

wildly staring monster which was reminiscent of a spotted hyena with the mane of a collie, and in the accounts of the secret fund came a new item: M . . . ninety crowns.

That monster was passing itself off as a mastiff . . .

But not even Kalous succeeded in getting any information out of Švejk. He fared the same as Bretschneider. Švejk diverted the deftest political conversations to the curing of distemper in puppies and the most cunningly prepared traps always ended in Bretschneider bringing back from Švejk another unbelievable mongrel monster.

And that was the end of the famous detective Bretschneider. When he had seven monsters of this kind in his flat, he shut himself up with them in the back room and starved them so long that they finally gobbled him up.

He was so honourable that he saved the state the expense of a funeral.

In his personal file at police headquarters there were recorded under the column 'Advancement in service' the following poignant words: 'Devoured by his own dogs.'

When Švejk learnt later about this tragic event he said:

'It gives me a headache to think how they are going to put all his pieces together when the day of the last judgement comes.'

Švejk Goes to the War

At the time when the forests on the river Raab in Galicia saw the Austrian armies fleeing across the river and when down in Serbia one after the other of the Austrian divisions were taken with their pants down and got the wallopping they had long deserved, the Austrian Ministry of War suddenly remembered Švejk. Why, even he might help to get the Monarchy out of the mess.

When they brought Švejk the order to report within a week for a medical examination on Sřtelecký Ostrov, he happened to be lying in bed, stricken once more by rheumatism.

Mrs Müller was making coffee for him in the kitchen.

'Mrs Müller,' Švejk called softly from his room, 'Mrs Müller, come here for a moment.'

When the charwoman stood by his bed, Švejk repeated in the same soft voice: 'Sit down, Mrs Müller.'

There was something mysterious and solemn in his voice.

When she had sat down, Švejk drew himself up in bed and announced: 'I'm going to the war!'

'Holy Mother!' shrieked Mrs Müller. 'What ever are you going to do there?'

'Fight,' answered Švejk in sepulchral tones. 'Things are going very badly for Austria. Up above they're already creeping on us at Cracow and down below on Hungary. They're crushing us like a steam-roller on all sides and that's why they're calling me up. I read you yesterday from the newspaper, didn't I, that dark clouds were enveloping our dear fatherland.'

'But you can't move.'

'That doesn't matter, Mrs Müller, I shall go to the war in a bath-chair. You know that confectioner round the corner? Well, he has just the right kind of bathchair. Years ago he used to push his lame and wicked old grandfather about in it in the fresh air. Mrs Müller, you're going to push me to the war in that bathchair.'

Mrs Müller burst into tears: 'Oh dear, sir, shouldn't I run for the doctor?'

'You'll not run anywhere, Mrs Müller. Except for my legs I'm completely sound cannon-fodder, and at a time when things are going badly for Austria every cripple must be at his post. Just go on making the coffee.'

And while Mrs Müller, tear-stained and distraught, poured the coffee through the strainer, the good soldier Švejk started singing in bed:

'General Windischgrätz as the cock did crow
Unfurled his banner and charged the foe.
Rataplan, rataplan, rataplan.'

Charged the foe and brandished his sword
Calling to Mary, Mother of the Lord.
Rataplan, rataplan, rataplan.'

The panic-stricken Mrs Müller under the impact of this awe-inspiring war-song forgot about the coffee and trembling in every limb listened in horror as the good soldier Švejk continued to sing in bed:

'With Mary Mother and bridges four,
Piedmont, strengthen your posts for war.
Rataplan, rataplan, rataplan.'

At Solferino there was battle and slaughter,
Piles of corpses and blood like water.
Rataplan, rataplan, rataplan.'

Arms and legs flying in the air,
For the brave 18th were fighting there.
Rataplan, rataplan, rataplan.'

Boys of the 18th, don't lose heart!
There's money behind in the baggage cart.
Rataplan, rataplan, rataplan.'

'For God's sake, sir, please!' came the piteous voice from the kitchen, but Švejk was already ending his war-song:

'Money in the cart and wenchies in the van!
What a life for a military man!
Rataplan, rataplan, rataplan.'

Mrs Müller burst out of the door and rushed for the doctor. She returned in an hour's time, while Švejk had slumbered off.

And so he was woken up by a corpulent gentleman who laid his hand on his forehead for a moment and said:

'Don't be afraid. I am Dr Pávek from Vinohrady – let me feel your pulse – put this thermometer under your armpit. Good – now show me your tongue – a bit more – keep it out – what did your father and mother die of?'

And so at a time when it was Vienna's earnest desire that all the peoples of Austria-Hungary should offer the finest examples of loyalty and devotion, Dr Pávek prescribed Švejk bromide against his patriotic enthusiasm and recommended the brave and good soldier not to think about the war:

'Lie straight and keep quiet. I'll come again tomorrow.'

When he came the next day, he asked Mrs Müller in the kitchen how the patient was.

'He's worse, doctor,' she answered with genuine grief. 'In the night he was singing, if you'll pardon the expression, the Austrian national anthem, when the rheumatism suddenly took him.'

Dr Pávek felt obliged to react to this new manifestation of loyalty on the part of his patient by prescribing a larger dose of bromide.

The third day Mrs Müller informed him that Švejk had got even worse.

'In the afternoon he sent for a map of the battlefield, doctor, and in the night he was seized by a mad hallucination that Austria was going to win.'

'And he takes his powders strictly according to the prescription?'

'Oh, no, doctor, he hasn't even sent for them yet.' Dr Pávek went away after having called down a storm of reproaches on Švejk's head and assured him that he would never again come to cure anybody who refused his professional help and bromide.

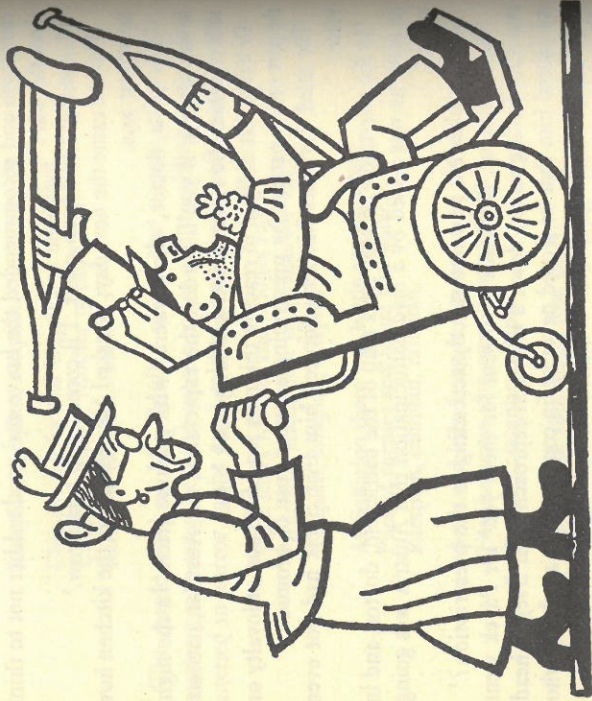
Only two days remained before Švejk would have to appear before the call-up board.

During this time Švejk made the necessary preparations. First he sent Mrs Müller to buy an army cap and next he sent her to borrow the bathchair from the confectioner round the corner – that same one in which the confectioner once used to wheel about in the fresh air his lame and wicked old grandfather. Then he remembered he needed crutches. Fortunately the confectioner still kept the crutches too as a family relic of his old grandfather.

Now he only needed the recruit's bunch of flowers for his button-

hole. Mrs Müller got these for him too. During these last two days she got noticeably thinner and wept from morning to night.

And so on that memorable day there appeared on the Prague streets a moving example of loyalty. An old woman pushing before her a bathchair, in which there sat a man in an army cap with a finely polished Imperial badge and waving his crutches. And in his button-hole there shone the gay flowers of a recruit.



And this man, waving his crutches again and again, shouted out to the streets of Prague: 'To Belgrade, to Belgrade!'

He was followed by a crowd of people which steadily grew from the small group that had gathered in front of the house from which he had gone out to war.

Švejk could see that the policemen standing at some of the crossroads saluted him.

At Wenceslas Square the crowd around Švejk's bathchair had grown

by several hundreds and at the corner of Krakovská Street they beat up a student in a German cap who had shouted out to Švejk:

'Heil Nieder mit den Serben!'¹

At the corner of Vodičkova Street mounted police rode in and dispersed the crowd.

When Švejk showed the district police inspector that he had it in black and white that he must that day appear before the call-up board, the latter was a trifle disappointed; and in order to reduce disturbances to a minimum he had Švejk and his bathchair escorted by two mounted police all the way to the Střelecký Ostrov.

The following article about this episode appeared in the *Prague Official News*:

A CRIPPLE'S PATRIOTISM

Yesterday afternoon the passers-by in the main streets of Prague were witnesses of a scene which was an eloquent testimony to the fact that in these great and solemn hours the sons of our nation can furnish the finest examples of loyalty and devotion to the throne of the aged monarch. We might well have been back in the times of the ancient Greeks and Romans, when Mucius Scaevola had himself led off to battle, regardless of his burnt arm. The most sacred feelings and sympathies were nobly demonstrated yesterday by a cripple on crutches who was pushed in an invalid chair by his aged mother. This son of the Czech people, spontaneously and regardless of his infirmity, had himself driven off to war to sacrifice his life and possessions for his emperor. And if his call: 'To Belgrade!' found such a lively echo on the streets of Prague, it only goes to prove what model examples of love for the fatherland and the Imperial House are proffered by the people of Prague.

The *Prager Tagblatt* wrote in the same strain, ending its article by saying that the cripple volunteer was escorted by a crowd of Germans who protected him with their bodies from lynching by the Czech agents of the Entente.

Bohemia published the same report and urged that the patriotic cripple should be fittingly rewarded. It announced that at its offices it was ready to receive gifts from German citizens for the unknown hero.

If in the eyes of these three journals the Czech lands could not have produced a nobler citizen, this was not the opinion of the gentlemen at the call-up board – certainly not of the chief army doctor Bautze, an utterly ruthless man who saw in everything a criminal attempt to evade military service, the front, bullets, and shrapnel.

1. 'Down with the Serbs.'

This German's stock remark was widely famous: 'The whole Czech people are nothing but a pack of malingersers.'

During the ten weeks of his activities, of 11,000 civilians he cleaned out 10,999 malingersers, and he would certainly have got the eleven thousandth by the throat, if it had not happened that just when he shouted 'About turn!' the unfortunate man was carried off by a stroke. 'Take away that malingerser!' said Bautze, when he had ascertained that the man was dead.

And on that memorable day it was Švejk who stood before him. Like the others he was stark naked and chastely hid his nudity behind the crutches on which he supported himself.

'That's really a remarkable fig-leaf,' said Bautze in German. 'There were no fig-leaves like that in paradise.'

'Certified as totally unfit for service on grounds of idiocy,' observed the sergeant-major, looking at the official documents.

'And what else is wrong with you?' asked Bautze.

'Humbly report, sir, I'm a rheumatic, but I will serve His Imperial Majesty to my last drop of blood,' said Švejk modestly. 'I have swollen knees.'

Bautze gave the good soldier Švejk a blood-curdling look and roared out in German: 'You're a malingerser!' Turning to the sergeant-major he said with icy calm: 'Clap the bastard into gaol at once!'

Two soldiers with bayonets took Švejk off to the garrison gaol. Švejk walked on his crutches and observed with horror that his rheumatism was beginning to disappear.

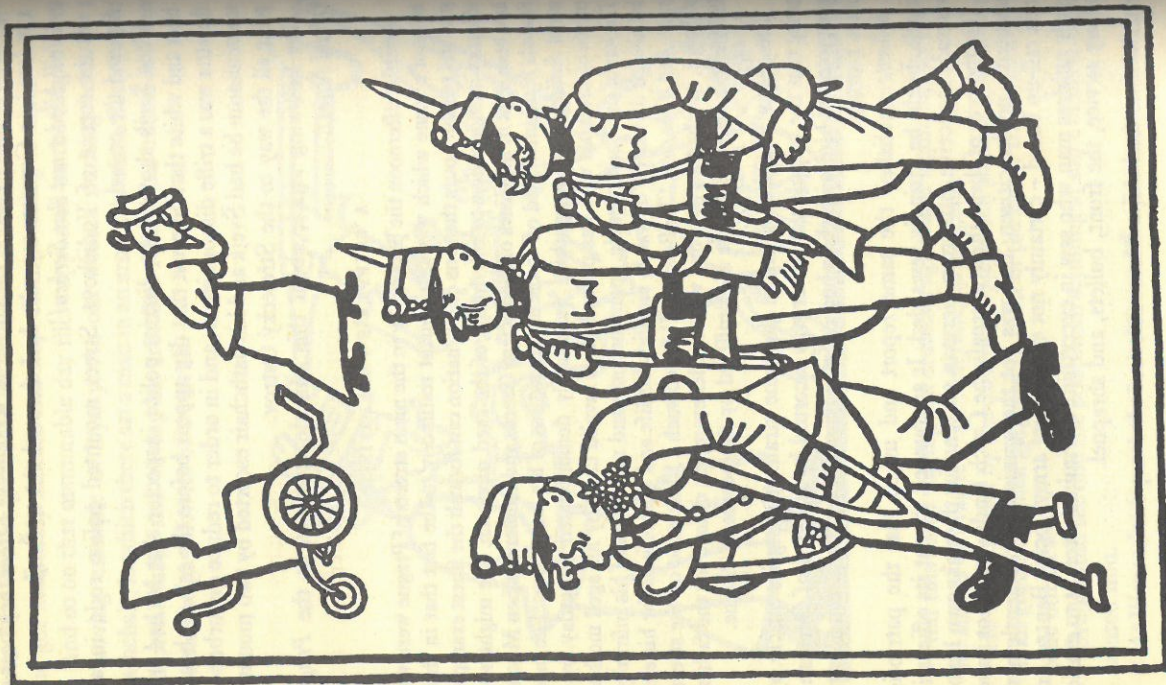
Mrs Müller was still waiting for Švejk with the bathchair above on the bridge but when she saw him under bayoneted escort she burst into tears and ran away from the bathchair, never to return to it again.

And the good soldier Švejk walked along unassumingly under the escort of the armed protectors of the state.

Their bayonets shone in the light of the sun and at Malá Strana before the monument of Radezky Švejk turned to the crowd which had followed them and called out:

'To Belgrade! To Belgrade!'

And Marshal Radezky looked dreamily down from his monument at the good soldier Švejk, as, limping on his old crutches, he slowly disappeared into the distance with his recruit's flowers in his button-hole. Meanwhile a solemn-looking gentleman informed the crowd around that it was a 'dissenter' they were leading off.



the left, who had just had an enema and who had been shamming deafness.

In the bed by the door a consumptive who was wrapped up in a cold wet sheet was slowly dying.

'That's the third this week,' observed his neighbour on the right. 'And what's your trouble?'

'I've got rheumatism,' answered Švejk, upon which there was a hearty guffaw all round. Even the dying consumptive, who was shamming tuberculosis, joined in the laughter.

'Don't try and climb in here with rheumatism,' a fat man warned Švejk solemnly. 'Rheumatism here doesn't mean more than a chilblain. I'm anaemic, I've lost half my stomach and five of my ribs, but no one believes me. We even had a fellow here who was deaf and dumb. For a fortnight they wrapped him up every half-hour in a cold wet sheet and every day they gave him an enema and pumped his stomach. All the nurses thought he'd won through and would go home, when the doctor prescribed him an emetic. It could have torn him in half and so he lost courage. "I can't go on being deaf and dumb," he said. "My speech and hearing have returned." All the patients urged him not to ruin himself but he insisted that he could hear and speak just like other people. And he reported to this effect at the doctor's visit next morning.'

'He kept it up for quite a long time,' remarked a man, who was pretending to have one leg four inches shorter than the other. 'Not like that chap who shammed a stroke. All they had to do was to give him three doses of quinine, one enema and a day's fasting. He confessed and by the time they started pumping out his stomach there wasn't a trace left of his stroke. The chap who held out longest of all was the one who had been bitten by a mad dog. He bit, he howled - it's true he could do it splendidly - but he just couldn't manage to foam at the mouth. We did our best to help him. Several times we tickled him for a whole hour before the doctor's visit until he had convulsions and got blue all over, but the foam wouldn't come and didn't in fact come at all. It was really terrifying. When he gave in one morning at the doctor's visit we were quite sorry for him. He stood by his bed erect as a candle, saluted and said: "Humbly report, sir, the dog I was bitten by may not have been mad after all." The doctor gave him such a queer look that he began to tremble all over and went on: "Humbly report, sir, I wasn't bitten by a dog at all. It was I who

Švejk the Malingerer

IN these great times the army doctors took unusual pains to drive the devil of sabotage out of the malingerers and restore them to the bosom of the army.

Various degrees of torture had been introduced for malingerers and suspected malingerers, such as consumptives, rheumatics, people with hernia, kidney disease, typhus, diabetes, pneumonia and other illnesses.

The tortures to which the malingerers were subjected were systematized and the grades were as follows:

1. Strict diet, a cup of tea each morning and evening for three days, during which, irrespective, of course, of their complaints, aspirin to be given to induce sweating.
2. To ensure they did not think that war was all beer and skittles, quinine in powder to be served in generous portions, or so-called 'quinine licking'.
3. The stomach to be pumped out twice a day with a litre of warm water.

4. Enemas with soapy water and glycerine to be applied.

5. Wrapping up in a sheet soaked in cold water.

There were stalwart men who endured all five degrees of torture and let themselves be carried off to the military cemetery in a simple coffin. But there were also pusillanimous souls who, when they reached the stage of the enema, declared that they were now well and desired nothing better than to march off to the trenches with the next march battalion.

In the garrison prison Švejk was put into the sanatorium hut among pusillanimous malingerers of this very type.

'I can't stand it any longer,' said his neighbour in the next bed, who was brought in from the consulting room after having had his stomach pumped for the second time.

This man was shamming short-sightedness.

'Tomorrow I'll join the regiment,' decided his other neighbour on

bit myself in the arm." After that confession they put him under investigation for self-mutilation on the charge that he had tried to bite off his arm to get out of going to the front.

'All those kinds of illnesses where you have to foam at the mouth are difficult to sham,' said the fat malingerer. 'Take for instance epilepsy. We had an epileptic here who always used to tell us that one fit wasn't enough and so he put on some ten a day. He writhed in convulsions, clenched his fists, rolled his eyes wildly, flung himself about on the floor, stuck out his tongue, in short, I can tell you, it was a magnificent first-class epilepsy, the genuine thing. But suddenly he got boils, two on the neck and two on the back, and it was all over with his writhing and flinging himself about on the floor, when he couldn't move his head and wasn't able either to sit or lie down. He got fever and in delirium he let out everything at the doctor's visit. He gave us a lot of trouble over his boils, because he had to lie here with them another three days and got another diet - coffee and rolls in the morning, soup, dumplings and gravy for lunch, and porridge or soup in the evening. And with our hungry, pumped-out stomachs and strict diet we had to watch this fellow bolting the food, smacking his lips, panting and belching with repletion. In this way he broke down another three who confessed as well. They had been suffering from heart disease.'

'The best thing to sham,' said one of the malingerers, 'is insanity. There are two of our teachers lying in the ward next door and one of them shrieks out incessantly day and night: "Giordano Bruno's stake is still smouldering. Reopen the trial of Galileo." And the other one barks, first three times slowly: bow-wow-wowwow, then five times quickly in succession: bowwowwowwowwow, and then once more slowly, and so it goes on without a break. They've managed to keep it up for over three weeks now. Originally I wanted to be insane too, have religious mania and preach about papal infallibility, but in the end I fixed myself up with cancer of the stomach from a barber in Malá Strana for fifteen crowns.'

'I know a chimney-sweep in Břevnov,' remarked another patient. 'For ten crowns he'll give you such a fever that you'll jump out of the window.'

'That's nothing,' said another. 'In Vršovice there's a midwife who for twenty crowns will dislocate your leg so well that you'll be a cripple until your death.'

'I had my leg dislocated for ten crowns,' came a voice from the row of beds by the window, 'for ten crowns and three glasses of beer.'

'My illness has cost me more than two hundred already,' announced his neighbour, a dried-up stick. 'You tell me any poison I haven't taken. You won't find it. I'm a living repository of poisons of all kinds. I've taken mercury chloride, I've breathed in mercury fumes, I've chewed arsenic, I've smoked opium, I've drunk tincture of opium, I've sprinkled morphine on bread, I've swallowed strychnine, I've drunk a solution of phosphorus in carbon sulphide as well as picric acid. I've destroyed my liver, my lungs, my kidneys, my gall-bladder, my brain, my heart and my intestines. No one knows what kind of illness I have.'

'The best thing to do,' explained somebody from the door, 'is to inject paraffin under the skin of your arm. My cousin was so fortunate as to have his arm cut off under the elbow and today he has no trouble for the rest of the war.'

'So you see,' said Švejk, 'everyone has to go through all that for His Imperial Majesty - even stomach-pumping and enemas. When I served years ago in my regiment it was even worse. In those days they used to truss the patient and throw him into a hole to recuperate him. There weren't any bunks like there are here or spittoons either. Just a bare plank-bed and the patients lay on it. Once one had a genuine typhus and the other next to him had smallpox. Both were trussed, and the regimental doctor kicked them in the belly for being malingerers. And when both these soldiers died it came up in parliament and was in the newspapers. They immediately forbade us to read those newspapers and searched our boxes in case we had them. And as I always have bad luck, I was the only one in the whole regiment they found them on. So I was taken off on regimental report and our colonel, who was a bloody half-wit, God help him, started to roar at me to stand straight and to tell him who it was who wrote that in the newspapers or he'd break my jaw wide open and have me locked up till I was black in the face. Then came the regimental doctor, brandishing his fist under my nose and shouting in German: "You dirty hound, you lousy scab, you miserable turd, you Socialist sod!" I looked them all squarely in the eyes without blinking and kept quiet, my right hand at the peak of my cap and my left on the seam of my trousers. They ran around me like dogs and yapped at me, but I did nothing. I kept mum, saluted, left hand on the seam of my trousers. When they had been raging like

this for about half an hour, the colonel rushed at me and roared: "Are you a half-wit or aren't you?" - "Humbly report, sir, I'm a half-wit." - "Very well then. Twenty-one days strict confinement for imbecility, two days a week fasting, a month confined to barracks, forty-eight hours in handcuffs, immediate arrest, don't let him eat, truss him, show him that the monarchy doesn't need half-wits. We'll flog those newspapers out of your head, you bastard," the colonel decided after flying around for a long time. But while I was sitting in jug miracles were happening in the barracks. Our colonel forbade our soldiers to read anything at all, even the *Prague Official News*. In the canteen they weren't even allowed to use the newspapers for wrapping up frankfurters or bits of cheese. From that time all the soldiers started to read, and our regiment became the best educated. We read all the newspapers and in every company they made up rhymes and songs against the colonel. And when anything happened in the regiment you'd always find some public benefactor who sent it to the newspapers under the title: "Maltreatment of the troops". And they didn't stop at that. They wrote to the parliamentary deputies in Vienna, asking them to take up their case, and the deputies began to make interpellations one after the other, saying that our colonel was a monster and suchlike. A minister sent a commission to us to investigate the case and a Franta Henčl from Hluboká got two years for being the chap who got on to the deputies in Vienna, because of the knock across the jaw he got from the colonel on the drill-ground. Later when the commission went away our colonel made us all fall in, the whole regiment, and told us that a soldier is a soldier, that he must shut his mug and do his job, and if he doesn't like anything then it's a breach of discipline. "So you, you bloody bastards, thought that that commission would help you?" said the colonel. "A shit they helped you! And now every company will march past me and repeat aloud what I've said." And so we marched to where the colonel stood, one company after the other, eyes right, and our hands on our rifle slings and shouted at him: "And so we, we bloody bastards, thought that that commission would help us. A shit they helped us!" The colonel doubled up with laughter until the eleventh company marched up. They marched, they stamped, but when they reached the colonel - nothing at all, not the faintest sound! The colonel got red as a turkey-cock, marched the eleventh company back and made them repeat the operation once more. They marched past in silence and each rank

after the other stared the colonel insolently in the eyes. "Stand at ease!" said the colonel and paced up and down the yard, lashing his boots with his riding crop and spitting about the place. Then he suddenly stopped and roared out "Dismiss!", mounted his old crock and away he was out of the gate. We waited to see what would happen to the eleventh company, but still there was nothing. We waited one day, then another and then a whole week, but still nothing happened. The colonel never appeared in the barracks at all, which gave great joy to the men, the N.C.O.s and the officers. After that we got a new colonel and it was rumoured that the old one was in a sanatorium because he had written a letter in his own hand to His Imperial Majesty telling him that the eleventh company had mutinied.

The time for the doctor's afternoon round approached. Dr Grünstein went from bed to bed, followed by the medical orderly officer with his notebook.

'Macuna?'

'Present!'

'Enema and aspirin! Pokorný?'

'Present!'

'Stomach pump and quinine! Kovářik?'

'Present!'

'Enema and aspirin! Koťátko?'

'Present!'

'Stomach pump and quinine!'

And so it went on, one after the other, mercilessly, mechanically, briskly.

'Švejk?'

'Present!'

Dr Grünstein looked at the new acquisition.

'What's the matter with you?'

'Humbly report, I've got rheumatism!'

In the course of his practice Dr Grünstein had grown accustomed to be gently ironical, which was much more effective than shouting.

'Aha, rheumatism,' he said to Švejk. 'Then you've got a jolly serious illness. It's really a coincidence getting rheumatism just at a time when there is a world war on and you've got to go to the front. I think you must be awfully sorry.'

'Humbly report, sir, I am awfully sorry.'

'Well, there you are, you see, he's awfully sorry. It's really awfully

nice of you that with your rheumatism you've not forgotten us just at this particular moment. In peacetime a poor chap like him runs about like a young goat, but as soon as war breaks out he immediately gets rheumatism and suddenly his knees don't work. Your knees hurt, I suppose?'

'Humbly report, they do, sir.'

'And you can't sleep a wink the whole night, can you? Rheumatism's a very dangerous, painful and grave illness. We've already had good experience with rheumatics here. Strict diet and other treatment of ours have proved very effective. Here you'll be fit quicker than in Piešťany¹ and you'll march to the front like greased lightning.'

Turning to the hospital orderly he said:

'Write this down: Švejk, strict diet, stomach pump twice a day, enema once a day, and we'll see how it goes after that. For the time being take him to the consulting room, pump his stomach and when he comes to, give him an enema, but a real good one, until he screams blue murder and his rheumatism gets frightened and runs away.'

Then turning to all the beds the doctor made a speech full of noble and rational moral maxims: 'Don't imagine that I'm just a bloody half-wit who swallows all your bull. Your tricks don't rattle me in the least. I know you're all malingerers and you want to desert from the war. And I'll treat you as such. I've survived hundreds and hundreds of soldiers like you. Masses of people have lain on these beds here who had nothing wrong with them at all except that they hadn't got a soldier's guts. While their comrades were fighting on the battlefield they thought they'd lounge about in bed, get hospital rations and wait until the war flew by. But they all found they'd made a bloody mistake, and all of you'll find you've made a bloody mistake too. In twenty years time you'll be still screaming in your sleep, when you dream of how you tried it on with me.'

'Humbly report, sir,' came a gentle voice from the bed at the window, 'I'm well again. I noticed in the night that my asthma's gone.'

'Your name?'

'Kovařík. Humbly report, I have to have an enema.'

'Good, you'll still get an enema for the road,' Dr Grünstein decided, 'so that you don't complain that we didn't give you treatment here. Now, all the patients whose names I've read out, fall in and follow the orderly, so that each can get what's due to him.'

1. A famous spa in Slovakia for the treatment of rheumatism.

And each one got a handsome dose of what had been prescribed. And if any of them tried to work on those who were executing the orders by means of prayers or threats that they might too once join the medical corps and the executioners might fall into their hands, Švejk at least bore himself with steadfastness.

'Don't spare me,' he invited the myrmidon who was giving him the enema. 'Remember your oath. Even if it was your father or your own brother who was lying here, give him an enema without batting an eyelid. Try hard to think that Austria rests on these enemas and victory is ours.'

The next day on his round Dr Grünstein asked Švejk how he was enjoying being in the military hospital.

Švejk answered that it was a fair and high-minded institution. In reward he received the same as the day before plus aspirin and three quinine powders which they dissolved into water so that he should drink them at once.

And not even Socrates drank his hemlock bowl with such composure as did Švejk his quinine, when Dr Grünstein was trying out on him all his various degrees of torture.

When they wrapped Švejk up in a wet sheet in the presence of the doctor his answer to the question how he liked it now was: 'Humbly report, sir, it's like being in a swimming pool or at the seaside.'

'Have you still got rheumatism?'

'Humbly report, sir, it doesn't seem to want to get better.'

Švejk was subjected to new tortures.

At that time the widow of the infantry general, Baroness von Botzenheim, took great pains to find that soldier about whom *Bohémie* had recently published a report that, cripple as he was, he had had himself pushed in a bathchair shouting: 'To Belgrade!'; which patriotic pronouncement induced the editorial staff of *Bohémie* to invite their readers to organize collections in aid of the loyal and heroic cripple.

Finally, after inquiries at police headquarters it was ascertained that the man in question was Švejk and after that it was easy to make a search for him. Baroness von Botzenheim went to the Hradčany taking with her her lady companion and her footman with a hamper.

The poor baroness had no idea what it meant for someone to be lying in the hospital of the garrison gaol. Her visiting card opened the prison door for her, in the office they were awfully nice to her, and

in five minutes she learnt that 'the good soldier Švejk', whom she was looking for, lay in the third hut, bed number seventeen. She was accompanied by Dr Grünstein himself, who was quite flabbergasted by it.

Švejk was just sitting up in bed after the usual daily procedure prescribed by Dr Grünstein, surrounded by a group of emaciated and starved malingerers, who had not yet given up and were stubbornly struggling with Dr Grünstein on the battlefield of strict diet.

Anyone who had listened to them would have had the impression that he was in the company of epicures, in a school of *cordons bleu* cuisine or a course for gourmets.

'You can even eat ordinary suet cracklings if they are warm,' a patient with 'inveterate stomach catarrh' was just telling the others at this moment. 'As the suet boils, you squeeze the cracklings dry, add salt and pepper, and I can tell you that goose cracklings are not in the same class.'

'You leave goose cracklings alone,' said a man with 'cancer of the stomach'. 'There's nothing to touch them. What are pork cracklings in comparison? Of course you must fry them until they're golden brown, like the Jews do. They take a fat goose, draw the fat off with the skin and fry it.'

'You know, you're quite wrong as far as pork cracklings are concerned,' Švejk's neighbour put in. 'Of course I'm talking about cracklings of home-made fat, what they call home-made cracklings. They're not brown and they're not yellow. They must be something between the two shades. These kinds of cracklings mustn't be either too soft or too hard. And they mustn't be crunchy or they're overcooked. They must melt on the tongue and you mustn't feel the fat dripping on your chin.'

'Which of you have eaten horse cracklings?' chimed in a new voice, but there was no answer because at that moment the medical orderly ran in:

'Everybody in bed! An archduchess is coming here. Don't anyone dare show his dirty legs outside the bed.'

And not even an archduchess could have entered the ward with such dignity as did Baroness von Botzenheim. After her the whole suite poured in, including even the quartermaster sergeant-major of the hospital who saw in all this the mysterious hand of Accounts Control, which was going to tear him away from his fat feeding trough

at the base and deliver him to the tender mercies of the shrapnel somewhere under the barbed wire posts.

He was pale, but Dr Grünstein was even paler. Before his eyes there danced the old baroness's small visiting card with her title, 'Widow of a general', and everything which could be associated with it like connections, protection, complaints, transfer to the front and other frightful things.

'Here you have Švejk,' he said, endeavouring to preserve an artificial composure and leading the Baroness von Botzenheim to Švejk's bed. 'He behaves with great patience.'

Baroness von Botzenheim sat down on the chair prepared for her at Švejk's bed and said: 'Tszech zoldier, goot zoldier, krippel - zoldier iss brafe zoldier. I lof fery moch Tszech Austrian.'

At that she stroked Švejk on his unshaven cheeks and went on: 'I reat eferyzink in ze newspapers, I brink you yum yum, zomzink to bite, to shmoke, to zuck, Tszech zoldier, goot zoldier. Johann, come here!'

Her footman, whose bristly side-whiskers recalled the notorious killer Babinský, dragged a voluminous hamper to the bed, while the old baroness's companion, a tall lady with a tearful face, sat down on Švejk's bed and smoothed out his straw pillow under his back with the fixed idea that this was what ought to be done for sick heroes.

In the meantime the baroness drew presents out of the hamper: a dozen roast chickens wrapped up in pink silk paper and tied with a yellow and black silk ribbon, two bottles of a war liqueur with the label: 'Gott strafe England.'¹ On the back of the label was a picture of Franz Joseph and Wilhelm clasping hands as though they were going to play the nursery game: 'Bunny sat alone in his hole. Poor little bunny, what's wrong with you that you can't hop!'²

Then she took out of the hamper three bottles of wine for the convalescent and two boxes of cigarettes. She set out everything elegantly on the empty bed next to Švejk's, where she also put a beautifully bound book, *Stories from the Life of our Monarch*, which had been written by the present meritorious chief editor of our official *Czechoslovak Republic* who doted on old Franz. Packets of chocolate with the same inscription, 'Gott strafe England', and again with pictures of the Austrian and German emperors, found their way to

1. 'God punish England.'

2. Czech children's game.

the bed. On the chocolate they were no longer clasping hands; each was acting on his own and turning his back to the other. There was a beautiful toothbrush with two rows of bristles and the inscription 'Viribus unitis',¹ so that anyone who cleaned his teeth should remember Austria. An elegant and extremely useful little gift for the front and the trenches was a manicure set. On the case was a picture showing shrapnel bursting and a man in a steel helmet rushing forward with fixed bayonet. And underneath it was written in German: 'For God, Emperor and Fatherland!' There was a tin of biscuits without a picture on it but with a verse in German instead, together with a Czech translation on the back:

Austria, thou noble house,
Thy banners wide unfurl!
Thy flags shall flutter proud on high.
Austria shall never die!

The last gift was a white hyacinth in a flower-pot.

When all of this lay unpacked on the bed the Baroness von Botzenheim could not restrain her tears for emotion. Several famished malingers felt their mouths water. The baroness's companion propped up the seated Švejk and wept too. There was a silence of the grave which was suddenly broken by Švejk who said with his hands clasped in prayer:

'Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. . . . Pardon me, your ladyship, it's not right. I mean to say: O God our Father in heaven, bless for us these gifts that we may enjoy them thanks to Thy goodness. Amen.'

After these words he took a chicken from the bed and started to devour it under the horrified gaze of Dr Grünstein.

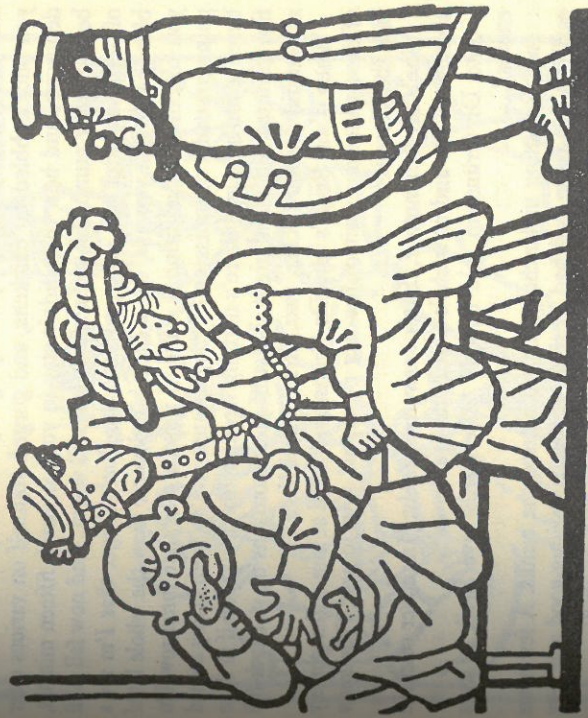
'Ach, how he enjoys it, poor soldier,' the old baroness whispered enthusiastically to Dr Grünstein. 'He's certainly well again and can go to the battlefield. I'm really very glad that my gifts stand him in such good stead.'

Then she walked from bed to bed, distributing cigarettes and chocolate creams. When she came back again to Švejk after her promenade, she stroked his hair, said in German: 'God protect you all!' and went out of the door with her whole escort.

Before Dr Grünstein could return from below, where he had gone

1. 'With united forces'. The device of the Emperor Franz Joseph.

to see the baroness out, Švejk had distributed the chickens. They were bolted by the patients so quickly that Dr Grünstein found only a heap of bones gnawed cleanly, as though the chickens had fallen alive into a nest of vultures and the sun had been beating down on their gnawed bones for several months.



The war liqueur and the three bottles of wine had also disappeared. The packets of chocolate and the box of biscuits were likewise lost in the patients' stomachs. Someone had even drunk up the bottle of nail-polish which was in the manicure set and eaten the toothpaste which had been enclosed with the toothbrush.

When Dr Grünstein returned he resumed his belligerent pose and delivered a long speech. A stone fell from his heart now that the visitors had gone. The pile of gnawed bones confirmed his belief that they were all incorrigible.

'Men,' he burst out, 'if you'd had a little sense, you'd have left it all untouched and said to yourselves: "If we eat it all up, then the

doctor won't believe that we're very ill." Now you've yourselves provided me with proof that you don't appreciate my kindness. I pump your stomachs, I give you enemas, I try to keep you on strict diet and you go and stuff up your stomachs again. Do you want to get stomach catarrh? You're making a great mistake. Before your stomach tries to digest all this I'll clean it out for you so thoroughly that you'll remember it to your dying day and tell your children how you once gobbled up chickens, and gorged yourself on various other delicacies, and how they didn't stay in your stomach fifteen minutes, because they pumped it out while it was still warm. And now fall in all of you, one after the other, so that you don't forget that I'm not a bloody fool like you are, but a little bit cleverer than the whole lot of you together. In addition I want to inform you that tomorrow I'm going to send a commission to you, because you've been lazing around here far too long and there's nothing wrong with any of you if in those five minutes you could pig it and stuff your stomachs up so chock-full as you did just now. One, two, three, march!

When it was Švejk's turn Dr Grünstein looked at him and a memory of the mysterious visit of the day prompted him to ask: 'You know Her Excellency?'

'She's my stepmother,' Švejk answered calmly. 'In tender years she abandoned me and now she's found me again....'
And Dr Grünstein said tersely: 'Afterwards give Švejk an extra enema.'

In the evening melancholy reigned among the bunks. A few hours earlier all of them had had in their stomachs various good and tasty things and now they only had weak tea and a slice of bread.

From the window could be heard the voice of no. 21: 'Do you know, chaps, that I prefer fried chicken to roast?'

Somebody growled: 'Give him the blanket treatment', but they were all so weak after the unsuccessful banquet that no one stirred.

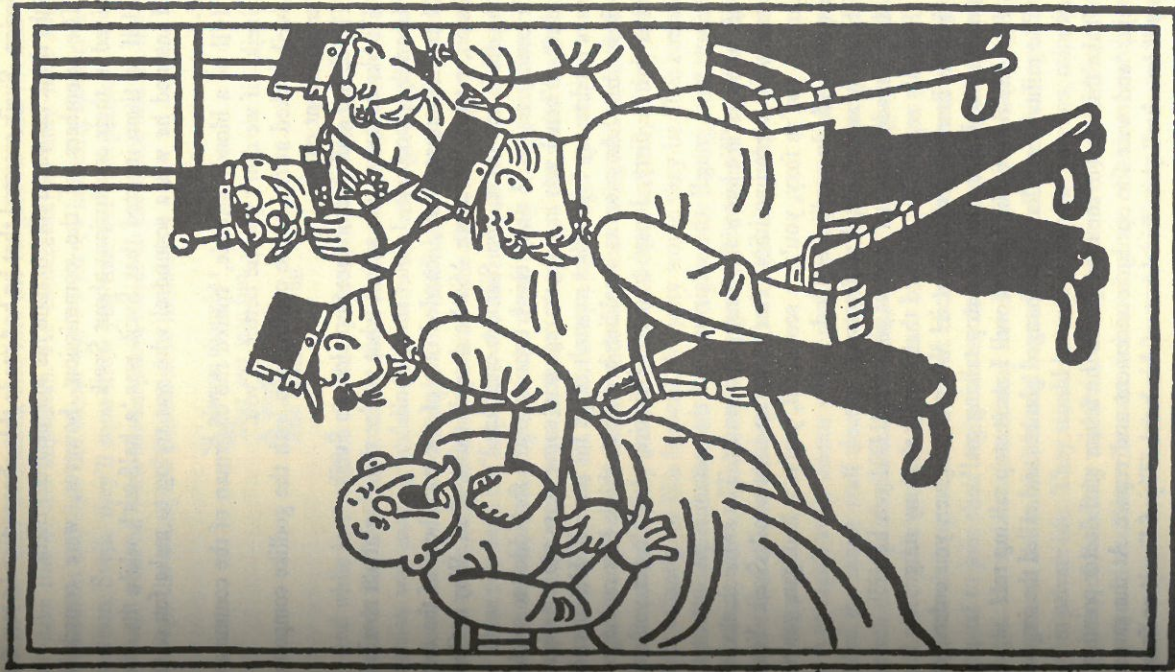
Dr Grünstein was as good as his word. In the morning there came several military doctors from the famous commission.

They went solemnly past the rows of beds and said nothing else but 'Put out your tongue!'

Švejk put his tongue out so far that his face made an idiotic grimace and his eyes screwed up:

'Humbly report, sir, I don't have a longer tongue than that.'

And an interesting discussion arose between Švejk and the com-



mission. Švejk asserted that he had made this observation in case they might think he was trying to hide his tongue from them.

The members of the commission, however, were remarkably divided in their conclusions about Švejk.

Half of them insisted that Švejk was 'a half-wit', while the other half insisted he was a scoundrel who was trying to make fun of the war.

'It'll be a bloody miracle,' roared the chairman of the commission at Švejk, 'if we don't get the better of you.'

Švejk looked at the whole commission with the godlike composure of an innocent child.

The senior staff doctor came up close to Švejk:

'I'd like to know, you swine, what you're thinking about now?'

'Humbly report, sir, I don't think at all.'

'Himmeldonnerwetter,' bawled one of the members of the commission, rattling his sabre. 'So he doesn't think at all. Why in God's name don't you think, you Siamese elephant?'

'Humbly report, I don't think because that's forbidden to soldiers on duty. When I was in the 91st regiment some years ago our captain always used to say "A soldier mustn't think for himself. His superiors do it for him. As soon as a soldier begins to think he's no longer a soldier but a dirty, lousy civilian. Thinking doesn't get you anywhere..."'

'Shut your mug!' the chairman of the commission interrupted Švejk in fury. 'We know all about you already. The swine thinks he'll be taken for a genuine idiot. You're not an idiot at all, Švejk. You're cunning, you're foxy, you're a scoundrel, you're a hooligan, you're a lousy bastard, do you understand...?'

'Humbly report, sir, I understand.'

'I've already told you to shut your mug. Did you hear?'

'Humbly report, sir, I heard that I must shut my mug.'

'Himmelherrgott, then shut it! When I've given you orders, you know very well that you must stop talking rot!'

'Humbly report, sir, I know well I must stop talking rot.'

The military gentlemen exchanged glances and called the sergeant-major:

'Take this man to the office,' said the senior staff doctor pointing to Švejk, 'and wait for our announcement and report. At the garrison they'll knock all this drivel out of his head. The fellow's as fit as a

fiddle. He's only shamming and into the bargain he talks rot and tries to make fun of his superiors. He thinks they're only here for his amusement and that the whole war's a joke, a laughing matter. At the garrison, Švejk, they'll soon show you that war's no picnic.'

Švejk went off with the sergeant-major to the office and on the way through the courtyard hummed to himself:

'I always thought

That war was fun.

A week or two

And home I'd run . . .

And while in the office the duty officer was bellowing at Švejk that bastards like him ought to be shot, in the wards upstairs the commission was making short shrift with the malingerers. Of seventy patients only two got through. One had had a leg torn off by a shell and the other suffered from genuine bone decay.

These two were the only ones who did not hear the word '*Tauglich*'. All the others, including even the three dying of consumption, were certified fit for service at the front, whereupon the senior staff doctor did not deny himself the opportunity of making a speech.

His speech was interlarded with the most variegated oaths and was brief in content. They were all swine and dung and only if they were to fight valiantly for His Imperial Majesty would they be fit to return to human society and after the war be forgiven for having tried to get out of military service and been malingerers. He himself however didn't believe that this would happen and thought the gallows were in store for them all.

A youngish army doctor whose soul was still pure and uncorrupted asked the senior staff doctor if he might say a few words too. His speech distinguished itself from that of his superior by its optimism and naïvety. He spoke in German.

He dwelt long on the fact that each of them who was leaving the hospital to join their regiments at the front must be conqueror and knight. He was convinced they would be skilful in handling their weapons on the battlefield and honourable in all their dealings in war and in private life. They would be unconquerable warriors, mindful of the glory of Radezky and Prince Eugène of Savoy. With their blood they would fertilize the vast fields of glory of the monarchy and victoriously accomplish the task to which history had predestined

them. With fearless courage, despising their lives, they would charge forward under the bullet-ridden ensigns of their regiments towards new glories and new victories.

Later in the corridor the senior staff doctor said to this naive man: 'My dear colleague, I can assure you it's all a complete waste of time. Why, not even Radetzky or your Prince Eugène of Savoy could make soldiers out of bastards like them. Whether you speak to them like an angel or a devil, it all comes to the same thing. They're a gang of crooks.'

Švejk in the Garrison Gaol

FOR people who did not want to go to the front the last refuge was the garrison gaol. I once knew a probationary teacher who was a mathematician and did not want to serve in the artillery and shoot people. So he stole a lieutenant's watch to get himself into the garrison gaol. He did this deliberately. War neither impressed nor enchanted him. Shooting at the enemy and killing with shrapnel and shells equally unhappy probationary teachers of mathematics serving on the other side seemed to him sheer idiocy.

'I don't want to be hated for my brutality,' he said to himself, and calmly stole the watch. First they examined his mental condition but, when he said he wanted to get rich quick, they sent him off to the garrison gaol. There were a lot more people like that sitting there for theft or fraud - idealists and non-idealists. There were people who saw the war as a way of increasing their income, those various quarter-master sergeants at the base or at the front who were up to all possible kinds of fiddles with messing and pay, and also petty thieves who were a thousand times more honest than the blackguards who sent them there. And soldiers sat there who had committed various other offences of a purely military kind such as insubordination, attempted mutiny or desertion. Then came the political prisoners who were in a special class; eighty per cent of them were utterly innocent and of these ninety-nine per cent were sentenced.

The whole establishment of the office of the judge advocate was magnificent. Every state on the brink of total political, economic and moral collapse has an establishment like this. The aura of past power and glory clings to its courts, police, gendarmerie and venal pack of informers.

In every military unit Austria had her snoopers who spied on their comrades, sleeping on the same bunks with them and sharing their bread on the march.

In addition the garrison gaol was supplied with material by the