Ivan Turgenev

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Introduction

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'Smoke' was first published in 1867, several years after Turgenev had fixed his home in Baden, with his friends the Viardots. Baden at this date was a favourite resort for all circles of Russian society, and Turgenev was able to study at his leisure his countrymen as they appeared to foreign critical eyes. The novel is therefore the most cosmopolitan of all Turgenev's works. On a veiled background of the great world of European society, little groups of representative Russians, members of the aristocratic and the Young Russia parties, are etched with an incisive, unfaltering hand. *Smoke,* as an historical study, though it yields in importance to *Fathers and Children* and *Virgin Soil,* is of great significance to Russians. It might with truth have been named *Transition,* for the generation it paints was then midway between the early philosophical Nihilism of the sixties s and the active political Nihilism of the seventies.

Markedly transitional, however, as was the Russian mind of the days of *Smoke,* Turgenev, with the faculty that distinguishes the great artist from the artist of second rank, the faculty of seeking out and stamping the essential under confused and fleeting forms, has once and for ever laid bare the fundamental weakness of the Slav nature, its weakness of will. *Smoke* is an attack, a deserved attack, not merely on the Young Russia Party, but on all the Parties; not on the old ideas or the new ideas, but on the proneness of the Slav nature to fall a prey to a consuming weakness, a moral

stagnation, a feverish ennui, the Slav nature that analyses everything with force and brilliancy, and ends, so often, by doing nothing. *Smoke* is the attack, bitter yet sympathetic, of a man who, with growing despair, has watched the weakness of his countrymen, while he loves his country all the more for the bitterness their sins have brought upon it. *Smoke* is the scourging of a babbling generation, by a man who, grown sick to death of the chatter of reformers and reactionists, is visiting the sins of the fathers on the children, with a contempt out of patience for the hereditary vice in the Slav blood. And this time the author cannot be accused of partisanship by any blunderer. 'A plague o' both your houses' is his message equally to the Bureaucrats and the Revolutionists. And so skilfully does he wield the thong, that every lash falls on the back of both parties. An exquisite piece of political satire is *Smoke;* for this reason alone it would stand unique among novels.

The success of *Smoke* was immediate and great; but the hue-and-cry that assailed it was even greater. The publication of the book marks the final rupture between Turgenev and the party of Young Russia. The younger generation never forgave him for drawing Gubaryov and Bambaev, Voroshilov and Madame Suhantchikov — types, indeed, in which all revolutionary or unorthodox parties are painfully rich. Or, perhaps, Turgenev was forgiven for it when he was in his grave, a spot where forgiveness flowers to a late perfection. And yet the fault was not Turgenev's. No, his last novel, *Virgin Soil,* bears splendid witness that it was Young Russia that was one-eyed.

Let the plain truth here be set down. *Smoke* is not a complete picture of the Young Russia of the day; it was not yet time for that picture; and that being so, Turgenev did the next best thing in attacking the windbags, the charlatans and their crowd of shallow, chattering followers, as well as the empty formulas of the *laissez-faire* party. It was inevitable that the attack should bring on him the anger of all young enthusiasts working for 'the Cause'; it was inevitable that 'the Cause' of reform in Russia should be mixed up with the Gubaryovs, just as reforms in France a few years ago were mixed up with Boulanger; and that Turgenev's waning popularity for the last twenty years of his life should be directly caused by his honesty and clear-sightedness in regard to Russian Liberalism, was inevitable also. To be crucified by those you have benefited is the cross of honour of all great, single-hearted men.

But though the bitterness of political life flavours *Smoke,* although its points of departure and arrival are wrapped in the atmosphere of Russia's dark and insoluble problems, nevertheless the two central figures of the book, Litvinov and Irina, are not political figures. Luckily for them, in Gubaryovs words, they belong 'to the undeveloped.' Litvinov himself may be dismissed in a sentence. He is Turgenev's favourite type of man, a character much akin to his own nature, gentle, deep, and sympathetic. Turgenev often drew such a character; Lavretsky, for example, in *A House of Gentlefolk,* is a first cousin to Litvinov, an older and a sadder man.

But Irina — Irina is unique; for Turgenev has in her perfected her type till she reaches a destroying witchery of

fascination and subtlety. Irina will stand for ever in the long gallery of great creations, smiling with that enigmatical smile which took from Litvinov in a glance half his life, and his love for Tatyana. The special triumph of her creation is that she combines that exact balance between good and evil which makes good women seem insipid beside her and bad women unnatural. And, by nature irresistible, she is made doubly so to the imagination by the situation which she recreates between Litvinov and herself. She ardently desires to become nobler, to possess all that the ideal of love means for the heart of woman; but she has only the power given to her of enervating the man she loves. Can she become a Tatyana to him? No, to no man. She is born to corrupt, yet never to be corrupted. She rises mistress of herself after the first measure of fatal delight. And, never giving her whole heart absolutely to her lover, she, nevertheless, remains ever to be desired.

Further, her wit, her scorn, her beauty preserve her from all the influences of evil she does not deliberately employ. Such a woman is as old and as rare a type as Helen of Troy. It is most often found among the great mistresses of princes, and it was from a mistress of Alexander II. that Turgenev modelled Irina.

Of the minor characters, Tatyana is an astonishing instance of Turgenev's skill in drawing a complete character with half-a-dozen strokes of the pen. The reader seems to have known her intimately all his life: her family life, her girlhood, her goodness and individual ways to the smallest detail; yet she only speaks on two or three occasions. Potugin is but a weary shadow of Litvinov, but it is difficult

to say how much this is a telling refinement of art. The shadow of this prematurely exhausted man is cast beforehand by Irina across Litvinov's future. For Turgenev to have drawn Potugin as an ordinary individual would have vulgarised the novel and robbed it of its skilful proportions, for Potugin is one of those shadowy figures which supply the chiaroscuro to a brilliant etching.

As a triumphant example of consummate technical skill, *Smoke* will repay the most exact scrutiny. There are a lightness and a grace about the novel that conceal its actual strength. The political argument glides with such ease in and out of the love story, that the hostile critic is absolutely baffled; and while the most intricate steps are executed in the face of a crowd of angry enemies, the performer lands smiling and in safety. The art by which Irina's disastrous fascination results in falsity, and Litvinov's desperate striving after sincerity ends in rehabilitation, — the art by which these two threads are spun, till their meaning colours the faint political message of the book, is so delicate that, like the silken webs which gleam only for the first fresh hours in the forest, it leaves no trace, but becomes a dream in the memory. And yet this book, which has the freshness of windy rain and the whirling of autumn leaves, is a story of ignominious weakness, of the passion that kills, that degrades, that renders life despicable, as Turgenev himself says. *Smoke* is the finest example in literature of a subjective psychological study of passion rendered clearly and objectively in terms of French art. Its character, we will not say its superiority, lies in the extraordinary clearness with which the most obscure mental phenomena are

analysed in relation to the ordinary values of daily life. At the precise point of psychological analysis where Tolstoi wanders and does not convince the reader, and at the precise point where Dostoievsky's analysis seems exaggerated and obscure, like a figure looming through the mist, Turgenev throws a ray of light from the outer to the inner world of man, and the two worlds are revealed in the natural depths of their connection. It is in fact difficult to find among the great modern artists men whose natural balance of intellect can be said to equalise their special genius. The Greeks alone present to the world a spectacle of a triumphant harmony in the critical and creative mind of man, and this is their great pre-eminence. But *Smoke* presents the curious feature of a novel (Slav in virtue of its modern psychological genius) which is classical in its treatment and expression throughout: the balance of Turgenev's intellect reigns ever supreme over the natural morbidity of his subject.

And thus *Smoke* in every sense of the word is a classic for all time.

EDWARD GARNETT.

January 1896.

List of Characters

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THE NAMES OF THE CHARACTERS IN THE BOOK

Grigóry [*Grísha*] Mihálovitch Litvínov.

Tat-yana [*Tanya*] Petróvna Shestóv.

Kapitolína Márkovna.

Rostisláv Bambáev.

Semyón Yákovlevitch Voroshílov.

Stepán Nikoláevitch Gubar-yóv.

Matróna Semyónovna Suhántchikov.

Tit Bindásov.

Pish-Tchálkin.

Sozónt Ivánitch Potúgin.

Irína Pávlovna Osínin.

Valerián Vladímirovitch Ratmírov.

In transcribing the Russian names into English —

a has the sound of *a* in *father*

e has the sound of *a* in *pane.*

i has the sound of *ee.*

u has the sound of *oo.*

y is always consonantal except when it is the last letter of a word.

g is always hard.

I

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I

On the 10th of August 1862, at four o'clock in the afternoon, a great number of people were thronging before the well-known *Konversation* in Baden-Baden. The weather was lovely; everything around — the green trees, the bright houses of the gay city, and the undulating outline of the mountains — everything was in holiday mood, basking in the rays of the kindly sunshine; everything seemed smiling with a sort of blind, confiding delight; and the same glad, vague smile strayed over the human faces too, old and young, ugly and beautiful alike. Even the blackened and whitened visages of the Parisian demi-monde could not destroy the general impression of bright content and elation, while their many-coloured ribbons and feathers and the sparks of gold and steel on their hats and veils involuntarily recalled the intensified brilliance and light fluttering of birds in spring, with their rainbow-tinted wings. But the dry, guttural snapping of the French jargon, heard on all sides, could not equal the song of birds, nor be compared with it.

Everything, however, was going on in its accustomed way. The orchestra in the Pavilion played first a medley from the Traviata, then one of Strauss's waltzes, then 'Tell her,' a Russian song, adapted for instruments by an obliging conductor. In the gambling saloons, round the green tables,

crowded the same familiar figures, with the same dull, greedy, half-stupefied, half-exasperated, wholly rapacious expression, which the gambling fever lends to all, even the most aristocratic, features. The same well-fed and ultra-fashionably dressed Russian landowner from Tambov with wide staring eyes leaned over the table, and with uncomprehending haste, heedless of the cold smiles of the croupiers themselves, at the very instant of the cry *rien ne va plus,* laid with perspiring hand golden rings of *louis d'or* on all the four corners of the roulette, depriving himself by so doing of every possibility of gaining anything, even in case of success. This did not in the least prevent him the same evening from affirming the contrary with disinterested indignation to Prince Kokó, one of the well-known leaders of the aristocratic opposition, the Prince Kokó, who in Paris at the salon of the Princess Mathilde, so happily remarked in the presence of the Emperor: *Madame, le principe de la proprieté est profondément ébranlé en Russie!* At the Russian tree, *à l'arbre Russe,* our dear fellow-countrymen and countrywomen were assembled after their wont. They approached haughtily and carelessly in fashionable style, greeted each other with dignity and elegant ease, as befits beings who find themselves at the topmost pinnacle of contemporary culture. But when they had met and sat down together, they were absolutely at a loss for anything to say to one another, and had to be content with a pitiful interchange of inanities, or with the exceedingly indecent and exceedingly insipid old jokes of a hopelessly stale French wit, once a journalist, a chattering buffoon with Jewish shoes on his paltry little legs, and a contemptible

little beard on his mean little visage. He retailed to them, *à ces princes russes,* all the sweet absurdities from the old comic almanacs *Charivari* and *Tintamarre,* and they, *ces princes russes,* burst into grateful laughter, as though forced in spite of themselves to recognise the crushing superiority of foreign wit, and their own hopeless incapacity to invent anything amusing. Yet here were almost all the ' *fine fleur* ' of our society, 'all the high-life and mirrors of fashion.' Here was Count X., our incomparable dilettante, a profoundly musical nature, who so divinely recites songs on the piano, but cannot in fact take two notes correctly without fumbling at random on the keys, and sings in a style something between that of a poor gypsy singer and a Parisian hairdresser. Here was our enchanting Baron Q., a master in every line: literature, administration, oratory, and card-sharping. Here, too, was Prince Y., the friend of religion and the people, who in the blissful epoch when the spirit-trade was a monopoly, had made himself betimes a huge fortune by the sale of vodka adulterated with belladonna; and the brilliant General O. O., who had achieved the subjugation of something, and the pacification of something else, and who is nevertheless still a nonenity, and does not know what to do with himself. And P. P. the amusing fat man, who regards himself as a great invalid and a great wit, though he is, in fact, as strong as a bull, and as dull as a post. . . . This P. P. is almost the only man in our day who has preserved the traditions of the dandies of the forties, of the epoch of the 'Hero of our Times,' and the Countess Vorotinsky. He has preserved, too, the special gait with the swing on the heels, and *le culte de la pose* (it cannot even be put into words in

Russian), the unnatural deliberation of movement, the sleepy dignity of expression, the immovable, offended-looking countenance, and the habit of interrupting other people's remarks with a yawn, gazing at his own finger-nails, laughing through his nose, suddenly clutching his hat from the back of his head on to his eyebrows, etc. Here, too, were people in government circles, diplomats, big-wigs with European names, men of wisdom and intellect, who imagine that the Golden Bull was an edict of the Pope, and that the English poor-tax is a tax levied on the poor. And here, too, were the hot-blooded, though tongue-tied, devotees of the *dames aux camellias*, young society dandies, with superb partings down the back of their heads, and splendid drooping whiskers, dressed in real London costumes, young bucks whom one would fancy there was nothing to hinder from becoming as vulgar as the illustrious French wit above mentioned. But no! our home products are not in fashion it seems; and Countess S., the celebrated arbitress of fashion and *grand genre,* by spiteful tongues nicknamed 'Queen of the Wasps,' and 'Medusa in a mob-cap,' prefers, in the absence of the French wit, to consort with the Italians, Moldavians, American spiritualists, smart secretaries of foreign embassies, and Germans of effeminate, but prematurely circumspect, physiognomy, of whom the place is full. The example of the Countess is followed by the Princess Babette, she in whose arms Chopin died (the ladies in Europe in whose arms he expired are to be reckoned by thousands); and the Princess Annette, who would have been perfectly captivating, if the simple village washerwoman had not suddenly peeped out in her at times, like a smell of

cabbage wafted across the most delicate perfume; and Princess Rachette, to whom the following mischance had occurred: her husband had fallen into a good berth, and all at once, *Dieu salt pourquoi,* he had thrashed the provost and stolen 20,000 roubles of public money; and the laughing Princess Zizi; and the tearful Princess Zozo. They all left their compatriots on one side, and were merciless in their treatment of them. Let us too leave them on one side, these charming ladies, and walk away from the renowned tree near which they sit in such costly but somewhat tasteless costumes, and God grant them relief from the boredom consuming them!

II

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II

A FEW paces from the 'Russian tree,' at a little table in front of Weber's coffee-house, there was sitting a good-looking man, about thirty, of medium height, thin and dark, with a manly and pleasant face. He sat bending forward with both arms leaning on his stick, with the calm and simple air of a man to whom the idea had not occurred that any one would notice him or pay any attention to him. His large expressive golden-brown eyes were gazing deliberately about him, sometimes screwed up to keep the sunshine out of them, and then watching fixedly some eccentric figure that passed by him, while a childlike smile faintly stirred his fine moustache and lips, and his prominent short chin. He wore a roomy coat of German cut, and a soft grey hat hid half of his high forehead. At the first glance he made the impression of an honest, sensible, rather self-confident young man such as there are many in the world. He seemed to be resting from prolonged labours and to be deriving all the more simple-minded amusement from the scene spread out before him because his thoughts were far away, and because they moved too, those thoughts, in a world utterly unlike that which surrounded him at the moment. He was a Russian; his name was Grigory Mihalovitch Litvinov.

We have to make his acquaintance, and so it will be well to relate in a few words his past, which presents little of much interest or complexity.

He was the son of an honest retired official of plebeian extraction, but he was educated, not as one would naturally expect, in the town, but in the country. His mother was of noble family, and had been educated in a government school. She was a good-natured and very enthusiastic creature, not devoid of character, however. Though she was twenty years younger than her husband, she remodelled him, as far as she could, drew him out of the petty official groove into the landowner's way of life, and softened and refined his harsh and stubborn character. Thanks to her, he began to dress with neatness, and to behave with decorum; he came to respect learned men and learning, though, of course, he never took a single book in his hand; he gave up swearing, and tried in every way not to demean himself. He even arrived at walking more quietly and speaking in a subdued voice, mostly of elevated subjects, which cost him no small effort. 'Ah! they ought to be flogged, and that 's all about it!' he sometimes thought to himself, but aloud he pronounced: 'Yes, yes, that 's so . . . of course; it is a great question.' Litvinov's mother set her household too upon a European footing; she addressed the servants by the plural 'you' instead of the familiar 'thou,' and never allowed any one to gorge himself into a state of lethargy at her table. As regards the property belonging to her, neither she nor her husband was capable of looking after it at all. It had been long allowed to run to waste, but there was plenty of land, with all sorts of useful appurtenances, forest-lands and a

lake, on which there had once stood a factory, which had been founded by a zealous but unsystematic owner, and had flourished in the hands of a scoundrelly merchant, and gone utterly to ruin under the superintendence of a conscientious German manager. Madame Litvinov was contented so long as she did not dissipate her fortune or contract debts. Unluckily she could not boast of good health, and she died of consumption in the very year that her son entered the Moscow university. He did not complete his course there owing to circumstances of which the reader will hear more later on, and went back to his provincial home, where he idled away some time without work and without ties, almost without acquaintances. Thanks to the disinclination for active service of the local gentry, who were, however, not so much penetrated by the Western theory of the evils of 'absenteeism,' as by the home-grown conviction that 'one's own shirt is the nearest to one's skin,' he was drawn for military service in 1855, and almost died of typhus in the Crimea, where he spent six months in a mud-hut on the shore of the Putrid Sea, without ever seeing a single enemy. After that, he served, not of course without unpleasant experiences, on the councils of the nobility, and after being a little time in the country, acquired a passion for farming. He realised that his mother's property, under the indolent and feeble management of his infirm old father, did not yield a tenth of the revenue it might yield, and that in experienced and skilful hands it might be converted into a perfect gold mine. But he realised, too, that experience and skill were just what he lacked — and he went abroad to study agriculture and technology — to learn them from the

first rudiments. More than four years he had spent in Mecklenburg, in Silesia, and in Carlsruhe, and he had travelled in Belgium and in England. He had worked conscientiously and accumulated information; he had not acquired it easily; but he had persevered through his difficulties to the end, and now with confidence in himself, in his future, and in his usefulness to his neighbours, perhaps even to the whole countryside, he was preparing to return home, where he was summoned with despairing prayers and entreaties in every letter from his father, now completely bewildered by the emancipation, the re-division of lands, and the terms of redemption — by the new regime in short. But why was he in Baden?

Well, he was in Baden because he was from day to day expecting the arrival there of his cousin and betrothed, Tatyana Petrovna Shestov. He had known her almost from childhood, and had spent the spring and summer with her at Dresden, where she was living with her aunt. He felt sincere love and profound respect for his young kinswoman, and on the conclusion of his dull preparatory labours, when he was preparing to enter on a new field, to begin real, unofficial duties, he proposed to her as a woman dearly loved, a comrade and a friend, to unite her life with his — for happiness and for sorrow, for labour and for rest, 'for better, for worse' as the English say. She had consented, and he had returned to Carlsruhe, where his books, papers and properties had been left. . . . But why was he at Baden, you ask again?

Well, he was at Baden, because Tatyana's aunt, who had brought her up, Kapitolina Markovna Shestov,an old

unmarried lady of fifty-five, a most good-natured, honest, eccentric soul, a free thinker, all aglow with the fire of self-sacrifice and abnegation, an *esprit fort* (she read Strauss, it is true she concealed the fact from her niece) and a democrat, sworn opponent of aristocracy and fashionable society, could not resist the temptation of gazing for once on this aristocratic society in such a fashionable place as Baden. . . . Kapitolina Markovna wore no crinoline and had her white hair cut in a round crop, but luxury and splendour had a secret fascination for her, and it was her favourite pastime to rail at them and express her contempt of them. How could one refuse to gratify the good old lady? But Litvinov was so quiet and simple, he gazed so self-confidently about him, because his life lay so clearly mapped out before him, because his career was defined, and because he was proud of this career, and rejoiced in it as the work of his own hands.

III

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III

'HULLO! hullo! here he is!' he suddenly heard a squeaky voice just above his ear, and a plump hand slapped him on the shoulder. He lifted his head, and perceived one of his few Moscow acquaintances, a certain Bambaev, a good-natured but good-for-nothing fellow. He was no longer young, he had a flabby nose and soft cheeks, that looked as if they had been boiled, dishevelled greasy locks, and a fat squat person. Everlastingly short of cash, and everlastingly in raptures over something, Rostislav Bambaev wandered, aimless but exclamatory, over the face of our long-suffering mother-earth.

'Well, this is something like a meeting!' he repeated, opening wide his sunken eyes, and drawing down his thick lips, over which the straggling dyed moustaches seemed strangely out of place. 'Ah, Baden! All the world runs here like black-beetles! How did you come here, Grisha?'

There was positively no one in the world Bambaev did not address by his Christian name.

'I came here three days ago.'

'From where?'

'Why do you ask?'

'Why indeed? But stop, stop a minute, Grisha. You are, perhaps, not aware who has just arrived here! Gubaryov

himself, in person! That 's who 's here! He came yesterday from Heidelberg. You know him of course?'

'I have heard of him.'

'Is that all? Upon my word! At once, this very minute we will haul you along to him. Not know a man like that! And by the way here 's Voroshilov. . . . Stop a minute, Grisha, perhaps you don't know him either? I have the honour to present you to one another. Both learned men! He 's a phoenix indeed! Kiss each other!'

And uttering these words, Bambaev turned to a good-looking young man standing near him with a fresh and rosy, but prematurely demure face. Litvinov got up, and, it need hardly be said, did not kiss him, but exchanged a cursory bow with the phoenix, who, to judge from the severity of his demeanour, was not overpleased at this unexpected introduction.

'I said a phoenix, and I will not go back from my word,' continued Bambaev; 'go to Petersburg, to the military school, and look at the golden board; whose name stands first there? The name of Voroshilov, Semyon Yakovlevitch! But, Gubaryov, Gubaryov, my dear fellow! It 's to him we must fly! I absolutely worship that man! And I 'm not alone, every one 's at his feet! Ah, what a work he is writing, O — O — O! . . .'

'What is his work about?' inquired Litvinov.

'About everything, my dear boy, after the style of Buckle, you know . . . but more profound, more profound. . . . Everything will be solved and made clear in it?'

'And have you read this work yourself?'

'No, I have not read it, and indeed it 's a secret, which must not be spread about; but from Gubaryov one may expect everything, everything! Yes!' Bambaev sighed and clasped his hands. 'Ah, if we had two or three intellects like that growing up in Russia, ah, what mightn't we see then, my God! I tell you one thing, Grisha; whatever pursuit you may have been engaged in in these latter days — and I don't even know what your pursuits are in general — whatever your convictions may be — I don't know them either — from him, Gubaryov, you will find something to learn. Unluckily, he is not here for long. We must make the most of him, we must go. To him, to him!'

A passing dandy with reddish curls and a blue ribbon on his low hat, turned round and stared through his eyeglass with a sarcastic smile at Bambaev. Litvinov felt irritated.

'What are you shouting for?' he said; 'one would think you were hallooing dogs on at a hunt! I have not had dinner yet.'

'Well, think of that! we can go at once to Weber's . . . the three of us . . . capital! You have the cash to pay for me?' he added in an undertone.

'Yes, yes; only, I really don't know——'

'Leave off, please; you will thank me for it, and he will be delighted. Ah, heavens!' Bambaev interrupted himself. 'It 's the finale from Ernani they 're playing. How delicious! . . . *A som . . . mo Carlo. . . .* What a fellow I am, though! In tears in a minute. Well, Semyon Yakovlevitch! Voroshilov! shall we go, eh?'

Voroshilov, who had remained all the while standing with immovable propriety, still maintaining his former haughty

dignity of demeanour, dropped his eyes expressively, frowned, and muttered something between his teeth . . . But he did not refuse; and Litvinov thought, ' Well, we may as well do it, as I 've plenty of time on my hands.' Bambaev took his arm, but before turning towards the café he beckoned to Isabelle the renowned flower-girl of the Jockey Club: he had conceived the idea of buying a bunch of flowers of her. But the aristocratic flower-girl did not stir; and, indeed, what should induce her to approach a gentleman without gloves, in a soiled fustian jacket, streaky cravat, and boots trodden down at heel, whom she had not even seen in Paris? Then Voroshilov in his turn beckoned to her. To him she responded, and he, taking a tiny bunch of violets from her basket, flung her a florin. He thought to astonish her by his munificence, but not an eyelash on her face quivered, and when he had turned away, she pursed up her mouth contemptuously. Voroshilov was dressed very fashionably, even exquisitely, but the experienced eye of the Parisian girl noted at once in his get-up and in his bearing, in his very walk, which showed traces of premature military drill, the absence of genuine, pure-blooded 'chic.'

When they had taken their seats in the principal dining-hall at Weber's, and ordered dinner, our friends fell into conversation. Bambaev discoursed loudly and hotly upon the immense importance of Gubaryov, but soon he ceased speaking, and, gasping and chewing noisily, drained off glass after glass. Voroshilov eat and drank little, and as it were reluctantly, and after questioning Litvinov as to the nature of his interests, fell to giving expression to his own opinions — not so much on those interests, as on questions

of various kinds in general. . . . All at once he warmed up, and set off at a gallop like a spirited horse, boldly and decisively assigning to every syllable, every letter, its due weight, like a confident cadet going up for his 'final' examination, with vehement, but inappropriate gestures. At every instant, since no one interrupted him, he became more eloquent, more emphatic; it seemed as though he were reading a dissertation or lecture. The names of the most recent scientific authorities — with the addition of the dates of the birth or death of each of them — the titles of pamphlets that had only just appeared, and names, names, names . . . fell in showers together from his tongue, affording himself intense satisfaction, reflected in his glowing eyes. Voroshilov, seemingly, despised everything old, and attached value only to the cream of culture, the latest, most advanced points of science; to mention, however inappropriately, a book of some Doctor Zauerbengel on Pennsylvanian prisons, or yesterday's articles in the *Asiatic Journal* on the Vedas and Puranas (he pronounced it *Journal* in the English fashion, though he certainly did not know English) was for him a real joy, a felicity. Litvinov listened and listened to him, and could not make out what could be his special line. At one moment his talk was of the part played by the Celtic race in history; then he was carried away to the ancient world, and discoursed upon the æginetan marbles, harangued with great warmth on the sculptor living in the time of Phidias, Onetas, who was, however, transformed by him into Jonathan, which lent his whole discourse a half-Biblical, half-American flavour; then he suddenly bounded away to political economy and