the RADIANT CROSS

A NOVEL OF THE UKRAINIAN STRUGGLE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

Herbert Hirschfeld

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR . . .

HERBERT HIRSCHFELD, whose relationship to the events in this novel is far less than objective, lives with his family in Forest Park, Illinois.

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STRUGGLE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

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by Herbert Hirschfeld

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Introduction

IF MANKIND does not destroy itself in the near future, the twentieth century will go down in history as an era of the unprecedented control by man of the material universe. In a darker sense, it will mark the culmination of man's ever-increasing inhumanity to man and the gradual destruction of all those individual and human rights which have been painfully evolved during the long centuries. The history of modern Ukraine can well witness to this, and it is of this that this story tells.

We see in the nineteenth century a small group of peaceful, thrifty, and hard-working German Protestants led by misrepresentation to settle in the wilderness of Volhynia, one of the provinces of Ukraine. They speedily establish good relations with their Ukrainian neighbors, and the friendships thus formed remain throughout three generations, as the representatives of two families agree that their grandchildren must become pastors and priests to spread among their peoples a knowledge of the Word of God and of their duties to Him and to their neighbors.

Yet there is no peace, for the little communities are ravaged by World War I, the horrors of anti-Jewish riots by the Polish students, the excesses of the Polish "pacification" of Western Ukraine, the coming of the Russian Communists in 1939, the excesses of the Nazis, and the return of the Communists—each more terrible and more ruthless than the preceding. At the end, the German Ludwig, a Protestant pastor, meets a heroic death in a detachment of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, the U.P.A., commanded by his friend Ivan, a Ukrainian Orthodox priest; and over his burial mound his friend erects the golden cross which has defied Genghis Khan and only in the twentieth century has been moved from its ruined church.

It is a true culmination of the struggle for peace and freedom for the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, without any help from the Free World which, absorbed in the search for peace, fearlessly attempted to bring that peace to Ukraine by fighting resolutely and desperately against both tyrannical invaders, the Nazis and the Communists, neither of whom would recognize the human rights of the population.

The author with due regard for history has tried to picture the tragedy of Ukraine, not through its impact on the broad masses; he has recognized the severely individual tragedy of the individual and his family, and this work should be earnestly read and pondered by all those people who conceive of a compromise peace or a peace which does not guarantee liberty, freedom, and the right to practice the Christian faith to each man or woman, no matter how humble, if they are animated by good will and the desire for justice. This is the essence of the progress of mankind through the ages until the new code of the twentieth century launched mankind on a retrograde path. Let us hope and pray that that may once again change directions and let mankind resume his moral and religious progress, as well as improve his material well-being.

CLARENCE A. MANNING
Associate Professor
of Slavic Languages, retired
Columbia University

March 12, 1963

The Radiant Cross

1. *The Primeval Forest*

THE ANCIENT song of the primeval forest of Volhynia could be heard through the rustling foliage. Ancient, majestic trees, oaks and pines, spread their thick branches over the tangled brushwood and blackthorn where wolves and foxes lurked, where wild boars reared their litters. Bordering this forest, there was a wide-spreading marshy meadow through which a river made its way. The right bank, resplendent with giant linden trees, rose steeply toward heaven. Colonies of bees worked in those old trees and stored their honey there.

This wilderness was rarely invaded by humans. Blizzards and thunderstorms removed the refuse and debris of nature to make room for the new. The sun was generous, so the summer was warm and lavish in this land. It was like a Garden of Eden.

One morning an unusual sound was heard. The wild animals pricked up their ears. Someone was chopping his way through the thicket with ax and knife. Before long, these intruders revealed themselves in the open. They were not ordinary people these; rather, some of Russia's élite—the great of Russia. There were several generals and engineers, accompanied by a large number of soldiers.

Their greedy eyes surveyed the river and its two-kilometer-wide swamp about the forest. It was an ideal location for a fort. They nodded to one another and went away. Two weeks later, more men entered the forest and sawed, chopped, and uprooted from early morning until late at night. They cleared space to build three wooden barracks. The untouched beauty of the forest was now destroyed.

One day, as suddenly as they had appeared, woodsmen, engineers, carpenters, and General Topelush, who seemed to be

the soul of the whole enterprise, departed. It was later revealed that the Russian Army staff had changed the original plans. Instead of locating a fortress in the bend of the river, they decided to fortify the cities of Lutsk, Rovno, and Dubno. General Topelush had always displayed keen interest in fortifying the western boundary of the Czar's empire. Therefore he was given the forest. In turn, he was obliged to pay taxes.

Topelush was fully aware that the Czar had given him this vast wilderness as a form of punishment. Topelush had previously fallen into royal disfavor. In a clearing that had cost much to make, stood three barracks, all useless. Under his breath, Topelush cursed his fortune, but there was nothing he could do. He considered himself fortunate to be alive. More important men than he were banished to Siberia where they were never heard from again.

"At least I should be able to capture some game as compensation for my trouble," he grumbled. Topelush stood at the edge of his forest. He stared toward the east and grumbled at what he saw: a vast swampy meadow. This was another "gift" from his "fatherly" Czar. He spat on the ground with disgust. Then he straightened up. He had come to shoot a wild goose or duck, and it was growing late. Peace hovered over the forest, the river, and the swamp. No life stirred. Natasha was right, he thought. She called me a *durak,* because nobody goes duck hunting in June. "The ducks and geese are busy with their young," she said. "They are skinny at this time."

"Natasha, my wife," he mumbled, shaking his head. "I don't understand her. As a bride, she was meek as a lamb, but an hour after our marriage, she turned into another person. She changed from that sweet angel into a dictator. She must have put the pants on while the priest was still busy marrying us! In those twenty-five years we have been married, I have known no peace. And other Russian men have the same trouble. They are bossed around by their wives, too. But wasn't Natasha always right, just as today? She said: 'Do not go hunting geese

and ducks, because it isn't hunting season. You won't even see one!' And they are *not* around.

"Wait a minute," he exclaimed suddenly, "she is *not* right —not this time anyway! I haven't seen a bird, but not because of this hatching business or because it's out of season to hunt. I haven't seen them because they are taking a nap like I do every noontime. And my nap usually lasts from twelve to three o'clock." He stroked his round belly and a gust of wind blew in his face and ruffled his beard. He patted his beard and looked at his epaulettes. They glittered in the noonday sun. He grinned as he felt a surge of pride. "A Czarist general am I, and I do know some things!" He looked to the east. His eyes squinted.

A pillar of smoke was slowly rising beyond the broad meadow. It could be a sign of war. Exciting! Smoke signs were regarded as warning signs of an approaching enemy. Maybe the local inhabitants have revolted to shake off Father Czar's yoke. There are forty million of these Ukrainians and they inhabit the most fertile soil in the world. And it is a beautiful land, Ukraine. Full of enormous forests.

He turned toward the east again. Spread before him were the swampy meadow with the dark willow bushes, the waving reed, and the blinking ponds here and there. And far to the east, the high river banks were crowned with beautiful pine trees. This was only the beginning of this beauty. Ukraine stretched from there to the Black Sea, to the Carpathian Mountains, and farther east than the cities of Kursk and Kharkow. One could never forget the beautiful Crimea. No other place like it existed. They had something to fight for, these Ukrainians. Their country was the most beautiful in the world. He shook his head.

"No," he said, "these peasants don't even know they are a different nation; they believe they are Russians. But what if somebody should come and wake them up? A few more poets like Shevchenko and they'll be demanding independence. He awakened the educated Ukrainians with his singing verses. The Czar jailed him far away from his beloved Ukraine, but he

kept on writing. He died last year. Good for him and for us."

Topelush looked again at the smoke pillar far to the east. Majestically it rose at least a thousand feet in the blue sky. Topelush was suddenly angry. "Uprising?" He drew his long saber. "For what do I command a regiment over there in Lutsk?" He slashed the air with his sword and grinned wickedly at the sharp whistling noise. "No, no uprising. I'll see to that!"

But that smoke over there. What could it mean? "I know there are no ducks and geese around. They are taking a nap now. That's exactly what I am going to tell Natasha, and this time I'll be right!"

The man looked about him. For the first time he saw the grass, the oaks, and the pines which he had not really seen before. Sturdy oak trees meant fertile soil. His mind began to work. "I could sell these trees and soil for a handsome price." He lowered the gun, strolled back to his carriage, and drove away. Upon reaching home, he immediately sent for Mottel, his lawyer and manager.

"Mottel, we must get a crew to clear land. That Volhynian forest must be cut down."

Mottel scratched his head. "But that will be difficult." After some hesitation, he added, "Yet, we can probably find good woodsmen in Germany. Germans are emigrating into many parts of the world just now."

"You will be well paid," promised the general.

Mottel closed one eye while he winked at his influential master with the other. Topelush glanced at his lawyer; they understood each other.

2. *The Immigrants*

FOR TEN DAYS the forest and meadow were drenched with pouring rain. Wolves howled as they prowled about with wet pelts. Foxes peered from their caves at the soaking forest, still ever alert for their prey. Finally, on Saturday, the sun broke through, freeing the heavens of storm clouds. Twilight came and with it an occasional gust of wind. The soft breezes shook the last raindrops from the trees. Animal and man were relieved. The aftermath of the storm had cleared the air. It was now bright and crisp outside.

Mottel had succeeded in bringing German woodsmen from western Poland and Germany into this forest wilderness. In glib tones he had given them lavish descriptions of "a land which flowed with milk and honey." He had accompanied them on the long journey. When the woodsmen were discouraged, when their horses seemed unable to go farther, he urged them to push on. When they would reach "the land" they would find pasture, juicy meadows in which the beasts would grow fat in no time. They reached the forest and Mottel had them drive straight to the barracks; he told them what had to be done and then he returned to Topelush. He wanted to claim his reward promptly. He did not care what happened to the men from now on—let them perish—he wanted his reward.

The woodsmen were left to the thick forest. Wolves came out to snap at the heels of their horses. The bachelor Lemke fired his muzzle-loader at them. The fire and lightning played about their muzzles and they beat a speedy retreat. A Baptist, Lemke had suffered much at home because of his faith. He had joined the group hoping to build a new home. Here, he thought, he could worship in freedom. Fortunately for the new-

comers, the hastily-built barracks were there to offer shelter.

General Topelush came to the forest a few days later. He saw the horses, but they were just skin and bones; the men were tired; the women and children were wretched. He laughed bitterly and grew sullen with rage. He realized that they could never clear away the gigantic trees of his forest. He wondered why he had paid Mottel so much money. He grew discouraged. He stayed but a short time, climbed into his carriage, his epaulettes glimmering in the sunlight. "You may clear the forest, if you think you can," he called sarcastically as he drove away.

The immigrants did attack the forest. They chopped, sawed, and dug. From dawn till dusk, yes, even far into the night, they worked. Their muscles and bodies were aches and pains. The forest echoed with the blows of the axes; the wolves and wild boars soon disappeared. The work was hard because the tree roots, tough like wire, could neither be cut nor torn apart.

The work was particularly hard for Lemke. Bloodthirsty gnats and gadflys were ravenous and they made his life miserable. It was Lemke who did the hunting for the colony. He had been a famous hunter in Germany. He pursued wild boars, deer, and stag. Fish abounded in the stream and also in the ponds of the great meadow. Game and fish helped to keep them from starving.

There was no doctor. Malaria attacked some of them. Any victim of appendicitis was given up. Sickness, disease, and injury continued to plague them. Yet despite these hardships, none of them would admit defeat. They had a strange determination to succeed. They could not be diverted from their tasks.

They felt alone in a seemingly endless stretch of forest. They knew nothing about their fellow-inhabitants in this new land; they were not even sure they had neighbors beyond the forest. On the days when no breeze blew, they sometimes saw smoke rising straight as an arrow beyond the broad meadow and the forest. All would wonder about this smoke, but could only guess at the cause.

In awe of the strange sight stood Lemke, Gutsch, and Friedman. The pillar of smoke rose higher and higher into the blue sky. There, high above the earth, the smoke rose and, as if bent by tender hands, started moving toward the west.

"It got caught in an east-west moving air current," explained Lemke. He was regarded as the smartest of all woodsmen and many a settler came to him for advice. He was tall, with broad shoulders, and a round boyish face covered with a fine long red beard. He was kind and ready to help everybody.

Friedman's straw blond beard was as long as Lemke's but much narrower. Gutsch was shorter than the other two and did not like a beard. "I like to feel the wind blowing in my face," he would often say. The three men were friends and ready for any task. Looking at the smoke, they shook their heads.

"We must solve that riddle," said Gutsch. Without further discussion, the three friends set out to discover the origin of that smoke, a curiosity which General Topelush had not cared to explore. They walked for half a day, through swamp and brush, and suddenly before them stretched a river fifty meters wide. They had never imagined that a river flowed so close to their territory.

Lemke, a good swimmer, stripped, bundled his clothing on his head, and jumped into the crystal-clear water. Ancient willows leaned over the stream from both sides, and Friedman and Gutsch used them to make their crossing. It was fresh and clean, and the trio enjoyed this impromptu swimming session. Lemke, splashing happily in the clear water of the river, laughed at the careful movements of his two companions on the willow branches.

It was a broad river and cold, but the trio was used to hardship. Finally, they made it. Breathing heavily, they stood and watched Lemke emerge from the stream. They dressed themselves quickly.

The next problem was the high bluff. They traversed a broad stretch of dense forest and stood upon a hilly stretch

of fertile land. On they walked—uphill, downhill, always in the directon of the smoke which served as a guidepost. A good sign-post! thought Lemke. I wonder about the column that guided the Israelites.

Suddenly Friedman grasped Lemke by the sleeve. "Look!" he pointed toward the distance. They saw a cloud of dust moving toward them. They retreated behind the bush and firmly grasped their weapons. As the dust-cloud neared them, a gust of wind blew it away and they saw a man driving a yoke of oxen which pulled a big oak branch. As he came abreast, Lemke and his companions stepped out. Seeing the rifles, the ox-driver fell upon his knees and begged to be spared. The Germans, although they had lived some years in Polish neighborhoods, were surprised that they could understand some of his words.

"Who are you?" asked Lemke in Polish.

"I am a Ukrainian," was the reply.

"A Ukrainian?" answered Lemke. "I have never heard such a name."

Slowly, the Ukrainian got to his feet. He was young, about twenty-five, with coal-black hair and black eyes. White teeth glistened when he spoke.

"A fine fellow," said Friedman. The others agreed.

"What are you doing?" asked Lemke.

"I am plowing," explained the young farmer.

Lemke shook his head. "You ought to have an iron plow."

The Ukrainian wrinkled his brow. "We don't have such things."

"I'll teach you to make one and to use it. There are blacksmiths among us." Then he asked, "Are you a heathen or a Christian?"

"I am a Christian. I belong to the Greek Orthodox church. Behind that hill stands our church, and there in the valley is my village. Go there. I have to finish my work; otherwise, I would go with you." He smiled at the strangers because he now realized they were friendly and meant no harm.

So they left the plowman and went on toward that hill to

the south. When they had climbed halfway up the last hill, they stopped. A golden cross rose above the hill and greeted the Germans. They saw nothing more, only the radiant cross, sparkling and glittering just over the hill. They wondered and marvelled at the sight. Here in the wilderness and in their loneliness they had found a sign of their faith.

Feeling that it was a holy moment, Lemke took off his cap; his companions did likewise. Lemke found it hard to explain his inner feelings whenever he looked at a cross; he was always overwhelmingly, deeply touched. The cross spoke to him of the wickedness of men who had crucified the Innocent and Just One. It told him that there exists a crooked demoniacal force, always hating the good and the beautiful. The cross told him another story, too. It told him that the power, the strength, and the might of the evil force are limited. The threat of crucifixion was not able to silence Christ the Lord who preached justice and peace. He went to Calvary fearlessly, and, dying, he cried aloud: "It is finished!" The power of sin and death and the devil was broken. The cross had a twofold meaning for Lemke. It was, first, the sign of the greatest victory ever achieved; and, second, a proof of the existence of the devil. Lemke was deeply religious. That is, he felt his faith no matter where he was—in or out of church.

They hurried up the hill, there to look out over a lovely valley, in the middle of which a pond shone in the sunlight. In the midst of the verdant green stood the whitewashed homes of the villagers. An ancient church stood in the village; its golden cross glittered in the sunshine and spoke the first welcome. The strangers no longer felt alone. They knew they were in the midst of friendship.

The news of the arrival of three strangers spread quickly. People came running out of their homes. Lemke saw a tall man, with dark hair and a mustache which reached to his ears, pressing through the crowd. He stood for a time and just looked at the newcomers. Finally he spoke: "My name is Kar-

people. We are all subjects of the Czar in Moscow. On behalf of all, let me welcome you to our village."

Lemke, because of his knowledge of Polish, was able to grasp the meaning of what was said, and answered, "I am happy to know you. We are Lemke, Friedman, and Gutsch—all pioneers."

"You are welcome," answered Karluk in a tone that assured them no harm would come their way.

3. *The Neighbors*

WHEN the Ukrainians heard that the Germans were clearing the forest, they began to worry. What would happen if the whole forest was cut down and all the game disappeared? Their source of food might thus be taken from them. However, when they learned that the clearing was being done far away, beyond the river and swamp, they rested their thoughts. When asked about the smoke which the Germans had seen on breezeless days, Karluk and the priest, who had hastened to join them, led their guests to a long row of ovens. A peasant was removing some beautiful vases, pitchers, and bowls from one of the ovens.

"Potters!" exclaimed Gutsch, greatly pleased, for the Germans lacked all kinds of kitchen and household utensils. "How wonderful! You people have a talent for doing many things."

The mayor smiled at Lemke. "I like you. We shall become friends."

Lemke glanced at the mayor. He found him to be wise and good-natured as far as he could ascertain. But that long mustache and narrow face did not harmonize completely. He had never seen such a long mustache. It was quite unusual and aroused his curiosity. He can easily tie both ends behind his neck, thought Lemke. The ends of the mustache were bent and resembled the horns of a goat.

The mayor noticed Lemke's stare and stroked his long mustache. "It is long, yes. My ancestors were Kozaks. Have you heard of them?"

The Germans shook their heads.

"Yes, Kozaks," Karluk continued, "very famous warriors who fought the enemies of Ukraine—Tartars, Poles, Turks,

Muscovites, and many others. And all Kozaks grew long mustaches. I wish my son and grandson would do likewise. It is every father's wish that his son shall grow up strong and powerful in the Kozak tradition."

The mayor led the newcomers through a few of the shops in which the potters worked. They sat at their potter's wheel, turning it with their feet and forming the handsome vases, pots, and pitchers. Lemke could not take his eyes off their hands. Under their skilled use, the vases grew and formed so smoothly and skillfully that the woodsmen could only marvel. Never had they seen such works of talent and training. These certainly were gifted people.

"And we thought we moved into a land where the world ends!" Friedman exclaimed. "These people are certainly far more advanced than we are."

"Is that a special clay?" asked Lemke.

"Yes, it is dug out of the forest over there, and nowhere else. There are large holes in the ground."

"How long have you been doing this work?" asked Gutsch.

"Through many centuries," said the mayor. "It is a tradition with us."

"Is this the only village around here?" asked Friedman.

"No," replied the priest. "There are many Ukrainian villages, most of them hidden in forests near the ponds or rivers. I am not a Ukrainian but a Russian. Our church language is Old Slavonic. When I preach, as I do once in a while, I use the Russian language, which these people can hardly understand."

"Why don't you preach in Ukrainian?" wondered Lemke aloud.

"Because it is both a common and a despised language. The Czar in Moscow has forbidden us to use Ukrainian. He jailed the Ukrainian poet Shevchenko who wrote poems in that language. It is good that the poet died. It will never come to pass that their language will be used in their churches. Russian is the language for all the people."

"Nobody knows all that may happen," muttered Lemke. "None of us are able to predict the future."

New wood was now put into the ovens and lighted. The smoke rose toward the blue sky.

"Have you a city in this land?" Gutsch asked the priest.

The stout priest wore a long black robe and had long black hair reaching far down his back. He laughed and answered: "You would think we live on the moon. Yes, we have many cities, if you know where to look. Looking from that hill toward the south, you can see, on clear days, the dome of the Orthodox cathedral in the city of Lutsk. Would you like to see that?"

"Of course," the men replied. "We want to see as much as possible of this wonderful land."

The mayor spoke to the priest: "Let them have something to eat. They must be hungry." With that, he led them and the priest into his house. "Later, after we have eaten, there will be time to see the cities."

For the first time the immigrants entered a Ukrainian home. They were warmly greeted by the mayor's wife. She led the strangers to the table on which she had put a bowl of honey, a pitcher of milk, with butter and fresh black rye bread.

Milk and honey of which we read so much in the Scriptures, Lemke recalled to himself.

The floor was of clay. "It must be the same clay the pots are made of. See how clean and shiny they are!" remarked Gutsch. In one corner was a big oven built of bricks. It was flat, and blankets and pillows were piled on top. It must be warm to sleep on, but too hard for me, thought Friedman. The windows were small. In every corner there was a picture of a bearded man with a large cap pulled down on the forehead.

Lemke liked everything here, the interior of the room as well as the people. He looked out of the window. There stood a crowd waiting to see the strangers. Even the air surging through the open window was fresh and fragrant. This was a

wonderful country and he was captivated by all of it. Ukraine and her people had found their way into Lemke's heart. He nodded and said: "Mayor, I would like to be your friend. May there be friendship between our children and our children's children."

"May there be friendship," smiled the mayor. "Forever and ever."

But Lemke did not like the priest. Maybe it was because of the way he had spoken of the Ukrainian language. The priest was actually pleased that the poet Shevchenko had been jailed and was now dead. But so many had regarded him as a hero!

After they had eaten, the mayor called four strong men who embarked with them in a canoe; their quick, strong strokes carried them quickly toward Lutsk. The river, which the Ukrainians called the Styr, made many turns. They passed villages with round and golden church domes. The strangers saw an old culture and civilization they never dreamed existed. They saw many cows with calves, pigs, and sheep in the meadows. The immigrants rejoiced at the sight, for they hoped to buy some cattle and sheep.

Rounding a high bluff, the city appeared before them. It was a good location because the Styr surrounded the city on the south, west, and north, but there was only one paved street which ran from east to west. During a rain, conditions were probably very poor. Along both sides of the street were wooden huts—the stores of this "city." Bearded Jews operated these stores, but there was only a small selection of goods; all they had was cart-grease, petroleum, matches, salt, and salt-herrings.

The visitors discovered to their amazement that these Jews spoke German. All of them came to greet these German strangers. As they welcomed them, a Jewish rabbi said: "Look, my fellow Jews, soon we will have poultry, wheat, cattle, horses, eggs, and butter to buy and sell. Thousands of Germans will be coming into our land. That means progress and advancement. They will make an agricultural area out of these forests and swamps!" There was much rejoicing at this expectation.

The rabbi pointed to a fortress: "That was built by a German architect named Hoffman." The immigrants were astonished. The rabbi continued: "In this city there was even a German emperor some four hundred years ago. I think his name was Maximilian. He conducted a conference with the Polish king and the Lithuanian duke concerning the menace of the Turks."

Lemke, Gutsch, and Friedman shook their heads. They could not understand that. "A German emperor in this miserable town!"

"At that time it was a large city," said the rabbi. "Then it was destroyed by fire, and again, later, by the Tartars."

Leaving the city, the three men returned to the potters' village. Sometime later, loaded with all they could carry, they took their leave. It was an experience they would never forget. For the first time they had heard the word "Ukraine." The priest, Karluk, and some others saw them on their way.

From the hilltop, they looked back on the lovely village, its clean white huts, dominated by the church and its radiant cross. Lemke pointed to the cross. "Look, how wonderful! This is a magnificent sight."

"Yes," said the priest. "Our church is Byzantine style with its round dome. It is now almost a thousand years old. Volodymer the Great, a Ukrainian prince, sent emissaries to Constantinople. They learned Christian doctrine and returned. The first baptism took place in the Dnieper River by Kiev. Cyril and Methodius, two brothers from Constantinople, had preached in this part of Ukraine many years before. They built this church and that cross."

"One thousand years—that's a long time," mused Lemke.

The priest nodded, shook hands with the three friends, and turned to go. Karluk said: "Come again; we have become good friends, and friends should see one another often."

The German colonists were soon able to obtain everything they needed from the Ukrainians—fowl and domestic animals, corn, and other seeds. The relationship between Germans and

Ukrainians was very good. Karluk, who had become as fond of Lemke as the latter of him, was largely responsible for this. He often came to see his friend in the barracks, and Lemke frequently visited him in the village. On one such visit, Lemke presented his friend with a rifle, and both men—Ukrainian and German—frequently went hunting together. They became inseparable friends. It was a friendship that would prove valuable in later years.

The work of clearing was not neglected. Steadily the forest was pushed back. On the conquered land potatoes and other vegetables, as well as barley, were soon grown. The immigrants were tireless workers—from sunrise to sunset they labored in the fields, determined to see to it that their community would thrive and become prosperous—truly a land of milk and honey.

4. *The Growing Colony*

WHEN General Topelush visited the settlement, he could hardly believe his eyes. The forest had been cleared! It was astonishing but true. He had to blink many times. He was so pleased that he made a contract with the pioneers: each one was permitted to clear for his own use as much ground as he wished. When he came a second time, he looked out over broad cultivated fields. As far as his eyes could see, heavy golden grain stalks bowed almost to the earth. Never did he expect to see such a miracle in a "white elephant."

They worked with toil and sweat of brows,
Though cold the nights and hot the days.

Lemke had cleared a tract of land for himself. Before long he was able to have his own plow and horse. It was just the start of this prosperity. One day a proverb of the Lord came to him: "It is not good that man should live alone." When he next met Caroline Schmidke, a lovely girl whom everybody liked, he asked her to be his wife. She sent him to her father. Her father, however, sent him back to his daughter. "Because," he said pleasantly, "you must decide this for yourselves. After all, both of you are getting married, not me."

Soon after, the first wedding was celebrated in this primeval forest. The returning sun brought the next spring to the land, and a healthy boy with light-colored hair arrived. His father was greatly pleased. Several days after this happy event, Karluk came to visit and rejoice with the Lemkes. Looking at the little one, he remarked: "He has a nice white head."

"What name do you think he should have?" asked the happy father. "We can't make up our minds."

"Just call him 'Silverhead,' " answered Karluk with a smile. The boy received a real name later, but he was always known as Silverhead because his hair was as white as snow.

The following Sunday afternoon, Lemke visited the mayor who led his friend into a room, and lo, there was a little boy in a basket swung by ropes from the ceiling. The baby had been born on the same day as Silverhead. However, Karluk's baby had black hair.

"What name do you think he should have?" asked the mayor.

"He doesn't need a name, just 'Blackie,' " laughingly replied Lemke. And so, though the boy also received a real name, he was called Blackie by everyone.

"May our sons become true friends, just as their fathers," declared Karluk, little realizing that the two boys would indeed become inseparable friends.

When Lemke's son approached his sixth birthday and still possessed his white hair, the father became concerned. "When this lad is twenty, people will think he is sixty. Even a six-year-old with a white head is something quite unusual; I doubt if he will ever find a girl! But what can we do? It is the way he was born."

About this time, the pioneers decided to build a house of God. As they were nearly all Lutherans, it was a Lutheran church with a steeple which looked out over the primeval forest. In the course of years, a number of Baptists immigrated to this land of promise, and these people Lemke organized into a church, and here they built a beautiful chapel. Spiritual life developed, as it had in the homeland, rich in blessings. Choirs were trained, and on beautiful summer days the strains of church hymns floated out through the open windows of the churches and penetrated the forest.

The colonists, weary of living in the barracks, longed for private dwellings. There was an abundance of building material at hand, more than enough for all their needs, and they put it all to good use. In time, a community was built, one

that stretched straight as a string from the south to the north, for a distance of three kilometers. The houses were a hundred meters apart. The fields stretched toward the west, and down to the great meadow toward the east. The meadow had long ceased to be a swamp. Fruit trees reached from one property to the next. With their roots sunk deep in the virgin soil of the former Black Sea bottom and their branches high in the sun-drenched air of Ukraine, the trees grew and spread their boughs over houses and barns.

The sands of time continued to flow. Most of the elders were no longer there. Beside and under blooming rosebushes they rested from the labors and burdens of clearing the land. It is said: "The first generation works itself to death, the second suffers privation, only the third has bread." The children of the pioneers, reverently holding their forefathers in memory, loved their beautiful colony and did all in their power to maintain its progress.

Lemke aged like the others. His son Silverhead was now over twenty, but his hair was still white.

"He is a pious, devout boy, friendly and ready to help everyone, but whether he will ever get married, I don't know," said Lemke one day to his wife.

Caroline, however, was more hopeful. "Don't worry, Father. Our boy is a good boy, and he will make some effort on his own."

"Yes," agreed Lemke at great length. "You are right. I am worrying too much."

One Sunday morning, Lemke and the boy visited the Ukrainian village to see Karluk and attend a worship service. They went over the meadow. Valuable grasses were growing in the fertile soil, furnishing feed for grazing cattle. Lemke, who had often gone with Karluk through the big forests without tiring, this time said to his son: "My years are passing. I feel tired from this march over the meadow." He prayed aloud: "Don't forsake me, O Lord, in my old days."

"The Lord is with you, Father, and I am, too," comforted his son.

"Yes, the Lord and you. That's enough for me," the father answered. They went on up the hill, looking at the cross on the Orthodox church.

"The longer I look at the cross, the happier I become," said the son.

His father nodded. "Yes, it's true. It is the only unchanging value in a changing world. I was often discouraged in my wood-clearing, but after a worship service in the church, I became strong for a new week of labor."

So they went on to the mayor's house, where they were greeted heartily. Blackie was happy to see his friend Silverhead. They were so different in appearance. Young Lemke was heavy with small blue eyes, muscles like steel, and a white head. Blackie was tall like his father, with black curly hair, dark eyes, and a long mustache. They had often wrestled, but there was no standing up against young Lemke. He could easily throw to the ground two boys the size of Blackie.

5. *Wedding Bells*

ALTHOUGH the two boys had much to talk over, Lemke had not come for conversation. He came to attend the worship service. The church stood among many pine trees and rose-bushes surrounded by a high hedge. Near the church, on the other side of the road, was the parsonage, a large house with an extensive apple orchard behind it. Near the church and parsonage was the pond.

It was a bright Sunday morning, filled with the songs of birds. Old and young streamed into the church. The sanctuary was round, divided by a board wall, with many doors large and small. The walls were decorated with many pictures of saints in long beards and large caps pulled down almost to their eyes. Soon the priest came, wearing so many fancy robes that Lemke hardly recognized him. His part of the service consisted of singing and reading the Scriptures, and going in and out of all the doors in the dividing wall.

In all these strange services, there was something that lifted his spirit and made his soul rejoice—the singing of the choir. The women sang like nightingales, and the deep voices of the men made the church windows tremble.

Lemke's gaze turned to the stained glass dome. The song and the ancient Byzantine style of the building took his thoughts back to Constantinople, where this church originated. Later came its final separation from the Roman church. Eager missionaries had then carried the message of this church to all the people of eastern Europe, even to the slopes of the Ural Mountains. Many followers joined, and soon the church grew in stature and influence.

Lemke and his son stood reverently throughout the entire

service, only bowing their heads as the people knelt during a part of the service.

The mayor's wife had invited the Lemkes, as well as the priest, to dinner. Before they sat down, the priest arrived. There were large dishes filled with potatoes, sauerkraut, and wild boar meat. All were hungry and ate heartily.

While they were eating, the priest turned to Lemke: "I was glad to see you in church, but you did not kneel down with all the others."

"I am getting old," replied Lemke. "But you forgot to preach a sermon," he added.

The priest was silent for a time, and then said, "We don't preach every Sunday."

"My Ukrainian language is weak, or I might come over and preach to your people," said Lemke, a strange smile on his face.

The priest was serious. "You don't know the power I have. On my order the police would arrest you and the judge would sentence you to hard labor in Siberia. The throne of our emperor in Moscow rests on our Orthodox church and the police. I say 'our' because, as I told you, I am a Russian, and not a Ukrainian. Most of the priests in Ukraine are Russians. I am surprised that you are not yet aware of the power of the Orthodox church."

"Police and a state church are weak foundations for a kingdom. Its foundation must be justice and righteousness. Sooner or later such thrones will fall," Lemke replied, no longer feeling hungry.

"Never! Our throne in Moscow will stand forever, like a rock. For these words of yours, Lemke, I could have you thrown into prison for life!" The priest was angry, but then he softened and said, "Don't be afraid. You are a fine man. We have known each other for such a long time. I wouldn't harm you."

"Thank you, but what I said is true. It is what I believe."

The priest seemed lost in thought, but finally said: "As

evidence that I love and trust you, I would even let you preach in my church."

"Not I," said Lemke. "But maybe my grandson. He shall become a preacher." Then, as if awaking from a dream, he said quickly: "What did I say—a grandson? My son doesn't even have a sweetheart!"

Just then a beautiful blond girl came into the house.

"Who is this girl?" Lemke asked.

"Blackie's promised bride. They will be married soon," said the priest.

"A blonde?" said Lemke.

"Yes, in the Ukrainian nation there are many blond people, which seems to confirm the theory that the ancestors of the Ukrainians were the Germanic Eastgoths who had a great kingdom north of the Black Sea over two thousand years ago. It was later destroyed by the Huns. Slavic tribes, emigrating from the West, caused the remaining Eastgoths to adopt their language. So now Ukraine is called a Slavic nation."

"I don't care whether that theory is true or not," said Lemke. "Anyway, it is true that Blackie will have a golden-haired bride." He looked sadly at his own son. "My son is not so fortunate."

On their way home, the Lemkes stood on the hilltop and looked back into the valley.

Silverhead said, "Blackie has a beautiful girl."

"Yes, that is true," replied his father.

"Our neighbor's girl is blond too. She likes me," said Silverhead hesitatingly. He cast a shy glance toward his father.

"Do you mean Friedman's servant girl?"

"Yes," confessed Silverhead. "We were talking together last Sunday, after the church service. But she is poor, and everybody says it is best to take a rich girl for a wife."

Lemke grasped his son's shoulder. "Love of money shall not have a place in our family. Riches are not everything. We have enough. Our farm is big. This girl's parents died shortly after they arrived in our forest. Their daughter was taken and

reared by a kind neighbor. Now she works for Friedman. Take that fine girl into our house, and you can take over the farm. Your mother and I are growing old. This would greatly please us."

So it came to pass that on the same day that Blackie led his girl to the altar in the Orthodox church, the wedding bells also rang for Silverhead and his bride.

"Lord, thy ways are wonderful," said Lemke, as the young married couple left the Baptist church. "Cast all your care upon Him for he cares for you."

6. *Ludwig and Ivan*

IT WAS a sunny fall day, neither warm nor chilly—just right for expanding the chest and wandering through field and forest, contemplating the marvels of nature and God. The village mayor Karluk went to visit his old friend Lemke.

As he approached, Lemke said happily: "Friend, you come at the right time. We must discuss an important matter together." Lemke led him into the inner room, where he always retreated to consider serious matters. "You know, I called your boy Blackie and you called mine Silverhead, and they are still known by those names. Now we should find names for our grandsons."

"But they are not yet born; they may be girls!"

Lemke scratched his gray head, looking troubled for a moment. "How can you say that? I say they will be boys, because I have already chosen professions for them. They shall become pastors, because we need good and consecrated pastors to preach worthy sermons, to comfort and lift up those who labor and are heavily laden."

The mayor shook his head. "I don't understand." He twisted his long gray mustache, no longer black as in his youth.

Lemke nodded. "I know you can't understand. Your people are good-hearted, but they need to be educated. It is as important as being fed."

Karluk sprang to his feet. "You're right! I have felt that as long as I have been mayor, only I did not know how to go about it. Yes, our nation needs good teachers and preachers, and when God gives me a grandson, that is what he shall be! Have you decided upon his name?"

"In your nation two out of every three boys are named Ivan, which means John."

Karluk nodded. "Yes, Ivan is a very fine name." Then he asked, "But why should your grandson become a pastor?"

"Because there is great need of them," replied Lemke. "We desperately need one in our church. Your priest caused our former pastor to be exiled to Germany from whence he came."

"I know," Karluk nodded his head sadly. "He came from Germany and learned our language very quickly. He started to preach in our villages, so our priest demanded his removal. He said your pastor had done much damage. The people were awakened because he preached in a mighty way. And now some of our own people are starting to preach, too." After a pause, the mayor asked, "What name shall your grandson have?"

"It is up to you."

"Ludwig is a good German name. I have heard it often," said Karluk.

"Ludwig, it shall be then," Lemke agreed.

The two friends, excited about finding the names, were talking louder than was necessary. Silverhead's wife looked into the room. "What is going on?" she asked.

"We are just choosing names for our grandsons," said the mayor.

She merely said, "I'll call you for dinner soon."

"A fine girl," commented Lemke, "humble, faithful every day, friendly like sunshine. May she become the mother of a pastor."

"That's good to hear. Silverhead and Blackie both have blond wives; may the boys be blond, too," said Karluk.

"Why blond?"

"Because in our church we have many holy pictures of angels, and they are always blond. So I think every clergyman should be like an angel, blond and handsome."

"That's not essential," said Lemke. "God looks into the

hearts of men. The color of their hair does not mean they will be holy."

Silverhead had come home from the fields and his wife told him about the conversation between the two old friends.

Silverhead laughed. "If we have a son, I will be the happiest father," and with that he kissed his wife. "But if a daughter is born, I shall love her just as though she were a son."

Months later, Lemke stood looking out of the window. He could hardly control himself. At any moment he would be a grandfather. The leaves had fallen from the trees, giving him a full view of the meadow. It was a beautiful day on which to be born. And the child *had* to be a boy—he just had to!

Lemke saw somebody running toward the house. He quickly opened the door to welcome the mayor.

"It's a boy!" cried Karluk.

Lemke put a finger to his lips: "The angels are coming to our house, too."

Karluk whispered, "He is a fine child with a narrow face and dark eyes, just like his father."

At that moment, Silverhead opened the door and announced: "It's a boy, blond just like his mother!"

The grandfathers embraced and kissed each other happily.

"Two pastors! The Lord bless them. Ludwig and Ivan shall be their names," declared Lemke, "just as we decided earlier this year. Oh yes, this is truly an occasion to long remember."

7. *In Lvov: Lemke's War Memories*

THE SUN was shining brightly on the city of Lvov. The streets were devoid of life; those who did not have to go out on the streets sat in cool darkened rooms. Merchants stepped out on the thresholds of their shops and, yawning with boredom, looked idly up and down the streets. It was a quiet day because of the heat. They knew, however, that the beginning of September was almost upon them, summer vacations almost at an end. Thousands of high school and college students and vacationers, who had been away for the summer, would soon be returning to this beautiful city. Business would pick up again.

Lowenstein stood in front of his store, pulled his red beard, pointed to Mariacki Square, and said to his neighbor Hirschberg: "See how the water in the fountain sparkles and glitters! He who stands beside it does not seem to fear the rays of the sun." He was referring to the Polish poet Adam Miskiewicz who was receiving a laurel wreath from the hands of a young woman.

Hirschberg smiled wryly. "Those two have been doing that for years. She's been handing him that wreath and he still does not have it."

Lowenstein poked Hirschberg. "That's the way with many a merchant. He doesn't get one either."

Hirschberg shrugged his shoulders indifferently. "With such weather as this, the best merchant can't hope to get much business. Soon things will be different. See, there are the first."

Both looked toward two men who were coming along the Akademicka, the street which was the pride of the city.

"It's a father and his son," said Lowenstein. "Surely he is expecting to enter his son in school here. How fat the father

is, and he must be old because his hair is snow-white. What an unusual pair they make!"

The merchant heard them speaking German. He approached them and seized the older man by the coat sleeve. "You are Germans. We seldom hear the German language here. Kaiser Franz was a good father to his people, and we Jews did well under his blessed rule, you know. Galicia belonged to Austria."

"I am a German colonist from Volhynia, and my name is Lemke," replied the silver-headed man. "I seek lodgings for my son who is registered at the gymnasium. His name is Ludwig."

Lowenstein invited them into his house, and they soon settled the business details. Ludwig was given a neat little room with a desk, chair, bed, and even a sofa.

After they had had refreshments and had rested, Lemke wished to see more of the city. Lowenstein pointed to a hill in the east: "That hill is called the High Castle, although there is no castle on it. If you will climb that hill, you will have a clear view of our city and the surrounding country. Everyone who visits Lvov climbs that hill."

And so, they decided to make the climb. Fortunately, the hillside was covered with vegetation; otherwise, the ascent would have been difficult. At the summit they found a lookout with spiral paths leading to a platform on top. Lemke was perspiring profusely. They gladly sat down for a rest, and looked down upon the city. It was indeed a beautiful sight to behold, and he was glad he had made the climb. Lemke had brought his son to attend gymnasium; he was to become a pastor. Ludwig was now fifteen, a slim, blond boy, with sky-blue eyes and a very fair complexion. Everyone liked the bright and merry lad.

Since the birth of Ludwig and his arrival in Lvov, many things had happened. Lemke's thoughts went back. A few years after his son's birth, World War I had broken out, and all the German settlers had been driven out by the Russians and

sent to Siberia, losing all their property. It had been a long, long journey, with many hardships and miseries. Silverhead's father and mother had died from exhaustion and disease, and were laid to rest under a big oak tree along the road the exiles traveled. Finally they had arrived in Omak on the Irtish River, where Lemke had worked in a flour mill and Ludwig started to go to school. He soon spoke Russian as well as his Russian companions.

A sad thought interrupted Lemke's memories. Lvov was going to take his boy away from him for many years. But the boy had to be educated. He wiped the tears from his eyes with his sleeve. Looking up, he turned to Ludwig. "My son, now that you shall have to live by yourself, without me, I will give you a bit of advice that will lead you safely through those years and through your whole life. Remain humble and reverent before thy Creator. He is a helper in every trial and tribulation. I am speaking from personal experience. Let me tell you a story of my life that you have never heard before.

"You know I was drafted in Omsk by the Russians and sent to the Turkish front. It was winter when we boarded the train. We rode many days and nights. I read my Bible and prayed. Five Russians and Germans were with me in our compartment. One was an atheist; he laughed and sneered at me, but I kept on praying. The land became mountainous. When the train stopped and we disembarked, it was summer and very hot, but I preferred it to the icy cold.

"Then I saw the name TIFLIS on the station building. We had arrived at the Turkish front! I was shocked, and I prayed: 'Lord, let me not fall into the hands of the Turks!' I had heard that where the Turks lived there were also blood-thirsty Kurds, cruel people who tortured their victims.

"Soon my battalion marched away, uphill and downhill. During the day it was terribly hot, but the nights were unusually cold. Many of us became ill. I, too, became ill and was sent to a hospital. Every morning a nurse came in and opened the window and I could gaze out upon a mountain landscape

bathed in sunshine. In the background stood the gigantic mountain, its hoary peak towering above all the others. I thought: The mountain has a white head like mine. White is a sign of innocence, and the mountain is as innocent of guilt in this war as I am. The nurse told me the name of the mountain: Mount Ararat. I was speeechless. Mount Ararat, of which the Bible speaks! The spot where the ark of Noah descended. I was on holy ground. Who could have foreseen this?

"After my recovery, I returned to my unit and we marched to trenches at the foot of Ararat, where a terrible battle was raging. The Turks were dealing powerful blows to the Russian position. It was a strange meeting at a holy spot. However, a great peace descended upon me. Could misfortune befall me here? In the evening while bullets were whizzing by, I looked up to the mountain, and its gray summit. It made me shudder to know that I was at a holy place. Here Noah sent out the dove, and here the beautiful rainbow, the sign of mercy, spanned the horizon. Soon danger surrounded us.

"One night a group of ten soldiers, Russian and German, were ordered to seize an advance position. We all knew this was a dangerous mission. The second night we were taken by surprise. Before we had had an opportunity to defend ourselves, we were overpowered by the Kurds. They were particularly skillful in making surprise attacks. They would creep in as noiselessly as cats. Suddenly they came, and just as suddenly they were gone, disappearing as though the earth had swallowed them.

"Immediately we were taken prisoners. Our hands were bound and we were driven away. We walked far, and at daybreak arrived in a broad valley. The Kurds sat in a huddle with a Turkish officer. There was an argument. It seemed the officer was trying to prevent the Kurds from doing something. Finally they all stood up and approached us. They blindfolded us and tied our hands behind our backs. I knew the Kurds had let no Russian prisoners live. Then a command—flintlocks clicked. . . .

"The end is here, I thought. In desperation, I cried out in German: 'Angel of the Lord, be our help and rescue!'

"Again came a sharp command. Then a voice ordered, in broken German: 'Germans step out!'

"We five Germans from Russia at once stepped forward. The Turkish officer spoke several words to a group of women and children who had hurried to the spot. At once they shouted: *'Lemez, Kardasch, Kardasch!'* (The Germans are our brothers, our brothers!)

"Germany and Turkey were allies in the First World War and, because of this, we were treated as friends. I looked at our Russian comrades. I knew what fate awaited them. Then I called, pointing to myself and then to the Russians: *'Kardasch, Kardasch!'* The women among the Kurds understood my meaning, and the Russians were dragged along, too, with shouts of rejoicing and jubilation. The Turkish officer rejoiced, but the Kurd soldiers shook their heads. They hated the Russians and wanted to kill them, but they let the women have their way. They mingled with the throng of women and children who were hopping and dancing as David had danced before the Ark of the Covenant.

"As a prisoner, I was assigned to the care of a Kurd who was as stout as me. He was wealthy, the owner of many sheep. At each meal a little he-goat was set before me, and I ate—just as in Abraham's time. One day I went out and looked up at Mount Ararat. After a long while, I said aloud: 'The Angel of the Lord hovers about those who fear him and helps them.'

" 'That's true!' said a voice behind me. It was the atheist who had laughed at me when I prayed. He now had tears in his eyes. 'If you had not been there with your faith, we would all have died in that terrible hour. Forgive me my mocking, I beg you.'

"I pointed toward the sky and said: 'Give thanks to Him. It was He who put forth his hand to keep us alive.'

"He shook my hand and went into a cave beside the road,

where I later saw him kneeling in prayer. So great is the power of prayer that even the faithless are shaken by God."

Ludwig was deeply touched by these recollections from his father's past. "You have never told me of all this before. It is wonderful. You were very near death. If they had killed you, I would be alone in the world." He put his arm around his father's neck, as though still afraid he might lose him.

Lemke answered: "I did not tell you this story before because I wanted you to hear it at a time when you would be leaving home and away from our protection. Remember, he who trusts in the Lord builds his house upon a rock."

"Father, I will do what you say. I will love and trust in the Lord."

Lemke smiled happily. "I am happy, my son, I believe that you are going to be a fine pastor. How your mother would have loved to be with us on this hilltop today!"

Silverhead's beloved wife, Ludwig's mother, had become ill with typhus in Siberia just as the Russian Revolution broke out in 1917. They had hoped to reach their home in Volhynia, but she passed away before they could get started. Ludwig had sorrowed for many weeks, longing for his dead mother. Friedman, Lemke's neighbor, took charge of the little eight-year-old orphan and brought him home. Home? There was no home. The war between Austria and Russia had raged for four years over the fields of that colony. Everything had been destroyed. The fields were ugly because of the trenches and holes made by the grenades.

As Ludwig stood weeping on the place where his home had been, a white head suddenly emerged from a nearby trench. His father had been living in this squalor. He clasped his son in his arms. In this tragic moment his sobbing son told him how his wife had died in Siberia.

Lemke brought himself back to the present. "Yes, she would have been happy on this hilltop, being with her family, and looking at this beautiful city."

Ludwig lifted his eyes. "Look, Father, Blackie is coming with Ivan!"

Karluk smiled happily as he saw Lemke on the hilltop. They warmly welcomed one another. The two boys, like their fathers, were proud of their friendship.

Blackie pointed to the city. "I don't think you will be disappointed in Lvov. It is a big city, the capital of our Ukrainian province of Galicia. Lvov was founded seven hundred years ago by the Ukrainian King Daniel. It was named after his son Lev, a name which means 'Lion' in Ukrainian. It is the city of the Lion." He pointed toward the east. "See how beautiful the countryside is!"

Lemke nodded. "Yes, Blackie, your Ukrainian land is indeed beautiful. I know I shall be very happy in Lvov."

Then Karluk continued: "And Ukraine is grieved and sorrowful because she is enslaved. The spot where we stand, as well as all of Volhynia and Galicia, is occupied by Poland. Stretching to the Black Sea, Kiev, the Dnieper, and all of eastern Ukraine are in the paws of the Russians. In thinking of this my heart breaks." Then he lifted up his face and stretched out his hand. "Look, Silverhead, over there, far away, are our Carpathian Mountains. I can see those beloved blue ridges."

Lemke made an effort to see them, but could not. He doubted that his friend could see them, but he knew of Blackie's love for his Ukraine and he remained respectfully silent.

8. *Student Days*

THE next day, after urging their sons to be ambitious, both fathers left Lvov and returned to their homes. Ivan and Ludwig hurried to the High Castle Mountain and watched as long as they could the train that bore their fathers. They were not ashamed of the tears they shed. Loneliness and homesickness had already taken possession of them. It was the first time they were away from home and it was not an easy experience for either of the seventeen-year-olds. However, they soon controlled their feelings and became more mature. Ludwig went to his room at the Lowensteins, Ivan to the Ukrainian dormitory on Ruska Street.

For Ludwig, things were not easy at school. He was put in the fourth class, but the language of the classroom was Polish, and his Polish was weak. He was put on probation for a year. Whether he would be allowed to continue would depend upon his progress and his knowledge of the language at the end of the year.

He was not of an indolent family or people. Indolence could not have created a flourishing countryside out of primitive forest and swamp, as his people had done. Because he knew Ukrainian and Russian, he did not find it too difficult to learn Polish, and his teachers were pleased at the progress he made during the first year. They proudly cited him as an example of industry and diligence. As his knowledge broadened, he became acquainted with the beauty in Polish and classical literature. The *Iliad* filled him with excitement. The tumult of battle before the gates of Troy seemed to him a magnificent symphony played by Agamemnon, Achilles, Hector, and Paris. Natural science, revealing the secrets of life, was a

fascinating subject. Before his eyes a picture unrolled like a film until—the crown of creation, man. Germination and growth in the plant world, even the appearance of symbiosis upon the poor soil of the tundras and in the deepest sea, made him bow his head before the Creator. History, chemistry, and physics each introduced him to new surprises. Never before did he realize that there were so many fascinating things in the world.

Ludwig's zeal for knowledge increased. He imagined how the boys in the colony would look up to him when he returned home well-educated—education in Europe is very highly respected. Soon he began to enjoy himself—he began to love his surroundings, his classrooms, the boys and girls with whom he could now speak Polish fluently. The language was beautiful. It sounded like the chirp of swallows gathering in late summer on telephone wires or thin branches to chat over the approaching journey south. Ludwig now mingled with his classmates, chatting happily as if he had spoken Polish for years.

When Ivan came, Ludwig spoke in Ukrainian. He might have switched as easily to Russian, German, and Yiddish. In speaking Yiddish with his Jewish friends, they never believed he was not a Jew.

Asked by his Latin teacher how he felt knowing five languages, he replied: "I feel as if I had 'open' ears. When I go into the city, I understand everybody." The three languages he used most frequently were Polish in school, Yiddish in Lowenstein's house, and Ukrainian with Ivan, who saw to it that Ludwig had enough practice in that tongue. He came almost every day, and the two made excursions through the city and the surrounding area. Ivan did not let an opportunity pass to assert that every hill, every tree, and every inch of soil they stepped upon was Ukrainian.

If a soldier in a Polish uniform or a policeman came by, Ivan explained: "That means nothing; they occupy only Volhynia and Galicia. The heart of these provinces remains Ukrain-

ian. Ukrainian they shall always be. The Muscovites swallowed up the 'Great Ukraine.' That does not mean Ukraine no longer lives."

Ludwig nodded in agreement, but he was amazed at Ivan's patriotism. He wondered who had kindled that fire of love for Ukraine in his soul? There could be no answer. He knew only that a flame was kindled and that it burned. Ludwig loved Ukraine, too. He knew that his father Silverhead and his grandfather the immigrant had loved her, also.

June was approaching. Ludwig and Ivan's first vacation was at hand. The director of the gymnasium put his hand upon Ludwig's shoulder: "You made it. We expect you back after your vacation."

Ludwig felt very happy. "You have been kind to me; you have been patient and you have helped me. I thank you with all my heart. I'll come back."

It was time to set out for home, and the two boys were filled with joy. As Lutsk, their native city, with all its church steeples came in sight, they told each other that no city was as splendid as Lutsk, the capital of the Ukrainian province of Volhynia. It was no longer a poor city; it had become prosperous. Arriving at the station, the boys found their fathers waiting for them with their horses and buggies. The city had never before looked so magnificent. Even though it could not compare with Lvov, it was good to be home again.

The train stopped and the two fathers stood there to greet their sons with open arms. They could not drive home together —the Karluks lived on the right side of the Styr, while the Lemkes lived on the other and had to drive through the city and over the bridge.

The ride home was an experience for Ludwig. Across from the station stood the barracks. It was once inhabited by the Russians; during one period it was commanded by General Topelush himself. Now Polish soldiers were drilling on the grounds. When they came to a valley, Ludwig, who had been eager to drive the team, had trouble holding the horses back.

The buggy, indeed, literally pushed the horses and they, as if knowing they had to take home a dear guest, were as swift as rabbits. Lemke almost lost his cap; the wind howled about their ears and the buggy made a terrific noise on the cobblestones. It sounded as if five tanks were rumbling against an enemy. "We are going as fast as a train!" yelled Lemke. They slowed down as the road started uphill. The Orthodox cathedral came into view; then the long main street with neat business houses on both sides; a few houses were three stories high. One could now buy more than cart-grease, petroleum, matches, and salt-herrings, the only items the immigrants had found in the stores of Lutsk. There were all kinds of cosmetics, cameras, bikes, the finest dresses, suits, and shoes, all the newest fashions of Paris and New York, fine restaurants and bakeries. In the market place the farmers had their products exhibited.

"Yes, our Lutsk may not be as big as Lvov, but it is a lively city," observed Ludwig.

They rolled over the wooden bridge into a suburb and were soon in the country. Ludwig's eyes, long accustomed to high buildings, could now see the horizon where earth and sky met. He saw a sea of grain turning a golden yellow. The harvest was not far away. It felt wonderful to be back again.

At home he was greeted by the farm hands, Frank and Paul. They had been with Lemke for years. Then there was Maria. She was old; her husband had passed away years ago and her son had been with Lemke on the Turkish front but never returned. She lived with the Lemkes, helping around as much as she could.

When dinner was over and they had rested, Lemke said: "Tell me, son, what did you learn—what do you know?"

"I learned a lot, but I sometimes feel I do not know anything. There is so much I have yet to learn."

His father sighed. "I did not have the opportunity to study.

I might have become a real smart fellow. But I know the Holy Scripture and some things about farming."

And he was right. When Ludwig returned from Siberia, the farm was a wilderness—a picture of utter destruction. The soil was torn up by thousands of grenades and shells in the year-long battle between the Russians and the Austrians. There was no trace of a building. Reconstructing the farm was harder than the clearing of the forest. Thousands of shell fragments had to be gathered up, barbed wire had to be torn from poles and shaped into rolls resembling mighty wheels. The hardest work was filling in the deep trenches and grenade holes. Ludwig had helped his father clear up that mess and his hands were still rough and often bled. Building material had to be bought and transported home. New buildings had to be erected. As the years went by, Lemke, with the help of his farm hands and his son, accomplished much. He was an industrious farmer. People who worked for him loved him. He treated them justly and paid them well for their work.

Lemke was proud of his good reputation. "Yes, they call me a good boss. I am happy about that. But I live my life for you, Ludwig, my only son." He was quiet for a while; then he said, more to himself: "It is good to live for somebody; it's rewarding, the best part of life."

The next day, Lemke asked, "How is Ivan doing? Do you think he will become a good priest?"

Ludwig hesitated for a moment. "Well . . . didn't Christ say that no one can serve two lords? That's what Ivan is doing."

"What do you mean?"

"Ivan should be more concerned with the invisible kingdom instead of with Ukraine. He has only one dream every night and that is Ukraine. A clergyman should disregard the world and live only for the kingdom above. Am I right?"

"In this case you are wrong, my son," answered Lemke. "One should also love this world created for you to live on; one should admire the Creator's handiwork in every living creature, in every leaf on a tree or a bush. And you must love

the nation of your fathers. Only when you love your own people and land, will you be able to love others. As far as Ivan is concerned, his nation is politically dead. Ukraine is occupied by the Poles, Bolsheviks, Rumanians, and even the Czechs. His fatherland is dismembered and sick. I was told that parents love their sick children more than the healthy ones. It's only natural that all Ukrainians, heartbroken over their oppressed fatherland, love it so much. But the truth is all around us—Ukraine just does not exist."

Ludwig was lost in his thoughts. Then he asked, "What about us? Do we have a fatherland? Is Poland our fatherland?"

Lemke shook his head. "No, Poland is not our fatherland. Although we live within her borders and are citizens, the Poles will never regard us as Poles. We do not have a Polish name and we are not Catholics."

"Is it Germany? It is a beautiful country," sighed Ludwig.

Lemke's expression changed almost immediately. His brow became furrowed and a faraway look came into his eyes. He did not answer; he turned and walked away.

"Strange," murmured Ludwig. "He never talks to me about Germany."

The next day was Sunday. Father and son left for church. The church stood on the other side of the street, apart from the farmhouses. The people came slowly, in groups, talking with one another. In the churchyard there were greeetings. Everybody had the regular songbook under his arm; the woman held bundles of flowers in their hands, lifting them to their nostrils from time to time. All of them came to shake hands with Ludwig. The children he had played with, however, stood aside until he went to them and said: "Don't you know me anymore?" They looked at the ground. Finally one said: "You are a student in a faraway city now."

"Have I changed that much? Maybe I grew a little, but I feel I am the same. And we must still be friends. Now, let's go inside."

They all went together and the boys sat on one bench. The

songs flooded the edifice so sweetly that tears ran down Ludwig's cheeks. His father saw how Ludwig was overcome with emotion—he loves the worship service; he loves the house of the Lord; he will become a good preacher.

That afternoon, after the Lemkes had finished their Sunday dinner, the family retired to the parlor. The next day was to be a holiday. St. John's Day, the 24th of June! Actually, the colonists were often confused about that day. Was it a holy day or not? No one did hard work on that day. But everybody prepared for the hay harvest the day after St. John's. The settlers began to mow their meadows and from that day on, harvesting did not stop until the potatoes were reaped in October. After the hay harvest, came barley, then rye, wheat, oats, and finally the potatoes. St. John's Day was a happy day, but it also meant the beginning of hard work. The scythes were taken out, put on little anvils, and the edge of the blade hammered to make it thin. Then the whetstone made it as sharp as a razor blade. In every farmyard of the colony could be heard banging, a tingling noise that added a merry note to the lives of the people. Sunrise of the next day saw the colonists on their way to the meadow. All day long the mowers were diligently at work; among them worked Ludwig.

They mowed toward the river. Reaching out to the right and pulling the scythe in a circle to the left, they left long rows of mown grass behind them. It was hard work. The patches with reeds were especially difficult. By sunset the shiny surface of the river came into view, and the mowers rejoiced. The first day of harvest was over. The mowers threw off their clothes and jumped into the cool water. Soon the clear blue waters were a scene of splashing, diving, and laughing. Afterward they gathered on the bank. The young did more wisecracking and bragging than logical talking. However, young people are usually dreamers and this was acceptable and understood.

Suddenly Frank, Lemke's farm hand with the round friendly face, pointed to a mighty pine tree with huge branches spread-

ing out over the river. The mowers looked up and saw a hawk nest on one of the branches. Two young hawks stuck their heads out, bent their necks in anger, and cried in shrill voices.

"They must be destroyed; they steal our chickens!" shouted the farmers.

But who would climb the tree? The village boys would dare almost anything to look smart and be regarded as heroes, but they hesitated. "The tree is too thick, the bark too slippery, and the nest far out over the water," they observed.

"And the mother still remains to swoop down on an intruder," one old farmer shook his head sadly.

So the mowers left the nest where they found it and went home to rest. Many more days of hard work lay ahead.

The next morning, Ludwig thought his ribs were broken. He was one mass of aches and pains from the hard labor.

"I should have known better," said Lemke. "He is too young for mowing; he's not used to such hard labor after that year of school. Stay home and help Marie," the father suggested.

But Ludwig shook his head. "I want to be where the hard work is done." And so he went along. But he could not mow that day.

"Let me see," said the father. He took one look and declared: "Your ribs are swollen. No more work for you today."

Ludwig went toward the forest. Looking back, he felt guilty and ashamed that his father had to work while he was loafing. He came to the river. The hawk nest was still there, but he did not see any of the young. Were they still asleep? He sat down by the river and let his feet dangle in the water. Reeds grew by the river side. Gusts of wind were rushing through them, causing the fairly long leaves to quiver from side to side. He looked up and saw an aspen tree next to the pine tree with the hawk nest. How different the trembling of its leaves are, he observed. It was as if they were joyfully excited whenever a gust of wind blew at the tree. To Ludwig

it was a beautiful play of nature. Before him in the water grew the water lilies which he could touch with his feet. The water lilies had their roots in the bottom of the river. A flexible stalk grew toward the surface where they developed large round leaves surrounding a flower resembling a beautiful rose blossom. Having accomplished their goal, the lilies served no other purpose except to rest on the water surface—a picture of peace and contentment. Always at rest? No! A stronger current would come along and submerge the flower and the leaves. Soon the stronger current passed; the flower and leaves emerged, sparkling and more lovely than before.

Ludwig jumped into the water near the bank, to pull out a water lily stem. He was due for a surprise; it was stronger than he thought. Finally it broke. It felt soft and flexible, and yet it was so strong. This was necessary to resist the continuous pull of the flowing water currents. Ludwig marvelled at the wonders and wisdom of nature. He looked around. There was such a great variety of plants and insects. There was a time when all the earth was void and empty, and everything had to be planned and designed in the mind of that great Builder and Creator of all things. Suddenly he was possessed with a great love for the Master Architect. The sun rose higher and higher and the Styr reflected the sun rays in such a brilliance that Ludwig had to close his eyes. When he opened them after a long while, he saw Ivan coming down the river in a canoe.

"I knew you were here," Ivan called to his friend, jumping out of his boat. "Why aren't you in the fields?"

"I'm sick, I guess," said Ludwig.

"Too much mowing the first day, eh?"

"True," replied Ludwig.

"In a week we'll start mowing barley, but I won't overdo it the first day," said Ivan.

"Look at the water lilies."

Both boys looked into the sparkling stream. They saw the trees on the other side of the bank as if they were standing on their tops. They also saw the smoke pillar reflected in the clear

greenish river water. The boys looked up and saw the smoke rising over the forest into the blue sky. The potters were busy.

Ivan pointed at all the beauty of nature about them. "Isn't our homeland beautiful?"

"Yes, indeed; there is no better land in the whole world."

"Let's row to the other side," suggested Ivan.

And this they did. They climbed the high river bank through underbrush and thorny tangle. When they reached the top, they looked through pine tree branches, seeing the long line of mowers moving toward the river. The two boys now entered the forest. It was like a huge cathedral, dimly lit and solemn. Strong bundles of sunlight beamed through the mighty treetops and the foliage of smaller trees.

They discovered large patches of delicious and fragrant wild blueberries. After they had picked enough and their hands and mouths were blue all over, they sat in the grass at the foot of a thick oak tree. Looking at Ludwig's face, Ivan asked: "Did you start shaving already?"

Ludwig stroked his chin. "Haven't thought of it yet. Why?"

"I had trouble with my father. I took his shaving knife accidently and he said, "That's not for you. You shall never shave in your life. All our old priests grew long hair which reached down their backs and long beards to their very belts. The younger ones, not caring much for old traditions, and so becoming less dedicated priests, shave their beards and keep their hair short.' If I neither shave nor cut my hair until I graduate, I'll have a beard to my belt and hair that reaches far down the opposite side of my body!" Ivan looked troubled. "How will I appear on the streets of Lvov without making the people turn their heads after me? And how shall I mingle with my classmates?"

Both looked at each other and started laughing so loud that a crow took off from the tree under which the boys were sitting. After they had quieted down, Ivan said: "The trouble is, my father means it."

"I'll talk to my father. We'll come over on Sunday after-

noon and maybe he'll talk to your father," promised Ludwig.

"He will listen to your father," said Ivan, comforted.

The next Sunday afternoon, the Lemkes left for Karluk's village. They went along meadow path. The mowing was finished, the grass had dried, been raked, and was now placed into big haystacks.

As they approached the village, Lemke said: "Look for the cross."

"There it is!" exclaimed Ludwig with excitement.

"The peculiar thing is that it seems as if it were sticking out of the ground right in the middle of this ancient road. No roof, no tree around, just the cross, and it radiates in golden splendor," observed the older man.

They continued the journey and soon stood at the edge of the valley, looking down into a little paradise. In the center there was a glittering pond, and on both sides on tender slopes stood the whitewashed houses partially hidden by cherry trees.

Silverhead and Ludwig were heartily greeted by the Karluk family. Lemke looked at his friend's wife. "If ever there was a rose of Sharon in this world, I swear she is it. She was just a bud when I saw her the first time with my father, but now she is a rose and developing into a greater beauty every time I see her."

The mayor's wife shook her finger at Silverhead. "Be quiet, you flatterer. You make my Blackie jealous."

"The truth is still the truth. We must have truth or the world perishes," answered Silverhead.

Blackie turned around. He heard Lemke's last remark but, not knowing what had preceded it, said: "Lemke is right, truths must be repeated."

"The truth is that your wife is the most lovely woman on the whole globe. That is what I was talking about."

Blackie flashed a good-natured grin. "I guess I have to keep an eye on you." This made all of them roar with laughter.

They were invited to the table where the mother placed before them black rye bread, butter, sour milk, pickles, and

honey. Pickles and honey? This seemingly strange combination has the most harmonious, spicy taste of all the world's culinary concoctions. And the cool sour milk with butter and black bread could hardly be refused after a long march on a hot summer day. After they had eaten, Lemke said to Ivan: "When are you going to have a haircut?"

Blackie looked puzzled. "So that's why I haven't seen you around the whole day! You went with your trouble to Ludwig and he told his father that you have to grow long hair and a long beard."

"You don't mean it, friend," frowned Silverhead.

"Never have I been more serious than now," emphasized Blackie. "He will be a priest, and a priest has to have a long beard and long hair. That has been a custom in our land for centuries. Look," Blackie pointed to a corner of the room, "that is St. Nicholas—see, he has long hair and a beard. There is St. Volodymyr; he looks like Nicholas. And the other saints over there; not one is shaved. What will happen if we neglect our most sacred customs? A man of God should look dignified." Blackie looked at his wife. "Isn't that true, honey?"

But his wife kept silent.

Lemke rose. "Blackie," he began, "there is more to being a man of God than having a long beard. Your spiritual life decides if you are a man of God or not. Besides, you have already given up much of the old. Look at your beautiful new home. You once lived in an old and smaller one, with a clay floor. Now you have new furniture and a wooden varnished floor. You have better farm tools and a nice new buggy. But still you say pastors should walk around as they did a thousand years ago. Don't you believe in progress?"

Karluk jumped to his feet. "But a long mustache he should have! Look at mine; his must be just as long."

"Why?" demanded Lemke.

"Because my ancestors were Kozaks, the most famous warriors of their day. They chased the Poles and Turks out of Ukraine and did battle with the Tartars and the Muscovites.

All of my ancestors were Kozaks and officers. One was an adjutant of the famous Colonel Bohun, an army leader the world had not had before and will never have again. It was said Bohun could stand on a hill and shout his orders in such a thundering voice that the onrushing Polish hussars would stop dead in their tracks. Such a man was Bohun."

Ludwig and Ivan laughed.

"What's so funny?" the mayor demanded.

"The Polish hussars would have hardly retreated from mere shouting," said Ludwig. "In those days both man and horse wore armor plating and were hard to stop. It was during the siege of Vienna by the Turks that the emperor sent a message to the Polish king Sobieski, asking for help. The king had one answer: *I come.* He took three thousand hussars and rode day and night. When he arrived in Vienna, the battle was raging, but he disregarded his tiredness and hunger and rushed right on. He plowed from behind, right through the Turkish camp. Turning about, the Polish army plowed again through the Turkish *janitschars,* crushing and smashing all resistance. The hussars were the tanks of their time."

"But why were the Kozaks always victorious?" wondered Lemke.

"On rainy days the hussars could not ride. The ground became soft and the Kozaks were greater in number, and brave," explained Ludwig.

"Brave," repeated the mayor. "Ludwig, I like that word. The Kozaks, that means my forefathers were brave. Let's shake hands."

The two shook hands and were friends again. It was agreed that Ivan had to grow a long mustache only to indicate he was a descendant of the once famous Ukrainian soldiers. The boys left to join the other village boys. The old folks went for a walk, down to the pond with its large patches of marshy ground and dark willow bushes, and on to church. The large yard with the church in the middle was surrounded by a high hedge. The pond reflected both the church and the houses

standing half way up the slope. Tiny waves seemed to shake the golden cross and to bend it many times, but it straightened out as soon as the little waves had stopped.

Across the street stood the parsonage in a large apple orchard in which were many cherry trees. There was no fence, and the three entered the orchard and sat down under a cherry tree.

"Is the priest at home?" asked Lemke.

"Yes, but he does not mingle with the people," replied the mayor.

"Has he a good income?" Lemke wanted to know.

"Very good, one hundred acres of land belong to the church. Besides the money he receives for his services, he receives much food from the townspeople."

"Is he a Muscovite?" asked Lemke.

"No, we have no more Muscovites in our churches. Ukrainians are priests in our churches now," Blackie informed his friend.

Lemke was gazing at the golden cross. He seemed to be lost in his thoughts. Blackie noticed his preoccupation and said: "Your father was greatly comforted when he saw this cross for the first time."

"Yes, he told me that," replied Lemke absentmindedly.

"Will you tell Lemke the story about Genghis Khan and the cross, Father?" asked Blackie's wife.

Lemke was suddenly awake. He shook his head as if he had to recover his hearing. "Did I hear right? What possible relationship could this church have with that monster Genghis Khan?"

His friend Karluk told him the following story: "There was a time when the church and its cross saved our village from annihilation. Genghis Kahn was sweeping through the land with his hordes, burning and pillaging everything in sight. One day he approached our village by the very road you did, and he suddenly saw the church with its radiant cross. He stopped his horse and marvelled. It was a bright summer day

and as he rode into the village, he discovered that all the people had gathered in the church in fear of the Mongols. Genghis Khan looked up at the cross and said to his officers: 'Behold this friendly and peaceful scene. No one should harm these people.' And he rode away. Our people have always believed that our cross caused him to have a change of heart."

Lemke was deeply touched. "The cross saved the village from death! But isn't that symbolic of the real meaning of the cross of Calvary, saving people from eternal death?"

All three sat for a long while, lost in their thoughts. Then they rose and went back to the mayor's house. They were wondering about the boys when suddenly they heard a peculiar noise up on the slope. They went up and saw the boys lying on their bellies, looking over the edge and banging away with sticks on a small board.

"What's that?" asked the mayor.

"Machine-gun fire," answered Ivan.

"Machine-gun fire?" asked Lemke.

"Yes," said Ivan, rising to one knee. "Do you see that even field to the northwest? Let's assume an enemy surges out of that forest and tries to reach our valley. Here, where we are, however, lies a company dug in with machine guns and rifles. Farther back, the company's mortars are defending this village in the valley. So a relatively small force is able to hold down a strong enemy."

"Your grandfathers chose the wrong profession for you!" said the mother, sharing amazement with the father.

"You should become officers," said Ivan's father.

"You mean officers in a free Ukrainian army?" asked Ivan.

"There is no Ukrainian army," answered Lemke.

"But there will be one," assured Ludwig, rising from his knees.

Lemke was infuriated and decided to put his foot down. "Now wait a minute, you young whippersnapper, let's get this straight. The world has plenty of officers, bricklayers, attorneys, carpenters, horse dealers, and blacksmiths. What the world

needs today is dedicated pastors—pastors who can weep with those who weep and rejoice with the rejoicing. The human heart longs for understanding. You would be surprised how many people cannot cope with life's problems. They feel alone, forsaken, and forgotten. They begin to fear the future, and soon despair grips their hearts. Some end their days in mental institutions. And yet, there is so much that can be done. A pastor's comforting word is like a ray of sun breaking through dark clouds, illuminating the land, driving the darkness away, and making the people rejoice. His presence has helped many a crying soul and cleared up many a troubled mind. Why has Christ's impact been felt through two thousand years? Because He offered divine mercy for those who labor and are heavy laden. He loved those that were downtrodden in spirit and body. He put his finger where it hurt the most—on guilt and sin—and He blots them out and makes the conscience clear. And that's what you must preach to make people rejoice. Do you understand?"

The boys nodded.

"I hope so," Lemke continued. "And don't play your war game any more! Your battlefields will be the villages and the towns. There you will go and fight crime and sin, sorrow and grief, in the name of the Lord."

As they started down the hill, Blackie stopped and spoke to Lemke: "Silverhead, my friend, are you not digging a little too deeply with your religious beliefs?"

Lemke hesitated for a moment and then, looking his friend straight in the eye, asked: "You are a farmer. When is your golden harvest grain the most rewarding and most bountiful?"

"When I plow real deep," answered Karluk, understanding the point.

They went on down the hill. The sun was almost setting as Ivan's canoe carried Silverhead and his son to their meadow. Walking home, Silverhead was content.

Lemke was pleased with his visit to the Karluks. He had saved Ivan from wearing long hair and a beard. He had given

the boys a piece of his mind; he had flattered his friend's beautiful wife, and he had heard the story about Genghis Khan and the church.

Soon the grain harvest started. Ludwig did his share of the work until the time came when he and Ivan were on the train again, bound for Lvov.

9. *Ludwig Finds a Sweetheart*

ARRIVING at Lvov, Ludwig was warmly greeted by the Lowensteins. They had remodeled his room while he was gone. "For the convenience of our young friend," smiled Lowenstein in his friendly way. Ludwig liked that smile. Having experienced hardship in his young life, he was grateful for every sign of kindness.

Lowenstein did not have an easy life. The owner of a small grocery store with only average sales, he worked very hard. He spent the whole day on his feet, weighing, packing, and wrapping. Ludwig felt sorry for him, seeing him sitting after work in his chair, too tired to get up for dinner. It was often said that Jews did not want to work. Ludwig knew better. He saw plenty of Jews: tailors, shoemakers, carpenters, capmakers, plumbers, buggy makers, and blacksmiths, working by the sweat of their brows and often not earning enough for a decent living. They were always good workers.

One day after school, Ludwig went into the store and started to help Lowenstein. Lowenstein stepped into Ludwig's room later and put some money on his table. "For your work," he said. But Ludwig would not hear of it. He did not help him for money. To Ludwig, helping a person did not mean cash payments. In his colony, people helped one another, never thinking of money. Besides, he didn't need the money. His father sent the Lowensteins the money for his room and board every month and Ludwig received an allowance besides. No, Ludwig didn't take any money, but continued to help the Lowensteins whenever his time permitted. He was happy to be of help.

His friends in school also greeted him most cordially. Lud-

wig had spoken only German and Ukrainian during his vacation, and so he had some difficulties for a few days. Soon, however, he was able to adjust again to the Polish language. But during his second day in Lvov, Ludwig began to feel unhappy and he realized that he was homesick. For a few days he really had it bad. Ivan, who visited him, admitted to the same feeling. Both went up to the High Castle on Sunday and looked longingly to the north, to their homeland. But they did not cry this year as they had a year ago, when their fathers had left. Now they were almost adults. Ludwig had even started to shave. How could they cry from homesickness again?

"There will be another vacation," Ludwig tried to comfort his friend.

"But it will be a long time," Ivan remarked moodily.

"Looking ahead a year seems endless, but looking back it's really not so long." Ludwig was always the wiser of the two.

He was right. That second year passed swiftly and another vacation was approaching. But this time they decided to take a trip into the Carpathian Mountains. It was not so important now to go home.

The station at Lvov was big and impressive. There was laughter and joy there that morning because hundreds of students were going home. There were some elderly passengers, too. A peasant couple sat facing the two boys. The husband, looking happily through the car window, said to his wife: "Look, what a beautiful building! This mighty station-hall was built by our great Ukrainian Prince Volodymyr." There was pride in his voice.

She nodded. "Yes, I see. He was a great ruler."

The boys smiled; the Ukrainian Prince Volodymyr had lived and reigned over one thousand years ago! The railroad from Vienna to Lvov and the station building were built by the Austrian Kaiser, Franz Joseph I, fifty years before. The boys were appreciative of the great patriotism of the peasant couple, even though their history was not accurate. It was a good sign.

Rolling slowly out of the station, the train was soon speeding along in the sunny morning. Steeples and domes of the many churches and cathedrals grew smaller and smaller until they finally disappeared. They were traveling southeast, through hills, forests, and broad fields, with fields of grain on either side.

After several hours, the blue ridges of the Carpathian Mountains began to show on the far horizon. As they drew nearer, the friends were deeply moved by the majesty of this new world. Ludwig laid his hand upon Ivan's shoulder. "Now do you understand that it was impossible for your father to see these Carpathians from the High Castle at Lvov?"

"Yes, but he saw them as he sees all of his oppressed country, day and night, awake or sleeping, because he loves it so much."

The train was going slower because of the steep grades, the engine making a noise as though tormented. Finally they reached the foot of the Carpathians. The boys alighted and stood in awe between a towering dark mountain and a rushing creek. Coming from the plains with only low hills, they could sense the might and greatness of the Creator.

As they stood gazing about, a man approached, recognizing that they were strangers. "I am the village school teacher. Where are you going?"

"Into the mountains," said Ivan.

"Have you a guide?" asked the teacher.

Both shook their heads.

"Oh, holy carelessness!" he exclaimed. "I wish I were like you. Come with me."

They crossed the creek and came to a village, which they had not seen before because of the trees. Ludwig looked at the teacher striding along joyfully between them. He seemed to be in his middle fifties, tall, with much gray hair, and a pleasant smile. The teacher went into a store, asking the boys to wait. He shortly returned with a bag of food, which Ludwig carried for him.

They went up a little hill at the foot of the dark mountain. They saw a schoolhouse surrounded by pine trees, and not far from it was the teacher's house. It was a fairly long, but in no way a tall building. The walls were built of pine-tree trunks. The houses of the other villagers were of the same material, all low and strong, obviously to resist the storms and cold winter. They entered through a low door, passing directly into a large room where a woman, seated in a chair of willow-wands, was busy with her needlework.

"My wife," introduced the teacher. "I have brought some guests, Marusia. I found these two students lost beyond the creek. They intend to ascend our mountains. They have never seen such high mountains before. They have no guide or lodgings."

The teacher's friendly wife arose and shook hands with the boys. She had great beauty, dignity, and humility. "We do not often have guests in our lonely village," she said. "Make yourselves at home."

The boys sat down while the teacher and his wife went into the kitchen to prepare food for the hungry boys. Just then they heard singing in the garden. A young girl, obviously, was just outside the house. Then a pair of eyes looked through the window. They belonged to a beautiful girl carrying a basket of strawberries. Ivan twisted his mustache, which was not yet very long. The girl opened the door and stood in surprise. After a moment, she said, "My name is Olga. My father is the teacher."

The boys rose shyly. Ivan tried to speak, but found it difficult. He was overcome by the girl's exquisite beauty. Ludwig spoke: "We are students from Lvov. My name is Ludwig, and this is my friend Ivan. We are somewhat taken aback because we do not stand before such loveliness every day."

Olga blushed. Her father came in and explained to his daughter how he had found the two students and brought them home. There was much laughter in the house. Ludwig looked

again at the maiden. She turned to him. "I understand German. I am studying it in the gymnasium."

Ivan rubbed his eyes and looked at the girl; she smiled and went to join her parents in the kitchen. She was the loveliest girl the two friends had ever seen, with soft brown hair, shining gray eyes, and a beautiful pink and white complexion. Her form was slim and straight and firm like the pine tree on the hilltop. Just the kind of girl the poet Schevchenko loved to write about.

While the boys ate, Olga told the boys that she, too, intended to study next year in Lvov. She planned to become a teacher, like her father. After they had eaten, they all went down to the rushing creek where they fished and later swam in the sparkling waters. The sun was setting behind the mountains when they returned to the teacher's house. Supper had already been prepared and was waiting for them.

Ludwig was seated where he could admire Olga's fine features. Her white teeth glistened when she laughed. Her eyes spoke of a well-balanced personality. She certainly was a captivating girl. Her mother, too, was a fine woman; he felt this instinctively. He had lost his mother when he was only eight, and now he felt the yearning to have this woman as his mother and Olga as a sister.

After supper, Olga and Ludwig washed and wiped the dishes. Their eyes met often. Ivan and the teacher were discussing history. The mother looked at Ludwig and Olga and smiled wisely. Ludwig had not seen such a motherly smile for many years. When the work was done, they all gathered in the living room. Ludwig chose a seat next to Olga's mother. Unable to keep his feelings to himself, he exclaimed: "I am so happy! I can dream how it must be to have a mother like you!"

"Where is your mother?" asked Marusia.

"My mother has rested for many years in the soil of Siberia."

Marusia looked at him and tears glistened in her eyes.

"Poor boy! Please feel as though you were in your own home, with your mother. I have often longed for a son."

"Blessed be this home!" responded Ludwig.

Olga came and sat down next to him. Marusia looked at both and knew that here was the beginning of a lasting love. As for Ludwig, a new day had begun, a new life had dawned. He felt he had found people who were more than mere well-wishers; people who were ready to take him into their family circle, to show him warmth and love. At last he was going to have a mother and sweetheart. He felt safe and secure as never before since his mother had died far away in Siberia. He could live with these people forever; that was how happy he felt!

It was late when they went to bed. The boys slept in an upstairs room. Ivan was tired, but before closing his eyes, he said in a whisper: "Olga loves you, and I'm not at all jealous. Yes, yes, you belong to each other. I know, I know." Soon he was fast asleep.

Ludwig was not as tired as that. The rushing creek sang to him the song of a tender beginning on a mountaintop, growing to a mighty river flowing through the land. "Isn't that the way of love?" he whispered. "O creek, thy song is so sweet!" Then he, too, fell asleep. He heard the sound of the creek all through the night. It made him dream of happiness and a bright tomorrow.

The next morning, Olga volunteered to be their guide, and so the three went up the mountain. It was hard climbing for the boys who were not used to it, but not for Olga. After several hours of difficult climbing, they reached the top and stood gazing at the mountain world before them. They were deeply touched by the majesty of those giants. Hunger finally compelled them to sit down and eat of the good food Olga's mother had provided.

Olga pointed down the mountain. "Getting to the top was a hard task. We can't see our village from here."

"Yes," said Ludwig, "I am inclined to compare life with the climbing of a rough mountain. Our outlook from here,

however, is beautiful and the air is very easy to breathe. That is the reward for sweat and effort."

After they had rested, Olga said: "Let's go over to that ridge. From there you can see Czechoslovakia." She pointed. "Look down this way. See the wide valley? That's an alpine pasture where many cattle feed, both from our village and from others. They are driven up here in the spring and taken back in the fall. There are many chalets there."

Their curiosity aroused, the young men, led by Olga, hurried down the mountain. The descent was not easy. The boys' knees were soon weary, but they dared not admit it to the girl and kept right on. The sun was almost setting when they heard the barking of a dog and the laughter of girls. They came upon a herd of cows being milked by joyful girls who came running to welcome them. Olga knew them all, and they spent a pleasant evening with these mountain dairy folks. The milk, butter, and cheese were the best the two boys had ever tasted. They would long remember this alpine village with its friendly folk.

10. A Mountain Patriot

THE next morning one of the herdsmen went up to the ridges with the climbers. Walking over the lush alpine pastures, with the fat beef cattle looking friendly and confidently at them, they came upon the skeletons of five cows. The herdsman explained: "Killed by a mother bear. One of the cows attacked a little cub. The mother went into a rage and killed all five cows in a few minutes. Always be on the watch for a bear. They are powerful killers."

The trio then went into the forest. Ivan's eyes tried to penetrate the thick foliage but it was too dense. They began to ascend again. It was pleasant and cool in the shade, but soon they left the trees behind. Only brush bordered the path. Higher and higher, with much effort, they continued toward the bare rocks of the summit. Finally they stood at the top. All of them were breathing hard from the exertion.

The herdsman pointed his stick. "We are now standing on the border between Poland and Czechoslovakia."

"No!" said a strange voice. A border guard stood before them. "You are now on Czechoslovakian soil. You are all under arrest."

Olga smiled and said in Ukrainian: "You don't look that mean. You wouldn't put us in jail, would you?"

"Oh, you are Ukrainians!" said the soldier, with a grin. "That is different. I couldn't put such a lovely girl in jail. Are all of you Ukrainians?"

"Yes," said Ivan proudly. "We are Ukrainians. This fellow is a German."

"You are all members of a minority group, like me. I am not a Czech, but a Slovak. I would not arrest you, for you are

not really standing on Czech soil. Look," he stretched out his arm to the south. "All the mountains you can see are really Slovakian mountains, my mountains. To the north, from where you came, are your mountains, Ukrainian mountains. Both were given in the Treaty of Versailles to foreign people. Woodrow Wilson came here after the World War with his fourteen points on which to make peace. According to one of them, all nations would obtain the right of self-determination. Actually, it was not given either to us or to you. We had to join the Czechs to form a state—Czechoslovakia—and your Ukraine is divided among many peoples—Poles, Russians, Rumanians. And what about the Sudetenland? There was no self-determination there, either. The Germans had to join Czechoslovakia. The Allies gave strong arguments to Hitler, who is climbing to power in Germany right now. Why didn't Wilson *insist* upon the policy of self-determination? Because the plotter and intriguer, the friend of the Russians, Jan Masaryk, put his fingers into this pie. After the outbreak of the World War, he ran from government to government of the Allies, making propaganda for his scheme of stealing other people's land, to create his state. He even hurried to Japan, always talking in favor of the Muscovites. Finally he hit the soft spot—Woodrow Wilson, advising him among other things to recognize those Bolsheviks and to strengthen Russia, not to weaken her by the self-determination of her enslaved nations —the greatest two of whom were Ukraine and White Russia. Remember also the Armenians, Georgians, Asserbeidshans, Tadshiks, Kasachs, and others, longing for freedom from the Muscovites' yoke.

"Masaryk advised the old makers of the Treaty of Versailles to leave his bosom friend, Russia, strong as a backing and cover against Germany. Woodrow Wilson capitulated. The other aged peacemakers mocked the idea of self-determination. If Wilson had insisted upon his noble idea, Ukraine would be free today. Without Ukraine with her rich soil and industrial potential, the Communists could have never existed. The Czechs,

however, will get their reward. For whatever one does in dealing with the Muscovites, he'll get hurt. The punishment is even greater when dealing with Red Muscovites.

"Wilson held his finger on the pulse beat of history, but he failed. And so the world is now headed for trouble." He suddenly grew angry. "America is called by Providence to lead the world, but her presidents don't know of the nations of the world, their desires and their aspirations. What's the matter with the schools in America? Don't they teach geography? Their blunders will cost the world blood and tears in the decades to come!"

"You are a wise man," said Olga, when none of them could give any reply.

"Well, I have attended college, and after my term of service here, I am going to study theology," he said.

"Which theology?"

"I am a Lutheran."

"How interesting," observed Olga. "I seem to be in a fellowship of clergymen. This dark fellow with the mustache is going to be an Orthodox priest. This blond student will become a Baptist pastor. You are a Lutheran."

"Yes," nodded the soldier. "All of my Slovakia was once Lutheran, but then the Catholic Jesuits came with their counter-Reformation. They converted many of our people to their church. They worked in my village, too, for a number of years, but had very small success. Eventually the Jesuits disappeared. Later, Maria Theresa again started the work of conversion in my village. She sent a priest, who built a church and a parsonage. For years he lived in our village, leading a fine life, without people or work. But he left during the World War. Now that fine big church belongs to us. It is a splendid Lutheran church. My aim in life is to become a pastor in my own village. You will understand that a faith that cost so much is loved by every one of us."

The future Lutheran pastor stood looking dreamily over snow-covered mountains into his own land. He stretched out

his arm. "Look, between those two white peaks, in the blue mist of the far horizon, you may see a ridge; beyond that ridge, turning to the left and then to the right, going down and up again, you will look down into a valley. There lies my village with its large church, and lofty white steeple.

"In this village of mine, I shall some day be pastor and serve my church in an independent and free Slovakia." Preparing to leave, the soldier added: "It has been a joy to meet and talk with you. When the Lord gives us and the Ukrainians freedom, we shall be neighbors, state neighbors, and perhaps we will meet again. Now you must go for soon my superior officer, a Czech, will come and he would arrest you because you are on our soil."

They all said their farewells and parted.

"My father thinks that as long as there is injustice on earth, wars will continue," said Ivan, after a while.

"But war is bad. Christian nations should be able to provide a better remedy. We've had two thousand years of Christian history. And yet hatred, fighting, injustice, and lying seem more prevalent in the so-called Christian countries than in heathen lands," said Olga, sorrowfully. "But I know that this is a Christianity without Christ." She looked at Ivan and Ludwig. "You are both going to become pastors. Your duty is to preach of sin and of righteousness."

Ludwig took Olga's hand. "Yes, I will. I wish you could help me."

A blushing glance was his reward. "Of course I will," she answered in a low voice.

As they approached where the bear had killed the five cows, Ivan's dark eyes shifted suspiciously to the right and to the left. The herdsman pointed with his stick. "Over there are our chalets, sheds, and grazing cattle. We have peace there. In all the long years I have been here, the wild bear struck only once, and only because her cub was attacked first. The worried people can move into the mountains and live in peace."

"I doubt," said Olga, "if there may not be quarrels and

fighting even here. If only they would realize that they are children of one Father who loves them all! They have to love the great Creator and each other as brethren."

Ivan walked in silence. They reached the chalets and all sat down to eat the black bread brought in by a mule-rider every week, the cool milk, the fresh butter, and the cheese. It was a wonderful refreshment to the tired, hungry, and thirsty group. A quiet evening followed. It was a sweet moment for Ludwig as he and Olga sat on a rock not far from the resting cattle. The stars were shining brightly. The rocks behind the trees stood silent and solemn, witnesses of God's might and grandeur. The only sound was the murmuring of a nearby spring. Olga seemed sad. She lowered her head and looked at the rushing water.

"Why are you sad?" asked Ludwig, noticing her contemplative attitude.

"That soldier reminded me of *our* distresses. He said that these mountains rightly belong to Ukraine."

"Do not be sad. The Ruler of all nations is the Almighty. He will help us in His own time," Ludwig consoled her.

She looked thankfully at him. "You are truly my friend."

"Some day I hope to be more than a friend," said Ludwig, gently putting his arm around her as his heart warmed to this unaccustomed tenderness. She was silent, and he gently drew her head down upon his chest. After a few moments, he ventured to raise her face and kiss the delicate and pure lips.

"I will love you as long as I live," declared Ludwig.

Olga smiled. "This is the happiest hour I have ever had. I will belong to you all my life." She leaned against him. "I am so happy! Happiness is ours in this world of unrest. We belong to one another. That is so very precious to both of us."

"Yes, love will win the battle and create a new and happy age," cried Ludwig as he kissed his Olga again. They heard sweet music in that happy hour. The nightingales began to sing so sweetly that tears of joy ran down their cheeks. The moon came up over a high ridge. The water in the pond

shone like silver. Olga said, "The rising moon is an omen of good fortune. Our country will likewise rise to become free and happy."

The next morning Olga and the boys said farewell to the hospitable Alpine people and returned home. Mother and father rejoiced to have their children—for so they regarded all three of them—back in their home. Mother had prepared a good meal and did not have to urge them to eat.

Ivan and Ludwig stayed for a few more days. Olga was their constant companion. The happy trio was inseparable. When the boys left for home, the teacher and his family accompanied them to the station. All of them were saddened by this parting and tearfully kissed one another goodbye.

The train sped through the splendid Ukrainian countryside. Ivan chattered away as he looked out of the window, but Ludwig was quiet. He looked back at the Carpathian Mountains disappearing on the horizon. He seemed depressed. Ivan smiled at him. "The advantage of not being in love is that my heart travels with me. Yours is on the mountains. A German folk song says: 'I lost my heart in Heidelberg'; but you lost yours in the home on the hill."

Ivan was right. Ludwig's heart was with "the loveliest girl in the world" as he would have put it. He was happy even in his sorrow, grateful that he had enjoyed a few brief hours of joy.

When they reached Lutsk and left the train, they walked toward Ivan's home. There, over the last hill, was the old cross, shining and welcoming the two friends. Ivan's father Karluk was delighted to see the two boys. His black eyes beamed with joy. Ludwig was very fond of him, admiring his long mustache, now turned gray.

Karluk pointed toward the vegetable garden. "There is mother." The two boys ran to greet her. She took them both into her arms and kissed them. With his blond hair, Ludwig looked more like her than her own son. After refreshments, Ivan took Ludwig to the river. They walked through the mead-

"You have finally returned. My heart has been waiting for you," said Silverhead.

A few days later, the father remarked: "Ludwig, you are a changed boy! What has happened to you?"

"I have met a wonderful girl, a fine pious girl, and I love her," confessed Ludwig promptly.

Lemke's eyes became larger. "That's fine. I knew you would choose a girl who loves the Creator. That alone can guarantee a happy married life. Perhaps some day soon you can bring her here for a visit. I should like to see her."

Ludwig had always found it difficult in the past to leave his father and return to school. This year was different. He could hardly wait for the beginning of the new term. He was overjoyed to arrive in Lvov and see Olga once more. As they walked through the streets of that city, Ludwig realized what a beautiful old Ukrainian city it was. The show windows glittered brightly and the buildings seemed twice as high as before—there was a new world around him.

Olga and Ludwig met often for their favorite walks through the great cemetery, said to be the most beautiful in all of Poland. Huge trees spread their branches in all directions. The sun's rays pierced through the trees to enhance the imposing marble statues. A military cemetery adjoined this one. Hundreds of rows of the graves of German dead were here. Nearby was also a Russian cemetery, with its forest of large and small crosses, depending on the rank of the fallen soldiers; and close by was the cemetery of the Ukrainians, warriors for freedom. On the benches between the graves, students often met, some to study, others to decorate the graves.

Ludwig often stopped to talk with the Ukrainian youth in the yard between the Greek Catholic Cathedral of St. George and the Archbishop's Palace. Twice they saw the venerable Archbishop Metropolitan Andrij Sheptytsky coming out on his balcony to bless the youngsters at play. The young folk enjoyed their happiness with all the eagerness of youth. Their happiness, however, was soon to be rudely interrupted.

11. The Pogrom

ONE evening, Ivan suddenly burst into Ludwig's room, crying out: "Tonight the students in Lvov are starting a pogrom against the Jews!"

"Pogrom!" Ludwig declared. "Do students go out like bandits to beat men just because they are of another faith?"

That night saw thousands of young people, mostly students, rushing through the streets. They shattered the windows of Jewish places of business; they tore down signs, and beat every Jew they met. They overthrew Jewish kiosks and scattered the ripped newspapers all over the streets. For many days the hoodlums acted like madmen. Streetcars were overturned, Jewish schools were blockaded. Police were powerless against the thousands of rioters. The appeals of the university professors were met with scoffing. No one ventured out to the stores; no one went to the railroad station. Not only Jews, but Christians as well were beaten with cudgels when the brawlers became so aroused they did not even bother to identify the victims. Vengeance ruled supreme. Many a student beat up the professor who had given him what he thought was unjust treatment; many a debtor worked off an old grudge against his creditor. Hundreds of gymnasium students joined the "heroes" in the mob. Disorderliness and vandalism became wilder as the days passed. Everyone wondered when such terrible actions would all end.

Right at the beginning, the Ukrainian students had announced through placards that they, victims of oppression themselves, would not march against the Jews. This helped a little. The Polish authorities eventually sent out the few small tanks the garrison possessed to patrol the streets. But it was all sheer

mockery. Their crews did not dare shoot, so they rode up and down the streets and served no purpose at all.

The rioters broke up their groups and marched at considerable distance from each other. At a given signal, the group would throw itself upon a victim, then quickly fan out again. Wholesale slaughter took place.

This pogrom started with trouble at the medical schools. The Poles objected to Jewish students dissecting Christian cadavers. In fact, they refused to provide them with any bodies. There were heated quarrels. During one of them, a Jew unfortunately killed a Pole. It was like lightning. The Jews sent out appeals requesting that the pogrom be ended since the Jewish population as a whole was not at fault. The guilty individual would be delivered up to answer for his crime. These appeals did no good and the madness continued.

It was at this time that Lemke decided to visit his son. He was quite unaware of what was going on in Lvov, and no sooner did he step out of the station onto the street than several stout fellows rushed up with the obvious intention of beating him.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"Pogrom against the Jews!" they shouted.

"What's that?" he asked again.

"We are beating up the Jews!"

"So I see; but I'm no Jew," he declared as the ruffians began to crowd closer.

They looked him over, examined his face, and were uncertain. One of them shouted: "His accent shows he is not a Pole. Beat him up!" The crowd was growing vicious.

"All right," cried Lemke. "If that's what you want, I'll have a little pogrom myself!" He shook his heavy cudgel and started swinging wildly.

He was a powerful man and when one rioter, braver than the rest, came too close, Lemke seized him with his left hand and flung him bodily back into the crowd, taking down three others with him. Grasping his stick more firmly, Lemke shouted:

"Come on, I'll teach you some new tricks!" When Lemke became excited, he always spoke German. The rioting students recognized his German. "Let him go," they cried. "He's a German!"

As he went his way, he encountered other groups who attempted to attack him. However, when one of the rioters suffered a severe blow over the back from his cudgel, the others made a hasty retreat. As a Christian, he realized he should not have used violence; the Bible says: "If they smite thee upon thy cheek, offer them also the other." For the sake of his faith Lemke would have sacrificed all. He was considerate of human weakness and frailty. As far as deliberate wickedness, injustice and cruelty were concerned, however, he had but one remedy—to grasp his stick more firmly.

At Lowenstein's house, he saw six students tormenting a Jew who was lying on the ground. Several were beating him, others were tearing at his beard. Without a word, Lemke seized two of the mobsters by the scruffs of their necks and knocked their heads together. They crumpled to their knees. Two more he hurled across the street. Two others fled. Lemke recognized the victim as Lowenstein. Raising him gently, he carried him into the house. The man was battered and bleeding, but otherwise he was not seriously harmed.

"You have saved my life!" exclaimed the badly mauled man. He thanked Lemke from the depths of his heart. His wife, the chubby, always smiling redhead, felt deeply in debt to Lemke. She was weeping, lamenting the fact that they had to suffer so much because of their religion.

When Ludwig arrived, Lemke assured him that things were going well on the home farm, that there were good prospects for a plentiful harvest and an abundance of ripening fruit. He inquired about Ludwig's girl and asked to see her.

"She lives in the dormitory of the Ukrainian Teachers College for girls. It's not too far from here. I will go and bring her."

Soon Olga came before Lemke. He rose to greet her and

came right to the point. "Listen, I have a son, an only son. His heart once belonged to me, but now someone else has taken it. Do you know who did that?"

Olga smiled and her white teeth shone like pearls. "Up to now you had only your son's heart. Now you have the hearts of two children. Isn't that much better?"

"Of course, it is," agreed Lemke. He kissed his new daughter. "I love both of you, my children." Then he reminded them: "A heart is a wonderful thing. It is able to love more and more persons, without decreasing its power of love to each. It is like an ocean—so deep and wide." He looked at his children. His little eyes beamed. "I now have another child, and how lovely she is! Her smile is as comforting as the rays of a rising sun; her face seems to express all the beauties of the provinces of her land. Her eyes shine and sparkle like the Black Sea on a sunny morning," Lemke murmured, wiping his eyes with his sleeve.

12. *Pacification*

THE next day, Olga, Lemke, Ivan, and Ludwig rode out of the troubled city. They didn't want to see the fury of the Polish students, or hear the wails of the Jews. The hilly countryside around Lvov was lovely. They rode through peaceful villages, past groves, and through colorful glens. Ivan was proud when Lemke admired all of the beauty around them.

In the midst of this tranquility there came the sound of trotting horses behind them. Looking around, they saw a group of policemen. They were soon surrounded and commanded to show their papers. When the police found that Lemke and Ludwig were Germans, they were allowed to step aside. Ludwig drew Olga to him, "She is my sweetheart."

"All right," said the leader. Suddenly he pointed at Ivan and shouted. "He's a Ukrainian, beat him!"

Ivan managed to escape into the nearby woods. The *"psiakrew!"* (blood of a dog) they shouted after him had no effect. He was gone before anyone could even protest this terrible treatment.

In answer to Ludwig's question, they said the Ukrainians had cut telephone lines and set fire to the haystacks of the owners of large estates. This is what had given rise to the "pacification." These policemen were delegated to punish Ukrainians. They had been assigned to occupy the nearby villages to make the people "see reason."

Forty policemen were sent into each village. The people were compelled to lodge and feed them. The despised soldiers were active—they tore the roofs from houses, poured oil and flour into the water wells. They went so far as to tear up the housewives' feather beds, scattering the feathers to the

winds. They stood on street corners and compelled the citizens to greet them and bow. Anyone who didn't obey quickly enough to please them was beaten. Many a young man was called from his home in the night, never to return. The villagers were treated with no respect. There was suffering and tears in the Ukrainian land.

Representatives of the English Labor Party came to Galicia from London. They traveled through the province and expressed their opinion of the "pacification" in no uncertain terms. This enraged the principal Polish newspaper, *Krakowski Kurier Codzienny,* which brusquely reminded the English of their acts during the Boer War and advised them to mind their own business. The English had no choice.

Lemke and his party went back to the city. The Germans were not being harmed. Lemke reflected: "For the acts of a few, the innocent are made to suffer. Curses on 'collective guilt'!"

At Lowenstein's house, Olga was very unhappy. "This pacification is a great humiliation for me as a Ukrainian."

Lemke nodded sadly. Ludwig was distressed. It was a situation in which words would have done more harm than good; sometimes a sorrow must be borne without comfort. What could they say? When would the Ukraine be an independent state? But it was Lemke who offered them solace. "'Bear my cross,' our Lord said. Olga, His grace is sufficient for you." He then prayed for Olga, for the divided and oppressed Ukraine, for all unhappy people, in sorrow and grief, in trials and tribulations, in distresses and miseries. He asked God to count the tears and to change them into pearls of joy.

Olga felt better after the prayer. "Your prayer gives me new strength. It is the right comfort at the right time." She put her arms around Lemke's neck and kissed him on the cheek. "From your future daughter-in-law!" Then she left for her dormitory.

Lemke remained with his son another week. He visited Olga and Ludwig's teachers. Olga was already a member of

his family as far as he was concerned. The teachers told him his children were examples of diligence and character.

A week after the pogrom, Lowenstein looked much improved. One evening, Lemke said to him: "Get ready for tomorrow, friend. I am taking you to my farm."

Lowenstein was speechless. "I don't understand," he said.

"Listen, as far as I know, you have worked hard all your life and, after that beating, your battered body needs rest, fresh air, and good food. Your wife will take care of your store. Isn't that so, Mrs. Lowenstein?" asked Lemke as she appeared in the doorway.

"I'll miss him, but he has earned a few weeks' rest. My sister could come over and help me," she said.

Lowenstein, however, seemed to hesitate.

"Just don't worry," said Lemke. "I have strong horses and a fine buggy. I will drive you to the city and I'll buy you all the kosher food you need. And pots and pans, also. Only come along."

Lowenstein and his wife were touched and happy. The next day Lemke left for home with his friend Lowenstein. It was the least he could do to ease the burden of his beloved friend who had become a victim of persecution.

13. *The Great Sorrow*

WHITSUNTIDE was an occasion for much worship and observance. It had long been the custom for thousands of Ukrainian young people to meet on the square in front of the Ukrainian cathedral on the day after Whitsunday to join in a festive procession to the cemetery. Here, they held a memorial service to their dead heroes. Shortly after dawn, thousands were assembled in the cathedral square. After Metropolitan Sheptytsky, the aged spiritual leader of Galicia, gave his blessing, they began to march to the cemetery, singing hymns as they went. As a symbol of the suffering the people had endured during periods of oppression, such as the "purification," two youths followed immediately behind the priests, carrying a huge crown of thorns mounted upon a tall staff. Ivan and Ludwig marched too, with Olga between them.

When they reached the Ukrainian military cemetery, they stopped by the massive cement-decorated crosses commemorating the Ukrainian heroes who had fought for Ukraine's freedom. One of the priests ascended the temporary podium and spoke of the sufferings and trials to which his people had been repeatedly subjected by the strangers who ruled the land. He assured his hearers that there *is* a God who cares especially for the oppressed and the captive and who punishes every oppressor and demands of him a reckoning. Then they sang the beloved song, "The broad Dnieper roars and foams," which resounded through the cemetery. Immediately after that, the forbidden national hymn, "Not yet is Ukraine dead," was heard even more loudly.

Ludwig was sure the song was heard by all Ukrainians, present in spirit if not in body, from San to Rostov, from the

Carpathians and the Black Sea to the swamps of Pinsk and to Kursk. Hearts swelled with patriotism and love for their native land.

Suddenly out of nowhere, Polish mounted police rushed upon the defenseless crowd and began to beat them. The enraged Ukrainians retaliated by seizing stones. A bitter struggle followed in which many were wounded. Shots swept through the crowd and cries of anguish were heard. Ludwig, trying to protect Olga, was struck by a heavy object and thrown to the ground. As he struggled to his feet, he saw Olga prostrate before him, pressing her hand to her breast, from which blood was flowing. He threw himself down beside her, trying to help her up, but she shook her head. He clutched her hand in his and gazed in despair upon her paling face.

Her voice was weak. "I am dying for my native land. I wanted to live to see our great day of freedom. I wanted to be with you . . . to help you in your work. Send greetings to my parents . . . and to your father. . . ." Her voice died out, her pale lips moved in prayer, and she was gone.

Kneeling by the body of his dead sweetheart, Ludwig did not notice that the crowd had gone, the cemetery deserted. Only Ivan stood beside him, unable to move.

Ludwig was unable to believe Olga had passed away. He stroked her cheeks. "Olga, open your eyes, I am beside you," he pleaded. Then he covered his face with his hands and cried aloud: "O God, why so much hardship? Exile, Siberia, my mother's death, hard years after the war, and now the joy and strength of my heart has been taken away from me!"

The sun still shone, the wind blew softly; but Ivan and Ludwig were numb with shock. The horror of what had suddenly happened turned them into mutes. At length the approach of an ambulance, summoned by student friends, aroused them. Sorrowfully they watched them put Olga inside. They stumbled from the cemetery back to the city, carrying grief and heartbreak to the Lowensteins and to all of Olga's friends.

The day of Olga's burial was one of deep, intense sorrow.

Ivan and Ludwig saw her for the last time. Her father and mother stood by, weeping bitterly. How lovely she looked in myrtle wreath and veil! She seemed to be sleeping peacefully. She was so young—snatched from their loving arms before she knew the real meaning of life.

It seemed to Ludwig as though a wind blew down from the heights of the Carpathians, from the hilltop home of her girlhood, eastward over the Black Sea, over the beautiful Crimea, on and on, over the broad land, over rivers, forests, steppes, and fruitful fields, to the hills near Lvov, and then down to the streets of the city. He wept openly for Olga and his country—both suffering so intensely.

Public funerals were forbidden, so Olga was laid to rest in the very spot where she had fallen. The next morning, her grave was blanketed with beautiful forget-me-nots which Ludwig, with the help of Ivan, had planted during the night. It was all they could do without arousing the wrath of the Polish police. The day after Olga's funeral, Ludwig left his room and went up to the hill—the High Castle. From that high point, he looked far off into a world which seemed dark and empty. The sun was shining, but he thought it pale and without power. His sunshine had departed. Far down below, he saw mounted police riding through the village, supposedly to enforce "pacification." Then suddenly he felt a sense of relief. Olga had wept for the oppression of her people. She rested in peace; no sorrow could reach her. Again a wave of grief surged over him. He felt his loneliness so strongly that he sat down under a tree and let the tears pour down his cheeks. After a while, he rose, put his right hand upon his heart, and looked over the mighty trees toward the cemetery. There was nothing more for him to do now that he was alone.

The next weekend, Ludwig went to visit Olga's parents. He entered and stood before the grieving mother who sat in her chair, her hands folded in prayer. "My son, did you come to comfort me? The Lord bless you for that. Sit down and let me be your mother. You have no mother, and I have no

child. Olga is gone!" The tears flowed freely and they embraced as they sorrowed together.

Olga's father came in. Ludwig was shocked at his appearance. He seemed to have aged twenty years. He put his hand on Ludwig's shoulder. "I appreciate your coming. Your presence is a consolation to us in our distress." Slowly they all became calmer and sat in silence. An occasional sigh from one of them was the only sound. There was nothing they could say to one another.

Ludwig went up to the room he had occupied, and stood looking out of the window for a long time. The lower mountains, with their forest crowns, stood in solemn quiet, like a group of mourners. It was as if they knew that the heart which had so greatly loved them was gone. The creek was rushing along; it was singing, but this time it was a song of sadness. As Ludwig listened, there emerged a new melody, new tones in harmonious chords, developing into a mighty symphony of the immortality of love. It filled him with a sense of deep humility.

Ludwig lay down and fell asleep. There was *one* thing that mighty death could not destroy. It was love—such as his and Olga's. It was destined to live forever.

When he left he promised to return soon. Ludwig reached home and told the tragic news to his father. The older man's sorrow was great. "I lost my wife so early. She never returned from Siberia; she showed such loving kindness and was so peaceful-minded, just as your Olga. And now Olga is gone, too."

Lowenstein, who had recovered from his beating, was also smitten with grief. Slowly, tears began rolling down into his beard. This was a time of great heartbreak and nobody spoke a word for the rest of the day. Even the farm hands kept silent, and the old women, who had waited for Ludwig's homecoming, wept softly.

On the following Saturday, Ludwig saw Lowenstein taking the narrow path through the wheat field. Ludwig followed

him. They sat down on the borderline between Lemke and Friedman's fields. It was Ludwig who broke the silence. "It is a sad world we live in."

"The world is all right, it's just that many people are no good," Lowenstein replied gloomily, and then they sat in silence.

A welcome interruption to the sad quietness was the appearance of a swarm of starlets, whirling around in the sky as if confused.

"Look," cried Ludwig, jumping to his feet. Lowenstein, startled out of his reverie, did the same. They saw a hawk speeding like an arrow toward the starlets. The frightened birds fled in all directions. The hawk singled out one of the birds and flew toward it. The starlet shot down toward the men. It landed close to their feet and tried to hide in the furrows that separated the two fields. The hawk was close behind. Ludwig jumped quickly and, throwing his cap upon the hawk, pulled it to the ground. The hawk turned his neck, his beak was open wide, ready to strike Ludwig's hand. Lowenstein, moving with surprising agility, placed his foot on the bird's neck. The two men quickly tied the enormous bird's wings, turned him over on his back, and managed to tie the feet, carefully avoiding the knife-sharp claws. Then they turned him loose and the once menacing bird of prey jumped high in the air, striking left and right with his beak, crying in a shrill voice.

Lowenstein exclaimed: "It is frightening!"

"Yes," said Ludwig. "What a display of nature! What a wild, angry beauty; he's almost majestic in his movements. The eyes seem to beam with fire and lightning."

Lowenstein stood in wonder. "What a wild beauty!" he repeated. "He must be from the hawk nest on the branch of that mighty pine tree by the river."

The hawk calmed down, exhausted. Ludwig seemed to be lost in thoughts for a while; then he said: "Considering what has just happened, how the strong chased the weak, do you

think Darwin is correct when he considers life as a struggle for existence—that it is quite a natural phenomenon that the strong kill the weak? If this is so, my dear Lowenstein, then the attack on you and Olga, and all the wars throughout the ages, all the raids and robberies, are an outflow of a natural law—the struggle for existence."

Lowenstein shook his head. "I have not had high schooling and I don't know what Darwin said, but I would leave his theories to the animal world. Look at the hawk: what a sharp and strong bill. Look at his claws, his sharp wild eyes; he is armed for his job to chase and to kill. I once heard that the hawk, along with other beasts of prey, catches only that which is old, weak, or sick, and so they carry out the function of a sanitary police. You learned this in school, I'm sure."

Ludwig nodded.

"But this law has no place in human society. A human face looks so different. Looking into your face, all the sharp tools the hawk possesses are missing. Human hands do not have claws like his. A human face is smooth, helpless. A human face gives the impression of a sermon of peace. And that's what it should be. In order to survive, humans are equipped with reason and the ability to think. This is a great gift, a mighty tool to generate all they need for their daily living in a noble way."

"Then why do we have so much distress, sorrow, and grief in this world?" Ludwig wondered, still aching over the loss of Olga.

"Because of the evil in this world," answered Lowenstein with some hesitation.

"What's the reason for its existence?" Ludwig wanted to know.

"Ludwig, I am only an ordinary man with little learning. That's for the learned doctors to answer. But common sense tells me that without the evil in the world, there would not be any good either. Evil gives us the opportunity to struggle, to become noble and good. Without the necessity to strive and

struggle, we would be without that something which makes our personality; that little something that makes people interesting, and enables them to become great in the arts and in the sciences. Those trees are mighty only because they have their roots deep in the soil. Why? Because storms and winds tossed and shook them so often that their roots had to go deep into the soil to withstand the elements. Now they are bulky, tall giants."

The hawk started jumping again.

"Should we kill him?" asked Ludwig. "He steals chickens. Our farmers are angry at him. We saw his evil doings right in front of our eyes. His guilt is evident."

Lowenstein shook his head. "How can we interfere with nature? The hawk does not have the ability to think like people. I guess we'll let him go." He pushed the hawk hard to the ground, while Ludwig cut the string around his feet, and then around his wings. With a shrill, joyous cry, the angry beauty took off with such a flurry that the wheat stalk in his path bowed to the ground. He truly *was* a magnificent specimen.

"Lowenstein, you say that evil shall make people perfect, noble, and good. But in reality we see that evil does exactly the opposite. Evil produces murderers, thieves, bigots, warmongers—and tragedy."

"That's the danger with the problem of evil; it must be controlled by man. If not, evil will dominate him. Man then becomes a thousand times more dangerous than a hawk, a tiger, or a wolf. He uses his great gift, the mighty power of reason, to create destructive weapons. Evil can make a paradise or a hell out of this world. Man holds the steering wheel."

"How can the evil force that exists on earth be connected with Olga's death?" Ludwig wondered.

"That same evil force that exists on earth tempted the Poles to attack the hard-pressed Ukrainian Liberation Army in 1919. It also prompted the Communists to attack from the east. And so the action of liberation was suppressed. Your

girl was a patriot, taking part in an anti-Polish demonstration, and so she fell, a victim of a stray bullet."

"You are a wise man, Lowenstein," said Ludwig softly.

"I am no longer young. I think a lot and often read after work."

The men rose and both looked over the fields. They stood in awe of the beautiful sea of golden grain, and they felt, more than ever, a deep love for their country.

14. A Pastor in Volhynia

THEOLOGY opened a new world of experiences to Ludwig. He was fully confident that he would be able to find the fountain of wisdom in philosophy. He soon learned that there were opposing philosophical systems. One day he asked his teacher about this and was answered with laughter.

The professor bent down, took a grain of sand and laid it upon a sheet of white paper. "See! That represents the power of a man's comprehension, the limit of human understanding." He made a circular motion with his arm. "This is truth, encompassing the whole universe, from the Milky Way to the most distant nebulae. Just as the universe cannot find room in that grain of sand, so man, with his limited intelligence, cannot comprehend the vastness of truth. Philosophy is only a *search* after truth. It never reaches a complete goal."

The words of the Apostle Paul—"We know in part"—now had a new meaning for Ludwig. He studied diligently and learned the various philosophical opinions about the material and the spiritual in life. He was surprised at the views of the "Higher Critics." He came to realize that the study of theology had a different character than that of a prayer meeting attended by the devout farmers in his homeland. What power could destroy his belief in God who had guided and kept him all of his life?

The four years of study passed by very quickly. There was little time for idleness. His father rejoiced when his son finally came home, a graduate minister. All of their dreams were now fulfilled. The pastorate of a church fifty miles to the east of his home, near Rovno, became his responsibility.

During all the time spent at school, Ludwig had never

forgotten the grave of his beloved Olga in Lvov. Every year, during vacation, he had gone to visit Olga's parents on the hilltop at the foot of the Carpathians. There was no joy or laughter, as there had been when the boys first visited that house. On the contrary, the mother began to weep every time Ludwig came. Twice he climbed to the mountain top where Olga had told him of her love and that she wanted to help him in his work. His heart sorrowed anew at his loss. The song of the rushing creek sang on about the eternity of love. He was not alone in his grief. When he left for the last time, Olga's parents went with him to Lvov to visit her grave. It was well-kept, planted with lovely flowers, the service of the Ukrainian youth. Olga was regarded as a patriot who had died for her country.

As Pastor Ludwig moved into the pleasant parsonage of the fine church and walked through the rooms, he remembered the words: "It is not good for man to be alone." He would have given years of his life to have had Olga with him, but she was gone and he knew he had to begin this new life alone. He did not know, however, how short a time he was to be able to live here.

His Ukrainian friend Ivan, after finishing his studies, had become a priest of a Greek Orthodox church about eighty miles to the west, near Cholm, on the road to Warsaw.

And so, a new life began for both young men—Ludwig the German, and Ivan the Ukrainian. The members of Ludwig's church in Volhynia, the westernmost province of the Ukraine occupied by Poland, were scattered over a sixty-square-mile area. Some lived in villages, deep in the forest. Ludwig preached in seven churches. His faithful people longingly awaited their pastor, and he visited them as often as possible. Hundreds came to hear him. The lines of hard work and the hardship of life showed on their faces as they sat before him. After the worship services, a changed expression came into their eyes. Their faces became serene and they went out of the sanctuary with new strength, faith, and hope. To help and

comfort in this way was no easy task for an inexperienced pastor. Physically it was very difficult. At times he had to travel fifty miles by horse and buggy, in rain, mud, and snow. Frequently he preached three times a day, and every sermon was expected to be longer than an hour. He hardly had time to rest. Yet he was happy! He found in this service the life work he had desired. If only Olga had been permitted to help.

15. The Storm

TWO YEARS after Ludwig had taken over the church, his blessed work was suddenly interrupted. The Second World War smashed into Europe. Like a devastating tornado, it was filled with destruction. Then, in the last days of September 1939, suddenly and unexpectedly the Russian Red Army invaded Poland.

The Red Army entered East Poland in relatively peaceful fashion, but it very soon made a bad impression. During the first four days, the Red soldiers would accept no gifts. "We have enough, we are rich!" declared the Red commissar. "We came to deliver you from the yoke of capitalism." This was a farce. The deliverance from the capitalist yoke soon became complete.

After four days, the Reds crowded into all the shops and stores. These soldiers and the civilians from "The Paradise of Workers" grabbed everything they could get hold of—shoes and dresses (the wives of the officers sometimes wore only military coats). They stole caps, bedding, pails, whips, dishes, cords, ropes, and watches (they were proud of the latter, looking at them every five minutes). They took pencils, rings, cart-grease, petroleum, and yeast. They even tried to eat the yeast since they had heard that yeast was somehow connected with cake; the yeast did not taste good and they spat it out. They confiscated hair oil, shaving lotions, and perfumes. When they discovered that the perfumes contained alcohol, they began to drink them. Hundreds of empty bottles were soon littering the streets, and the Red soldiers smelled like Parisian beauty shops. Nothing escaped them. They robbed curtains, nails, hammers, paint, and barrels with or without

beer. They removed doors and windows, and took them, too, to the "Paradise of Farmers and Workers." They seized everything they could, from an ox to a needle; they ignored any protests and laughed derisively. In no time at all, East Poland was reduced to abject poverty. The Bolsheviks asserted that they had come to deliver the people from the capitalist yoke. True, there was no more capital. The Bolsheviks had stolen everything. But what did they bring?

People were compelled to shout, "Hail Stalin!" They took all orders from the Red commissars. The first proclamation stated: "The lands, farms, lakes, woods, houses, cattle, carriages, horses—all property belongs to the state." The people became destitute overnight—the shroud of hopelessness descended on the fifteen million people of East Poland. They could not fight back.

At meetings conducted by the commissars, the people were told that the country would be made into a paradise. In Soviet Russia men could have a car; a poet in Kiev even had a private boat, they said. The listeners laughed bitterly; they knew that in Poland the owners of the coal mines and factories had their own cars, while in the United States almost every laborer owned a car. Everyone grew suspicious of the wild promises made by the Bolshevik invaders.

Shortly after the Red invasion of East Poland, news came that all German colonists had to return to Germany, according to a treaty between the two "brothers," Stalin and Hitler. The German colonists were glad, because Stalin had deprived them of their land and other property. A farmer seldom will be happy without his land. He makes a poor slave worker.

Lemke was uncertain as to what to do. He wanted to remain where he was. Ludwig was surprised at this until his father gave his reasons.

"Listen, Ludwig. My father came from Germany to the forests of Ukraine. When I returned from military service, I decided to go from the land of my Kurd friend to Germany. It was easy. I rode from Turkey, through Austria, to Germany.

There I was sent to East Prussia to work on a large farm. To my surprise, I soon learned that there were still many indentured servants working for the tremendously rich landowners. It was forbidden for them to move from place to place just as in the days of the Dark Ages. They had to do and live as the landowner wished. I protested such conditions of life, because, as you know, we were free people on our Volhynian farms.

"Then one day I was beaten by the inspector. I pushed him; he fell down a hill, turning over and over. A policeman came and put me in jail for a month. After my discharge, I escaped to my homeland. I found our colony destroyed; I lived in a trench until you came back home.

"Right now, I would rather go to live with my Kurdish friend; I have been utterly disappointed in East Prussia. It is possible that you would be disappointed, too. Let us stay here; later we will go to my friend, the Kurd, at Mount Ararat. The people there are friendly and good."

Ludwig could not understand. "You never told me all this," he exclaimed.

"I wanted to spare you the details of unpleasant events," the father said.

"Therefore, you never talked with me about Germany. When I questioned you on the subject many years ago, you had an unhappy face."

Just then five men, all Ludwig's church members, came into the room. "Preacher," one said, "we hope you will go with us."

"We stay here," said Silverhead.

"You are out of your mind, brother," one said. "Haven't our grandfathers worked and died clearing the forests and swamps? Don't you remember how we worked after the first war? And for what? Since yesterday we are like birds on a branch, owning nothing, freed from everything. Since yesterday we are slaves on our own farms. The Bolsheviks are our masters. Is that the life you want?"

"We won't stay here, we will go to the Caucasian Mountains," Lemke informed them.

But he was promptly told: "Don't you know the poor creatures in the Red paradise can't leave the village without permission? And to travel by train you have to have a passport issued by a high official. How will you get to the Caucasian Mountains?"

There was a painful quietness in the room.

Then the deacon spoke again. "A good shepherd remains with his flock; only a hireling flees."

Ludwig looked dreamily out on the winter landscape. His church people were going to the west and the Ararat was far away. He was determined to remain with his people. "Maybe my people will need me in Germany. I will go with them."

"Then I shall go with you, since you are my only son," cried Lemke.

The farewell to their Ukrainian friends was difficult. All the Ukrainians—yes, and the Russians, too—all the peoples of the Soviet-made "paradise" would have gladly moved westward to the ends of the earth, to get away from the "heaven" of the farmers and laborers ruled by Stalin. Ivan and Ludwig wept freely as they shook hands for the last time.

Ivan said: "Don't forget us. Tell them in Germany that many of the people of the Soviet Union are eagerly waiting and praying for a liberation."

16. Ludwig in Germany

LUDWIG'S father cared little for Germany ever since his unpleasant experiences in East Prussia, but he had to go for his son's sake. They, with many others, came to Thuringia, the so-called "green heart of Germany." Ludwig was overjoyed to be able to see the country of his ancestors. With others, he was lodged in a large house.

As they prepared for service on the first Sunday, a man in a brown uniform came into the church and faced Ludwig: "I represent the Nazi party. I am going to conduct a worship service."

Ludwig and his father were shocked by this unprecedented intrusion, but they realized they had no voice in the matter. The visitor began to play the piano. None of Ludwig's people had ever heard such a church song. When the Nazi read his text, he astonished his audience more. None of them had heard such teaching from the Word of God. He played the piano again and the worship service was over. Ludwig picked up the strange "bible" and read on the cover: *Mein Kampf,* Hitler's political book, "My Struggle." The music apparently was Nazi-inspired.

At first Lemke and Ludwig thought the whole affair was some sort of ludicrous farce. "Surely you are not serious," Ludwig faced the Nazi when he had finished. He wanted an explanation.

"I am quite serious, Herr Pastor," answered the Nazi. "In the future it is I who shall conduct your services."

The next day, a Lutheran pastor visited the newcomers. He spoke shyly, as though afraid of the consequences. "I am forbidden to visit you, but I have come to invite you to church

next Sunday. You are new here in Nazi Germany and I urge you to be extremely cautious in all your activities."

The next Sunday, Ludwig conducted the service as he had done in his church. When the Nazi came with his bible under his arm, the congregation locked him out. Ludwig preached a sermon as never before, criticizing godlessness and concluding: "Justice exalts a nation, but injustice destroys it."

The next morning, a Nazi official accompanied by another man in uniform entered Ludwig's room and shouted: "You devil! You dirty pig! You are an enemy of the German people! You hypocrite, you Satan, you never worked a day in your life. I'll throw you into the camp at Buchenwald, where you will die like a dog! I have sent many ministers to that camp. We are determined to put a stop to this harebrained business of religious swindling. You are too new here to know what you did. There is no criticism allowed in our land." Then he stopped abruptly. "No, I won't kill you. You are too young to die. I'll send you into the army. We need men. We can use you."

He turned on his heel and left. At first Ludwig was deeply hurt. Never had he shown any signs of laziness. Hard work was nothing new to him. As a child he had worked hard in Siberia. Returning home, he had helped his father rebuild the farm. During his vacations, he was there where work had to be done. Only once had he been excused from mowing and that was when his ribs had bothered him. Even then his conscience had troubled him. But now, these words—devil, dog, Satan, deceiver—that was too much for him. Slowly he felt anger come upon him. He was a man of God and it was painful to be treated like this.

Suddenly he was also frightened. He fled from the house into the forest. He had no idea where he was going, knew only that he was in a forest and running down a sloping hill. He fainted and fell. He did not know how long he lay there, nor did he know that a man revived him. Struggling to regain con-

sciousness, he opened his eyes and recognized a man whom he had seen before. The man lifted him up and leaned him against a pine tree. The sun was setting behind the young trees and on the meadow deer were peacefully grazing.

The man sat in the grass. "I heard everything. I saw you run from your house and I followed you here. My name is Karl, Karl Schmidt."

"Who was the gangster who abused me?" inquired Ludwig, reviving himself.

"That was a member of the Gestapo. They are dangerous. They have the power to put you to death, without trial or judgment."

"This is terrible!" exclaimed Ludwig.

"True enough. But when these gangsters win the war and become powerful, what then?"

Ludwig pondered a bit. "If these men should win the war, then woe unto us, and all people," he cried, and again sank down.

The sun disappeared behind the young pine trees when, with the help of the man, Ludwig managed to return to his house. There he found his father, standing looking out of the window.

Lemke turned a sad face to his son. "I knew you would not like it here, Ludwig. Too many arrogant people. They all brag, they like to boss others around. This is what you'll find everywhere in Nazi Germany. Hitler is turning all of them into wild beasts."

"But such people as the man who just helped me are here also; he followed me, found me lying between the young pine trees and brought me home. And how concerned he was!"

"Yes, my son, he is quite different from that raging Gestapo man. But he is in the minority. The Nazis are very powerful."

"Evil dominates them," reflected Ludwig, recalling Lowenstein's words.

The next day, Karl sought out Lemke. "I am sorry for

what happened yesterday. Germany has fallen into the hands of robbers and ne'er-do-wells. They promised work for the unemployed, the destruction of communism, and peace within and abroad, and so we voted for them. Then they cheated us."

"Ne'er-do-wells, you said?" asked Lemke.

"Yes, the highest robber, Hitler, the *fuhrer,* never learned a trade; he was too lazy to stick to work. The police *fuhrer,* Himmler, was a chicken-raiser who did not like the hard work. So they went into politics. They are all tramps and gangsters. To forget this ugly scene, I suggest you go to Eisenach to see the Wartburg. That's where Luther translated the Bible. You will forget the Gestapo. I'll give you my bike and for your son I'll borrow one. Between here and the Luther city lies a mountain ridge. You'll have to push the bikes up, but then you'll ride down like the wind."

So it was. The next day Karl brought two bikes, and father and son took off for Eisenach. The streets were clear but the fields were white with snow. They pushed the bikes up higher and higher and soon entered a thick forest. There was much snow on the branches of the fir trees. All was quiet and solemn, only a few crows sitting on branches.

Having reached the crest after two hours of toilsome ascension, both of them rested and then continued on their journey. "Like in Lutsk when our horses sped through the valley!" shouted Ludwig. Silverhead only nodded. He seemed scared; this was too much speed for him. The road went uphill again, over a wide plain; soon Eisenach lay before them. The streets were crowded with marching, brown-shirted men. Yes, there certainly were many Nazis.

They reached the foot of the hill on which the Wartburg stood. The climb was not very easy. Lemke was breathing heavily. Having made it two-thirds up the hill, they decided to rest at a donkey station. Donkeys came up and looked curiously at the two men.

"They want to carry you up! It costs fifty cents, also candy

or a piece of sugar for the donkeys," said a man introducing himself as the owner of the donkeys. "I have ten donkeys."

Lemke and Ludwig searched their pockets. All Lemke found was a piece of zwieback. Ludwig had more luck; he pulled out a handful of candies. Two donkeys ate out of their hands. Having eaten everything, Lemke's donkey eyed him speculatively. First the animal raised his face and looked at Lemke squarely; then he tilted his head to the left and looked at him with his right eye; tilting his head to the right, he checked Lemke with his left eye and then from head to foot.

Having paid his fifty cents, Lemke decided to climb on. But the donkey jerked away, kicking at Lemke, missing him by inches. Lemke tumbled to the ground and into the snow. Getting back on his feet, he grumbled: "What's the matter with that beast anyway?"

The owner laughed heartily. "You are too heavy for him."

"How does he know?" Lemke wanted to know.

"Didn't you see how he looked you over? He is with me for ten years. The first five years he dragged up everybody; then he wised up. Now he carries people up to a hundred and fifty pounds only."

"But he ate my zwieback!" hollered Lemke.

"He is just a smart donkey," the owner replied.

Ludwig climbed his donkey. The owner suggested that Lemke try another donkey, but the older man had had enough. He walked beside the donkey Ludwig was riding. That was satisfaction for him. Donkeys were not to his liking.

Reaching the top, they noticed there was no free space left. The old fortress Wartburg filled the whole top of that rock with access possible from the east side only. Ludwig jumped from his donkey and watched the animal run back to the donkey station.

They went over a drawbridge and into a yard surrounded by a five-foot wall which stood at the brink of the abyss. From this point, father and son could look far out over the surround-

ing countryside. There was the Thuringian Forest, and there to the south the hills of Hesse. It was a breathtaking sight.

"Beautiful country!" exclaimed Ludwig. "Much more variety than in our homeland Volhynia."

Lemke was surprised at these words. "Have you forgotten our black fields with wheat like a sea? Do you not remember our light-green meadows with the dark-green willow bushes? What about our beloved river and the forest starting on its east bank, stretching to the Urals and Siberia? Have you forgotten the potters' smoke pillar rising so majestically in the blue sky?" Lemke turned toward the east. Deep in his heart he felt serenity and peace. For a moment he was back in Ukraine, the land of his birth.

"You are right, father," Ludwig answered. "We had a beautiful homeland. I wonder how our Ukrainian friends are living under Red rule. And Ivan, what is he doing?"

"Nobody knows," murmured his father.

They entered the castle. There was the chapel with the pulpit from which Luther had preached; it was visited every year by Archbishop Soederblom of Sweden, who came here for inspiration. They entered the room in which the Reformer had translated the Bible. The heavy oak chair and table Luther had used were still there. There was the hole in the wall; this was where the inkpot Luther had thrown at the Devil had landed.

Turning to his father, Ludwig asked, "What do you think about throwing an inkpot against the Devil?"

"Looking at all the wickedness, misery, sickness, heartbreak, and suffering of innocent people, I often doubted a good Father above. I never doubted the existence of the Devil, though. He wants the destruction of all that is good and beautiful. He knew the translation of the Holy Scripture would make more people good; he approached the interpreter with all kinds of doubt; Luther could almost feel the tempter physically, and so he crashed the inkpot against him. Determination —that's the only language an evil power understands!"

When they left, they went over the drawbridge again and started downhill. The donkey station came in sight. The animals were walking around, looking indifferently at the world.

"Where is my friend?" asked Lemke.

The owner pointed to a donkey standing near the shed. He pretended not to see Lemke. He pricked his ears, switching one up, the other down. Suddenly one ear stood straight up and pointed toward the sun; the other he switched to a horizontal position, resembling a pistol ready to shoot at his fellow donkeys. Everyone laughed.

They walked to the bottom of the hill. After stopping for refreshments, father and son took their bikes and left for home. Lemke made an observation: "I noticed that this land has a twofold face: the friendly face of landscape and people, and the dark, grouchy face of the rulers and bums of all descriptions. I am grateful to Karl for his advice to make this trip to the city of Eisenach. I have learned a great deal from this experience."

After his return from Eisenach, Ludwig expected to be drafted any day, according to the threat of the Gestapo man. He could not imagine himself living in barracks, wearing a uniform and a pistol. All that was so contrary to his occupation, his concept of life. He did not like violence. He never wanted to harm a fellow being or an animal.

He had once played war with Ivan, as all boys do at times, but he had never forgotten his father's admonition: "Don't play war anymore. *Your* battlefields shall be the towns and villages; there you will go and look for those who labor and are heavy laden, say a comforting word to the heartbroken, lift up those who have fallen by the wayside of life, and wipe away their tears."

And that is exactly what Ludwig had done during his first years as a pastor. He rejoiced with the rejoicing and wept with the weeping. Now he was forced to become a soldier, to kill others he had never met before and who were not his enemies.

Ludwig shuddered. Troubled, he rose and walked back and forth in his room. He stopped abruptly, his lips twisting into a cunning smile. "I'll outwit you fellows. I did not make the war and I don't want any medals for bravery, and so I'll take it easy—I'll loaf, daydream, or sleep. I neither love nor have any interest in your turbulent war." He grinned. "I'll outwit you fellows. Just you wait and see!"

Ludwig was by no means an impractical pacifist. He had studied historical theory at the gymnasium, and knew that many wars had been fought in the past on behalf of humanity. The battle against the Huns at Chalon, the battle near Tours against the Moslems had saved the Western world from the fanatic creed of Mohammed. But he did not feel any urge to sacrifice himself for Hitler. History had already disproven the course these dictators took. And the welcome he had received in his own country was not the type to rouse him to lay down his life for Hitler. The *führer* did not advocate progress or advancement. He preached death and destruction, a doctrine which Ludwig was determined not to follow.

17. *In the German Army*

A FEW DAYS later, Ludwig was drafted. His father secured a small apartment not far from him, and went to work in an ammunition plant. It was obvious to all that Hitler was preparing for more bloodshed. No one was permitted to rest; every person was compelled to participate in the coming war effort.

Ludwig was standing in the clothing room of an army depot when suddenly wearing apparel started flying at him—trousers, jacket, shirts, belt, overcoat. A pair of shoes landed against his face, knocking his glasses to the floor.

He shouted: "Hey, what's the matter? Wait a minute!"

A man leaped at him, shouting coarsely: "I'll tear you to pieces! Don't you see?" pointing to his collar and shoulders, "I'm a corporal!"

"Whether you are a corporal or not does not concern me. Remain a corporal, but don't throw things into my face!" said Ludwig in a loud voice.

The corporal shouted: "You pig! We'll teach you how to respect your superiors. You'll soon learn!"

The corporal was right.

The next day Ludwig stood in the orderly room in front of the master sergeant, a big bully who eyed the recruits—not like the donkey, who eyed his father by tilting his head to the left and to the right—straight in their faces. Ludwig realized that there would be neither loafing nor daydreaming in the German Army. After that hostile face had looked over the recruits, they were led to their rooms. Ludwig shared his with six others.

The next step was to put on the uniform. Ludwig's trousers were too long and his cap too small. He looked in the great

mirror on a wall in the corridor and almost cried; he did not recognize himself. The color of his new outfit, the buttons, the belt, everything was so strange to him. He looked at his civilian clothes he had put aside, and he felt like one who had to leave a dear friend, not to see him anymore. He hated army life from the start and regretted having come to Germany.

Early the next morning, soldier life began with the orderly's whistle and his yelling: "Wake up!"—at a time when the most conscientious rooster who likes to crow very early was still asleep. It was raven-dark outside. To the surprise of the men, the master sergeant appeared on the scene, tramping through the rooms and roaring like a lion: "Get up, you swine!" The frightened recruits got out of bed fast.

The drill started by racing around the barracks half-naked for fifteen minutes. It was ice-cold. Ludwig was on his feet from earlier than dawn to later than dusk. In the morning, the recruits had to run in formation on the fields. In the afternoon exercising was closer to the barracks and there were lessons on weapons—pistols, rifles, mortar-throwers, and machine guns. In the evening, it was potato-peeling and other kitchen and cleaning duties.

Ludwig, with no interest in weapons, was ordered to study their parts and learn how to use them. Taking apart the machine gun, he had to admire the technical perfection of that weapon. It stood on three spread-out legs, the barrel sticking out ready to spit fire and bullets. A great technical accomplishment, he thought. If only it could be used for gainful purposes.

He was more impressed when the whole battalion moved into a hilly, wooded area for target practice. Ludwig aimed into a sandhill and felt the terrifying impact of his firebursts. The soil seemed to be boiling under that hail of bullets. He had an impression that life in the army was a stage play. The weapons were there for an invisible monster, a dragon maybe. He realized suddenly that there wasn't such a thing and that the weapons were created to be used against people and that

a war was on. "My God!" he whispered. He remembered his friend Lowenstein's words: "A human face is a sermon of peace, is even helpless." That weapon proved something else. He did not know now that in a few years he would be behind a machine gun, firing into an onrolling sea of humans, that he would approve of using any kind of weapon in defense of freedom and human dignity—that he would become a man of death.

The most annoying nuisance in the army was the saluting of all the commissioned and noncommissioned officers. Everyone demanded a smart salute. The recruits became so confused that many of them even saluted the officers' uniforms in the store windows. Riding a streetcar, Ludwig once clicked his heels and made a perfect salute to an admiral, or so he thought. The man laughed. "Don't salute me. I'm the clown of the Circus Sarrasani." The people in the car laughed.

After the day was over and the men sat in their barracks, tired and exhausted, the group corporals would kick the doors open and crash their dirty boots into the rooms without saying a word. The soldiers knew they had to shine them, and that the job better be good; if not, they would be severely punished. The boots went from man to man. Everybody worked on them until sweat appeared on their foreheads. The next morning, the corporals gathered together before marching out into the fields and held a bootshine contest. A "judge" picked the shiniest boots and, after the day ended, the "victorious" corporal received from every loser a shot of *schnapps.* The losing corporals let their anger out on their men. Ludwig felt humiliated holding the corporal's dirty boots on his knees and working on them furiously—a corporal who knew only how to roar and drive the recruits, without any other skill or education.

It was small wonder a new song became popular: *"Es geht alles voruber, es geht alles vorbei nach jedem Dezember folgt wieder ein Mai"* (Everything passes on, everything passes by,

after every December follows a May). And so Ludwig started thinking ahead to brighter days, a better future when all that miserable treatment would have passed; it gave him a certain peace of mind and took his thoughts off the humiliating present.

18. *Back to the Homeland*

A CHANGE in Ludwig's army life came suddenly. Hitler attacked Stalin; Germany and Russia were now at war. A few days later, Ludwig was ordered to join the German attacking force in East Poland, to serve as an interpreter on the division staff. He was glad of the opportunity to do something intelligent. He met his division in the immediate vicinity of Lvov—beloved city where he had studied. Not permitted to enter the city, he still could plainly see its towers and steeples glittering in the sunshine. His eyes immediately caught the outline of the High Castle, from whose peaks he and Ivan had often scanned the vastness of the surrounding country. It brought back memories of happier times.

In the distance he saw the lofty trees of the cemetery. He wanted to be the first soldier to enter the city, to deliver his friends—and the grave of his beloved—from the Reds. His unit, however, was to pass Lvov and to push on to the east. They were to surround the city in case of strong resistance. The Ukrainians had done a good job of sabotaging the Bolsheviks within the city gates, however, and the capture of the city was an easy victory.

A terrible discovery was made. Thousands of Ukrainian youths, jailed by the Communists since 1939, had been slain —murdered by the retreating NKVD, the Communist secret police. A priest told Ludwig that thousands more had been forced to march to the east; could the Germans save them? Ludwig nodded. "I hope so. Maybe Ivan is among them."

His thoughts were interrupted by the sound of running feet. Hundreds of peasants were hurrying to a little woods. It was rumored that a Red secret police unit was concealed there. The

angered villagers attacked them with rifles, pitchforks, and flails, until every one of the hated Communists was exterminated. At first Ludwig was shocked. Later, he was to discover that once the Reds were driven out, the people returned to their fields, hoping to regain their farms which had been stolen by the Communists. The Red secret police was hated from the "bottom of the oppressed peoples' hearts." The G.P.U. enforced the devilish Red laws, including the stealing of their farms. Now the vengeful farmers paid them back with flails and pitchforks in the little woods. Ludwig did not realize how hated the Reds were. Everywhere he went, they were spoken against.

The fighting went on. In every town and city, Ludwig discovered that thousands of people had been murdered. In Uman, in Soviet Ukraine, ten thousand had been slain. They were all young people from Lvov and the vicinity, and were shot because the Germans were advancing so rapidly.

Near Uman, the Germans had surrounded two Red divisions. Surprisingly, the fighting was not fierce. Russian soldiers threw away their weapons and surrendered in large groups. German officers were proud of their success. Ludwig spoke to a captured Ukrainian Soviet officer about the large number of prisoners of war. The officer replied: "We are not prisoners of war. Ninety per cent are deserters. You would not have made such easy progress if our soldiers had really resisted. For whom should we fight? Stalin stole our farms and factories; he made slaves of the Ukrainian people."

The German advance had been swift, considering the vastness of the area and the few good roads. Only the poor fighting of the Red Army made it possible for the Germans to capture so much territory in such a relatively short time.

In the trenches near Krementschuk on the Dnieper, Ludwig did not have much to do. Then he was ordered to ride through an area along the route of advance, untouched by the advancing army. He took with him some German soldiers and ten Ukrainians who were very willing to become German soldiers.

The Ukrainians were provided with uniforms. The rains had turned the many fields and roads into a sea of mud; the quickest way to advance was on horseback, and there were many stray horses from the cavalry of Red Marshal Budienny. They had a wonderful time riding through the Ukrainian prairie, which has the most fertile soil in the world. Much of it was not cultivated because the area was sparsely populated. The men rode through high grass which reached to the bellies of their horses. Three hundred years ago, this large steppe had been the home of the Ukrainian Kozaks, an army which fought for freedom and independence after defeating Ukraine's enemies—the Russians, Turks, Tartars, and Poles.

They arrived at the top of a hill and looked down onto a lovely village nestled in a peaceful valley—Ukrainians liked to build in valleys. The small force was noticed immediately; cries of joy and happiness rang throughout the village as the people ran toward the soldiers: "The Germans! The Germans!" many voices were shouting. "We waited for you! You have finally come!"

More and more people came, old and young and little children. Parents lifted up the smaller children and said: "Look, these are our deliverers! Don't forget this day!"

A tall old man with white hair pressed through the crowd. "I welcome you heartily in the name of my village. I am the mayor now that the Reds have gone. We have waited for you for thirty years. You have come at last to deliver us from our oppressors."

Ludwig and his comrades were led to a large house in the middle of the village. "Look at our houses," the mayor said, making a sweep with his arms. "They are almost falling down. There is no material for new homes. But in every village Stalin built for us a great Kultura House. We weary and tired people had to gather there every evening to hear that Lenin was greater than God and that Stalin was a good angel, greater than the sun and the moon and all the stars

together. All the time we were hungry and wore rags, but the Russians cared nothing!"

Ludwig and his men were ushered into a large room and the village people poured in after them. The mayor continued: "Look at my people, see how poorly they are dressed. Look at these faces and you will see the effects of thirty years of torture, hunger, misery, and distress. In the beginning Lenin told us: 'All the land belongs to the farmers!' Because the farmers had nothing while the landlords had everything, the people helped Lenin. He also said: 'All the factories belong to the workers,' so factory workers helped him, too. When he had won his battle for power, Lenin said: 'You are crazy! All the land, forests, lakes, factories, houses, horses, cows, pigs, hens, carriages, belong to the state.' He stole all our property and made us slave laborers."

A woman rose. "They arrested my husband!"

"Mine too! Mine too! Our sons are gone!" a hundred voices cried out.

"Thousands, millions, were arrested in 1936 and 1937. We don't know where they are," shouted another woman. "We wrote to Kalinin, because the people said: 'He is the only Bolshevik with a heart of compassion'; we wanted to know the fate of our loved ones. He answered: 'Do not cry, because Moscow won't heed your tears. They were sentenced because they worked against socialism. After ten years, they will come home!' It was all lies. They lie in Moscow. But you are here to deliver us. Praise the Lord!"

When the people had quieted down, Ludwig was able to explain: "Germany is the friend of all the nations of Soviet Russia. In the name of the great German Reich, I declare all the state farms to be your property. Take your land; work on it in liberty for yourselves and your children forever."

A cry of joy and jubilation went up from young and old alike. People pressed toward Ludwig and kissed his hands and uniform. Then the mayor ordered: "Women, prepare a meal such as we have never had in these thirty years!"

Ludwig saw the killing of ducks, geese, sheep, hens, and a big ox. The young men brought long tables. As the sun set, hundreds of people began to celebrate their liberation. Along with the prepared meats, they enjoyed sauerkraut, honey, black bread, onions, garlic, potatoes, watermelons, apples, plums, and vodka. It was a great banquet. Ludwig was amazed at what these people were able to provide, after so many years of oppression. "You did not live under Uncle Joe too badly after all. Look at all that is on the tables."

The mayor explained. "This food had been raised on our stolen fields by our own hands. After harvest time, the Red Muscovites would have taken everything away as usual. But you came and chased them away. Now this food belongs to us."

Dancing followed the feast. Girls wanted to dance with Ludwig, but he did not know how. He stepped on their feet time after time. Soon the girls discovered that there were many Ukrainians in German uniforms. It was not until dawn that they went to seek rest and sleep.

Late in the afternoon of the following day, the mayor came dressed in a splendid Kozak uniform. "I was in the old army, a colonel in a Kozak regiment. I have hidden my uniform for thirty years for the time when I would use it again. Right now I feel as if I could lead a regiment against the leaders of Russia."

Boys came to Ludwig and begged to enlist against Stalin. The mayor-colonel said: "If you Germans are wise, you will create an army of three million Ukrainian men. Tell your leaders to let them fight for a free Ukraine."

The mayor led his guests to the cemetery and pointed to thirteen new graves. "These are the Red police. Our enemies, our tormentors, who always had plenty to eat while we almost died from starvation. In 1933, millions died from the famine. When they heard that you were coming, these Reds tried to escape. I watched and arrested them with the help of my boys. They were tried and executed two days ago."

"Then you shot them to death?"

"No," the mayor said as he drew his curved-blade sword. "Each got but one stroke. I thought I had forgotten the old Kozak art, but I was still master of it. Thirteen strokes, thirteen heads rolled on the sand."

Ludwig looked in amazement at the colonel. A hero of old, he thought. He then realized an important fact—these people had dared to break with Stalin. This thought troubled him—"If the Reds should come back, woe to these people!"

He sat down tiredly and pondered his recent experiences while his soldiers rejoiced in the hospitality of the delivered people. "Moscow doesn't heed your tears." Ludwig shuddered as he thought of Kalinin's message to those grieved people. Little did he realize that two years hence he would stand before long rows of freshly-opened soil in Winnitza; here Stalin's orders had buried thousands in 1937. Thousands of people were to look for their loved ones. Many were to recognize fathers, brothers, or sons, by their clothing. A great cry was to echo through the park of Winnitza. And yet, Kalinin, the Bolshevik with a good heart of compassion had written: "Don't weep, Moscow doesn't heed your tears." What could the people expect from any Bolshevik?

And Hitler? What of him? At the same time Ludwig was giving the farms back to the farmers, Hitler, Himmler, Goebbels, Goering, Rosenberg, and Darré were deciding the future of the occupied countries. Hitler wondered about the state farms—the land stolen by the Reds. He wanted to give them back to the former owners. Goebbels the propagandist and Himmler the killer said nothing. Their jobs did not have to do with the soil. Goering agreed: "Yes, the only thing we can do is to return the land to the owners. Thus we will have the common people of Russia behind us. In wartime that means a lot."

Rosenberg had another idea. "My *Führer,* I was born among Russians, in Riga. What the Reds have been doing with the people is right. Stalin had some wise ideas. The Russian people must be oppressed, must be made to feel a yoke on their necks.

Only by applying this method can we keep the nations of the Soviet Union under discipline."

Hitler thought this over very carefully. "Rosenberg, you know best. You are the man of God, the prophet of our party. You will create a new German religion. Woe to the leaders of people and nations who do not listen to their men of God. I lived in Vienna and I know the Slavs. They must be disciplined, as you suggest. I will send a strong administration to Russia. We are the rulers there and they shall feel our yoke. What Stalin had been able to do, I can do better."

Goering, who had remained silent up until now, spoke up: "I think that would be a wrong decision. A better policy is to give the people freedom to create free nations. Let us take the millions of Russians and Ukrainians and all the others into our army. They are begging to be used against their foes, the Communists."

Rosenberg laughed. "That would mean that *they* are the rulers there. We cannot permit them to become powerful."

Hitler agreed. "That is true. We are the rulers in those lands. We don't need their help. We are strong enough."

Goering was troubled. "My *Führer,* I think this policy shall create partisans behind our battle lines. We shall create rebellion in those great occupied areas with their tremendous forests."

Himmler shrugged his shoulders. "Rebellion? Don't be afraid. Let me take care of that!"

Hitler felt relieved. "Don't be afraid, Goering. As long as we have heroes such as Rosenberg and Himmler, everything will work out!"

So it was that many farm workers in officers' uniforms came from Germany into the occupied areas. They took over the state farms, they beat the people, and seized their crops and livestock. Goering's advice had been sound. If Hitler had listened, he might have won the Second World War. "But the Lord had appointed to defeat the good cause of Ahithopel to the intent that the Lord might bring evil upon Absalom"

(II Samuel 17:14). What would have happened to the world if Hitler and Himmler had won the war? God alone knows. It is too terrible to contemplate.

Ludwig continued his duties as liaison officer among the Ukrainians. He was warmly welcomed wherever he went. He soon learned that all the people were against Stalin; there were no Russian soldiers, no commissars, or police—the people themselves had made the purge.

He rejoined his unit just as the Germans were beginning their battle to cross the mighty Dnieper, near Krementshuk. Ludwig crossed the river near Kherson not far from the Black Sea. The resistance of the Red Army was weak. Captured Red soldiers on the other side of the river greeted the Germans: "Why did you take so long? We were waiting for you!"

It was given to Ludwig to cross the Dnieper. Shevchenko, the great Ukrainian poet, had written about this mighty river. Some of those poems had been sung on the day of Olga's death. She had talked often of the Ukrainian rivers. Her dream to live in a free Ukraine never came true. Ludwig had never realized that some day he would have the opportunity of seeing the mighty Dnieper.

From the Dnieper River, near Kherson, to the peninsula of Crimea is a distance of about eighty miles. The country was a prairie with few villages. The fertile soil was largely uncultivated; Russia lacked farmers to till it. This entire area offered no resistance. Red soldiers dropped their rifles and actually welcomed the Germans. Red commissars fled eastward. At Perekop, before the peninsula, the German advance was stopped for a few weeks. The Red Army was split: one part fled to the Sevastopol fortress, the other went south to Kertch. This was a serious turning point of the war.

On his way to Kertch, a shell fragment struck Ludwig's helmet and injured his left eye. The closest army hospital with an eye specialist in attendance was in Lvov. And so Ludwig was sent to Lvov. Although he endured some pain, he was happy because he was to see his beloved city Lvov again.

19. *A Visit to Lvov*

AFTER a very long journey, Ludwig stood on a hill and looked down on the beautiful city. He could not keep back the tears. Lvov had not been destroyed, yet the streets seemed strange to him. The earlier joyfulness and happiness were gone. It was a city without a soul. Entering the city, he saw many German, Hungarian, Rumanian, and Slovakian soldiers. Coming to Theater Square, he saw thousands of Jews being rounded up. The SS men separated families without pity. Men were put into one truck, women in a second, and children in a third. What would become of them, no one knew. But it was obvious that they were going to a horrible fate. The cries of these unhappy, persecuted people terrified Ludwig. He looked at the faces of the SS men. They were grim. Their faces were not a sermon of peace, as Lowenstein had put it. These men were changed; they were robots, possessed by the evil spirit. A great anger gripped his heart. He put his hand on his revolver. It felt hard and cold.

"By moving fast I could shoot at least three Nazis before they got me. But would that solve the problem; would that stop other SS men?" he asked himself. He realized he was powerless, and he fled from the square. Lvov had given him a terrible welcome. He wished he had never come here.

He went to the Main Square and entered a restaurant where he had often eaten as a student. The waiter did not recognize him at first. But Ludwig told him who he was and then he welcomed him. He knew Ludwig very well, even Olga; both of them had come to the restaurant together. After she had died, Ludwig had wandered aimlessly through the city and one day stepped into the restaurant where the waiter, who was

a Ukrainian patriot, comforted him. Today Ludwig learned much about the political situation. The waiter told him how the independence of the Ukraine had been proclaimed after the Bolsheviks had been driven out. The joy of the people had been great. A government was quickly established. The bishops blessed the new young state, as well as the great German deliverers. That proclamation was made on June 30, 1941, by Jaroslaw Stetzko, premier of the new Ukraine Government. The government made plans to establish an army of three million men to help the Germans exterminate the Reds. But suddenly the German Gestapo had come and arrested the ruling members of the new republic. This was a sudden about-face. Germany alone would not be able to win the war. They would lose and the Reds would take over again! The Ukrainians were angry and bitter.

Ludwig left the restaurant and went about the city. The sky was clouded and he felt miserable. Slowly he made his way to the cemetery and came to the Ukrainian graves. He found the resting place of his martyred Olga. As he sat on a little bench by her grave, all his past experiences seemed to press in upon him. He had often sat here with the Ukrainian students; he remembered the words Olga had spoken high in the Carpathian Mountains: "Germany is our hope." Ludwig glanced at Olga's grave. A late rose was blooming on a bush he had planted many years ago; the last leaves were falling from the trees. The sky darkened; a few drops of rain fell. In his grief he imagined the heavens were weeping over conditions on earth. Like Elijah, he wanted to die. Sorrowfully, he bent and kissed the rose; then he walked slowly from the cemetery.

As he passed through the streets, he saw many old Jewish people dying of starvation. They were being cruelly treated by the Nazis. His heart was filled with sorrow because he could not help.

Who was this? An old man was sprawled on the steps of a house. He thought the face familiar. He went closer,

kneeled down, and cried out: "Lowenstein! My Lowenstein!" The dying man opened his eyes, and shuddered with fear as he saw Ludwig's uniform. "Don't be afraid, Lowenstein. It is I, Ludwig, your friend."

"O, you, Ludwig," whispered Lowenstein. He was terribly weak and in great pain. Ludwig called a passerby and they carried his old landlord into a house and carefully lowered him upon a bed. Lowenstein looked at Ludwig's uniform and asked: "Why are you in that uniform?"

"I had no choice," answered Ludwig.

The old man gasped weakly. "I am very hungry, I have not seen food for days. But there no longer is time. It was nice on your farm. There I spent my first real vacation . . . the best days of my life. Remember me to your father. My wife is dead already, soon I'll meet her." With these words, he bowed his head and passed away quietly, much suffering written on his aged face.

Ludwig looked at his dead friend's white beard. He said to himself: "Polish and German fists tore at that beard. Now nobody can harm him. All because he was Jewish."

Friendly hands carried the body to the Jewish cemetery for burial. Ludwig purchased a chrysanthemum and placed it on his friend's grave. "Rest in peace until we meet again!" He recalled Lowenstein's words in the wheat field when the two of them were watching at the hawk they had tied: "When evil dominates man, he becomes more dangerous than tigers, lions, and wolves." How true was his prophecy!

20. *In the Carpathians Again*

LUDWIG'S wounded eye improved rapidly under the skilful treatment of the doctor who had been an eye specialist in Berlin. He had also been drafted, and put to work in a military hospital in Lvov. The doctor said: "Because of the improvement of your eye, I am able to let you go a week earlier. Do you have somewhere to go? Why should you go back to the front a single day earlier than necessary?"

Ludwig was grateful for the suggestion, and decided to visit Olga's parents. The doctor gave him the necessary papers. Ludwig left the city. Although he had once loved Lvov, he had seen so much suffering there that he did not know if he wanted ever to come back again.

The railroad to the Carpathians, where Olga's parents lived, was not important to the German war strategy, so it was not interfered with. Ludwig, however, learned that a freight train was being put together at the main station, to which he made his way. There were no civilians, there was no laughter and joy he had seen so often when leaving for his vacations. Only serious-looking military personnel strolled through the once-beautiful halls, waiting for trains which would carry them to the front or home on a short furlough. The beautiful paintings on the ceilings had become drab and gray from dust and negligence.

Ludwig found the distant track where the freight train was being put together. After hours of waiting, the train pulled out of the station, rattling and jerking at a slow speed. The steeples and domes of the many churches and cathedrals grew smaller and smaller, until they finally disappeared. At the train stations there were no students happily leaving the

train, as they did when Ivan and Ludwig first rode into the Carpathians. Instead, conscripted road and railroad laborers by order of the Nazi High Command climbed into the wagons. Few spoke. There was no spirit of friendship. The laborers climbed on at every station until all the seats on the benches around the walls were taken. The others had to stand in the middle of the wagon.

At one station, a man who boarded was respectfully greeted —"Hallo, *djack,* did they drive you to work also?" The newcomer nodded. *Djack* meant deacon, the man who helped the priest during the worship service, singing psalms, reading the Scriptures, and directing the choir.

A man with a long mustache rose and, with a light bow, offered the deacon his seat. How thoughtful, thought Ludwig. The mustached man reminded him of Ivan's father Karluk. Standing next to the *djack,* who had taken his seat, he pointed to Ludwig. "Look, *djack,* we have a guest."

"I wonder where he is going," the *djack* stared at Ludwig.

"We think he's escaping to the mountains; maybe he does not like the *führer,*" one said.

The *djack* was amused, but he did not laugh aloud as the others did. Everybody looked at the soldier; then one said: "He is a good-looking boy. Wonder what part of Germany he comes from?"

"Blonds like him are usually from North Germany; maybe he was born near Hamburg," the *djack* explained.

The mustached man remarked: "I bet you he has already shot at least a hundred Jews."

The *djack* pushed his lower lip out a little, knit his brow and thought it over. "Panas, restrain yourself from judging too fast. Appearances can be deceiving."

Panas stretched out his arm, his finger almost touching Ludwig's uniform, and hollered: "Maybe he's a camp commandant, who came out to look for people."

A man called out: "Shut up, Panas, don't you see he is only a private? Besides, he has no eagle on his sleeve. Those

with the eagle on their sleeves are the devils. And besides, the boy looks rather peaceful. Why don't you let him alone?"

Panas, retreating into the crowd, grumbled: "My mother used to say, 'A devil can change into an angel of light.'"

Ludwig felt as though he were on trial. He decided not to say anything lest it start a commotion. He tried to present an indifferent expression. He wanted to look out of a window, but there was no window. He stared at the wall, but this grew tiresome. He hates me; he wears a long mustache, which means his forebears were famous Kozak officers; he loves his country and hates Hitler's policy in Ukraine. I am a German soldier—he can feel no other way toward me, reasoned Ludwig.

The *djack* looked troubled. "And how did we wait for them! The day Hitler attacked the Reds was the brightest day of our lives; it was a day of prayer. The nations of Russia, enslaved by the Soviets, prayed for Hitler's victory. We greeted them with our traditional salt and bread. Our youth decorated the graves of their dead. But it was stupid German politics that could not see the signs of the time. As long as the world exists, there has never been such an opportunity to win a war. Fate threw victory into their lap, but they tossed it out, kicked it away, when they turned against us."

Panas squeezed through the workers until he stood before the *djack,* pointing toward Ludwig again. "They did not come to free the nations; they came to rob and steal our land. Our beautiful Crimea has been designated for the storm troopers as a place to loaf and loiter."

The *djack* nodded. "It is true."

Then Panas asked: "What about it, *djack;* which is the bigger evil for us, the Nazis or the Reds?"

"To live under the Reds can be compared to a plant in the Arctic tundras. Its life is drab and gray in that merciless climate where the storms howl and the cold cuts like a knife."

"I was there in a labor camp; there is a short summer," someone shouted from behind.

"Yes, there is summer for a few weeks, but the ground

remains frozen. From time to time there appears a ray of hope in the Red paradise, but the ground remains frozen," the *djack* said sadly.

The others agreed.

"Should the Nazis remain here," the *djack* continued, "our life would be like the life of plants in the Sahara."

"We don't understand," one shouted. "The Sahara is a desert in Africa, scorched by the sun, where there is no life, only immense sand masses."

"But there are oases," said another.

"Yes, our Ukraine would be such an oasis for the Brown Shirts and other Nazi vagabonds. We would die sooner or later," the *djack* stated with a sigh.

"That's terrible," Panas declared excitedly. Pointing to Ludwig, he said: "Let's kick him out. He would roll down the embankment into the bushes and nobody would find him."

The *djack* shook his finger. "Don't you dare. We may get ourselves into a lot of trouble."

A stillness descended upon everybody. The men looked depressed. Their faces seemed to sink, as if they were gazing into a bottomless pit. Occupied by what had been said, Ludwig did not realize the blue ridges of his beloved Carpathian Mountains had drawn near.

The train slowed up because of the steep grades; soon the train came to a stop at the station which Ludwig knew so well. He got up and, in perfect Ukrainian, said: "Friends, I understood every word you said."

The men were thunderstruck. The freight train had stopped.

Panas shouted: "He is a spy! He looks for people for their industries. Let's flee, he'll turn us in!" He jumped out first and ran. The others did the same. The last one out was the *djack.*

Ludwig shouted after them: "Friends, wait! I am not a spy! I haven't shot a Jew or a Gentile. I wasn't born near Hamburg. Wait, let me explain! *Djack,* you wise man, wait for me!"

They did not hear him. They were gone. They had disappeared behind bushes, down the hills, to their villages in the valleys.

Ludwig looked around. The train had pulled away. He sat down on a stone. "They run away from me. My friends run away!" he told himself. The world became empty; it seemed to him he had flown away and was sitting alone on a stone in the universe. He experienced the grief of being alone. Perhaps the Lord felt this way when his disciples fled after his arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane. The thought of God helped to give him some peace.

Night descended. The mountains grew dark and threatening, as if angry that their friend was in a German uniform. Ludwig shuddered; he felt an inner cold. He put his hand on his forehead. It felt hot. At that moment he longed for a word of consolation; perhaps he would see a smile on the lips of Olga's mother. And the father would put his hand upon his shoulder, showing happiness that Ludwig had come. He longed to tell them that he had visited Olga's grave, and that the rosebush was still there. Yes, it would be good to visit them again, just like the old days.

He started out for the home of Olga's parents. He hurried over the bridge and up the hill. There was the school. How everything had changed! He came closer. The house was without windows or doors. The soldiers from "the Workers' Paradise" had been there and had done their usual thorough job of robbery. He entered through the low door into the living room. It was empty. All the furniture, even the doors and window sashes, were gone. His steps echoed through what he thought was an empty house.

He heard someone coming down the stairs. He looked up and saw a man standing before him. He looked like Ivan, but without Ivan's mustache.

"Ivan, is it possible? Is it really you?"

"Yes, Ludwig. I recognized you immediately, although you

are in uniform." The two friends embraced warmly, holding back the tears.

Ludwig pulled a Hindenburg candle from his bag. Every soldier had to carry such candles all the time. They were short, in a carton cup, about four inches in diameter. It was difficult for even a strong wind to extinguish them. In the light of that candle, Ludwig looked into Ivan's face. "It's you, all right. What are you doing here? What has happened?"

"I have been living here since the Communists took over our two provinces, Volhynia and Galicia, and the whole of East Poland. They sought to kill me. I fled and was hidden in this house and in forest caves. Olga's parents brought me food at night, until one night the NKVD came. They shot him to death, raped his wife, then exiled her to Siberia."

Ludwig fell against the wall, then slipped to the floor. He could not weep, the shock was too great. A whole world seemed to collapse—Olga dead, her father killed, her mother violated and exiled to Siberia! A fine family wiped out; nothing was left of them. He put his head into his hands. The night had descended quietly, making the empty house seem more horrible. A gust of wind entered and went howling through the empty doors and windows. It was truly the end of the world as far as he was concerned.

Ivan shuddered. "Ludwig," he asked, "have you an answer for this? Isn't it that even you despair now? You must admit there is no stop sign when all belief, faith, and hope break down. There is no consolation, no hope. There is nothing but darkness."

Ludwig did not have an answer. He admitted it was a desperate moment. "Ivan, you are a priest and you know the Scriptures and the comforting words therein."

"There will be a new heaven and earth. There will be a time when the Creator will wipe away all our tears. There will be a time without pain and sorrow; neither grief nor war will trouble us." A faint smile appeared on Ivan's lips; then he said, "Yes, it is an optimistic outlook, but too abstract

and not realistic. It does not say how to bring back our freedom or how to destroy Communism."

Ludwig was aware that dreaming of a new heaven and new earth would accomplish little. The facts of life were too hard and pressing. There was nothing he could say.

They kept silent for a long while. They heard the rushing of the creek and the meowing of a stray cat. A lone star appeared through a cleft in a cloud. Noticing its simple splendor, Ludwig sighed. "Heavenly light will overcome all darkness."

In time the darkness was punctured by hundreds of stars. The clouds were gone. It was so heartwarming that Ludwig felt impelled to sing:

There's a land that is fairer than day,
And by faith we can see it afar;
For the Father waits over the way
To prepare us a dwelling-place there.

In the sweet bye and bye,
We shall rest on that beautiful shore.
In the sweet bye and bye,
We shall rest on that beautiful shore.

Ivan looked longingly through the broken windows and sighed. "A fine melody, it makes me feel better, but it does not solve any of the problems we are facing in this time of trouble." Finally he rose and left. He returned with a bunch of old straw and spread it on the floor to serve as their bed. It was a refreshing sleep. No disturbance. The creek did not sing any special song. It rushed along, murmuring as usual. The creek would never change. Even war could not disrupt the harmony of God and nature.

The next morning, they sadly said farewell to that once lovely place where they had experienced so much joy, sorrow, and grief. They traveled together to Lvov where Ivan, with Ludwig's help, was able to get a ticket to his village in Volhynia.

"I'll take over the church in my village," cried Ivan as the train pulled away. "Just you wait and see!"

Ludwig returned to his unit. Having daily seen so much cruelty and injustice, he started to criticize the Nazis and their ruthless policy in the occupied lands. There were no Nazis in his unit, and so everybody agreed. But the situation grew dangerous for Ludwig when an SS officer caught him carrying food to a barrack occupied by starving Jews. Ludwig had been doing this for months, since his return from Lvov. The SS man went straight to Ludwig's captain and demanded severe punishment for Ludwig. The captain called him in. "You are in danger. I like what you have done—my brother and uncle are Catholic priests. I hate this Nazi pestilence and I'll help you. Since you are an interpreter, I can send you back to a garrison in the Reich. I will tell the others you are in the trenches."

And so Ludwig was sent back to Germany.

21. In Kiev

THE SUN was setting as Ludwig arrived in Kiev on his way home. He had never before seen Kiev, the capital of the Ukraine. The following morning, he took a walk through the beautiful city, the pride of every Ukrainian throughout the world. Olga had often spoken of Kiev. She, too, had yearned to see it. Although the Communists had not done much to improve conditions since they had taken over, the old splendor was still visible in many quarters.

He went up to St. Andrew's Church, built many centuries before on the high bank of the Dneiper River which Ludwig had crossed near Cherson, not far from the Black Sea. He sat on the cement steps of the church, which had been closed since the revolution. Grass was growing in the cracks of the walls and steps. He looked over the mighty river into a wonderful land. He recalled the legend of Andrew the Apostle, who had come here to preach the Gospel and baptize the people.

Kiev is the oldest city in Eastern Europe, located on the old trade routes from Armenia and the Mongolian lands to the Viking states around the Baltic Sea. In the eighth century, the family of the German-Swedish knight Rurik came into this land and organized all the tribes, creating in due time a kingdom. In 988, King Vladimir was baptized here with his entire following. Because of the leadership of Rurik, the nation was called Rusyani.

The ancestors of the present-day Russians lived then in dark forests in the region of their river Moskwa, and called themselves Muscovites. The Ukraine, because of her fertile soil, was the scene of much bloodshed. Through the centuries,

she struggled with the Mongolians from the east, the Turks and Tartars from the south, and the Poles from the west. Then in the fifteenth century, the strong, wild Muscovites emerged from their forests, captured Kiev, took over the Ukraine's religious culture and changed its name to Russia, a latinization of "Rus," the ancient name of the Ukraine. Current Russian history books tell about the conversion of Russia in 988 and the beginning of the Russian state in the eighth century. After the Muscovites took the name "Russia," the people called themselves Ukrainians to distinguish themselves from the Muscovite Russians. And ever since, the people of the Ukraine have sought freedom and self-government.

Will there be a time when the history will be corrected regarding the Ukraine, the most beautiful land on earth, and its people who stood on guard for Europe against the wild Mongolian sea long, long ago? Thus sitting on the steps of St. Andrew's Church and recalling the past of the Ukrainian capital, Ludwig saw a man come around the corner of the church. He looked as if he had only recently experienced great grief and disappointment. He came apparently to seek the solitude to be found on the steps of the church closed by the Reds many years ago. Seeing Ludwig, he began to run.

"Stop or I shoot!" shouted Ludwig.

The man stopped. Ludwig called to him and he approached him fearfully.

"I would never have shot at you. I only wanted to know what suffering you bear in your heart. Perhaps I can help you."

The man sat down beside him. He was of Ludwig's age, intelligent-looking, and was surprised to hear Ludwig speak in Ukrainian. He buried his face in his hands; obviously he was very much shaken. "Something horrible happened. A Ukrainian woman poet was shot yesterday here in Kiev."

"A woman poet?" repeated Ludwig. "What was her name?"

"Olena Teliha," said the man. "Her parents escaped the Red henchmen in 1917 and fled to Czechoslovakia. She was but a young girl then, growing up in Podebrady, where her

father was dean of the Ukrainian Technological Academy and where she issued two volumes of poetry. After the deliverance of Kiev by your people, she came back and edited a literary magazine. In one issue, she wrote about the necessity of an independent Ukraine with a great army in order to defeat Communism. That was the reason for her death. The SS shot her."

Ludwig leaned against the wall, unable to utter a word. A woman, he thought. A tender woman, a friend of the Germans shot by her friends. That deed would remain in Ukrainian literary history forever. Who could have ordered such a satanic plot? She certainly was not dangerous. She would never have taken up a weapon to fight them. What a vicious murder!

The Ukrainian, seeing Ludwig's silence, and odd behavior, shook his head and went away.

Ludwig strode back to the church, which stood only a few steps from the edge of the Dneiper Valley, and sat down again. It was growing dark. That he felt neither heartbreak nor sadness was baffling. Was it the good Lord's protection against a serious damage of mind and body? The wounds in his heart and spirit which he received in Lvov and on the hilltop were not yet healed. He decided to remain on the church steps during the night, fearing he might see or hear something sorrowful again on the streets or in the lodging place. His soul cried for peace and quietness. It was granted to him. Ludwig fell asleep on the steps of the Greek Orthodox church.

The next morning, Ludwig went to the railroad station and boarded a train bound for the Reich. Many soldiers from the front were changing trains in Kiev for furlough in Germany. In Ludwig's compartment sat five privates, an SS corporal, and an old sergeant—a regiment band leader whose eyes shifted like those of a weasel, looking at everybody and openly sneering his contempt. The SS corporal was a young Austrian from Vienna, wearing a brand new, good-fitting uni-

form, and shiny boots. Ludwig and the other five privates in shabby uniforms sat quietly.

The train pulled out of the Kiev station and began to speed through Ukrainian land toward the west. It was a bright and sunny May day. The SS man looked out of the window into the beautiful landscape. "All this land far to the south to the Black Sea and to the east to the very Volga will belong to the Reich. Our farmers will eventually leave their meager mountain farms and settle right in this paradise!"

"What about the inhabitants of this land?" asked the sergeant.

"We'll drive them out, to Mongolia, Siberia, or Kasochstan. The lovely Crimea, however, is reserved for the old SS and their leaders."

Ludwig thought: That's exactly what the *djack* said in the train.

The sergeant shook his head. "There is nothing lacking in *your* appetite. Will you digest what you are swallowing up? The occupied lands will turn to stones in your stomach. The Ukrainians are not going to give up without a fight."

"You don't understand the signs of our time. Germany is on the move, and nobody will stop us. We need only hardened men and women, not meek ones. A hard time requires hard people," answered the SS man.

"You don't look so hardened yourself," replied the sergeant. "Otherwise, you'd be fighting at the front."

"You don't know what you are talking about," snapped the SS man. He stood up, got a case from the shelf, and pulled out a guitar. The sergeant's grin stopped as soon as the Viennese boy struck his first chords. He played and sang so that everybody marveled.

"An instrument in a master's hand," murmured the band leader.

He sang about *"Wien, die lustige Stadt"* (Vienna, the gay city), about love and betrayal, the front song, "Lili Marlene," about his Blue Danube, and then swung into the "Strauss Waltz."

Lovely music for an SS man! What a crazy mixture, thought Ludwig.

The SS man put his guitar away and started a speech about a great Reich in the Ukraine, about Hitler who would soon conquer the whole world.

"Who taught you all these ideas?" asked Ludwig.

"*Dummkopf,* naturally the Ordensburg, our political school," he retorted.

He started to preach again, but the sergeant said: "Your music, yes; your political babbling, no! Shut up!"

The SS man quieted down. The train went on through the night. The next morning, Warsaw came in view. It was a beautiful sunny day again. Over the city, however, hung a black cloud.

"What is that?" asked the sergeant.

"That's smoke," said the SS man.

The smoke did not rise straight into the sky like the potters' smoke, but lingered over the city, creating various forms and shapes. It seemed to Ludwig as if he saw bodies without heads and heads without bodies and angry-looking faces; and there were twisted smoke funnels resembling snakes.

"Where does the smoke come from?" asked Ludwig.

"*Dummkopf,* from the ghetto, of course. The Jews made an uprising and they fight like lions, killing many of our boys. See?" he pointed. "The Jews had to fence themselves in by putting up a stone wall around their part of the city in which they were ordered to live and to starve. So they made an uprising. Now they are being destroyed—men, women, and children!"

Suddenly Ludwig seemed to wake up from a dream. What did the arrogant SS corporal say? Men, women, and children? Even children? As a little boy in Siberia he had lost his mother in a bazaar for a few minutes. He had been horrified. He had run crying and looking for his mother, until she had found him. And over there were children hiding behind their mothers' skirts which were being pierced by bayonets! He jumped to his

feet, ran to the train window, hammering the panes with his fists and shouting: "Stop it, stop it!"

"What's the matter with you?" asked the corporal.

Ludwig turned around. He felt the whole Nazi burden again put upon his soul. He saw the scene in Lvov, heard the talk in the train, and the woman poet Olena Teliha slain by such gangsters as this one. Ludwig suddenly jumped toward the SS corporal, grabbed him by his neck, and punched him. The SS man hit back, but the gangster could not free his neck from Ludwig's grip. Ludwig banged the corporal's head against the wall.

"That for Lvov! That for Olena Teliha! That for the ghetto!" He loosened his grip when he saw that the corporal had fainted. Nobody even made an attempt to help him, except a young front soldier who splashed coffee from his flask into his face and the corporal regained consciousness. He was enraged. "I'll report you! You'll be shot! I'm an old fighter and belonged to the party long before the *führer* occupied Austria. I have power. You are just a lousy *dummkopf* private in the Wehrmacht. Just you wait. . . ."

Ludwig jumped him again, but the old sergeant pushed him back. "It's enough," he warned. Pointing to Ludwig, he said: "He's cracking up. It's front-craze. He saw too much war, too many casualties. You haven't seen that. Compare your uniform with those of these boys and you should understand."

"I'll report him at the next station! The guards will take him off of the train!" the corporal shouted.

"We will say *you* started the fight. What about that, boys?" asked the sergeant.

"The corporal started the fight," the others said in unison.

The Austrian looked around and shook his head. "What a rotten world, this world of ours!"

"That's exactly what it is," remarked a soldier seated near the door.

"A rotten world because of too many killings and dying of innocent people," said Ludwig.

The corporal looked up. "Are you perhaps a patriot? Our movement likes patriots."

"Sure," said the sergeant, "he is a patriot, a great patriot —maybe of a different kind than you."

The corporal stroked his neck with his hand and discovered blood. "What shall I tell my comrades when they ask about these bruises?"

The sergeant grinned and his cunning eyes shone as he said: "Tell them your last girl went wild and scratched you."

The soldiers laughed. Suddenly the corporal put his hand upon his head, groaning and moaning. "It hurts! There's a lump."

The sergeant moved closer to him, rubbed his pointed nose, and whispered—for all to hear. "Tell them the girl was not satisfied afterwards and hit you over the head with the rolling pin."

There was much laughter, and even Ludwig grinned. The corporal was quiet for a while, then he took up his guitar and began to play and sing about a dishonest, deceitful, rotten world. But he kept a careful distance from his adversary.

Ludwig was amazed at the confusion of ideas and conceptions in the mind of this Nazi-trained young man. Looking out of the window, he saw the smoke over the ghetto disappear on the horizon. "A scratched neck and a lump on the head of an SS man. That's all I could do for you fighting and dying people!" he whispered hoarsely.

At the next station, the SS man grabbed his belongings and guitar and vanished in the crowd without saying a word.

22. *The Shepherd and the Young Slave Laborers*

LUDWIG proceeded to his new assignment, where he was attached to an interpreter company. Here he became a teacher of the Ukrainian and Russian languages. His days were active, but he still felt the anguish of having lost his loved ones and his country.

For many months he led a peaceful life. He lectured in clean classrooms in a five-story modern barrack. His students, all soldiers, had some background in their foreign languages. Russian was very much in demand. Interpreters were needed by the army to serve on divisional, regimental, and battalion staffs, to translate captured documents and interrogate prisoners. They were requested even by army bakeries and large farm administrators. Ludwig knew he was in this way helping to enslave the poor peasants on their collective farms and to prolong the war. But he had no choice. To disobey would mean his death before a firing squad.

One Sunday morning he felt he had to get away from the military life: the barracks, classrooms, soldiers, and most of all those officers, commissioned and noncommissioned, who were always out for a smart salute. Most of them were egomaniacs.

He took a streetcar to the edge of the city. From there he walked until he came to an uncultivated, prairie-like field with a lovely rushing brook, the young willow bushes bending over it from both sides, as if wanting to see their reflections in the crystal-clear water.

Ludwig wandered aimlessly along the creek. He took off his cap, opened his collar. He was happy in a small way. No task, no duty, no aim. He felt relaxed. He strode through a

grove of young birch trees. The white stems shone in the morning sun. He suddenly found himself before a herd of about five hundred sheep, resting peacefully in a meadow near the creek. There was a shepherd standing on a nearby little hill, leaning on a long stick. He was an old man whose weather-beaten face was covered by a broad gray beard. At his feet lay his dog, his snout resting on his outstretched front legs, glancing at the sheep from time to time without lifting up his head.

The shepherd was not looking at his sheep, but staring into the far land. Ludwig wanted to touch his shoulder, to strike up a conversation, but he did not want to disturb the shepherd who seemed lost in his thoughts.

Must be meditating. No wonder, always so close to the heart of nature. Maybe right now his searching mind is penetrating and grasping the truths of the mystery of life and its beginning. Can't disturb him, decided Ludwig. He turned away and stretched out beneath a juniper. Like a mighty dome, the blue sky bent graciously down all around the horizon, just as a mother would bend over a cradle, with a smile, to lift her child to her heart,

Yes, there was smiling everywhere. The birch trees with their shiny white stems seemed to smile. The singing of the ascending larks sounded like the giggling of happy girls. He looked after the larks. How could they ascend so straight up until they could not be seen, singing all the same time? These crested larks had always fascinated him. Their lovely song could make him forget the whole world and ease the pain of his anguished soul. The sun was smiling, too. She can look pale and angry—then beware of cold and frost; she can look small, red, and distant—and drought and heat may follow; she can look big and near, resembling a mighty eye full of tears—and a rainstorm will sweep the land. The sun can peep through clouds, sending beams up and down and all around —and a mild rain will kiss and refresh the earth and its inhabitants. But today the sun had no trick in mind, just honestly

friendly and smiling. Ludwig smiled while he relaxed beneath the juniper. How could it be otherwise? This is the day of the Lord. He smiled as he began to fall asleep.

When he awoke, the sun had moved to the west. The shepherd was still standing on the little hill and looking to the far horizon. He rose and went to him, touched his shoulder. "Shepherd, wise man, you surely were meditating and your mind was searching after the ultimate truth. What did you find?"

The shepherd turned his face toward Ludwig slowly. His eyes were gray like his beard, reflecting kindness and an inner peace. He shook his head. "I did not think of anything."

"The whole day long?" asked Ludwig.

"The whole day long," the shepherd repeated. "You see, in the long run the world will not live by what the human mind searches for and thinks—that may ruin her—but by the quiet and calm the people are able to preserve. It is vitally important to turn off our thinking apparatus once in a while and let the tormented nerves rest; only so we'll be able to radiate calmness to others. Why are my sheep so calm? Because I am calm and my dog, too."

"Why are the nations so confused?"

The shepherd continued: "Because their leaders run wild. There is neither calmness nor peace to be found in their minds. Their nerves don't rest. They are swept and driven by longings and desires for more and greater power and glory. Remember, quietness is an ancient recipe. The prophet of old said: 'In quietness shall be your strength.' There is still another outcome of quietness. When you have left behind all earthly noise, managed to shake off all cares and woes, an inner voice may occur to you. A voice from the Great Beyond, telling you kindly of the love and compassion and peace it would like to bestow upon you and through you to others.

"The leaders of the nations have no time for that inner voice. They won't believe in a Being greater than they, and whose commandment they have to obey. And now, young

friend, goodbye. I have to lead my sheep to a green meadow for supper. I am, after all, a good shepherd."

As he walked away, the sheep rose and followed him. The dog trotted behind, seeing to it that no sheep dawdled.

Ludwig stood and looked after the shepherd until he and his herd disappeared behind the birch grove where there was a green meadow. He thought about the old shepherd. He cares for his animals. How different are the rulers on earth who drive their young men into death and destruction because they refused to listen in quietness to a voice from above. "God bless you, good shepherd," Ludwig said and turned to go back to his barrack.

A month after his talk with the shepherd, Ludwig was ordered to appear in battle dress and helmet in the battalion office, where he was promoted to corporal. "For brave conduct on the front and his merit as a teacher of foreign languages," the order read.

Ludwig was pleased. He moved to the corporals' room, which was kept clean by privates. He ate in the noncom's dining room, where privates served them. And best of all, he no longer had to salute the corporals and they could no longer yell at him.

Soon after he was made a corporal, he was called to his *hauptman,* who told him he had to see the Gestapo. The SS officer who had reported him to the Gestapo for carrying food to the Jewish barracks had learned his whereabouts. Ludwig told the whole story to his captain, who had been a professor of philology at a famous university in southern Germany and had been drafted to head the interpreter company. He seemed to like Ludwig and had suggested his promotion to corporal. He put his hand upon Ludwig's shoulder and said. "They are not that powerful yet. The Wehrmacht is the only domain where these Gestapo are powerless. They even fear a coup from the Wehrmacht. Should they win the war, every Wehrmacht commander would have a Gestapo on his neck. But not yet; we do not tolerate any interference from them. I don't know

exactly what they want, although they did some questioning about you. But go there, and don't be afraid. I'll watch the situation and will do all I can to help you if any problems should arise."

Arriving at the many-storied police building, Ludwig climbed to the third floor, occupied by the Gestapo, and stood before an iron fence which reached to the ceiling. He handed his papers through the iron bars to a guard, who opened the gate and then closed it with a heavy click behind Ludwig. He was now with the Gestapo. Ludwig walked slowly to the assigned room. He knocked; he heard steps; a man opened the door. Ludwig showed his card and the man bowed him in with great courtesy and invited him to sit down. He was a husky fellow with a pleasing red face. He did not look as hardened as the other Gestapo men.

"I am very happy that you came. You speak Russian and Polish?" He was very friendly.

Ludwig nodded, still too frightened to speak.

"That's fine. Will you be so kind as to help us?"

"Help you?" Ludwig asked, surprised. "What is it?"

"We discovered a dangerous conspiracy. Polish workers created an uprising here, so we arrested them. We have thirteen young men in the jail over there," he pointed to a building across the yard. "They have been here four months already. We had no time to try them and the right interpreter was not available. Please wait, I'll bring them up. In the meantime, you read and classify the letters they have received." He pointed to a large bundle of letters on his desk, and left.

"Polish guerrillas here in Germany? Impossible. A useless bloodshed." Ludwig was curious to see these diehards. He opened the top letter. It was not the handwriting of a determined guerrilla leader stirring up men. In fact, it was written by a hand which did not use the pen very often. "My dear child, where are you? I write and write, but no answer. Are you well? Have you something to eat? Please write and console

a wounded mother's heart." The other letters were along the same lines—mothers' hearts crying out for their children.

He put the letters aside; he was deeply moved. Ludwig suddenly felt a great compassion for the mothers far away in Poland. How true, he thought. Mothers all feel alike, whether they are German, Polish, Russian, Chinese, Jewish, or French. Mothers should reign and rule the world, then maybe things would be different in our vale of tears!

His thoughts were interrupted by the sound of many feet. The Gestapo man opened the door and pushed one prisoner after another into the room. Thirteen men stood lined up against the wall. Men? No, kids. The oldest was about nineteen and the youngest was just a sixteen-year-old boy. They had been brought from Poland to work on the railroad for the Todt organization. They were frightened school boys.

"Someone must have made a mistake. How innocent they look," Ludwig observed aloud.

The Gestapo man snickered. "Ha, I recall someone saying the Devil is able to change into an angel of light. Their innocent looks do not mean a thing. Ask them why they have been arrested."

When he asked, the boys all shook their heads. Finally the oldest said: "We don't know."

"They don't know," Ludwig told the Gestapo man in German.

"Ask them why they planned an uprising."

He translated. The boys looked at each other in surprise but said nothing. "Why did you plan it?" he pointed to a boy with big blue eyes and a blond curl tumbling down on his forehead.

The boy looked scared, then he said quietly: "It is not true. It was this way. There is a gentleman farmer not far from where we worked. He has many boys and girls from Poland working for him. Among them is his Polish driver, who has been with him for many years and who speaks German very well. Sometimes, after work or on Sundays, we went over to

chat with the workers, but the driver became jealous and told the farmer we were talking politics. One day, when we were standing on the street in front of his estate the farmer jumped at us from behind the bushes with a long, old-fashioned rifle, arrested us, and drove us to the police. The police brought us to the Gestapo where we have been imprisoned for four months. We don't know what is going to happen to us."

That was a different story and Ludwig believed it. The Gestapo man was apparently confused. The story was too convincing. He took the boys back to the jail. When he returned, Ludwig asked him when he was going to release them.

"Release them?" He looked surprised. "Only our chief can do that, and it is his policy to send one more to the concentration camp rather than one less."

"But these are innocent kids!" Ludwig exclaimed.

The Gestapo man shrugged his shoulders. "Let's go and see the chief."

They went to his office on the fourth floor. He was a captain, about forty, wearing an eagle on his sleeve, obviously an SS leader.

"Release them?" He laughed so hard he shook. "Rather one more than one less in the camps." He laughed again and then became serious. "I suppose you cling to the old concept of justice, in a trial. Then you should remember there have to be witnesses, too. Where are the witnesses who would endorse their story? Maybe you can get one and bring him before me!" He smiled in triumph, even long after they had left his office.

It was a desperate situation. Where could Ludwig find someone who would speak for the boys, defend them in the face of the Gestapo? Who had heard them talking on the street that day? Suddenly he had a thought—who did *not* hear them talking politics, and yet arrested them? The farmer, the farmer! This was his only chance. He looked at the Gestapo man, who sat at his desk, looking out of the window. Would he be

willing to bring in the farmer to tell what he knew? It was worth trying.

"What about the letters?" he asked. Ludwig opened one after another and read aloud to him: " 'Write, my child, and console your mother's wounded heart.' Nothing subversive in these letters," he remarked. "Have you any children?" Ludwig asked after a while.

"Yes, a boy. Just about the same age as these boys."

"Do you love him?"

The Gestapo man looked up at Ludwig in surprise. He rose and said: "Sure I love my boy. And I know what you are driving at. You want the boys freed. That's impossible; I know the chief. Besides, there are no witnesses."

"If I had a witness, would you let him appear before us to testify?" asked Ludwig.

The Gestapo man looked at him wonderingly. Finally he said: "Yes."

"Let the farmer come. He arrested them; he must have heard what they said."

The Gestapo man shook his head. "You are smarter than seven gypsies; but I'll do it."

He telephoned and ordered the farmer to appear before him the next day. The next day, early in the morning, the farmer was brought into the office. He looked around, scared.

"You sent us innocent kids," Ludwig came right to the point.

Assuming Ludwig to be a high Gestapo official, he made a deep bow. "I know, I know, but I could not foresee that it would develop into such a situation. I thought the police would scare the boys and warn them to stay off my estate, and stop bothering the girls on my farm. But the police took them to you. The foreman from the railroad curses me every day. He needs them for work."

Ludwig was overjoyed. He had not expected such an easy outcome with the nobleman farmer. "You repeat what you have

just said before the others, or you'll never get out of here!" he threatened him.

"I will, I will!" He made his confession before three Gestapo men. It was typed and then he signed it. Then they all went to the chief, before whom the farmer repeated his confession.

The chief fell into his easy chair, groaned, and said: "And he got witnesses. Out!" he cried suddenly to the others. They disappeared. Then he rose and came toward Ludwig. "You are determined to get the rebels out. In your imagination, you already see them in the camp, dying of starvation. You hear them crying and you, of course, can't stand tears. You old washerwoman! I know who you are, you minister. All we were taught at the Ordensburg is true. Religious people are weak people!"

Ludwig retorted: "I am a soldier who fought the Russians, in great danger day and night. And where were you? I know, sitting in this room, prosecuting and sending innocent people into camps—and you call *me* an old woman!"

The chief shouted back: "You'll never get out of here. This is treason! I'll teach you discipline!"

"You will let me out or you will have my military authorities on your neck," Ludwig raised his voice.

The chief sat down, breathing heavily. Ludwig sat beside him, looking at him. He opened a letter and translated into German: " 'Write, son, and console a wounded mother's heart.' " Then he added: "Could you stand before your mother with a good conscience, having sent thirteen other mothers' children to a concentration camp? Can you imagine the grief and sorrow of your own wife if somebody tore her children from her heart?"

This was too much for the chief. He started pacing back and forth, then sat down, got up again, and stepped toward Ludwig. Looking straight into his eyes, he said: "I guess we have been misinstructed regarding the weakness of religious people. You are not such a washerwoman as I thought."

"Yes, you have been misinstructed," was Ludwig's answer.

"Go tell the Gestapo man to come to me. The boys will go free. As for you—I shall always despise you!"

After a while, the Gestapo man came, waving a piece of paper. "They are free!"

They went to the jail. The Gestapo men let the boys out and lined them up against the wall. The boys looked at the men with fear, not knowing what was going to happen.

The Gestapo man said solemnly: "You are free. Go back and report to your boss for work."

Ludwig translated. Watching the faces of the kids, he felt this was the happiest moment of his life. He gave them their letters. "As soon as you get back, write to your mothers. That's an order. Do you understand?"

"Yes," they answered as one. Then thirteen kids left and ran down the street.

Looking after the Polish kids, Ludwig thought: This is the least repayment I can make for the friendliness and help I received in the Polish schools. He was so happy, he exclaimed aloud: "Praise the Lord, the boys are free!"

The Gestapo man heard him because he said: "I don't believe in God, but should there be a higher being, He himself has just sent you to us to help these boys." Then he whispered into Ludwig's ear: "The world does not like us. Don't cross the paths of these kids. They saw you with us. They might harm you. They can't know what you did for them, and the chief is not your friend either. Be careful."

23. The Ukrainian Case

LUDWIG was not worried about this warning. The boys turned a street corner and disappeared. Ludwig said, "Goodbye," and strode away.

The Gestapo man, however, ran after Ludwig, and grabbed him by his sleeve. "Wait, we are not through yet."

"What's the trouble?" asked Ludwig, surprised.

"There is still the Ukrainian case."

"The Ukrainian case? What's wrong with the Ukrainians?"

The Gestapo man told Ludwig: "Well, they hoped to get an independent state in this war. But our great Himmler did not want a free Ukraine. He arrested their leaders and took at least half a million of their young men to our country, to work and to forget their ideas. Now these young men are organizing themselves into military units. After their work is done, in the evenings, they gather together, drill, and talk about the future of their country. We are arresting them, to bring them to trial. You shall be our interpreter."

Before Ludwig could utter a word, the man was gone. A few minutes later, he pushed two Ukrainian boys into Ludwig's room, locked the door behind them, and came into the room through another door. "Here are the first two rebels," he announced.

Ludwig faced two typical Ukrainian boys, with their black eyes and round, completely innocent faces. He had to ask: "Do you belong to the organization 'Free Ukraine'?"

The boys said, "Yes," very innocently.

They then had to sign a "confession" and were led back to prison. More and more young Ukrainians were brought in, and Ludwig had only to ask about their belonging to the organ-

ization. They signed the required papers and were led away. All identified their leader as "Franco," in Camp C.

The Gestapo then drove to that camp to seize Franco. Ludwig waited anxiously. Suddenly the door opened and the Gestapo kicked none other than Ivan into the room. Both friends looked at each other. Before any other words could be exchanged, Ludwig said quietly, "We must not know each other, but maybe I can help you."

Just then the Gestapo officer came in. "This is the big fish, the organizer of 'Free Ukraine' here in the city and vicinity!"

A second officer arrived, with his secretary. "Why are you such an enemy of Germany?" Ivan was asked.

There was no need for Ludwig to translate. Ivan was a friend of Germany; he had diligently learned the language in his school days. "I am *not* an enemy of Germany. Our only desire is to make our country of forty-five million people a free nation."

"What is your real name?"

"Ivan Karluk."

"Are you the leader of 'Free Ukraine'?"

"That's not your business. That organization is the concern of only the Ukrainian people."

The officer laughed, and pushed a sheet of paper before him. "Sign your name here."

"Never!"

The Gestapo man laughed again. Then two of them took weed sticks from a corner of the room, threw Ivan on a bench, and began to beat him. He fell to the ground, but without a cry. He was beaten again and again, but kept silent, to the wrath of his tormentors, who cried: "Are you the leader? Sign your name!"

Ivan made no answer. Ludwig, who could not endure to see the beating of his friend, fled to the next room while the angry Gestapo man shouted: "I'll kill him! I'll kill him!"

Then they led the severely-beaten Ivan into the hallway and shackled him with a chain to a hot radiator. The Gestapo man

said to Ludwig: "Tell him I give him two hours to consider. If he won't confess, I'll kill him!"

Ludwig went to Ivan on the floor, chained like a dog. As soon as he saw Ludwig, he began to weep. "My terrible disappointment," he said. "What I have to suffer from thy people!"

"Not from the German people, Ivan. These Gestapo are not the German people," Ludwig answered in a low tone.

"What do you want from me?"

"Admit that you are the leader of the organization. I beg you to do so. Otherwise, that man will kill you. I think they'll send you to a concentration camp, where you may survive until the Americans come. I love you and am very much concerned about your life. Please, Ivan. . . ."

Ivan knew Ludwig's honesty and his face told of his love. He remembered their past, their experiences together—joys, pleasures, trials, and tribulations. That they would now meet under such terrible circumstances! Looking long and earnestly at his friend, Ivan finally said: "I will do as you advise."

"How did you come to be in Germany?" Ludwig asked.

"I criticized the unjust German administration, so they sent me to the labor camp here. I have organized our boys against Stalin. Hitler is going to lose the war anyway. This may be the one chance for Ukrainia to become free."

The Gestapo officer seemed very friendly, as soon as Ivan signed his name. After he led Ivan away to prison, he said: "Our chief will probably put this Ivan to death!"

Ludwig was astonished. "To death? Surely he must have a trial."

The man laughed. "That is not necessary in countries ruled by a dictatorship."

"Why should he be put to death?"

"Death follows any attempt to seize German land."

"But the Ukraine never belonged to Germany."

"It makes no difference. Himmler says they have to die, and our chief will put this Ivan to death. The others we will send to a camp."

Ludwig suddenly felt the urgency to talk. He found himself telling all he knew about Ivan—that they had been students together, that Ivan loved Germany, and that all the Ukrainians had helped the German colonists in their distress. His listener was deeply impressed and finally agreed to persuade the chief not to put Ivan to death, but to send him to Buchenwald. Here the boy would have a fair chance for survival.

The following night, Ludwig became very sick, with a high fever. In a dream he saw Ivan again as a little boy—they played together. He was his good friend through all the years in Lvov. Both became pastors in the same year. As he left for Germany, Ivan said, with tears in his eyes: "Greetings to your country. We are waiting for salvation from here." After that came the war, the suffering of the peoples in the occupied lands—and finally he saw Ivan being hanged.

He cried out and awoke. That same morning the Gestapo told him officially that Ivan would not die, but was to be sent to Buchenwald. Ludwig was glad, but still he continued to be ill.

24. *Return to the Front*

AFTER Ludwig's recovery, he was sent to the central part of the Eastern front where he was destined for Orsha, in White Russia. The military transport by which he traveled, after leaving Brest-Litovsk, passed through dense forests. The railroad was guarded by Hungarian soldiers living in strong bunkers along the way, about two hundred yards apart. There was only one supply line to the White Russian front, and this was in jeopardy. Later he learned that the White Russians had welcomed the Germans as heartily as had the Ukrainians, and that Hitler had created here also an army of hostile partisans.

Ten to fifteen miles east of Orsha was the battle line. Ludwig was assigned to a division staff ten miles behind the front. The Reds were bombarding, from time to time, with their artillery. The staff was sheltered in deep bunkers built of tree trunks.

Ludwig was conducted to a colonel, who welcomed him and asked: "What your profession?"

"A minister," he replied.

"Good. Then you are not a great lover of the Nazis. I'm not either; they have led our people into great distress. Now, your duty here will be to make propaganda."

"Propaganda? But the Nazis say our soldiers know for what reason they are fighting."

"No, no. You do not have to make propaganda for our own soldiers. You are to take a loudspeaker, creep into the midst of no man's land, and fasten it to a tree. You attach to it a cable which you bring back into the trenches. Then you challenge the Russian soldiers to desert to our side. Ask them what they are fighting for—Stalin's state farms, their slave

work, the destruction of their churches? Tell them that in *our* ranks they will get good food and vodka, and all the comforts of home."

Ludwig was shocked. "Then I shall be lying, because you know we didn't dissolve the state farms, with their slave work. In our camps many of them will die from starvation."

"But we have orders to do this. I am convinced they will destroy your loudspeaker with shellfire. Try it, at least." He was lost in thought, then he added: "Our behavior in the occupied lands and our treatment of prisoners of war are the reason nobody is coming over to us any more. We have made a lot of mistakes."

"And the armies of hostile partisans have the same reasons."

The colonel jumped to his feet. "That's true! We have very hard fighting behind us in this forest, too. After we lose this war, the Nazis will say again there were traitors in the German Army; they will never recognize that they themselves are the traitors. Our army is doing its duty. We are fighting almost entirely without a supply of heavy arms or tanks. Each German soldier has to stand against ten Russians. The Reds are getting more and more materiel from America, while we suffer from less and less, because our factories are being bombed. You know, I don't glorify war, but I *do* glorify our men in the battle lines, where our infantrymen are struggling against tanks without the support of artillery. When the Reds have enough American tanks and planes, they will break through our lines. And behind us there is nothing but partisans. Where our forces will stop the Reds, I don't know. The situation does not look encouraging."

This man, Ludwig realized, was deeply concerned about the future, but as an individual there was little he could do about it.

The next night, Ludwig began his propaganda work. He called on the Russian soldiers to desert to the Germans. They answered by sending up extra heavy mortar fire. The colonel had said: "They use mortar fire because the thousands of frag-

ments, sweeping close to the ground in all directions, are bound to strike their objective."

Ludwig called out again: "*Tovarishtshi,* come over to us!" This provoked a new and even greater attack. The earth trembled as the shells swept over the German lines. Many were killed or fatally wounded. The German soldiers cursed: "Away with this propaganda! Give us more ammunition, more soldiers, tanks, artillery, planes—*that* is the best propaganda!"

Ludwig knew the soldiers were right. But he again lifted his microphone. There was no sound. His loudspeaker had been hit. He was glad. Perhaps this meant his useless work was at an end. Now Ludwig was able to tour the trenches. Every twenty yards he saw a soldier, dirty and unshaved. They had been sitting in these trenches for a year without furloughs. They were anxious about their homeland, their villages, their cities. Many had been bombed, but the soldiers were without mail. Maybe their loved ones were sleeping the eternal sleep, under city ruins. They in the trenches had no word from home. But in spite of it all, these soldiers were doing their duty. Their heroism is happening but once, thought Ludwig.

The next night, Ludwig crept out very carefully with a new loudspeaker, which he fastened to a pine tree in no man's land. That evening he used no propaganda, but sang Russian folk songs familiar to the peasants. Finally he sang in German about a mill in a valley in the Black Forest. The front was very quiet.

As he went through the trenches the next morning, many of the soldiers thanked him for the songs. "You should make such propaganda every night," they said. But his colonel said: "Your singing won't bring the Russians over to our side. However, sing as much as you please, and when they are quiet and listening to that, put in some remarks about the Commies coming over to us. You must do this; otherwise, the General could accuse us of disobeying his orders."

Ludwig remained several weeks longer at the front, singing and urging the Red soldiers to desert to the Germans. But

his heart was not in this deceptive work, which was a failure anyway, because no Russians deserted.

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One night, a Russian sniper got Ludwig. Ludwig was thrown to the ground, but managed to crawl back to his own battle line, where he collapsed, blood all over his right side. They carried him to a dressing station. He had a lung wound, and they sent him to a hospital one hundred miles behind the front. Ludwig was seriously wounded and had lost much blood. After several weeks of convalescence, he was placed on a hospital train filled with wounded and sick soldiers, and brought back to the Black Forest, of which he had sung at the front. All were taken to Titisee, a lovely area high above sea level. Goebbels was a great liar about many things, but this statement of his was true: "The best things Germany has, of food, clothes, hospitals, the soldiers must have." Many of the hospitals were located in the best hotels in the country. Ludwig was taken to a hotel where, in peacetime, English lords and French marquises had spent their summers.

Ludwig made a rapid recovery. In this hospital he saw the great sacrifices of doctors and nurses. They worked day and night, never becoming discouraged or unfriendly. He soon discovered that the people of the Black Forest were anti-Nazi. Their greetings were never "*Heil* Hitler," but the old familiar, "*Gruess Gott.*" The soldiers who entered the shops and gave the greeting "*Heil* Hitler" got nothing. These people showed admirable resistance.

When Ludwig could sit up, he enjoyed looking out of the window upon the beautiful Titi Lake surrounded by lofty hills crowned with pine forests. From a distance the forest was so dark he readily understood why it was called the Black Forest. The forest was reflected in the lake as if the trees stood on their heads. Over this beautiful world flooded brilliant sunshine.

One fine day as he was looking at the lake with the Feldberg

in the background, ten miles beyond the lake, the highest mountain of all the dark ridges, he heard a gentle knocking at his door. It slowly opened and the white head of his father appeared. Both were so overcome with joy, they could hardly speak. They wept, kissed, and then wept some more. Ludwig had to lean back on his pillow. All of this excitement had increased the pain in his chest.

Lemke obtained a room, and they saw each other every day. After a few weeks, Ludwig was able to go for a daily walk. Each day they went farther, a little higher into the beautiful hills scented with pine trees. It helped him to gain back his strength.

On one of their daily walks, they met a soldier, paralyzed on one side, sitting in the sunshine beside a wild rose bush. He was a Russian in German uniform.

Haltingly, he told the Lemkes: "I was seven years of age when the Reds, in the revolution, killed my parents. Nobody cared about the millions of orphans throughout Russia. So we organized ourselves into groups. My group lived in a cemetery, in the graves. We were from nine to twelve years old. We made raids on butcher shops, bakeries, and farms to get a little food. Many of us died from starvation. One day, my best friend brought in a piece of bread, a black, heavy piece, and began to eat it. He could not divide it because it was too small. Yet I was so hungry, I was desperate. I took my long, sharp knife and stabbed him to death. Then I ate his bread. When I looked at my friend, lying there dead, I slowly began to feel remorse. I wept, and I have never since forgotten that picture—killing my best friend for a piece of bread! Later, we who survived were taken to work on the state farms and in the factories. We were taught there was nothing—no God, heaven, judgment, soul, or immortality. But above it all lay the image, the horrible memory of the friend I had killed.

"Then came the Germans. They forced me into the storm troops. To quiet the voice in my soul, I helped to murder the

Jews. I heard their cries, the disconsolate cries of women and children day and night, until, awake at night, they began to paralyze my thoughts and actions. I learned that one bad deed can never blot out another. It was growing dark in my soul. I saw my friend again, stabbed to death; I heard continually the wails of the Jews I had helped to kill. Oh, I was all alone! I did not have a father since the age of seven. The Reds shot him with my mother, and then confiscated our home. I can hardly remember what the place looked like. If I had had a home with loving parents, I would not be where I am today. I would not be sick in body and soul. Oh, I wish I could go home to a waiting mother and father!" His left hand trembled. He pressed it to his body, but it was entirely without feeling.

Father and son felt as if they themselves were paralyzed.

"He longs for home" murmured Lemke.

"But there is no home for him, and he will be soon out of this world," whispered Ludwig.

"Are you sure there is no home for him?" asked Lemke. He rose, hitched up his pants, which tried constantly to slip down his round belly, and hurried away. He soon came back, sat down by the Russian, and showed him a book. "It is a Russian bible, and here I have a story of a son who also had been in trouble and had longings like you." He gave him the story of the Prodigal Son to read. The Russian took the book with trembling hands and started reading.

The Lemkes left quietly.

Farther on, they climbed the Hochfirst, the next to highest peak in that region. This was not an easy task for Ludwig with his lung wound, but Lemke helped him as best he could. When they reached the top, they entered the lookout tower and surveyed the beautiful, rolling landscape below—hills, valleys, towns, and villages.

Ludwig said: "It is a wonderful country."

"It is," answered Lemke. "And in spite of all the many disappointments experienced here, I love it. All this great

country, from here to East Prussia, and from the Baltic Sea on the north to Austria and Silesia, is something worth loving and defending."

Ludwig looked toward the east. "The Ukraine has mountains, too; great portions of the Carpathian Mountains belong to that country. After the Ukraine is delivered from the Reds and the Nazis, we will go back to live where we were born."

"Yes," said Lemke, "but we will go even farther, to my friend the Kurd, at Mount Ararat."

It was a haze, perhaps a dream—but it gave them something to live for.

They descended and walked back to the injured Russian. He seemed not to see them, but he finally lifted his head and said: "The bad son went home, and his father took him in his arms! I thank you very much for giving me this book. I feel a wonder surging through my heart!"

The next morning, a nurse knocked at Lemke's door. She returned the bible, and said: "Alexander Orlov told me to bring this book to you. He passed away last night. In his last moment he whispered: 'The son went home and the father took him in his arms. May the Almighty bless the man with the white hair for giving me this good book.' "

Father and son looked at each other and nodded. The old story of mercy and forgiveness had once more done its wonder.

25. *In the Homeland Again*

SOON Ludwig was to be released from the hospital. He was granted four weeks' furlough, which he decided to spend in his homeland. Since Volhynia was in the occupied lands, he had some difficulty in getting permission, but finally he succeeded. The Lemkes said farewell to the kindly people and to the beautiful hills. They rode through Dresden and Breslau in Germany, Lodz and Warsaw in Poland, until they reached their home city of Lutzk in Volhynia. It was a long journey—from the borders of France to East Poland. The older Lemke wiped his eyes with his sleeve as he left the train in Lutzk and looked out at his city. It was a city without life. The Jewish merchants had been slain.

The steeple of the Lutheran church and the dome of the Orthodox church near the park rose in the air as before, but when they stepped into the buildings, they found them filled with old papers and trash.

His father said: "Come, son, the churches are profaned by the Reds."

The streets were unwholesome. Gone were the friendly passersby—only proud slave-farm officers, soldiers, and prostitutes. The stores were empty. There was the familiar river Styr, peacefully flowing through the green meadows and almost encircling the city.

"Let us get a boat so we won't have to walk to our old home," suggested Lemke. But there was no boat to be had. Their first destination was the Karluks. After a while, on the horizon appeared the famliar forest. They quickened their pace, longing to see again the old village. Silverhead was anxious to take Blackie in his arms, and to talk over old times.

Ludwig said: "Father, we should already be seeing the golden cross, over the next hill."

"Yes, we should. I can't see so far, but soon we shall look down into that valley."

At length they stood on the hill, looking down; but there was no village. Then Ludwig saw two men running through the bushes. He caught up with them, and said in their native tongue: "Don't be afraid. What has happened here? Where is the village, and the people?"

One answered: "Himmler's storm troopers came with artillery and tanks. There was a great battle with the Ukrainian national troops. All the houses were burned, and the people killed."

"Where is Karluk?" asked Ludwig.

"We know none of the people here. We escaped from a prison camp."

Ludwig put his hand upon his heart. He was faint and had to sit down in the grass.

"The storm troopers have destroyed my Ukrainian village. The church tower is gone, too, with its cross. It did not look over the hill to welcome us," said Silverhead.

Ludwig did not look up. His head rested upon his knees. The two escapees sat down. They looked down into the ruins of the village. The wind blew the ashes into the air. After a long silence, one of the escapees explained: "I am a Russian from West Siberia. This man is a Tartar from the Crimean peninsula. We both threw away our weapons and came over to the Germans. We would have died of starvation in a prisoners' camp, only we escaped. My father said it was good to live as a cattle-raiser in Siberia, under the Czar. His heart felt free and his mind was like the great steppe between the Urals and the river Ob. Then came the Reds, who promised a heaven on earth, and stole my father's cattle. Now he is a poor slave-shepherd, working for the Reds. I saw their broken promises and their lies, and therefore will not fight for the Communists.

"When Hitler attacked the Reds, all people, all nations

of the Soviet Union, prayed to God for his victory. But he is not a statesman. He will fail. He is an unwise, stupid dictator. He will be driven back, to die. But the other dictator, our Stalin, is much more cunning. He comes with a satanic smile to the nations. The hope of all the peoples under the Red yoke is now America."

He stretched out his hand toward the west and America: "O America, thou alone art the hope of the world, thou alone its light. Be conscious of it. Keep your flag high and remain strong. Do not ever believe a Red; he will deceive you. His 'No' and 'Yes' mean nothing. His smiling face can mean scoffing, mocking disdain, or scorn. Don't trust the Reds. You can never negotiate with them. Take the same position toward the Communist which medicine takes toward the germs of disease and pestilence. Whoever believes them and tries to make friends with them will perish. One request I have: Free world, don't compare the peoples of Russia with the Communists. It is a comparatively small group of wicked men who are tyrannizing the peoples of Russia. Don't fear the threatening of the Reds. Resist them, remain determined!"

Later, they went down into the charred village and into the ruined church. The steeple, with its cross, had crashed into the sanctuary. They looked and marveled, for the cross which had stood high in the air on the steeple for hundreds of years, which had been spared even by Genghis Khan, which had greeted the immigrants—Lemke, Gutsche, and Friedman—now stood in the sanctuary in golden splendor. It reflected the rays of the setting sun shining through the broken windows. The debris and disorder were brightened by the radiating cross. All of the men, even the Moslem Tartar, removed their caps. Then they all knelt and prayed, each in his native tongue.

Later, they went out into the orchard. The setting sun lit up the blossoming trees. It was a lovely hour, but Ludwig still was filled with sadness. He stood before the ashes and ruins of the parish house in which Ivan had lived. Ivan had vowed in Lvov that he was going to take over his village church.

Where can he be now? Ludwig sat down at the foot of a cherry tree, loaded with blossoms, near a rose bush. The evening was calm and sweet, full of the scent of flowers. The moon glow was soft and soothing. The frogs were croaking, a late lark rose singing toward heaven; the nightingales began their lovely concert.

Lemke, the Silverhead, got together something to eat, and put it on a blanket. They sat around the blanket on the grass. The two strangers had had nothing to eat for several days. After they had finished, all four listened to the concert by the frogs and the nightingales. A mist rose from the meadow. Such a wonderful evening would have made a man's soul rejoice. But they could not rejoice when they looked at the ashes and ruins about them. "Nature is singing and rejoicing; only man, the crown of God's creation, caused the destruction around us," remarked Ludwig.

It became chilly, and they decided to go into the church to find shelter for the night. But Ludwig could not sleep. He went outside and sat under the cherry tree. He put aside his weapons and drew his mantle around his shoulders. Then his father came out and joined him.

"I can't sleep either. The destruction of so many villages in our homeland Volhynia by the storm troopers is a burden too heavy for my soul. These people were our neighbors for so many years, our friends and helpers. That cross was on the dome a thousand years. Genghis Khan spared it but that Nazi, Himmler, has destroyed it. I am ashamed and shocked in my soul," said Lemke.

"Himmler does not represent the German people, nor Christianity," said Ludwig.

Then he was silent for so long that his father looked at him as if he wanted to say: "Speak, say something. Don't you have an uplifting word?"

And Ludwig spoke in a low voice: "A picture emerges before my eyes. The picture of the young Slovak in the Czech uniform, on the Carpathian Mountain ridge. I remember him

saying: 'All the mountains you can see are really Slovakian mountains, my mountains. The north from where you came are your mountains, Ukrainian mountains. Both were given in the Treaty of Versailles to foreign people. Woodrow Wilson came here after the first World War with his fourteen points on which to make peace. According to one of them, all oppressed nations would obtain the right of self-determination. But the plotter and intriguer Masaryk persuaded Wilson to ignore the oppressed nations of Russia. He wanted a strong Russia, even a Communistic one as backing against Germany. The peacemaker dropped that point. And so there was no freedom for Ukraine, White Russia, the nations of the Caucasian region. No freedom for us, the Slovaks, the Sudeten Germans. We had to join the Czechs to form Czechoslovakia. No freedom for the Kroatians or Slovenians. They had to join the Serbs to create Yugoslavia. And so sand was thrown in the gears of European politics; the frictions were bound to come. Ground was prepared in that unjust Treaty of Versailles for the growth of demagogues and dictators. And so the brown dictator rose with strong arguments in his hands.'

"And the Red dictator could grow into power undisturbed, because there was no self-determination for the enslaved people of that horrible prison of nations."

Lemke rose clumsily. "Then this is not solely a German sin, but an American and European sin also."

Ludwig nodded. "Because of Versailles, the world is bound for trouble and tears. There will be much more. The victors of the First World War did not realize, in their terrible hatred, that the human race had arrived at a crossroad. The shortsighted old men chose the wrong road, down to disaster."

Lemke looked up to the heavens, folded his hands, and said: "More misery to come. Almighty have mercy upon us!" Then he put his hand on Ludwig's head. "May the Lord be with us and keep us through this bitter, hard time." He went back into the church.

Ludwig, too, felt his heart torn into pieces. He remembered

Olga. How she would have suffered if she could see this destruction. For the first time he felt relieved that she was no longer in this valley of tears.

It was about this time, only eight years ago, high in the Carpathians, they had sworn their love. It had been the happiest moment in Ludwig's life, and the nightingales sang then, as they were doing now. The peaceful moon had his same round face, but there was one difference—then it had looked down upon rocks, pine trees, and resting cattle, and upon a pair of happy lovers. Now it was upon an apple orchard, a church destroyed, and many ash heaps—and also upon a grieved and lonely heart.

There was, too, in Ludwig a conflict of emotions. Sometimes he felt proud of the German contribution to science, medicine, industry; their diligence, ingenuity, and sense of order. Now his face spoke of great indignation changing slowly to a troubled expression, as if ashamed of what had happened to his beloved Ukrainian village in the valley and to all the surrounding villages and their peoples.

"May others be ashamed of what was done wrong at Versailles. I am ashamed of what happened here!" he cried out and sat down, burying his face in his hands and sobbing from the depths of his tormented soul.

After a long time, he lifted up his face and got slowly to his feet. His features assumed an expression of amazement as he gazed into an evening glow of such grandeur that he was unable to utter a word. The sun had set behind the far horizon, leaving an afterglow out of which golden beams flashed into the evening sky with such brilliance and force as if their only desire were to reach and kiss the faraway stars. Resembling mighty pillars, they changed high in the air to pink and purple, and even became greenish, only to land all together far above earth in a red sea of fire.

"God is painting the sky," finally Ludwig muttered. "Isn't that glow the other face of the land from which my grandfather came?"

After all, every nation has two faces. (Which nation will strike its chest, exclaiming: "We are composed of angels only"?) One face is coined by its great sons whose spirits dwell in the spheres of light, who are preserving the image of God; the other by the servants of the power of evil. Are not those beams a token of Germany's great sons? Are not the heavenly chords of Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert, Brahms, Wagner, and others soaring like those gleaming beams? Is not that glimmer the brilliance of the spirits of her great philosophers, from Kant to Heidegger, untiredly searching for the ultimate truth? And there were her writers of godly hymns and discoverers and inventors. What a glorious face!

An art which will be admired from generation to generation, long after the last trace of Himmler's cohorts, whose deeds were burned villages, will have vanished. Suddenly he realized that they were retreating, leaving his Ukraine. Germany and all the occupied lands would soon be free.

"Let freedom ring. A tyranny is dying!" he exclaimed. He felt better. He stood for a long time, fearing only that something would disturb his momentary happiness. Finally the beautiful phenomenon faded away. Slowly he turned to the east, and froze. The eastern sky looked pitch dark and unbelievably threatening. Suddenly, far to the northeast, the rumble of a faraway but approaching thunder set in. He understood: artillery fire.

"Hitler's nightmare is moving out, the Red plague is moving in! O God, have mercy on us!" Ludwig prayed. But he knew neither prayer nor wishful thinking will stop tyrannies on earth, only struggle is the answer to them.

Ludwig looked at the ash heaps, and remembered his friend Ivan. He had been able to rescue him from what had seemed inevitable death. Had he escaped, or was he still in the prison camp?

Finally, from sheer exhaustion, he fell asleep. A sweet melody awakened him. He was still sitting at the foot of

the cherry tree. A new day was on its way with its bright rose color; soon the sun would rise. The song of the birds had awakened him. He looked on the beauty of God's world, and a tender smile appeared on his lips. Everything was beginning to look brighter.

26. *The Ukrainian Army of Liberation*

SUDDENLY he saw two men running behind some bushes. A shot rang out. Ludwig, just rising to his knees, was thrown against the cherry tree. His father, the Russian, and the Tartar came running. Lemke started crying aloud until he realized that Ludwig had been hit in the arm only.

The two riflemen drew nearer. One suddenly fell to his knees; in an anguished voice, he cried out: "I am a murderer! I have shot you, my friend."

"Do I see right, is it you, Ivan?" cried Ludwig. He was nearly speechless from the shock of seeing his long-lost friend.

"Yes, Ludwig, it is I who shot at you."

"It is only a flesh wound. I am all right, I guess. How did you get away? You must tell me everything."

While bandaging his arm, Ivan told his friend the whole story. "I was not sent to a camp. At first, they kept me in a prison cell for many months. I was expecting the worst every day. Finally, I assumed they had forgotten me. Then one Sunday I was led to the chief's office. I thought my last minute had come. But to my great surprise, he was very friendly. He told me to sit down. Not having much hope anyway, I asked him: 'To what camp will you send me and when shall I die?'

" 'Forget it,' he answered. 'I'll set you free. You see, Ludwig's story that you grew up together and were friends made a strong impression on me. I realized you are an idealist, the way you were organizing your boys to fight for your land. And the Bolsheviks have to be fought. Now I have some happy news for you. Listen, if you want to fight, you have the opportunity. We are organizing a Ukrainian SS division in Galicia. Go home. Join its ranks. I give you even more freedom. Return

to your church, for my sake, since you are a priest, but make propaganda for that great cause you know best—the Ukraine needs friends. Together we shall fight the Red pestilence.'

Ivan continued: "I promised to do my best, got the necessary papers, and was on my way. I asked him, before leaving, to let my boys come along, but he refused. 'I can't give you one hundred men, we are short of workers.'

" 'Then you send them to a camp?' I asked.

" 'What good would that do? They will stay right where they are, working for the great victory,' he told me.

"Arriving home, I learned there had been organized a Ukrainian National Army behind the German lines by heroic Ukrainian men. They don't get many into their Ukrainian SS division. But Himmler was against the whole idea of a Ukrainian army, and he sent storm troopers against us. A furious battle raged, they suffered heavy casualties, and their revenge was the destruction of our villages. As my village went up in smoke and its people perished, I grabbed a weapon; I became a freedom fighter. When I saw your uniform, I thought you were one of them, and I shot. I'm a colonel in command of five hundred troops. As for the war, the blitz victories have ceased a long time ago. With the waters of defeat rising to their necks, they speak of friendship. I can't understand it."

"On the other hand," said Ludwig, resignation in his voice, "I stopped analyzing their mentality, logic, common sense, and morality long ago."

All of them went toward the forest on the high bank of the river, exactly the same way the first immigrants, among them Ludwig's grandfather, had come to learn about their neighbors and the reason for the smoke rising into the blue sky.

They entered the forest which Ludwig knew and loved so well. They walked a long time. Suddenly they stood before a large clearing of marshy ground and swamps, which could prove dangerous to strangers. It was an ideal location for Ivan's partisan unit. Ivan blew a whistle, and in minutes the place

was filled with riders and ponies in orderly lines. The soldiers wore good uniforms with tridents, the Ukrainian emblem, on their caps.

"My units," explained Ivan. "We are a part of the UPA, the Ukrainian Army of Liberation. We will go into action as soon as the Germans have fallen back and the Reds approach."

"Where do you live?" asked Ludwig.

Ivan blew his whistle again and the riders disappeared as if swallowed up by the earth. Then he led the group into the brushwood where they saw the barracks, tight buildings of round logs, so camouflaged that they defied even close inspection. Behind the barracks were stables for the horses, actual Mongolian ponies with long, curly wool to withstand the cold Siberian winter.

In Ivan's barrack his room was even cozy. There was a table and chairs and pictures on the walls, of Mazepa, Chmelnicki, and Petlura. But there was a picture of a general whom Ludwig did not know.

"Our supreme commander is Taras Tshuprinka, but this is Rostyslaw Woloshyn, commander of the liberation troops in his Volhynia. I say 'his' because he was born in this province, loves it and will defend it," Ivan explained.

The Ukrainian Army of Liberation had its medics and doctors; everything was organized and in efficient order.

The following days were quiet ones for Ludwig. His father, the Russian, and the Tartar volunteered to work in the kitchen. Ludwig, his arm in a sling, went to the high bank of the river and looked over the water and meadow to his birthplace. It looked so close and yet so far. Now, it was completely deserted and lonely. He became sad and full of melancholy. He looked up to the trees around him as he had done many times when he roamed these woods with Ivan on their vacations. These mighty pine trees had always impressed him. One hundred feet high and straight as arrows. Up from the ground, the bark was rugged and gray; the higher up, the more yellow it became. The trees were usually without branches, except

on the top a few resembled a crown upon the head of a champion. They were awe-inspiring, majestic. When swaying in the wind, a rushing, murmuring voice was heard, as if the trees said: "Behold, such trees as we grow only once in the world—on the fertile soil of the Ukraine."

One day, Ivan ordered a complete cleaning of the camp—Commander Woloshyn was to inspect the unit. There was much activity, scrubbing, and sweeping. Woloshyn came on horseback, with a number of his officers. (In the Ukrainian Army of Liberation, however, they were not called officers but *starshyni,* which means elders or commanders.)

Seeing Ludwig in his German uniform, Woloshyn winced.

"He is a German *drushe,* Commander, and my friend from childhood. He loves the Ukraine more than many a Ukrainian," Ivan hastened to explain.

(In the Ukrainian Army of Liberation, the word "sir" was not known; the word *"druh"* was employed instead. It means friend; but more, it means a friend in need, a friend who hears the heartbeat of his friend, be it the heartbeat of joy or sorrow. A *druh* will rejoice when his friend rejoices and cry when he cries. Ludwig knew this word and was pleased it had found its place in the Ukrainian Liberation Army, that it was used to address commanders as well as soldiers.)

"I am glad to hear this, *drushe,"* said the Commander, extending his hand to Ludwig. And Woloshyn and Ludwig shook hands as if they had been friends for years.

Ivan blew his whistle. As if from nowhere, Ivan's cavalry appeared and stood in formation in perfectly straight rows on the large training ground. They looked good in their saddles. As the Commander approached, a "Hail to the Ukraine!" greeted him from five hundred men so that the mighty pine trees trembled. When the Commander and his companions reached the first rider, there was one click—the men had drawn their curved Kosak swords, holding them in front of their faces, so straight that, looking at the first man's saber, he saw only that one. The Commander strode between the rows,

inspecting horses and riders. Then he spoke: "*Druhs,* the mother of us all, our country, the Ukraine, expects of her sons not more and not less than her freedom. This is our land—it gave us our life, nourished us, and wants to be free! Our fate shall not be determined by foreigners. The Ukraine shall be free!"

The Commander continued: "We will have to fight. Our ancient foe, the Muscovites, following the retreating Germans, march again through our land. We will fight them with determination. There will be a day of victory and glory. Hail to the Ukraine!"

"Hail to the heroes!" the mountees shouted in answer. They saluted with their sabers, and were dismissed. In a matter of moments, they vanished.

When they returned to Ivan's room, Lemke was introduced to Woloshyn. Lemke said: "For the first time I stand so close to a commander! In the Czarist army I saw them from far away and they behaved like gods."

The leader laughed. "My only desire is to be a humble servant of my suppressed land, to be her free citizen and to sacrifice my life and all I have." Then he grew serious. He pointed to a large map on the wall. "The Germans are retreating and the Reds are approaching. We are awaiting them and will deliver them a great defeat on these fields." He drew a circle on the map with his finger. "This ancient route in the forest winds around lakes and swamps. It's dangerous for everyone who leaves that old track. Only on this road the enemy will come out and pour into these fields. Our troops are awaiting them. To keep our back free, this smaller forest way, leading to the next villages, has to be guarded. It must be expected that Red cavalry, infantry, maybe even tanks, may try to get through here to fall on our back. The task of keeping the back of our fighting troops clear is yours, Colonel," he said to Ivan.

"Yes, *Druhshe* Commander," was Ivan's short answer.

They sat down to the dinner Lemke had prepared. Lemke

had to learn to cook and he did it well. Lemke observed the Commander. He was a slim fellow with a narrow face, blond hair, and green eyes which, Lemke was convinced, saw everything. In his behavior he was a gentleman, quiet, and self-confident. He inspired respect. Lemke seemed to have something on his mind. Ludwig saw his father seeking an answer to a question he could not solve himself.

Lemke approached the Commander slowly and said: "I humbly beg your pardon."

"What is it?" the Commander asked.

"I am but a plain peasant."

"Very often," the Commander interrupted, "one finds among them men with great common sense and even philosophical thought."

"I don't feel I am like that at all, but, *druhshe,* what do you think will be the outcome of your struggle without a great hinterland, without an industry or allies?"

The Commander stood up. "Lemke, if the statesmen of the Western countries would possess real statesmanship, they could utilize the anti-Communistic movements and crush *both* Hitler and Stalin. They will not. And that affects our prospects and conditions. Do you know why we fight?"

Lemke shook his head.

"We fight, first of all, to set a pattern, an example for future generations. They shall not say our ancestors did not fight in a crucial time. We will fight and die so our bones can become the seeds for future regiments, divisions, and armies. We fight because Mazepa, Chmelnicki, and Petlura, the heroes of the Carpatho-Ukraine, have set the pattern for us, have given us their example."

These words were the strongest Lemke had ever heard; they gripped his heart. He was unable to speak. Finally, in a trembling voice, he said: "Your deeds will move God's heart. There will come a resurrection morning for your beloved land."

The Commander's words had the same effect on Ludwig.

He stepped toward the leader and said: "*Druhshe,* you spoke of this land having given us our lives and now asking for its freedom. *Druhshe,* I am born here, too. Let me join your army!"

The Commander, Ivan, and all the others were impressed. "You have just heard what the prospects are, and you desire to become a guerrilla—you want to take upon you hardship and death?"

"I don't fear death if only my bones will cause the rise of one regiment of future freedom fighters," said Ludwig.

All in that room were deeply touched. The Commander turned to one of his officers and ordered: "The saber out!" Ludwig put his hand upon that curved Kosak saber and repeated solemnly the pledge of allegiance to the Ukraine he was born in, pledged allegiance to the most fertile, the most beautiful land in the whole world, to help free it from all enemies, particularly the Red menace. Mighty sunbeams penetrated the branches of the giant trees and shone through the window on the sword. The stainless steel of the blade reflected the rays, sending flashing beams throughout the room. A Ukrainian uniform was brought in, and Ludwig changed uniforms slowly. He looked smart in the earth-gray uniform of the Ukraine. He liked his new cap—it resembled the French-style army caps. Ludwig looked into a mirror and was impressed with his reflection.

Then the Commander put his hand upon his shoulder: "We need officers, so you with your experience are herewith promoted to a *sotnik* (first lieutenant.) You shall command a cavalry company of a hundred men." The Commander fastened the insignia to Ludwig's epaulets and collar.

Ludwig's father was taken by surprise. Later, while the others were bent over a map on the table, Lemke said to his son: "You have cut all ties with the land your ancestors came from." He looked troubled, as if Ludwig's deed was too sudden, too great a decision in too short a time. Lemke was confused.

"Father," replied Ludwig, "I don't cut any ties with Ger-

many. It is a great land of famous composers and scientists, of many great poets, of European culture and tradition. If I return to Germany, they will send me to the front. I will not sacrifice my life to protect the Gestapo and all the other gangsters and murderers. Prolong their mad and delirious rage, I will not! You have seen the village in the valley."

"But you will lay down your life here in these forests," the father replied.

"Do you know Christ's words? 'Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' "

Lemke looked long into Ludwig's face. "I have a great son."

They stepped outside. A mighty gust of wind blew through the treetops. It seemed to Ludwig as if it had come from the mighty treetops of the cemetery of Lvov. His face beamed with joy and contentment. "Yes, my Olga," he whispered, "it's a greeting from you. I know you are happy and I promise I'll do my best in the coming battle for your beloved land. I know you are always by my side."

Ivan, who had gone ahead with the others, returned to Ludwig. "With whom are you talking? There is nobody around!"

"With Olga," Ludwig said plainly.

Ivan looked as if lost in thought. "Now I understand the meaning of 'Love is stronger than death.' "

They strode on until they reached the clearing where some hundred mounted riders were gathered.

The colonel pointed to Ludwig: "This is your *sotnik*. He is prepared to fight."

"We, too!" was the united answer of these brave boys.

There never was a better introduction. They felt immediately that they belonged together. Ludwig's main concern was the training of his men. They could ride like the wind, swing under the bellies of their horses and back into the saddles again; and they could use rifles, sabers, and lances.

But if the Reds should use this sandy track to break through with tanks, as the Commander said, cavalry could not stop

them. His boys had to have and to know how to use heavier weapons: machine guns, hand grenades, mortars and tank-breaking equipment. And so he kept an eye on the railroad tracks running through this forest ten miles to the east, where the German freight trains were rolling back. They should have ammunition and weapons, Ludwig figured.

He rode with his boys to the railroad bridge, mined it, felled trees across the tracks, and waited. Finally a train came along. It stopped. A German officer jumped to the ground and approached them, shouting angrily, "What's all this?"

"We want your weapons and ammunition," Ludwig replied.

The officer drew his pistol but, seeing Ludwig remain entirely calm, he did not raise it. Ludwig pointed out his men holding the detonator for blowing up the bridge. The German officer hesitated.

"One wave of my finger, the bridge flies up in the air and you never get out of here," Ludwig told him.

The German recognized defeat, and ordered his men to unload the machine guns, among them two 42's, submachine guns, and ammunition, but most important the *Panzerfausts tankfists,* a rocket weapon no tank could resist.

Then Ludwig ordered the train crew out. Twelve men came out. He lined them up, took their pistols, and held them under guard. With some of his men he searched the train.

"What are you looking for?" asked the German officer.

"I am looking for SS or Gestapo men."

But there were none. However, Ludwig discovered quite a few big German cans of meat, the only thing he liked in the German Army.

They had weapons and were now a dangerous force to halt any driving through that part of the forest. The next weeks were busy ones. Ludwig taught his boys how to handle these weapons. They learned with great eagerness. They learned to respect the *tankfists* as they watched Ludwig use them to blow thick trees from their stumps. Ludwig's Kosaks learned to handle the weapons just in time.

27. *The Battle for Freedom*

A BEAUTIFUL summer day dawned. The rising sun sent her first beams like fiery fingers over the green forest into the sky as the first two Bolsheviks stepped out of the woods. They scanned the wide field with their binoculars. There were no Germans. They advanced; then stopped and waited. A tank came howling out of the forest. The two jumped onto the tank and the tank moved on. Behind the tank the Reds came pouring out of the dark woods. They spread out, followed by more tanks, trucks loaded with infantry, horse-drawn wagons of supplies. They came on in good cheer, not knowing they were moving into a trap, not knowing they were surrounded from the north, south, and east. A sudden roaring thunder made the barracks tremble. A whole division had moved into that field, the Ukrainian's fist had smashed into the Reds.

Heavy guns, German anti-tank mortars, machine guns, and rifles spit fire and destruction into the ranks of the Reds. Tanks blew up, trucks with infantry were torn to pieces, Red soldiers were mowed from their ponies.

Ludwig wondered about the amount of arms the freedom fighters possessed. "Taken from the retreating Germans and Red partisans," explained Ivan.

The Reds finally hit back. New troops came pouring out of the forest. Infantry dug in. But the Ukrainian infantry stormed them and hand-to-hand fighting developed. It was a fierce battle. The Ukrainians fought for a cause. The Reds were not sure of their own cause. They were driven to fight by the *politruks*. And during this battle many raised their hands and ran over to the Ukrainians.

Ludwig watched his road. A rider from an advanced obser-

vation post galloped to Ludwig's side, reporting the approach of a Red tank column. Woloshyn had sealed off the main track, so they tried this way to break through. Ludwig recognized this dangerous maneuver. "They shall not attack Woloshyn in the rear!" he swore.

He posted his men along the narrowest part of the road, with strict orders to act only upon his command. The tanks came on with howling motors, plowing the sand like a ship on the ocean. Ludwig shot a light rocket. The leading tank turned in its tracks and began a wild firing into the woods. The soldiers aimed and shot just as Ludwig had taught them to handle the *tankfist.* Each tank got one in its belly and hell broke loose on earth. The tanks were literally blown to pieces. Their munitions contributed to the destruction. The old sandy road was made impassable by the deep craters and the remains of the tanks.

At the same time, Ivan and his men mowed down a whole battalion of Red infantry on trucks who tried to follow the tanks.

One hour after this victory, Ivan came galloping to Ludwig. "Hurry, take your men, without horses, but with machine guns and mortars. Go to the edge of the valley and seal off a surge of Red infantry. They're being led by a local Communist around the swamps to relieve the encircled Reds. Stop them at all costs!"

They went almost to the destroyed village, a little way down the slope but high enough to look over the edge where they dug in, having a wide, even field between their front line and the woods. It was the area in which he and Ivan had played war, hammering with sticks upon a board, imitating machine-gun fire; the same place Ivan had explained to the old folks was the strategic position where a relatively small force could hold down a strong enemy surging out of the forest. And there Lemke had reminded them of their real task. That play had become a cruel reality. Here, Ludwig, the

sotnik, had the task to defend the valley, to prevent an attack by the Reds on the back of the fighting Kosaks.

He went from man to man, giving instructions, advising them to be calm, and not to shoot without an order. He had in his unit eight German machine guns, 35's; two 42's; five mortars, and rifles—quite a fire power.

The battle raged. From Ludwig's position, he could overlook almost the entire battlefield. And he saw the iron ring of the freedom fighters tighten around the Reds.

Suddenly an ear-shattering "Urrah!" A wave of Red soldiers broke out of the forest. A local Communist civilian led them through the marshy woods. Of course the Reds are peacemakers, they never attacked a land, but marched into many, called in by traitors of the doomed nation. Ludwig vowed the Red civilian would die in the first fire burst. The Reds came running toward Ludwig's defense line. Apparently they wanted to get into the valley where the village once stood and to reach the battlefield undetected.

"You shall not get through here!" Luwig murmured to himself. They were only a few hundred feet away. Ludwig's Kosaks lay behind their weapons, waiting anxiously for the sign to fire. Finally the long awaited yell—"Fire!" The hail of bullets hitting the dense masses was shattering. Ludwig, behind a machine-gun, aimed carefully at the traitor leading the Bolsheviks toward the valley. Ludwig's first blast made him jump like a deadly-hit deer; down he went like a sack of potatoes, and with the traitor hundreds went down to the ground with whirling arms. They kept coming, like sheep to a slaughter-house, and the freedom fighters mowed them down.

Suddenly mortar fire from the woods—the shells went down into the valley. Ludwig felt the ground tremble. "Mortar fire!" he commanded, and soon they had the answer. The trees swayed and their fire stopped. Again the waves poured out of the forest, but this time they fell to the ground, jumped a few feet, and fell again. A new tactic to avoid being the continuous

target of the defenders. He saw them creeping on their knees and elbows, closer and closer.

Ludwig gripped his gun until his hands ached, ready to fire should they make the final dash to break through. But suddenly his hands loosened from the gun butt and trigger. He had glanced at the heap of the dead, and his knees became weak. Because there was suddenly before his eyes the words of the Scriptures: "Thou shalt not kill." After all, he was a clergyman. He had never harmed anybody in his life. Only to the mosquitoes and flies he had sworn eternal hosility. They had stung him many times and later he had learned they were disease-carriers, and so he killed them whenever he could. But human beings! "Thou shalt not kill." He knew that commandment well. He had preached about it, he had taught it to children. And here—hundreds of dead before him. Turning from his gun, his head lowered to the ground. A soldier lifted him up. "*Druhshe Sotnik,* are you all right? What is it? You are not wounded, are you?" he asked.

Ludwig shook his head. The Bolsheviks were creeping closer. The warriors looked anxiously to their leader. Suddenly Ludwig seemed to hear the words of the Creator spoken at the beginning of our world: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over all the earth." He created free men to possess the earth, not to be possessed by a clique in the Kremlin. "The Creator did not create slaves," Ludwig cried out angrily. He recalled the arrival of the Reds in September 1939 in his Volhynia and how they had proclaimed: "Everything you possess belongs to the state." His people had become beggars and slaves overnight. A nightmare had descended upon those desperate people. All of a sudden, he realized that those creeping nearer were carriers, too, much more dangerous than a disease, they were carriers of a nightmare and slavery the world has not seen since its creation. There they came. Ludwig felt strong again, he grabbed his machine-gun more firmly than ever. "Urrah!" The salvos of the machine-guns and rifles were like fiery fingers reaching out to get the Reds—and they got them.

Ludwig's gun was able to spit out three thousand bullets per minute. It was a new German weapon. He did not hear single shots but a singing noise like that of a sewing machine. Yes, his machine-gun and all the weapons of his brave men sang a song, the song of freedom.

They stopped coming from the forest. Then there they were again, and they dug in. "Mortar fire!" Ludwig ordered. The three mortars in the valley opened fire. The mortar shells did not make a deep hole in the ground, only hen scratches, but the fragments were shattering for the infantry. The fire stopped. "No more shells," Ludwig was told.

"Oh, no!" he exclaimed. "Who will drive them out of their foxholes?" Ludwig was disturbed. But what was that? A cloud of dust whirled toward the Reds. The wind blew the dust away, and there was Ivan with his Kosaks, swooping down on the Red infantry.

Ivan recognized the danger. They should not get a bridgehead this side of the forest. Ludwig and his boys saw flashing sabers and dipped lances, and the Reds died at the very instant. They were routed. This was cavalry in action in a war of highly complicated machines. The sun was almost setting as the last Red resistance was broken on that battlefield. The UPA freedom fighters were exhausted, but in a confident frame of mind.

Ludwig, too, was happy. He stood up to stretch his arms and legs—a shot rang out. A sniper from a tree in the forest had hit him. His soldiers stormed in holy anger toward the forest and shot three snipers out of the trees.

Ludwig was hit in the chest just below the old wound he had received near Orsha when calling on the Red soldiers to desert. His soldiers gathered around him. Ivan came galloping. He took Ludwig in his arms and laid him on a blanket. Ludwig raised his head and saw the blue-yellow flag of the Ukraine going up on a high post over the battlefield. He smiled. "They did not get through here."

"No, they did not, thanks to you and your brave men," Ivan said.

And then a song was heard. The victors started to sing the holy song of the Ukrainian patriots: "God, thou only great and mighty, protect our Ukraine." The song spread over the whole field, even the wounded and dying joining in. The song spread into the forest and, behold, it came back clear and in harmonious chords: "God, thou only great and mighty, protect our Ukraine."

An echo?

Of course an echo, but no one has ever heard an echo so determined, so distinct, that one could understand every word: "God, thou only great and mighty, protect our Ukraine."

The soldiers stood in amazement and wonder. Finally one said: "The trees are singing also."

"Yes," said Ivan, "the trees grown on our soil don't want foreigners to decide their fate." And the nightingales joined in, and the frogs and the crickets chirped. Men, animals, and plants joined in a concert, and its content was victory and freedom.

Ludwig, breathing heavily, listened. Tears of joy filled his eyes amid so much happiness around him, because of that won battle, fought in behalf of freedom. His father came. He knelt beside his son and cried. Woloshyn came also with his officers. He jumped from his horse and knelt down.

"*Druh,* my friend, my eyes have been on this spot; a breakthrough here would have impaired our action against the enemy."

"They did not get through here," whispered Ludwig.

"No, they did not. We are grateful to you and your braves."

A last smile. Golden rays of the setting sun kissed Ludwig's cheeks for the last time. Then he whispered, "Mother, Olga, I come." And Ludwig fell peacefully asleep forever.

His father said: "Now I am quite alone in this world."

Woloshyn put his hand upon his shoulder and said: "We are all your friends."

Lemke wiped the tears from his eyes. So did Ivan and all his brave men. Lemke sat through the night beside his son. He searched his soul, as millions have done through the ages on graves and deathbeds of loved ones, asking themselves: "Could I have done more, shown more affection and love to him who sleeps his last sleep? And many, since the human race began, had to admit their shortcomings, and would have given half of their lives to correct what had been done wrong.

But for Lemke there was no self-accusation. He had reared his son in the right way, to love the Creator and his fellow men. And there was another thing: the hope of seeing his son again. Lemke looked up to the stars. They twinkled joyfully as if they wanted to say: "Dry your tears. There will be a resurrection morning. Always in your greatest heartbreak, a fountain, a spring opens up far above the stars, and new hope and strength pours into your life." He dried his tears.

The next morning, Ivan asked Lemke: "Do you want me to carry Ludwig to his colony and put him to rest in the cemetery?"

"No," said Lemke. "Ludwig loved this edge. From here he looked so often into your lovely village valley. Let him rest on this very spot. He belongs here."

"Let us choose this place as the resting place for all our dead heroes," said Ivan.

And so the heroes, the men who died for the freedom of the Ukraine, were brought to this place. In the center was Ludwig's grave. Ludwig's coffin was made by the Russian and the Tartar out of boards taken from the ruined church.

Woloshyn spoke of the braveness of his men who knew how to win a battle, even as partisans, without a fatherland providing them with supplies. "Our old Kosak spirit has not died, and never will, and some day we will be triumphant," he concluded.

Then Ivan spoke. He spoke of his friend Ludwig, how they had been friends from childhood on, and their fathers and grandfathers had been friends, too, and they had studied

together; that Ludwig's sweetheart had been killed, inflicting wounds to his heart which never healed even unto his death, and that Ludwig longed to see the Ukraine free. "And for her he fought and died. Blessed be his memory and the memory of all our heroes," concluded Ivan.

"Blessed be their memory," repeated the soldiers in chorus, and "Blessed be their memory" echoed back from the forest.

A gust of wind blew from the valley. Did it come from the Carpathian Mountains, from the shores of the Ukrainian Black Sea? Did it blow over all the rivers, the Dnieper and others? Over the meadows, the forests, over Ludwig's colony, over the city of Lvov, and from Olga's grave, perhaps? It was the last farewell, from the land Ludwig and all the heroes were born in and for which they fought and put down their lives. Then the coffins were lowered into the graves.

"Let's put up our Ukrainian traditional mound, and it shall stand on Ludwig's grave," said Ivan.

The soldiers formed a large circle. Then each took out his entrenching spade and took up some soil. They marched past the grave and threw in the soil. They kept on so that the mound mounted higher—five feet, ten feet, fifteen feet high before they finally stopped.

"Behold, so the Ukraine used to honor her friends and heroes," Ivan declared.

The soldiers turned and looked in astonishment. What was that? Up from the valley came the Russian and the Tartar. They were carrying the cross from the ruined church. They climbed the mound over Ludwig's grave and placed the cross upright upon it. And indeed this cross could have no better place than on that mound in the middle of that cemetery. The sun broke through the clouds which had hidden it and, lo, the cross reflected its beams in such glory that the soldiers bowed their heads.

Lemke, the Silverhead, was deeply moved by the signs of honor and love bestowed upon his dead son. Looking upon the radiant cross, he said: "My father never dreamed that the

cross, which greeted him for the first time over this hill, would stand some day upon the grave of his grandson." Turning to Woloshyn, Ivan, and all the soldiers, he announced: "I am going to leave Europe. I am too old to share your hardship. I shall return to my friend the Kurd, in a lovely valley at the foot of Ararat. I'll get through the front somehow. Then I'll wander until I reach my friend beyond the Caucasian Mountains. There I shall find friendliness and peace—I shall not forget you. As you go about your task of liberation, remember that yonder at Ararat is one who night and morning is praying for you and your unhappy Ukraine."

This farewell made the soldiers sad. They came to shake his hand upon which many a tear fell.

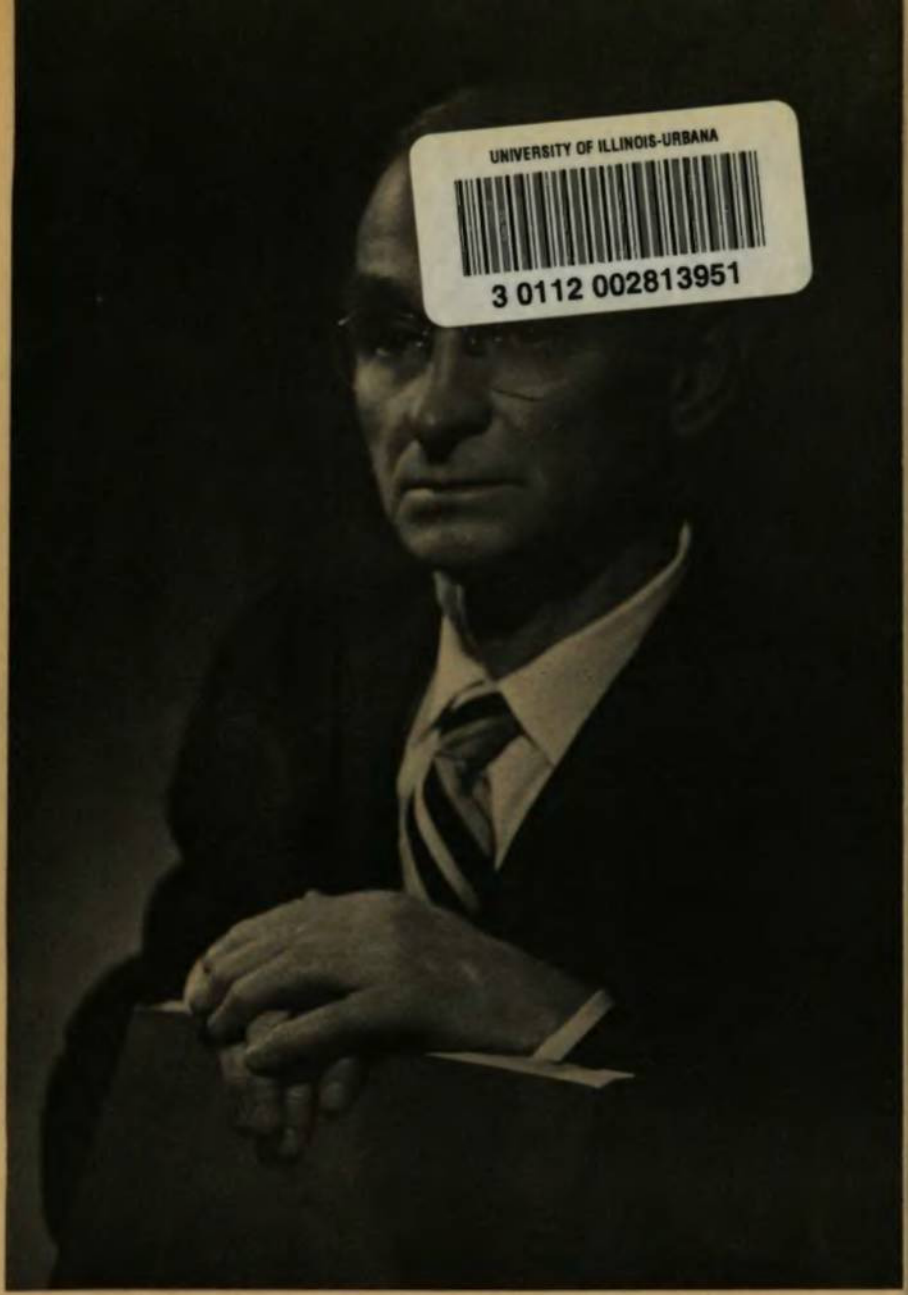
He looked over to his beloved colony, and down into the valley of the ruined village; then a last time at the cross on his son's grave.

"God bless thee, beloved landscape," he said.

He turned eastward to begin his long, weary journey to the peaceful haven of Ararat. They watched his snow-white head with the sunlight upon it until they could no longer see him.

Wolochyn, turning to the officers and soldiers, said: "Let's go and prepare for another battle with the greatest enemy of all mankind and of all freedom—the Communists—who are twisting the light of truth into darkness, and the darkness of swindle into light."

And they went.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR . . .

HERBERT HIRSCHFELD, whose relationship to the events in this novel is far less than objective, lives with his family in Forest Park, Illinois,