, and with it also death, was a trying ordeal. To one side of them, some three hundred metres away, was a deep ravine where it would be possible to hold out quite well and fire at the Rumanians from the flank. But he could not carry Leontyev to the spot.

He made an effort to keep his eyes riveted on the hollow in front where the enemy would probably appear. He wished they would come soon: it seemed to that his nerves would not stand the strain, and that if time dragged on much longer, he would abandon Leontyev in the brush, and begin to crawl towards the ditch, out of the way of the retreating battalions.

"Our troops behind!" Leontyev suddenly exclaimed. "Hear that?"

Negreba himself heard quick short bursts of fire, but was afraid to trust his own senses. Leontyev moved and cried out in a feeble, hoarse voice:

"Marines! . . This way! . ."

He tried to rise, only to collapse on the grass. Negreba looked out o the brush, and in the yellow corn-field nearby beheld a black sailor's cap, and a second one, to the left. Rising to his full stature, he energetically waved his hand:

"Marines! . . Perepelitsa, you devil, right to starboard, your own men!"

Two parachutists, Perepelitsa and Kotikov, ran through the corn towards the brush.

They dropped into the brushwood, and Negreba hastily described the situation and outlined his own plan which was to move to the ravine and fire at the retreating Rumanians from the flank.

"This is no position for us, we'll be slaughtered here like sheep," he argued. "You go ahead, drag Leontyev over there, and I will cover you."

Kotikov and Perepelitsa lifted the wounded man. He clenched his teeth and shut his eyes, for every jolt of the running men evoked sharp pain. When some eighty metres separated them from the ravine, shots rang out in the hollow and more than a dozen Rumanians appeared. Negreba fired back from his tommy-gun, but the other two had to put Leontyev on the ground and join in the fray. After beating back the attackers the marines finally rolled down the ravine and there found one more parachutist, Litovchenko, lying on the ground, with grenades around him, and the black muzzle of his tommy-gun protruding from the grass. He cried out excitedly as he saw Red Navy men:

"And I thought I was cooked! Here I am on my own, waiting for the rush—but now there are lots of us."

Leontyev was unconscious. Negreba inspected his bandages, they were stained with blood. He removed his jacket, tore it into strips and re-bandaged the wounds. Meanwhile, Perepelitsa produced biscuits and chocolate.

"How about some breakfast?" he said. "What d'you think of that?"

The others also brought out their rations. But the dry biscuits stuck in their parched throats, and try as they might they could not swallow the chocolate. Their mouths were dry from running in the scorching sun and they would have given anything for a drop of water. But all of them, it turned out, had emptied their flasks the previous evening. Only Litovchenko accidentally discovered some water in his flask, and he handed it to Negreba:

"Give it to him. See, the man's burning up."

Negreba gently poured some water into Leontyev's mouth. He swallowed and opened his eyes.

"Hold on, old boy," said Negreba, "see how many we are now. . . We'll break through, that's a fact!"

Leontyev did not reply and again closed his eyes. Then Perepelitsa whispered:

"Look, there they are again, the Rumanians . . ."

And sure enough, the first crowd of the retreating Rumanians appeared from the hollow making straight for the brush where the marines had been hiding shortly before. In front of them and racing faster than the rest, were several German tommy-gunners. They reached the brushwood, dropped to the ground and opened fire at the retreating Rumanians.

"That's tactics, I declare!" cried Negreba in amazement. "Well, boys, shall we help the Huns? . . But not the way they do it: no pot-shots, but straight at the target."

He rolled up the sleeves of his jersey and fired the first shot at an officer who was waving a pistol. From the ravine the sailors' bullets struck at the flank of the retreating troops.

They could, of course, have refrained from firing. The Rumanians would not have noticed the handful of men in the ravine. But then they would have reached their rear-lines without losses. Therefore the marines fired, revealing their presence; they fired because every shot destroyed one more enemy soldier; they fired because thereby they were helping the attack of the marine paratroops.

Under this fire the officers did not succeed in either halting, or in assembling their companies which left the trenches. The German tommy-gunners thereupon shifted fire in the direction of the sailors, and one of the officers gathered about two score soldiers and led them in an attack on the ravine. This was a real battle. The marines repulsed two attacks. Finally the wave of Rumanians rolled by, leaving their dead in the corn-field and near the ravine. Perepelitsa inspected the field of battle.

"Plenty laid low!" he said with unconcealed satisfaction. "And what's the situation with our cartridge supply, boys?"

The cartridge supply was low, the marines having spent almost the whole of their stock on the tommy-gunners and in repulsing two attacks.

This was all the worse, since the Rumanians from the adjoining sector would be the next to flee, and, according to all calculations, they would inevitably come upon the ravine. Negreba proposed to repeat their manoeuvre and move to another ravine which would again face the flank of the retreating troops, but a glance at Leontyev made him give up his idea. Silently, the marines sat there, thinking. Then Negreba said:

"Well. . . It seems as if we'll have to hold out here. The cartridges must be saved for a break-through. We'll use grenades to beat them back. Strike at those who come close."

They were again silent, waiting for the enemy to appear. Then Perepelitsa produced an officer's pistol and inspected the cartridge clip.

"Six cartridges," he said. "And there are five of us. It'll do, we shall draw lots. Get it?"

"Yes," said Litovchenko.

"Clear," Kotikov echoed him.

"Exactly," added Negreba.

He plucked four blades of grass and bit at one. Then, straightening them out, he locked them in his fist and stretched his hand toward Litovchenko.

"Where'd you get an enemy pistol?" asked Litovchenko turning to Perepelitsa as he pulled a blade of grass, and said with a sigh of relief: "Not me, it's a long one."

"Last night," replied Perepelitsa. "Knocked down an officer. Not a heavy thing to take along, and might come in useful. . . Go ahead, Kotikov, your turn."

"Perhaps we'd better leave our own cartridges for this," suggested Kotikov, cautiously pulling the blade. "Disgusting, with their bullets. . ."

He also drew a long blade.

"If you are wounded, you won't be able to handle a tommy-gun, but with this thing you can reach everybody lying on the ground," remarked Perepelitsa in a business-like manner and pulled his blade. "A long one, too. Then, it's you, Mike, who'll have to do it. But take your time. When the end has come, understand?"

"Quite clear," said Negreba and took the pistol.

"It looks as if they are coming," said Kotikov quietly. "Well, sailors. . . If nothing happens, we'll meet again."

And the marines lapsed into silence. Only Leontyev was heard moaning from time to time. Perepelitsa threw his jacket to Negreba.

"You'd better cover yourself. Lying there all striped like a zebra, they can see you a mile away."

"They can see me, anyhow," replied Negreba. "I'd rather not take it. Better this way. At least, our sailors will recognize us."

They were silent again, peering into the distance where the avalanche of Rumanians rolled on towards the ravine.

The Rumanians ran out of the trenches, dropped to the ground firing back at someone pushing behind, and then, jumping again to their feet, ran for some five—six metres. They moved in a solid chain, almost touching shoulders, and every leap brought them closer and closer to the handful of seamen. About a hundred of them made straight for the ravine, obviously feeling that there they could find cover from the fire of the pursuing air-borne-marine regiment. Once again they hugged the ground, fighting rearguard action, and then, as if ordered, leaped to their feet and rushed towards the ditch.

The marines could already discern their faces, unshaven, dripping with perspiration, ugly with fear. They were so near that it seemed to the men that they could almost smell perspiration. Silently, keeping pace, they ran on stubbornly, stampeding like a frightened herd of cattle sweeping everything from their path.

It was then that their path was blocked by Negreba, who rose to his full stature. There he stood, a strong, well-built seaman, in his striped jersey, with a tommy-gun in his left hand and a grenade raised in his right.

"Hey, you there, Rumanesti, get this sailor's present!" he shouted at the top of his voice, throwing the grenade. Immediately three more were flung from the ditch and burst right in the midst of the sweat-dripping herd. The Rumanians dropped to the ground. Some shrank back and, zigzagging like hares, scuttled for cover. The seamen threw four more grenades. The breach was widened.

"Mike, it looks as if we'll break through, after all! Come on, grab Leontyev!" cried Perepelitsa.

The marines understood him, everyone holding up the wounded man with his free hand. They rushed into the breach between Rumanian ranks; pain brought Leontyev back to consciousness, and he again gritted his teeth to endure this sweeping, furious race. They had already passed through the very thick of the enemy when he saw that the Rumanians had started in pursuit. He relaxed a bit and looked at Perepelitsa:

"Drop me. . . Fight through!" he pleaded.

Without slackening his pace Perepelitsa barked back at him, and he quietened down again.

The Rumanians came very close. There were five seamen with hundreds of the enemy soldiers after them. The Rumanians apparently realized it and decided to take the seamen alive. A tall soldier leaped towards Perepelitsa trying to get at him with his bayonet. Kotikov released Leontyev's leg and fired a bullet through the soldier's skull, but another immediately rushed at him. Perepelitsa caught the Rumanian's rifle and charging with his bayonet brought down that soldier, and then a second and third. Thereupon he dropped the rifle, tore a grenade from his waist and flung it into the soldiers running towards him. They shrank back, but the grenade burst in their midst. The survivors dropped to the ground and opened fire. Bullets whistled around the sailors. Perepelitsa dropped to the ground and cried:

"You two drag him along, while Kotikov and I hold them back!"

The other seamen also dropped to the grass and began to fire back with their last cartridges. Negreba and Litovchenko crawled forward on their bellies dragging Leontyev along, while the other two, crawling behind, held back the Rumanians with few well-aimed shots. Finally the enemy gave up pursuit hastening to get away to the rear, and the seamen suddenly fell into an empty Rumanian trench.

There they recovered from the excitement of the battle and looked around: Kotikov's cheek was pierced by a bullet, Perepelitsa found that two bullets had lodged in his thigh, and Litovchenko, too, discovered that he was wounded. All their sailor's jackets were used up for bandaging.

The Rumanians were already far beyond the brush, and in front were probably only Soviet troops. Making Leontyev comfortable in the dugout, the men brought water, washed him, gave him a drink, and placed by his side a Rumanian tommy-gun and grenades found in the trench.He looked on at all this smiling feebly, and his tear-filled eyes expressed his feelings better than any words. This look of his apparently embarrassed Negreba, because he rose and said in a very matter-of-fact way:

"You stay here,we won't jolt you any more. And we'll go and look for our troops and then come back for you with a stretcher."

And they rose, the four of them in striped jerseys, black sailor caps cocked on their heads, blood-stained, bandaged with strips of their own uniforms, but strong and ready again to make their way through hundreds of enemy soldiers.

It seemed as if they themselves were astonished at their strength and vitality, for Perepelitsa said:

"One sailor is just a sailor, but two sailors make a platoon; three sailors, a company . . . And how many are we? Four, yes? . . Now, battalion, listen to my orders: forward. . . march!"

ALEXANDER DOVZHENKO

HIS MOTHER

Not for the sake of the tears and the bitter grieving, not for the wrathful curses—for are the Germans not cursed as it is by the whole world!—but for the honour of our people, in the name of love, was the tale recorded of this glorious death.

And though many are the unforgettable losses that have fallen to our lot, though it would be far pleasanter and easier for the eyes to read of joy in labour and din of battle, we shall read today of Maria Stoyan.

Who is that running through the village among the enemy dead, among the flames of the burning cottages?

Who groaned just then? Whose heart flutters so wildly in his breast that it may well leap out and run ahead of him?

It is Vassil, Maria Stoyan's son, armed with automatic rifle and bombs.

Who is that hanging dead by the ruined stove under the open sky?

His mother.

Soaked with the sweat of prolonged fighting, anxious, alarmed, Vassil ran on. How hard he had fought here outside his native village! He was a scout, he smashed up firing-points, wiped out with a grenade a German fortification that had once been the cottage of his uncle. The enemy shuddered, and took to flight.

Vassil ran through the village, through what had been a village not so long ago. Two hundred fires had burned here; scorched gardens, crockery, craters and multitudes of the enemy, stiff in dirt and blood.

"Mamo, where are you? Here's your Vassil, come back alive! They killed Ivan, Mamo, but I'm still left alive. I killed nearly two hundred of them. Where are you?"

He ran into the yard; the yard here was right under the hill.

"Mamo, mother darling, where are you? My own dear, why don't you come out to meet me? Why don't I hear your soft voice? Where are you, my grey dove, my little grey Mamo?"

Vassil paused by his home, but his home wasn't there. Vassil turned hither and thither about the yard, but there was no yard. To the orchard he went, but there was no orchard. Only an ancient pear-tree survived, and on it his mother was hanging. . .

Oh, unspeakable moment!

While she was still alive and the house was still standing on the village outskirts, once, at midnight in the depth of winter, when the blizzard was fiercest, someone knocked at the door.

"Who's there?"

"Let us in, auntie, we're perishing out here!"

"Who are you, boys? Where do you hail from? What are you?"

"We're Russians, auntie! Your own folks. Airmen. We crashed."

"Lord save us, sons! Come in, quick! Let me close the door, so that nobody sees you. The place is full of Germans."

Two cripples with their arms around each other for support staggered into the room.

They tumbled to the floor and fell asleep instantly, as though plunged into a chasm of sleep; and slept for nearly forty-eight hours. The woman thought them dead. She washed their feet with hot water, heated the stove, warmed up food for them three times. But still they slept.

She had wept day and night for her own sons, Ivan and Vassil. Who would feed them, who would warm them in this time of trouble? Where were they now? Maybe lying somewhere in a snowy field with the winter wind blowing through their thick locks; maybe hanging on the gallows-tree in German captivity with the ravens pecking out their eyes in the frost. And no one would glance that way, nor ask, nor weep for them!

So many deaths all around, and all of them terrible. Children, oh, my children!

Stepan Pshenitsyn and Kostya Ryabov both came from the Urals. They belonged to that particular breed of Russian youth which for long years to come will be studied with interest and amazement by historians of the stupendous human drama. Unshaven, battered by rough winds and the ups-and-downs of life, they groaned threateningly in their sleep and breathed heavily. War had agitated and aroused their dormant souls. They were plain, ordinary young men of the Urals, educated to a certain extent, honest, hardworking young Communists from good, sound working people's families. They had not been eager for this war, but, following the fine old Russian custom, they had not wept or hidden from it. They had gone out to the front as volunteers, anxious to reach the enemy as soon as they could and to destroy him.

It had not taken them long to become pilots; they did it as easily and as simply as they might have become submarine-men or snipers. Nature had endowed them in generous measure, and there was good stuff in them.

"At first, mother, the Germans got it hot from us with the heavy bombs, but then later on we did some educational work. Not that we wanted to, but those were our orders."

"And what kind of work might that be, boys?" Maria asked as they were sitting one evening talking in the dark hut.

"We dropped leaflets over the Ukraine, mother. So that people might know the truth about the war," Pshenitsyn said.

"So it was you who did that, was it? Oh, that was great work you were doing, my boys!" Maria said with a sigh. "Devil take the bombs, no matter where they are! But good tidings are a great thing to those in captivity. There's such a darkness all around; these prating Germans filled folk's heads with their rubbish till there was no sense in living any more. Indeed, it seemed at times as though it was all over with us, think of that. . ."

And now for the first time, listening to the mother's plain heartfelt words in this unfortunate brother country, Pshenitsyn and Ryabov felt how great was the mission that had been entrusted to them.

In the shabby old cottage, wrapped in twilight, with the howling of the wind and the menacing roar of the distant line in their ears, they heard how people copied these leaflets, learned them off by heart, spread their contents by word of mouth from village to village, that the faith might not die. Words of truth glowed in the darkness like fires through the long, cold winter nights. Thousands who had lost their faith, who were caught in their captivity, were saved by these leaflets from actions desperated and dreadful to contemplate.

Long did Pshenitsyn and Ryabov sit, lost in thought, that night. Then they told her how they had crashed in the woods one night, how they had broken their ribs and arms and split their heads open, how they had run eastward through woods and gullies, had hidden from Germans in snowdrifts and hollows. As they told the story, they themselves marvelled at their own extraordinary strength and will to live.

"Where did all this happen, my dears?" Maria asked, raising her hands and clasping them in sympathy and wonder.

"A long way from here. About five hundred kilometres."

"Was it a long time ago?"

"A month and more. Our bones have had time to set."

They showed the mother those dreadful scars, the wounds that had maimed them.

"God save us, what's that?"

"Never mind, mother dear, bones heal in living folks. We're the kind can stand anything. All we need is to lay up a while and get our strength back, and then we'd be able to make our way across the front, aye, even if

we'd to do it under the snow," thus did these indomitable children comfort old Maria Stoyan.

"What's to be done with boys like you? Mine were just the same. . ."

A whole fortnight Maria hid her visitors, kept watch over the house, fed them, and when there was nothing left to eat, went a-begging round the village. And none refused her, nor asked a question, though everyone guessed that Maria Stoyan would never have gone begging for herself.

But she was not fated to save those children. One morning there was a sudden cannonade. The front was coming closer. More bedraggled units crept up and streamed into the village. Maria glanced into the house.

"They're coming, children!"

The Germans were on the threshold.

"Who are these men?"

"My sons."

"You're lying!"

"I swear I'm not."

"Search this house!"

"Don't touch those boys, they're sick. . . All broken to bits. . . God!"

"Halt! Is this your mother?"

"Yes," Ryabov replied.

"You're lying, commissar!" and the speaker's hand went to his gun.

The mother flung herself before the boys and shielded both.

"I won't give them up to you! Aye, strike me, then! . . I won't give them up to you man-eaters! . . Children dear, 'twasn't a she-wolf bore you but a woman, a mother. . . My sons!"

"What made you hide these men?"

"I was frightened. You're so terrifying! There's nothing on earth more terrifying than you!"

"Ha-ha-ha! Is that so? You're right, old dame. There shouldn't be anything on earth more terrifying, either!" The German brute was pleased and laughed.

Two hours later, the Germans drove the last remnants of the local kulaks out into the village square to identify the boys.

Pshenitsyn and Ryabov were set face to face with the whole village. They looked at the people, and there wasn't a face they knew among them.

"Farewell, Ural!" whispered Pshenitsyn, glancing at his friend.

"Farewell! . ."

"Good people, look, here's my Ivan and here's my Vassil. Wouldn't you know them again?" Her entreaties made one think of a seagull fallen in the roadway, beating its wings helplessly. "Say they're mine! Why don't you speak? Have pity, can't you feel pity for them? Oh, good neighbours, speak! . ."

The people wept and, heedless of the threats, acknowledged the boys as her sons. Even the village elder and the police appointed by the Germans did not dare to deny her.

The only one who preserved a sinister silence was Palashka, the widow of the chief constable who had been killed by the partisans.

"Palashka, say it, say they're my sons! Or else I'll bring down curses upon you in this world and the next for ever and ever," whispered Maria. "Remember, you'll have to answer to the Almighty for this, Palashka! . ."

Palashka was silent.

"Well, Frau Palashka, whose sons are these?" the German commandant asked.

The people stood petrified, their eyes fixed on Palashka's face. There was dead silence.

The commandant turned a deep purple, and the veins on his thick neck stood out like cords. He suspected that they were all in league with Maria.

"Well?"

"They're hers!" said Palashka, lowering her gaze.

Then the commandant struck her with all his might on the right cheek and the left. She dropped like a stone before she could utter a sound, and he turned on the pilots.

"Your names?"

"Ah!" Maria gasped, as though stabbed to the heart. For she had not told her name, and they, in their foolish, oh, so foolish carelessness, had neglected to ask hers.

It was long before she could rise to her feet from the blow she had received on the head. But she could hear as in a dream the voices of Pshenitsyn and Ryabov calling her:

"Farewell, mother! And thank you for all you've done. With a mother like that it isn't hard to die."

Shots rang out. . .

They lay in the snow with their arms around each other. The Germans pulled her up by the arms and dragged her through the village, beating her with anything that came to hand. The house was blown up with grenades, and she was led to the pear-tree. It rocked and whirled dizzily before her eyes.

"Don't hang me! Would you disgrace me altogether, then? How can I hang there, an old woman like me? Let me have a bullet, just one bullet, I beg and pray you. . ."

They would not let her have her way. Then, quickly, she mounted a tree-stump, and crossed herself.

"Don't touch me, you: you're lower than any human creature could be. . . Don't touch my neck. . ."

She put the noose around it herself.

"Children!". . . and let the ground slip from under her feet.

Long, long did Vassil lie in the snow under the old pear-tree. None heard him groan, nor complain, nor grind his teeth. When morning was at hand, when his heart had turned to stone with the frost and the rumble of artillery sounded the reveille, Vassil fell silent, as though a great weariness had drawn him into deep slumber. Then he raised himself and kissed his mother's cold hand.

"Farewell, Mamo! . . All the goodness and sweetness you gave me, I leave here with you, Mamo, under the pear-tree. . ."

He wandered over to the ashes that had been his home, and, picking up a handful, tied them carefully in his handkerchief.

"This is what I'm taking with me, Mamo, so that not feet, nor hands, nor heart may ever tire."

Men were marching westward on the road through the village.

"Private Stoyan!"

"Coming!"

"Who's that woman hanging there?"

"My mother."

"Your mother?"

"Yes, my mother, comrades, my own mother."

"Company, halt! Caps off! Quick, march!"

The troops passed bareheaded before her, children paying respect to motherhood as they went into battle. Guns boomed. The sun gilded the snow. The hoar-frost was shaken from the boughs with the thunder of the guns, and glittering snowflakes fell from the old pear-tree into his mother's wide-open eyes.

Who among the living and among the generations to be would not do reverence to the undying beauty of Maria Stoyan, the mother who went a-begging for the sake of another's children? See, she's hanging here before you, raised high above her own frozen earth. Her hands, small and delicate, with long, beautiful fingers, are those same toil-worn hands that did so much baking and spinning and preparing of seed. They hung there now with the palms turned outward a little, as though she were saying:

"I've nothing for you, children, nothing left. I've given you all I had, be happy now and content!"

The little figure seemed to soar into the cold, blue, and the grey head, tilted sideways, touched the clouds that heralded spring.

Deathless glory to your name, Mamo Maria!

No costly garments were yours, no Parisian perfumes; the fragrance of wormwood and hemp that grew in the fields hung about you.

You never travelled about the world. You had no time for that sort of things. Busy as a bee you were, from morning dew till evening dew, bringing honey to Soviet hives, till the day came when the German beast took your life.

But foreign countries will come to you yet, as if you were some fine lady, come to stare at your stove, left exposed under the open sky, at the cloves you dried in it as a charm against the evil eye, at the memorial set up to you. The whole world will reverence your beauty, our dear mother, our Slav mother of the Ukraine.

And the world will know how you hung here, Mamo, on the old pear-tree, for the sake of your friends in the Great World War, in a blood-drenched Ukrainian village, in blood-drenched Ukraine.

VILIS LACIS

IT HAPPENED AT SEA

When Duksis warned Inga Murnieks that he would have to take smoked fish to town next day, the man said nothing. There would have been no point in replying, for who could refuse if the suggestion came from Duksis? If you so much as tried it, he would run and tell the Germans at once. No wonder Sergeant-Major Flobergs and his armed gang had settled down in Duksis' house. Orders were all issued from that house now, and the fishermen's fate was decided there. As a rule, any order Duksis gave was carried out without demur.

"When do we put off?" was all Inga said.

"When the sergeant-major tells us," Duksis replied.

Duksis, ex-publican and lumber-profiteer, invariably had a somnolant look about him, as if he never had a proper sleep. His face was purple, the face of a drunkard much addicted to spirits. If he happened to be in a warm room, he was continually yawning, dozing, rubbing his eyes and stroking his rusty-red moustache. He had left off wearing his big, broad gold wedding-ring and the watchchain with all its little jingling charms; a cautious, farsighted rascal, this! He was only too well aware of the Germans' foundness for trinkets of that kind. If once they caught sight of them, they would take them without so much as a "by your-leave," even though the things belonged to their own hireling. As for ordinarly mortals, fisherfolk and the like, it was just a case of "hand over the goods and keep a civil tongue in your head": everything came in handy for the Führer.

"Still, I ought to be told a bit beforehand, so I can get my engine heated up," Inga grumbled. "Otherwise he'll go and tell me at the very last minute, and then it'll be all my fault: I couldn't get started in time, he'll say."

"A soldier will call you," Duksis explained. "I'll tell him to do it in good time. Yes, and take the young lad along too. We'll take a boat-load of fish in tow. We must take everything that's accumulated, and the boy can steer. The weather promises to be fair right from the morning. That's all I have to say."

And Duksis, like a master giving orders to his farm-hand, feeling perfectly certain that they would be obeyed without the slightest protest, clicked his tongue against his teeth with an air of assurance and went away. He lingered for a moment by the barn to speak to Inga's father, who was planing a new oar. Inga was too far away to hear what they said. Nor was he interested. His head was seething with all kinds of thoughts. It was a good thing that nobody could guess those thoughts. If they only knew. . .

He gave a gloomy chuckle. He waited until Duksis had disappeared around the corner of the shed where the life-boats were kept, then he went into the yard.

"I'm going down to the beach," he said to the old man. "Tell Ewalds when he comes in that he has to go to town tomorrow. We're both going."

"I know, Duksis has just told me," old Murnieks growled without glancing up from his job.

He stood there busy over the nets, a quiet peaceable old man, grey and stooped, with a much-chewed pipe between his teeth. All his long life had been spent in dangerous labour. He had reared two sons and a daughter.

In the white sands beyond the dunes stood a little grey, moss-roofed cottage. In the bay an old motor-boat rocked peacefully at anchor, and along the beach the shabby, much mended nets and seines were hung out to dry on poles. These comprised all his worldly goods, all he had earned in the course of that long, hard life, an obscure and modest life, satisfied with very little, a life that knew salt winds and water, clean sunlight and the sands of the sea. Three times a year the whole family went to church; after a particularly good catch there was sometimes a bottle of vodka; in the cemetery of the local community a little plot of ground beside the graves of his father and his wife would be his.

. . . Never before had Inga felt such a burden on his heart. But he only shook his head and, without another word, set out in the direction of the dunes. He did not, however, go straight down to the beach, where the fishing boats were moored and the drying nets flapped in the wind. He climbed a moss-grown hillock and strode off towards the headland that led far out westward where the belt of sand-dunes cut deep into the coast.

It was a bleak, dismal, deserted spot. Like mighty waves driven far in-shore by westerly winds white sands seemed to blow in here. The rampart of dunes crowded with tall pines enclosed the little valley in an almost perfect semicircle.

Inga paused a moment before an old, spreading pine. Gnarled and worn and mutilated by the winds from the sea, the old tree grew somewhat apart from the rest at the very top of the dune; it was twisted, knotted, covered with queer lumpy growths that reminded one of the toilworn body of an old worker. Below lay the grey and tranquil sea, touched by a dun-coloured mist. The sands at the water's edge were spattered with white: seagulls resting on the beach. Further on, there was something black and some darkish moving specks. They were the jetty, the fishing-boats, fishermen putting in from sea, the German sentry with his rifle and field-glasses. And though the boats were still several miles out, Inga could clearly see the oars' rise and fall, and the way the fishermen flung themselves back with every pull. The boats would reach the strand in twenty minutes, Inga thought to himself, and the armed German would go down to meet them, then clamber into them and search every corner, even turn out the fishermen's pockets, to make sure they hadn't hidden a fish anywhere.

"Curse them!" Inga ground his teeth. "They would take the last fishbone and gobble it. They weigh the catch to the last gramme, as if it were medicine in a chemist's shop, and pay the fishermen in paper money that isn't worth a penny—German occupation marks."

Along the whole length of the coast rose a pale vapour from the smoke-houses, bringing to the nostrils the pleasant and familiar smell of plaice and sprats. And all these riches were to go to strangers, to an alien and enemy people, the hungry hitlerite idlers. One man went down to the sea for fish that other man ate. The man who caught the fish didn't need anything to eat, evidently; he could just die of starvation without any fuss; that was nothing, because he wasn't anybody in particular, he wasn't a man, just a slave!

Reluctantly, Inga tore his gaze from his beloved sea. Then, slowly and cautiously, as though fearful of crushing something, he dropped down on the ground a few paces from the old pine;

his face softened, but there was pain in his eyes as he stooped and smoothed the cold sands tenderly, whispering lovingly, caressingly:

"I've come again, dear, can you hear me? I'm right here with you now. Forgive me for doing nothing yet. But I will. Maybe tomorrow even you'll be avenged. Yes, I'm thinking of doing it tomorrow, if they come out with me in the boat. Oh, your Inga's forgotten nothing, nor ever will. . . And until it's done, he'll never know a minute's peace, day or night. You must just wait, dear, and have patience a little longer. . ."

She was buried here among the white sands, under the shade of the gnarled, spreading pine, Aina, his sunny little Aina Sniedze. But not a soul knew of it, neither her parents nor Duksis, nor Sergeant-Major Flobergs. And they would never know, until the last German robber was destroyed. Then it could be talked out freely, and a fence put up around the grave, and a headstone over it. Meanwhile she must lie there alone, and only Inga could visit her sometimes of an evening and talk to her about life and people and the great struggle. In the old days they used to come here together, hiding their love from curious eyes. They used to sit there on the soft sand through the warm summer nights, listening to the lapping of the waves, gazing at the stars reflected in the sea. Here they had cherished their pure lovely dream, built plans for the future, plans of a beautiful road leading far away. Sometimes he had gone away to sea, across the waste of waters, to foreign lands. And after every voyage he brought her back some souvenir, a silk handkerchief, a box made of shells, a coral necklace, views of distant countries, photographs of foreign cities. That summer Inga Murnieks had sailed no more; he had left the ship and decided to stay on land, so as to begin the new life with his Aina.

A few days before war broke out she had fallen ill of pneumonia, and when the vanguard of the nazis approached the fishing village, Aina was still lying ill. Inga had not the heart and the determination to leave the place with his comrades. He was waiting for Aina to get better, so that they could both escape from the enemy's power. That was why he had not gone, but had lingered until the Germans came; then he had to bow his back under the yoke of the foreign invader.

In the second half of July Sergeant-Major Flobergs was billeted in the village with a coast-guard detachment. He was regarded here as acting-commandant and therefore exercized full sway over the district that covered twelve kilometres of the shore zone. Not a single fishing boat could put out to sea without his permission; he examined the catch, which was distributed among the consumers under his personal supervision.

The publican Duksis came to occupy a position of trust with Flobergs. Duksis drew up a list of Soviet employees and Communists. Aina Sniedze's brother had been elected am ember of the local executive committee, under the Soviet government. He left with the Red Army units, but for all that the sergeant-major questioned the old folks and Aina for a long time. One Saturday evening she was taken away to Duksis' public house. One of Duksis' servants, a woman named Lize Arais, had heard through the wall a drunken officer annoying Aina, threatening to send her to a concentration camp if she did not yield to him. Neither threats nor caresses had any effect on her. She tore herself out of his grasp, wept, implored him to leave her alone. The German used force.

Her body was found next morning hanging from a pine by the roadside. On her breast there was a notice saying: "This woman was punished for resisting the instructions of the German military authorities."

It was forbidden to take down and bury the dead, because Sergeant-Major Flobergs wanted every passer-by to see and talk of that they had seen in the villages and country districts, so that it would make the people

respect the German occupation authorities.

Inga Murnieks went about like a trapped animal all the time. But he spoke to none of the agony he was enduring, of the hatred he felt for the enemy and the thirst for vengeance that consumed him. He hid his feelings under the mask of submission, played the simple lout. But Sergeant-Major Flobergs' fate was sealed.

One dark, rainy night Inga Murnieks took down his sweetheart's body and bore it away to the dunes. He wrapped it in tarpaulin and buried it under the old pine in the spot where they had so often sat of a summer's night. And the rain and the wind covered his tracks. When the disappearance of the body was first brought to the sergeant-major's notice, he shouted and bawled, and threatened, but he could do nothing, and gradually he realized this, and forgot the incident. Inga made his way to the dunes. He brought no flowers or plants from the woods to lay on the grave, but offered up the dumb agony, the infinite patience of a man who longs for vengeance and never for a moment forgets his aim.

And now at last the hour was approaching. But would Flobergs go with, that was the question. He sometimes did. Oh, if he would only go this time, it would be a lucky day for Inga! It would have been worth waiting for!

Long did the fisherman sit musing, and his eyes burned like live coals as he stared into the gloom. From time to time he smoothed the dry sand tenderly.

"It will pay them out for all Aina suffered and the beastly things they did, and for all the grief and trouble they've brought on my friends. I'll make a start, anyway; and if I can't carry on, others will carry on for me, and finish the job."

Only the sea wind whispering in the tall pines herd him.

Duksis kept his word. He himself called at Murnieks' house and warned him that they would have to start in an hour's time.

It was still dark when Inga and his younger brother Ewalds came down to the beach. The workers, both men and women, were loading cases of fish into a motor-boat and an ordinary row-boat, ready to put out for the open sea. Inga started to warm the engine.

"Put plenty of clothes on," he said to his sixteen-year-old brother Ewalds. "It's going to be pretty cold when we get out to sea. You'll freeze like a Prussian cockroach."

"As if I'd be afraid of a puff of wind!" Ewalds retorted with all a boy's self-assurance.

"I tell you there'll be a strong wind blowing up presently," Inga said softly. As Ewalds bent over the batch to see how the engine was coming along, his elder brother stooped swiftly and whispered in his ear: "Take the old life-belt and put on your cork waistcoat, but watch that nobody notices your doing it, see?"

"Why, do you think there's going to be bad weather?"

"It's nothing to do with the weather. You put on that cork waistcoat, that's the point. You never know when you may have to dive and swim even in fair weather."

They exchanged glances. Then, with a carefree laugh, Ewalds nodded to show that he understood, and went off to get his things.

Duksis had evidently dressed to go with them. He wore high boots, a knitted sweater and over that a padded jacket. When the loading was nearly finished, he sent a guard to the village to bring the sergeant-major.

Not a muscle moved in Inga's face when Flobergs appeared and ordered one of the fishermen to carry his stout person to the motor-boat. This time he acknowledged Inga's greeting without a trace of surliness and took his place beside Duksis, midway between the engine-cabin and the packing-cases, where there was shelter from the wind. A soldier with

a rifle settled down by Inga, the other got into the tow-boat, steered by Ewalds.

Slowly and cautiously Inga steered both vessels through the first belt of shoals, then started the engine. The breakers that met them showed no signs of storm; nevertheless Inga strained his eyes into the grey murk of the early morning and clearly saw the crests, stormily white beyond the headland. Low blue-grey clouds scudded inland. The young fisherman felt his face growing chilled and stiff as he scanned the watery spaces. His fingers gripped the wheel. The boat obeyed every touch. She was a good little craft, well-seasoned, well-tried. . . He had paid for her bit by bit, for five years, until he was out of debt to the builder and the firm. And now other owners had claimed her. It was lucky they even let him have a chance to take her out sometimes, his own boat. At times like these he used of feel himself her master once more.

Ewalds steered the other boat very well, although the waves dashed over the side from time to time. Glancing round, Ewalds saw the German soldier mopping his face, and thought to himself: "That's right, wipe it, you'll have to keep on wiping it soon. This isn't German headquarters, my lad, this is the open sea."

Sergeant-Major Flobergs evidently had a "hangover" after yesterday's spree. He fumbled in his pocket for a bottle of vodka, took a long drink, then handed the bottle to Duksis. They helped themselves to a couple of smoked fish from one of the cases. Then Flobergs gave a jerk of his head in Inga's direction.

"Inga!" Duksis called, trying to make his voice heard above the roar of the engine. "The sergeant-major's offering you a drink. Here, it'll warm you up in a second."

And in his anxiety to humour the fisherman, Flobergs actually went so far as to wink at him. In reply Inga smiled a meek humble smile, laid his left hand on his heart and murmured: "Danke, danke, Herr Flobergs!"

In spite of himself his hand shook with the nervous strain he was under. The German decided that the fisherman was overfond of vodka. He whispered something to Duksis, and both men watched him while he drank, and roared with laughter. He smiled gratefully, then handed back the bottle and resumed his former position, stiff as a frozen statue, gazing with dead vacant eyes out to sea. The German soldier beside him shivered in his thin coat, for the rising wind was keen. Sometimes he glanced in the drinkers' direction and licked his lips, but they did not offer him a drink, and he could not muster up enough courage to beg for one.

The boats were riding the waves, listing heavily first to one side, then to another. From time to time a wave bigger than the rest would seize the little craft and bear her along on its crest. Thus they rounded the headland and kept about three kilometres from the coast.

Observing that the sea was much quieter inshore, Flobergs asked Inga why he did not prefer to hug the coast.

"Because I'm afraid of the rocks under the water," Inga explained.

"Ah, is that the case? Well, than, there's no help for it."

But now Inga's gaze was fixed on a pine-tree towering somewhat apart from the rest. When a low hillock overgrown with scrub was directly between the distant pine and the bows, he gave the wheel a turn to the right and made an oblique line for the shore. His eyes were scanning the white surf for one particular wave that he alone could recognize. And each time as the wave neared the point he was watching, it seemed to split, then fall apart with a roar, followed by dead silence. For there, three kilometres from the shore, was a giant rock that reared its sharp ridges treacherously from the depths of the sea. Many an inexperienced

mariner had come to grief on these rocks, and the wreck of many a sailing-vessel lay under the sands of the sea.

The sergeant-major carefully corked the empty vodka-bottle and put it back in his pocket. Thoroughly chilled now, the German soldier clambered into the engine-cabin and tried to warm his frozen hands at the red-hot metal. Inga looked round. His glance met the questioning, anxious gaze of his young brother. Inga reassured him with an affectionate, understanding smile and drove the boat through the waves towards the fatal rock. The engine roared at full speed, but the wave was swifter. The passengers experienced a sensation as though a huge hand was flinging them across the watery waste, and the swiftness of it went to their heads.

At that instant when the billow broke over the hiden rock with wild force, Inga grabbed the iron handle of the steering wheel and brought it down with all his might on Flobergs' head. He had no need to do this, his enemy was doomed in any case; but the long pent-up feelings were too much for him, demanded an outlet. For an instant he saw the blood, the crushed head, the flabby body slumping down lifeless. Then a terrific blow struck the boat, and with her heavy engine weighing her down she plunged into the watery chasm. Inga had just time to leap overboard at the last instant.

When he came up to the surface, he saw that the sea was strewn with pieces of sail, oars and empty cases. The rowboat that had been in tow was swaying, full of water, right over the rock. Ewalds and the nazi soldier were clinging to it.

Inga seized an oar and swam to the boat.

"Hold on, lad!" he called out to his brother.

"This damned German's got me!" Ewalds called back.

Inga swam round the rock till he was behind the German. And tenacious though the man's hold was on the boy's clothing, Inga managed to tear him off. In sudden fury he drove the oar-end into the German's mouth, and he went down like a stone. Inga noticed Duksis' cap with its shiny peak floating on the wave.

Now Inga might die in peace. But he might live, too. While life throbs in a man's veins, he doesn't want to die. So Inga Murnieks heaved the cases of fish overboard, and the little boat gradually rose in the water. Seizing his brother under the arms with one hand while he clung on to the boat's bows with the other, Inga headed for the shore. Wind and wave bore them inland toward the life and the new battles awaiting them.

FYODOR PANFYOROV

HIS LITTLE DAUGHTER

The little town was three hundred kilometres from the nearest railway station, far from the capital, and its name was Kudryash (which in Russian means curly-head). Why Kudryash? Nobody could tell. Perhaps because there were so many leafy lime-trees growing in it, or perhaps also because the first one to settle there had been some "Kudryash," some curly-headed devil-may-care sort of fellow. It might have been so. But in the little town nobody cared. Its inhabitants had other things to think about. Some of them gathered shells on the banks of the rivers; out of these others manufactured buttons at the factory; and the whole

lot of them liked to boast: "You see, ours is an industrial town."

In short, it was a very peaceful little town built of pine-log cottages, adorned with twisted cornices, with a small garden at the front and brightly painted weather-cocks on the chimneys. But on the Central Square, next door to the café "The Valley of Roses," proud of its three stories and red bricks, stood the "Specialists' House." This name was very much to the taste of the townsfolk who eagerly waited to see who was to move into it.

The first to settle there was the local physician Ivan Ivanovich Levchenko, and all the townspeople were unanimous in their approval. Levchenko had been living in the town for fifty-four years, and knew everybody just as well as everybody knew him. Many people remembered him when he was still a little boy with tousled hair, lively and snub-nosed. As for the womenfolk, they remembered him as a youth when he used to come for his holidays and liked to show off with his student's uniform in the streets of Kudryash. Ah, how the eyes of many a girl had sparkled and how envied he had been by the young fellows! Yes. But since then more than thirty years had passed, the girls had long ago turned into mammas, and Levchenko himself was the father of a twenty-four-year-old son. Everyone expected his son would follow in his footsteps. Instead, one fine day the son, Vassili Ivanovich, took a different turning and became an agricultural expert. The townsfolk were greatly amazed:

"What's this we hear about Vassya?"

"Well, there it is. That's how he felt."

"Well, in that case, your daughter will have to do something about it. You see, your father doctored us, and then you took over. It looks as if there'll be nobody to follow after you, doesn't it?"

"Well, I think I'll have to speak to my daughter," Levchenko answered and smiled lovingly.

He loved this little daughter of his, seven-year-old Nina, grey-eyed, with a tuft of auburn hair waving above her forehead, and very much like her mother; he loved her more than anyone else in the world.

"With all your heart?" she would ask him, snuggling up to him.

"More than with all my heart," he would answer.

"More than all the other daddies put together?"

"More than all the other daddies put together. And you do too, my Ninochka?"

Ninochka would turn up her eyes, and tossing her golden hair, would cry:

"I love my Daddy a hundred times more than anybody loves anybody."

Ninochka was Levchenko's greatest joy. His second greatest joy was the fact that he was not quite unknown in the medical world. All those thirty years he had assiduously studied all kinds of folk remedies, and many of them he had found very useful in his medical practice.

Once one of the peasants had cut his foot badly; there and then he had smeared the wound with cart-wheel tar and bandaged it; the wound closed in a very short time. Levchenko made an analysis of the tar and then composed an ointment of his own out of pure tar, formaline and cod-liver oil. This ointment he applied to the wounds of his patients, and the results were brilliant. Once he tried it with a patient who had his hand frozen; again the results were very good. Then Levchenko sent his ointment to the proper medical department for approval, and very soon little pots appeared in all the chemists' shops with the label: "Dr. Levchenko's ointment." And then? Then something happened which he had not in the least expected.

The country had taken up the exploitation of its inexhaustible forest wealth.

Scores of thousands of woodcutters were sent to the North. That winter very hard frosts came as if on purpose, and many of the woodcutters got very bad frost-bite. Then the physicians started applying Dr. Levchenko's ointment. This was of great help, and the Government awarded Dr. Levchenko the Order of the Labour Red Banner.

"Dad, daddy, my daddy's got an order!" little Nina clapped her hands when she heard of the award, and he caught her up in his arms, and walzing around the room with her, kept saying:

"Little daughter mine! Ninochka!"

And then the war broke out.

Millions of mothers' hearts quivered. Of course, none of them started sobbing, tearing her hair and crying out: "Oh, my dear son," for they all knew that their country was in danger; but every mother's heart sank within her, and her eyes gazed somewhere far off into the distance, where her son was.

"So it's come. Well, that's that," muttered Levchenko entering his flat.

Yelisaveta Ilyinichna, his wife, tidied her greying hair as if she were looking into a mirror, and without replying she suddenly smiled.

"What are you smiling at, dear mamma?" asked Levchenko, who on such occasions always became very ceremonious. "What does that little smile of yours mean?" And then Ivan Ivanovich saw that his wife's eyes were looking straight ahead of her, somewhere into the distance, beyond the walls of the flat. He stood up, came up to her, clasped her in his arms and said softly: "Ours is not the only one. Millions will go."

"Yes, oh yes! I know it," answered the mother.

And then in all the rooms there appeared pictures of their son: Vassya—a baby, Vassya learning to walk, with his mouth open, Vassya as a schoolboy, Vassya—a youth, Vassya as agricultural expert. All the walls were decorated with these pictures, you could see them standing on all the tables, and yet the mother was always unearthing new ones. And soon it seemed that in all four rooms, on all the walls, tables and windows there was nothing but Vassya; now not Vassya any more but Vassili Ivanovich, the commissar of a regiment.

Every morning Ninochka would make the round of all the pictures, talking to them in her own tongue. Her mother followed her whispering softly her usual: "My Vassya, my boy!"

And so the days and months passed by. There had been but one letter from Vassya from the front, and that one very short and concise, mentioning only that he was safe and sound and that he longed to see his father, mother and little Ninochka. And after that one letter there was nothing more. In fact, hardly anything ever did reach Kudryash from the front except rumours.

"Rumours are always wrong," Levchenko used to say and would eagerly rush at the papers. And when reading about the atrocities committed by the Germans, their cruelty, their pillage, he sometimes said to his colleagues:

"Wait a moment, how can that be true? They lead out a mother, and before her very eyes they cut to pieces her twelve-year-old son for no other crime than refusing to give up his pigeons to the Germans. . . Just makes no sense. It's inconsistent with the behaviour of Man."

The elderly colleagues would just shrug their shoulders, but with gleaming eyes Natasha Kraynova, a young woman doctor, exclaimed:

"And what if they have lost the very semblance of Man?"

"Well, you're right in a way. But they are Germans. Don't you see? Koch, Roentgen. . ."

"Kant, Hegel, Heine, Schiller. . . Why do you mention all these?" Natasha interrupted. "They are discarded by the nazis, everyone of

them. The nazis have unearthed something quite different, they've found Hitler, because the men you mentioned taught them to live honestly, to toil, to love mankind, and Hitler teaches them merely to plunder and kill."

"Well, I suppose so," Levchenko would drawl, and with his ageing hand he would touch Natasha's young and fresh one. "You see, it isn't that I don't believe it's true, I simply cannot grasp it. It's sheer barbarism."

On my arrival in Kudryash I went straight to the hospital deciding that it would be better to meet Levchenko without his family. I had to wait about half an hour in the corridor. The doctor was busy attending one of his patients, and only when that patient had left I entered his consulting room. The physician walked towards me in his white overalls, with a deep wrinkle above the bridge of his nose and a little pink spot under his left eye. Immediately I recognized him for Commissar Levchenko's father.

"Well, what ails you?" he began, but seeing me smile he stopped somewhat hesitatingly. "What is it? Are you from the front?"

"Yes, I've come from there. Seen your son."

"What. . . Vassya? Vassili Ivanovich?"

Levchenko shut the door tight and for some time stood before me with his hand pressed against his heart. Then he suddenly said brusquely:

"Go on, say everything. Don't be afraid."

I told him that the regimental commissar, his son, had quite accidentally fallen into the hands of the Germans, that the Germans had tortured him, that later on he had been rescued by his friends, that for a long time he had stayed in the German rear fighting as a partisan.

"Not long ago he came back and. . ."

"Well, and. . ?"

"And went blind. From the blows of the Germans. The Germans beat him up, tortured him."

For some time Ivan Ivanovich stood before me, looking at the floor, then raising his tear-dimmed eyes:

"Only, you see. . . You mustn't. . . not in front of his mother."

"Of course not."

"Quite. Remember. And then. . . we have another head of our family—Ninochka. . . my little daughter. Seven and a half. Not a word to her, either."

"Of course not."

"You see what I mean." Then again, having hesitated for a moment, and looking me straight in the eyes: "This means you've seen him. Why, you've shaken his hand, haven't you? Eh?"

"Of course I have."

"You know what? May I kiss you? You've been in such close touch with my son," and without waiting for my consent, he hugged me tight, then pressed my head against his breast and, or maybe I only imagined it, murmured softly: "My poor Vassya!"

It was a Sunday in winter.

Levchenko came out of the maternity ward at about five in the afternoon. The case had been an exceptionally hard one, but he had succeeded in saving the young mother's life. His wife had suffered just like that when giving birth to Ninochka. Oh, what Levchenko had had to go through then! And now, whilst helping this young woman, he kept thinking about his wife and Ninochka. Ninochka! How lovely her golden hair is! When one looks at that hair of hers, she seems quite a big girl, and that's why Levchenko always speaks to her as if she were grown-up and he a mere child. Presently he would go home and say:

"My 'earses' seem quite frozen, Ninochka."

And she is sure to correct him:

"It isn't 'earses,' it's ears, daddy!"

And then he would start arguing and assuring her it was "earses" in the plural, just as you said "horses," and talking all kinds of nonsense, and she would keep correcting him.

Levchenko went down the steps and blinked: his eyes were blinded by the rays of the bright, cold winter sun

that sparkled on the silvery-blue surface of the snow. Two jackdaws perched on the paling were jabbering shrilly to one another.

"That means we'll soon have warm weather, the jackdaws are cawing just as they do in spring," decided Levchenko, and quickening his step he walked towards the Central Square and the Specialists' House. A sudden desire to unbutton his coat came over him, and his fingers were just touching the first button when the drone of engines sounded somewhere in the sky. "What may this mean?" he thought, and turning glanced upwards. An aeroplane flying low swept over the little town. Levchenko had not had time to take in what was happening when the plane shot upwards above the Central Square, and then something crashed, the ground swayed under his feet and a pillar of rubble and thick smoke whirled from the square. In the smoke he caught glimpses of flying logs, planks, bricks and cart-wheels. "It's absurd, it's perfectly absurd!" muttered Levchenko and rushed to the scene of the explosion.

Everything had been swept away. Two enormous craters yawned in the Central Square, smoke slowly rising out of them. And it seemed that they alone were alive, everything else around was dead; quite close to the craters a horse lay torn to pieces, and a cart without its hind wheels; there was only one story left of the Specialists' House, and the café "The Valley of Roses" seemed never to have existed, as also did the town Soviet building, the hotel and the small houses with their gardens at the front and their multicoloured weathercocks on the roofs. All had been swept away.

Ignoring the surrounding wreckage, hearing neither the moans nor the shrieks, with both hands protecting his face from the dust and smoke, Levchenko crossed the square and rushed into his own apartment on the ground floor. He went to open the door as usual, and had already reached out his hand for the door-handle but stopped, bewildered for a moment: there was no door, only sharp slivers of wood, and one rusty hinge were sticking out of the jambs. Levchenko stepped over the threshold. A cold draught caught him in the face, and some finely ground bits of glass crunched under his feet. He stepped into the second room. There, in the second room, on the floor, her face turned upwards and her hands thrown back, lay his wife Yelisaveta, and in the corner, as if hiding from someone, little Nina crouched, and her glassy dead eyes were fixed on the door.

Ivan Ivanovich fell heavily to the ground beside his little daughter, and stretching out his arms to her, he moaned:

"My Nina! Ninochka! Why should this happen to you?"

. . . Twilight was gathering over the little town, a winter twilight, so it was dull and murky. The air was thick with the smell of burnt straw. . . Smiling at something, murmuring something, fumbling with the lapels of his furcoat, Levchenko again crossed the Central Square and bent his steps to one of the suburbs of the town. Coming out into the open field, he lost his way and started walking through the snow-drifts. The piercing icy wind blew straight in his face and tousled the grey hair on his uncovered head.

Very early next morning, alarmed by Levchenko's disappearance, the townspeople, headed by some representatives of the local authorities, poured all out of the little town. Not far from its outskirts they found Ivan Levchenko lying stiff and stark in the snow. At the same time on the snowy steppes the German aircraft was also discovered. It was found later that, on the day before, the nazis had taken off to do a military job, had lost their way and flown deep over our rear. There, seeing that they were running out of fuel, they had decided to unload their bombs and had dropped them over the town of Kudryash. Then they had made a forced landing.

Immediately the townsfolk encircled the nazi plane, keeping at a distance of about three hundred metres from it. The nazis then showed a white flag, evidently thinking that this would be quite sufficient; but no one approached the craft. The people stood forming a living ring around them and silently, tensely, kept watch over the plane. The nazis came out. There were five of them. For a few minutes they looked at the people, then they began to shout and to threaten with their revolvers. The live ring did not move. The nazis took a few steps to one side, then all the ring curved like a sea-wave following the airmen's movement. The latter made a rush in the opposite direction, again the ring swayed after them. Then the nazis started shooting, but their bullets did not reach the ring. And so it went on till evening, and when twilight had darkened the sky, one of the airmen, the youngest of the lot, fell on his knees and stretching his hands out to the citizens he shouted something, evidently crying for mercy.

"Oh! you swine!" this came from Yegor Kraynov, a man of about sixty, the hospital door-keeper, who was standing there leaning on a heavy oaken club. "Oh! you swine! Throw away your pop-guns. It's all the same, you're done for. You can't get away now."

The nazis dropped their revolvers and put up their hands. . . the circle began to tighten around them. The people moved towards them in silence, slowly forming first into two rings, then into three, then into four. And suddenly the chairman of the town Soviet stepped forward and approached the nazis, pulling a cord out of his pocket with the intention of binding them. But from the other side at the same moment there stepped out Yegor Kraynov. With proudly raised head he came up to the lieutenant-colonel and swinging his club he shouted:

"You'll get what's coming to you, you bastard! . . That's for Nina and for Ivan Ivanovich, and for all the others together!" and down came the club.

The lieutenant-colonel crouched to the ground, clutching his head with his hands. The rest of them rushed in different directions but were immediately seized.

FUNERAL SERENADE

Mussolini has issued an order appealing to the soldiers and officers of the 8th Army "just home from Russia." But that's all that remained of the 8th Italian Army routed at the Soviet-German front

Drawn by Kukryniksy

POETRY

JOHANNES BARBARUS

Night

In darkest Europe suffocating,
Nightmare walls my fists repelling,
I hear about me keybolts grating,
Hoarse echoes mock the soul's rebelling.

The street rings hollow like a tomb,
The Milky Way floats in cerements white;
The stars are candles, the towers assume
The shapes of monks in callous rite.

The moon up there, a monocled fop
Gazing head down from his tumbled bed,
Stares vacantly into a pastry shop
At the corpse of a fly on ersatz-bread.

In peeling paint, wind-blown and sad,
A dummy loaf creaks on a rusty peg;
A homeless mongrel, melancholy mad,
Stops and sniffs and cocks his leg.

A sentry scowls from his shadowy post,
Some challenge menacing intones;
One bullet kills, one speeds his ghost,
His thick skull thuds against the stones.

Translated by John Evans

The Last Hours

We were approaching Stalingrad aboard the "U-2." The plane flew low over the fields and ravines which but not long ago were the scenes of the greatest battle in the history of warfare. In the summer the bitter smell of absinth rising from the vast rolling steppes by the Volga mingled with the smell of gasoline and blood. Now scattered over the unbounded snow-covered plain, where but recently the earth sizzled from the impact of molten metal, there are thousands of trucks, guns, tanks, hundreds of planes lined up on the aerodromes. Trains with armaments and war supplies can be seen on the railway below. This abundance of trophies is even more striking when the plane lands and the traveller continues his trip by car. By the roadsides, in inhabited points, railway stations, crossings, everywhere we came upon German war equipment captured by the Soviet troops.

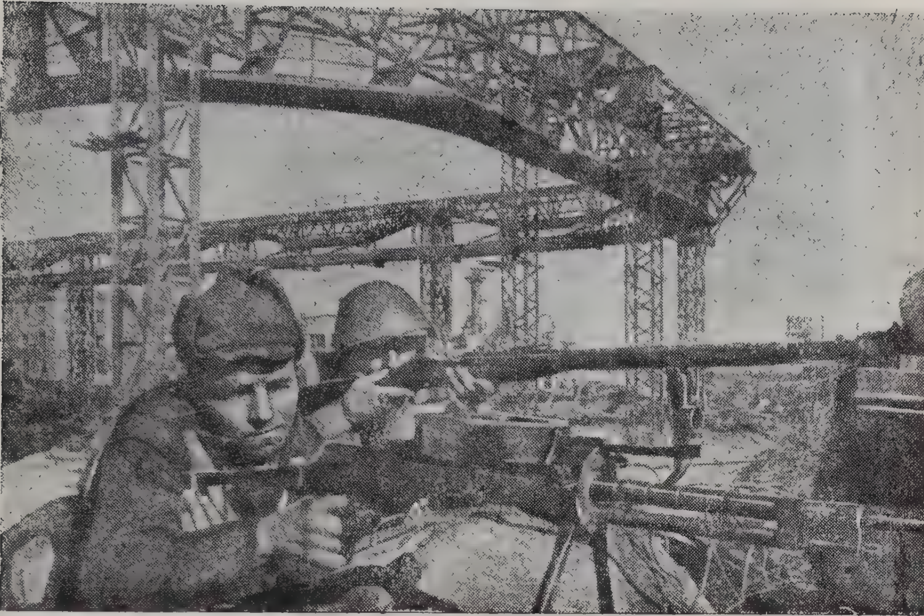
Passing the stations of Voroponovo and Sadovaya, our car drove into the city, where we could still hear the roar of artillery and the ceaseless rattle of machine-guns, amplified by the echo ringing through the cold frosty air.

The city was almost completely cleared of the enemy. Fighting was still going on at two centres of senseless German resistance. Step by step, block after block, our troops cleared Stalingrad, smoking the Germans out of the buildings with artillery fire, ousting them with bayonets, and with every onslaught new hundreds of enemy soldiers surrendered.

There was unconcealed joy on the faces of German prisoners of war, joy at being alive, contrary to the will of their commanders. All the liberated streets were literally jammed with prisoners of war. They approached Red Army men, asking for bread and walking across the bodies of German dead, joined long columns which were under special convoys. Here is a characteristic incident: a field-kitchen arrived at the position of one of our companies on the advanced line. The smell of food brought the Germans out of their trenches, and in a short time scores of men surrendered. Officers who tried to prevent their men from surrendering were shot by their own soldiers.

German officers have been hammering into the heads of their soldiers that surrender would mean inevitable death, that the Russians were destroying their prisoners of war. The soldiers of the German army encircled at Stalingrad who now surrender in thousands, can see how they were received. Many prisoners have asked Red Army commanders for permission to return and bring back their comrades. And truly: a prisoner, granted permission, vanishes through the gap in a wall, only to return thirty minutes or an hour later, his face beaming, with thirty to fifty men trailing behind him.

I watched a German infantry division surrender to the Red Army. The officers kept apart from the soldiers in an isolated group. A tall ober-leutnant, who in conditions of encirclement managed to preserve some of his aristocratic officer's polish, approached a Soviet major. Raising his hand in salute, he asked



In defence of Stalingrad

the major for permission to ask a question.

"Herr Major," he said in broken Russian, "will we receive blankets in the camp for prisoners of war?"

The major clenched his fists, making a desperate effort to control his feelings.

"I think, you will get blankets," he said and turned away.

Saluting again, the German returned to his place.

A few days ago this major with his unit captured from the Germans a camp for Soviet prisoners of war, and there is his signature on the document recording the monstrous atrocities, the inhuman tortures to which Red Army men were subjected in this camp. The "camp of death," this is how the Red Army men called this horrible place. On the vast grounds, fenced off with barbed wire, the Soviet prisoners lived in the open air in holes dug by themselves. The survivors found by the liberators no longer resembled human beings. They were mere skeletons covered with skin. The men hadn't the strength even to speak, much less to move independently. The living lay alongside those who died unable to withstand the torture. A document which fell into the hands of the Red Army men affords eloquent testimony of the treatment prisoners of war received from the Germans. Here is the diary of the chief of the camp's "ambulance." The daily entries show how many of the men perished from hunger, disease, beatings and executions. They begin with the figures: 20, 18, 22, 19 men. As the list is continued we see the figures 60, 58, 72, and, finally, there are the record figures of 120, 90 and 118 daily.

Recovering somewhat, the survivors of the camp described their awful life there. All the wardens carried sticks, they said, with which the prisoners were beaten on any pretext and without pretext at all. They were beaten if the queue in front of the kettle with muddy water called "soup" was not straight enough, for a loudly spoken word, for walking too slowly. They were beaten cruelly, until bones were fractured. But most of the time they were simply shot.

Stalingrad. The central square

That is why the Red Army major could barely control his feelings in conversation with the brazen officer.

The city rocked from the roar of guns of every caliber. A heated battle flared up in one district. The Soviet troops completely captured two parks and a square, and they were engaged in mopping up the streets where small groups of fascists were still offering disorderly resistance.

As soon as a district of the city is liberated, inhabitants immediately appear in the streets. I saw women searching among the ruins of their homes. But I refused to believe my own eyes when on one, of the streets littered with German corpses I beheld a child, a girl of about seven years of age. She was helping her mother to pull a sled with all of their worldly possessions. In a few days workers of Stalingrad factories, who in those trying days voluntarily took up arms in defence of their native city, will begin the restoration of their enterprises.

With fighting still in progress in the city, restoration work was already gaining tempo at the nearest railway junctions, stations and lines. Soon, very soon, the soldiers will bid good-bye to Stalingrad. There are other fronts waiting for them.

I watched a touching scene: a group of Soviet pilots, whose work here was finished, were taking leave of Stalingrad. Dozens of planes took off from nearby aerodromes. Flying in several waves, they passed over the city on their way to the west. The last wave of dive-bombers lined up in the sky so as to form a five-pointed star. The machines passed over the centre of the city, filling the air with the powerful drone of their motors.

Fighting continued, and street by street, block by block, the Red Army men freed their native Stalingrad of the Germans. . .

On the sector where General Tolbukhin's troops had fought, a group of German officers surrendered. In his neat uniform, his gold epaulettes gleaming, a Hitler colonel slowly marched through the ruined street, stepping over German corpses. He was followed by several lieutenant-colonels, majors and lieutenants, and behind them, stretching in a half-kilometre long column, German soldiers limped on their frost-bitten feet.

When one German colonel was told how far the front-line had moved, he gaped with wide open eyes. There in encirclement they had no idea of the situation at the front. Proof of this: a small detachment of German soldiers, masquerading as prisoners of

war, with a "convoy" of Huns disguised in Red Army uniform, left the city in an effort to break through to their own troops, in the district of. . . Kalach.

Columns of Red Army men are marching in formation and in single file in the direction from which artillery fire is still heard, accompanied by the rattle of tommy-guns, where the last points of resistance of the encircled German troops are being crushed. To speed the end! This desire lays in ever stronger grip on the Red Army men and commanders as time goes by. The job must be finished, the city liberated!

Matters are rapidly moving to head. The last centres of German resistance are noticeably weakening, artillery crushes their defences. And suddenly in one or another quarter the shooting dies down and a stick with a white rag on it appears through the gap of a wall. The man with the white flag of capitulation comes forth with a throng of Germans trailing behind him. Beyond the city the columns of war prisoners stretch for many kilometres. There are tens of thousands of them.

Our troops continued to tighten both rings around the encircled Hitler troops. Soviet planes ceased to bomb the Germans entrenched in the central section of the city. This had become dangerous, for they might hit their own troops, so small had the islets held by the Germans become.

The fascists had entrenched in a tall building with many floors, to which they even dragged a cannon. From beyond the corner eye had a good vantage point from which to watch the progress of the battle. Two of our tanks closed in on the building and opened fire at it, to be met by German tommy-gun fire. Artillery men rolled the cannon into the open and firing over open sights pounded away at the embrasures. Tommy-gun fire flashed through one of the embrasures. Calmly and slowly the gun-layer began to adjust the sight of his gun aiming at this point. "Come on, get at them there!" the Red Army men who took cover behind the ruins encouraged him from every side. There was a roar, and the embrasure vanished in flames and a cloud of thick smoke. Ready. Immediately, however, fire

Stalingrad today. Repaired armoured cars leave for the front

flashed from the next floor: the Germans were climbing higher. The artilleryman pounded away, shell after shell, as if he were driving nails, forcing the Germans to climb still higher. Finally a human form was seen dashing about on the roof. A shell tore the edge of the roof, a smoke obscured everything from vision, and jumping from their shelters the Red Army men ran towards the house. The artilleryman shifted his fire to the next house. Darkness was descending, and tracer-bullets screamed past like fiery needles.

On January 29th one could already drive a car through many streets in the centre of Stalingrad. Sometimes it was necessary to get out, taking cover from tommy-gun fire, and make one's way through the ruins of buildings. When one walks through the streets and squares of the one time big beautiful city destroyed by Hitler, a city which will now have to be built anew, one feels like baring his head in silence before these noble ruins, where every stone, every bit of wall is stained with the blood of our fighters, proof of the glory of the Soviet people. The punctual German strategists had taken everything into account. But in their rich military terminology they had forgotten to include one word and its meaning: Russia. And they found their death amid the ruins of the city which has become a symbol of the fortitude and might of our country.

We will again rebuild you, great Stalingrad! Inspired artists, architects and sculptors will create edifices from marble and granite, they will lay green squares and parks. Your factories will be restored. But these ruins will never be forgotten by mankind, nor those great Soviet men, who so long as their hearts throbbed with life fought, on the stairways, among the smouldering debris, in the basements and sidestreets.

In the morning on January 30th, all the Soviet troops converging on the centre of Stalingrad in stellar formation joined forces. The German group was completely routed. Only small groups remained, and occasional tommy-gunners continued to fire from the ruins. Soviet patrols driving through the city were mopping up the German cut-throats. Commander of the 100th Light Infantry Division, Lieutenant-General Sanne, was encircled and taken prisoner. German soldiers who capitulated laid down their machine-guns, rifles, tommy-guns in the mounting heaps of trophies in the streets. Suddenly three German transport planes appeared high above the city. They dropped containers with food. The Red Army men unpacked and opened them and enjoyed eating the sausage destined for von Paulus. . .

Small skirmishes continued as patrols combed the city, completing the mopping up of the last nests of resistance. Machine-gun and rifle fire lasted all night. By morning the shooting had died down. . .

The front has receded far from the city. The Red Army is marching west, continuing the rout of the enemy begun here, at the walls of Stalingrad. Every Red Army man is eager to go west. And no matter to what sector of the front he is sent, he will always say with pride:

"I fought at Stalingrad."

ROMAN KARMEN

Stalingrad, January 28th— February 1st, 1943.

In the Wake of the German Butchers

The Red Army is sweeping victoriously forward, liberating towns and villages from the German-fascist invaders. As they retreat, the hitlerite scoundrels are blowing up the houses which the German secret police had occupied, consigning to the flames the testimony of their sanguinary crimes. But the butchers are unable to wipe away all traces of their hideous deeds, any more than they will be able to escape the people's stern and just retribution.

The following are the first letters received from Anatole Kalinin, special correspondent for *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, who accompanied the Red Army units following up the German beast. and collected documentary evidence in Georgievsk, Pyatigorsk and Stavropol on the crimes of the German secret police, the Gestapo.

No. 87 PRODOLNAYA STREET

Here is a one-story red brick house, surrounded by a grey wooden fence. Before the Germans came to the town, this was a children's tuberculosis hospital, where the little patients, surrounded by the tender care of doctors and nurses, recovered from the dangerous illness and returned to life again. In this house everything was especially arranged for children: the clean, bright surgical clinic, the sunny wards with their little white beds, the play-room with its huge teddy bears simply begging to be hugged, and its rubber elephants and dogs.

As we enter the court-yard of this former children's clinic, the first thing that meets our eyes is a deep yawning trench. At the edge lies a fair-haired child of about six, arms flung wide, flaxen curls matted with blood. He is dead, his temple having been crushed in with some blunt instrument. There are no fingers on his left hand. It is as though they had been slashed off with a razor. A bullet from an automatic rifle has torn across the child's chest. There he lies, his head pressed to his mother, whose dead eyes, half open, stare fixedly. Her head has been bashed in, and a gaping wound runs across her neck. Next to her lies a man with deep sockets where his eyes should be, his legs dangling in the trench; still further, there is a young girl in a torn blouse, with a deep knife wound in her chest; an old woman of about seventy in a black kerchief; a man's legless body. . .

And so it goes on. . . more and more of them. The trench is filled with bodies. People seeking their friends or relatives come up and examine them. There are stifled sobs. A tall Red Army man grits his teeth and walks away with unsteady steps. A small grey-haired woman, Doctor Nina Alexandrovna Zholudeva, says in a shaking voice:

"That was Pavel Petrovich Poleshko. I know his coat, it's the one he always wore. And I know that old woman too, she lived at the corner of Krasnaya and Molotov Streets. Her name was Kashevarova. And that's Irina Ilyinichna, she worked in the chemist's shop. What have they done, what have they done, those fiends!"

I saw it all with my own eyes: 87 Prodolnaya Street, the square court-yard and that terrible trench. It is a memory which can never leave me.

Here, in this children's tuberculosis hospital, a branch of the Gestapo had its headquarters. They arrived in Georgievsk the day after the German troops entered the town, and from that moment the one-story red brick house, No. 87 Prodolnaya Street, became a house of horrors. Day and night, cries and groans could be heard from within its walls. Lorries covered with grey tarpaulin left its court-yard to return in the morning laden with boots, women's coats, children's felt boots, which the black-clad soldiers would fling into the yard.

Even during the day people avoided this terrible building, looking askance at the sentry standing motionless at the door. A tall thin Ger-

man in a fur hat, the chief of the Georgievsk branch of the Gestapo, could often be seen leaving by the front entrance. He was always accompanied by his interpreter, a short, thin German, and a blood-hound; his other invariable companion was a short, fat man in a padded jacket, called Georg. This was the executioner.

Georg lived in house No. 89, next door to the Gestapo, in Antonina Andreyevna Vassilenko's apartment on the first floor. He did not usually talk to her, but slept all day and disappeared from the house at night. "Weg!" he would shout at Antonina's little boy whenever he saw the child about.

He spoke Russian badly, but prided himself on his command of the language. When he came home in the early morning, Georg would take the bottle of cognac that always stood on the window sill, and after slowly drinking glass after glass, gradually became talkative. Speaking with a marked accent, he would tell Antonina Andreyevna:

"You Russians is very bad people. Like cattle. You moost work and say nossing. Yes, say nossing!"

One day Georg came in flushed and covered with sweat. Breathing heavily, he took off his coat and began drinking cognac, while Antonina Andreyevna silently laid the table. After the third glass Georg became expansive and boastful.

"Ach, how I am tired! Zis nacht have I vorked, and how!".

"Tired?" repeated Antonina Andreyevna.

"Ja, ja, tired," he said with a sigh of satisfaction. "Zis night have I, myself, shot forty people. Very heavy vork. Was? Silence!" he suddenly shouted, bringing his fist down on the table.

Later on he began to make a habit of talking Antonina Andreyevna, and used to start bragging even when he was not drunk. He brought home gold watches and rings.

"Zis haf I earned," he said with atisfaction, weighing them in his and. "Vat do dead menschen need vis vatch? Zey need no vatch down zere!" And he jerked his thumb earthwards.

At nights, Antonina Andreyevna could not sleep for the cries and groans coming from the Gestapo building. When she went on onto the balcony, she could see people being brought into the court-yard. The guards, their bayonets gleaming in the moonlight, would lead them to the gaping trench, and then she would hear dull thuds and groans. A sharp crackle of firing followed, and one after another, men, women and children would fall into the trench; for a long time one could see their tortured, convulsive movements, and hear low groans.

Arrested people, women together with their children, were brought to the Gestapo in fetters. People were seized on the slightest pretext: for having a son in the Red Army, for not answering a German with the humility demanded, for not understanding an order given in German.

Pavel Petrovich Poleshko was a former partisan and had been decorated. He was an old inhabitant of Georgievsk, well known and respected.

"Partisan?" asked a Gestapo agent roughly, blocking the old man's way in the street.

Pavel Petrovich said nothing.

"Waiting for the Red Army to come, are you? Nothing to say? Wore a decoration, eh?"

"Yes, I wore one, and I shall wear it again!" said Pavel Petrovich, unable to control himself. "You won't last long, you swine!"

Pavel Petrovich was dragged to the Gestapo and beaten all night. Antonina Andreyevna could hear his voice, grating in agony:

"Lies! You won't make me speak. I shan't tell you. Go on, flog me, you butchers! You can't break Poleshko!"

Early in the morning Poleshko was led through the streets of the town, his face and clothing covered with blood, barely recognizable after the torture. The men working at the sand-pits saw the old man brought there. When the guard placed Poleshko at the edge of the pit, he suddenly struck

the soldier with all his force, knocking him down, and took to his heels. The other guards fired after him, but missed, and Pavel Petrovich dashed across the stream, clambered up the opposite bank and disappeared in the forest.

The Germans organized a man-hunt. They surrounded the woods with a close ring of guards, and in the end they caught the old man. Again Poleshko was led into the Gestapo courtyard, again he was beaten all night, and in the morning finished off with one shot from a revolver.

A German officer working in the Gestapo came to live with old Kashevarova, in the house at the corner of Krasnaya and Molotov Streets. The officer would come home in the worst of tempers after his "labours" of the night. He would tear the door off its hinges, and fling the chairs about, shouting loudly for the woman of the house. One morning the officer came home, took off his jackboots and flung them at the old woman, shouting:

"I shall sleep. You shall clean. Ven I vake, zey shall be as mirror."

While the officer slept, Kashevarova cleaned his boots. In the evening the German woke, his face red and swollen, his temper foul. He began pulling on his boots, then suddenly roared:

"Hey, come here, you!"

The old woman approached timidly. The officer took off the boot, swung it around and brought it down with all his force on Kashevarova's face. Blood spurted from her nose, but the officer continued beating her and shouting:

"Badly cleaned! Vas have I you said? Schwein, bitch!"

Kashevarova went to the German headquarters to complain about the officer. The commendant listened to her and wrote everything down, then rang up the Gestapo. Shortly afterwards, the officer who had hit Kashevarova appeared and led her away. She never returned home, and when our forces entered the town her body, mutilated and hardly recognizable, was found among the others in the trench in the Gestapo court-yard. So savagely had she been handled, that even her own son had difficulty in identifying her.

The Gestapo made the house on Prodolnaya Street a hideous torture chamber for the people of Georgievsk. Solovyov, the director of the district lumber industry, was beaten with whips, sandbags and ramrods, and then bayoneted. The Germans excelled in refinements of torture. The whole town knows about the girl whom the Gestapo put in chains in the courtyard of the polyclinic. She was a war prisoner, a Soviet nurse. A hinged board with a hole in the centre was fastened to the fence. The girl's neck was put through the hole, and she was kept there for three hours every day. Then she was led through the streets with the board round her neck. The unfortunate girl finally went mad, whereupon she was shot.

The tall thin German with his interpreter and his dog, accompanied by the executioner Georg, would come to the prison where Red Army war prisoners and Soviet civilians were confined. Then the cells would resound with the groans of tortured people and the crack of shots. And the same tarpaulin-covered lorries would carry men, women and children from the prison to be shot. The Germans would take them to the sand-pits outside the town, force them to dig their own graves, line them up in a close formation, shoot them down and shevel the sand over the still warm bodies in the trench, covering both the dead and those wounded but still living. Men working in the sand-pits would often find legs, heads or fists clenched in agony, projecting from under the sand.

"Venn we shoot vis revolver, dann ve lay zem on ze ground," Georg told Antonina Andreyevna with cold-blooded cynicism. "Venn ve shoot vis rifle, zenn on ze knien, venn it is ze automat, zey stand. Ve make it a new vay every time."

Seven huge grave-yards have already been discovered in the sand-pits. One of them contained the bodies of two hundred and three men, women, children and old people, another sixty, others fifty, eighty, a hundred and twenty, and so on.

On the outskirts of the town, in gardens and the cellar of the kindergarten the bodies of twenty-five adolescents were found, brutally tortured and mutilated, heads smashed, ears slashed off, teeth knocked out, and the girls' breasts hacked off.

I stood together with other people beside that terrible trench in the Gestapo court-yard and pictured the whole scene to myself, how the mutilated, tortured people were led out and forced to lie down one on top of the other at the bottom of the pit. Then the executioner Georg and his assistants would fire into the writhing mass of bodies with revolvers or automatic rifles. Antonina Andreyevna could see from her balcony how after every round the butchers would turn their flashlights into the trench, to examine the result of their "work."

The day before the Soviet forces entered Georgievsk, Georg fled from the town, together with the whole Gestapo.

I have seen that one-story red brick house, 87 Prodolnaya Street, that square court-yard and the trench filled with dead bodies. In the sand-pits, new grave-yards, fresh victims are still being discovered. First in one place, then in another, the bodies of Soviet people tortured to death by the fascists are being found in cellars and sewers. Several thousand have already been discovered, and the terrible list grows longer every day.

It makes one's blood run cold to think of the hideous nightmare of the German occupation of Georgievsk. And we vow: the butchers shall be made to pay to the full! Not one of these brutally murdered people shall go unavenged! And our vengeance shall be a terrible one!

NIGHT IN PYATIGORSK

When you go from Georgievsk to Pyatigorsk, you have to ford the river at a place where the piles of the blown-up bridge rise from the water on your left. The road climbs sharply, falls again, curves up and down hill like a boat riding the waves. And all this rise and fall is Pyatigorsk. Snow has veiled the roofs, and the trees on the boulevard with their delicate covering of hoar frost stand out sharply against the clear blue sky. And in the background rises Mashuk, gleaming dimly through its enveloping clouds.

Clouds of smoke hang over the town. Indeed, this cannot be called a town any more. For it is a huge scorched wound. But for the kindly covering of snow, it would be still more dreadful. Wherever one looks, there are only ashes to be seen.

We all loved this town, for it is inextricably bound up in our minds with the name of Lermontov. One thinks of that now, passing along these wrecked streets. The remains of the Balneological Institute are covered with heaps of dust and rubble which settled after the explosion. When they blew up the building before taking flight, the Germans thought nothing of Lermontov or Pushkin, of Belinsky and Griboyedov, to whose memory the walls of this historic building were dedicated. Or perhaps they did think of them, perhaps this thought only increased the malicious pleasure with which General Mackensen issued the order to blow up the building and with which the German sapper lit the fuse. This heap of grey dust covers scientific treasures of the greatest value, especially the library of a hundred and five thousand volumes. Part of this library the Germans managed to send

Pyatigorsk. Eagle in bronze

to Germany, just as they sent the libraries from the Pedagogical and Pharmaceutical Institutes to Berlin, along with all the books belonging to the schools, the technical school and the town libraries. They stripped the town of everything: grain and meat, butter and sugar, books and turbines, children's blankets and powerful steam engines. They would have taken Mashuk itself if they could have moved it.

True, they did not get as far as Germany with all their stolen goods. There are forty trains captured by our forces, standing at the station of Mineralnyie Vody, thirty kilometres from Pyatigorsk. We examined these trains. The cars were filled with grain, sheepskins, coal and coke. This they had been unable to take with them, and trembling with fright, had abandoned part, and blown up the rest.

With vindictive rage they blew up the beautiful Mineralnyie Vody station into which formerly puffed trains filled with holiday-makers. We always passed through this station on our way south, and the very name Mineralnyie Vody had a pleasant joyful sound as the conductor called it.

It was not only stolen goods that the Germans abandoned, but their own belongings likewise: flatcars with absolutely new machines, tanks, long-range guns, staff cars with papers and maps.

For five months they had lorded it in Pyatigorsk. One hundred and fifty days! Not days, but nights, one continuous, dark, hideous night.

No. 57 Soviet Prospect, formerly occupied by a Party organization, had housed the Pyatigorsk Gestapo. The Germans blew up this house before they fled, hoping to bury under its ruins the bloody secrets

of their five months rule. But the truth could not be hidden. It was known to all the townspeople when the Germans were still in Pyatigorsk, and now it is coming to light for the whole world.

We do not propose to weave any tales, we shall simply give the sober facts as related by P. D. Manuilov, a salesman at a station kiosk, who was in the Gestapo prison from September 6th to January 10th last.

The Germans came to Manuilov's apartment at five in the morning on September 6th. They were accompanied by a traitor called Kaurov, formerly a white-guard emigrant, who had worked in the international police in France, and then returned to the Soviet Union and taken on some inconspicuous work in an office. It was this Kaurov who led the Germans to Manuilov.

The gendarmes organized a regular pogrom in the apartment. They took all the children's clothes, the bed linen, the toys, they drank the soup out of the pot, stripped Manuilov's wife and children naked and left them there on the floor, took Manuilov himself with them to the prison and flung him into a cell.

On September 16th the guards led him, bound, through the town from the prison to the Gestapo, where he was handed over to Senior Lieutenant Fischer, assistant to Captain Winz, chief of the Pyatigorsk branch of the Gestapo. Winz had a second assistant, Senior Lieutenant Biebusch. These three did their bloody work together.

In the Gestapo Manuilov was thrust into a cell where he found Molchanov, a former lecturer, Uncle Shkurat, a Cossack from Goryachevodskaya, and a young fellow from Nalchik.

On September 17th Fischer interrogated Manuilov for the first time.

"Are you a communist? Have you been engaged in underground work?" asked Fischer.

Manuilov said nothing.

"I'll have your life, you scum!" yelled the fascist. He flung himself on Manuilov, beat him over the head and face, then thrust him, bleeding, into another room, where two executioners with blood-stained whips stood ready. They tore his clothes from him, threw him over chairs and began to flog him. When Manuilov lost consciousness, they poured water over him, threw him back into the cell and left him lying there, dripping, on the cold floor. There Uncle Shkurat bandaged his wounds.

"The Shkurovites[1] flogged me," said the old man, "but I've never seen anything like this."

On the 18th Manuilov was interrogated again. This time he was flogged by four men, but still he kept silence.

"You'll rot in prison!" yelled Fischer.

Manuilov was taken back to the prison, where he saw with his own eyes how the German beat and shot the Soviet people. This took place in the prison court-yard. On that day, September 28th, they led three boys into the yard. Among them was a personal acquaintance of Manuilov's, a lad called Oleg Rakhmanenko, who lived at 20 Andjievsky Street. The boys were ranged against the wall, shot, and then dragged by the legs along the road and thrown into a pit behind a high brick wall. Every day Manuilov saw the same scene enacted. The people would be led out in groups of ten to fifteen, mown down with automatic rifles and dragged out by the feet. During the night, the guards would burst into the cells and beat up the prisoners with the greatest ferocity, breaking their arms and legs, and bashing in their skulls.

On October 2nd Manuilov was again taken to the Gestapo, where he remained till October 14th. During these twelve days he witnessed

[1] Shkuro—a whiteguard bandit, leader of counter-revolutionary groupings which fought against the Red Army in the Kuban and North Caucasus during the Civil War.

the shooting of one hundred and twenty-one people, including Uncle Shkurat, a worker from the motor-repair works called Petrov, Bondarenko from the tram depot, Nina, a cashier from the transport office, another resident of Pyatigorsk called Adamov, and many others. On October 7th forty-one people were shot, including eight children, three women, and a chauffeur called Alexeyev, whom Manuilov knew well. The condemned people were all stripped naked before being shot.

On the morning of October 14th, Manuilov was pushed into a closed car, together with several other people, including Mikhail Kaplanov, Ivan Zotov, a young teacher called Tonya Tokareva, Xeniya Perventseva, wife of a Red Army commander, and others. They were driven to the Kislovodsk Gestapo, and from there to a concentration camp outside the town, where they found fifty-one other people. All were without clothing or shoes. The Germans forced them to gather the harvest from the suburban farms, to dig potatoes and cut corn. News from Pyatigorsk and Kislovodsk used to seep into the camp by roundabout ways. Manuilov's wife found ways of letting him know that the Germans were nervous, and that Soviet leaflets reported the Red Army advance. She told her husband that their apartment was searched every day, but that she had been able to hide all his important documents from the Germans.

Manuilov also learned that the Germans had shot two youths, Sasha Miroshnikov and Vanya Chernovanov, in the camp, while news came from the Pyatigorsk prison of the shooting of twelve more youths, including seventeen-year-old Edward Popov, well known to Manuilov.

After some time, Manuilov succeeded in escaping.

His sufferings have left permanent traces on this man. In the prime of life, he is now an old man, barely able to creep about the room on crutches, his eyes still mirroring the horrors he saw and felt in the fascist torture chamber.

So far we have only related what was seen by one man, Manuilov. But he could not see or know everything that happened, that other inhabitants of Pyatigorsk saw and experienced.

On Sunday, September 25th, people leaving the church saw the Germans bring two thousand eight hundred people out of the barracks and lead them out of the town under heavy guard. All these victims including several hundred women and children, were shot on the brink of three huge trenches dug on the slope of Mashuk, two hundred yards from the place where Lermontov's duel was fought. This slaughter was witnessed by a forester whose cottage was about fifty yards from the place. One day the Germans brought a closed car full of people they had arrested. The car could not take the ice-covered road up the mountain, so the guards put the people out and shot them right there on the spot.

And so it went on, day and night. A hideous night of horror had settled over the town. People hid themselves in cellars, while the sound of heavy tread of fascist boots echoed through the streets.

While the Germans were drenching Pyatigorsk in blood, they were at the same time plundering, pillaging, carrying off everything of material or cultural value. Rosenberg's notorious commission seized everything in the scientific institutions and museums. Up to the last days of German occupation, the doors of the Lermontov museum bore a notice beside the memorial board, reading: "Requisitioned and taken under the control of Rosenberg's headquarters and the local commendant. According to orders of the High Command. Entrance or removal of the seal forbidden."

The German quartermaster housed his soldiers in the museum devoted to the great poet. They slept among

the valuable exhibits, engaged in drinking bouts, smashed the chairs. A shoeshop was set up in the yard.

Elizaveta Ivanovna Yakovkina, the museum director, complained to the German quartermaster that the German soldiers were running amok, and that this was impermissible within the walls of a museum where valuable exhibits, literary and cultural treasures were preserved. The quartermaster drove her away.

Rare pictures, engravings and sculptures from the Rostov Museum of Pictorial and Plastic Art were stacked in the court-yard and sheds of the Lermontov Museum. The Germans sent most of these treasures to Germany. They would have sent them all, had not Elizaveta Ivanovna Yakovkina and Natalia Vladimirovna Kapieva, one of the scientific workers of the museum, hidden several cases of engravings, pictures and porcelain. They succeeded in concealing pictures by Repin, Vrubel, Surikov, Levitan, Serov, Rubo, Vasnetsov and other great artists from the robbers, as well as a valuable collection of porcelain and engravings.

On December 23rd, General Mackensen, commander of the German forces in Pyatigorsk, accompanied by an adjutant, appeared in the museum, examined the pictures belonging to the Rostov Museum of Pictorial and Plastic Art, and picked out three rare canvases for himself.

Immediately after Pyatigorsk was occupied by our troops, a Soviet general visited the Lermontov Museum and wrote the following in the visitors' book:

"Hearty thanks from the Red Army to Elizaveta Ivanovna Yakovkina and Natalia Vladimirovna Kapieva for preserving treasures belonging to the museum, the property of the people."

These are the words of the man who at the head of our forces brought light and joy back to liberated Pyatigorsk, which is emerging from the horrors of the fascist night.

A. KALININ

A Formidable Force

"The war isn't over yet," is the frequent remark of this partisan, a man decorated for bravery with the Order of the Red Banner during the October Revolution celebrations.

Although his blond hair is now abundantly sprinkled with silver, the eyes remain as gay as ever and often sparkle mischievously. One glance at the man will convince you that he is a general favourite, well liked by his comrades-in-arms, loved by children, and trusted by women. A man of this type will never betray or deceive you. That smile will curl his lips to the very last, and should death be inevitable he will not break down or cover his eyes. And the sentence which sounds like a proverb when spoken by him, is full of profound meaning. It is a warning to enemies, a reminder to comrades and a thought that he too might one day lay down his life in his native forests of Russia.

During the grim autumn days of 1941 the Germans were repeating in a million leaflets and over the radio:

"A few days more, and Moscow will fall! The war will be over!"

"The war isn't over yet!" said the blond partisan (his hair was still untouched by grey), who found himself in an autumn forest with a group of loyal comrades.

On the eve of November the Seventh, 1941, the Germans quartered in neighbouring villages arranged drinking parties to celebrate the imminent "fall of Moscow."

A day later the partisans distributed in those villages leaflets with Stalin's report on the occasion of XXIVth anniversary of the Great October Revolution and the speech

delivered in the Red Square on the 7th of November.

This was the first powerful weapon received by the small partisan group. And that day they swore an oath of loyalty to each other:

"I swear to defend my native land as long as there is an ounce of strength left in my body. Should I prove traitor or coward, let the hand of my comrades punish me! Let death be my punishment!"

German automobiles and motorcycles often travelled along a certain forest road. The partisans could get a close look at the Germans through the bushes. Hatred, resentment and a desire for action filled the hearts of the men in hiding. There were no weapons, however, and they had to be procured. At first all their thoughts centered on rifles:that was the limit of their aspirations. Then, after a group of partisans out on reconnoissance patrol brought back several German mines, it became evident to everybody that partisan warfare had to be waged skilfully, resourcefully.

The partisans mined a crossroad and arranged an ambush. Armed men held the front-line, while unarmed men remained in the background.

The roar of an automobile engine was heard, and soon a lorry appeared. It stopped near the crossroad. The blond partisan parted the bushes, and slightly raising himself, peered out. The lorry was still there. There were sixteen Germans, armed with rifles and sub-machine-guns inside. They watched with indifference as the driver fussed with the engine. Then the driver got inside the cab and put the lorry into reverse. The partisan bit his lip. Would they escape? But at that moment the lorry again moved forward and reached the crossing. An explosion and screams were heard; splinters whizzed through the air. A steel helmet came crashing through the thin branches and landed near the partisan.

The partisans rushed onto the road. Everyone of the sixteen Germans, as well as the driver, were killed. Wood fragments and weapons were scattered about. Without firing a single shot the partisans had gained possession of rifles, tommy-guns and a sub-machine-gun.

The partisans collected their booty and disappeared into the forest to their dugouts, constructed among rotting pine-trees broken by storms and collapsed from sheer age.

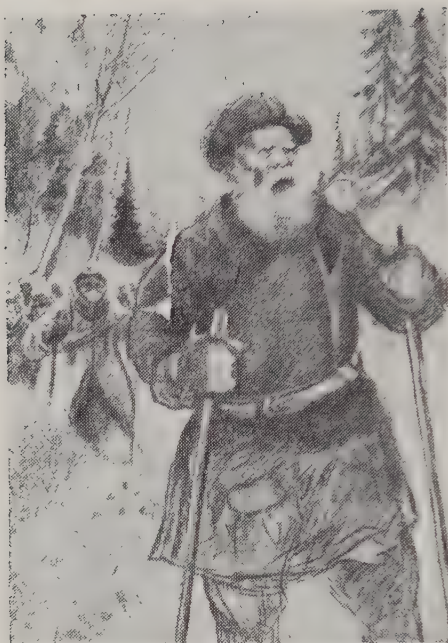
From that day on, one successful operation followed another. The men were steadily gaining in skill, experience and confidence.

Soon the men began to specialize according to their particular talents. Some became scouts, others—experts on ambushes, while still others preferred mine-laying. Once they succeeded in laying twenty-eight mines in one night. The next day a lorry carrying soldiers was blown up on them. The Germans increased protection escorts, but two more lorries were destroyed. The infuriated commandant himself drove up to the spot in his car and... he and the car together went flying sky-high. The Germans organized a search for the partisans, but they were nowhere to be found. The miners were "cultivating" another sector...

The detachment was growing steadily. From the charred and ruined villages around collective farmers, men and women, old folk and youngsters, came to join the partisans.

In winter an old man of medium height came to throw in his lot with the partisans. They learned of his misfortune. He thought that the Germans would not harm him and stayed behind in the village. The Germans came and shot the old man's whole family. Then he made his way into the forest by familiar paths and sought out the detachment.

His eyes were always watery, and it seemed as if he was constantly mourning his murdered ones. Despite his advanced age the old man was thirsting for action. At first the partisans attempted to prevail upon him to stay behind, but seeing that it was useless they permitted him to take



Partisans. Drawing by N. Zhukov

part in all operations. He usually carried a sack of food with him, but during the fighting, when any of the men were getting short of ammunition, he would crawl up and hastily shake cartridges out of the pockets of his old city made overcoat.

The old man was with the detachment on the day when the scouts reported that an SS battalion was marching towards a village, situated on the bank of the river.

On a frosty morning twenty-four of the partisans hid behind the houses and fences on the outskirts of the village. The old man was lying behind some logs. Soon the German reconnoitering party appeared. Three soldiers were walking in the middle of the road, drawing a machine-gun mounted on a sleigh. Behind them marched the rest of the battalion.

The partisans held their breath. The soldiers had not been under fire yet. They were marching along heedlessly, apparently anxious to reach the village as soon as possible. When the Germans were but a few dozen metres away, the first shots were fired from the ambush. Two of the scouts fell on the snow, the third made off limping.

The partisans shifted their fire to the soldiers, who had lain down in the field. The Germans returned the fire. The partisans, under cover of the houses, were invulnerable. Their attention was drawn to the machine-gun abandoned in the middle of the road. Its barrel directed invitingly at the Germans, it seemed to call upon them to make use of it. Suddenly the old man crept from behind the logs and crawled towards the road. Guessing his intention, a young partisan jumped into a roadside ditch, crept along it and reached the machine-gun first. The lad pulled the machine-gun into the ditch and opened fire. The old man crawled back behind the logs.

In order to force the partisans out into the open, the Germans began to fire incendiary bullets at the huts, several of which caught fire. The Germans attempted to attack, but met by a withering machine-gun and rifle fire they broke and ran, abandoning their weapons.

Red flashes of fire gleamed on the snow. The wind carried sparks from roof to roof. A haystack flared up with a dark-red flame. Through the fire and smoke, the partisans kept up their fusillade. Then the partisans rushed out into the open and started in pursuit of the fleeing Germans. The old man stood on the piled up logs bareheaded and lighted up by scarlet flames sang the *Internationale*.

The enemy lost more than 150 men killed and wounded in the battle. The partisans captured 11 machine-guns, 3 mortars, a gun, 7 sub-machine-guns and 70 rifles. There were no causalties on the partisan side.

The old man's sheepskin hat was put on his head, but he remained standing on the logs with tears streaming down his cheeks. Only a short time before, when his family was shot in the village, the old man had felt wretched, lost and weak. But now a small group of his countrymen had routed several companies of soldiers in grey-green uniforms. Now he felt strong.

The correlation of forces changed considerably from the day when the first German lorry was blown up on a mine to the day when the German command demoted one of its officers for unsuccessful operations against the partisans. But the partisans remember every single day of their life. They look back and take stock in order to attack the enemy with still greater courage.

The war isn't over yet, and German trains crash down embankments.

The war isn't over yet, and hand-grenades are hurled into German headquarters.

When the partisans were making for a certain railway junction in order to destroy German ammunition dumps located there, they knew that the enemy garrison was 400 men strong.

They were aware that the Germans were supported by a medium tank and an armoured car.

The nights are cold in the forest in winter. The trees whine in the wind. The Germans are cold and frightened. They light bonfires. They burn no logs, but whole trees, and sit around the fires or walk about near them. They warm themselves, and they listen intently. Sparks from the fire fly into the air, as if the Russian birch was signalling to the partisans before its death.

And the partisans come. They approach the junction from all sides, encircling it. A German is stabbed and he screams, he has no time to press the trigger. A shot is echoed by scores of others, and the battle flares up.

Partisans hurl hand-grenades into windows and into bunkers. The armoured car drives up to support the Germans, but a man armed with an anti-tank rifle lies in wait for it. The medium tank approaches and is also met by a tank-fighter. The car and the tank break into flames. A partisan leaps on the tank and throws a hand-grenade into the open hatch.

Many Germans have retreated to the station building from which they keep up a steady fire. Several men are killed or wounded. But the rest draw the ring around the station tighter and hurl hand-grenades into it.

The junction has been captured, but the partisans are after the ammunition dumps as well. A few minutes later columns of smoke and flame tear the black veil of night. The tortured earth shudders.

The partisans depart leaving more than 150 dead Germans behind. They carry off German machine-guns, mortars, sub-machine-guns and rifles. The men who came on foot jump onto German horses, tie cases of ammunition together with straps and sling them across the horses' cruppers.

The partisans have become a redoubtable force. The Germans employ punitive expeditions, ambushes, leaflets in trying to close the front in their rear.

But train after train is still blown up. A middle-aged partisan, recently returned to the detachment, said:

"Well, fellows, the ninth one has been accounted for! The next will be a jubilee number."

This man has already derailed nine trains and intends to keep it up.

The Germans do everything possible to protect the railway from partisan attacks. Along each side of 170 kilometres of track leading from a big station, they built fences with watch-towers. But this did not make the trains run any better, for there is Russian soil under the fences, which willingly lets partisans through to the line, and echelons continue to go hurtling down the embankments.

Just as the Germans cannot drown out the roar of tall pines or sweep away the snows from Russian fields in winter or stop the mighty onrush of the wind in the steppes, no more will they ever break the strength of the Soviet people risen to fight the German invaders.

The war isn't over yet! And when it is over, the hitlerite State will have ceased to exist.

The partisans are helping to bring that hour nearer.

A. SOFRONOV

The Germans in Kalinin

A year and a half ago Kalinin, the ancient city of Tver, was a cheerful, flourishing town, and with its lovely surroundings and many fine buildings and works of art was considered one of the most beautiful in the Soviet Union, as it had been in old Russia. Nearly two hundred years ago Catherine II had written: "After Petersburg, Tver is the finest town in the land."

But for the German-fascist invaders, who had temporary possession of the town in the fateful autumn of 1941, works of art and culture were of "no importance," as the notorious order issued by the bandit General Reichenau cynically puts it. Two months sufficed the Hitler gang to turn this pearl among Russian towns into a heap of ruins. Ancient works of Russian architecture and the modern creations of Soviet times suffered equally from the nazi barbarians.

Since the place was liberated, its inhabitants have healed many of its wounds, but the number of works of art destroyed irrevocably by the brown plague is still great.

Long ago, Russian chronicles mention the town of Tver, situated at the junction of the Volga and the Tvertsa, as an important trading and political centre. Its first mention is in a document dated 1135, and the first detailed description is to be found in a chronicle of 1181.

In the thirteenth century Tver was the capital of a grand-duchy, and then towards the end of the fifteenth century town and district were incorporated in the Moscow State. The founding of St. Petersburg brought further development, since Tver lay on the main route between the old capital and the new, and was selected by the tsars as a halting place on their journeys. In 1776 it became a regional government centre.

In the more than eight hundred years of its existence Tver has frequently been visited by fire and sword, and for this reason none of the buildings dating from the most ancient period of its history remain. The oldest structure was the White Trinity Church (Byelaya Troitsa), 1564, which subsequent building operations included as an organic part of the town.

A feature of modern Kalinin is the numerous buildings designed by the great Russian architect Matheus Kazakov. After the devastating fire of 1763, a brigade of architects was formed consisting of Karin, Obukhov, Kvassov and Borissov. The brigade was led by Nikitin, and Kazakov, then a young man, was his first assistant. Soon after this, Nikitin left for Moscow, and Kazakov himself undertook the direction of reconstruction.

In 1767, four years after the fire, Kazakov reported to the commission the completion of the most important buildings, and presented his new plan for further construction in the town, a plan which guided its whole further development.

The plan of the town consists of two main streets crossing at right angles. At their intersection, in the centre of the town, is the Octagon Square, now the Lenin Square. The main street which runs parallel with the Volga is the principal avenue, and ends in two more squares. The Octagon Square is surrounded by four identical two-story houses; the facades form four sides of the octagon. Two of these buildings, one of which was the district court of justice in recent times, were built in 1767—1770 according to Kazakov's plans. Their style has a noble simplicity, reminiscent of the French classic; the central part of the building is brought forward by white doric pillars surmounted by gables. The two opposite buildings were designed by Nikitin in similar style.

After the Great October Revolution, a granite Lenin memorial by the sculptor Merkurov was erected in the centre of the square.

A Kalinin street bombed by the fascists. Drawing by A. Laptev

The gleaming white and gold of the buildings, their simple austere style, the green of the surroundings, all this lent a pleasant, cheerful appearance to the square.

Now the windows are gaping emptily, the roofs are destroyed, and the valuable decorations of the interior are smashed or burned. The Germans tore down the Lenin memorial, leaving only the pedestal. In blind rage the nazis tried to smash and destroy Lenin's name, engraved in the granite of the pedestal, but they were able only to deface the letters, they could not destroy them, and throughout the two months of German rule the name of Lenin on the pedestal of the overturned memorial called on the people of Kalinin to battle against the invaders.

The most important of Kazakov's buildings in Tver is the Journey Castle (Putyevoy Dvorets). The two-story main building, standing well back in its grounds, and its two projecting wings together with the square formed a noble parade ground. At the ends of the wings rose the cupolas of two private chapels. In 1809—1811 the castle was rebuilt under the direction of the famous Petersburg architect Carlo Rossi, who, however, left the main lines of Kazakov's work untouched. The stone embankment with its iron railing which divides the parade ground from the square was erected in 1871 according to the designs of the architect Rozanov.

After the October Revolution the palace was occupied by the leading Soviet authorities of Kalinin district, while the Historical-Archeological Museum, dating from 1889, was housed in the left wing. The decorations of the interior remained as they were until destroyed by the Germans. With regard to the destruction of the palace, the protocol of the commission appointed by the Academy of Architecture [1] states:

---

[1] Compilation of the Academy of Architecture of the U.S.S.R.: *On the Memorials Destroyed by the German Invaders*, Moscow, 1942, Academy of Architecture Publishing House,

". . . During the retreat of the German troops, the whole building, with the exception of part of the right wing, was burned down. Roof, wooden ceilings, floors, inner walls, doors, window sills were all consumed by the flames. The wrought iron staircase in the front hall was destroyed, as were the main staircase of the palace, and an iron spiral staircase connecting the service rooms of the ground and first floors. The furniture and decorations of the halls, including bronze brackets and crystal candelabra of C. Rossi's design, were destroyed by the fire. The upper part of the walls (near the cornices) has been partly damaged by the flames. The park wall was under fire, and its ornamentation is defaced in many places. Only remnants remain of the decorations of the inner walls which can serve merely as faint indications in the restoration work. The marble stoves and mirrors of the main hall and part of the granite columns of the entrance hall have been destroyed; four of the six pillars are left. The wall decorations remaining in the first floor are covered with indecent drawings, some of them accompanied by verses in German. . ."

With the Putyevoy Dvorets, began Kazakov's main avenue, the Millionnaya Road, now the Soviet Road, which led through three squares at equal distances from each other. The first of these is the Castle Square, now the Revolution Square, followed by the Octagon or Lenin Square already mentioned, the third being the Market or Post Square, now the Soviet Square, According to Kazakov's design, this closed the perspective of the main street, and from here at a sharp angle ran two more streets across the town.

One point of particular interest is that not only the general architectural plan and the design of the main buildings of the town were the work of one man, the architect Kazakov, but that the same master influenced the design of the streets with their smaller private houses. For example, a section of the main avenue between the Castle and Octagon Square was built in the eighteenth century by an architect of Kazakov's brigade, the style of the houses being uniform. Many other Kalinin streets had numerous houses designed by architects from Kazakov's brigade.

The rebuilding of Tver after the fire of 1763, under the direction of an outstanding architect, was one of the rare cases of the planned construction of an entire town in the eighteenth century. This circumstance, and the lovely situation of the town on the high bank of the Volga, gave Tver a singular charm. The broad, straight streets with their trees and lawns, the inviting dwellings and the noble palace and public buildings, suitable to the town in size and style, all this united with the older buildings to form one harmonious whole. And later, up to our own time, the architects of Tver and Kalinin were able to preserve the charm of the town and to make their new buildings harmonize with the old.

Among the architectural works unconnected with Kazakov, there was the Catherine Church built in the Baroque style in the eighteenth century, on the tongue of land at the juncture of the Volga and the Tvertsa. Half of its bell-tower was torn down by a German bomb, and the main building was seriously damaged.

The Nativity Cloister, founded during the days of Ivan the Terrible, with its Main Church built by the architect Lvov in the nineteenth century, makes a beautiful grouping.

One characteristic feature of the general appearance of Kalinin was the beautiful row of shops at the Horse Market, consisting of twenty two-story buildings with sale-rooms. These buildings are damaged to such an extent that their restoration is hardly possible.

The Theatre of the Young Spectator, built in 1768—1788 by an unknown architect, was also blown up and

burned. Its facade was reminiscent of the Catherine Church in Petersburg, designed by Delamautte in 1769—1775.

In recent years several buildings of considerable size, harmonizing with the old architecture, have grown up, such as the cinema on the Volga bank near the park, the air-port, the new granite embankment. These buildings have also suffered severely from German vandalism during the occupation.

It is hard to find adequate words to express one's horror at this monstrous destruction by the hitlerite gang of a lovely, flourishing town, a unique memorial of Russian eighteenth century architecture.

K. ALEXANDER

Children of Our Time

The journalist and the boy met on the road leading to the fighting lines. The boy was making for his detachment, he said. And to the pressman it was all the same where he went; he was on the look-out for interesting events and gallant men. The newspaper was expecting his "copy." But it is difficult to foresee just where a battle will take place and which man will make himself famous in it; so the journalist was merely strolling around, trusting in his usual pressman's luck.

His fellow-traveller could not possibly be more than twelve. The journalist saw that at a glance; and he certainly did not believe the lad's statement that he was fourteen.

"Let him be as old as he likes. It's his funeral, after all. Let him be fourteen." The journalist was a courteous man and took no pleasure

Assignment fulfilled. Cavalry unit commander and two young scouts

In the Kubán. Fifteen-year-old Victor Chaikin, a schoolboy, on guard on his collective farm fields

in disconcerting people by his astuteness.

It was a mild day: no rain, no wind. Neither were there any shells or mines. The two were walking side by side, and the journalist asked, merely as a matter of routine, if the boy had heard of any brave deeds, heroes or anything of that kind.

"Would you like me to tell you about myself?" said the lad.

"So you're a little braggart as well, my lad," thought the man; what he said was:

"Please, do. It must be interesting."

What the boy told him was really out of the common, in fact quite thrilling, but unfortunately, highly incredible. Broadly speaking, it seemed interesting enough, but what the pressman wanted was life. Life as it is. While here he was being served fiction. Yet, in spite of himself, he couldn't help feeling interested.

One of the boy's yarns was excellent: a perfect little gem of a short story, in the O'Henry style, with an unexpected dénouement. It was about his once going on a scouting expedition with the object of catching a "tongue" (a prisoner for information) at all costs, and of his having to return from it empty-handed. But later on, when already inside the Russian lines, he ran into a German soldier. The man was cutting wood, his tommy-gun lying on the ground at his feet. The lad pointed his rifle at him and said that, like the fool he was, he had come there on his flat feet to be taken by the Russians. And the man raised his hands obediently and trudged along to the Russian camp. But afterwards it came out that this capture had taken place in the German zone.

There had been another event. Their unit had been outflanked: They had run short of fuel, and there had been no chance of bringing away the heavy field guns. Then he had made his way into the German region and in two days's time returned bringing with him a sufficient number of horses.

There was yet one more yarn about his having shot his tenth Hun the day before.

It was a longish walk. . . There were lots of stories. When the man and the youngster reached the copse, their ways parted. The pressman was rather short as he took leave of the boy: he disapproved of this tendency to embellish reality by fibbing, both in his fellow-craftsmen and in other people, even in kids. However brilliant the fabrication, the journalist prefers life. At H. Q. he would be told the names of real heroes and would write about them. Their deeds might possibly have nothing showy about them, well, he didn't want the reader to be astounded but simply to believe him.

"I've got you," said the major at H. Q., "I know the kind of man you want. You must see Zhdankov. He's a lad from the village of S. The Ger-

mans hold it now. They've killed his father; the boy escaped by the skin of his teeth and is fighting now. We tried to transfer him to the rear, but he can't be made to go. And he's certainly a splendid soldier: brave, resourceful, clever, and modest to the verge of shyness. The last quality, however, you no doubt consider rather a fault than a good point. It's a hard job to draw a single word out of the nipper.

"Well, you just remind him of some of his exploits. Let him tell you how he contrived to catch a nazi on German territory. Or how he rescued the whole unit by bringing us horses from the German stables. . . But that's the snag: I am not sure you'll be able to draw him out. He's such a shy little fellow. Tomorrow he has to make a speech, we have guests from the rear, who have brought us some present, so he has been rattled ever since. Today he left at dawn.

"'I'll go,' he said, 'and find some stranger, and I'll tell him everything, I'll make it a regular rehearsal.' But I doubt if you'll get him to speak. Though you're shrewd, you pressmen, you don't need a long speech to make you to realize what kind of man you're dealing with, do you?"

"We don't," said the journalist reluctantly, thinking that this shrewdness which he had always believed to be part and parcel of his professional training and of which he had been rather proud, was not of much use at the front, where you keep unearthing amazingly improbable and utterly incredible stories. "By the way," he turned to the major, "how old is this Zhdankov?"

"Fourteen on his last birthday, which was yesterday. He shot his tenth German, and said it was his birthday present from himself."

I have no idea what that boy looked like before the war. Still, one may surmise that his appearance was then decidedly less dare-devil: there was surely no smart little soldier-cap perched at a perilous angle just above his right ear; and in those days he had no boots, each of a size which could easily accommodate both his feet. The boy has been changed by the war, and that's what he's like now. And without actually seeing him it's difficult to imagine that he looks and acts just as he does.

The war has left its mark on all our children: certainly on those who have seen the Germans in the flesh, and even on those who have never seen them.

What do the children themselves say about it? What do they think of the war?

The children's newspaper *The Pioneers' Truth* asked its readers to answer a questionnaire. No leading questions were inserted. The children were merely asked to think a bit and to write without constraint—all they wanted and all they were able to say. And children wrote. When we draw

Seryozha Alexeyev, adopted by a Moscow Guards cavalry unit, helps carry out military assignments

up the indictment of Hitler, these batches of letters, with their straggling uneven childish characters, will weigh down the scales against Hitler and his gang.

The questionnaire inquires: "What has 1942 taught you?" Twelve-year-old Margaret Rakcheyeva from the village of Ovsyannikovo, Solnechnogorsk district, Moscow region, answers it:

"It has taught me to hate the nazis. I do hate them. They cut out stars on the cheeks of the Red Army men they had taken prisoners. When they had to retreat, they set fire to the village, they destroyed the wells, poisoned the water, they took away all the cattle we had, and together with the cattle they drove away my daddy and my little brother. My daddy was old."

Shura Boykova from Malakhovka School No. 4 doesn't refer to the Germans or the fascists: she calls them "hitlers" and writes this word without using the capital.

"I have learnt how to hate the hitlers. I have seen them kill our soldiers with their rifle-butts. Here's what I'd like to do with the hitlers: kill them and drive them away from our land, so they would be unable to torture our people."

Children are questioned: "Have you helped the Red Army? What did you do last year?"" And the youngsters enumerate: they worked on the collective farm, they were busy weeding, pulling flax, threshing ("it's a long time since we only went to school and played, and thought we were mere kids"). They gathered flowers and herbs ("these have probably been made into all kinds of medicines to cure our wounded"). They collected metal waste ("our 'link' collected 25 kg., this means thousands of bullets for the nazis' heads"). They sent presents to the front, grew vegetables and berries for hospitals. And, as a matter of course, they went on with their schoolwork.

Valya Nazarov is a very small boy, his handwriting proves that. He tells us how he has helped the Red Army:

"The Germans came to our village. They had a Red Army man as a prisoner. He came to our house. We kids were alone, the Germans had killed daddy. We gave the Red Army man something to eat. Then we hid him in the cellar. The Germans searched many places for him, but they didn't think about us, we were only kids. And then, one happy day, the Red Army came, then our own Red Army man got out of the cellar and told everything, and he thanked us. Oh, how he hugged us!"

"What would you like most?" the questionnaire goes on.

"What I want most is that the war should end, and the robber Hitler with his looters should be crushed. And because he broke the treaty with the patient Soviet Union, I want Hitler to be shot. He ought to be tortured for all the torments our people have suffered. But in the Soviet Union nobody is tortured, it's only his soldiers who do that. And to be shot on the spot isn't torture, it is the vengeance of the people."

NINA IVANTER

BOOKS AND WRITERS

KARL MARX ON LITERATURE

The vast scientific heritage of Karl Marx includes a wealth of ideas about art and literature. They have not been collected into a special survey, but they are abundantly scattered in his works, in his correspondence, and much about Marx' ideas with regard to art was said by his closest friend and comrade Friedrich Engels.

Marx' interest in art and literature was not a casually acquired taste. In his youth he wrote poetry. He loved literature and studied it all his life. Possessing a remarkable memory, he was able to recite long excerpts from the *Divine Comedy*, which he had memorized almost in its entirety, as well as acts from the tragedies of Shakespeare, whom he held in particularly high esteem.

Karl Marx' tastes were determined to a considerable extent by English literature. He read and reread Walter Scott, Fielding; the study of Shakespeare was a cult in Marx' family. Replying to a questionnaire about his favourite poets, Marx wrote: "Shakespeare, Aeschylus, Goethe."

This cult of Shakespeare is quite understandable. If the basic content of Marx' aesthetic concept is to be given concisely defined, it may be said that it is a humanitarian concept. The idea of the liberation of man from all the fetters which restrain development of his abilities and vital energy, an idea which determined all Marx' activities, naturally attracted him to literature; in literature he was attracted to writers in whose work he found the most complete and faithful portrayal of man and in the first place to Shakespeare, of whom Engels wrote: "In Act I of *Merry Wives of Windsor* alone there is more vitality and movement than in the whole of German literature; Launce with his dog Crab alone are worth more than all the German comedies taken together." (Engels' letter to Marx, December 10th, 1873.)

Characterizing the development of human society, Marx said that it moves along the road from the "non-human man," that is from the man who is impoverished and restricted in his development as a result of the defects of the social system, to the "human man," that is to the man of the future who had the opportunity of full and harmonious development.

In art Marx sought, primarily, the representation of man.

That is why in works that differ widely from each other he frequently turned to general problems of art and to an analysis of books by certain writers.

These scattered remarks are united by a general understanding of art, and by what he himself demanded in general of art.

That is why, taken as whole, they enable one to speak with a fair degree of definiteness about Marx' aesthetic ideas and about Engels' ideas, which were closely associated with them. Collected in the book *K. Marx and F. Engels on Art* (published by the Art Publishing House, Moscow, 1937), they make up a volume of nearly 700 pages. It is characteristic that the volume contains excerpts from works on subjects apparently far removed from problems of art, as for example *Capital*, *The Theory of Surplus Value*, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, etc. The wide range of the works quoted in this volume may be judged by the fact that it mentioned more than two hundred men of letters: Greek, Roman, English, French, Italian, Russian, Spanish and many others.

This list in itself is an illustration of the general principle of Marxism, clearly expressed by Lenin when he said that Socialist culture can be built only upon the basis of the complete and profound study and assimilation of the cultural wealth accumulated by mankind in the course of milleniums of development. As an example he referred to Marx' encyclopaedic knowledge, to the intensive work he carried on for many years while living in London where he spent day after day studying historical and literary material in the British Museum.

In literature Marx valued above all faithfulness to life, the basis of realism in art. That is why his attention was centered on Shakespeare, whom in his letter to Lassalle he contrasts with Schiller whose heroes are artificial, whereas Shakespeare's characters behave as life prompts them to behave.

Characteristic also is Marx' opinion about the English realistic writers of the nineteenth century; he values precisely the fact that the brilliant modern school of novelists in England, novelists whose vivid and eloquent descriptions have exposed to the world more political and social truths than all the politicians, publicists and moralists taken together, has depicted all sections of the bourgeoisie. (Marx' article in *New York Tribune*, August 1st, 1854.)

These words clearly indicate that Marx regarded literature as one of the forms of the reflection and cognition of life. A characteristic of Kant was the negation of the perceptional value of literature in general, and even Hegel considered it only as one—and that not the highest—stage on the ladder of perception of the world. In Marx' concept, literature can, like science, give a profoundly true picture of life and, therefore, permits us to judge of its laws.

A Marxist study of literature presupposes a definition of the historic position determining and reflected in the author's attitude, and of the role played by his works in the social struggle.

But for Marx the study of art does not terminate with the determination of the writer's contact with the social environment that suggested his images and ideas. On the contrary, it only begins there. ". . . the difficulty is not in grasping the idea that Greek art and epos are bound up with certain forms of social development. It rather lies in understanding why they still constitute with us a source of aesthetic enjoyment and in certain respects prevail as the standard and model beyond attainment." *(A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy.)* It is very easy to see that the historic conditions which have predetermined the origin of art in antiquity can not reappear. "Is the view of nature and of social relations which shaped Greek imagination and Greek art possible in the age of automatic machinery, and railways, and locomotives, and electric telegraphs? Where does Vulcan come in as against Roberts and Co.; Jupiter, as against the lightning rod; and Hermes, as against the Crédit Mobilier? . . What becomes of the Goddess Fame side by side with Printing House Square? . . is Achilles possible side by side with powder and lead? Or is the *Iliad* at all compatible with the printing press and steam press? Do not singing and reciting and the muses necessarily go out of existence with the appearance of the printer's bar, and do not, therefore, disappear the prerequisites of epic poetry?" (Ibid.) Nevertheless, the aesthetic importance of Greek art extends beyond the framework of social relations in which it has arisen. Marx sees an explanation of this in the humaneness of this art, in the fact that it raises problems of general importance for humanity (within the limits, naturally, in which they could appear under the given historical conditions), which preserve their significance for other periods of social development as well.

"A man," writes Marx, "cannot become a child again unless he becomes childish. But does he not enjoy the artless ways of the child and must he not strive to reproduce its truth on a higher plane? Is not the character of every epoch revived perfectly true to nature in child nature? Why should the social childhood of mankind, where it had obtained its most beautiful development, not exert an eternal charm as an age that will never return? There are ill-bred children and precocious children. Many of the ancient nations belong to the latter class. The Greeks were normal children. The charm their art has for us does not conflict with the primitive character of the social order from which it had sprung. It is rather the product of the latter, and is rather due to the fact that the unripe social conditions under which the art arose and under which alone it could appear can never return." (Ibid.)

In these ideas Marx solves one of the most important contradictions in the theory of art, a contradiction of the general and the historic aspects of art. As opposed, on the one hand, to the vulgar sociological point of view which restricts science to the social environment in which it has developed, and on the other, to abstract ideas about eternal aesthetic values detached from historic conditions, Marx shows that art is inseparably connected with its historic environment. At the same time, however, he shows that its human content at every stage of the development of society causes it to raise basic problems common for different historical periods, problems of vital interest to man. And the art of antiquity, though we realize its historical remoteness from us, at the same time interests us precisely because in its own way it solves basic problems of human life that concern us closely. That is why one of the best-loved heroes of mankind is Prometheus, who reveals to the full the strength of the human spirit, which is not to be bowed, and the nobility and beauty of the human heart which is ready to forego all personal interests for the good of the people, and the grandeur and steadfastness of human nature for which the highest ideal is freedom.

Citing Prometheus:

My miseries, be assured, I would not change
For the gay servitude, but rather choose
To live a vassal to this dreary rock,
Than lackey the proud heels of Jove.

Marx wrote that "Prometheus was the most noble saint and martyr in the calendar of philosophy" (Foreword to the doctor's dissertation). The character of Prometheus, suggested by the historical conditions peculiar to Ancient Greece, reveals at the same time traits so common to mankind that they retain their significance in all epochs. That is why the image of Prometheus has retained its fascination for us as well. Marx defined happiness as struggle, and misfortune as submission. It is easy to divine in these words that same concept of the essential man which in antiquity found expression in mythological form in Prometheus. And in our own day might not any participant in mankind's great struggle against fascism repeat words that revealed the Prometheus-like strength of Marx' spirit? Do we not recall Prometheus when we think of the heroism of the defenders of Stalingrad?

The aesthetic conception of Marx is based on a solid historical foundation and at the same time on an understanding of the universality of human nature, which, manifested historically, reveals the finest traits of man fighting for his freedom and independence, fighting to create the conditions for his harmonious development.

Characteristic in this respect is the attitude of Marx to Russian literature. Marx was able to read every European language and knew English and French perfectly well, and at the age of fifty he undertook the study of Russian, a language considered

by F. Engels to be "one of the most forceful and richest of living languages," and rapidly mastered it.

Marx held in high esteem the works of Pushkin, Chernyshevsky and other Russian writers, but he singled out the oldest monument of Russian literature *The Lay of Igor's March*, dating from the end of the twelfth century. *The Lay of Igor's March* is an exceptionally powerful expression of the love of the Russians for their country; it is a gem from the treasury of Russian literature.

It is precisely this that Marx stresses when he says: "The meaning of this poem is the appeal of the Russian princes for unity right on the eve of the Mongol invasion." (Marx' letter to Engels of March 5th, 1856.)

Shortly before the modern barbarians invaded Europe, the Soviet Union celebrated the 750th anniversary of this remarkable epic, the cradle of the idea of Russian patriotism. And once again in our time it has fallen to the lot of the Russian people to save humanity from the Hitler hordes.

And once again the historic meaning of the *Lay* which acquired general significance in Marx' interpretation, has become neer to us, acquired urgent meaning. The strength of patriotic feeling embodied in it unites the Russian people in these days as well.

The importance of the Marxist aesthetic doctrine lies precisely in this, that it teaches us to link with modern times the best works created by human genius in the past, that it reveals to us to its fullest depths the universal content of art.

In the Soviet Union the aesthetics of Marx and the inseparably linked with it aesthetics of Engels are the subject of exhaustive study.

The heroic nature of Soviet people, a nature that was revealed to the world in the days of its mortal combat with fascism, bears the closest resemblance to that ideal of the "human man," envisioned by Marx as the man of the future. The man whose traits he sought in the history of world literature. This man is the principal character of Soviet literature wherein he is portrayed in days when the Soviet Union was engaged in peaceful construction, in the unobtrusive heroism of labour, which moulded the character of a man to whom happiness means struggle, and misfortune—submission.

Thus does Soviet literature depict him today in the fighting line, where he struggles to save mankind from subjugation by fascism.

LEONID TIMOFEYEV

"UNCONQUERABLE CAUCASUS"

Every handful of earth here is the dust of long-dead warriors, heroes, martyrs. For this is the Caucasus, the cradle of mankind, the treasure-house of universal culture. Here the great trade routes crossed and the bloody trail of the conqueror passed; hither the nations came from the ends of all the earth and merged in the crucible of peoples, races, cultures; here East and West met and united. It was in Georgia that the dawn of the European Renaissance broke; it was in Georgia that the Caucasian Dante, Shota Rust'hveli, wrote the poem that has survived through the ages. The ashes of one of the greatest of poets, Nizami Gianjievi, he whom Goethe called his teacher, are buried in Kirovabad in Azerbaijan. The rarest of mediaeval manuscripts are preserved in the temples of Armenia, in particular the Echmiadzin Monastery. In the mountain fastnesses of Pshavo-Khevsuretia an ancient folk-epic of unusual power and beauty has come down to our own day by word of mouth.

The European world drew on these sources constantly; European scholars turned new pages in the history of philosophy, studied the language of the myths, poets transplanted the tender shoots of Gulistan to European soil.

Those who desire to probe into the soul of Caucasian poetry, the language of its

M. Goudantov, a Caucasian collective farmer, pointing out a mountain path to Yelisseyev and Kavteladze, scouts

imagery and symbols, and to understand its organic unity with the national spirit, must first realize that while the Great Patriotic War is being waged this poetry lives only upon the will to victory. The national Georgian greeting which means victory and dates back to the time when the "Gamarjveba" struggle for liberty was being fought, has not lost its significance and can still inspire Caucasian poets today.

A volume of Transcaucasian poetry has just been published under the title of *Unconquerable Caucasus*. The poets represented here take victory for their slogan and summon their people to fight against the twentieth century vandals, against those who want to turn the free peoples of the Caucasus into beasts of burden and make bonfires of immortal works of science and literature. Not for the first time is the foot of the invader defiling Caucasian earth. This earth was crushed beneath the chariots of Ashur, the cavalry of Cyrus, the phalanxes of Alexander of Macedon, the Roman legions; Mongols and Seljuks descended upon it like an avalanche; the Crusaders trampled it, bringing fire and sword. But the peoples of the Caucasus have always fought heroically for their freedom and are fighting heroically today. The struggle they are waging, side by side with the Russians, for national and historic existence, for honour and liberty, finds vivid reflection in these poems.

With pen and sword are the Caucasians serving their country. They have gone to the front as soldiers, commanders, war-correspondents; they work in the editorial offices of papers published at the front and do their share for the "TASS Windows." In Georgi Kuchishvili's *Ballad of a Poet-Warrior*, Suleiman Rustam's *Vow*, in the poems of Shalva Abkhaidze and other poems, we are given memorable pictures of a poet warrior and bard who swears a solemn oath upon a handful of common earth from the roadway, kisses it and dies.

National pride pervades the verses of Samed Vurgun *The Philosophy of Life*; Ovanes Shiraz' *My Ayastan* and *To the Descendants of David*; Nairi Zorian's *Apples of Arzakiand*, and Tsatourian's *The Love that Knows no Bounds*; Ashot Aram's *In the Homeland* and *In Armenia*; Rasul Rza's *Native Land*, Suleiman Rustem's *Tabriz*, Maro Margarian's *We* and others.

They turn for inspiration to the heroic traditions of their national history.

A favourite image is the symbol of their country, her living embodiment as a Georgia woman, the mother of heroes. She sharpens her sons' swords when she sends them to war, and ties her veil to the hilt. Then, changing her woman's attire for a coat of mail and lowering the visor of her helmet, she leads the troops into battle. This is the Georgian woman presented to us in Georgi Leonidze's verses *Georgian Women*, in Karlo Kaladze's *Our Girls* and Sandro Shanshiashvili's *Georgian Mother*.

The great traditions of a national culture serve as a spiritual weapon in the present war. At the antifascist meeting of the Transcaucasian peoples, Rust'hveli's lines rang out like a challenge to arise and drive the

enemy from the country forever. Rust'hveli's name has associations that make it a symbol of the liberty of the Caucasian peoples. The Georgian dies in battle with words of an ancient song on his lips; the Georgian poets have emblazoned the names of their national geniuses on the banners they bear into battle.

New editions of the works of Hachatur Abovian, a nineteenth-century educator, writer and philosopher who laid the foundations of the Armenian literary language and literature, are republished and studied. Very popular in Azerbaijan are the works of Mirza Shafi, a nineteenth-century poet who has been translated into many European languages,

The Azerbaijanians turn to the great shades of the past, recalling Babek, a ninth-century military leader who freed his people from the Arab yoke,and the ashug Ker-Ogly, the legendary warrior-bard of the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century, who appears in Mamed Ragim's poem *Sons of Azerbaijan*. David of Sassun, the hero of a tenth-century epic, is the Armenian soldier's ideal in Ovanes Shiraz' poem *To the Descendants of David*, and Nairi Zorian's *Message to My People*. Stalin appears as the Caucasian Prometheus in Georgian poems.

During this war the sons of every nationality call each foot of Soviet land their own. The Kazakh poet Abdilda Tajibayev tells of a Kazakh soldier who, when he crossed a river and set foot on liberated Ukrainian soil, wept for joy and kissed it as passionately as though it were his own. Jamboul, the aged Kazakh bard, sent besieged Leningrad *The City of Red Dawns* in which he calls Lenin's city his home. The Caucasian poets sing of the courage of Soviet people, of their unconquerable spirit, their steadfast resistance. In *Partisans of the Ukraine* the Azerbaijanian Samed Vurgun shares with the Ukrainian his grief over the trampling of his native soil by the foe; the Armenian Vagan Grigorian mourns with the Byelorussian in *Somewhere in Byelorussia* a village burned down by the Germans; in *We Shall Come Again*, the Azerbaijanian Mamed Ragim takes a soldier's vow to the peoples of the Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Baltic countries. The activities of the partisans are an unfailing source of inspiration to Caucasian poetry; the Georgian Irakli Abashidze greets as brother partisans among whom are

The Uzbek and the lad from Pskov,
The Georgian and Kalmyk, friend of the steppe.

A memorial to the friendship of the Transcaucasian peoples is the Armenian poet Sarmen's *Three*. They are the Armenian Ara, the Georgian Shota and the Azerbaijanian Abdullah, bound by the brotherhood of heroism, sanctified by death.

There is boundless love in the verses Caucasian poets dedicate to their Russian brothers of the Red Army. As instances we may quote Samed Vurgun's *Russian Army—Soviet Army*, the herdsman-bard Tagiev's *Red Army* and Galaktion Tabidze's *Great Army*. Russian soldiers and commanders enter the pantheon of Caucasian heroes of the Patriotic War, and Caucasian poets sing of their exploits as though they belonged to their own people. Moscow and Leningrad are dear as their own homes to the poets of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Lenin's city, the cradle of the proletarian revolution, Smolny, the headquarters of the revolution, the very stones of Leningrad, the living chronicle of revolutionary Russia from the Decembrists to the Bolsheviks, are sung by the Armenian Suren Vagun in *Leningrad*. In his *Lenin in an Armoured Car* Ilo Mossashvili gives us a fleeting glimpse, a poetic vision, of Lenin driving in an armoured car through the streets of his besieged city and delivering a fiery speech to its defenders. But most vivid and memorable of all is the image of the brotherhood of peoples embodied in Stalin as he appears in Samed Vurgun's *Our Captain*, in Georgi Leonidze's *To Stalin* and in Simon Chikovani's *To Comrade Stalin, Our Leader and the Captain of Our Forces*.

The atmosphere of the approaching hour of victory and the anticipation of this hour pervade the verses of the Balkar Bakulov *We Shall Win*, of Kaissan Kuliev's *I Believe*, of Joseph Grishashvili's *Country and Victory*, and particularly Simon Chavchavadze's *Gamarjveba*. For ages this word has been on Georgian people's lips in toil and struggle, in war and peace; it glowed from the banners that went into battle and gleamed from the blades of the warriors; the sage pronounced it when he gave the young man his blessing, the mother murmured it when she parted from her son, the soldier swore by it to his brother-in-arms. And nowadays the poet sends this ancient national greeting from his people, in the name of all the Caucasian peoples, to his country, to the army, to the leader. Victory; the unconquerable faith that pervades the poetry of the heroic Caucasus.

This volume of poems *Unconquerable Caucasus* is an event in the cultural life of the Caucasian peoples, the outward sign of new inspiration.

A kind of exchange of poetic thought is being effected by the translating of Russian and other poets of the U.S.S.R. into numerous Caucasian tongues. An anthology published in Chechnia-Ingushetia includes poems by the Azerbaijanian Samed Vurgun, the Ukrainian Maxim Rylsky and the Russian Constantine Simonov. A collection of war-songs has been published in Kabardino-Balkaria under the title of *All Take to Arms* in four languages: Russian, Kabardian, Balkar and Tatar; the works of the Armenian Gamzat Tsadass are translated in several dozen languages of the Daghestan peoples.

R. MILLER-BUDNITSKAYA

LATVIAN LITERATURE DURING THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR

Latvian literature, which has produced such masterly writers as Rainis in poetry, Blaumanis in prose and Andreis Upits in the field of the novel, has always, as is evident from its folklore, upheld the highest popular ideals, singing the praises of labour, love of freedom, the friendship of peoples, and instilling a deep hatred of foreign oppressors.

The hitlerite armies' invasion of the Soviet Union has temporarily deprived the Latvian writers of direct contact with their people. But it has been powerless to destroy the deep-rooted, indissoluble bond between them. All the Latvian writers who were able to bear arms joined the ranks of the Red Army as volunteers at the very beginning of the war.

In the autumn of 1941, Latvian rifle units were formed in the Red Army. The prominent Latvian writers Grigoulis, Rokpelnis, Vanags, Loukks, Spure, Balodis, Yakabson, Lemanis and Talcis took part in the battles for Leningrad and Moscow, and on other sectors of the front. In their leisure time, in the intervals between battles, they wrote poems and tales, composed stories about those great days when every hour produced its heroes, when people had such a deep faith in life that it seemed death itself must give way before them.

Evacuees from Latvia have found a field for their efforts, Latvians have entered into the productive life of the country and have started working in factories, laboratories and collective farms. Latvian newspapers are again appearing, artists' ensembles and schools, carried on in the Latvian language, have resumed their activities; and extensive opportunities have presented themselves to Latvian writers. They have composed mass songs, popular tales and plays, have written reminiscences and satirical works. At the plenum held in Moscow on the 13th and 14th of June, 1942, Latvian writers reviewed the work they had done up to that time, exchanged experiences, indicated the lines along which Latvian literature should develop, and defined the most important tasks that lay ahead.

Latvian literature has much to show for the period of the Great Patriotic War, and has every right to be proud of its achievements. This refers equally to the writers at the front and to those who are working in the rear. The year has proved especially productive for the old master of Latvian prose, A. Upits (born 1877). While Latvia was still Soviet, Upits wrote the tragedy *Spartacus*, which he had thought out long before, a work that has been highly praised by the critics for its realism and the skill with which the local colour of ancient Rome has been conveyed. The tragedy must be considered one of Upits' best historical works. The writer has also finished a cycle of short novels on the Hitlerites. In the story *Rolando Furioso* we have a description of the brutality of the Hitlerites, of their seizure of the European countries, of a village in the German rear, of a brigandly "collection of donations" in occupied Riga. Of the welcome given to evacuated Latvians in the Soviet Union the author tells in the story *Vilnitsa's Journey to the East*. In addition, Upits has produced a story about the first days of the German invasion of Latvia, a story about the Latvian partisans, several one-act plays and many newspaper articles.

The art of the prominent Latvian poet Soudrabkalns has developed and matured. Soudrabkalns is among the most gifted of Latvian poets. For a long time, before the establishment of a Soviet Government in Latvia, Soudrabkalns wrote nothing. Now, when people and country have thrown themselves into the struggle for defence of their rights, Soudrabkalns has at last broken silence. His satire *The Turn of the Tide* should be classed with his subtle philosophical and lyrical verse. This satire, like the other works of the poet, kindles in the people the flame of wrath against the oppressors. The collection of poems *The Larks Call to Battle*, dedicated to the Red Army, describes how the whole Latvian land and all her people have risen to struggle for their happy future against the German barbarians.

The novelist Vilis Lacis, well known for his descriptions of the life of Latvian sailors and fishermen, has written during the war several short novels and stories in which we meet again the fishermen of the Riga seashore, familiar to us from previous stories. But now they are no longer peaceful fishermen but formidable avengers of the people. Particularly successful is Lacis' story *It Happened at Sea*, the hero of which, a fisherman-patriot, takes vengeance on the German invaders for the death and dishonour of his bride. In the story *The Sons of Old Crusoe* the writer tells of the tragic fate of a Latvian family. One of the sons of a grey-headed partisan betrays his brother, and the father with his own hand kills the son who has become an enemy of the Latvian people.

The talented woman writer, Anna Sakse, began to write when Latvia was already Soviet. Her novel *An Industrious Tribe* sketches in bold strokes the historical fate of the Latvian village. During the Great Patriotic War Sakse has written several short novels and stories about the life of Latvians evacuated to the Soviet Union,

and the struggle carried on by Latvians in occupied Latvia. In her short novel *A Peaceful Citizen* a member of the intelligentsia, a wretched egoist, whose only thought is how to get through the war "peacefully" somewhere in the rear, becomes a traitor because of this willingness to sacrifice everything to his own peace. At the same time Sakse is working on subjects dealing with young people. She has already written a story about the life of young folk on a collective farm.

The poet and dramatist Fricis Rokpelnis has rapidly risen to be one of the best representatives of Latvian literature. Rokpelnis' war poems are not only deeply significant as to content, but are rich in imagery and artistic methods borrowed from folklore. In the play *Latvians Go into Battle* collective farmers see a Latvian youth off to the war. The send-off develops into a splendid demonstration of the friendship of peoples. Many poems and songs are introduced into the play, to which Latvian composers have written the music.

During the past year Latvian poetry has shown greater development than for the previous five years. Poetry has become trenchant and vigorous, a reflection of the times. This is how the poets on active service at the front write; for instance, V. Loukks, A. Grigoulis, A. Balodis, J. Vanags, whose poems seem to be written in blood. Grigoulis and Vanags have also proved themselves fine writers of prose. Grigoulis' story *The Finger Nail*, which may be called a prose poem, depicting a bloody battle and the heroes who take part in it, is imbued with such all-conquering optimism that the reader is regenerated, thirsting for new battles.

Valdis Loukks has celebrated in verse all the most important campaigns and battles of the Latvian riflemen. Some of his verses have become as popular as marching songs.

Temporarily cut off from their country and from the majority of their countrymen, Latvian writers have none the less continued during the year of the Great Patriotic War to grow and develop as artists. This is abundantly proved by the appearance of several young people of outstanding talents among the Red Army men and young evacuees.

All this gives grounds for the firm conviction that, on returning to their native Latvia after the defeat of the Germans, the Latvian writers, tempered by their experiences in the Great Patriotic War, will fulfil with honour the tasks that lie before them in connection with the restoration of their country.

JANIS NIEDRE

UNSUBDUED NORWAY

The peoples of the European countries enslaved by the Hitlerites have inscribed no small number of glorious pages in the epic of their liberation struggle against the German occupationists. Undoubtedly resistance will continue to grow, and the more determined the struggle becomes, the more vivid will be these heroic pages. However, its initial phases are already reflected in literature.

The spring of 1940 was the fatal spring for Norway when hitlerite troops invaded the country of a people who knew not foreign oppression.

Norway was so sure of the inviolability of her neutrality, hallowed by nearly a century of peace, that the attack of the perfidious foe caught her unawares, absolutely unprepared to offer resistance. The nazis took possession of Norway within a few days.

Stuart David Engstrand's novel *Norwegian Spring 1940* is the first, and one may say without hesitation, successful attempt to depict in literature the tragedy of the Norwegian people in those terrible April days, and that inner strength of consuming hatred for the invader, a hatred that is the guarantee of their future emancipation.

The writer has selected the psychological form for his novel. He introduces his principal characters in general outline, already in the very first pages of the book, particularly the enemy, a young German fascist, Ralph, one of those hitlerite scoundrels, who, in the name of the "triumph of the German race," sow death and destruction everywhere. He is counter-balanced by citizens of a freedom-loving country, simple people rich in human feelings and imbued with the consciousness of their dignity.

By their very nature these people cannot reconcile themselves to fascism or submit to it, and in the struggle for their freedom and for the freedom of their native land they rise to the greatest heroism. Among them are the worker Johan, the step-father of Ralph, his mother, a German, and the rest of the family: the twin brothers, Astri, Johan's daughter from his first marriage, and little Britta. Practically the whole population of the Norwegian town: the pastor, the neighbours and saw-mill workers, share their feelings and thoughts.

Ralph appears in the very first pages of the book in the role of one of the numerous wreckers sent to Norway by the Germans to prepare the ground for the insidious seizure of the country. But Norway is not a foreign country for Ralph: it is his second home. In the famine years following the

first imperialist war he was given a home by the Norwegian worker Johan. Later Ralph's mother, became the wife of Johan and they both lavished all their love on the boy. Until the age of eighteen he breathed the air of a free country. Afterwards his mother sent him to nazi Germany to study. Ten years later, in the winter of 1940, he returned a bitter enemy of his family, of his native town, of the whole country.

During the years spent in Germany Ralph passed through all the stages that moulded him into a real Hitlerite. It covers the path that leads from one crime to another, the participation in a Jewish pogrom, the murder of an unarmed anti-fascist, to activities of a spy and wrecker who stops at nothing, who betrays his own brother and is ready to kill Johan, the man who was a father to him.

This monstrous creature of hitlerite Germany brings destruction and death into the family of Johan and Martha, simple, honest, industrious folk, to whom freedom is like the air they breathe. In vain are all the attempts of the mother to regenerate the former Ralph. She makes the greatest sacrifices, but to no avail. Finally, in defending the life of her husband, her real country, Norway, she shoots her son.

The main merit of Engstrand's book, and his greatest success as an artist, is his portrayal of the courageous resistance offered by a small Norwegian town, poorly armed and caught unawares like the rest of the country. When Hitler's mechanized hordes advance on the small town, it courageously fights, its whole population heroically defending their freedom. The worker Johan pitted against a whole detachment fights until the last bullet. This kind, good-natured man is dominated by one desire, one thought: to destroy the maximum number of invaders; his friends saw-mill workers, youth, old men and women offer furious resistance. Martha, the tender mother and wife, meets her death in an attempt to wreak vengeance on the local Quisling who has betrayed the town.

In stirring words Engstrand shows how in that terrible hour hatred was born, a hatred that blazed in the hearts of all these hitherto deeply peace-loving people.

At this stage the initial outcome of the struggle is sealed, the odds are too heavy; but the passionate, furious hatred that was born in those minutes in the hearts of the noble peace-loving Norwegian people is the true guarantee of their coming triumph. Norway awaits her hour and, after casting off the shackles of hitlerite occupation, will again win her freedom. Engstrand's book leaves not a shadow of doubt about this. "Every iron heel that struck against the ancient cobbles would bring not fear but hatred into Norwegian hearts. . . Hate had been born, and hate would live until Norway's mountains and shores were free again."

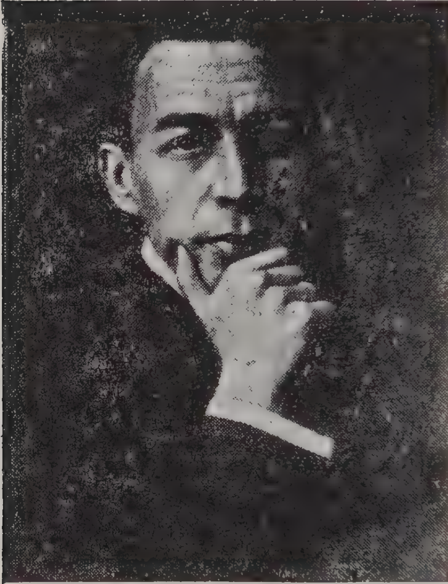
NATALYA KAMIONSKAYA

THAT "MORNING AFTER" FEELING

HITLER: What will the morrow bring?..
Drawn by L. Brodaty

IN MEMORIUM

RACHMANINOV



Rachmaninov is dead. The great master of music died within three days of his seventieth birthday. He was a vivid, a unique page in the history of Russian music. In all its branches he was a consummate artist.

As a composer, a pianist, and a conductor he will never be forgotten. His works will always bring joy to the listener. His art as a pianist, too, will be remembered just as the art of Anton and Nicholas Rubinstein, Chaliapin, Paganini, Liszt and other great pianists will always be remembered. Our descendants should be happy that Rachmaninov's playing has been recorded, and we must preserve these records and thus keep alive the memory of his great skill. There have been critics who, considering his work in a superficial and, it must be said, much too casual and familiar a manner, have pointed to an absence of depth and originality in it, and "reproached" him with having a "salon" style and various nonsense of that kind. The true musician will understand that opinions like these are but the outcome of dislike of an amazing art, the outcome of hasty judgement and lack of discernment.

I have the warmest love for Rachmaninov's music and regard his creative work as that of a genius. His melodies are invariably original and beautiful, his harmonic language is poetic and peculiarly his own.

I never knew him personally. I do not know what kind of a man he was in his personal life. It pains me to think that he spent his last years far away from my country and his. I will not take it upon myself to pass judgement on him for that, though in my heart of hearts I censure him for this break with his native land and his people.

I was overjoyed to learn that when the hour of trial came upon our country Rachmaninov felt himself a son of the great Russian people and helped us through his art and his conduct to defend ourselves from the fascist invasion. There was joy too in the knowledge that I was Rachmaninov's contemporary, and pain in the knowledge that this great fellow-traveller of mine had gone from us forever.

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH

Moscow, April, 1943.

A LIFE DEVOTED TO ART

One of the most prominent figures in Russian theatre art, Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko, died on April 25th, 1943. A founder of the Moscow Art Theatre, his services to the theatre and literature were very highly appreciated by the Soviet public. The title of People's Artist of the U.S.S.R. was conferred upon him by the government, and in 1943 he was awarded the Stalin Prize.

A whole epoch of the history of the Russian theatre is bound up with his name. His was a long life, wholly devoted to art, a life illuminated by the glow of great creative gifts.

He was born in 1858 in a little Caucasian town. Right from boyhood the theatre had a fascination for him and fired his imagination. On the broad window-seat, in his favourite play-corner, he would arrange shows with figures cut out of old playing-cards; the characters played *Hamlet*, Pushkin's *Boris Godunov* and Lermontov's *Masquerade*.

During the years that followed, at school and subsequently colledge, this passionate absorption with the theatre never left him. The young student took part in all amateur theatricals and showed unmistakable talent. About this time he launched into literature. Becoming an authoritative theatre critic, he developed a fine and penetrating appreciation. But he was attracted still more strongly to dramatic art, and in 1882 his first play, *The Wild Rose*, was staged in Moscow. Soon he was an acknowledged and popular playwright, and his *Last Will, A New Task, Gold, The Price of Life* won instant success. His stories and novels appeared in the best magazines and were also published separately; these were *Earning Your Bread by Writing, A Local Governor's Inspection* and *A Drama Behind the Scenes*. His talent was varied. While continuing his writing, he acquired a name in the teaching of acting, and soon became the head of the dramatic courses at the Philharmonic.

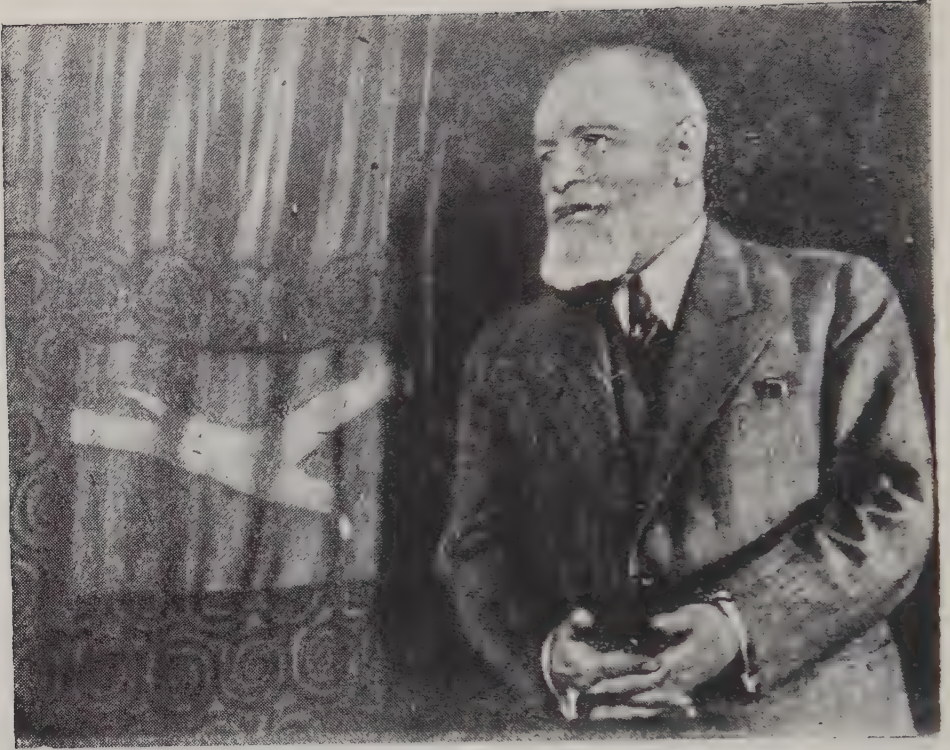
He always hated the conservation and stagnation by which even the most brilliant stage gifts were sometimes bound. The closer the contacts this young playwright, author, critic and teacher made with theatre life, the more compelling became the desire to contribute something of his own, something entirely new to theatre art. Gradually the idea took shape of founding a new theatre that would embody the traditions in which Russian theatre art is so rich. He sought a colleague, a friend, who would share the ideas and the work; and he found him in Constantine Stanislavsky.

Among the exhibits in the Moscow Art Theatre Museum there is a visiting card, yellowed with time. It bears the printed name: "Vladimir Ivanovich Nemirovich-Danchenko," and below, a few lines in very fine, delicate handwriting. This was the card sent half-a-century ago, inviting Stanislavsky to meet him and discuss the idea of founding a new theatre. The meeting took place in a Moscow restaurant on June 27th, 1897. It was the first step towards founding the Moscow Art Theatre.

It was opened in 1898. From that time on Nemirovich-Danchenko's life was devoted to the theatre, and when you speak of his life you are speaking of a remarkable theatre of which our people are justly proud.

Every page of the Art Theatre's creative history is linked with the name of Nemirovich-Danchenko, that remarkable producer, that profound interpreter of the works of Russian and foreign dramatists, that director whose firm hand launched and steered the brave bark that was the Moscow Art Theatre.

In the course of his forty years of activity he produced fifty-eight plays, a tremendous number, if one takes into consideration the theatre's methods, if one remembers that there were some productions upon which Nemirovich-Danchenko worked liter-



ally for several years on end with all the scrupulous attention, all the care of an extremely exacting artist who was a great master in his field. Among the plays that he produced independently, and also in conjunction with Constantine Stanislavsky, Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, Pushkin's *Boris Godunov*, Chekhov's *The Three Sisters*, Gorky's *The Lower Depths*, Alexander Ostrovsky's *Thunderstorm*, Griboyedov's *Wit Works Woe*, form a constellation that has the power to stir every true theatre-lover even by their very mention. For decades they never leave the stage, audiences come to see them time after time with the increasing delight one feels on rereading a favourite book.

In his post-revolutionary productions Nemirovich-Danchenko revealed and interpreted Tolstoy's immortal works *Resurrection* and *Anna Karenina*, adapted for the stage. With triumphant power he expressed Gorky's revolutionary thought in *Enemies* and Chekhov's faith in a brighter future for his country in *The Three Sisters*. There was a wise simplicity in his treatment of Trenyov's *Lyubov Yarovaya*, a play about a heroic Soviet woman.

There was, perhaps, no field of the theatre's life in which Nemirovich-Danchenko failed to interest himself. The question of an opera theatre was for ever in his mind. An innovator of great thoroughness, high principles and consistency, he struggled tirelessly against stock methods and with the habit of working in a groove, methods particularly unsuited to Russian opera which was glorified by the names of Chaikovsky, Glinka and Moussorgsky. During the first years of the Revolution, Nemirovich-Danchenko founded, with the help of the Soviet Government, his Musical Theatre, which cultivated a new type of actor-singer, equipped with both vocal and acting talent.

Here, in the Musical Theatre that was given his name, he produced thirteen operas, ranging from classics like *La Traviata* and *Carmencita and the Soldier*, to the works of contemporary composers Dzerzhinsky (*And Quiet Flows the Don*) and Khrennikov (*Storm*).

The Art Theatre is known all over the world. Touring abroad, it became very popular. Nemirovich-Danchenko himself participated in these tours, the first of which was made through Western Europe in 1906. The theatre's second tour was not made until after the Revolution, when in 1922 it visited France, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Germany and ten large American cities, among them New York, Chicago, Philadelphia and Boston.

In 1937, the theatre was sent by the Government to the International Exhibition in Paris, where, in the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, it gave three plays: Gorky's *Enemies*, Trenyov's *Lyubov Yarovaya*, and an adaptation of Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*.

The Musical Theatre also went on tour to Western Europe and many cities of the United States in 1925—1926, when Nemirovich-Danchenko, who accompanied it, remained for some time working as a producer in American motion-pictures.

Far from weakening his strength, the war increased it tenfold. In wartime he produced a play by a Soviet dramatist, N. Pogodin, *Kremlin Chimes*, in which Lenin and Stalin are truthfully represented.

The valuable experience accumulated in the course of his many-sided creative life has been recorded by Nemirovich-Danchenko in his memoirs *Pages from the Past*, published in Moscow in 1938. His concluding sentences express those new principles upon which the art of the actor flourished in the U.S.S.R.:

"The social position of the present-day actor is so sharply distinguished from that of bygone days, when the actor's life was confined to the theatre walls; the broad flood-tide of the country's life so envelops his whole being, that his mind receives, together with the artistic heritage of his fathers, a new content and a new tempering."

Nemirovich-Danchenko is dead. He has gone from life, this great representative of Russian theatre culture, this close friend of Anton Chekhov and Maxim Gorky, this co-founder with Stanislavsky of a splendid, a festive edifice wherein the true art of the people found its home.

He was eighty-four when he died, but up to the very last he worked with the passion and absorption of youth. He spent several hours a day in the theatre watching rehearsals. He took an active part in the country's social life and was chairman of the Committee adjudging the Stalin Prizes for art and literature. He and Stanislavsky were the first to receive the honorary title of People's Artist of the U.S.S.R. He also wore the highest distinctions: the Order of Lenin and the Order of the Red Labour Banner.

A true Russian, he loved his people and their art; he hated the Hitlerites as the destroyers of culture and the enemies of progress.

As a memorial to him, the Soviet Government has decided to publish all his literary works and researches as a producer; to found a theatre-studio bearing his name and connected with the Moscow Art Theatre; to erect a monument to him, and to place his home under the care of the Moscow Art Theatre which will open a museum there.

This long and splendid life is over. But even after death he will remain with us as the companion and teacher of the Russian theatre, the great artist whose name is a symbol for the unfading glow of creation, for unflagging movement onwards.

SERGEI BOGOMAZOV

NEWS AND VIEWS

"The Germans, our age-old enemies, have been trampling Latvia for over eighteen months," said Professor Kirchensteins, representative of the Latvian people, in opening an anti-fascist meeting in Moscow, to rally the Latvian people for uncompromising struggle against the hitlerite invaders.

Kalnberzins, a Latvian public figure, in his speech referred to the ghastly German atrocities perpetrated in this tiny country. The Hitlerites have killed over 100,000 Latvian patriots. Over 300,000 men and women have been despatched to Germany for forced labour. The Latvian people hate the enslavers and are fighting against them in the ranks of the Red Army. Over 25,000 hitlerite officers and men have been annihilated by Latvian infantry units which have also taken prisoner thousands of fascist soldiers. . . . That is the Latvian people's contribution to the common struggle against fascism.

Lacis, chairman of the Counail of People's Commissars of the Latvian Republic, spoke of the devoted work of Latvians evacuated to the Soviet rear. Special training courses have been organized in many parts of the U.S.S.R., where Latvian youths and girls are completing their education. Young Latvians are studying in agricultural and medical colleges, in technical and secondary schools. Latvian art workers have formed a national ensemble. Four newspapers in Latvian are printed in the U.S.S.R., and the works of Latvian writers and poets are published. Although the war has torn the Latvians from their native towns and countryside, they are pulling together as one with the other peoples of the Soviet Union.

Krumins, a Latvian officer, Vitina, a tractor-driver, Rokpelnis, a writer, Pakule, a singer, and Smagars, a smith, all spoke of one thing: the unanimous endeavour of the Latvian people to carry on the struggle against German fascism to the victorious end and to return to peaceful creative life on their native soil. This thought is reflected in the greetings to Stalin and the call to all the Latvian people adopted at the meeting.

In January the Soviet public celebrated the 80th birthday of A. S. Serafimovich, one of the oldest writers of the U.S.S.R. whose valuable services had just been rewarded with the Stalin Prize.

Hero worship. The writer A. Serafimovich with some of his young friends and admirers

A. S. Serafimovich is the author of *The Iron Flood*, an outstanding book translated into many languages.

Born in the same year as Bernard Shaw, in the middle of last century, A. S. Serafimovich is still doing fruitful work for the Soviet press. In the struggle with fascism he is using to greatest effect his unfailing weapon—the winged word.

Soviet scientific circles are widely observing the fourth centenary of the death of the great scientist-innovator, Nicolaus Copernicus (1473—1543), a notable date for world culture.

The Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. and the All-Union Astronomic and Geodesic Society are holding meetings in honour of Copernicus' memory.

The Academy of Sciences is publishing a book containing Copernicus' biography, a brief outline of his teaching and translations of excerpts from his famous work *The Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres*. Leading Soviet scientists, astronomers and professors are contributing to this book.

The Moscow Planetarium observed the day of the fourth centenary, May 24th, with a special show for scientific circles of the capital. Besides this, the Planetarium sponsored a number of lectures on the life and work of Copernicus (his biography and the fundamentals of his teaching). These lectures aroused particular interest because the Planetarium possesses exceptional facilities for visually exhibiting the firmament system of Copernicus, contrasting it with the Ptolemaic system which took the world as the static centre of the universe. The Planetarium is giving a number of lectures specially for schoolchildren: "The Form and Movement of the Earth," "The Earth-Planet," "The Structure and Development of the Universe." The basis of all these conceptions is the teaching of Copernicus. The Planetarium's scientific workers have also arranged to visit hospitals to deliver magic-lantern lectures to wounded Red Army men.

The Moscow Planetarium has opened an exhibition in colours on the life and work of the great scientist. The exhibition is displaying a great deal of literature on Copernicus and his teaching, and also reproductions of rare editions of his works including *The Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres*, published in 1543, not long before his death, and the first publication in Russian where mention is made of Copernicus' teaching (1710).

A number of magic-lantern slides about the life of Copernicus and his works have been prepared in Moscow, which are to be shown in schools and clubs to illustrate lectures on Copernicus.

The Moscow Planetarium is publishing a popular leaflet containing the principal information on Copernicus.

Copernicus' absorbing biography and the dramatic story of his struggle for scientific truth, provide the fabric for *Nicolaus Copernicus*, a play (in 10 scenes) by V. Kochetkov, the Moscow playwright. Up to the war the play enjoyed great success at the "Star Theatre" attached to the Moscow Planetarium.

The relations between British and Russian science through the years were recalled with particular interest during the third centenary of the birth of Isaac Newton, observed recently. A special meeting of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. was opened by V. L. Komarov, the president of the Academy. At the request of the Royal Society the meeting was addressed by Academician P. L. Kapitsa, Soviet scientist, who was recently elected member of the Royal Society. A comprehensive speech was delivered by Academician A. N. Krylov on "Newton and His Place in World Science." An interesting report on the study of Newton's works in Russia was given by Professor T. P. Kravets. Greetings were received from the Royal Society.

In the Moscow House of scientists an exhibition has been opened of first editions and translations of Newton's works, and of the extensive literature devoted to this eminent scientist. The press of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. has published a biography of Newton written by Academician S. I. Vavilov. On the day of the third centenary Soviet newspapers and magazines carried comprehensive articles on Newton. In Moscow and other towns lectures were delivered on the life and scientific work of this famous British scientist.

The Leningrad State Literary Publishing House has published dozens of new books of late, in editions totalling 500,000 copies. Among them are Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* in one volume, *Dmitry Donskoy* by S. Borodin (see our magazine No. 9, 1942), which earned him a Stalin Prize, Wanda Wasilewska's *Rainbow* (No. 2, 1943), *Russians* (No. 12, 1942), a play by C. Simonov, *Frowning Morning*, a tale by Alexei Tolstoy, and a number of other outstanding works of modern Russian literature.

The Leningrad Publishing House has printed books written in the embattled city: a collection *Leningrad Youth*, *The Spirit of Leningrad* and *The Pulkovo Meridian*, both by Vera Inber, a collection of A. Prokofyev's poems and *A Poem of Leningrad* by O. Bergholz.

The regular issue of the magazines *The Star* and *Leningrad* have been resumed. Both are highly popular with the men and commanders of the Leningrad front. The *Leningrad* is publishing an almanac *Works of Red Army Men*, a rather ambitious publication comprising the works of Red Army poets, writers and artists.

The first number of the children's magazine *Campfire* was also published at the beginning of the year and retains the vivid cover and lavish illustrations of its pre-war days.

S. Borodin, author of the novel *Dmitry Donskoy*, has now written a play on the subject of this ancient popular hero of Russia. It is by no means a mere dramatization of the novel.

"The laws of prose and drama," says the writer, "are so diverse that it is difficult to adapt the novel to the stage without breaking up the novel or overloading the drama."

This is particularly true of such an ambitious historical work as *Dmitry Donskoy*, that is why S. Borodin treated the play as a work on its own. Phases of the plot of the novel are adapted to serve as the ground-work of the new dramatic situation. New material has been introduced into the play, enabling the author to bring out the stage representation of Dmitry Donskoy, the hero, with greater force and relief.

There are ten scenes. The first three show fourteenth century Moscow, aware of the Tatars' campaign against Russian soil. The following three scenes show Moscow rallying for the campaign against the formidable enemy. Then come three scenes devoted to the battle on Kulikovo Field which has gone down to history.

It is interesting to note that the first Russian drama about Dmitry Donskoy, by V. A. Ozerov, a dramatist of Pushkin's time, was first staged on the 14th of January, 1807. It enjoyed exceptional popularity during Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812, stirring the audience to a high patriotic fervour.

Now, almost 150 years later, a Soviet writer and dramatist turns to the great Russian hero whose battle for his native land, for Russian soil, is so intimately linked with present-day events.

The Turgenev State Museum removed from Orel has now resumed its work on a wide scale in the town of Penza. Turgenev's study, bed-room and library containing 4,000 volumes have been carefully preserved and are now arranged in five large rooms. The writer's billiard table, chess-table and pictures brought from France and Italy have also been preserved. The hunting outfit of the author of the famous *Notes of a Hunter* are on view: his powder-pouch, rucksack, flask and hunting-cap. The museum also carefully preserves the cap and gown presented Turgenev when elected Doctor of Law at the Oxford University.

The State commission formed by the Soviet government to catalogue and preserve art treasures is now drawing up a list of these. It will include about ten thousand outstanding examples of architecture: churches, monasteries, palaces and dwelling houses of historical architectural value, and also painting.

Over 1,500 monuments have been studied and recorded in detail in the ancient Russian towns of Yaroslavl, Suzdal, Ryazan and Vladimir. Twenty expeditions will be despatched to Vologda, Archangel, Siberia, Central Asia, the Transcaucasus and the central regions for the same purpose.

The second edition of *Architecture of the U.S.S.R.* containing a wealth of material on war-time building has now come off the press.

Articles by Academician Rudnev and Professor Golossov deal with the speedy restoration of collective-farm villages destroyed by the Germans. The article by Academician Kolli touches on building in Central Asia.

Of considerable interest are sketches made by Leningrad architects during the siege.

The edition also carries material on modern architectural and building practice in the U.S.A., on new methods in the high-speed building of settlements at munition factories.

In the very first months of the war "Councils of Service Men's Wives" came into being in many towns, and ever since this public spirited movement has gained ever wider scope. The woman whose husband, son or brother is at the front cannot isolate herself from the war. True, she works as everyone else. But she feels, she wants to give every available moment to the service of her country. She helps at the recruiting station.

This is not merely a State organization sending out the papers calling men to the colours: here a great deal of social work is done. The young fellow approaching military age finds here literature helping him study military subjects, and the man already of age may acquaint himself with various arms of the service. Then there is the man who has gone off to war leaving his children or his old mother at home. Who is to care for them? This is where the work of the "Councils of Service Men's Wives" begins. They do their utmost to help the families of the men in the forces. In Noginsk, a town in Moscow region, the wives' council obtained a large piece of land and turned it into a kitchen-garden, thanks to which the families of many men in the service received extra vegetables. Last summer, in Noginsk, a large recreation ground was opened for Red Army men's children and was followed this winter by a kindergarten. In the town of Serpukhov, Moscow region, the service

men's wives investigated the circumstances of 350 families of Red Army men and arranged regular help for them. This help does not only take the form of supplies: sometimes a woman needs a friendly talk, a sympathetic word, advice. . .

Callers are received by the members of the "Council of Service Men's Wives" on duty. They've all got their own anxieties, each of them is thinking; "How's my man," nevertheless they do all they can to ease the lot of their women friends, help the kiddies and calm the old folk.

The "Councils of Service Men's Wives" are one of the manifestations of the Russian woman patriot's profound sense of public duty.

A new production of Chaikovsky's opera *The Queen of Spades* has been presented in Moscow by Conductor S. A. Samosoud, People's Artist of the U.S.S.R. Although the opera was written over half a century ago, its dramatic power still grips and stirs the audience. "I wrote with enthusiasm, forgetful of all else, and put my whole soul into the work," Chaikovsky said of the score of the *Queen of Spades* in one of his letters.

Vano Muradeli, the Georgian composer who was present at the first night of the new production, finds in it much that is daring, original and truly talented.

"The storm scene is astonishing in its power," wrote Vano Muradeli in the newspaper *Pravda*. "The threatening clouds hanging over the monument of the 'Bronze Horseman' and the howling of the storm reflect, as it were, the unleashed passions of Herman, the hero. . . S. A. Samosoud, producer and conductor, has achieved the most delicate finish throughout. The orchestra gripped the audience by its remarkable power of expression. The entire world of subtle imagery and passions embraced by Chaikovsky's music is brought out in clear-cut relief."

The new production is being staged by the Filial of the Moscow Grand Opera House.

The Grand Opera House now in Kuibyshev has just produced a new ballet, *Scarlet Sails*. The plot (libretto by A. V. Talanov) is taken from the novel of the same name by A. S. Grinevsky, the talented Soviet author known under the pen-name of A. Grin.

Scarlet Sails is a poem of people whose dreams come true. Assel, the daughter of a poor seaman, heard in her childhood the fairy-tale of the magic ship with scarlet sails. She believes that one day a ship with scarlet sails will come sailing in and that its captain will take her into beautiful land. Everyone laughs at the girl and thinks her a little foolish. But unexpectedly Assel's dream comes true. Captain

F. Petrova in the role of the Countess, in "The Queen of Spades"

Grey, a brave and good man, a rover and dreamer, hears of her naive childish hopes. He orders his ship to be fitted out with sails of scarlet silk and in this gay rig-out brings it to shore. The girl Assel is happy; she sails off to the land of good fortune, on the ship of the scarlet sails, the ship of her dreams.

The idea underlying the production: firm belief in a happy future, has found powerful and vivid expression in the music of V. Yurovsky. With great mastery he has created the symphonic scenes of the world of dreams and the world of everyday, and the musical characteristic of the heroes is expressive. The music of the new ballet is light, "dance" music, and is an excellent medium for varied dances.

The ballet has been produced by the young ballet-masters A. Radunsky, N. Popke and L. Pospekhin, their third work for the Grand Opera House. Their two former productions, *The Stork* and *Svetlana*, earned well-merited popularity with the public. There are many interesting stage effects, and much that is original and inventive. The angry sea (in the prelude) is originally and vividly portrayed by the mounting velocity of the movements of the dancers who are arrayed in diaphanous dresses of a misty bluish-grey. They portray the waves, first falling, then rising with fresh force and seeming to wash the shore. The greatest effect is

achieved by the ensemble dances in the sailors' jig, performed at an increasing speed.

P. Williams, the artist, one of the finest Soviet stage-decorators, has created a setting very well suited to the ballet's romantic atmosphere.

The leading part of Assel is played by the young dancer Irina Tikhomirnova, of whom the Soviet press has written in the highest terms. "I. V. Tikhomirnova lives the part of Assel," writes Honoured Art Worker V. Vladimirov in the newspaper *Izvestia*. Many outstanding dancers of Soviet ballet are taking part in the production, including A. Messerer, P. Gussyev, L. Lashchilin, A. Tsarman and others.

People's Artist Y. Fayer conducts the orchestra with his customary brilliance.

Soviet ballet has always striven for big, gripping themes, and searched for new means of their scenic expression in the dance. In these stern days of war the Grand Opera House has staged a production full of vital force and faith in the finest and noblest qualities of man.

The Foreign Languages Publishing House eas printed an interesting series of postcards hepicting heroes of the Patriotic War of tqd Soviet people with Hitlerism.

The portraits are of people whom the whole country knows, whose exploits are known to every Soviet man, and are executed with taste and fidelity. A brief biography of the hero and description of his deeds are given in English on the back of the card. We are reproducing a postcard bearing the portrait of E. N. Preobrazhensky. Regular readers will recall that the ninth and eleventh issues of our magazine last year contained excerpts from G. Miroshnichenko's novel *Colonel Preobrazhensky of the Guards*.

The Sverdlovsk Opera House has staged Glinka's *Ruslan and Ludmila*, one of the oldest of Russian operas, first presented in Russia a hundred years ago. Pushkin's poem *Ruslan and Ludmila* inspired the composer to write his opera in which the genius of the great Russian poet combines with the amazing talent of the founder of Russian classical music. *Ruslan and Ludmila* is shot through and through with the poesy of folk ballads and tales, majestic epos and tender lyricism; it is a work of genuine national Russian art.

The Sverdlovsk Opera House is large and has every facility to stage a complex production such as *Ruslan and Ludmila*, as its premiere showed. Glinka's opera could only be performed at a first-class opera house, for the orchestra, chorus and singers must all be of the standard required by the poetic force of Pushkin and the musical imagery of Glinka. In its production the Sverdlovsk Opera House has maintained the best traditions of the Russian opera.

Editor-in-chief: HELEN STASSOVA

CONTENTS

No. 6 June 1943

TOPICS OF THE DAY

ZDENEK NEJEDLY — Czechoslovaks on the Soviet-German Front 2

I. ORBELI — The Hated Enemy of Armenia . . 5

BELLES-LETTRES

LEONID LEONOV — Invasion 7

STEPAN ZORYAN — A Mother 43

POETRY

ONDRA LYSOHORSKY — Three Lachian Poems 46

FRONT AND REAR

ALEXANDER SERAFIMOVICH — In My Native Land 49

B. IVANITSKY — Lacerated Rostov 51

VALENTINE STARIKOV — By the Enemy Shores 53

A. KOZLOV — The Velvet Book 55

BOOKS AND WRITERS

ALEXANDER MAKAROV — Leonid Sobolev, a Russian Sea-Story Writer 57

DMITRI GORBOV — At Alexander Fadeyev's 63

Alexei Surkov 64

ARTS

ROMAN KATZMAN — "Stalingrad" 65

ARNOLD ALSCHWANG — In Memory of Edvard Grieg 68

IVAN LAZAREVSKY — The Red Army in the Fight Against the German Fascist Invaders 71

NEWS AND VIEWS 73

On the cover: a poster by V. Ivanov

Address: "International Literature," P. O. Box 527, Moscow
Cable address: Interlit, Moscow