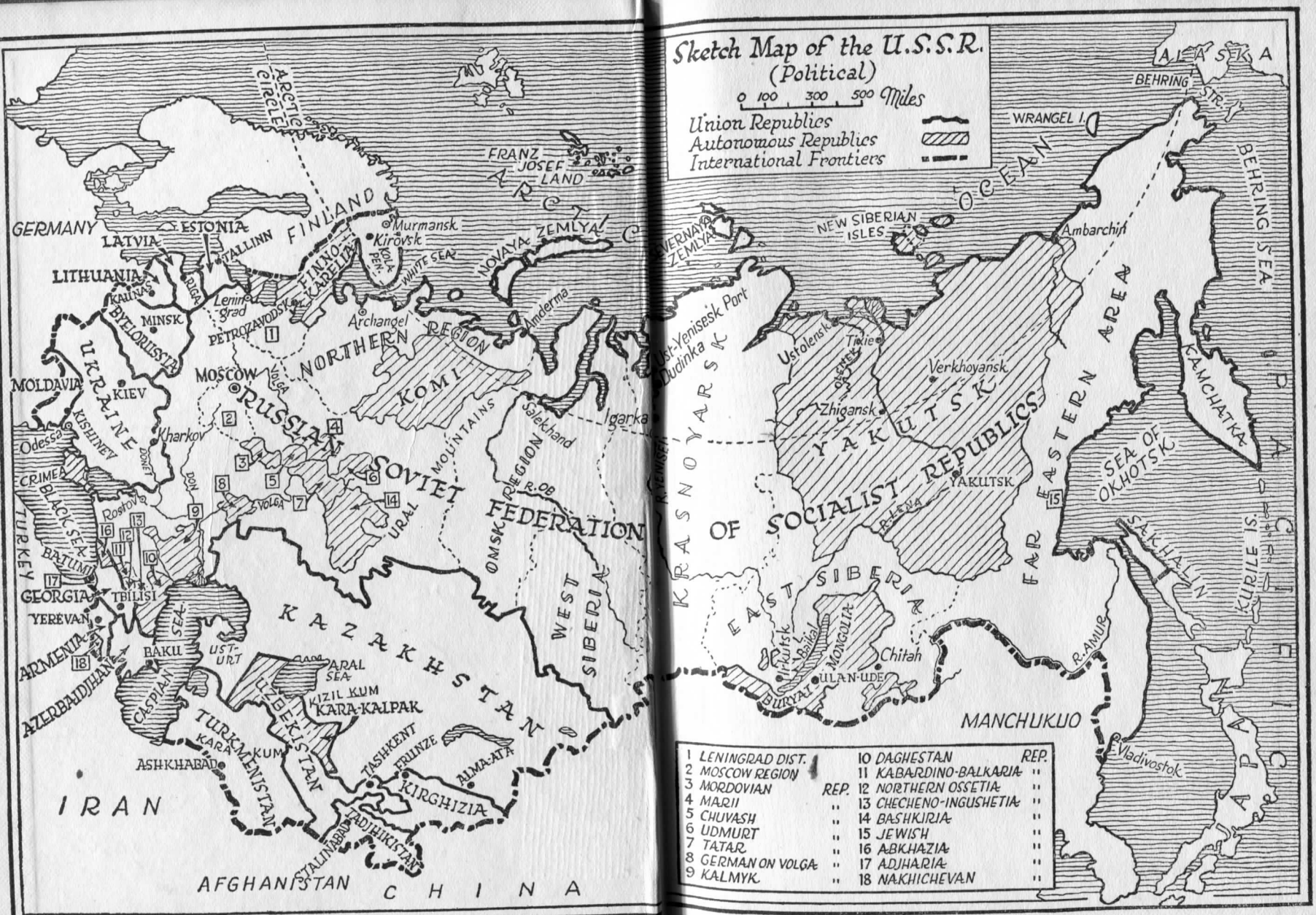
RUSSIAN CAVALCADE

E. H. CARTER



NELSON


Sketch Map of the U.S.S.R.
(Political)
0 100 300 500 Miles
Union Republics
Autonomous Republics
International Frontiers
ARCTIC CIRCLE
FRANZ JOSEF LAND
ARCTIC OCEAN
NOVAYA ZEMLYA
KARA SEA
GERMANY
LATVIA
ESTONIA
TALLINN
FINLAND
Murmansk
Kirovsk
KOLA PEN.
WHITE SEA
LITHUANIA
KAUNAS
RIGA
Leningrad
FINNO-KARELIA
BYELORUSSIA
MINSK
PETROZAVODSK
Archangel
Amderma
NORTHERN REGION
KOMI
MOLDAVIA
KIEV
UKRAINE
MOSCOW
VOLGA
RUSSIAN SOVIET FEDERATION
MOUNTAINS
Salekhard
Igarka
KISHINEV
Kharkov
Odessa
CRIMEA
BLACK SEA
DNIEPER
DON
Rostov
VOLGA
URAL
OMSK REGION
R. OB
R. YENISEI
TURKEY
BATUMI
GEORGIA
TBILISI
YEREVAN
ARMENIA
BAKU
CASPIAN SEA
AZERBAIDJHAN
UST-URT
ARAL SEA
KAZAKHSTAN
WEST SIBERIA
KIZIL KUM
KARA-KALPAK
UZBEKISTAN
TURKMENISTAN
KARA KUM
ASHKHABAD
TASHKENT
FRUNZE
ALMA-ATA
KIRGHIZIA
TADJHIKISTAN
STALINABAD
IRAN
AFGHANISTAN
CHINA
SEVERNAYA ZEMLYA
NEW SIBERIAN ISLES
Ambarchik
Ust-Yenisesk Port
Dudinka
KRASNOYARSK
Ustolensk
Tiksi
OLENEK
Verkhoyansk
Zhigansk
YAKUTSK
SOCIALIST REPUBLICS
YAKUTSK
LENA
R. YENISEI
FAR EASTERN AREA
SEA OF OKHOTSK
KAMCHATKA
SAKHALIN
KURILE IS.
EAST SIBERIA
Irkutsk
Baikal
BURYAT
ULAN-UDE
MONGOLIA
Chitah
R. AMUR
MANCHUKUO
ALASKA
BEHRING STR.
BEHRING SEA
WRANGEL I.
PACIFIC OCEAN
Vladivostok
1 LENINGRAD DIST.
2 MOSCOW REGION
3 MORDOVIAN REP.
4 MARII "
5 CHUVASH "
6 UDMURT "
7 TATAR "
8 GERMAN ON VOLGA "
9 KALMYK "
10 DAGHESTAN REP.
11 KABARDINO-BALKARIA "
12 NORTHERN OSSETIA "
13 CHECHENO-INGUSHETIA "
14 BASHKIRIA "
15 JEWISH "
16 ABKHAZIA "
17 ADJHARIA "
18 NAKHICHEVAN "

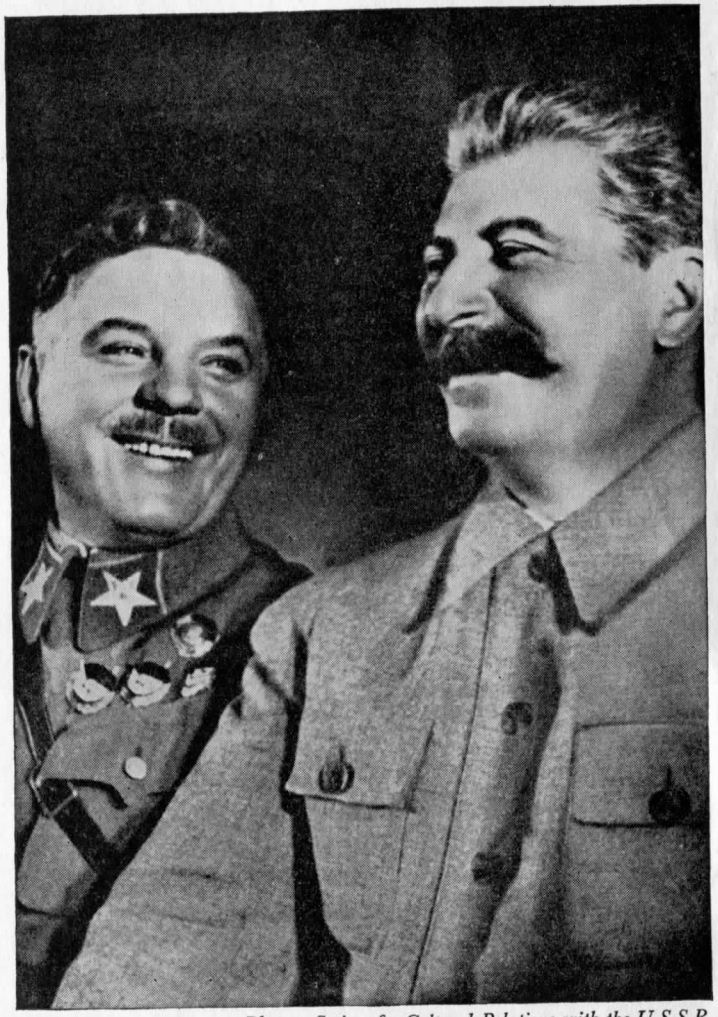


Photo : Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R.

STALIN (right) with MARSHAL VOROSHILOV

RUSSIAN CAVALCADE

by

E. H. CARTER M.A.

LATE H.M. INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES
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PREFACE

THE unrelenting fire of Russian heroism has aroused in our peoples a determination to know more of the Russian story. To understand Soviet Russia we must understand Tsarist Russia. In this little book, specially revised for schools, I have tried to outline the main features of the Russian Story through the Ages, in the belief that a place and time should be found for it among the books that young people read at school.

Of special interest for young readers are the broadcast on " Russia's Malta " (for which I am indebted to Mr. Maurice Edelman), and the two short Russian stories which give such an intimate picture of Russian life. But I hope the whole story will make a strong appeal to all young readers, whether or not they are " keen on history."

I am indebted to Mrs. Beatrice King for the end-paper map, and I am grateful to all friends who kindly read the manuscript, especially to the late Sir Stephen Gaselee, Librarian and Keeper of the Papers at the Foreign Office.

Finally, I should like to thank, for his encouragement in my task, one to whom the cause of Anglo-Soviet understanding and friendship owes so much, Mr. Anthony Eden, who was kind enough to write : " I am glad to hear that such a book is being written, for it is hard to overestimate the importance of giving our schools and the man in the street an accurate and fair picture of Russia if the purpose of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty is to be fulfilled."

I have done my best to be " accurate and fair " as well as to resist " the besetting temptation to identify in

all things the letter with the spirit "—but perhaps in no realm of history is it more difficult to get at the facts for accuracy and fairness, and if as a student of history and economics I have so much as approached this ideal, I shall at least not have attempted this Russian story in vain.

E. H. CARTER

ARLEY HOUSE, FILLONGLEY
near COVENTRY
May 1944

CONTENTS

	Introduction : The Land and the People	1
I	The Birth of Holy Russia	11
II	Russia " submerged by Asia "	20
III	The Rise of " Mother Moscow "	25
IV	Tsars of All the Russias	29
V	Russia " thrown into Europe "	37
VI	" Liberals Abroad but Autocrats at Home "	45
VII	" The Inflexible," " The Liberator," and the Last of the Tsars	55
VIII	Lenin, Creator of the New Russia	65
IX	The Russian Revolution	72
X	Stalin succeeds Lenin	83
XI	Russia's Industrial Revolution : The Five Year Plans	91
XII	Russia's Agricultural Revolution : Collective Farms	101
XIII	A Brave New World for Young and Old	110
XIV	" Russia's Malta " in Peace and War	119
XV	A Russian Answer to a Russian Problem	121
XVI	The Anglo-Soviet Treaty and the Roosevelt-Molotov Agreement	131
	Some Landmarks in Russian History	135
	Two Short Russian Stories	138
	Index	147

THE SPECTATOR, 28 November 1941

"The relations between Russia and Great Britain have been again and again exacerbated in the past either by insufficient understanding of the other's aims or by insufficient give-and-take. In this country there ought to be a far closer study of the Russian economic system and what has been achieved by planning."

THE TIMES, 29 May 1942: "*Old and True*"

"There are on earth to-day two great peoples who from different starting-points seem to move towards the same goal: the Russians and the Americans. Both have expanded in the shade; while the eyes of men were busy elsewhere, they have taken their place suddenly in the forefront of the nations, and the world has become aware, almost at the same moment, of their birth and of their greatness. . . . Their starting-points are different and their paths different; yet each seems called by a hidden purpose of Providence to hold in its hands one day the destinies of half mankind."

DE TOCQUEVILLE

RUSSIAN CAVALCADE

INTRODUCTION

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

By lasting out the strokes of fate,
In trials long she learned to feel
Her inborn strength. So hammer's weight
Will splinter glass but temper steel.

PUSHKIN

RUSSIA in Europe and Asia, with its nearly two hundred million people, is the largest country in the world. Two oceans and twelve seas wash its shores; to the north it is bounded by eternal ice; in the south it is so hot in summer that oranges and lemons ripen, and tea and cotton and tobacco grow. It is no more of one piece than is the British Empire, but unlike the latter, it has no dividing oceans, for it stretches continuously nearly half-way round the world. Throughout its entire length it is a vast plain, interrupted only by the low Urals and traversed by half a million rivers. From Moscow to the narrow Bering Strait, which separates Asiatic Russia from American Alaska and its new highway, it is just the distance from London to Australia, and is one vast stretch of unbroken land.

Russia has always been mainly a land of peasants, and is still so in spite of the Soviet's amazing industrial revolution. As in the past, so to this day "the peasant is the real autocrat of Russia," said one of her social revolutionary leaders in 1917. Not the burning of Moscow and not the frosts, but the peasants inflicted the most

terrible blows on the Grand Army of Napoleon, drawing it farther and farther into Russia's illimitable wastes, " scorching " the earth and denying the enemy sustenance and shelter as he advanced. So it was in Napoleon's day ; so it was to be in Hitler's day. And always after the battles, the sufferings, and the wanderings, the peasant would return home—

> And slowly something began to draw him
> Back to the country, to the garden dark,
> Where lime trees are so huge, so full of shade,
> And lilies of the valley, secret as maids ;
> Where rich and black as velvet is the earth.

The vast homeland of the Russian peasant was almost entirely cut off from western Europe and its more civilized life until in 1703 St. Petersburg was founded " to open a window to the west." Yet an " old and free " Russia had existed from our King Alfred's time until it was destroyed by Tartars from Asia. Russia in Europe lay on the main highways along which the Tartars and other Asiatic peoples migrated from East to West, and she was thus geographically compelled to be of Asia as well as of Europe. It was through suffering under the Tartars and many subsequent raiders and aggressors that the Russians learned both to hate and to endure war. For centuries Russia's only outlet to the seas was an icebound port on the Arctic Ocean, and only by a long series of wars did she gain footings on the Baltic and on the Black Sea, which are her gateways to civilized Europe.

Russia in Europe is an immense plain with mountains on the borders. To the east lie the low ranges of the Urals. To the south rise the loftier Caucasus, higher than the Alps, a hundred miles wide, and longer than the length of Great Britain, and until a century ago a frontier



Photo : Popper

View from Kiev across the river Dnieper to the plains of the Ukraine

between Russia and restless Asiatic peoples. Some of the greatest rivers of the world, from their sources in the northern marsh-lands, flow slowly and quietly southwards over the crumbling soil of the vast plains. These waterways have been Russia's main roads and key communications ever since the Vikings of old struck down her rivers to Kiev. This ancient city is situated in the " Ukraine," a name which signifies the old " borderland " of the civilized Christian world. From Kiev, Russia was gradually colonized eastwards—trade, culture, and religion following the settlers. In due course Moscow, commanding the head waters of the great river systems, superseded Kiev.

The Volga, the Dnieper, the Don, and other rivers, the themes of many Russian songs, provided from earliest

times a means of transport and trade and preserved a friendly sense of relationship and of unity among the peasants. The majestic Volga, the " Little Mother of the Slavs," flows through the heart of Russia, and is the longest river in Europe. The magnificent rivers of Siberia flowing northwards pass through vast stretches of virgin forests before they pour their waters into the icy seas of the north ; and down the river Amur coarse salmon often descend in such numbers that one could almost " walk across on their backs." Russia's whole history is bound up with her rivers. The Dnieper first gave her close contact with Greek culture and religion, the Volga made her Asiatic, the Neva made her European.

There are many types of soil in that vast land. Stretching across the north between the great forests and the Arctic is a belt of frozen land known as the tundra, with a vegetation of scrub and tundra moss on which the Lapps' reindeer can live. South of the tundra is the greatest forest belt in the world, 600 miles deep, and still haunted by packs of wolves. Farther south the forest disappears and is succeeded by flat treeless steppes with rich black earth, the most fertile soil in the world—the granary of the ancient world and long coveted by the Germans. This Black Earth Belt stretches eastwards right into Siberia, from and across the Ukraine, " where the rivers flow brighter than silver, where the gentle steppe rustles to the passers, and the farm buildings are lost in cherry orchards." South of this highly cultivated steppe lies a belt of grass-covered steppe. Eastward towards the Caspian Sea the steppe gives place to desert, and parts even of this desert Soviet irrigation has turned into cotton and other fields. The Caspian Sea is famous for its sturgeon, and from their dried roes is made the highly prized delicacy of caviare. Tundra, forest, black

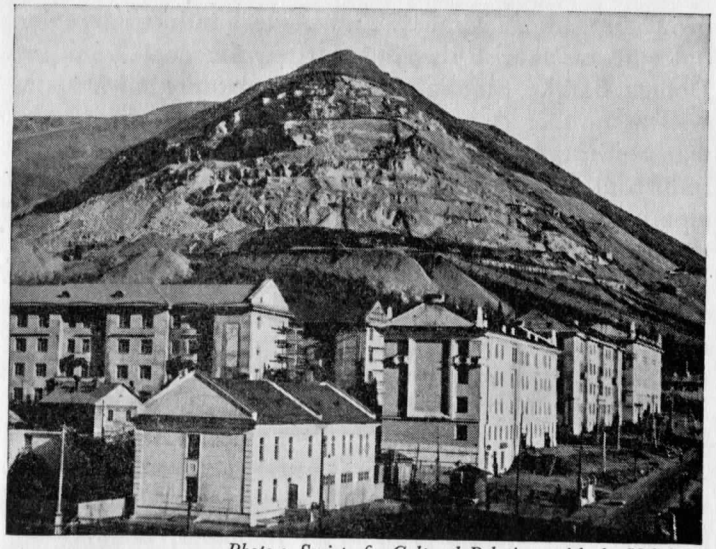


Photo : Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R.

Apatite surface mines in Kola Peninsula, showing miners' houses. Valuable fertilizers are obtained from apatite

earth, fertile and barren steppe, so varied is this land of Russia.

Lenin described Russia as an " incredibly backward country." Yet Russia is possibly the richest country in the world in many kinds of natural resources, and to develop these throughout the Soviet Union was the purpose of Stalin's series of Five Year Plans. Gold is mined at various places in Siberia, and as far as Vladivostok on the Pacific coast. Russia now takes the second place in the gold production of the world. In the Ural Mountains, besides gold, there are stores of platinum and semi-precious stones. Even more important for modern industry are the deposits of coal and iron in the Don Basin, where a great new manufacturing population has

grown up. The Moscow and central industrial region dates from Tsarist days, and drew its coal from the Donetz Basin. Siberia, too, has important coal-fields as well as lumber camps and paper mills, and during the war against the Nazis it became the core of Russia's industrial life. Other minerals include copper, lead, zinc, nickel, and aluminium, while the greater part of the world's stock of manganese comes from Russian mines in the Urals and the Caucasus. Petrol to feed the modern tractors, tanks, lorries, and aeroplanes comes from the oil-fields found in the Volga-Ural region stretching to the Caucasus. Baku on the west Caspian coast is the main centre, and a " second Baku " is being developed in the Urals.

The Russian polar region is one-fourth of the area of the U.S.S.R. This great northern desert of snow and ice, for centuries the despair of mankind, is revealing itself under Soviet scientists and explorers as one of the world's richest regions with immense mineral treasures under the ice and valuable fur-bearing animals in its majestic forests. Here Soviet men and women in the last few years have struggled—with the help of ice-breakers, motor sledges, aeroplanes (" flying reindeer "), wireless—to construct radio stations, landing quays, subterranean hot-houses, and air bases. The shortest air route from Russia to America is over the North Pole ; stratosphere planes can fly above the Arctic weather from Moscow to New York (5,800 miles) over the top of the world.

" The Russian people definitely began," writes Sir Bernard Pares, " as European in blood, language and religion and are therefore closely akin to ourselves." The Russians proper are the most numerous, roughly 100 millions, in this Soviet Union of peoples, and the next

in number are the Ukrainians, roughly 40 millions. But there are Finns, Poles, Lithuanians, and (until the Nazi war) a small German republic near the Volga ; while in the south there are descendants of Asiatic Tartars and other Moslem tribes. The Russians proper are almost surrounded by the non-Russian peoples of the U.S.S.R., and from their steppes and forests they have in course of time colonized eastwards, gradually trekking through the Asiatic peoples to the Arctic and the Pacific. In Asiatic Russia there are amongst other peoples white-cloaked Uzbeks, bearded and beturbaned Kirghiz, and on the far-eastern shores of Lake Baikal, the Buryats, without alphabet or recorded history of their own till Soviet times. Among all these peoples to-day new industries are developing—in the Caucasus, the Urals, Siberia, Soviet Central Asia, and the Far East.

Among the nearly 200 million people of the Soviet Union no less than 180 languages and dialects are spoken ; newspapers and school-books have to be printed in 70 languages, and theatres give performances in 45 languages. Like the U.S.A. and the British Commonwealth, the U.S.S.R. is a federal State, and no State has shown more aptitude in dealing with backward peoples and thus solving the old problem of nationalities—not like the Tsars by forcibly Russianizing them, but by fostering their national life, language, and culture. This was one of the aims of the county councillors or Zemstvo men (of the 1867–1917 period) who led the liberal movement that preceded the Revolution. Under the U.S.S.R., ten-day festivals are held from time to time in Moscow to honour the arts, the songs, and the dances of the European and Asiatic republics. " Whether in Baku, or in Kuibyshev, the people flocked to opera and ballet and concert, as they crowd into a cinema in our country " (writes

Sir Walter Monckton of the Russian people he saw in November 1941) " . . . . and when you see them stirred by the beauty of sound and movement, you begin to understand a little of the inner fires which light up the patience and endurance . . . into that heroism everyone sees to-day."

In and beyond the Caucasus with its health resorts and bright oriental colours—in peace time every Russian's dreamland—there are gifted peoples organized as self-governing soviet republics, proud of their oil wells and electric stations, orange and lemon orchards and vineyards, wheat, rice, tea, and tobacco. The picturesque and warlike Georgians (Stalin's own people) and the tall dark Armenians are ancient Christian peoples, whereas many of the mountain peoples have been Moslems for centuries as have many other peoples in Asiatic Russia.

> When I am threatened " The old world will return,"
> I fall to the ground to freeze in fear.
> Give me a gun, comrade, give me some bullets,
> I'll go to battle ; I'll defend my land, my Soviet land.

So sings a Tajik (Samarkand) poet and collective farmer, one of those co-operating peasants who now farm their land together and divide up the product, some of it for the State and the rest for each individual according to the work he or she does during the year.

For centuries the Russian peasant was a serf. Yet throughout Russian history the peasants were the colonizers of that " vast inclement country alternately parched by the summer sun, or buried under a pall of arctic snow. . . . Unfriendly nature had here imposed a task so rigorous as to leave little energy over for the refinements of life. . . . In the forest zone there was no

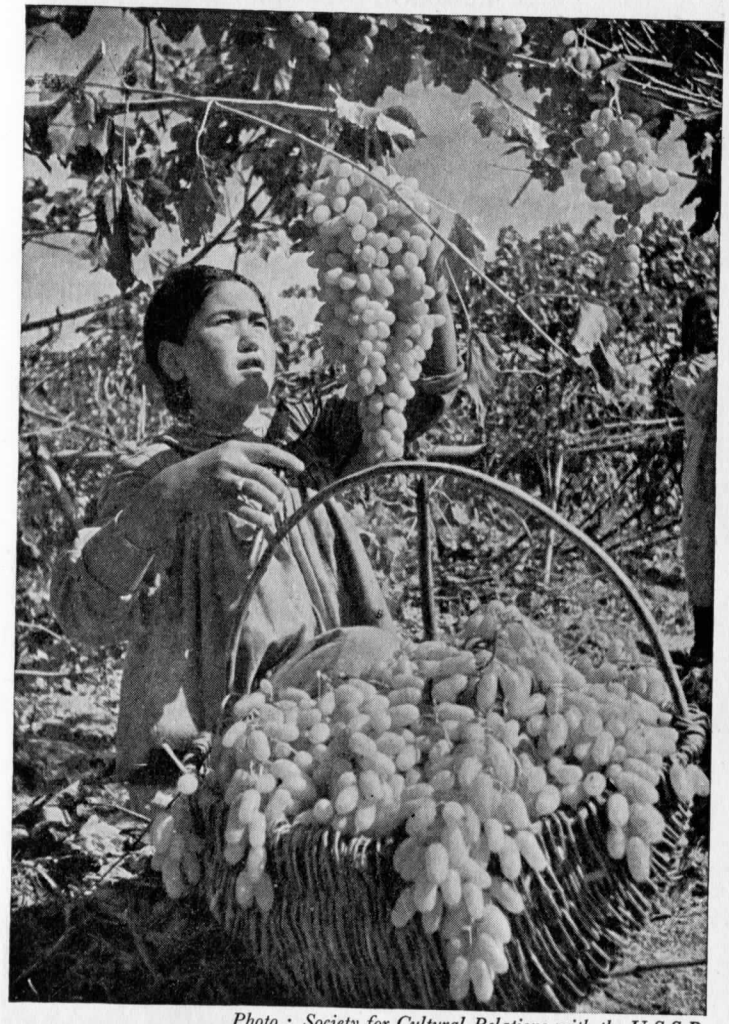


Photo : Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R.

Gathering grapes in a collective farm in a southern vineyard

corn, in the arable zone no timber, in the zone of the arable steppes a treeless waste of spring pasture. The goal set before the early Russians was the settlement and colonization of a land so vast that it always seemed empty, and so flat that it offered a perpetual temptation to movement, which only the invention of serfdom was able to avert. . . . The valiant labour of innumerable spades and axes goes unchronicled . . . yet in each generation forests were cleared, villages and towns were built of wood . . . and burned down in some high gale and built again ; rough lumbermen plied their trade upon the waterways, village communities tilled the rich black soil, herdsmen galloped on rough little ponies over the heaving grasses of the southern steppes, war was waged upon the wolf, the bear and the beaver, and a coarse, violent, emotional race of men lived, bred, toiled, quarrelled and died." [1]

The earlier stages thus eloquently summarized of Russia's thousand years of toil and suffering we have now to outline, for none can appreciate the New Russia who is ignorant of the Old. Emerging from centuries of comparative isolation, the Russian peoples since the Revolution of October 1917 have made miraculous progress in modern cultural, administrative, industrial, and military methods. With the vast resources lying within their own boundaries and their unconquerable spirit and devotion to the Soviet Motherland, they now take their place in the very front rank of World Powers, and to-day—

. . . the front line of the free
Is Russian earth, from Don to Arctic Sea.

[1] H. A. L. Fisher, *History of Europe*

Chapter I

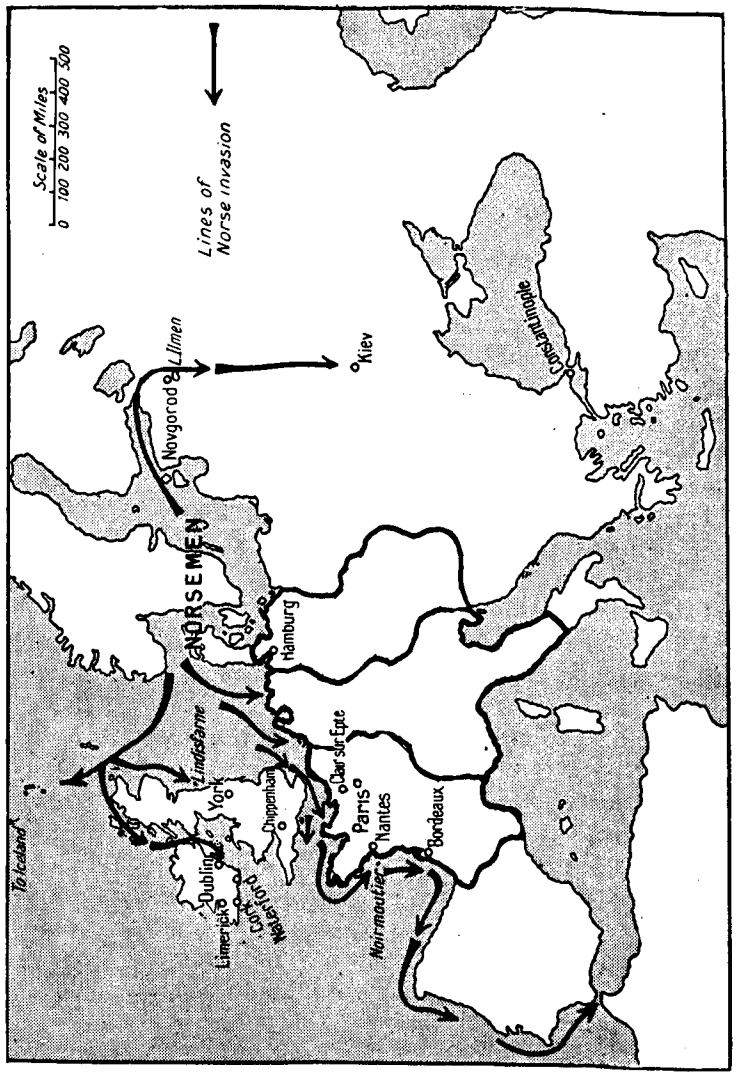
THE BIRTH OF HOLY RUSSIA

". . . the tumultuous liberties of an earlier Russia. . . ."

For many centuries Russia was a land of mystery to the peoples of western Europe. The Old Russia was an inland country with no sea outlets, barred from the Baltic Sea by Finns, Swedes and others, and from the Black Sea by Asiatic tribes. All these other peoples figure largely in Russia's long story even to our own days.

The name " Russia " is derived from *Rus*, which seems to have been the Finnish name for Swedish or Viking " rowers." For some centuries the Vikings raided the coasts of Europe at many places from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Some made new homes for themselves among the peoples of England, Normandy, and Russia, and these three peoples owe much to Viking " rowers." Thus among the founders of the first small Russian States were, besides the westerly Slavs, these adventurous Vikings. The ancient chronicles state that about our King Alfred's time, a band of blue-eyed and fair-haired Rus rowers, " tall as palm trees," were invited by a Slav forest tribe to come and govern them. Under Rurik, their semi-legendary leader, they made their way to the district round Lake Ilmen below what is now Leningrad—whither (as this is being written) the unconquerable Russians of to-day have blazed a route across the frozen marshes and smashed a way through to relieve Lenin's city after a bitter Nazi siege of seventy-four weeks.

Amid these self-same marshes and woods those early Rus settled, and just north of Lake Ilmen founded



Map showing direction of Norse invasions

Novgorod, or New Town. Thence they moved southwards along the rivers and reached the ancient settlement of Kiev on the Dnieper. From Kiev, a small band of armed merchants forging on ahead made the first of the six Rus attacks on Constantinople, the great city of the Cæsars. They had in fact found a river road from sea to sea : from the Baltic southward, then all the way along the Dnieper River (which was old Russia's main road), through Kiev and on to the Dnieper's mouth in the Black Sea—a river road right across Russia from the land of the pagan Vikings in the north to the land of the Christian Greeks in the south.

The intercourse between Russia and Constantinople had led to a few conversions among the Rus. A Christian bishop had visited Kiev. Olga, the widow of a son of Rurik, paid a state visit to Constantinople, and was there baptized into the Greek Church. However, neither her son nor her people would follow her example, and it was not till her grandson, Vladimir, was on the throne that mass conversion of the Russians was accomplished. Vladimir the Great was called St. Vladimir, though he was a monster of cruelty and anything but a saint ; but he was a powerful prince, in the north making large conquests of non-Russian lands on the east Baltic shore, and in the south carrying Russian influence to the Sea of Azov.

As his people were passing through a time of unrest, Vladimir tried to appease them by reviving their old pagan worship. On a height above the river Dnieper he set up a great idol of their chief god, Perun, " with a head of silver and a beard of gold," to which both the people of Kiev and Novgorod offered sacrifices, sometimes of human beings. Meanwhile Vladimir and his Council began to examine their neighbours' religions. The

Moslems had converted the Bulgars of the Volga to Islam, and the religion of Mohammed seemed a fine warlike creed suited to a warlike nation. But Islam forbade the drinking of wine, and said Vladimir, " Drinking is the joy of the Rus ; we cannot exist without that pleasure." Neither did the Catholic Church of Rome—which had converted and civilized western Europe—attract the Russian mind, while the Jewish creed was that of a people " dispersed abroad " and " that fate," cried Vladimir, " must never be ours ! "

In the end Russia was won for the Greek or Orthodox Church, the Bible having been translated into Slavonic by the Apostles of the Slavs, Cyril and Methodius. It was the splendour of the worship in the great cathedral of St. Sophia (Holy Wisdom) in Constantinople which gained the hearts of the Russian visitors. " We cannot describe it," they said on their return to Vladimir ; " we only know that there God dwells in the midst of men. Had the Greek Church been evil, then Olga, thy grandmother, the wisest of human beings, would not have entered it." Vladimir, having won an imperial princess as his bride, became fired with zeal for his new faith. For a start he ordered the idol Perun to be beaten with clubs by twelve stalwart men and cast into the river. Then this first Russian Christian prince commanded his twelve sons, his squires or *boyars*, and the people to be christened in the Dnieper. What happened at Kiev happened soon afterwards in Novgorod and throughout the Rus land, till a whole people was added to Christendom, and pagan Russia became Holy Russia.

" *Holy Russia* has been no empty phrase." [1] The early

[1] See Sir Raymond Beazley in *Russia* (Clarendon Press, 1918) ; also *Cambridge Medieval History*, Vols. IV and V (1927)

Russian princedoms, Kiev and Moscow, became a rampart and a pioneer of Christendom facing eastwards, " standing on guard of the land of Russia and waging war with the heathens." Holy Kiev, the city of four hundred churches, is as ancient as Canterbury, and as dear to the Russians as Canterbury is to us. The Greek Church, with its monks and priests, in due course became the wealthiest land-owning power in the country, and exercised enormous moral and cultural influence, teaching national unity and playing an imposing part in Russian national life. Even to-day echoes of the Easter feasts of the old Russian princes may be heard in the folk-songs of the north.

The Greek Church brought to Russia the music, literature, architecture, and the codes of law of a civilized people. These advantages were great, but there were also grave disadvantages. Unlike the Roman Church, the Greek Church was a department of the State, teaching passive obedience to the Cæsar or Tsar. Again, if the Greek Church saved Russia from the Moslem Empire, it also severed the Russian people from their kindred, the Slavs of Poland and Bohemia, who belonged to the Roman Church—and this has had momentous results. Furthermore, Russia was to have no part in those great religious movements, such as the Crusades, which under the leadership of Rome inspired and civilized the peoples of the west.

Kiev was " the mother city of Russia," and the first capital of the new Russian nation. From Kiev the Russians carried out raids against their Moslem neighbours, attacked the Greek (Byzantine) Empire, and extended their power over neighbouring Slav settlements. It was the centre from which the first Russia, the old and free Russia, was organized. It had elective City Wardens

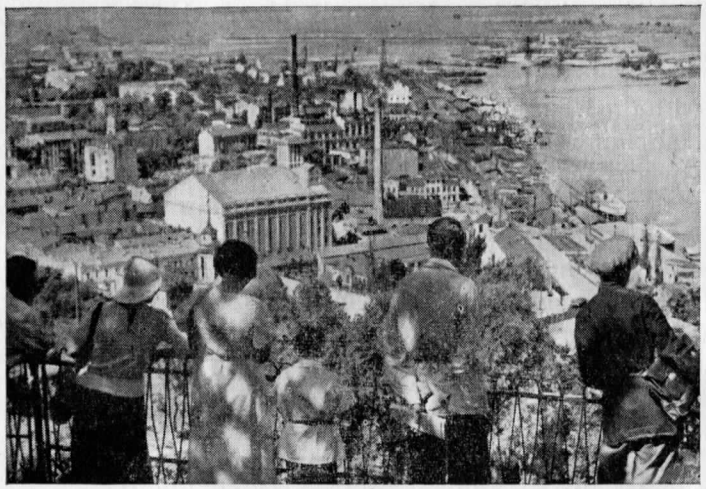


Photo : E.N.A.

A modern view of Kiev, showing the industrial quarter and the river Dnieper

who formed part of the Duma, or State Council, of the prince. Every year, usually in November, the Prince of Kiev set out, like an early English king, to make a tour of his lands to receive tribute due to him, paid sometimes in coin, but more often in furs and skins, corn, honey, wax, and slaves. The merchants of Kiev traded with Constantinople, with Czechs, Hungarians, and Germans, and with the markets of the Moslem world. Under Vladimir the Kiev princedom reached its highest powers and widest extent.

After the death of Vladimir the Great his dominions were divided among his sons, of whom Yaroslav was the ablest, the " Law-giver." To him has been attributed the revision of the earliest Russian legal code known as *Pravda* (*Law* or *Truth*), though at this time it was con-

cerned mainly with the rights of land- and slave-owners and merchants. Yaroslav married one of his daughters to the King of France, and another to Harold Hardrada of Norway, the invader of England on the eve of the Norman Conquest, while a son married the daughter of that Harold of England who was killed at the Battle of Hastings. Exiled princes from England and elsewhere found refuge at his court, and in fact Russia was now recognized as a true European State. After Yaroslav's death, during the long civil wars among Rurik's many descendants, Kiev itself was attacked by one of the rival claimants, and at last sacked and ruined.[1]

Meanwhile in the north Novgorod continued to be an important centre of trade, where foreign merchants had their guildhall and stores, and the German Hanseatic factory traded Novgorod's exports to the west. There, within the walls of the highly picturesque Kremlin or citadel, workmen from Constantinople built in the eleventh century the cathedral of St. Sophia, famed for its artistic domes, tombs of princes, carved stalls, fine old icons, and bronze doors. The citizens of Novgorod elected their princes from Yaroslav's descendants, but all authority was vested in the " sovereign people " gathered in the *Veche*, or Assembly, which represented the ancient tribal organization. Even the elected prince had to keep its friendship and support or be " shewn the way out." The Assembly, summoned by the city's great bell, elected the mayor, nor would they scruple to depose him if he displeased them. It was about the time when the

[1] Note the chequered history of Kiev, " the mother city of Russia," and with its nearly thousand-year-old cathedral the first capital of its Grand Merchant-Princes ; sacked by the Tartars, 1240 ; passed later to Lithuania and Poland ; finally re-annexed to Russia in the seventeenth century, and again the capital of Southern or Little Russia, called " Ukraine," the old " Borderland " of the civilized Christian world.

barons of England were exacting Magna Carta from King John, that Novgorod's citizens were fighting against unjust taxes levied by the Mayor Dmitri. They set fire to the houses of the mayor and his family, sold their lands and servants, seized their treasure, and when at last the mayor's dead body was brought back to Novgorod, only the Archbishop's pleading saved it from being thrown without Christian burial from the Great Bridge into the river.

Novgorod was the only one of the early Russian city states to possess a large colonial empire, extending from the far north Arctic Lapland to the Urals. When the power of Kiev began to decline, Novgorod became once more the chief city. So powerful was this old city-republic that the Russians proudly asked, " Who can stand against God and Lord Novgorod the Great? " It was the coming of the pagan Tartar hordes from Asia that crushed Novgorod and the " old free Russia."



A Tartar Warrior

Chapter II

RUSSIA "SUBMERGED BY ASIA"

"... blotting out of men's minds nearly all that had gone before."

In an age when western Europe was singing the praises of gallant knights defending their own and attacking other people's castles, Russia, which knew neither castles nor knights, was confronted with a new terror from Asia. "For our sins," wrote the thirteenth-century chronicler of Novgorod, "came unknown tribes. No one knows exactly who they are, nor whence they came out, nor what is their language, nor of what race they are, nor what their faith is, but they call them Tatary."

Under the leadership of Jenghiz, their khan or emperor, the savage Asiatic herdsmen known as Tartars [1] gradually conquered North China and Mongolia beyond the Great Wall. Then some of the tribes entered Russia to spy out the land. On reaching the Dnieper, the invaders turned back loaded with slaves and other spoil. Three years later Jenghiz Khan died. One of the most ruthless conquerors the world has ever seen, he left a vast empire extending right across Asia from Manchuria in the north-east to the Caucasus in the south-west. That empire had "cost more than eighteen million lives ... no empire had ever occupied so large a portion of the earth's surface as that of Jenghiz, or has been the cause of so much human suffering in the winning."

It was a nephew of Jenghiz who led the second Tartar

[1] Even we in England nowadays still sometimes call an "awkward customer" a Tartar



Photo : Henry Guttmann

The Tartars capture Kiev, 1235

assault upon Russia, coming from the north-east through Black Bulgaria across the Volga. "This year the Tartars seized all the Bulgar Land," writes the Novgorod chronicler, "and took their great city and slew all, even wives and children." Every important Russian town, except Novogrod, was sacked and burned. Kiev, already much reduced in size by civil wars, was still large enough to attract the enemy and was destroyed. When the stout-hearted old friar, Carpini, passed through South Russia on his mission to the Tartars in Asia, he found only a few houses and survivors to tell of the trade or town of Holy Kiev.

The Tartars swept on towards central Europe. Hungary was ravaged almost from end to end. Poland and the border States of the German Empire were only saved by news of the Great Khan's death coming from

far away China and halting the Tartar advance. When their hold on western Russia relaxed, the Tartars suffered defeat at the hands of the Lithuanians. Western Europe was thus saved from the Tartar terror, for the vast empire of Jenghiz now began to crumble.

The Tartar cavalry leader in Russia threw off allegiance to the Khan in distant China and set up his own State, known (from the Tartars' yellowish complexion) as the *Golden Horde*, in the south-western steppes of Russia. The Tartars became Moslems, and made their capital, with its orchards and palaces, at Sarai on the lower Volga. For two centuries the Khans of the Golden Horde were the great power in Russia. Only by submitting to the Tartar and paying a tax in furs and money could the Russian princedoms and city states keep their lands and their own way of living.

Novgorod, safe within its northern forests, was the only large Russian town that escaped Tartar destruction. The invaders marched towards the city, " cutting down everyone like grass," but the season was unusually wet and the task of pushing through dense woods dripping with rain and over great swamps was too much even for the Tartars. But though the city and its great church of the age of our Norman Conquest escaped destruction, yet it had to pay tribute to the Tartar tax-gatherers ; the citizens raged, threatened, and trembled, but in the end they paid. It was as Prince of Novgorod (1240–63) that St. Alexander Nevsky won fame for his kindness to the peasants suffering at the hands of the Tartars, as well as for his victories over the Swedes (on the Neva—hence his name Nevsky) and over the Germans. Not once, but many times in their history, have the Russians risen up to smite the German enemy.

In spite of its wealth and commercial importance



St. George, an icon of the fifteenth century
(*From the Collection of Boris Bakhmeteff, New York*)

Novgorod never became the capital of Russia, though it remained the true representative of free Russia near the Baltic lands. But, among the pine forests of central Russia, a small village on the river Moskva was to rise slowly to the proud position of the capital of a new and greater Russia, the White Stone City, "Mother Moscow," whence was to develop the empire and autocracy of All the Russias, "blotting out of men's minds nearly all that had gone before." [1]

During all the long years that the Russian peasant suffered under the Tartar Yoke (1240–1480) he never lost his love of folk-song nor his hold on religion. The Church remained the main hope of unity and recovery. Religious painting, in which Russia has always excelled, found a refuge in the monasteries, and long afterwards the sacred icons were cleaned and renovated—a work honourably completed by the Soviet Government.

The great Tartar slave raids into the southern provinces of Russia continued till the eighteenth century. There are now in Soviet Russia about 13 million Tartars, peaceful hard workers, scattered in three large groups—those of European Russia, of the Caucasus, and of Siberia. If we glance forward seven centuries from the first Tartar invasion, we see in our own day in Sevastopol and elsewhere "the unshakable comradeship between the Tartars and the Russians."

[1] See Sir Raymond Beazley, "Democratic Features in Russian History," in *Contemporary Review*, March 1942

Chapter III

THE RISE OF "MOTHER MOSCOW"

"Moscow was to Russia all, and more than all, that Paris was to France. . . ." [1]

The Tartar Golden Horde was largely responsible for the rise of Moscow, the second capital of Russia. When Kiev was destroyed, one of the princely families made a new settlement in the forests to the north-east, and this became Moscow. On the hill known as the Kremlin, this princeling built a house for himself near the tiny church of The Saviour in the Wood, the oldest building in Moscow, still preserved in the courtyard of the former royal palace.

Moscow, on the Moskva River with its portage to the Volga, had an excellent geographical position. It lay roughly midway between the north and south of Russia. It stood in the midst of what came to be known as the Great Russian stock—the colonizing eastward-moving part of the Russian race, which had early been escaping from Kiev and from the ruined and enslaved south. It was too small to attract an enemy's attention, and it offered a refuge from the Tartar terror. In peace time the princes could make easy journeys along the various rivers—for there were no roads—and extend their lordship over nearby settlements.

The princes of Moscow were already aiming at being national leaders and working to free the Russians while seeming to serve the Tartars, and Moscow enjoyed the advantage of longer reigns and more settled conditions

[1] E. A. Freeman, *Historical Geography of Europe*

than the other Russian princedoms. The Patriarch of the Russian Church moved to Moscow, attracted by its peace and security, and gave the Church's blessing to schemes which might one day free the nation from the Tartar. Moscow succeeded Novgorod as the cultural and artistic capital, and as such its greatest achievement was in religious painting : " The age of Cyprian is also that of the monk Andrey Rublev, the greatest painter ever produced by Russia." [1]

But the real power which raised Moscow to the leadership lay in the cool-headed, far-seeing character of some of its merchant-princes. No doubt some patriotic Russians and rival princes thought these men the worst of traitors and money-grubbers. But they were statesmen as well as financiers. While serving the Golden Horde, they were preparing to destroy Tartar rule in Russia and to build up a united Russian nation. Church and people accepted them as the only way to freedom from the invader, though their autocratic power had many of the features of the despots of Asia.

The first of these financier-princes was Ivan Kalita, or John of the Money Bags. As he could gain power only by favour of the Khan of the Golden Horde, he asked the Khan to allow him to collect the tribute from other Russian princes, and decided that no one should share his " privileges." " It shall be for me to know the Horde," he said, " and not for thee." The princely tax-collector used his power to extend his own dominions by seizure or purchase of lands, by colonization, and by treaties. When he met with any resistance, he did not hesitate to call for help from Tartar troops. Yet this policy gave his land fifty years of peace and freed it from robbers. When Moscow became the centre of the Russian Church, and

[1] *Cambridge Medieval History*, VII

Ivan Kalita's next successor helped St. Serge to found the famous Troitsa or Holy Trinity monastery (one of Russia's chief holy places), then the people began to speak reverently of " Mother Moscow " and to regard the prince as the eldest son of the Church, her friend and protector. " Mother Moscow " she was in the Tartar Terror, and " Mother Moscow " she was to be again when the Kremlin became the Soviet Premier's headquarters and the Nazi Terror smote the land in our own days.

Within fifty years of Ivan Kalita's death, the Golden Horde had to acknowledge the power of Moscow. In due course Ivan's third successor, Dimitri Donskoi or Dimitri of the Don, built up a league of princes strong enough to meet the hitherto invincible Tartars in battle, who for the first time (roughly the time of Crécy) suffered defeat at the hands of the Russians. But it was not till the end of the Middle Ages that Ivan the Great (1462–1505) Grand Prince of Moscow, threw off the Tartar yoke. By this time the Russian people had found, as they find to-day, strength in unity under Moscow's leadership. " Moscow was to Russia all, and more than all, that Paris was to France. . . . It was from Moscow as the centre that the lost Russian lands were won back." Ivan the Great extended his rule beyond the Urals into Asia. He claimed all Russian lands as his personal estate, and the boyars (landed gentry) flocked to Moscow to enter the Tsar's service.

Although the Tartar power was broken, the Khan of the Crimean Horde continued to make attacks on Moscow, carrying off peasant men, women, and children as slaves. To meet this danger there grew up in the south a system of soldier-farmers and " adventurers " known as " Cossacks," who sprang from many races and from communities of runaway serfs and outlaws, and in

due course became a notable element in the Russian nation.

After the Turks had captured (1453) Constantinople —the Rome of the East—the Grand Prince of Moscow took the title of " Tsar," [1] the Russian form of " Caesar," and claimed to be the true successor of the East Rome Emperors. Ivan the Great, the first of the tsars, married an imperial princess, and adopted for the new Russian Empire the ancient imperial crest of Rome, the double-headed eagle. Thus, the Grand Princes of Moscow appeared before the world as the heirs both of the Tartar Khans of the East and of the ancient Cæsars of the West, and Moscow claimed to be the " third Rome." As successors of the Greek (Byzantine) Emperors, the tsars assumed the leadership of the Greek (Orthodox) Church, to which belonged the Balkan peoples—Christian subjects of the Turks and Slav kindred of the Russians, who in a later century struggled to set them free. " Here is a romance of history and a dream of empire, running counter to the tumultuous liberties of an earlier Russia." [2]

[1] This " Slav word ultimately represents the Latin Cæsar." *O.E.D.*
[2] H. A. L. Fisher, *History of Europe*



Ancient Russian rouble showing double-headed eagle

CHAPTER IV

TSARS OF ALL THE RUSSIAS

" The mass of the people, more than ever, ' went under.' "

UNDER Ivan the Great and his successor, Basil III, the Russian nation enjoyed what seemed almost a golden age. Later tsars may have had equal and perhaps greater power and ruled over a wider Empire, but they seldom commanded the wholehearted confidence and respect of the entire nation of priests, nobles or boyars, merchants, townsfolk, and peasants. Only with this national support could the Grand Dukes of Moscow (once the poorest of Rus princes) have kept their leadership over the whole Rus people and have loosened the weight of Tartar oppression. But that long grim struggle could not fail to keep Russia itself some centuries behind the western nations in culture and social progress.

Basil III (1505–33) is described by the Russian chronicler as " the last of the gatherers of Russian land." The ancient Russian city of Smolensk on the Dnieper had been seized by the Lithuanians, once the mightiest of conquerors in all lands from the Baltic to the Black Sea, and the last important heathen race of Europe. Lithuania had recently been united with Poland and then converted to Christianity. Smolensk was not incorporated with Moscow till after a long war with Poland.

It is interesting to note that the Prussians as well as the Letts and Lithuanians belonged to the Balto-Slavonic peoples. What is now Berlin stood in what once was Slav land. These Prussians were not germanized nor converted from their primitive heathendom till as late

as the thirteenth century (long after the Russians), and " to this day the sky-line of Berlin is more unbroken by church towers than that of almost any other city." [1]

For some time now the Russian people had been firmly ruled. When Basil III died, his widow Helen and her uncle carried on the government successfully for a time, but when her son Ivan IV was eight years old Helen died suddenly and mysteriously, and for some years the country was at the mercy of tyrant nobles, each wanting to seize power for himself and take revenge on his rivals. The country was reduced to a lawless state, and it is not surprising that the young Ivan, after spending his childhood amid scenes of strife and suffering neglect and lack of training, grew up to be a strange, mistrustful, unbalanced man. At his best he proved an energetic and intelligent ruler, but at other times he was morbid and cruel, superstitious and deceitful. He was only sixteen when he demanded to be crowned. At first he gave great promise. He addressed his subjects in great humility, asking pardon for his youthful misdeeds. He summoned the first general or " land " assembly to reform local government and codify the laws. From his reign dates the Cathedral of St. Basil in Moscow, which like most Russian churches had many domes and much colour after the model of the churches of the East.

Ivan IV, to be known as Ivan the Terrible, extended his empire eastwards beyond the Urals into Siberia and across northern Asia, and so began the great trek that reached the Pacific about a century later. In his war against the Tartars he took Kazan and Astrakhan on the Volga. The whole of the Volga route now passed to the Russians, who thus closed the road to invaders and

[1] Acton, *Lectures in Modern History*



Photo : Henry Guttmann

Ivan the Terrible returns to Moscow after his capture of Kazan, 1552

marauders from Asia. But Russia was still cut off from Europe by the hostile states of Poland, Sweden, and Turkey, and it fell to England to " discover Russia."

It was to Ivan the Terrible that the English sailor, Richard Chancellor, delivered a letter from the boy king Edward VI. This was the beginning of Anglo-Russian friendship. Chancellor had hoped to reach Peking in China by way of the Arctic Ocean, and to discover a new route of merchant adventure. But after losing two of his three little ships, a storm drove him and his own vessel to the White Sea, from whose shores he made the long journey to Moscow by sleigh. On his return home from Moscow he told how he had dined off the Tsar's gold service. Following Chancellor's visit the English Muscovy (or Russian) Company was founded. On the White Sea, near the monastery of St. Nicholas, was set up a trading station which grew into the port of Archangel, for long the only Russian seaport, and in our days a port for the Northern Convoy of British and American munitions to the U.S.S.R. Soon French and Dutch vessels were also visiting this port and trading with the newly discovered Russia. Ivan in his latter years liked to call himself " the dear brother and friend " of our Queen Elizabeth, and he even wanted to marry one of the Queen's ladies though his seventh wife was still alive ! For his interest in things English, he is sometimes referred to as Russia's " English Tsar," and when he asked the Muscovy Company to send him architects, artisans, engineers, and chemists, he was anticipating Peter the Great's " westernizing " policy.

Towards the middle of his reign Ivan IV became a changed man, tyrannical and cruel, bent on making himself master of All the Russias—in short, he was *Ivan the Terrible.* He is said to have put to death no fewer

than 4,000 nobles and ambitious courtiers, keeping a careful list of his victims and sending it to the monasteries that prayers might be offered for their souls. He gathered men round him who were sworn to obey his will in everything. Flogging was the usual method of correction : the Tsar flogged his nobles and they flogged their servants and slaves ; even priests were flogged by their bishops and monks by their abbots, and brutal treatment was meted out by heads of families to their wives and children. In a fit of mad rage Ivan killed his own eldest son whom he passionately loved, and he literally threw to the dogs the last of his rebellious nobles. When his end came, and he lay dying, he assumed the hood of the strictest order of hermits, and Ivan the Terrible died as the monk Jonah !

Little wonder that western travellers gave a dark picture of Russian society. The Tsar had now a more absolute power over his subjects than any other ruler in the world. The ordinary man of Moscow used to say, *I know not ; only God and the Tsar know.* The long Tartar terror had indeed left its mark on Russia. Ivan and other tsars imitated the manners of Asiatic rulers—and the Russian throne endured for another four centuries while other thrones shook and toppled. " The rulers themselves were slaves, and the same age which saw the imperial expansion of Russia also saw the disappearance of the free elements of the earlier Russia, the enslavement of the peasants to the landowners, of the nobles to the officials, and of the officials to the Tsar." [1] Even so, " popular songs preserved the memory of Ivan IV as a democratic Tsar who ferreted out treason (*i.e.* the boyars) from the Russian land." [2]

[1] Christopher Dawson in *Russia and the West*
[2] Paul Milyukov in *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* XIX (1929)



Photo : Henry Guttmann

Byzantine Cathedral of St. Basil, Moscow, begun by Ivan the Terrible

Ivan was succeeded by a son, but with his son's death the line of Rurik the Viking came to an end. With no lawful heir to the throne, there were fifteen years of great confusion known as the *The Time of Troubles* (1598–1613)—which was really one of Russia's many revolutions, class rising against class, landowners great and small, peasants and Cossacks, fighting each other, spreading ruin and desolation over the land. " The mass of the people, more than ever, ' went under.' "

Moreover, the Poles—once one of the chief Powers in Europe and now at their height—invaded Russia and occupied the royal palace of Moscow. The King of Poland assumed the title of Tsar. Then came one of Russia's darkest hours. The Poles were in Moscow and Smolensk ; the Swedes were in Novgorod ; the Russian treasury was empty ; the land was untilled. The whole social system seemed to break up, just as it did again when Tsardom collapsed in 1917. But inspired and headed by the Church, led by a butcher and a prince and helped by the Cossacks, the Russian people rose in self-defence. They drove the Poles out of Moscow, and called a national assembly to elect a new tsar. After three days' fasting, this assembly elected Michael of the boyar family of Romanov, a lad of sixteen, cousin of the late Tsar, and son of the Patriarch. Thus began with Michael (1613–45) a new line of tsars, the House of Romanov, who ruled over Russia for three centuries until 1917. Again the tsar became " the elect of God, the little Father of his people, the healer of their troubles."

During the reign of the second Romanov Tsar, Alexis, the Cossacks and other peasants of the Ukraine again rose in arms against the Poles, and at last the Ukraine (east of the Dnieper) and its rich black soil passed to Russia with Smolensk and Kiev. The Tsar

Alexis was the most civilized ruler Russia had yet had, and his country was now gradually coming into closer touch with European learning and manners. English, German, and Dutch engineers and skilled workers built factories and foundries. Western music, pictures and plays, clothes and furniture, found their way into Moscow homes. Alexis (1645–76) helped Charles II with money during his wanderings, and he was the only European prince to refuse to acknowledge Oliver Cromwell.

Under Alexis it seemed that the national assembly might become a real parliament and stabilize a more liberal form of government. But the long Tartar tyranny and the years of unrest had scattered the peasants in all directions, so that the landowners were left without labour to cultivate their estates. They demanded that these fugitives be brought back. Man-hunts were organized, and all returned except those who had joined the Cossacks, who were too much feared to be attacked. A register of serfs and other labourers was then compiled which turned the peasants and their descendants into serfs, tying them to the soil far more severely than elsewhere in Europe even in its feudal times. Thus serfdom became the law, " the main theme in the history of the Russian people." The tsars parted company with their people. For nearly three centuries, though there were many peasants' revolts, the lamp of freedom burned very low.

Chapter V

RUSSIA " THROWN INTO EUROPE "

" Peter the Great is Russia—her flesh and blood, her temperament and genius, her virtues and her vices." Waliszewski

Of Peter the Great, a man of volcanic character, it has been said " he took Russia by the scruff of the neck and threw her into Europe." In numbers and extent the Russian Empire in his reign became the first of Christian Powers, passing by the action of this one man from obscurity to a dominant place among nations.

Peter became Tsar (1682–1725) at the age of ten, and for seven years his sister Sophia ruled as regent. During that time Peter lived quietly with his mother in a village near Moscow. His education was very scanty, but he was keen on mathematics, mechanics, and technical knowledge of all sorts. He was very strong, delighting in hard manual work such as carpentry and boat-building, and he " played soldiers " with lads of his own age, sons of Russian noblemen, whom he equipped from the State arsenal and instructed in drill with the help of foreign soldiers. From this " play " the young Tsar gained two well-drilled and fully equipped regiments, which became the basis of the Russian army of the future. Equipped with these as bodyguard, Peter, at the age of seventeen, freed himself from the regency of his sister Sophia and placed her in a convent.

Much of Peter's time had been spent in the foreign quarter of Moscow, mixing with men of many nations and learning from them western ideas and methods. Two of his friends, a Swiss named Lefort and a Scotsman



Photo : E.N.A.

STATUE OF PETER THE GREAT, LENINGRAD

named Gordon, were in due time placed at the head of his navy and his army.

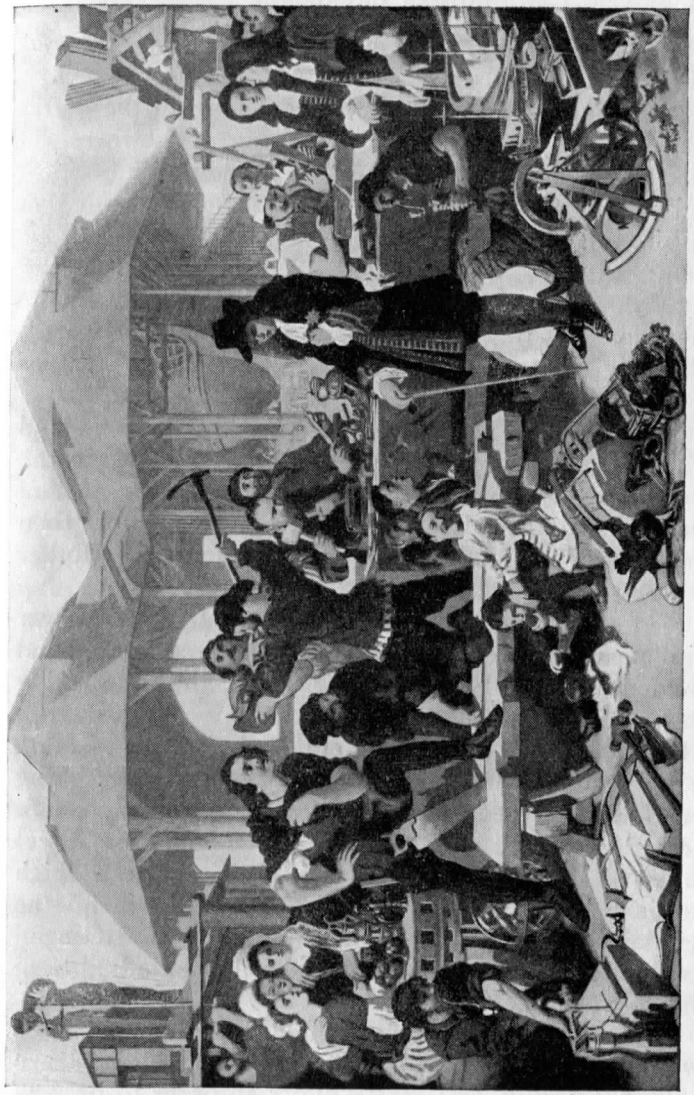
Russia was still almost an inland empire, and had as yet but one strip of sea-coast, the White Sea in the north, with the port of Archangel, frozen half the year. Moscow, where the Tsar lived and his council, or Duma, met, was far more like an eastern than a western city. Its trade was carried on for the most part with Central Asia by means of slow-moving caravans travelling overland from and to Mongolia and Turkestan. It was clear to Peter that his country needed a stretch of sea-coast with direct outlets to Europe ; but the Swedes dominating the Baltic barred the way to the more advanced countries of Europe, while the Turks were in control of the Black Sea. Peter's first attempt against Turkey, made by land, was a failure ; but he was always ready to learn by his mistakes, so he spent the winter building a fleet higher up the Don, and he attacked but did not hold the Turkish fort of Azov.

In 1696–97 he planned a foreign tour to seek alliance with other Christian Powers against Turkey, and at the same time to collect technical equipment and instructors in order to " westernize " his backward country. Travelling as Bombardier Peter he joined his party of diplomats and his Swiss friend Lefort. He visited the Baltic States, Prussia, and Hanover, and then went on to Holland to learn shipbuilding, tooth-extraction, and other useful arts. There he was seen by the Duke of Marlborough. The duke, visiting a dockyard in Holland, was struck with the appearance of a journeyman at work there—a large and powerful man, dressed in a red woollen shirt, duck trousers, and a sailor's hat, seated with an adze in his hand upon a rough log of timber. This gigantic workman was Tsar Peter, who at the age of twenty-five stood nearly seven feet high and was broad to match. He was living

in a two-roomed log cottage, which is still standing. However, his famous " apprenticeship " lasted only three days, for the crowd of sightseers collecting to watch a monarch at work was too much for Peter's peppery temper. He removed to Amsterdam and there worked in the dockyards of the wealthy Dutch East India Company.

During this foreign tour, Peter was invited to England by William III. He spent three months in London and Woolwich, where it is reported " he himself did essay the casting of bombs." In London he was present at a debate in the House of Lords : " When subjects thus do speak the truth unto their Sovereign, it is goodly hearing," said this autocrat of the Russias whose word was law in Church and State ; " let us learn in this of the English." In the law courts of Westminster he was impressed by the number of men in wigs and gowns, and was surprised to learn they were all lawyers. " Why," said he, " I have but two lawyers in my empire and one of them I mean to hang when I return." During his visit to the Archbishop's library at Lambeth Palace, he declared he never imagined there were so many printed books in all the world. Peter attended lectures, inspected paper and flour mills and printing offices, visited hospitals, museums, and libraries. All this time he was learning what he thought would be useful to westernize Russia, and collecting a company of doctors, engineers, skilled workmen, and military instructors to take back with him.

Peter was in Vienna when he heard that the old Russian militia, the Streltsy (shooters), who had already caused him trouble, were in revolt and plotting to get rid of Germans and other foreigners. As Peter was the first Russian ruler ever to leave his country, his long absence had given rise to discontent. The revolt was



Peter the Great (*left*) working at Deptford

dealt with severely, and after another rising the old militia was abolished altogether.

Peter intended to plant a Russian port on the Baltic coast. While the Swedish army was busy elsewhere, he seized some territory a few miles from the Finnish frontier, and there laid the foundations of St. Petersburg—to give Russia, said he, " a window through which to look out upon Europe." So many men lost their lives in the stupendous task of building Peter's city on piles in the Neva marshes that it was said to be " built on bones." The new capital, to which Peter removed the seat of government from Moscow, became a city of fine streets and large public buildings, colossal squares, spires, and minarets sheathed in barbaric gold and flashing in the sun. But it was always " foreign." When the last of the Tsars abdicated in 1917 and St. Petersburg (then known as Petrograd) was being threatened, " Mother Moscow " again became the capital.

For the greater part of his reign Peter was at war with one or other of his powerful neighbours, Turkey and Sweden. The great war with Sweden, then the ruling Power of the Baltic, lasted twenty-one years ; Charles XII's victory at Narva was nullified by Peter's triumph at Poltava in 1709, and Sweden's young warlike king found invasion of Russia as fatal to him as was Napoleon's a century later. From the Swedes Peter won those direct outlets to Europe (later the small Baltic States) which Russia held till 1918. Peter also fought Persia for the Caspian seaboard, along which lay the routes to Central Asia and the East. Before he died, all Siberia had been added to Russia.

One of Peter's most far-sighted acts was to choose two hundred and fifty young men and make them learn reading, printing, and mathematics in order to become

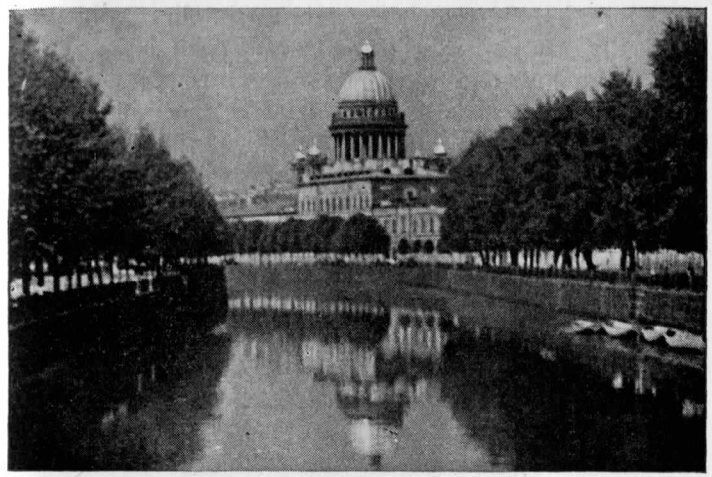


Photo : Pictorial Press

St. Isaac's Cathedral, Leningrad

artillerymen and craftsmen. His reign saw the creation of Russian industry and a great increase in trade. He made " plans " for industry, and opened a number of factories and mills, including ironworks and cloth mills in the Urals, allotting to these so many peasants as serf labour. His last months were spent in visiting his new canals and ironworks. He insisted on universal service to the tsardom—from the boyars (or landowners) and from the peasants. He made the peasants work for the boyars and the boyars work for him. The peasants were serfs—in person, property, and labour the possession of their masters. In point of fact boyars and peasants were equally the Tsar's serfs.

Peter the Great died in 1725 in his new city at the early age of fifty-three. A few years before his death, with characteristic ruthlessness, he killed his own son. " Forgive all " were his last words, scribbled on a scrap of paper.

Peter the Great was a giant, intellectually and physically. But with his untiring energy he had been in too great a hurry to force his subjects to accept western ideas and customs. His westernizing reforms were hated, but his subjects were afraid to resist. He himself would pull out their teeth. He even made his tailors stand at the gates of Moscow snapping with their great scissors at the boyars' flowing costumes, and he himself removed the long beards of the leading boyars—beards which many old Russians saved for their coffins, fearing they could not enter heaven without them. Like our Henry VIII, Peter the Great made himself head of the National Church, put an end to the Patriarchate, and tried to reform lazy and ignorant clergy. He improved the administration and trained a host of able Russian officials whose successors carried on the work of ruling Russia down to the end of tsardom. He created a regular army drilled by capable German officers to take the place of the old unreliable militia. He had a passion for ships ; he organized a fleet and set up a naval college. To Peter the Great Russia owed her first hospital, first newspaper, and first museum.

European by his refinement of intellect, Asiatic in his love of brutal sports, savage when in wrath, Peter the Great made Russia, transforming a vast country from medieval to modern, an eastern to a western State. " Although one of the greatest men that have influenced the course of Christian history, he who was himself a barbarian, could not imagine management of men by the nobler motives . . . but he was not working for himself ; at Poltava (his great victory over the Swedes) he told his troops that they were fighting for Russia, not for him." [1]

[1] Acton, *Lectures on Modern History*

Chapter VI

" LIBERALS ABROAD BUT AUTOCRATS AT HOME "

> Gods of the earth ! ye Kings ! who answer not
> To man for your misdeeds, and vainly think
> There's none to judge you : know, like ours, your lot
> Is pain and death : ye stand on judgement's brink.
>
> Lomonosov

Peter the Great died in 1725. His eldest son had already perished—a victim of his father's terrible temper —and his younger sons had died in infancy. Between Peter and his great successor Catherine, two pleasure-loving empresses with their German courtiers dominated the Russian scene and weakened Peter's work. Catherine the Great (1762–1796), the ablest of Peter's successors, was a German princess, married at the age of sixteen to Peter's grandson. She became completely Russian at heart, and in her new home almost died of congestion of the lungs from walking about her bedroom with bare feet trying to learn Russian words by heart. Catherine's husband, Tsar Peter III, was an ignorant, vulgar creature ; a " palace revolt " deposed him and Catherine was made empress.

She decided to erect a monument to Peter the Great. The famous French sculptor who undertook the work imagined a steep rock with a horseman arriving at the summit at a gallop. But how was he to find a one-piece granite rock massive enough to support the enormous weight of the imperial horseman in bronze ? In due course a Finnish peasant found such a rock bogged in the marshes of Finland. There it lay, an inert, gigantic mass



CATHERINE II
(From a contemporary portrait)

of granite weighing a thousand tons. No less than four hundred men were occupied for nearly two years in pulling this " rolling mountain " into motion, pushing it to the sea, loading it on to an " enormous raft," and finally depositing it on the banks of the Neva. At last in August 1782 the Empress unveiled the monument. (See page 38) As she pulled the cord, she humbled herself, the only time (it is said) she made public obeisance.

At Catherine's accession Poland was the largest kingdom in Europe after her own. It had been the only large Slav realm to come seriously under western influence, adopting (unlike Russia) the Latin alphabet and the Roman Faith, and had played an important part

during the Middle Ages. But unhappy Poland suffered three partitions at the hands of Prussia, Russia, and Austria in 1772, in 1793, and again in 1795, when Russia extended her western frontier till it joined Prussia. Poland was thus shamefully removed as an independent State from the map of Europe for more than a century —until 1918—but in spite of all, throughout her history she tenaciously preserved her nationality.

In Catherine's reign Russia invaded the Crimea (a Tartar name and region) and took it from Turkey, thereby advancing the Russian frontier southwards to the Black Sea, on whose shores Catherine founded Sevastopol (destined to win undying fame). There were wars with Turkey, Poland, and Sweden. Not since Ivan the Terrible had such great conquests for Russia been made.

In these and other wars Suvorov, one of Russia's greatest generals and heroes, won fame. To him Nelson wrote : " This day has made me the proudest man in Europe. I am told that in our stature, person and manners we are more alike than any two people ever were." (See illustration on page 48.)

The court of Catherine the Great attracted many visitors from other countries. Catherine had been educated in France, and she herself corresponded in French with the great writers and thinkers whose works prepared the way for the French Revolution. French became the language of her Court and of the upper classes. Russia had never before been in such close touch with western thought and taste. Voltaire wrote of her as " that great man whose name is Catherine."

About this time we see the first beginnings of the Russian intelligentsia, middle-class men of advanced political views who became the cultural link between Tsarist and Soviet Russia. Catherine aspired to be an



Photo : Rischgitz

GENERAL SUVOROV
(*From an engraving*)

" enlightened " monarch like her neighbouring monarchs in Europe—" liberals abroad but autocrats at home." When she began to fear that the reforming ideas now in full swing in France might spread to Russia, she turned her back on the liberal views of her youth and dealt harshly with any who showed themselves too radical. She banished to Siberia a liberal nobleman named Radischev, burning his book in which he had shown sympathy with the peasants' revolts.

Early in her reign she summoned a great Duma to Moscow, in which all classes, except the serfs—the great mass of the people—and the clergy, were represented and allowed to state their grievances. She herself raised the

question of serfdom, expressing the opinion that " if this vast evil were left to grow, it would bring down the whole social structure." But when some of the council spoke in favour of freeing the serfs, the landowning nobles raised a great outcry, begging the empress to check such dangerous ideas. During this eighteenth century, while liberal ideas were spreading among educated Russians, the weight of serfdom pressed ever more heavily upon the suffering soul of Russia.

Peter the Great had placed two great burdens on the peasants : a heavy tax and the internal passport system. The passports could be obtained only by the head of a family. No peasant could move any distance from his home without being constantly checked and signed up, and his wife and children could not travel without him. More and more the peasant was placed at the mercy of the landowner, who also acted as magistrate, tax-collector, policeman, and recruiting officer. So completely did personal liberty disappear that some drunken squires gambled away their serfs over the card table or even exchanged them for greyhounds. The penalty for sheltering a runaway serf was very severe. Any cruelty short of taking life could be inflicted on the serfs. The squires could sell them by auction, force them to join the army, or send them into exile in Siberia. Acts of vengeance were committed in the lonely forest regions : here the murder of a squire, there the burning of a wooden manor house ; but the most formidable threats were the raids of the Cossacks, whose leaders were regarded with mingled fear and admiration. One of their most famous leaders in Catherine's reign was the Don Cossack, Pugachev, who with weapons from the Ural iron foundries set the south-east of Russia ablaze, led a peasants' war against their oppressive rulers, and threatened even

Moscow itself till General Suvorov was called in and Pugachev was executed.

Catherine interested herself in education and public health, including inoculation against smallpox, setting an example herself; and she built a hospital for women and the first Foundling Hospital. In her reign died the first great Russian scientist, Lomonosov, an Archangel peasant who made his way, poor and hungry as he was, to Moscow to enter a school. He became a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, made valuable scientific discoveries, and helped to found in Moscow Russia's first university, from which was to come a new generation of thinkers.

Catherine the Great died about the time that Napoleon was rising to power in France. Soon his shadow fell across Europe from Spain to Russia, and Russia was drawn into the struggle. For a time Catherine's grandson, Alexander I (1801–25), hesitated which side he should take. Then in 1807 he met Napoleon on a raft in the river at Tilsit in East Prussia, and made a secret alliance to divide the world with him. This alliance became unpopular with Russian merchants and nobles, who found Napoleon's blockade of the British Isles very irksome for their trade and comforts. Two years later the Tsar withdrew his consent to Napoleon's plans and prepared for war by joining Britain and the Allies against France.

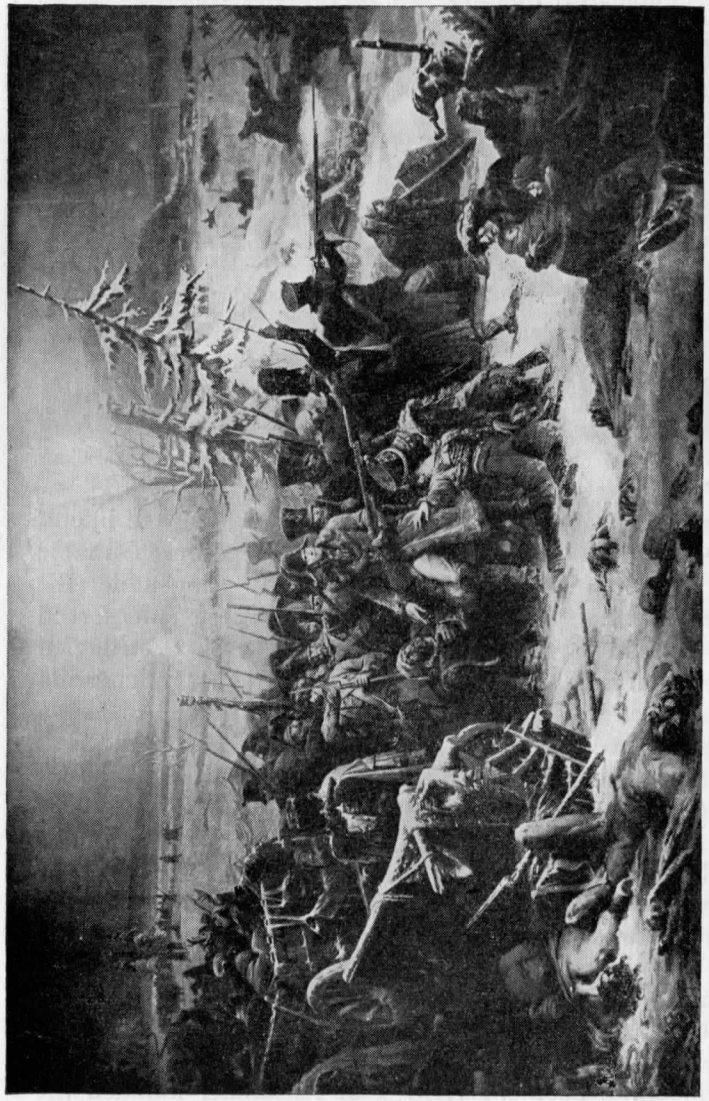
In 1812 Napoleon invaded Russia and advanced towards Moscow. Under their famous general Kutuzov the Russians fought gallantly at Borodino, Smolensk, Mojaisk, and other places whose names have now become so familiar to us, but the superiority of the French army led the Russians to execute a series of masterly retreats and fall back on Moscow. Here they set fire to the city, after having destroyed in their " scorched earth " policy



Monument erected by the Russians, 1839, on the battlefield of Borodino

vast quantities of food and other stores along the line of the French advance. Napoleon finding himself unable to feed or quarter his Grand Army suffering under the terrible blows inflicted by Russian peasants, was forced to retreat. Winter came on. The French struggled west, harassed unrelentingly from all sides by guerrilla bands and Cossack irregulars until they became a hungry frozen rabble. Only a ragged remnant survived to reach home. And now (wrote Sir Walter Scott to a friend in 1813) " let me gratulate you upon the vigour of your fine old friends the Russians. By the Lord, sir ! it is most famous this campaign of theirs." This disaster was Napoleon's downfall. Russia, by a rearguard action, had again checked the career of a ruthless aggressor.

Although the Russian army took no active part in Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo, it joined the Allies in occupying defeated France, where the younger officers were brought into touch, often for the first time, with a democratic people. Their Tsar Alexander founded the



The Retreat from Moscow
(*After a painting by Yvon at Versailles*)

" Holy Alliance of Christian Princes " who were to rule their peoples as members of a " single Christian Nation " ; but to the Austrian Metternich it remained a " sonorous nothing " and to Castlereagh a " piece of sublime mysticism and nonsense." Alexander himself soon ceased to distinguish between (as he said) " the holy principles of liberal institutions " and " destructive teaching which threatens a calamitous attack on the social order."

No tsar was more powerful or more popular than Alexander I. That great man, Count Leo Tolstoy (1828–1910) novelist, social reformer, religious mystic, has told in his immortal picture of Russian society, *War and Peace*, of the army officers' devotion to their adored Tsar during the Napoleonic war, of the " scorched earth " tactics, and of the peasant-soldiers' tenacity and resilience under enormous strain. Some of the young Russian liberals now began to think the peasantry had more to contribute to the world than any other rank of Russian society, and after their return from France they organized secret societies based on the principle that serfdom was unjust and dangerous and would in time bring disaster to the whole nation. Alexander I was fully aware of these underground movements and of the need of reform : but he was not a strong character ; he hated revolutions and hesitated to make any drastic changes. He told his minister to prepare a plan for gradually freeing the serfs, but he directed that it should not include " any measure that might be burdensome for the landowners or likely to need the use of compulsion."

For some time the tsar refused to take action against the secret societies. The most ardent of these, the Southern Society, was led by Colonel Péstel, a brave young officer. They wanted Russia to be a republic,

to give the peasants liberty and the land, and were ready to adopt violent methods—even the tsar's assassination—if such were needed to attain their object. Most of the reformers, however, belonged to the Northern Society, led by a friend of the poet Pushkin, and these were anxious to secure freedom under a monarchy controlled by a parliament more or less as in England. "We formerly asked, every time we met newspaper readers in the club, whether there was a new constitution," records Turgenev in his diary about this time (1820); "now we ask whether there is a new revolution."

Alexander I died suddenly in 1825 and left no son to succeed him. His nearest brother, Grand Duke Constantine, refused office, while his younger brother Nicholas, to become "the Inflexible," was not anxious to do so.

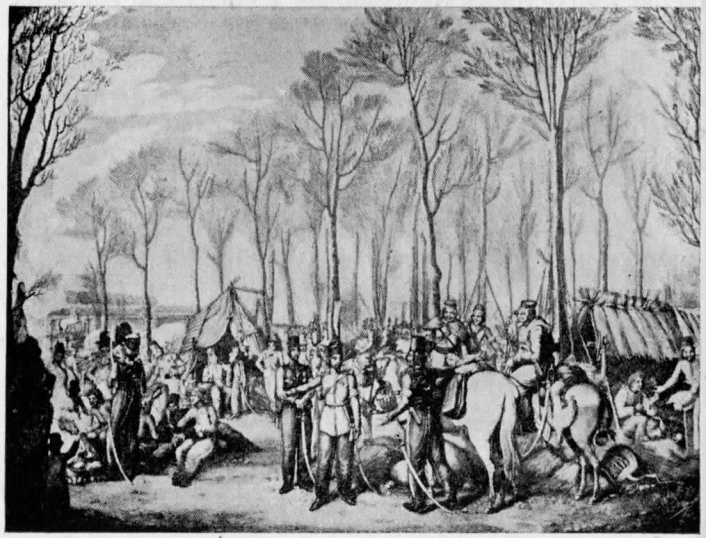


Photo : Henry Guttmann

Cossacks in the Champs-Élysées, Paris, 1814

Chapter VII

"THE INFLEXIBLE," "THE LIBERATOR," AND THE LAST OF THE TSARS

"Poor and abundant,
Down-trodden and almighty,
Art thou, our Mother Russia."

Nekrasov (1873)

The reign of Nicholas I (1825–55), who was very unpopular on account of his harsh and overbearing manner, was "a long rearguard action against the new ideas." During the three weeks which elapsed before he became tsar, some of the young reformers stirred up a rebellion. Winning the support of the Guards, they rose and demanded a Constitution. But even the leaders had no definite idea of the form this was to take, while the ordinary soldiers shouted lustily for "Constitution" under the impression that they were cheering the charming wife of Grand Duke Constantine! This was the December Rising of 1825. But the Decembrists, doomed to failure from lack of sufficient support, paid dearly when Nicholas I assumed power. Many were shot or hanged, and the rest sent into exile in Siberia.

Among those executed was the brilliant Colonel Péstel, leader of the Southern Society, who "argued that Russian autocracy was Mongol, Russian bureaucracy German in origin, and that the true spirit of Slavonic institutions was to be found in the commune, but he stood almost alone as a republican."[1] About this time

[1] Fisher, *The Republican Tradition in Europe* (Note to Chapter XIII)

the work of Robert Owen, cotton manufacturer and English socialist, was popular in certain Russian educated circles, and Péstel in one of his letters refers to Owen's social experiments at his mill.

Some of the Russian thinkers were Slavophils who believed that Russian civilization was potentially higher than the western European, and that the old Russian peasants' commune (or *mir*) revealed the true socialistic soul of Russia which is unlike the individualist western soul. The majority of Russian reformers opposed this view and were Westerners. Among these was Bakunin, a Russian of noble family, an energetic agitator in many countries, preferring " militant anarchy " to the " peaceful agitation " sponsored by Karl Marx. However, for both Slavophil and Westerner, " the whole revolutionary struggle in the century between the beginning of the Decembrist movement and the victory of the Revolution was inspired by the determination to right the wrongs of the oppressed and the exploited."

Like many Russian rulers, Nicholas the Inflexible carried out many reforms in the early years of his reign. He honestly cared for his peasantry, rightly regarding them as the mainstay of the Empire. But although he introduced some improvements he soon fell back into the old ways, ruling as an autocrat with the support of armed force and secret police. His motto was *submit and obey*. He regarded books with suspicion, even school arithmetic text-books and sheets of music which might be used to spread revolutionary ideas through secret codes. He sternly opposed within his Empire the fostering of new ideas, especially those of Karl Marx, which were to have deep influence on Russia's future. Yet his reign saw the beginning of the great age of Russian literature, the age of Pushkin and Turgenev, of Dostoevsky and

Tolstoy, who are numbered among the greatest writers of all ages and countries.

Russia under Nicholas I won victories over Persia and Turkey and gained territory in the Caucasus. A rebellion in Poland in 1830, a year of European revolutions, was crushed at great cost, and Russia helped Austria to put down a rebellion in Hungary in 1848, another year of revolutions in Europe.

A few years later came the Crimean War (1854–56), in which Britain rightly, or wrongly (as many people now think), joined France in support of the Sultan of Turkey whom the tsar called the " sick man of Europe." The vast size of the Russian Empire, and the fear that Russia aimed at the capture of Constantinople and the neighbouring seas, caused Britain and France to suspect Russian aims. There were some, too, who thought that Turkey might in time become a " respectable Power," and improve the terrible condition of her Christian subjects—some may possibly have foreseen the rise of a new Turkey, our faithful friend of to-day. From this time dates the growing importance of the Middle East and the peoples on the route to Asia—Egypt, Asia Minor, Syria, and Mesopotamia, which figure so prominently in recent world wars. Later on, by the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, the Asiatic spheres of interest of Britain and Russia were defined, and when the German menace loomed up in 1914 the two Powers were already closer together.

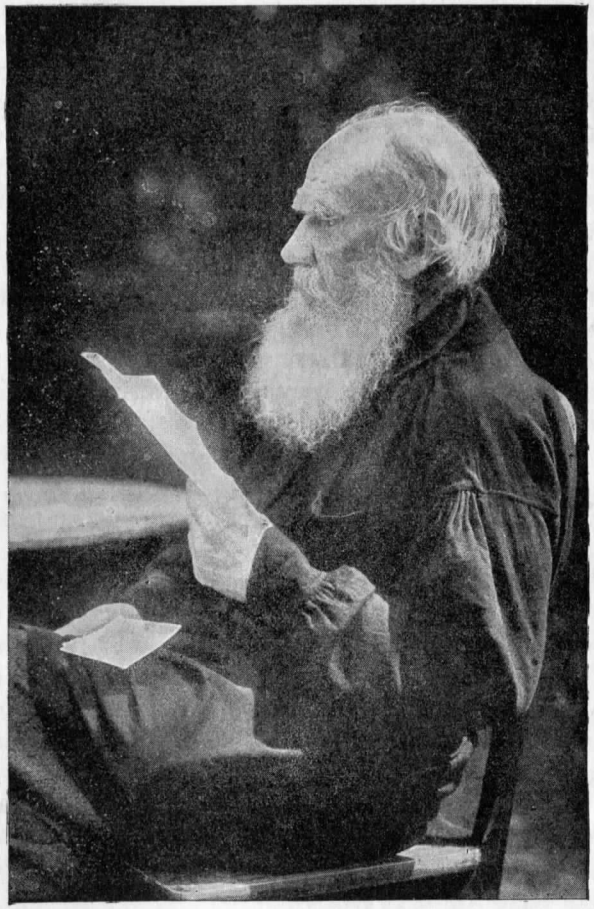
At the time of the Crimean War, Britain saw in Russia the chief pillar and prop of European autocrats. Moreover " the genius of the Russian people in literature and art, in science, music, and dancing, had not yet become part of the common stock of the civilization of Europe. The engaging quality of the Russian peasant

was unsurmised. . . . For many years to come Russia was a disabled giant, crippled by the terrible effects of the long hideous midwinter marches to the relief of Sevastopol, when ox-wagons sank deep in the snowdrifts and hundreds of thousands of honest peasants perished on the way." [1]

That serfdom must be abolished was one of the lessons the Russians learned from the troubles of the Crimean War. Nicholas's son, Alexander II (1855–81), one of the noblest of modern sovereigns, and known as the "Liberator," remarked it was "better to abolish serfdom from above than wait till it abolishes itself from below." Urged by educated men and by liberal-minded nobles like Count Tolstoy, the Liberator worked carefully at his reforms, and in 1861 he published the Acts of Emancipation for freeing the peasants from serfdom. This revolution created a new industrial and capitalist Russia. There was a rush of the freed peasants into the factories, and a great increase therefore in the "proletariate" or town working classes. But it did not make the peasants entirely free nor was their condition greatly improved, though they could now move about freely and had bargaining power. The peasants who bought their freedom paid dearly in dues, and their land allotments were too small. Some day the peasants might claim all the land. In 1904–7 they nearly did, and in 1917 they actually did make this claim.

In 1865 (before England had them) elected County Councils (*Zemstvos*) were organized to replace the squires who had hitherto directed the affairs of the countryside and had made a poor job of it. These Russian County Councils did efficient work in many districts, looking after the village schools and cottage hospitals where they

[1] Fisher, *A History of Europe*



TOLSTOY

existed and repairing roads and bridges. Alexander also organized a system of law courts, with the beginnings, as it then seemed, of a Rule of Law.

The tsar's reforms gave rise to political parties. The young men and women wanted a new world. Some of them formed a society called the Men of the People and lived among the peasants, stirring them up to a social revolution which should give them the land. But the peasants did not understand these strangers, and handed some of them over to the police. Others stayed on to do useful work as doctors and nurses and blacksmiths, but the more ardent stirred up trouble in the slums of the towns. The most radical of the reformers were known as Nihilists, men "expressing extreme principles." At first a few of these extremists were content to work for the spread of education, for bettering the conditions of the poor and raising the status of women. But the violent actions of others caused the radicals to be looked upon as lawless men or anarchists, and their path often ended at the gallows or in the Siberian mines.

"Russia became the supreme example to Europe of the evils of despotism; and her people were trained to use and expect violence." [1] The history of Russia during the last thirty years of the nineteenth century and till the First World War (1914) is largely the history of the struggle between the Tsarist officials and the educated people and reformers—of severe censorship of printed matter, secret police and spies, secret trials, courts martial, tortures on one side; secret societies, secret printing-presses, bank robberies, assassinations on the other side—acts of terror on both sides.

Alexander II completed the conquest of the Caucasus. It had taken half a century of almost unceasing warfare to subjugate its northern tribes. Russia also conquered lands in Central Asia, including Bokhara, with Samar-

[1] Ramsay Muir, *Civilization and Liberty*

kand, its ancient capital, and by the end of the nineteenth century she had won the Pamirs, the "Roof of the World." In 1877, in defence of her Christian Slav brethren in the Balkans, Russia was again at war with Turkey; but the Congress of Berlin, at which Bismarck played "the honest broker," ended in what Disraeli called a "peace with honour" and deprived Russia of the fruits of victory.

In March 1881, while driving through the streets of St. Petersburg, the reforming Tsar Alexander II fell a victim to a Nihilist plot and was fatally wounded by the explosion of a bomb. This assassination ended all reform for a quarter of a century, though there remained always a large section of reformist opinion.

The new tsar, Alexander III (1881–94), turned to the old reactionary methods, and in his time the Russian Socialists became Marxists. His reign is memorable for the religious persecution of all dissenting Churches and Sects; for the hanging of Lenin's brother accused of being implicated in an attempt on the tsar's life; for the first large strike in Russia; for the beginnings of labour circles for the study of Socialism which Lenin helped to organize; for the building of the Trans-Siberian and Trans-Caspian railways; for some progress in industry and in the colonizing of Russian Asia.

The last and weakest of the tsars was Nicholas II (1894–1917)—so weak that those around him must be held mainly responsible for the unhappy events that led inevitably to the great Russian Revolution. It was a time of gross corruption and cruelty, of secret police and spies, of the pogrom and the knout, of famines and diseases, of the brutal repression of Poles, Germans, Finns, and Jews living in Russia. In reply to a deputation on his accession, the last of the tsars dismissed his people's

claims to share in the government and issued a decree defending the land system from the growing democratic power of the county councils.

In 1903 the Russian Social Democrats held a meeting in London at which Lenin organized the Bolshevik (or Majority) party, although it was not yet powerful enough to take the lead in Russia. By 1904 Russia was faced with revolution at home, with strikes, peasants' rebellions, armed insurrections, and mutiny. At the same time Russia was suffering at the hands of Japan, who without declaring war attacked the Russian port of Port Arthur on the Yellow Sea. In July 1904 one of the tsar's ministers was assassinated. On " Bloody Sunday," January 9, 1905, thousands of people demonstrating outside the tsar's Winter Palace were massacred by the troops. In the autumn of that year there were workers' conflicts with police and military in many areas, in the Ukraine, in Georgia under Stalin, in the Donetz Basin under Voroshilov. Country and Town Councils (*Soviets*) pressed for a representative national assembly. At last Nicholas II agreed to the calling of a Duma.

Duma means " a thinking place," whereas our word Parliament means " a talking place." The Duma of 1905 was a nationally elected assembly covering the whole of Russia ; it included representatives of the peasants, and among its members there were priests, Orthodox and Catholic as well as Mohammedan mullahs, but " not generals and army officers, idiots, and ladies." The programme of a 1905 Moscow congress declared for freedom of conscience and of speech, and freedom from arbitrary arrest. Unfortunately in 1907 a reactionary Government dissolved the Duma twice, proclaimed a new electoral law limiting the suffrage so as to restrict further the election of opposition elements, and placed

the burden of administration on one class, and that a dying class—" the country gentry who never bore the same importance or the same solid qualities as the corresponding English class."

Four Dumas were summoned during this " Liberal Russia " of 1903–14. Then came the First World War, just as Russia seemed to be making some halting advance in liberty, education, and welfare. The Duma had become the voice of liberal-minded reformers, and when considering its story " we should remember in our own history, the machinery riots, the Chartist movement, and the disappointment which followed the extravagant hopes raised by our First Reform Act," [1] passed only seventy years earlier.

Russia entered the first totalitarian world war (which began in 1914) against Austria, and then joined Britain and her Allies. These acts were received with popular approval, and for a time the majority of the Russian nation seemed united in the support of the Government. But the Russian soldiers were inadequately armed, and military disasters revived the discontent. Russia was defeated at Tannenberg (August 1914), but the heroic resistance she had made undoubtedly helped to save Paris in those critical days of 1914, and gave *us* time to organize our own great national army. The tsar had lost his people's confidence through the gross mismanagement of the war, due partly to the evil influence exerted over the imperial family by a rascally monk known as Rasputin.

Early in the war the Revolution was on its way. From 1915 there were numerous strikes and demonstrations. In February 1917 a hostile rising took place in Petrograd ; red flags appeared in the Nevsky Prospect, its chief thoroughfare ; soldiers called out to

[1] J. W. Mackail, *Russia's Gift to the World* (1915)

restore order joined the people ; within a few days the rising tide of revolution inundated the whole country. Telegrams from generals at the front announced that their soldiers were deserting. There was a complete breakdown of the machinery of government, and public councils, the Soviets, began to take the lead.

On March 2, 1917, Nicholas II, " the kindest, the weakest, the most humane of the Tsars, the only perfect gentleman in the long list of Russia's rulers," [1] abdicated in favour of his brother, the Grand Duke Michael. The Tsar and his family were made prisoners, and months later, on July 16, 1918, they were all executed in a cellar at Ekaterinburg by order not of the central government but of the local authorities. Thus in grim tragedy ended the rule of the last " Tsar of All the Russias."

A month after the Tsar's abdication Lenin, the creator of the U.S.S.R., arrived in Petrograd, which since 1924 has been known as Leningrad.

[1] Fisher, *A History of Europe*

Chapter VIII

LENIN, CREATOR OF THE NEW RUSSIA

" His unforgettable image . . . is inspiring our people with . . . unshakable determination in the [present] struggle." M. Maisky
(*In a speech on the anniversary of Lenin's birth*, April 22, 1942)

In the upheaval which transformed the Tsarist Russian Empire into the U.S.S.R., one man stands out above all others. He is known to the world as Lenin (1870–1924). He was the creator of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the pioneer of a new world order. Lenin's own name was Vladimir Ilyitch Ulianov. He was born at the little town of Simbirsk on the Volga. His parents belonged to the Russian middle-class intelligentsia, his father being an education official, his mother a doctor's daughter. Lenin was the name he adopted when he was still a student in exile and preparing to enter political life.

Lenin was one of a family of six, three sons and three daughters, and like many other educated young Russians they became eager to see a new order in Russia. While he was still attending the High School his brother Alexander was accused of being implicated in a plot for the tsar's assassination and was sent to the gallows. This brought the whole family under the police ban, and many neighbours regarded them with suspicion. It was only when powerful influence was exercised on his behalf that seventeen-year-old Lenin could sit for his final school examination. It is a tribute to the lad's powers of self-control and concentration that he came well through the test in such trying conditions.

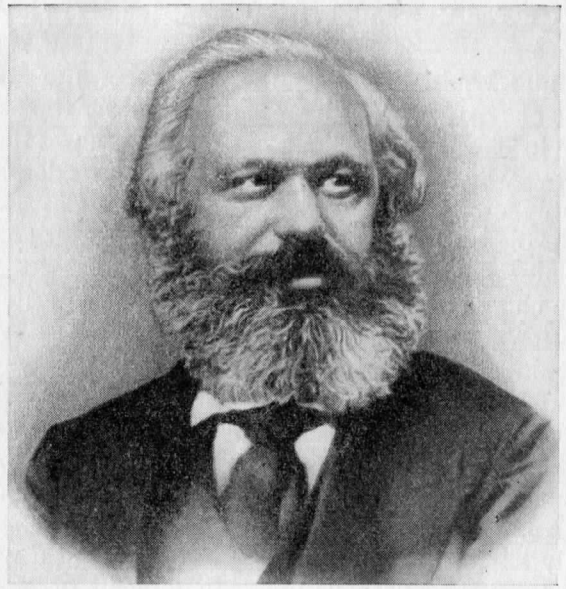
From school Lenin passed to the University of Kazan in Eastern Russia. His university career was very short, lasting barely a month. The students at Kazan, who worked under bad conditions both of housing and feeding, sometimes showed their discontent by noisy disturbances. One of these disturbances took place soon after Lenin's arrival at Kazan, and he was accused of being among the ringleaders. It seems more likely that because his brother's record was remembered young Lenin was thought to be an undesirable character, and he was therefore expelled from the university.

As Lenin's father had died the year before, the lad made his home with his mother's people and continued his law studies. He tried without success to return to Kazan or to find a place in one of the other universities. Nor could he get permission to leave Russia and study elsewhere. However, in 1890, he was allowed to sit for the law examinations at St. Petersburg University, and was successful in obtaining a law degree. Side by side with his law studies, Lenin studied the works of Dr. Karl Marx (1818–83), the son of a German Jewish lawyer, and the father of modern Socialism.

Karl Marx, a doctor of philosophy of Berlin University, was expelled from Germany and came in 1849 to London, where he settled for the rest of his life, studying in the British Museum. When in 1864 the International Working Men's Association was founded in London, Marx became its head. In 1867 he published the first part of *Capital*, a book which has had great influence in shaping modern political thought. "*Capital* will not bring in enough money to pay for the cigars I smoked when I was writing it," remarked Marx to a friend.

Half a century before the Russian Revolution, "there was beginning to appear a new demand for a large social

reconstruction which should secure to the mass of labouring men the material well-being that seemed to be enjoyed only by the few. The theory of Socialism—the theory



KARL MARX

that this equalization could only be achieved if the State took over the control of production and distribution—originated in Britain, the home of the industrial revolution: in many ways the English Socialist writers of the 'twenties and 'thirties of the nineteenth century anticipated all the main lines of later Socialist thought." [1] To generations of liberal-minded and reforming Russians, London was the sanctuary of freedom, offering through

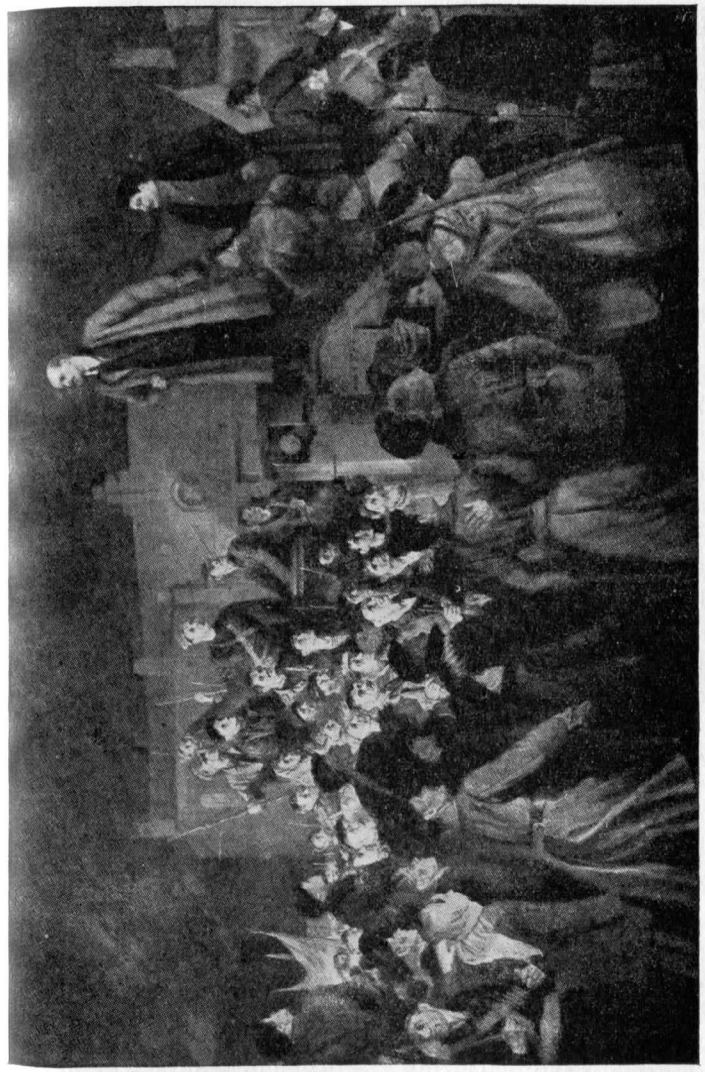
[1] Ramsay Muir, *Civilization and Liberty*.

the centuries the example of cool, level-headed social progress. In 1853 a Russian free press was created in London. In the Reading Room of the British Museum, Marx, and at a later time Lenin and " back-room boys " of the Russian Revolution, spent many hours forging their weapons.

Young Lenin had seen the horrors of the Russian famine of 1891. He felt increasing hatred for the existing system in Russia, and believed that Socialism was the only way by which his people would gain freedom. He probably meant at that time to earn his living as a lawyer and devote his spare time to the cause of Socialism. But a socialist lawyer had little hope of getting work ; he had to choose between the Law and Socialism ; he chose the latter.

Lenin attached himself to the Social Democrats in St. Petersburg. He held study classes for workers at which he read and explained Karl Marx's *Capital*. In this book Marx gives his own account of the methods of producing goods for man's service in capitalist societies. It is a book which " has been blindly worshipped, and blindly hated, by millions who have not read a word of it, or have read without understanding its obscure and tortuous prose." [1] The Social Democrats held their meetings in secret, often under such innocent titles as " a pancake tea," and they were careful to avoid the notice of police spies when coming or leaving. Lenin had been very closely under the eye of the police since he was expelled from Kazan University, but in 1896, after a severe illness, he was allowed to go abroad for his health. He visited Berlin and other European cities, and in Geneva he met other Russians who were living in

[1] A. D. Lindsay in " Hebrew Prophet turned Sociologist " (*The Listener*, July 16, 1942)



Lenin's arrival in Petrograd, 1917
(*From a painting by Vladimir Serov*)

exile. He returned with a trunkful of books on Socialis and a printing press, on which he intended to produc a Socialist newspaper, having smuggled these across th frontier.

Lenin intended to call his newspaper *The Workman Cause*, but the police learned of the scheme while th first issue was being prepared. Lenin was arrested an spent a year in prison awaiting the tsar's sentenc After his imprisonment, he was sent as an exile to Siberi for three years. " It is a pity they let us out so soon, he remarked ; " I would have liked to do a little mor work on my book. It will be difficult to get books i Siberia."

On his return from exile, Lenin decided he could d more for the cause if he lived abroad and kept in touc with other exiles. At first he lived at Munich i Germany, and there managed the publication of a news paper, *The Spark* (*Iskra*)—" from Spark to Flame "— which was smuggled into Russia. The German printe decided that the job was too risky, so Lenin and his wif (who had followed him in his Siberian exile) moved t London, where his paper was for a time published.

When the " young eagle " Trotsky visited London Lenin showed him the sights of the city. At a congres of Russian Social Democrats held in London in 190 after fierce discussion the party split into two groups, a parties have usually done throughout history. Lenin an his supporters became known as " Bolsheviks," o " majority " men, while the " Mensheviks " were th " minority " men. Each group worked according to it own ideas. The minority were ready to admit al sympathizers into its ranks, but Lenin insisted upon th strictest discipline and unity among the members of hi Bolshevik party. During the Russian troubles of 190

Lenin visited both St. Petersburg and Moscow, where he saw and realized the importance of the soviets or local government system organized by the strikers. The fall of tsardom was postponed, but Lenin did not regard the 1905 defeat as final. He believed the fighting spirit would soon flare up again, and in order to take part in a fresh effort he set to work to prepare himself and others by studying the lessons drawn from this attempt.

During the early years of the First World War, and at the time of the March 1917 Revolution and the Tsar's abdication, Lenin was in exile in Switzerland. In due course the German Government, for its own ends, hoping that Lenin's presence in Russia would strengthen the peace party in that country, provided a railway carriage with blinds drawn for him and his friends. Lenin arrived at the Finland station of Petrograd a month after the Tsar's abdication, where he was given a great welcome. The crowd called for a speech, but Lenin, instead of expressing his delight at the fall of the old order, surprised them by abusing the methods of the March Revolution. There must be another revolution, he told them, to give " Power to the Soviets, Lands to the Peasants, Bread to the Starving, and Peace to all men."

Chapter IX

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

"Russia . . . the Orthodox Church . . . the Tsar . . . Lenin . . . Karl Marx . . . the Bolsheviks; what did that revolution mean? It meant, very largely, the stomach."

CHARLES WILLIAMS (in *Russia and the West*)

LENIN'S unexpected attitude towards the March 1917 Revolution and towards the war was a shock even to some of his supporters. Actually Lenin understood better than most the real needs of Russia and her chaotic condition.

Shortly after Lenin's return to Russia, Trotsky arrived from America and joined Lenin, to whom he proved useful as orator and agitator. By this time Lenin had a small but efficient following. His supporters gradually won a majority in the soviets. The idea of a Soviet State gradually took form. Revolution was already on its way by March 1917 when the Tsar abdicated, and soldiers were asking each other "For the people or against the people?" The sailors at Kronstadt, the important naval base near St. Petersburg, mutinied, and whole regiments threw down their arms. The Russian front crumbled in the face of the enemy. At this news St. Petersburg seethed with excitement. The old order began to break up of itself. Sailors and soldiers returned to the capital and joined the workers in demanding "Power for the Soviets" and "End the War."

Blame for this upheaval was put upon the Bolsheviks by supporters of the Provisional Government, who declared Lenin to be a German spy, working to betray Russia to the Germans. Lenin had to remain in hiding

from July till October, the eve of the Bolshevik Revolution, but Stalin and the Petrograd Soviet managed to keep in touch with him. There were thus two revolutions in 1917, in March and in October.[1] In March, there was revolution in Petrograd, where a liberal government was set up, and the Tsar abdicated. Then for several months Russia had neither Tsarist nor Bolshevik rule, but a Provisional Government—a kind of coalition representing all parties except the Bolsheviks—led first by Prince Lvoff, then by Kerensky. But faced by such chaos and such colossal tasks no government could last which attempted to continue the war in view of its gross mismanagement and the terrible loss of life. "Bolshevism was brought to power by the universal longing to end the war."[2]

Some of Lenin's friends urged him to take action at once, but he thought it wise to wait until Kerensky became more unpopular, when public opinion was likely to swing round in Lenin's favour. In August 1917 the commander-in-chief, General Kornilov, marched on Petrograd to suppress its Soviet by force and set up a military dictatorship, but the attempt failed. By October the Bolsheviks had obtained a majority in the Petrograd Soviet. Now Lenin felt the time had come to take action, for Russia was starving and ringed with foes. He and the party executive met in secret council, and it was finally decided that in fifteen days the Bolsheviks would make the attempt to seize power. A few hundred young men were organized to form a secret "Red

[1] 7th November by our calendar. At that time Russia still kept the Old Style or Julian Calendar which had been abandoned in Britain in 1752. The events which followed became known in Russia as the October Revolution.

[2] Sir Bernard Pares, *Teachers' World*, September 1934

Guard." Arrangements were made with munition workers to provide bombs and machine guns. The battleship *Aurora* was brought by its crew up the Neva to the capital.

The date chosen for the decisive Bolshevik Revolution was 25th October. At two o'clock in the morning of that memorable October day in 1917 the Bolsheviks took up their positions in the city. Then began ten days of revolution that shook the world. " Bolsheviks ? " said a foreign general who was on the spot, " I'll tell you what we do with such people. We shoot them." " You do," retorted an American onlooker, " if you catch them. But you will have to do some catching. You will have to catch several millions." The Provisional Government ordered the *Aurora* to leave the river, but the ship stayed on, giving the Bolsheviks the advantage of a broadcasting station. In the afternoon a Congress of Soviets met and applauded Lenin's speech justifying the revolution. " It was the cry from the soul of a man who had waited thirty years for that one moment." One after another the Bolshevik party occupied government offices, including telegraph and telephone exchanges. The Winter Palace, headquarters of the Provisional Government, was the last to be taken. The Kerensky Cabinet was meeting there when the building was surrounded. In the darkness someone opened a back door ; the crowd poured in and all was confusion. By midnight, and almost without bloodshed, the Bolsheviks had complete control of the city.

Lenin now took control of affairs. He had always advocated the formation of soviets of workers, peasants, and soldiers, and by the following evening he was ready to meet the " All-Russian Congress of Soviets " with a new Government, of which he himself was President and

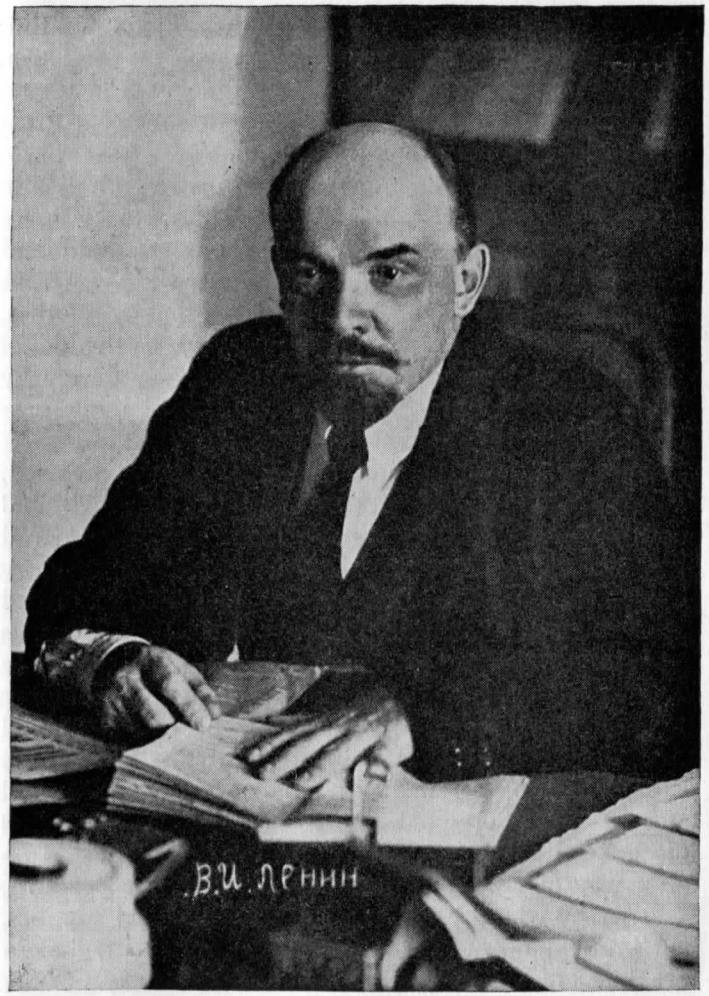


Photo : E.N.A.

LENIN AT HIS DESK

Trotsky the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Lenin had thus guided in a masterly way this great revolt on the Neva. Within twenty-four hours he had become a world figure. For a few brief years his brain was to control a great nation and set up a new social system.

The American writer, John Reed, thus describes Lenin as he faced the Soviet Congress : " A short, stocky figure with a big head set down on his shoulders, bald and bulging. Little eyes, a snubbish nose, wide generous mouth and heavy chin. Dressed in shabby clothes, trousers too long for him. Unimpressive to be the idol of a mob. A strange popular leader—a leader purely by virtue of intellect . . . with power of explaining profound ideas in simple terms."

Kerensky escaped, raised a small army, was defeated, and fled to Paris. Other members of the Provisional Government were thrown into prison. From Petrograd the revolution spread to Moscow and to the country districts. A wholesale break-up of the social system had followed the fall of tsardom. Even before the Bolsheviks came to power, the peasants had begun to divide up the landowners' property, and to burn down the manor houses of the landed estate owners who had oppressed them so long. A decree of Lenin giving the land to the peasants led to a wasteful division of estates which had later on to be corrected by merging the small holdings into collective farms. But at that time there seemed no other way of satisfying the land-hunger of the peasants. It was they who, by withholding food and fuel supplies, had brought down the Provisional Government, and in fact the last word in 1917 was with the peasantry. Before the Bolsheviks came on the scene, in some villages they had already formed soviets, seized the land, and sent delegates to Petrograd.

There was great shortage of food in the towns, and the Bolsheviks were now forced to seize and ration food supplies. But the most serious problem facing Lenin was the war, and he felt that the waste of human lives must be stopped at all costs. There were some five million Russian dead by 1917. " I calculate that the Russian Army was wiped out three times before it broke," says Sir Bernard Pares, who had himself watched " the terrible spectacle " of the battle in which Mackensen broke through the Russian front. In spite of a lack of munitions and of adequate field hospitals, the Russians had played a gallant and active part throughout those earlier years of the First World War, largely through their chivalrous readiness to relieve pressure on their Western Allies.

Russia's part in the struggle came to an end with the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk which the Germans made with Trotsky in March 1918; but the treaty was made void by the collapse of Germany nine months later. A woman Social Revolutionary made an attempt on Lenin's life when he was attending a meeting in the Kremlin at Moscow, and a bullet remained in his neck to the end of his life.

The Bolsheviks soon found that to make peace with Germany meant trouble with the Allies, not because (it was said) the Allies were " concerned with the internal political troubles of Russia as such. What we had to consider as a war problem was how best to prevent Germany from revictualling herself afresh from the corn lands and oil fields which would be laid open to her if she succeeded in penetrating to the Don and the rich provinces of the Caucasus . . . which would mean the prolongation of the war, perhaps by years." [1] More-

[1] David Lloyd George, *War Memoirs*

over the Allies had huge munition dumps in Russia. They now made common cause with the Whites against the Reds or Bolsheviks who were attacked from all sides. Killings, burnings, and pillagings added to the horrors of famine and exhaustion. Britain set up a blockade, while Polish and Roumanian troops massed on the land frontiers and a German army was occupying the Ukraine. White armies were advancing from north and south. Siberia was invaded by Japan.

For a time the Bolsheviks' position seemed hopeless. Then the tide turned, thanks to the success of the Red Army, and to Stalin who defended Petrograd with his workers and peasants—" pallid, scowling, with shadowy starved faces, narrow-shouldered and clumsy, carrying sacks and cartridges tied together with string, rolling in a drab mass along the streets smoking cigarettes."

The defeat of the Germans on the Western Front in 1918 led to the withdrawal of their troops from the Ukraine; but foreign intervention in Soviet Russia's affairs did not cease with Germany's defeat—for Soviet Russia the First World War ended not in 1918 but at Archangel in 1921. The Bolsheviks were now left with two hostile forces to oppose: the remaining White armies and the Poles. By the autumn of 1921 most of the White leaders had been shot or had fled the country, leaving a small detachment under Wrangel in the Crimea. But fighting with the Poles continued, and in two months the Red Army lost 150,000 men. Peace was finally made with Poland at the Treaty of Riga, March 18, 1921.

Eight years (1914–22) of brutal warfare and breakdown of Russian economy had passed, and late in 1922—barely twenty years before Hitler's invasion—it was possible to begin organizing the life and resources of Soviet Russia, at last emerging victorious from the

terrible ordeal. Cruel acts had been committed by White and Red against one another. The horrors of famine, added to those of civil war, had inflicted on the Russian people far more severe suffering than anything experienced by the French during the French Revolution.

During the struggle Lenin had resorted to a system of " war communism," by which the peasants' grain and other supplies became the common property of the State, while private trading and private shops were abolished. Once more the people were ripe for revolution. But Lenin realized that to reconstruct Russia needed " many intelligent compromises between theory and the hard logic of facts." In 1921 he therefore introduced his New Economic Policy (N.E.P.), restoring in part private enterprise and private trading, and making a trade agreement with Great Britain.

In 1922 the O.G.P.U.[1] was organized to defend the Soviet State against saboteurs, spies, and other enemies of the new régime within the country. There have been many ruthless and cruel " purges " throughout Russian history and in human revolutions elsewhere, and the O.G.P.U. regarded as an organ of the revolution was as ruthless as the tsarist secret police had been—both were State institutions which never sound pleasant to English ears. There are no Quislings or Fifth Columnists in Soviet Russia to-day. It should be added that the O.G.P.U. was not merely an organ for suppressing counter-revolution; it also has many beneficent prison reforms and child rescue work to its credit.

At an All-Union Congress of Soviets held in Moscow at the end of 1922 a new Constitution was formulated, and was ratified in July 1923. The soviets were made

[1] These letters stand for a name which translated means " Union State Political Administration."

the basis of the whole system, with factory soviets and rural and small-town soviets at the bottom of the scale, rising through large-town soviets, district and provincial soviets within the Union, to the highest of all, the All-Union Congress of Soviets, which was to meet once a year and to be the supreme law-making body.

Before the new constitution was actually in force, Soviet Russia lost the leader who had guided her destiny through six dangerous and epoch-making years. The strain of fighting and of solving such complex problems under such great difficulties had worn down Lenin's strength. In May 1922 he had a stroke from which he recovered, but against his doctors' advice he returned to work. The following March a second stroke paralysed his right side, depriving him of speech. He now had to retire from public life. In January 1924 he died at the early age of fifty-four.

Thirty years of Lenin's life had been given to the cause of the New Russia, much of that time being spent in prison, exile, or forced absence from his native land. In the six years of incessant activity before illness struck him, he directed and controlled the most far-reaching revolution the world had yet seen, and he was able to leave his successors a land at peace on all its frontiers and already showing signs of great industrial growth.

" At whatever cost the Soviet Republic must make use of all scientific and technical improvements," wrote Lenin, the realist, who in happier circumstances (someone has said) might have passed his life as a scholar. Stalin described Lenin as a " model of a man of science, boldly challenging science gone obsolete and blazing the trail for new science . . . such science as does not segregate itself from the people " ; while Maxim Gorky paid this



Photo : Pictorial Press

Red Square, Moscow, showing Lenin's tomb on right

tribute to his friend Lenin : " I have never met, nor do I know of, any man who hated and despised so deeply all unhappiness, grief, and suffering."

" It is not an over-statement to say that Lenin was

an unknown person in the public life of the world unt
October 1917. From that date his personality penetrat
the most remote corners of the globe. This fact mu
remain as one of the wonders of history. . . . It is not y
possible to say that Russia has in practice realized th
Utopian state of plenty, of liberty, and of happiness, no
is it possible to say that other countries may not reac
a better state in steadier and less harsh ways. It is possibl
to say that this man, quiet, unassuming, unimposing, se
himself a task of immense size when still a boy, and stuc
to it tenaciously to the end of his life." [1]

As we write, Moscow commemorates the nineteenth
anniversary of Lenin's death and pays homage to Lenin
the Patriot—the Lenin who in his own personality proved
that a communist could love his country, its language,
literature, and traditions, no less than any other; the
Lenin who had always a profound sympathy with
Western democracy and a belief that there existed an
underlying unity between democrats for defence against
aggressive reaction.[2]

[1] James Maxton, *Lenin* (1932)
[2] See *The Times*, January 25, 1943

Chapter X

STALIN SUCCEEDS LENIN

"Through the worse to the good.

Why, who compels you to copy wholesale? Surely you take what's foreign not because it's foreign but because you want it. That means, you use your judgment, you choose.

The whole question is, whether you've a good constitution; and ours —don't you bother, it will hold out. We're not so shaky as all that."

TURGENEV, *Potuhin in "Smoke"*

LENIN died in January 1924. Who was now to become leader of the Bolshevik Party? Stalin, Secretary of the Party, was regarded as the most reliable leader, but he was then almost unknown to the general public. "A useful servant," someone once said, "but no master"—which shows how little was known at that time of the "Man of Steel." Trotsky was well known all over Russia and beyond, but even before the Revolution he had been unable to work amicably for long in any party. He was not regarded as a reliable Bolshevist, and time and again his proposals were rejected at party congresses.

While Trotsky was concerning himself with ideas of a world revolution, Stalin was quietly consolidating the Party. He was fully aware that Trotsky's plans had no chance of real support in other countries. Above all he knew Russia had her own chaotic affairs to put in order and no time to waste elsewhere. Moreover, her problems were so great that they could not be solved by a divided party. By 1927, three years after Lenin's death, Stalin had won his duel with Trotsky and was acknowledged as leader of the Party. In the Soviet

merciless "purges" [1] of 1936–37 many of Trotsky's followers were accused and found guilty of hatching plots against the Soviet Government and a number of being traitors in the enemy's pay. Trotsky was expelled from the Party and left Russia, finally settling down in Mexico, where he was assassinated in 1940.

The new leader of the Russian people is, like Lenin, known to the world by an adopted name. "Stalin" (meaning the "man of steel"), and also "the wonderful Georgian," were titles conferred by Lenin himself upon his comrade Josef Djugashvili, on account of his hardness and coolness. Stalin was the son of a village cobbler of Georgia, which with other Caucasian lands had been so oppressed by the tsars that it was said the "only right the Caucasian possessed was the right of being tried." To his mother Stalin owed his education, patience, and ability to face danger without flinching. With the idea of becoming a priest, he was educated at a religious college or seminary in that ancient Christian land of Georgia. But the lad early gave up his studies for the more stirring world of revolutionaries, and joined the Social Democrats who were led by three former seminary students.

When only twenty-three years of age Stalin was arrested at Batum (1902). He was sent to Siberia, but escaped and returned to the Caucasus, where he helped to produce revolutionary journals. Six times he was exiled and once he nearly died of tuberculosis from exposure in Siberia. Stalin was one of the organizers of the 1905 Revolution in St. Petersburg and of the Bolshevik Party in the Duma. He met Lenin for the first time at the 1905 Bolshevik Party conference at

[1] See *Mission to Moscow*, by Joseph E. Davies, U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, 1936–38

Tammersfors (Finland), but before that he had been in touch with Lenin by correspondence and through other party members. In 1907 he met Lenin again at the London Congress. In 1908 he was again arrested, and banished to Vologda in north-eastern Russia. From that time until the Revolution of 1917, his career was a series of daring escapes and re-arrests. At the Revolution he became Secretary of the Bolshevik Party, and after the fall of the Kerensky Government, Stalin became Commissar (Minister) of Nationalities.

It was Stalin's steely determination that led to the defeat of the White Armies. Although, if necessary, Lenin was prepared to abandon St. Petersburg to the Whites advancing from the north, Stalin with Lenin's approval hurriedly scraped together an army and saved the city. Stalingrad, at that time called Tsarytsyn after the tsar—when it was a semi-Asiatic town of small huts and half-rotten hovels, of camel caravans and eternal dust—was a key point during the Civil War as in the Nazi War, and it was because of the brilliant defence of the town organized by Stalin that it was renamed Stalingrad. Now Stalin's town is the Steel City with its "Red October" metal works and tractor plant, and its population has jumped from 20,000 in 1920 to nearly half a million in 1939. It was in this town that Stalin, with consummate energy and genius, and though he had no military training, turned the tide of war in 1917 against the Germans' advance from the Ukraine to join the Whites. Stalin's City, in our days "a place of fearful slaughter and altogether superhuman heroism," has again guarded and saved the majestic Volga.

In 1921, after the country had undergone nearly eight years of world and civil war, armed foreign intervention and blockade, followed by one of the worst

famines in Russian history, the Government was no strong enough either in trained personnel or in neccessary material and means of production to repair the resulting ravages by State action alone. Actually, as regards industry, under the stress of the civil war, nationalization had been carried out far more rapidly than had been at first intended. Lenin himself declared that they had moved more rapidly than their strength and resources then warranted; and in regard to agriculture, during the Civil War and intervention, grain was of necessity requisitioned from the peasantry without the latter receiving a sufficiency of industrial goods in return.

To produce some sort of order in the chaos, and to set both industry and agriculture on its feet, the Soviet Government decided that a step backward must be taken in order the better to prepare for two steps forward.

At the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (March 8–16, 1921), on Lenin's proposal, a series of decisions was adopted which became known as the New Economic Policy (N.E.P.). In accordance with these decisions decrees were issued later, whereby a tax in kind was levied on the peasants in place of requisitioning. All grain raised by the peasants, over and above the tax, they were at liberty to sell on the free market, thus encouraging them to raise as much as possible. The various industries were formed into separate trusts, some of which were let to co-operatives, companies, or private individuals. All of them, however, were to be under the general control of the Supreme Economic Council. Private manufacturers were allowed to open small businesses, while side by side with State and co-operative shops, private home trade was permitted.

Large-scale industry, however, still remained in the

hands of the State, as did also the banks, the means of transport, and the monopoly of foreign trade. State enterprises were henceforth placed on a business footing, and had to keep strict accounts of profit and loss. The land also remained the property of the State, although the peasants were permitted to work on their own account the plots in their possession.

At the same time foreign firms were invited to take up certain industrial concessions and also to form mixed companies, working with partly Soviet and partly non-Soviet capital for trading purposes.

This policy was not liked by many, but as Lenin foresaw, in the circumstances it was essential if the economy of the country was to be set on its feet again, and results were apparent very soon. Only one year later, in March 1922, Lenin was able to declare: "For a year we have been retreating. In the name of the Party we must now call a halt. The purpose pursued by the retreat has been achieved. This period is drawing, or has drawn, to a close. Now our purpose is different . . . to regroup our forces."

Trade between town and country had revived, and the Government could now set about improving the organization of its own industries and trading establishments, and at first gradually, then as time went on more rapidly, to supersede the N.E.P. by socialist organization of the national economy of the country. In the countryside the kulaks (fists—the name given in pre-revolution days to close-fisted peasants, village merchant men, and money-lenders) raised their heads and exploited the poorer peasants for their private gain. The remedy for this was sought by the Soviets in the formation of collective farms (*kolkhoz*), by the combination of the poor and also of middle farmers, whom the State helped by loans of money

and seeds, as well as by making machinery available for the working of their collective farms.

In tsarist times trade unions were illegal. There were certain "company" unions, sponsored by the authorities for their own ends, but the real trade unions of the workers only existed as illegal organizations, carrying on their work mostly underground. After the revolution the trade unions were, of course, made legal organizations, and indeed membership was at first even compulsory, contributions being deducted from wages at the source, the State also contributing to their funds.

Later this practice ceased, and in 1922 membership became purely voluntary, fees being collected from individual members as in this country. The trade unions in the U.S.S.R., as in other countries, are organizations for the protection of the workers' interests, and this was particularly the case during the N.E.P. period. But in view of the different economic system of the Soviet Union they have additional functions, and the Soviet trade unions also take an active part in the drafting of laws—particularly those affecting the workers as such, in the organization and planning of industry, the carrying out of labour protection regulations, etc.

Since 1933, the Soviet trade unions have also administered social insurance, by which all workers are covered and the funds for which are provided exclusively by the various enterprises and the State. In 1934 the importance of the trade unions was further enhanced by transferring to their Central Council all the functions of the Labour Commissariat.

The Soviet trade unions are organized on an industrial basis, and all those employed in any one branch of industry—manual, office, technical staff—belong to the same union, so that in any given enterprise all the

workers irrespective of their function are catered for by the same trade union.

While Trotsky was demanding world revolution, Stalin wisely urged a system which he thought right and necessary for a vast backward country. The peasants had little interest in world revolution; what they most wanted was to keep their own land and cattle. For nearly twenty years after the revolution there was grim struggle between farm and factory, country and town. But Stalin never faltered in his gigantic task of saving and making the New Russia by means of his Five Year Plans (1928) for developing industry, agriculture, and education.

Russia's new Premier took for his motto, "Socialism in one country" and "working relations" with other states. For Stalin knew Soviet Russia needed peace and iron discipline at home to develop the socialist organization of the country. He declared that "revolution is not for export.[1]" He sought friendship with the democracies; secured American recognition of the Soviet régime; joined the League of Nations, and sent Maxim Litvinov, a man of shrewd judgment and foresight, to advocate a united front against all aggressors.

Stalin knew that Hitler in *Mein Kampf* had declared for the conquest of Russia, and that Japan was destined to be Hitler's ally. He had no faith in the British and French policy of appeasement; the lack of goodwill shown by the democratic powers towards Soviet Russia, and the failure to treat her as a Great Power should be treated, did not help matters. History told Stalin the Germans had long coveted the rich natural resources of the Ukraine. It is perhaps because he had thus looked

[1] In 1943 the "*Com*(munist) *Intern*(ational)" was dissolved.

back to the past and into the future that he made what are now seen to have been anti-German moves. When British negotiations with the Soviet Union broke down in 1939, the Soviet Government, after the German invasion of Poland, felt compelled to push the Finnish frontier (then only twenty miles distant) a little farther from Leningrad, and to incorporate (at their own request) the Baltic States within the U.S.S.R. to guard against a German invasion of its flanks through those States.

The Soviet-German Agreement of 1939 was merely opportunist in character, and the Soviet Union was well aware that it might have to face a German invasion—hence the successive steps which it took in 1939 and 1940 in the Baltic States. When on June 22, 1941, a day earlier than Napoleon in 1812, Hitler invaded Russia, our Prime Minister in one of the greatest of his speeches " offered Russia our full and unqualified alliance. And Mr. Eden, without delay, achieved a masterly reparation of the omissions of 1939 by bringing Russians and Poles at last together in preliminary agreement." [1]

[1] Pares, *Russia* (Penguin Special)

Chapter XI

RUSSIA'S INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION—STALIN'S FIVE YEAR PLANS

The country that doesn't play at things—that spreads itself smoothly over half a world, for you to go and count mile-stones till your eyes grow dazed with counting them. . . . Russia, whither art thou moving? No answer does she give. . . . Everything on earth flies past her, and other nations and governments look askance at her, stand aside, and give her passage.

Gogol, *Dead Souls*

Till the October Revolution of 1917 Russia had been mainly an agricultural country. Yet Russia in Europe and Asia possessed vast resources of the mineral wealth essential to modern industry and to transport, both in peace and in warfare—coal enough (say Soviet geologists) in the Altai Mountain area alone to supply the whole world for three centuries; iron ore in the " magnet " mountains of the southern Urals; the greater part of the world's stock of manganese; and vast stores of petroleum; all waiting development. When the great Trans-Siberian Railway (1891–1901) was laid down and railways began to be run at a profit, quantities of valuable timber were wasted by burning the forests on either side of the track. Not until the period of the Dumas (1906–17) was any profitable use made of the vast supplies of timber in northern Russia and Siberia. Where there were large industrial concerns, they were usually organized by foreigners and worked by Russian labour. But a remarkable system of state planning has changed all this in an incredibly short time.

Planning was not a novelty in Russia. Peter the



Photo : Henry Guttmann

Collective farmers attending school in their spare time

Great made a plan for industry and created many officials to run it. " The changes brought about by this Tsar were almost as sweeping as those introduced by the Bolsheviks two hundred years later, and were in some respects similar both in object and method." As soon as the Revolution had run its course, plans were discussed and put into action. Lenin's own special plan was to develop electric power as the speediest way to change the old order to the new. His critics laughed at what they called his " electrification," but how well Lenin's plan was justified is shown by the fact that the consumption of electricity in Russia was twenty times greater in 1940 than in 1913.

The eight years (1914–22) of warfare, chaos, revolution, and famines had been followed by seven years (1922–28) of reconstruction of industry and agriculture.

In 1928 Stalin was ready to launch the first Five Year Plan to utilize all Russia's resources everywhere, and in due course to raise the standard of living—in fact to solve at one sure blow the problems arising out of the chaos of the transition from the old order to the establishment of the new way of life.

The gigantic Soviet planning scheme had begun a few years earlier when all industrial concerns were commanded to prepare estimates of their productive capacity. These estimates were checked and amended by the Economic Council of each Soviet Republic and then submitted to the Supreme Economic Council. A body of about seven hundred experts (*Gosplan*) then welded the plans into a workable scheme for the whole Union and sent the result to the Economic Council, who in turn sent the agreed figures back to each of the industrial concerns as its objective for the coming years. These plans concerned not only producers' and consumers' goods, and the changing of small peasants holdings into large collective farms with up-to-date machinery, but also social services such as schools, hospitals, crèches and rest homes, as well as scientific research in all its branches.

By the autumn of 1928 all was ready for Stalin to open a vast energetic industrial and educative offensive. The great Plan had as its aims : to industrialize Russia ; to socialize agriculture ; to reduce the number of illiterates and reform education. Only so could the Soviet Government equip and maintain the Red Army and the Red Navy for its defence against external enemies, and in due course ensure higher standards of life.

On October 1, 1928, the first Plan was launched. Spokesmen addressed the workers on every possible occasion, and tried to create a new national spirit and a pride in the fact that the wealth of the country was now

a national, their own, possession. At first their words were sometimes listened to with doubt and disfavour. Every worker was asked to subscribe a week's or a month's wages to the State Loan which was to finance the Plan, for the Soviet Union was unable for a long time to obtain a loan from abroad. But in due course, fanned by the cold breath of Fear—fear of attack and of boycott from without—a flame of patriotic zeal blazed up. In the spirit of soldiers springing to arms in defence of their Motherland, the workers answered the challenge, subscribed to the loan, worked overtime without extra pay, and gave short shrift to shirkers. Soon factories were competing with each other in reaching the allotted quota of the Plan.

The party was quick to take advantage of this eagerness. A new slogan, " The Five Year Plan in Four," was displayed on banners across the streets and painted on walls throughout the Soviet Union. Prizes in the form of badges, extra rations, free railway passes, and summer seaside holidays were offered to zealous individuals, " shock troops " as they were called, who became the advance-guard in factory and in farm with their slogan, " In Labour as in Battle." So in a great Union-wide effort the Plan was carried to its conclusion actually ahead of the allotted time. By 1933 there had been a great increase in the production of food, of cotton, of tractors and other machinery. Above all, the Soviet system of planned economy, and the communal use for social welfare and military defence of the riches thus created, banished unemployment, the worst of all the stresses of poverty.

At first the foreign Press was sceptical and amused at the idea of the slow-footed Russian bear thus caught up in a hustle that seemed more suitable for New York.

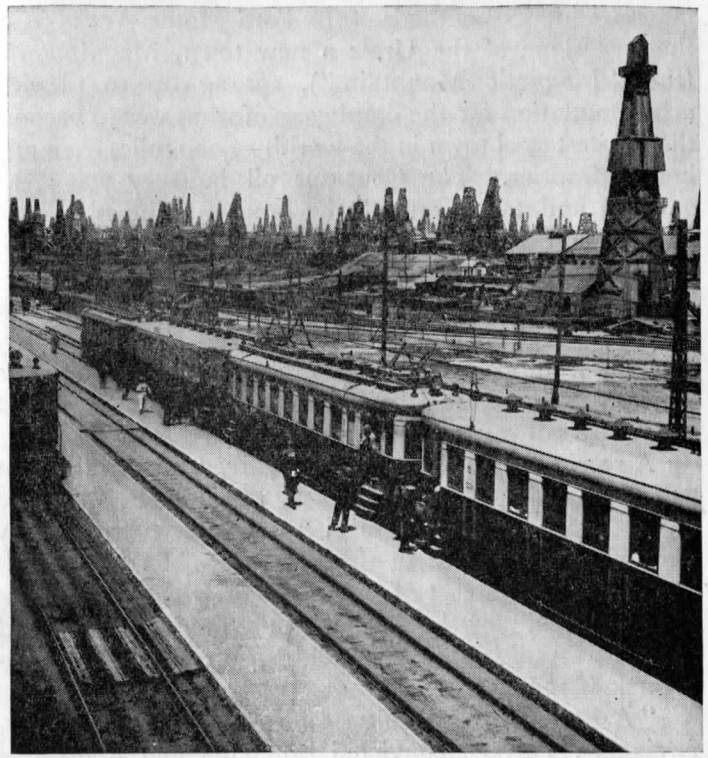


Photo : E.N.A.

Baku, showing electric railway and oilfields

But soon there was news of the miracles of modern engineering and industrial growth in the Soviet Union. A great electrical power station (destroyed in 1941 to save it from Hitler) was built at Dniepropetrovsk, where the mammoth dams of the river Dnieper provided water power for turning the huge turbines. At Stalingrad, on the Volga, American engineers were supervising a new factory turning out thousands of tractors a year on the

mass-production methods of the Ford Motor Works. On the east slope of the Urals a new town, Magnitogorsk (the " Magnetic Mountain "), sprang up to provide accommodation for the employees of what was to become the greatest steel town in the world—2,000 miles from any hostile frontier. The Caucasus oil industry was reorganized and taken out of the hands of the old small owners, and a pipe line, 600 miles long, carried the oil from Baku on the Caspian to Batum on the Black Sea. The slums of Baku were replaced by a garden city with an electric railway for the workers and a water supply brought from new reservoirs ninety miles away, while Moscow itself became the focus of the Russian transport system by railway, water, and air.

A recent writer who worked for five years on the iron and steel front at Magnitogorsk, the industrial fortress of the Urals, tells how semi-literate peasants from every part of Russia fought in that " battle of ferrous metallurgy . . . at the cost of more casualties than the battle of the Marne," for the defence of the Soviet Motherland against a hostile capitalist world. This was the Magnitogorsk of 1933 :

" A quarter of a million souls—communists, kulaks, foreigners, Tartars, convicted saboteurs and a mass of blue-eyed Russian peasants—making the biggest steel combination in Europe in the middle of the barren Ural steppe. Money was spent like water, men froze, hungered and suffered, but the construction work went on with a disregard for individuals and a mass heroism seldom paralleled in history." And two or three years later the position was this : " Every night from six until twelve the street-cars and buses of Magnitogorsk were crowded with adult students hurrying to and from schools with books and notebooks under their arms,

discussing Leibnitz, Hegel, or Lenin, doing problems on their knees, and acting like high-school children doing examination work in New York subway. These students, however, were not adolescents, and it was not examination time. They were just the run of the population of the Soviet Union making up for several centuries of lost time." [1]

" Soviet Russia has made a striking advance, and now ranks as the second industrial nation," wrote the *Westminster Bank Review* (May 1933) : " Most striking . . . is the success with which the Soviet Russian Republics have ' insulated ' themselves from the creeping paralysis of world trade to-day, and . . . the Five Year Plan claims to have nearly doubled Russia's industrial output in that period." Soviet Russia after colossal upheavals and pains seemed to be on the road to prosperity and security.

In the second Five Year Plan (1933–37) the great improvement already achieved on the farm and in the factory and in the production of raw materials was expanded, and education through schools and libraries, theatres, and cinemas, was being made possible for all, for women equally with men. More attention was now paid to quality ; the proportion of faulty goods, sometimes 50 per cent. at the beginning of the Five Year Plans, was gradually reduced until under the stimulus of war " the added quality of Russian production is in many factories equal to the mighty skilled British and American industries. Such is one side of Moscow during the winter of 1942," said Alexander Werth in a broadcast. The buildings erected at this time are in better style and have more dignity. The main streets of Moscow and other towns were asphalted. The number

[1] John Scott, *Behind the Urals : An American Worker in Russia's City of Steel* (Secker and Warburg, 1934)

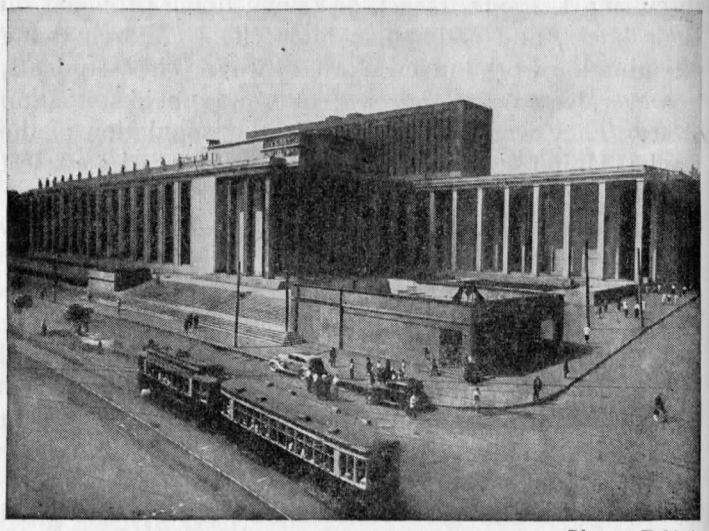


Photo : E.N.A.

Lenin Library, Moscow

of motor cars greatly increased. But the Second Plan had to be revised to provide weapons of war, for Japan by invading Manchuria, threatened the Siberian frontier, while in the west Hitler's Nazis were rising to power. Now industries, mines, factories, and power plants had to be developed in and beyond the Urals—eastern areas safe from land and air attacks. At the World Economic Conference of 1933 Russia was the only country to place a large increase of imports in the forefront of her programme.

The third Five Year Plan [1] began in 1938, and was more far-reaching than the others. Its aim was to strengthen the Soviet Union against enemy attacks, and

[1] For details see Maurice Edelman, *U.S.S.R. beyond the Urals : How Russia Prepared* (Penguin special)

to hasten the eastward movement of industries vital to war. For this purpose the new oil, coal, and electric power industries in the Volga-Ural region, in Siberia, in the Far East, and in Soviet Central Asia were further developed—an imperishable monument, in what was for long almost a wilderness, to the spirit of man. The output of oil and coal was now four times as much as in 1913, while electrical power stations had a capacity eight times as great, and by 1939 further giant strides had been made in all industries. More recently, in order to create a sound industrial tradition, the practice of controlling the factories by workers' committees had been modified by giving more power to highly skilled workmen and to managers — something like the war-time " production committees " in our own factories. Production conferences at which workers criticize the management and make suggestions which the latter are bound to take into account were and are held regularly in soviet factories.

A new device, the " hour-graph," has recently been used to increase output, to reduce costs and fuel consumption, and to reveal " bottle-necks " in the battle of production for the 1,000-mile battle front.

Since the time of the tsars, the industrial development of Asiatic Russia has leapt forward in an amazing way : iron and steel works, locomotive works, railways, power stations, chemical works, agricultural machinery, as well as fields of wheat and other cereals, sugar beet, cotton, rice, and tobacco are numbered amongst the many industries. But the Second World War came before the third Five Year Plan had run its course, and vast numbers of factory workers and machinery were sent by rail and " leap-frogged " to the Ural-Eastern areas. To-day, there is a chain of five new oil districts between the Caspian and the Arctic. Still the resources of Soviet Asia

are not yet fully developed. Her industries are still young.

The Soviet people are now a living proof of Stalin's words : " A new generation of workers is rising in the U.S.S.R., healthy, buoyant in spirit, able to make our Soviet country a tower of strength." There is no doubt that " the Russian worker and peasant are far better off in material things than they were in Tsarist times, and they live in better and cleaner homes, and have more entertainment." [1]

The Nazi War has proved how vital it was for Stalin in his wisdom and foresight to modernize Soviet Russia and to organize a great industrial and war machine in its central regions beyond what became the blitzed war zones—that, too, at a time when Hitler was shouting against Bolsheviks and Jews, and some people in other countries fancied that Hitler, " the Liberator," was saving them from a great danger.

[1] K. Gibbard, *Soviet Russia*, (Royal Institution of International Affairs)



Photo : E.N.A.

Harvest workers on a collective farm in the Ukraine

Chapter XII

RUSSIA'S AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION—COLLECTIVE FARMS

" From an agrarian country the U.S.S.R. has become an industrial country. From a country of small individual agriculture it has become a country of collective, large-scale mechanized agriculture. From an ignorant, illiterate, and uncultured country it has become—or rather it is becoming—a literate and cultured country." STALIN

By far the most difficult task in the first Five Year Plan (1928–32) had been to " socialize " agriculture—to persuade or compel the peasants to join the mechanized " collective " or large-scale farms which they would jointly own and manage. The year 1930 was to be, as

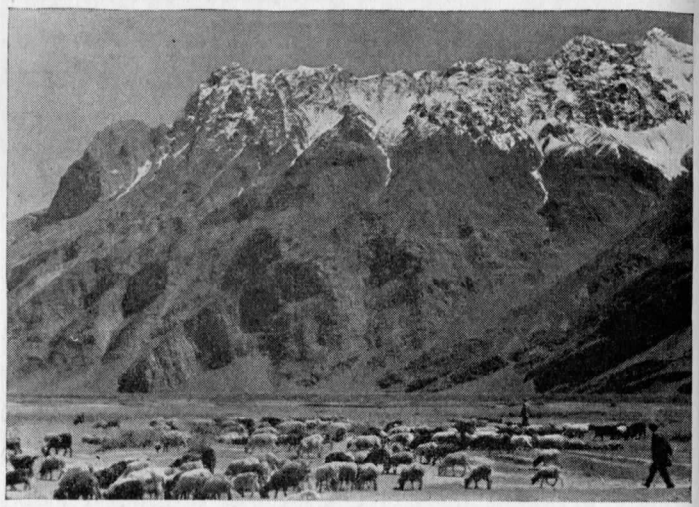


Photo : Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R.

Collective Sheep Farm in the Caucasus

Stalin announced, " the year of the great change," in fact, a second revolution to feed the millions of Soviet peoples.

But a large number of peasants, mindful of their partial emancipation in 1861, and of the land they claimed in 1917, put up a tough fight to keep their farms for themselves. The Russian peasants had never been the resigned serfs European history sometimes paints them. They seldom took their orders lying down. In some districts some of them had for centuries been used to working together through the co-operative society called the *Artel,* which provided loans of money for the purchase of implements, stock, or seed, and helped in selling crops and in many other ways, and Stalin wisely took a form of the Artel as the model for his collective

farm. In the Soviet agricultural Artel only the principal means of production were collectivized.

Even Lenin himself failed to " socialize " agriculture. To win the peasants for the Revolution he allowed them to seize and divide up the land which they had already begun to do in 1917 before he took command. But this " black partition " did not work. The many small holdings—common throughout Europe and England in the Middle Ages—could not be farmed economically. But soon a capitalist class, the kulaks, perhaps a million peasant familics, sprang up. These being more thrifty and enterprising, or more lucky and ruthless than their neighbours, prospered more and were able to increase their holdings and exploit the less fortunate peasants much as the squires had done in tsarist days.

The peasants had four-fifths of the land already in their hands, and now the problem was to " socialize " the land in the same way as the mines and factories. The kulaks, regarded as " enemies of the State," were to be eliminated, and the peasants were to be organized into a collective or large-scale farm in which for a start a minimum of fifteen neighbouring farms might be merged. In 1927, 80 per cent. of the Russian peoples were peasants, with some 24 million holdings, mostly small and scattered in strips, sometimes one holding of no less than 150 strips. Most primitive methods of farming were still employed, and there was sometimes not even a horse to draw the wooden plough. The poverty arising from the old strip-farming, which divided the land into millions of little farms, was such that an English newspaper correspondent once wrote, " Famine in Russia is periodical, like the snows, or rather it is perennial, like the Siberian plague."

Under Stalin's plan there were to be two classes of

large-scale farms, viz. State Farms (*Sovkhoz*) to specialize in some branch of farming, the State providing capital and machinery and the peasants working on much the same lines as artisans in town factories; and secondly, collective farms (*Kolkhoz*) where all the land and equipment was to be managed by the peasants in common. It reminds us of the priest, John Ball, the earliest English "socialist" of more than a thousand years ago: "Good people, things will never be well in England so long as goods be not in common, and so long as there be villeins and gentlemen."

The town-worker, after some doubting, had in the end accepted the Five Year Plan with enthusiasm, but it was not so with the peasants. The tussle between the industrial towns (that eat most of the food) and the country (that produces it) is an old one, not unknown even in our own country and by no means peculiar to Soviet Russia. Party members from Moscow visited the villages to persuade the peasants to accept collective farming. The village street or cottage-room groups listened stolidly to abuse of kulaks and to promises of canteens, clubs, and other pleasures for the collectives. In some cases land and beasts were seized and a State farm set up, but this soon proved unsuccessful. The better type of peasant held aloof. The young and inexperienced and the poorer peasants were at first the only willing converts, and they were sometimes of little practical use.

During the winter of 1929 a fierce propaganda campaign was launched against the kulaks, thousands of whom were torn from their homes and carried off to labour camps in the frozen north or forced to settle in the marsh lands. It nearly came to civil war. The food supply was endangered, for many of those who were

driven by fear and threats to enter a collective farm refused to work, and wrecked the machinery. There was a wide-spread slaughtering of cattle. The number of livestock has only recently surpassed the pre-1913 figure. Bitter criticism of the Plan was rife, especially in the Ukraine.

With his customary vigour Stalin decided to deal with the difficulties in a practical realistic manner. On March 2, 1930, the Soviet Press published an article in all the newspapers entitled, "Dizzy with Success." In this article Stalin said that certain party members were exceeding orders, and that membership of collective farms must be voluntary. He asked the peasants to carry out the spring sowing in the usual way or there would be no corn. This was done, and thanks to good weather there was an abundant harvest. Stalin had halted. But he was not the man to retreat. Collective large-scale farming must go on to make the land more productive, to insure food supplies for the towns, and sufficient agricultural exports to pay for imports of capital equipment from the West.

A second crisis came in 1932, when there was a partial Russian famine during that great world slump in trade and business which brought Hitler and Mussolini to the front, and which some regard as the main economic cause of the universal war of our own days. Two bad harvests, together with a world-wide fall in prices for oil and timber, made it difficult for the Soviet Government to pay their debts to foreign firms for imported machinery. They did meet all their commitments, but they wanted more grain to make up the balance. Peasants who were suspected of keeping grain for their own use were declared to be kulaks and "social enemies," and deserving of death. There were a number of kulaks who did all

they could to sabotage Soviet efforts to organize collective agriculture. Thousands of peasants left the land and made their way to Moscow, while some who stayed behind let the weeds grow over their fields and ruined machinery by neglect.

Stalin was as practical as he was relentless. In order to win the support of the poorer and middle-class peasants, he now laid the main emphasis on encouragement. Rewards were offered to hard-working peasants, State loans were made to collective farms to provide schools, cinemas, and clubs, and the movement to the towns was checked by a passport system (following Peter the Great's example) which deprived new-comers of shopping facilities.

The first Five Year Plan was completed in December 1932. By that time sixty per cent. of the farms in the Soviet Union had been " collectivized." Threats, heavier taxation on individually worked farms, the advantages accruing from collective forms of organization, easy State loans, help of the State-organized tractor machines, etc., had at length overcome the opponents. There had been much suffering and hardship—just as there was hardship in England when enclosures and scientific farming brought the old system to an end. The peasants who prefer freedom pay for it in higher taxes, and where nine out of ten of the villagers are in collective farms, the outsiders have to put up with the poorer land. The present position, however, may not be final.

A collective farm is a co-operative society managing its own affairs through its own elected management. The pay of the members depends on the principle : " To each according to the work performed." Managers and skilled workers may naturally receive more than the less skilled. Its status is defined in the 1936 Stalin Constitution : " The land occupied by collective farms

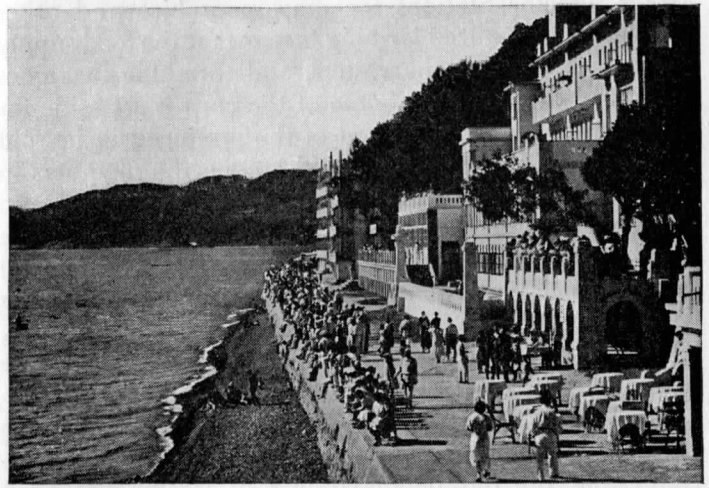


Photo : E.N.A.

Workers at their holiday home on the Black Sea

is secured to them for perpetual use, and each collective farm household has for its own use a plot of land attached to the house, and, as individual property, an auxiliary establishment (*e.g.* stables, barns, styes) on the plot, the produce, animals and poultry." Each farm receives a plan from the State, setting out the acreage of various crops, the measures to be applied, and the harvest yield that will be expected—much as British farmers receive a " cropping plan " from War Agricultural Committees.

The rules adopted by the farms are based on the " Model Collection of Farm Rules," drawn up by the Second All-Union Congress of Collective Farm-Stock-Workers and endorsed by the Soviet Government. At the close of the farming year, the produce is divided. Part (about a fifth) must be sold to the State at fixed prices, lower than in the open market. Part goes to

Motor Tractor Stations for machinery hire and other services : mechanized farming means that the food supply depends on tractors, harvesters, and threshing machines and oil to drive them. Some of the corn is set aside for next year's sowing. The rest of the produce can be sold collectively, or it may be shared among the members in proportion to the member's number of work-days and disposed of as he may see fit. A certain amount of the proceeds must be set aside for use in the farm's social services, such as building bath-houses, clubs, and sports stadiums and providing pensions for aged members, while some prosperous " collectives " have schemes for holiday homes for their members.

The production of grain has been increased by 50 per cent., and supporters of the collective farm system claim that the old perennial fear of famine has been stamped out. A collective farm may sometimes have more than 600 families, including several villages and a variety of farms, and by 1938 nearly nineteen million peasant families had united to farm a quarter of a million collective farms. Village life has been raised to a higher level. There is now generally a school and often a hospital. A collective farm needs artists to paint pictures for its clubs, homes, and schools ; musicians to provide music ; actors to help amateur dramatic clubs ; book-keepers, shop assistants, and managers. The co-operative store offers a better quality and quantity of goods than could be bought in tsarist days. There is a library, providing local and general newspapers and lectures, and for contact with the rest of the Soviet Union and the outside world there is the wireless. The peasant is not as free to buy and sell as he was in tsarist days, but he is better fed, and he has learned to feel that the land of the Soviet Motherland belongs to him, while in his

village soviet or parish council he can ventilate his opinions and make suggestions.

The old order has indeed passed away. The countryside and the life of the peasant have changed beyond recognition. Once the boundary of his village marked his worldly horizon. Now, after centuries of " physical suffering and spiritual yearning," he has seen a new life and fights savagely to defend it. Collective farmers have proved themselves " a ready-made Home Guard " against the Nazi invader. Women, since the war, drive 75 per cent. of Russia's tractors. To increase output, two hundred professors and scientific workers from agricultural institutes have recently been sent all over the land to set up new research stations.

Recently, on November 7, 1942, the U.S.S.R. celebrated its twenty-fifth birthday. During this incredibly short period, a peasant people, formerly illiterate and unskilled in the use of tools and machinery, has created vast new industries, transformed and mechanized a primitive agriculture, and educated itself to an appreciation of the arts on a mass scale. To look back at 1917, when the old order completely collapsed, is to be filled with amazement at the achievement of a single generation.

Chapter XIII

A BRAVE NEW WORLD FOR YOUNG AND OLD

" A new generation of workers is rising in the U.S.S.R., healthy, buoyant in spirit, able to make our Soviet country a tower of strength. It is time to realize that of all the valuable capital the world possesses, the most valuable is the people."

STALIN

In spite of the strenuous efforts of the Zemstvo or County Councils, education in Russia before the Revolution was in a backward state. In European Russia three-fourths of the population could neither read nor write, while in Siberia the illiterates numbered 85 per cent. A main task of the Soviet Government was to create a literate and politically-minded people, capable of sharing in the development of the country as socialists or communists.

One of the greatest achievements of the Five Year Plans was the steady and remarkable headway made in education : starting with the nursery and kindergarten and aiming at schools with a seven-year course (8–15), and eventually at a ten-year course (8–18), and all mostly free of charge. Further, it has been education in the widest sense : not only schools and colleges and research institutes but clubs, theatres, cinemas, hospitals, and better workers' dwellings ; a genuine " equal opportunity for all."

In Russia elementary education became compulsory only after the Revolution—nearly fifty years after Britain, late enough in her history, had passed her first compulsory Education Act. Such features as nurseries, kindergarten, and children's playgrounds, already doing good service in other countries, had been almost unknown

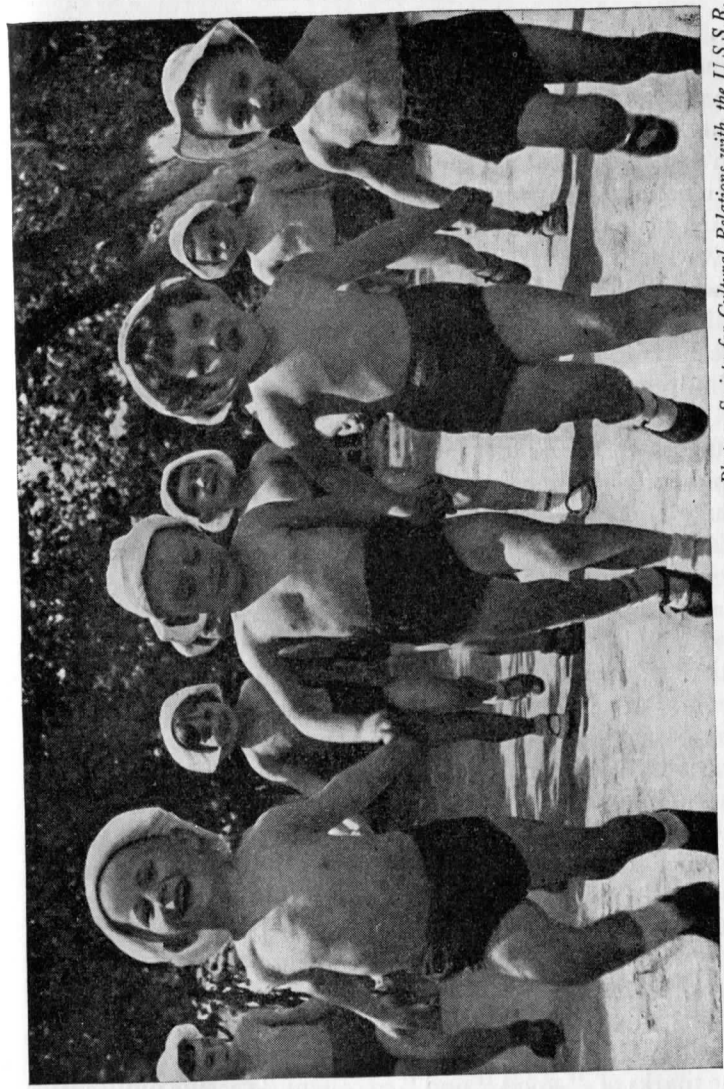


Photo : Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R.

Soviet Children out for a stroll

to the majority of Russians. Teachers had to be trained and thousands of new schools built for the different language groups. In the city of Kharkov, for instance, there were elementary schools for teaching in German, in Greek, and in Tartar, as well as in Ukrainian and in Russian. The great educational task was attacked with such zeal that the number of children attending school over the whole territory now covered by the U.S.S.R. was increased from less than 8 millions in 1913 to over 32 millions in 1941. Since 1933, 20,992 new schools have been built, 16,636 of them in rural districts, while 700,000 children are provided for in Soviet nurseries.

At the age of three or four the children pass from the nursery to the kindergarten and are trained in the first rules of cleanliness and health. At eight they pass to the elementary school. Attendance at the nursery and kindergarten is left to the option of parents, but at the age of eight education becomes compulsory. In the early days, many experiments in teaching were made, but now the methods and courses followed are similar to those in other countries. " Perhaps I had expected a parrot repetition of propaganda," writes Sir Bernard Pares of the Soviet children he saw in school. " What I found was very much more self-expression, more thinking, and more independent ideas of their own than before the Revolution "—a high tribute to any system of education. Science of all kinds is given much prominence, and especially mechanics and the working of the most common machines, about which most Russian boys and girls are very keen. Secondary schools have greatly increased in numbers in the past twenty years, and provide for capable pupils to the age of eighteen when those who pass out as satisfactory may go to a university. Pupils who obtain the marks of " good " and " excellent " receive university

training free of charge with maintenance grants when necessary. Of the 750 higher educational establishments, 659 have been set up by the Soviet Union.

There is also a great variety of *Technicums* or technical schools for pupils between the ages of fifteen and nineteen, who at the end of their four years' course may enter industry as fully qualified workers. Other schools are attached to factories and provide their apprentices with a shorter course. All technical schools are very popular with young Russians, and to-day there are various science and technical instructional films to help them.[1] In 1940 there were nearly a million technical students. Just before the German attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941, a first batch of a quarter of a million young men completed their training in the new industrial, railway, and factory schools, and now girls aged 15 to 18 are included.

The Youth Services are one of the happiest features of Soviet Russia. In 1932 many young communists or *Komsomols* went out from Leningrad, Moscow, Odessa, and other cities of the west to build Komsomolsk, the Russian City of Youth in far-eastern Asia, due north of Vladivostok. When they arrived there was nothing there, but by 1939 there were nearly 70,000 people—a significant emigration from Europe to the Far East, comparable with the sailing westwards of the *Mayflower* in 1620 to America.[2]

The annual Youth Day celebrations in Moscow's Red Square demonstrate to all how to keep fit and become useful citizens. Children's parks or sections of parks, provided with a " Pets' Corner," are to be found in many cities. In the Moscow *Park of Culture and Rest* the workers can watch their children at play while listening to music

[1] See the *Anglo-Soviet Journal*, Vol. IV, No. 1 (Lindsay Drummond)
[2] David Percival, Home Service broadcast, February 1943

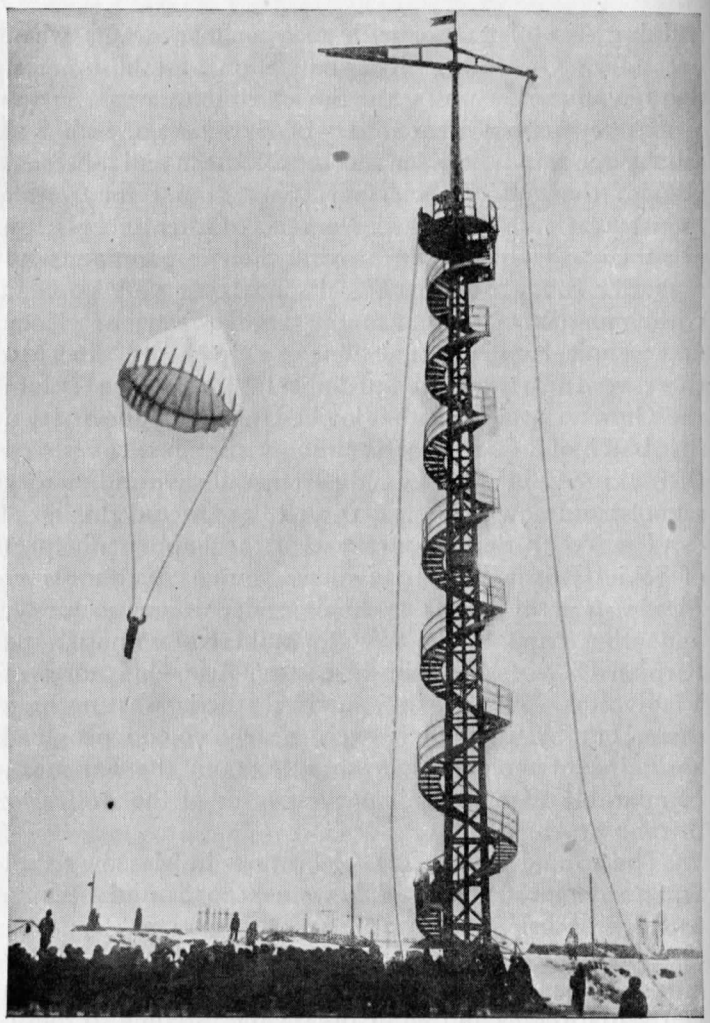


Photo : Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R.

Parachute Tower in the Park of Culture, Moscow

and American " swing." There are also children's camps for use during the summer vacation. Some of the camps are permanent ; others provide tents, camp equipment, and food, enabling young adventurers to explore their native region. In 1929 no less than 1,400,000 children spent their holidays in camps.

In Soviet Russia the health services, free of charge, are largely educative as with us. There is also a network of sanatoria, rest homes, health resorts, and youth hostels. How great was the need for these services can be best judged by those who knew the state of the tsarist villages and towns. " Tuapse," wrote Mr. Stephen Graham in tsarist days, " is beautiful from a distance, but when you get into it, 'tis the most untidy place that ever was called a health resort ; a confusion of little streets and bad shops, dirty coffee houses, fruit barrows and dust. Even the Black Sea, which a mile away is jewel-like and gleaming, is stirred up and refuse strewn." The health services owe much to scientific research, to the State Institutes of Food and Industrial Diseases, to the famous Soviet Academy of Sciences. The scientists of the Soviet Union have been especially successful in preventing malaria in the newly irrigated lands of Central Asia. How airmen may better " see in the dark " is one of the problems recently investigated in a Soviet research institute.

Through its science, literature, art, and music Russia has played a great part in the spiritual life of mankind. Russian ballets have, of course, long been world-famous. " It is a moving experience to sit beside simple Red Army men on short leave watching the fairy-like beauty of Tchaikovsky's ' The Swan Lake ' at the Moscow Ballet Theatre." [1] Russian plays and films of to-day glorify

[1] *The Times* Special Correspondent, Moscow, February 21, 1942



Palina Ulanova, Stalin Prize winner, in the rôle of the Swan, in "The Swan Lake"

the great Russian patriots of old: Alexander Nevsky, Peter the Great, Suvorov, and others. To literature a more serious function is assigned in Soviet Russia than perhaps in any country in the world, and authors count among the Soviet Union's most treasured citizens. The great social and other problems are fought out in books, of which there are no keener readers than the peasants. All phases of Soviet history—the civil war and war

communism, the New Economic Policy, and Five Year Plans—have been "vividly expressed . . . in poetry and fiction," and literature is deliberately used as a means of educating the peoples.

Lenin's works have been published in the Soviet Union in seventy-five languages of the peoples of the U.S.S.R., and the number of copies exceeds 140 million. The number of theatres has grown since the Revolution from 153 to 825. With Russian audiences and Russian readers Shakespeare is a great favourite, above all in war time when they are keen on allusions they can compare with current history. More Shakespeare plays are acted in a season in Moscow than even in London. Literally millions of factory and farm workers watch film versions of Shakespeare and Dickens as well as of Russian classics, listen to Bach and Beethoven, Mozart and Verdi, as well as to famous Russian composers, while foreign, Russian, and Soviet classics are in Russia published in editions of no less than half a million. "And, since only now is Pushkin read by millions in all the languages and dialects of the Soviet Union, in one sense at least it may well be true that Pushkin—in whom the universal Russian mind dwells—as it were awaited the proletarian revolution . . . and in a thousand villages and farms along the line of battle in Russia, his readers fight and die for what is truly Russia's cultural patrimony." [1]

Russia will know my name. Familiar it shall grow
In every living tongue throughout her great domain,
To Slav's proud son, to Finn, to Tungus, savage now,
And Kalmyk, lover of the plain.

So wrote Pushkin, Russia's greatest poet, more than a hundred years ago.

[1] *Times Literary Supplement*, January 2, 1943

The barbaric Nazis destroy every Russian tradition whether Soviet or Tsarist: historic churches at Kiev and Novgorod; the Tchaikovsky, Tolstoy, and Gogol museums; masterpieces of eighteenth-century architecture, such as the tsars' palaces at Peterhof and Tsarskoi Selo (now called Pushkin).

The achievement of the Soviet Government, in thus changing an illiterate into a literate people[1]—and in a single generation—is all the more remarkable when one remembers the pathetic legacy of waifs and orphans inherited from the chaos and famines that followed the fall of tsardom till Lenin and Stalin reorganized the State. Thousands of children, bereft of parents and guardians, wandered homeless over the countryside and in the streets of the cities, till economic planning, employment, and education did away with child vagrancy.

Through all these various means—collective farms, modernized factories, schools, books, theatres, concerts, soviets of all grades, and social services—the U.S.S.R. in peace as in war educates its peoples, young and old, in active citizenship, and to think more of their duties than of their rights[2].

[1] In 1933 the periodicals numbered 12,368 in 110 languages.

[2] The 1944 constitutional changes in the U.S.S.R. gave new rights to the Union republics—each is to have its republican military formations, and also the right to enter into direct relations with foreign states, and to exchange diplomatic and consular representatives with them.

Chapter XIV

"RUSSIA'S MALTA" IN PEACE AND WAR

Shortly before Sevastopol fell to the Nazis after a defence which stirred the whole world, this talk revealing Russia's peoples in peace and war was broadcast by one who remembered the heroic city as he saw it on a summer evening before the outbreak of war.

"There were sunburnt holiday-makers, women in brightly coloured frocks, men in white drills, sailors from the Black Sea Fleet with striped vests, and Tartars wearing long, thin moustaches, embroidered caps and high boots—all of them sauntering along the shore. With them trotted shaven-headed healthy-looking children, and the fathers carried their babies. In the dark cypress trees you could hear the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra playing the third "Leonora" Overture, and at night the Sevastopol gardens were lit with fairy lamps. The vineyards on the hillside were pricked out in the yellow light of their homesteads. The only thing that reminded me of war was the Inkerman cemetery not far away. There the British, French, and Turks who fell in the Crimean War are buried. In the harbour you could see a grey destroyer representing Sevastopol's proud place in Russia's defence.

"War has come to the Crimea, to the gentle holiday coast with its 'velvet seasons,' its native peoples, and its legendary landscape where in poem and story the princesses of Bakhchiserai still weep for lost lovers, and green mermaids appear at low tide. Now Nazi wounded cram the white sanatoria and rest homes of Yalta and

Gurzuf where hundreds of thousands of Soviet workers used to have free holidays and cures every year. Tanks and shellfire have crushed the quiet vineyards and collective farms. But Sevastopol, the Soviet bastion of the Crimea, still holds out against the Nazi siege, mutilates its attackers and sends greeting to Malta, its heroic counterpart in the Mediterranean.

" I can still hear my companion telling me the traditions of old Sevastopol as though he himself had actually been there. ' The forts were in a semicircle outside the town,' he said. ' We were hard pressed ; small chance of getting reserves, but our positions were very strong, thanks to our General Todleben—that's the one who invented pill-boxes. Sometimes they bombarded the town itself. But our women used to come to the front with hot food and ammunition too. They'd even stay for a gossip under fire. And sometimes they'd have to take back their dead. That's the women of Sevastopol.'

" Once again Sevastopol is under fire. Once again its women are in the front line bringing supplies, tending the wounded, and showing the same courage as their great-grandmothers. Like the women of Malta, they live much of their lives in caves in the hillside. And like the Maltese, the Tartars of Sevastopol are sharing in the defence of their homes. The Luftwaffe may reduce them to rubble in an effort to convince them of the superiority of Fascist rule—but it won't make any difference. Like the Maltese and the British, there's an unshakable comradeship between the Tartars and the Russians." [1]

[1] By kind permission of Mr. Maurice Edelman. (Home Service Broadcast, *The Listener*, June 18, 1942). Bakhchiserai was the Crimean capital and residence of the Tartar princes

Chapter XV

A RUSSIAN ANSWER TO A RUSSIAN PROBLEM

" All nations now have equal rights,
Beyond recall the ancient slights,
Your victories, my land, are lights
To all the peoples, Daghestan !
Lezghin and Russian and the Jew
Are one, and single aims pursue ! "
SULEIMAN STALSKY (Daghestan poet, died 1937)

" In the Soviet Constitution all citizens are equal in their rights. It is not the property status, nor the national origin, nor the sex, nor the official standing, but the personal abilities and personal work of each citizen which defines his position in our society." STALIN

" IN considering both the theory and the record of the Russian Revolution, three things must be kept in mind, viz. the unbroken despotic tradition of the country; its place in the then existing civilization ; and the complete absence of any experience in the practice of democratic government. The Russian Revolution was heir to the temper and methods of the Tsarist régime, and it is therefore not surprising that its early practice showed the source from which it came." [1]

Soviet Russia is very young. It is a Russian answer to a Russian problem. To compare Soviet Russia with Tsarist Russia is just ; it is unjust and unhistoric to compare it with Great Britain—there can be no valid comparison between a small sea-girt island and a vast plain sprawling over two continents ; between the homeland of the first industrial revolution and a land of

[1] Lord Snell : *Rival Ideologies in Theory and Practice* (1939)

primitive farming and age-old serfdom ; between a nation disciplined by a slow democratic growth and an innumerable people who have never known freedom of speech, freedom of association, political or civil liberty, and who have for so long endured an autocratic régime imposed upon them by geographical and historical facts beyond their control. We do not judge the French people by the excesses of the French Revolution, nor need we expect a revival of the grim days of the Russian Revolution.

Soviet Russia achieved in a single generation (1917–42) a reconstruction that had elsewhere taken centuries : in a backward and ruined land she carried through an industrial revolution without parallel in the history of mankind, and increased the national income ninefold. At the same time she has built up a commonwealth of her whole people on the basis of socially owned industry.

From great Moscow to the farthest border,
From our Arctic Seas to Samarkand,
Everywhere man proudly walks as master
Of his own immeasurable fatherland.[1]

It is not without significance that outside Russia there are now at least two remarkable examples of this social control of production—the electric grid in this country and the Tennessee Valley Authority in the U.S.A., and we have been recently reminded (by Archbishop Temple) that even we cannot have the advantages of planning and also retain the enjoyment of unfettered freedom.

The Stalin Constitution of 1936 set up a system of

[1] " What ' Land of Hope and Glory ' is to us, the ' Song of the Soviet Fatherland,' from which this first verse is quoted, is to the Russians."—(Foreword by Lord Beaverbrook in *Spirit of the Soviet Union*)



Photo : E.N.A.

Modern administrative buildings, Kharkov

parliamentary and local government based on representatives elected by and from the numerous geographical areas. In former Constitutions, soviets were elected on the basis of occupation, *i.e.* by the workers of the various industries or enterprises, by educational institutions, etc. ; but the 1936 Constitution altered the system of elections to the soviets to a territorial basis, so that elections took place in accordance with the various geographical areas, and made the system somewhat more akin to ours in Britain. The 1936 Constitution also introduced the secret ballot and made the suffrage universal by abolishing all political and economic disabilities hitherto suffered by priests, members of the former nobility, etc. ; henceforth every Soviet citizen, whatever his social origin, could elect and be elected to

every State department. Every citizen is expected to exercise the right to vote, " for one of the principles of communism is that there should be the widest possible interest and participation in public affairs." [1]

The U.S.S.R. is defined as a " socialist State of workers and peasants," in which the sources of wealth—land, forests, mines, factories, railways, waterways, oil-fields, power stations, schools, theatres, cinemas—are " the property of the State, that is, the possession of the whole people." In the U.S.S.R. the present organization of society is not regarded as fully-fledged communism, but rather as the first stage towards it. Communism would signify a society based wholly on the principle " from each according to his ability, to each according to his need." This is a system which the U.S.S.R. may attain when the output of necessities as well as of luxuries has become sufficiently abundant to make such a system possible, but this is at present not the case. Long before the time of Soviet Russia, communism was of course a much discussed theoretic system.[2]

Russian socialism draws its strength from the ideal of social unity and fraternity, in a society devoid of racial or class distinctions, and some see in it the expression of national unity long taught by the Russian Church. " It has been said . . . with great truth that of the three ideals [of the French Revolution], liberty has been fought for and won in England, but equality and fraternity are much more fully attained in Russia " [3]—more true now than before the Revolution. Russian needs, conditions, and history are very different from ours, with our long

[1] Gibberd, *Soviet Russia* (Royal Institution of International Affairs)

[2] For example, see Bede Jarrett, O.P., M.A., *Medieval Socialism*, Ch. III, " The Communists "

[3] J. W. Mackail, *Russia's Gift to the World* (1915)

tradition of disciplined freedom and our strong preference for a balance between private and socialized enterprises. " England has always been the happy hunting-ground of the individualist." Yet in war-time we are all " war-communists," with our lives, possessions, and activities at the command of the State—everything is the country's when the country is in danger.

Alongside the U.S.S.R. socialist system of economy, " the law permits small private economy of individual peasants and handicrafts based on their personal labour and precluding the exploitation of the labour of others . . . and the right of inheritance of personal property of citizens is protected by law . . . In the U.S.S.R. the principle of socialism is realized : ' From each according to his ability, to each according to the work performed ' "; this definition thus allows certain inequalities of income and permits (for example) State officials, works managers, artists, and others to earn more and enjoy privileges " according to the work performed " as do similar persons in other nations.

Men and women are equal in every respect under Soviet law, which in this respect is a great advance on the Napoleonic Code. In war against the Germans they have proved their heroism by doing everything, however strenuous or dangerous, that men do. Russian women are famous for their strong characters and intelligence. One of the Soviet ambassadors is a woman. Another was one of the builders of the famous Moscow Underground Railway. There are many women scientists, engineers, navigators, political leaders, managers, etc. Other women are highly efficient tractor-drivers, and others again most skilful parachute-jumpers and snipers. The late Major Marina Raskova, " charming friend and delightful mother," was a commander in a Red Army



Photo : Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R.

Election Day at a Stalin collective farm

aviation regiment, became a " Heroine of the Soviet Union," and was honoured with a State funeral.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—the new name for the united States of Russia—is not a nation ; it is a *union* of numerous nationalities grouped in many republics, territories, and regions. They are *socialist* republics of workers and peasants. And they are *soviet* republics, the people's representatives meeting for discussion in many soviets or councils from the soviet of the village, town, district, or region to the Supreme Soviet, or as we would say, from the parish council to parliament.

For the elections, the various groups and soviets of citizens nominate candidates, and after discussion, by a gradual process of elimination, the nominations are reduced to the number of seats available, and finally the

citizens vote by secret ballot for or against these selected candidates. There are no party politics at soviet elections. In the U.S.S.R. there is but one Party—a highly disciplined and trained corps of men and women communists who have shown in war astonishing powers of administration and of maintaining morale through intimate touch with the people. The Party is still a comparatively small body among the Soviet millions of citizens ; to win admission to it is a much coveted honour ; by slow stages and by education Stalin endeavours to make it and the people one.

Though Soviet Russia's institutions differ from ours and though its peoples do not enjoy the form of democracy to which we are accustomed, yet with their numerous soviets for discussion, argument, and suggestion they do enjoy what they regard as a type of democracy, and they are certainly on the road to being reasonably fed, housed, and educated, though it may not have been possible within a single generation to raise their material comfort and housing conditions to the high level obtaining in normal times of peace and employment in Britain and some other western democracies.

The Soviet people enjoy various rights and privileges which the British people do not enjoy. For instance, in the political sphere the electors have the right to recall any deputy who has been appointed to an elected body, if in their opinion this representative is not performing his duties satisfactorily. In the economic sphere, the Soviet workers both have the right and are expected to criticise freely the work of the administration of their industries, and through their trade unions they administer labour laws and so on. Again, the whole Soviet system, particularly the policy towards the nationalities, has always been directed towards organizing peaceful friendly re-



Photo : Henry Guttmann

Alexei Stakhanov (right) talking with coal miners

lations between all the various nationalities inhabiting the U.S.S.R., giving equal political, economic, and cultural rights to all these nationalities.

Russia's parliament is the Supreme Soviet of two Houses : the Soviet of Nationalities with 574 members representing the 189 nationalities, each with its special problems ; the Soviet of the Union with 569 members, about one for every 300,000 people and each representing a constituency like, but much larger than, a British constituency. Among deputies elected to the Supreme Soviet are such honoured civilians as Stakhanov, the Donbas miner famed for his feat in record coal-hewing, and Dusya Vinogradova, the leading " Stakhanovite " woman in the textile industry.

As regards religion, the legal right to religious worship

—whether Christian, Jewish, or Moslem—as well as " freedom of anti-religious propaganda " was a principle promulgated in the first declarations of rights in 1918, included in other Soviet Constitutions, and again in the 1936 Constitution. The Russian Church, unlike the Roman Church, had always sided with autocracy, and it suffered persecution during the Revolution when it was feared it might be exploited by the former governing classes in their own interests. But it came alive out of persecution. History has more than once shown that no government of any country can stamp out religion by closing the churches. Recent years have seen a resurgence of the Russian Church which for centuries had been a decisive factor in the history of the people. " For the Russian nature is innately spiritual . . . and Russian philosophy idealistic. That explains why Marxism, which claims to be rooted in materialism, itself with the Russians became a religion." [1] When the Nazi attack began, there were 12,000 worshippers in Moscow Cathedral praying for victory, and a Roman Catholic priest broadcast from Leningrad in favour of support for General de Gaulle.[2]

" The Russians under their warrior-chief, Stalin [said Mr. Churchill] sustained losses which no other country or government has ever borne in so short a period, and lived." The peasantry is the soul of the Red Army as it was of the tsarist army. Stalin's policy has won their fullest support, and universal education has made promotion by merit from the ranks much easier. Marshals Voroshilov, Budenny, Timoshenko, and Zhukov are all

[1] Sir Bernard Pares, *Russia* (Penguin)

[2] See *Truth About Religion in Russia*, recently published by the Moscow Patriarchate—" The most sumptuous publication which has come from the Soviet presses since the outbreak of war ; fifty thousand copies have been printed."—*The Times*, September 15, 1942

men of lowly birth. The war against the brutal Nazi invader has shown the world the Russian man and woman's magnificent quality of "lasting out," and their resolve to defend every street and every house. "Our heroes are baptised in the sweat of the Motherland . . . the soil from which their exploits spring are undying patriotism . . . Our forefathers, Alexander Nevsky, Dimitri Donsky, Suvorov, Kutuzov,[1] were the bearers of the finest qualities of our people" (*Pravda*). With their historic "scorched earth" tactics, and men and women guerrillas and sharp-shooters, the Russian peoples, as in Kutuzov's time, have given examples of patriotism and tenacity equal to the finest in human history.

"The day of trial to Russia has been severe, and her deportment under it will raise her high in the estimation of mankind. . . . Not only her armies, but her peasantry, armed and sent into the field as if by enchantment, have fought with the most invincible courage, though not always with favourable fortune. The chances of war have been sometimes with and sometimes against them, but they have arrested the career of the conqueror of the age, and drawn him on to ruin, even when they have yielded him the victory." [2]

The madness of the brave—
This is the wisdom of life.

[1] For these heroes, see Chapters II, III, VI
[2] John Quincey Adams, U.S.A. President.

Chapter XVI

THE ANGLO-SOVIET TREATY AND THE ROOSEVELT-MOLOTOV AGREEMENT

"Do not grant her selfish peace,
Do not send her blind arrogance ;
The spirit of death, the spirit of doubt,
Let them be extinguished in the spiritual life."

Glinka, Russian Composer (1803–1857)
(*Prayer*—? for all nations)

Universal war has wrought a great and it is to be hoped a lasting change in our own relations with Soviet Russia. The mistrust of earlier years has given place to mutual trust and alliance, and the change was dramatically announced to the world when a Russian bomber brought M. Molotov, the Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, on a visit to London, and then on to Washington, where he had an important conference with President Roosevelt, which ended with the signing of the Roosevelt-Molotov Agreement between the United States and Russia. The Anglo-Soviet Treaty of Alliance—the pivot of European security—was signed in London on May 26, 1942. "Had it been a fact some years ago, many grave blunders in foreign policy would have been avoided," remarked Mr. Lloyd George in the House of Commons ; "not only that : this [present] war could never have occurred."

The Treaty provides for full collaboration between the two countries both during and after the war, militarily, economically, on the basis of the principles set out in the

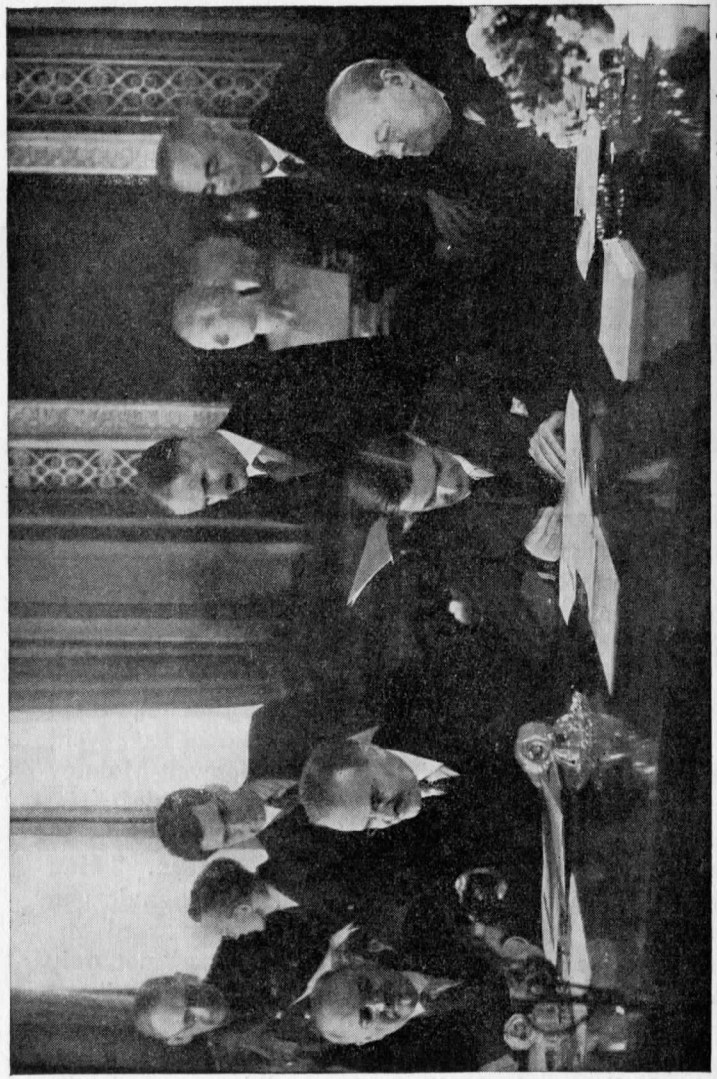


Photo : Photographic News Agency Ltd.

Signing the Anglo-Soviet Treaty

Seated left to right : M. Maisky, M. Molotov, Mr. Anthony Eden, Mr. Churchill

Atlantic Charter ; and it undertakes that during this war they will neither negotiate nor conclude an armistice or treaty of peace except by mutual agreement. The Treaty is to remain in force for twenty years at least. It was warmly welcomed by the Russian and British peoples, and its terms were broadcast to enslaved Europe.

" The international position of the Soviet Union has been considerably strengthened," declared M. Molotov, " and the bonds binding her with other freedom-loving peoples are stronger than ever. Among the freedom-loving nations, Britain and America, who are giving ever greater assistance to the Soviet Union, take the first place." Of the Treaty M. Stalin said : " It marks an historic turning-point in the relations between our country and Great Britain. . . . One should mention so important a fact as the visit to Moscow of the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Mr. Churchill, which established complete mutual understanding between the leaders of the two countries." " And," declared Mr. Anthony Eden in the House of Commons, " this is the time to mention the valuable contribution to Anglo-Russian understanding made by M. Maisky [Soviet Ambassador in London] over a long period of years."

In the three greatest crises of modern history—1812, 1914, 1941—Russia and Britain became Allies. The indomitable saviours of Moscow, Leningrad, and Stalingrad, assisted by the no less indomitable northern and other convoys, shared once again with the storm-racked Royal Navy the glory of defending civilization against a tyrant aggressor.

The Times, in a leading article published on April 23, 1942, wrote : " Russia has been reborn and regenerated through Lenin's leadership. He laid the foundation of an edifice whose solid strength, firmly based on a united

and unshakable national spirit, had withstood the utmost fury of a rampant and hitherto victorious Hitlerism. And, more significant still, behind much in Lenin's teaching and career which was hostile both to the immediate interests and to the fundamental traditions of this country there lay a perception of the nature of the crisis upon which modern industrial civilization was entering. It is of no great practical moment to analyse in what respect Lenin developed and adapted the doctrine of Marx, or Stalin those of Lenin. It was Lenin who first brought home to the consciousness of the western world the truth that a civilization based on the antagonism of capital and labour inevitably carried within it the seeds of its own destruction. He and his fellow workers sought to solve the problem in revolution ; others pursue their social ends by means that will maintain unimpaired the moral and material heritage of the past. In these ends there need be no incompatibility, and it is for the future to develop a way of collaboration that is not only desirable but imperative if the foundations of peace are to be made secure."

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more ;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind. . . .

Ring out old shapes of foul disease ;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold ;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

TENNYSON, *In Memoriam*

SOME LANDMARKS IN RUSSIAN HISTORY

I *Kiev (First Rus) State Under Grand Princes (865–1240)*
Russian Nation begins with union of Slav tribes and Viking merchant-princes
Five Rus Attacks on Constantinople (865–972)
Conversion to Greek Christianity (955–988)
St. Sophia Cathedral, Old Novgorod (1045)
Beginnings of Moscow (about 1147)

II *Tartar Invasion and Conquest (1240–1480)*
Russia " submerged by Asia "
Fall of Kiev (1240), the first Russian capital
The Golden Horde and Tartar Age
St. Alex. Nevski, Prince of Novgorod (1240–62) defeats Germans and Swedes
The End of the " Old Free Russia "
(Union of Lithuania with Poland, 1386)

III *Rise of Russian National State*
IVAN III, the Great (1462–1505)—Grand Prince of Moscow and first Tsar
Golden Horde declines ; growth of Russian Empire

IV *Expansion of Russian State*
IVAN IV, The Terrible (1533–84) ; defeat of Volga Tartars
First General Assembly. Introduction of Printing
Richard Chancellor, English seaman, at Archangel (1553) and Moscow
Beginning of Anglo-Russian friendship
The " Time of Troubles " (1598–1613)

V *Seventeenth Century*
First Peasant's War
Ukraine *v.* Poles : Ukraine (" Borderland ") to Russia (1654)

Conquest of Eastern Siberia
Fifth General Assembly elects Michael Romanov Tsar (1613)
Peter the Great (1682) : " throws Russia into Europe "

VI *Eighteenth Century*

PETER THE GREAT (1682–1725) : visits Germany, Holland, France, England ; founds St. Petersburg (1703) ; his " planning " to remake Russia
CATHERINE THE GREAT (1762–96) : conquers new lands and subjugates new peoples ; peasants' rebellion under Don Cossack Pugachev (1773) ; " partitions " of Poland (1772, 1793, 1795)
(Outbreak of French Revolution, 1789)
" Liberals abroad and autocrats at home "

VII *Nineteenth Century and Afterwards*

ALEXANDER I (1801–25) : Russian Alliance with Britain
Napoleon's invasion (1812) ; retreat from Moscow
NICHOLAS I, The Inflexible (1825–55) : The " Decembrist " Rising (1825) and reformist movement ; conquest of Caucasus ; Crimean War (1853–56)
ALEXANDER II, the Liberator (1855–81) : Abolition of serfdom (1861), and further reformist movement
The *Zemstvo* (county councils) from 1865 : education and other liberal reforms
LENIN (1870–1924)
Assassination of Alexander II (1881)
NICHOLAS II (1891–1917)—THE LAST TSAR : Beginning of Trans-Siberian Railway (1891)
Formation of Social-Democratic Labour Party (1903)
Russo-Japanese War (1904) ; the First Revolution (1905)
The Dumas (parliaments) and liberal reform (1906–17)
First Totalitarian World War (1914)
Abdication of the Tsar, March 1917. Provisional Government of Lvoff and Kerensky

VIII LENIN and the Great Russian REVOLUTION, October 1917
Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany, March 1918 ; Civil War
Economic restoration and formation of U.S.S.R. (1922)
Warfare, chaos, famines, revolution (1914–21)
Reconstruction (1921–28) ; Death of Lenin (January 1924)

IX STALIN succeeds LENIN
" Socializes " industry and agriculture ; the FIVE YEAR PLANS (from 1928)
The *Nazi Invasion* (June 1941)
Anglo-Soviet Treaty of Alliance (June 1942) and LEND-LEASE Agreement with U.S.A.

TWO SHORT RUSSIAN STORIES

1 THE MARSHAL'S WIDOW

A Short Story by Anton Tchehov—translated by Constance Garnett

On the first of February every year, St. Trifon's day, there is an extraordinary commotion on the estate of Madame Zavzyatov, the widow of Trifon Lvovitch, the late marshal of the district. On that day, the nameday of the deceased marshal, the widow Lyubov Petrovna has a requiem service celebrated in his memory, and after the requiem a thanksgiving to the Lord. The whole district assembles for the service. There you will see Hrumov, the present marshal; Marfutkin, the president of the Zemstvo; Potrashkov, the permanent member of the Rural Board; the two justices of the peace of the district; the police captain, Krinolinov; two police superintendents; the district doctor, Dvornyagin, smelling of iodoform; all the landowners, great and small, and so on. There are about fifty people assembled in all.

Precisely at twelve o'clock, the visitors, with long faces, make their way from all the rooms to the big hall. There are carpets on the floor and their steps are noiseless, but the solemnity of the occasion makes them instinctively walk on tip-toe, holding out their hands to balance themselves. In the hall everything is already prepared. Father Yevmeny, a little old man in a high faded cap, puts on his black vestments. Konkordiev, the deacon, already in his vestments, and as red as a crab, is noise-

lessly turning over the leaves of his missal and putting slips of paper in it. At the door leading to the vestibule, Luka, the sacristan, puffing out his cheeks and making round eyes, blows up the censer. The hall is gradually filled with bluish transparent smoke and the smell of incense.

Gelikonsky, the elementary schoolmaster, a young man with big pimples on his frightened face, wearing a new greatcoat like a sack, carries round wax candles on a silver-plated tray. The hostess Lyubov Petrovna stands in the front by a little table with a dish of funeral rice on it, and holds her handkerchief in readiness to her face. There is a profound stillness, broken from time to time by sighs. Everybody has a long, solemn face. . . .

The requiem service begins. The blue smoke curls up from the censer and plays in the slanting sunbeams, the lighted candles faintly splutter. The singing, at first harsh and deafening, soon becomes quiet and musical as the choir gradually adapt themselves to the acoustic conditions of the rooms. . . . The tunes are all mournful and sad. . . . The guests are gradually brought to a melancholy mood and grow pensive. Thoughts of the brevity of human life, of mutability, of worldly vanity stray through their brains. . . . They recall the deceased, Zavzyatov, a thick-set, red-cheeked man who used to drink off a bottle of champagne at one gulp and smash looking-glasses with his forehead. And when they sing "With Thy Saints, O Lord," and the sobs of their hostess are audible, the guests shift uneasily from one foot to the other. The more emotional begin to feel a tickling in their throat and about their eyelids. Marfutkin, the president of the Zemstvo, to stifle the unpleasant feeling, bends down to the police captain's ear and whispers:

"I was at Ivan Fyodoritch's yesterday . . . Pyotr Petrovitch and I took all the tricks, playing no trumps. . . . Yes, indeed . . . Olga Andreyevna was so exasperated that her false tooth fell out of her mouth."

But at last the "Eternal Memory" is sung. Gelikonsky respectfully takes away the candles, and the memorial service is over. Thereupon there follows a momentary commotion; there is a changing of vestments and a thanksgiving service. After the thanksgiving, while Father Yevmeny is disrobing, the visitors rub their hands and cough, while their hostess tells some anecdote of the goodheartedness of the deceased Trifon Lvovitch.

"Pray come to lunch, friends," she says, concluding her story with a sigh.

The visitors, trying not to push or tread on each other's feet, hasten into the dining-room. . . . There the luncheon is awaiting them. The repast is so magnificent that the deacon Konkordiev thinks it his duty every year to fling up his hands as he looks at it, and shaking his head in amazement, say:

"Supernatural! It's not so much like human fare, Father Yevmeny, as offerings to the gods."

The lunch is certainly exceptional. Everything that the flora and fauna of the country can furnish is on the table, but the only thing supernatural about it, perhaps, is that on the table there is everything except . . . alcoholic beverages. Lyubov Petrovna has taken a vow never to have in her house cards or spirituous liquors—the two sources of her husband's ruin. And the only bottles contain oil and vinegar, as though in mockery and chastisement of the guests, who are to a man desperately fond of the bottle and given to tippling.

"Please help yourselves, gentlemen!" the marshal's

widow presses them. "Only you must excuse me, I have no vodka. . . . I have none in the house. . . ."

The guests approach the table and hesitatingly attack the pie. But the progress with eating is slow. In the plying of forks, in the cutting up and munching, there is a certain sloth and apathy. . . . Evidently something is wanting.

"I feel as though I had lost something," one of the justices of the peace whispers to the other. "I feel as I did when my wife ran away with the engineer. . . . I can't eat."

Marfutkin, before beginning to eat, fumbles for a long time in his pocket and looks for his handkerchief.

"Oh, my handkerchief must be in my great-coat," he recalls in a loud voice, "and here I am looking for it," and he goes into the vestibule where the fur coats are hanging up.

He returns from the vestibule with glistening eyes, and at once attacks the pie with relish. "I say, it's horrid munching away with a dry mouth, isn't it?" he whispers to Father Yevmeny. "Go into the vestibule, Father. There's a bottle there in my fur coat. . . . Only, mind you are careful; don't make a clatter with the bottle."

Father Yevmeny recollects that he has some direction to give to Luka, and trips off to the vestibule.

"Father, a couple of words in confidence," says Dvornyagin, overtaking him.

"You should see the fur coat I've bought myself, gentlemen," Hrumov boasts. "It's worth a thousand, and I gave . . . you won't believe it . . . two hundred and fifty! Not a farthing more."

At any other time the guests would have greeted this information with indifference, but now they display sur-

prise and incredulity. In the end they all troop out into the vestibule to look at the fur coat, and go on looking at it till the doctor's man Mikeshla carries five empty bottles out on the sly. When the steamed sturgeon is served Marfutkin remembers that he has left his cigar case in his sledge and goes to the stable. That he may not be lonely on this expedition, he takes with him the deacon, who appropriately feels it necessary to have a look at his horse. . . .

On the evening of the same day, Lyubov Petrovna is sitting in her study, writing a letter to an old friend in Petersburg :

" To-day, as in past years," she writes among other things, " I had a memorial service for my dear husband. All my neighbours came to the service. They are a simple, rough set, but what hearts ! I gave them a splendid lunch, but of course, as in previous years, without a drop of alcoholic liquor. Ever since he died from excessive drinking I have vowed to establish temperance in this district and thereby to expiate his sins. I have begun the campaign for temperance at my own house. Father Yevmeny is delighted with my efforts, and helps me both in word and deed. Oh, *ma chère*, if you knew how fond my bears are of me ! The president of the Zemstvo, Marfutkin, kissed my hand after lunch, held it a long while to his lips, and wagging his head in an absurd way, burst into tears : so much feeling but no words ! Father Yevmeny, that delightful little old man, sat down by me, and looking tearfully at me kept babbling something like a child. I did not understand what he said, but I know how to understand true feelings. The police captain, the handsome man of whom I wrote to you, went down on his knees to me, tried to read me some verses of his own composition (he is a poet), but . . . his

feelings were too much for him, he lurched and fell over . . . that huge giant went into hysterics, you can imagine my delight ! The day did not pass without a hitch, however. Poor Alalykin, the president of the judges' assembly, a stout and apoplectic man, was overcome by illness and lay on the sofa in a state of unconsciousness for two hours. We had to pour water on him. . . . I am thankful to Doctor Dvornyagin : he had brought a bottle of brandy from his dispensary and he moistened the patient's temples, which quickly revived him, and he was able to be moved. . . ."

(By kind permission of Constance Garnett)

2 THE PARCEL

A Short Story by Alexander Isbach

Styopa Penkov was sending off a parcel to the Far East all on his own, right to the frontier, to his pal Mitya Dubov. Mitya had gone him one better, after all. True, he, Styopa, had participated in the manœuvres, in an unofficial capacity, and had even assisted the Reds to victory by his personal valour. Kondratov, the division commander, had said as much to Styopa's father, which was equivalent to a citation. His prestige in school and in the Young Pioneer [1] troop had undoubtedly risen ; even Mitya Dubov, who was always putting on airs because of his papa's stripes, deferred unquestioningly to Styopa's military prowess. But now Mitya had gone with his father to the frontier. There were real enemies out there. And who knows—perhaps Mitya would

[1] Soviet organisation, for boys and girls together, of age equivalent to Boy Scouts or Girl Guides

catch a spy. Such things happened. Styopa had read about cases like that in the *Pioneer Pravda*, and his brother, the lieutenant, had told him so as well. Yes, Mitya was indeed a lucky chap.

If the truth were known, little Styopa Penkov missed his friend keenly. What if they had scrapped most of the time? After all they were pals, and it was lonesome without Mitya.

Styopa kept all his savings in his own little metal savings bank. His capital at the moment amounted to forty-one rubles and some kopeks. A small-calibre rifle cost forty-seven rubles.[1] Styopa had hoped to save the required sum.

But now, with his aide-de-camp of the Iron-Hearted Chapayev Pioneer Troop gone to a military post in the Far East, all his problems of capital accumulation, to say nothing of his budget plans, had to be revised. It was important to bolster up Mitya's fighting spirit and political morale. Styopa remembered how much importance his friend, Captain Sokovin, attached to the political morale of the troops.

Styopa prised open his bank, removed forty rubles, pondered a while, then, setting his chin in grim determination, he took out the last ruble; with the money in his pocket he marched with firm, martial tread to the corner store.

He subjected all his purchases to the most careful scrutiny. There must not be the slightest defect or blemish, for after all the things had to travel thousands of miles.

Before clinching the deal he spent a great deal of time poring over a scrap of paper covered with figures, taking stock of his financial resources.

[1] Pre-war exchange value about £2

He bought thick woollen socks (spies are caught in swamps), packets of hard biscuits and bars of chocolate (the best form of nourishment on campaigns). Then, after some deliberation, he spent his remaining rubles on a small brown leather holster. (Mitya, he knew, had long dreamed of possessing one.) The holster was so tempting, its lovely brown, shiny leather was so smooth to the touch that for a moment, for the tiniest fraction of a second, he coveted it for himself. But he instantly suppressed feelings so unworthy of a fighter. He paid for his purchases, left the shop, and set out with the same martial tread to the post office.

Here he procured a small wooden box, neatly arranged the holster, the chocolate, the biscuits, and the woollen socks inside, nailed it up and tied it.

He longed to slip in a note, something like, "How goes it over there, Mitya, and have you seen any Japanese spies yet? We are relying on you. I miss you. . . ." But although his heart began to beat fast he corded up the box without inserting a note. Fighters of the Iron-Hearted Chapayev Pioneer Troop were strangers to superfluous demonstrations of emotion.

Generously moistening with his lips the big indelible pencil his father usually used to record smelting results, he wrote the address in large lettering: "Far East. Posetsky Distrikt. Post Office Box 2830. Commisar P. F. Dubov, for Dmitry." He took special pains with the number of the post office box. There was an aura of mystery about that number. Military secrets, and all that. Then he drew a thick line beneath which he added the words: "From Stepan Nikitich Penkov."

He had made only two spelling mistakes in the whole address. He spelt Commissar with one "s" and district with a "k." The fighters of the Chapayev Troop were

all " A " scholars and were distinguished for their steel-like character ; to-day, however, Styopa was pardonably excited.

He handed the parcel through the little window and said sternly to the girl who poked her head out to examine the young customer (she seemed a bit too frivolous for his liking) : " Now see you don't let the grass grow on it ! " (He had heard the expression used by his parents in reference to the postal service.)

" This is a very important parcel. . . ."

He was five kopeks short for the postage. He stood there, embarrassed and crestfallen. The " frivolous " girl took one glance at the disconcerted fighter of the Iron-Hearted Chapayev Troop and paid the five kopeks for him. The young warrior left the post office in a lighter frame of mind, and forgetting his firm martial step, he hopped and skipped his merry way along the street, humming a tune more gay than warlike.

(From *Soviet Short Stories*, by kind permission of the publishers, Pilot Press Ltd.)

INDEX

Agricultural revolution, 101–109
Agriculture reconstructed, 87, 88, 92, 93
— Socialization of, 102–103
Air routes, 6
Alexander I, 50, 51, 53, 54
Alexander II, the Liberator, 58–61
— assassinated, 61
Alexander III, 61
Alexis, Tsar, 35, 36
All-Russian Congress of Soviets, 74
All-Union Congress of Soviets, 79, 80
Alliances, 50, 53
Allies at war with Reds, 78
America recognizes Soviet régime, 89
Amsterdam, Peter the Great works at, 40
Anglo-Russian Convention, 57
Anglo-Soviet Treaty, 131, 132 (illus.)
Apatite mines, 5 (illus.)
Appeasement, Russian mistrust of, 89
Archangel, 32, 39, 78
Armenians, 8
Artel, 102, 103
Asia (Russian) colonized, 61
Asia Minor, 57
Asiatic influence on Russia, 20–24, 26, 27, 33
Assembly, The, 17
Astrakhan captured by Ivan IV, 30
Aurora reaches Petrograd, 74
Austria, Russia helps, 57
Azov attacked, 39

Bakhchiserai, 119, 120*n*.
Baku, 6, 95 (illus.) 96
Bakunin, 56
Ballet, 115, 116 (illus.)
Ballot, Secret, 123
Baltic dominated by Swedes, 39
Baltic States incorporated, 90
— — won by Russia, 42
Basil III, 29, 30
Batum, 96
Berlin, Early, 29–30
Bismarck, 61
" Black Partition," 103
Black Sea dominated by Turkey, 39
Bloody Sunday, 62
Bokhara, 60
Bolsheviks, 62, 70, 72, 73, 74, 78
Bolshevism, Reason for, 73
Borodino, 50
— Monument at, 51
Boyars, 14, 26, 27, 33–43
Brest-Litovsk Treaty, 77
British negotiations with U.S.S.R., 90
Budenny, Marshal, 129
Bulgaria invaded by Tartars, 21
Buryats, 7
Byzantine Empire attacked, 15

Calendar, Russian, 73*n*.
Capital, 66, 68
Carpini, 21
Castlereagh, 53
Casualties in First World War, 77
Catherine the Great, 45–50
— — portrait, 46
Caucasus, 57, 60
Central Asia conquered, 60
Chancellor, Richard, 32
Charles II, Help given, 36
Charles XII of Sweden, 42
Children, Soviet, 110–15, 111 (illus.)
Christianity in Russia, 13, 14
Church, The, 44, 129
Churchill, Winston, quoted, 129
— — visits Moscow, 130
City Wardens, 15
Coal, 5, 6, 91
Comintern, 89*n*.
Commissar, Stalin becomes, 85
Collective Farming, 8, 9 (illus.), 78, 87, 88, 92 (illus.), 93, 101–109, 101 (illus.), 102
Commune, The, 55, 56
Communism, first stage, 124
— War, 79

Congress of Berlin, 61
Congress of Soviets meets, 74
Constantine, Grand Duke, 54
Constantinople, Fall of, 28
— Rus attacks on, 13
Corruption of State, 61
Cossacks, 27, 35, 49
— in Paris, 54 (illus.)
County Councils, 58, 110
Crimea taken from Turkey, 47
— White Army in, 78
Crimean War, 57
Cromwell, Tsar refuses to acknowledge, 36
Culture, 7
Cyril, 14

Davies, Joseph E., tribute to the U.S.S.R., 132
December Rising, 55
Democracies and Soviet Russia, 89
Deptford, Peter the Great at (illus.), 41
Dimitri of the Don, 27
Disraeli, 61
Djugashvili Josef, 84. (*See* Stalin)
Dmitri, Mayor of Novgorod, 18
Dnieper River, 13
Dniepropetrovsk, 95
Don Basin industry, 5
Donetz Basin, 62
Donskoi, Dimitri, 27
Dostoevsky, 56
Drama, 115, 116, 117
Duma, 16, 39
Duma of 1905, 62

Economic Council, 93
Eden, Anthony, 90
Education, 50, 58, 93, 97, 110, 112 113, 118
— Compulsory, 110
Edward VI, letter to Tsar, 32
Egypt, 57
Ekaterinburg, 64
Elections, 123, 126 (illus.), 127
Electrification, 92
Elizabeth, Queen, and Ivan IV, 32
Emancipation, Acts of , 58
Empire, Russian, 28
Engineers from Britain, etc., 32, 36, 40
" English Tsar," 32
Enslavement of Russian people, 33
Equality of men and women, 125

Famine, 79, 86, 103, 106, 108
Farm Rules, Model collection of, 107
Farms, Collective. *See* Collective Farms
Finland, War with, 90
Five Year Plans, 89, 93, 94, 97, 98, 106
— — — Agriculture and, 104
Ford Motor Works, 96
Foreign trade, 87
Freedom, Anxiety for, 53–54
French the language of Russian court, 47

Geographical features, 1–4
Georgia, 62, 84
Georgians, 8
Germans train Russian army, 44
Germany collapses, 77
— Defeat of, 78
— invades Russia, 90
— Ukraine coveted by, 89
— U.S.S.R. moves against, 89, 90
Gold, 5
Golden Horde, 22
Gordon, head of Russian army, 39
Gorky, Maxim, quoted, 80–81
Gosplan, 93
Grand Dukes of Moscow, 29
Greek Church, 14, 15, 28

Hanseatic factory, 17
Health, 50, 58
— resorts, 8
— services, 115
Helen, widow of Basil III, 30
Hitler, 89, 90, 98, 99
Holiday Home, 107 (illus.), 108, 115
Holland visited by Peter the Great, 39
Holy Alliance of Christian Princes, 53
Holy Russia, Birth of, 11–13
Hospitals, 93
Hungary invaded by Tartars, 21
— Rebellion in, 1848, 57

Icons, 24, 23 (illus.)
Illiteracy, 110, 118
— reduced, 93, 92 (illus.)
Ilmen, Lake, 11
Industrial Revolution, 91–100
Industry controlled by State, 86–87
— created by Peter the Great, 43
Intelligentsia, Rise of, 47
International Working Men's Association, 66
Iron, 5, 91
Iskra, 70
Islam, Religion of, 14
Ivan the Great, 27, 28, 29
Ivan IV, the Terrible, 30–33

Japan attacks Port Arthur, 62
— Hitler's ally, 89
— invades Manchuria, 97
— — Siberia, 78
Jenghiz Khan, 20
John of the Money Bags, 26

Kalita, Ivan, 26, 27
Kazan, 66
— captured by Ivan IV, 30, 31 (illus.)
Kerensky, 73, 76
Kharkov, 110, 123 (illus.)
Kiev, 3, 13, 17, 35
— capital of Russia, 15
— Nazi destruction at, 118
— Sack of, 17
— Tartars capture, 21
— Views of, 3, 16
Kirghiz, 7
Kolkhoz, 87, 104
Komsomols, 113
Komsomolsk, 113
Kornilov, General, 73
Kremlin, 17, 25
Kronstadt, Mutiny at, 72
Kulako, 87, 103, 104, 105
Kutuzov, General, 50

Land Policy, 103
Languages, 7
Law Courts organized, 59
Law, Earliest, 16
League of Nations, Russia joins, 89
Lefort, 37, 39
Lenin, 61, 62, 65–82
— arrival in Petrograd, 64, 69 (illus.)
— attempt on life, 77
— brother hanged, 61, 65
— Death of, 80
— exiled, 78
— Library, 98 (illus.)
— portrait, 75
— Stalin and, 84, 85
— works published, 117
Leningrad, 11. (*See also under* St. Petersburg
" Liberal Russia," 63
Liberator, The, 58
Literature, 116
Lithuania defeats Tartars, 22
— seizes Smolensk, 29
— unites with Poland, 29
Litvinov, Maxim, 89
Loan, State, 94
Lomonosov, 50
Lvoff, Prince, 73

Mackensen, 77
Magnitogorsk, 96
Maisky, M., 133
Manganese, 6, 91
Marx, Karl, 56, 66, 67 (illus.), 68
Marxism adopted by Socialists, 61
— opposed, 56
Mein Kampf, 89
Mensheviks, 70
Merchant princes, 26
Mesopotamia, 57
Methodius, 14
Metternich, 53
Michael, Grand Duke, 64
Michael Romanov, Tsar, 35
Middle East, growing importance, 57
Mineral resources, 56, 91
Mir, 56
Model Collection of Farm Rules, 107
Mojaisk, 50
Molotov, M., 129
— quoted, 130
Mongolian People's Republic, 24
Moscow, 3, 6, 15, 39, 42
— centre of Russian Church, 26
— Lenin Library, 98 (illus.)

Moscow, Napoleon and, 50, 51
— Park of Culture, 113, 114
— Red Square, 81 (illus.)
— Retreat from, 52 (illus.)
— Revolution in, 76
— Rise of, 24–28
— supersedes Kiev, 3
— transport centre, 96
Moscow Congress, 1905, 62
Moslems, 8, 14, 15, 22
Motor Tractor Stations, 108
Muscovy Company, 32

Napoleon, alliance with Russia, 50
— invades Russia, 50–51
Narva, battle of, 42
Nationalities, Equal rights of, 128
Natural resources, 5, 6, 8, 91
Navy, Peter the Great organizes, 44
N.E.P., 79, 86, 88
— superseded, 87
Nevsky, St. Alexander, 22
New Economic Policy, 79, 86, 87, 88
Nicholas I, the Inflexible, 54–58
Nicholas II, 61–64
— executed, 64
Nihilists, 60, 61
Norse invasion, 11, 12 (map)
Northern Society, 54
Novgorod, 13, 17, 18, 22, 24
— Destruction by Nazis at, 118
— Swedes in, 35

October Revolution. *See under* Revolution of 1917
O.G.P.U., 79
Oil industry, 6, 91, 96, 99
Olga, 13, 14
Orthodox Church, 14, 15, 28
Owen, Robert, influence in Russia, 56

Paganism, 13
Pamirs acquired by Russia, 60
Parachute Tower 114 (illus.)
Park of Culture and Rest 113, 114 (illus.)
Passport system, 49
Patriarchate ended, 44
"Peace with Honour," 61
Peasants, 8, 10, 102, 103, 105, 106, 108, 109, 129
— annex lands, 76
— Burdens on, 49
— freed, 58
— Revolution of, 60, 62
— Serfdom of, 36, 43, 49, 53
— under Tartars, 24
Peasants' War, 49
Peoples, 6–7
Persia, War with, 42, 57
Péstel, Colonel, 53, 55, 56
Peter III, 45
Peter the Great, 37–44, 45
— — industrial policy, 91, 92
— — shipbuilding interests, 39, 40
— — statue, 38 (illus.), 45
— — visits England, 40, 41
— — westernizing policy, 37, 39, 40, 44
Peterhof, 118
Petrograd, Revolution in, 74–76 (*See also under* St. Petersburg)
Petroleum, 6, 91, 96, 99
Plans, Five Year, 89, 93, 94
Poland, 46, 47
— Rebellion of 1830, 57
— War with, 35, 78, 90
Polar region development, 6
Poltava, Battle of, 42, 44
Port Arthur, 62
Pravda, 16
Princes of Moscow, Financier, 26, 28
Private trade permitted, 86
Progress since 1917, 10
Provisional Government set up, 73, 76
Prussians originally Balto-Slav race, 29
Pugachev, Don Cossack, 49, 50
Purges, 79, 84
Pushkin, 56, 117
Pushkin (town), 118

Radischev, 48
Railways, 61, 91
Raskova, Major Marina, 125
Rasputin, 63
Rebellion, 1825, 55
Red Army, 18, 79
Reds, War against, 78

Red Guard formed, 73–74
Red Square, Moscow, 81 (illus.)
Reforms of Alexander II, 60, 61
Religion, 13–14, 128–29
Religous painting, 24, 26
— persecution, 61
Republicanism, 55
Revolution, the First (1905), 62
— the Great (1917), 61, 63-4, 71-4
— Lenin and, 72
— not for export, 89
Riga, Treaty of, 78
Romanov, House of, 35
Roosevelt - Molotov Agreement signed, 131
Rowers, 11
Rublev, Andrey, 26
Rule of Law, 59
Rurik, 11, 17, 31
Rus, 11
Russian Church, 14, 15
— — Moscow the centre of, 26
— — persecuted, 129
Russian Empire, 28
— — extended under Nicholas I, 57

St. Basil, Cathedral of, 30, 34 (illus.)
St. Isaac's cathedral, 43 (illus.)
St. Nicholas monastery, 32
St. Petersburg, Building of, 42
— founded, 2
— Rising in, 63
St. Sophia cathedral (Constantinople), 14
— cathedral (Novgorod), 17
Samarkand, 8, 60
Sarai, 22
Science, Soviet attitude to, 80
— Teaching of, 112
Sciences, Soviet Academy of, 115
Scientific research, 93
Secret societies, 53
Serfdom of Russian people, 36, 43, 49, 58
Serfs, Plans to free, 53
— Register of, 36
Serge, St., 27
Sevastopol, 47, 58, 119–20
Siberia, Industry in, 6
— invaded by Japan, 78
— part of Russia, 30, 42
Simbirsk, 65
Slavophils, 56, 57
Slavs, 11, 14
Small holdings, 103
Smolensk, 29, 35, 50
— seized by Lithuanians, 29
— restored to Russia, 35
Social Democrats, 62, 68, 70
— Stalin joins, 84
Socialism, 61
— Russian, 124
Social services, 93, 108, 115
Southern Society, 53, 55
Sophia, 37
Sovereign people, 17
Soviet Academy of Sciences, 115
Soviet Russia, 78
— achievements, 122
Soviet State, First idea of, 72
Soviet system formulated, 79, 80
Soviet-German Agreement, 90
Soviets, 62, 64
Sovkhoz, 104
Spark, The, 70
Spheres of interest defined, 57
Stakhanov, Alexei, 128 (portrait)
Stalin, 73
— and 1905 Revolution, 84
— Commissar, 85
— defends Petrograd, 78
— Leader of Bolshevist Party, 83, 84
— leads workers' conflict, 62
— Lenin and, 84, 85
— portrait (*frontispiece*)
Stalin Constitution, 1936, 106, 122
Stalingrad, 85, 95
State Council, 16
State Farms, 104
Steel manufacture, 96
Streltsy, 40
Strikes, 61, 62, 63
Strip-farming, 103
Suffrage, Limited, 62
Suffrage, Universal, 123
Supreme Economic Council, 86
Supreme Soviet, 128
Suvorov, General, 47, 48 (portrait) 50
Sweden, War with, 42
Swedes in Novgorod, 35
Syria, 57

Tajik, 8
Tannenberg, Defeat at, 63
Tartar invasions, 2, 18, 19 (illus.), 20, 21, 22, 24–27
Tartars, Lithuanians defeat, 22
— War against, 30
Technical schools, 113
Technicums, 113
Tilsit, 50
Timber, 91
Time of Trouble, 35
Timoshenko, Marshal, 129
Todleben, General, 120
Tolstoy, Count Leo, 53, 57, 58
— portrait, 59
Trade Unions, 88, 89
Trans-Caspian Railway, 61
Trans-Siberian Railway, 61, 91
Trotsky, 70, 72, 75, 77, 83, 89
— assassinated, 84
— expelled from Bolshevist Party, 84
Tsar, title first used, 28
Tsarskoi Selo, 118
Tuapse, 115
Turgenev, 56
Turkey attacked by Russia, 39, 47
— War with, 57, 61

Ukraine, 5 17*n.*, 62
— becomes Russian, 35
Ulianov, V. I., 65. *See* Lenin
Unemployment ceases, 94
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, composition of, 126
— created, 65
Universities, 112, 113
University, First Russian, 50
Ural district, Industries in, 96–9
U.S.S.R. defined, 124
— Constitution, 106, 118*n.*, 123–8
— Russian Empire becomes, 65
Uzbeko, 7

Veche, 17
Vikings, 11
Vinogradova, Dusya, 128
Vladimir the Great (St.), 13, 14, 16
Volga route, Russian, 30
Voroshilov, Marshal, 62, 129
— portrait (*frontispiece*)

Westerners, 56
" Westernizing " policy, 32, 36, 39, 40, 44
White Army, 78, 79
— defeated by Stalin, 85
White Stone City, 24
William III invites Peter the Great to England, 40
Winter Palace, 62, 74
Women equal with men, 109, 125
— in war, 125
World Revolution, Trotsky and, 83, 89
World War (1914–18), 63
World War (Second), outbreak of, 99, 100
Wrangel, 78

Yaroslav the Law-giver, 16, 17
Youth services, 113

Zemstvos, 7, 58, 110
Zhukov, Marshal, 129

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Sketch Map of the U.S.S.R.
(Political)
0 100 300 500 Miles
Union Republics
Autonomous Republics
International Frontiers
ARCTIC CIRCLE
FRANZ JOSEF LAND
ARCTIC OCEAN
NOVAYA ZEMLYA
GERMANY
LATVIA
ESTONIA
LITHUANIA
FINLAND
Murmansk
Kirovsk
KOLA PEN.
WHITE SEA
Archangel
Amderma
NORTHERN REGION
KOMI
MOLDAVIA
UKRAINE
KIEV
MOSCOW
RUSSIAN SOVIET FEDERATION
Kharkov
Odessa
CRIME
BLACK SEA
TURKEY
Rostov
DON
DONET
VOLGA
URAL MOUNTAINS
Salekhard
Igarka
OMSK
R. OB
WEST SIBERIA
KAZAKHSTAN
GEORGIA
TBILISI
BATUMI
YEREVAN
ARMENIA
AZERBAIDJHAN
BAKU
CASPIAN SEA
UST-URT
ARAL SEA
KIZIL KUM
KARA-KALPAK
UZBEKISTAN
TURKMENISTAN
KARA KUM
ASHKHABAD
TASHKENT
FRUNZE
ALMA-ATA
KIRGHIZIA
TADJIKISTAN
STALINABAD
IRAN
AFGHANISTAN
CHINA
MONGOLIA
NEW SIBERIAN ISLES
Ambarchik
Ust-Yenisesk Port
Dudinka
Ustolensk
Tixie
Verkhoyansk
Zhigansk
YAKUTSK
YAKUTSK SOCIALIST REPUBLICS
R. LENA
SEA OF OKHOTSK
KAMCHATKA
FAR EASTERN AREA
SAKHALIN
KURILE IS.
JAPAN
EAST SIBERIA
Irkutsk
Baikal
Chitah
R. AMUR
BURYAT
ULAN-UDE
MANCHUKUO
Vladivostok
BEHRING STR.
BEHRING SEA
WRANGEL I.
ALASKA
1 LENINGRAD DIST.
2 MOSCOW REGION
3 MORDOVIAN REP.
4 MARII "
5 CHUVASH "
6 UDMURT "
7 TATAR "
8 GERMAN ON VOLGA "
9 KALMYK "
10 DAGHESTAN REP.
11 KABARDINO-BALKARIA "
12 NORTHERN OSSETIA "
13 CHECHENO-INGUSHETIA "
14 BASHKIRIA "
15 JEWISH "
16 ABKHAZIA "
17 ADJHARIA "
18 NAKHICHEVAN "