

# JOHN SMITH ON A VISIT TO IVAN IVANOVITCH

By HAROLD E. SCARBOROUGH

Illustration by ALBERT LEVERING

**T**O-DAY a manicuring establishment opened for business on the Koznetsky Most, Moscow, which seven years ago was one of the principal shopping streets of the city. And to-day on the Tverskoi Boulevard a man who was carrying in his arms a small sack of flour inadvertently dropped it, and burst into tears as he looked down at the white spot on the pavement and realized the tragedy it implied.

That is the Russian capital of to-day, a kaleidoscopic succession of incongruities and contrasts—of the first faint stirrings of a new prosperity, coupled with the depths of degradation, despair and misery.

Moscow itself has experienced so much since the first graves of the 1917 revolution were dug by the Kremlin walls, in the Red Square, that it pays scant attention to such incidents as those mentioned above. Occasional patrons entered the manicure shop, and emerged later gazing curiously at their nails, as though they could not quite comprehend the luster they displayed. And although among the half-dozen people who stopped to help the man scoop up what was left of his treasure there must have been two or three who were very hungry, not one attempted to make away with any of the now discolored flour.

There are about 1,200,000 people in this city to-day. If a foreigner here were to be asked how they live he could only answer: "I don't know."

There are certain general observations, of course, that one may make. Of these the most important is that for all but an infinitesimal minority of the population of Moscow the first and last aims of life, as well as all the intervening ones, are to get enough to eat.

"What are you going to do about fuel this winter?" asked Colonel Mackie, a member of the Canadian Parliament, who is now in Moscow, of a man who had formerly been a university professor.

"There will be a shortage; we probably shall be cold," replied the man.

"But you have plenty of time. Why don't you hire a team, and go out into the woods and store up enough for yourself, anyhow?"

"Sit," the Russian replied, "breakfast to-morrow morning is as far as I am looking ahead. If I can get that assured before to-night I shall consider that I have done well."

And breakfast to-morrow morning is almost as far ahead as the majority of the Muscovites care to look. There is really little, if any, starvation in Moscow; to-morrow morn-

## MARTY MCMAHON'S REFLECTIONS

By Robert B. Peck

"**I**F I hadn't retired," said Marty McMahon, the retired bartender, "I believe I should give up my profession an' take to astronomizin'." Outside bartendin', it must be one o' the most interestin' an' useful professions.

"One way it's a good deal like tendin' bar. Whichever way it is that a man makes his livin' he don't live long enough to learn all there is to know about his profession or, for that matter, all he needs to know about it."

"There was an astronomizer I was readin' about just the other day. He was a moon specialist. He'd spent years an' years dopin' out just where the moon was goin' to be fer centuries to come, an' one night he happened to be out after dark an' he took a look at the moon an' it wasn't where it oughta be."

"It was like a fella had spent years stockin' up his cellar an' one day he goes down to tap a new barrel an' he finds they're all empty. There wasn't nothin' he could do about it. The moon wasn't where it oughta be an' that was all there was to it."

"Then there was another astronomizer who lived up in Alaska or some such place, an' was all the time takin' observations to make sure that he was where he thought he was, an' after twelve or sixteen years he finds he ain't where he thought he was at all but twelve or sixteen feet farther north."

"O' course, he coulda walked twelve or sixteen feet south an' then he'd been where he thought he was, but he'd sooner stay where he was an' try to dope it out, just like a fella might when he wakes up after a chowder."

"So he got to work an' he found out some interestin' an' useful things, too, just as a fella will when he starts out tryin' to remember where he was the night before."

"Fer one thing, he found out that half the time the North Pole wasn't where everybody thought it was, but was sixty feet or so outa the way, which musta been a great comfort to Doc Cook when he read about it."

"For another thing, he found that the pole was movin' its way farther an' farther down town all the time, the general effect bein', so far as lawbreakers were concerned, that the country was movin' north at the rate of about a foot a year."

"That made him proud an' satisfied, because it explained why he wasn't where he thought he was an' proved he hadn't made no mistake when he took his observations, which he had been afraid at first he might of."

"But the worst of it is there don't nobody know an' won't know fer a good many thousand years, maybe, but what thousands of years ago the days kept gettin' shorter by a thousandth of a second each day an' now things are just evenin' up, or that thousands of years ago the earth was movin' south at the rate of a foot a year an' is just settin' back now."

"Astronomizin' is just like bartendin' that way—you can dope things out as careful as you please, but you can't never tell. It must be interestin', at that."



ing's breakfast, somehow or other, always does seem to come. The point is that the citizen of Moscow, instead of regarding proper food, clothing and comfort as things more or less automatic in their recurrence, has to make the procuring of them his prime consideration.

From behind the veil of secrecy which has been drawn over the Russian capital these last few years, very little that is accurate has come out, in so far as the actual life of the people is concerned.

"Do you have to wear a red tie? Have you been arrested yet? Are people dying in the streets?" come queries in letters from the outside world. One wonders whether he will be believed if he states, quite truthfully, that he has told literally dozens of government officials that he considers Communism absurd in theory and impossible in practice, and has received neither prison nor threats of expulsion; that for a month he has lived in Moscow a peaceful and uneventful, if uncomfortable, life; that, a foreigner knowing only a few disconnected words of Russian, he has traversed the streets at all hours up to 3 a. m. and has not met with the slightest annoyance, let alone assault and robbery, from any one.

"It is very disappointing," said Isadora Duncan, who came to Moscow at the request of the Soviet government, to found a school of dancing. "I came here expecting to be knocked over the head and robbed; I had even rehearsed my dying speech to the multitude. And all that happens is that I have been here two months, bored to death, and have not yet been able to get enough beds for my teachers to sleep on!"

One's first impression of Moscow is that the city itself is the worst possible propaganda for Bolshevism. Uneven sidewalks, windows boarded up, roofs sagging in, cornices, sills,

**S**UPPOSE that in New York or Atlanta or Denver normal life had stopped in 1917. Suppose that since that time John Smith's employment had been gone; that he had spent the little reserve of money that he had; that he had pawned virtually all of his possessions; that he had been limited to three rooms of his apartment, and had had strangers billeted in the other three; and that until the spring of 1921 all of his pawning and selling had to be carried on surreptitiously, because detection meant prison and perhaps death. Suppose that he knew that he could not get medicine for his family, should they become sick; that he knew that he could not borrow from friends, because they were in the same plight; that he could not emigrate to another country, because it was illegal. Change John Smith to Ivan Ivanovitch and New York to Moscow, and you can form a fairly clear idea of his present state of mind, because Ivan can feel hungry and cold and disillusioned and disheartened in exactly the same way as can John.

doors—all the incidental details whereby one forms impressions—sadly in need of repair; occasional buildings in ruins, others sprayed with unmistakable marks of machine-gun fire—these things speak of a civilization in decay.

And then one notices that where yesterday there was a dusty and desolate interior, seen dimly through dirty windows, there is to-day a shop. The building around the corner from one's hotel, which showed only too plainly that the hands of the repairer had not touched it for seven years, appears with scaffolding in front of it and with painters and decorators at work.

One stands in the open square in front of the great Opera House and watches the street crowds. Strange, unfamiliar—yes, as strange as the bulbous gold domes arising from behind the castellated walls of the Kremlin or the low, white Asiatic edifices which one may find in any side street in thirty seconds' walk. But people are not dropping of starvation, or

of anything else, for that matter. Their clothing is unusual and looks as if it had been assembled at rummage sales, but on the whole most of the people seem to be fairly well protected from the chill wind which makes an American shiver though he be swathed in the heaviest underclothing and flannel shirt and sweater that a London colonial outfitter can provide. The leather puttees which that chap there in the leather coat and knitted cap is wearing may not be entirely comme il faut; in fact, they look as if they had seen long and hard service, but at least they serve their purpose. And if the down-at-heel, cracked patent leather pumps worn by the girl who accompanies him would scarcely be chic for Broadway, they are at least shoes.

"Spetchki, papyrosi!" cries the urchin at the curb in a not unmusical voice, meaning that he has matches and cigarettes for sale.

"Skolka Spiridonovskaia?" one asks of the

ancient droshky driver, who brings his creaky vehicle up to the sidewalk at one's signal. "How much to the Spiridonovskaia?"

"Tsork!" he answers, meaning "40,000 rubles!" One omits reference to thousands to save time and says simply "forty."

"Niet, tovarisch, niet! Durga, durga!" one retorts, exhausting a large part of his Russian vocabulary in saying, "No, comrade, no. It is too much!"

"Tretset!" offers the isvostchik, meaning that he will accept 30,000 rubles as a special favor.

"Dvatsit!" one replies. Twenty thousand is really enough.

The old man gathers up the flaring skirts of his coat and clucks to his horse as if to say that he cannot waste time palavering with a madman. His prospective fare likewise makes as if to move away.

"Pazholsta, pazholsta! Dvatsit-piet!" comes an agonized cry. The driver has implored, "Please, please! Twenty-five!"

So one turns (it is always better to seem reluctant about it) and gets into the droshky, having agreed to pay 25,000 rubles for a drive of one and one-half miles to the headquarters of the American Relief Administration. Both parties to the transaction have known all along that this would be the final arrangement, but, after all, a matter of business is too complicated to be settled by a simple question and answer.

Or one may wander out to the markets, of which the two best are the Troubnaia and the Smolensky.

The Troubnaia market is located in a roped-off space on one of the boulevards which form the inner ring of the two systems which encircle the city. It is the most primitive imaginable, and yet if one searches there long enough he is fairly sure to find what he may seek.

The booths are roughly constructed of wood, with canvas roofs. On the north side of the market are the hardware merchants—hardware including virtually any article made of metal, glass or wood. A pair of beautifully made surgical forceps lies alongside an ikon, enameled in blue and silver; a graphophone (one of the old, horned variety) grants out plaintive Russian songs, by way of showing that it will really work, while beside it is a silver-plated samovar. A handful of ten-penny nails, a couple of electric light bulbs, four brass doorknobs, five silver spoons and two little silver vodka cups complete a typical exhibit.

The central aisle of the market is given over to dry goods. It is doubtful whether there is in Moscow a length of cloth long enough to make two full suits, and yet there are cloths of every variety, from Irish tweeds to Crimean linens. In the dry goods aisle are also ranged all varieties of trinkets, from new pen knives, bearing a suspiciously "Made in Germany" look, to cheap enamel insignia and buttons of the Red Army.

Here, for instance, is a woman holding both hands before her face. The fingers are encrusted with rings—and they are all for sale. This is her method of displaying them. On a hawk's tray suspended from her shoulders there are silver cups, knives and forks, and thrown over one shoulder there will be a silk and wool embroidered shawl. Another woman will be wearing a well made fur coat; one wonders at her apparent prosperity until one sees some one begin to finger the coat and hears the inevitable "Skollaz!" (How much?)

Here is where Moscow shops—not in the Tverskaia or the Koznetsky Most, nor in the arcades on one side of the Red Square, now turned into government offices. The stores in these places will reopen after a while—many of them, in fact, already have done so—but it will be a year or two before they are able to compete with the markets.

And who does the shopping?

Foreigners, and those people whose acumen at trading would bring them to the top in any competitive system of society. One sells the family fish knives and makes a small profit; then one has enough to buy a samovar, which one sells again; then perhaps it is a set of dishes, or a fur coat; and finally one stands forth as one of the new bourgeoisie, comparatively affluent on a handful of paper rubles which a foreigner would pay for a dinner and forget.

Life is becoming harder and harder for the people who have not the commercial instinct. The majority of families have sold off all their jewelry, silver, furniture and clothing, beyond what they actually need from day to day, and this process has been going on for four years. And now the remaining clothes are wearing threadbare, the remaining furniture is creaking and shabby and to break one of the remaining dishes is a tragedy.

## WHEN VAUVILLE WAS VARIETY

(Continued from page three)

and those serio-comic singers, Ella Mayo and Jennie Engle. Pat Rooney, another favorite of elder generations, was an Englishman who, fortunately for the part he played so successfully on the stage, was born with a face like a caricature of an Irishman, and by carefully cultivating this feature and assuming a Celtic name and brogue acquired an enormous following. At the beginning of his career he something so far forgot himself as to misplace his aspirates, but as he possessed the gift to which I have already alluded as "getting across the footlights" and was, withal, a nimble and graceful dancer, he lived to become one of the most popular Irish impersonators on our stage.

Four of the principal players in "The Parlor Match," one of Hoyt's earliest successes, had previously won their spurs in variety. These were Charles E. Evans, still living; Bill Hoey, who styled himself "Old Hoss"—his brother was advertised as "Young Mule"—and their wives, the French Twins who were not from France, but from Lee, Mass., the children of a country editor. The four gave an entertainment that retained its vogue for nearly a decade.

Ella Wesner was another old variety favorite, a male impersonator of genuine distinction and second only to Miss Vesta Tilley, her legitimate successor in that field of endeavor. Among the best male impersonators of female parts whom I recall were the Russell Brothers, who styled themselves the "Neat Irish Chambermaids," and were the originators of the imperishable gag "Maggie, did you give the goldfish fresh water?" "No, they ain't drank up all I gave them yesterday."

Contemporaries of the Russell Brothers were Bessie Bonehill, a delightful English ballad singer, long since dead, and Maggie Cline, whose uproarious song "Throw Him Down McCloskey," was a perennial source of joy to the Pastor gallery. In quite another vein, but also with gladsome results, Miss Bonehill used to sing "Buttercups and Daisies."

Frank Bush, who is still living, though I have not seen him for many a year, won fame as a Hebrew impersonator. He was also a master in the art of reproducing the various dialects of our cosmopolitan town. He could show the differences in the conversation of a high German and a Plattdeutscher, and it would be hard to-day to assemble an audience capable of appreciating the delicacy of his work.

The old variety stage was indeed a treasure house of talent and the players who made it popular were so numerous that it is impossible to name more than a few of them in a single article. There was one annual event which served to round up the best of them and that was the benefit of Harry Sanderson, Pastor's business manager, who was also the author of many of the sketches presented on his stage. There are a few of us still alive who never missed one of these yearly feasts of laughter.

# REHEARSING THE MOVIE ORCHESTRA

By JAMES J. MONTAGUE

Illustrations by MERLE JOHNSON

**T**HE scene is the partially darkened interior of a moving picture theater. A new super-picture is being put into rehearsal with the orchestra. This is necessary in order that the action of the picture may be synchronized with the music. Inasmuch as it is a super-picture, not a mere picture, which is to be produced, the music effects, especially those produced by the traps, are highly important. Indeed the director, whose name is Pete, is seeking to do something big in the way of harmonious blending of visualization and syncopation. He is not having altogether an easy time with Sam, the orchestra leader; Heinie, the trombone player, and Shorty, the man who manipulates the traps. Let us now proceed with the rehearsal.

PETE—Now, boys, before we begin, this here picture is a corker, and if you guys do the right thing by it it will knock 'em. What I want is effects—effects with a capital I. Don't pay no attention to the subtitles or try to pull any stuff of your own. You just listen to me and do what I say. Now get ready; she begins with a scene of a lot o' warships and your cue is for "The Star-Spangled Banner." Good and loud. That's good, only it wants a little more pep. Now, Shorty, it's up to you—the hero's about to enter.

SHORTY (with the traps)—Clickity, clackety, clickity, clackety!

PETE—Nothin' like that! Nothin' like that at all. This guy is comin' on in a aeroplane.

SHORTY—I ain't got nothin' that will make a noise like a aeroplane.

PETE—What's the matter with them drums? Rumdumdumdumdum—like—you know how they sound.

SHORTY (on the drum)—Rum-dum, dum! dum! dum!

PETE—But this is the noise that the aeroplane makes by itself. Rumble them drums Shorty. (Shorty rumbles them.) That's the eye. Now, the villain is coming on with the bunch he hangs out with.

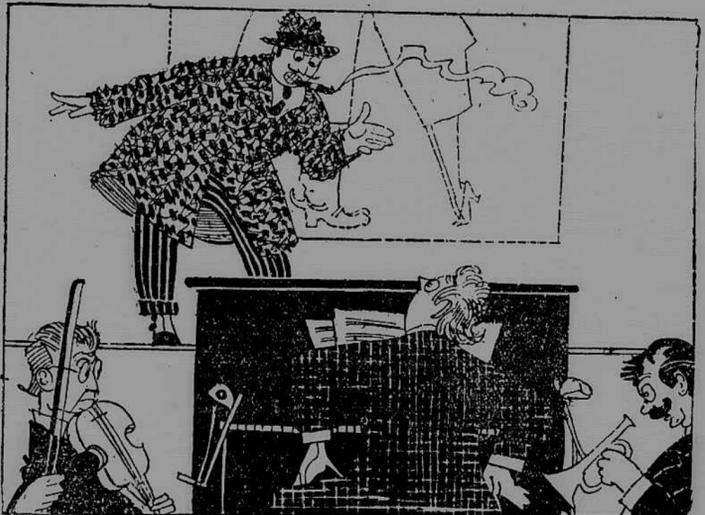
SAM—Sure. (Waves his baton, and the orchestra plays "Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here.")

PETE—Say, do you want to queer this film? This bird is a high toner here. He ain't no Tammany Hall roughneck. Play something that show's hell a villain all right, but a villain with a college education.

SAM—Aw, there ain't no such piece as that.

PETE—Well, play something classy, then. Some of that Irving Berlin stuff.

SAM—I get you! (He waves his baton and



"What I want is effects—effects with a capital I"

PETE—Say, that sounds like the parade goin' by. D'ja ever hear a aeroplane?

SHORTY—Can't say as I ever did. Close up, that is.

HEINIE—Why not give him a sort o' bugle call like—welcome to our city?

PETE—But this is the noise that the aeroplane makes by itself. Rumble them drums Shorty. (Shorty rumbles them.) That's the eye. Now, the villain is coming on with the bunch he hangs out with.

SAM—Sure. (He waves his baton and the orchestra plays "Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here.")

PETE—Cut it out. Ain't you got nothin' in them horns but that? Give up something that fits a little.

SAM—I know. (He waves his baton and the orchestra play "School Days.")

PETE—That's the stuff. Now, there's going to be a lawn party—you know, lemonade and tea and cocktails and whatever they have—under awnings.

the orchestra plays "You'd Be Surprised.")

PETE—That's the stuff. Something with a little clytle in it. Now, get ready for the heroine. She's coming in all alone.

SAM—C'rect. (He waves his baton, and the orchestra plays "All by Myself.")

PETE—Great stuff! That'll knock 'em. Just the right kind of pathetic business. Hold on, though. I guess I got the picture wrong. The Jane is coming in with a boarding school crowd.

SAM—Sure. (He waves his baton and the orchestra plays "Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here.")

PETE—Cut it out. Ain't you got nothin' in them horns but that? Give up something that fits a little.

SAM—I know. (He waves his baton and the orchestra play "School Days.")

PETE—That's the stuff. Now, there's going to be a lawn party—you know, lemonade and tea and cocktails and whatever they have—under awnings.

SAM—I'm next. (He waves his baton and the band plays "Tenting on the Old Camp Ground.")

PETE—Too sad. Jazz it up a bit, and maybe it will do.

SAM—Sure. (The band plays the tune double time.)

PETE—Sounds good to me. Next picture is a close up of the hero on horseback, fording a stream.

SAM—Sure—I know. (He waves his baton and the orchestra plays "There's One More River to Cross.")

PETE—Just the ticket! Now we see the villain looking in at the conservatory window of the heroine's house.

SAM—I get you. (He waves his baton, and the orchestra plays "Peekaboo.")

PETE—Not at all! Not at all! D'ja think this is one of them Sennett comedies?

SAM—I went a long way back for that one. How would "Ain't It a Shame" do?

PETE—Good as anything, I guess. (Now, Shorty, the hero, has just been in for a swim, and is rubbing hisself down with a turkish towel.)

SHORTY—(With the sand paper)—Sysh, sysh, sysh!

PETE—O. K. Couldn't be better. Say, hold on though—made a mistake. This here picture ain't the one we want. It ain't no super-picture at all. Oh, well, I guess the music 'll do. When it goes on to-night, you boys just use the stuff I've give you up here, and then vamp the rest of it. I got three more rehearsals with other orchestras this afternoon. (Curtain.)

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