

Soviet Georgia – A Living Example of the Lenin-Stalin National Policy

The Struggles and Victories of the Georgian People

By G. N. Doidjashvili

The collapse of the two great "prisons of nations," the tsarist Russian Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, enabled a number of small nations in Central and Eastern Europe to exercise their right of self-determination and to achieve their independence. One of the first acts of the Bolshevik government in Russia was to grant the unrestricted right of national self-determination to all the peoples formerly oppressed by tsarism. In Central Europe, the nations freed from the rule of the Hapsburgs began to set up their own states and to take their destiny in their own hands. Everywhere, the masses of the people were in a ferment.

But both in Central and in Eastern Europe, in Finland and in the Baltic countries, the bourgeoisie, with the aid of the victorious imperialist powers, and with the active cooperation of the leaders of the Second International, succeeded in crushing the popular revolutionary movement. It was not in the interest of the bourgeoisie of those countries to have the existence of the new states made secure by the revolutionary activities of the masses; they preferred to bring the new national states under the "protection" and "guarantee" of the victorious imperialist powers, and to tie the fate of their respective countries with that of the Versailles system. It is superfluous today to go into the details of the disastrous consequences of this treacherous policy. The people had to pay for this bitter lesson with blood and suffering.

Here we want to tell the story of a people who at that time was also being dragged into the net of the Versailles system; a people over whose neck the imperialists, with the aid of the counter-revolutionary Social-Democrats, had already thrown the noose, but who soon freed themselves from it, and preferred by their own efforts, and in unity with the socialist Soviet Union, to build up their own state. We refer to Georgia.

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The Georgian Socialist Soviet Republic is one of the three Transcaucasian Union Republics (the other two are Azerbaijan and Armenia). To the West it stretches to the Black Sea, and to the South to the Turkish frontier. The Georgian Soviet Republic includes the Abkhazian and Adjaristan Autonomous Soviet Republics, and the South Ossetian Autonomous Region. It has an area of 27,027 square miles and a population of 3,542,300. A humid, subtropical climate, fertile valleys, wild mountain streams representing untold sources of power, and rich in minerals (manganese, coal, non-ferrous metals, oil, marble and barite) – such is Georgia.

At the crossroads of two main trade routes, the road from the East (from India and Persia) to the West (to Greece), and from the North (across the Caucasus) to the South, Georgia in the course of over two thousand years was invaded by numerous enemies. But neither subjugation to Rome in 65 B.C., nor the atrocities of the Persian conquerors, who held the Georgian people in subjection for three hundred years (from the fourth to the seventh century); neither the rule of the Arabs (from the seventh to the ninth century), nor the subsequent invasion of the Turks and Persians; neither the brutal atrocities of the Russian conquerors (1801-1917), nor the reign of terror, and the execution of innumerable revolutionary workers and peasants by the Menshevik government – in conjunction with the British and French troops of occupation and with the moral support of the leaders of the Second International (1918-21) could break the determination of the Georgian people to achieve their freedom.

Russian tsarism, which pursued a policy of enslaving the small nationalities, was able to keep the Georgian people in subjugation for many years owing to the feudal division of the country. Georgia became one of the colonies of Russian tsarism. This was the worst period of oppression for this brave people. The scum of the Russian bureaucracy were appointed to the head of the administration. Russian became the official language in all administrative and judicial bodies. In an official report of an investigation instituted by the senate in 1831 it was cynically and frankly stated that "the chiefs of the local administrations in Transcaucasia are exemplary violators rather than custodians of the law."

But to all this gruesome subjection, and to all the attempts of the imperialists to convert them into colonial slaves, the freedom-loving Georgian people answered in the immortal words of their

great poet, Shot'ha Rust'veli: "Better a glorious death than a shameful life." This indomitable determination of the Georgian people to fight for freedom and independence was expressed in the numerous peasant revolts that broke out in the reign of the tsarist autocracy.

The years 1902 to 1904 witnessed continuous unrest, peasant revolts and workers' strikes. In 1907, General Vorontsov-Dashkov, the Viceroy of the Caucasus, wrote in great alarm to the tsar, Nicholas II:

"At the time of my arrival in the Region, the revolutionary movement, evidently connected with the movement throughout the Empire [i.e., the revolution of 1905-07 – G.D.] had already assumed dimensions that were dangerous to the state. I immediately declared martial law in Tiflis. ...At the same time, part of the Tiflis Gubernia, and the whole of the Kutais Gubernia, were swept by revolts of the rural population; these revolts were accompanied by the wrecking of landlords' mansions, the refusal of the peasants to pay taxes, their refusal to recognize their rural authorities, the forcible seizure of private land and the wholesale felling of trees in state and private woods.... In Tiflis, Baku and other towns in the Region, strikes of workers in all trades, including domestic servants, were a daily occurrence."

What was at the bottom of these numerous and widespread peasant revolts in Georgia? General Voronstov-Dashkov, who cannot be suspected of having had any sympathy for the Georgian people, provided the answer to this question. He wrote:

"In Transcaucasia, and particularly in Georgia, the serfs were emancipated on terms that were particularly advantageous for the landlords and disadvantageous for the peasants... moreover, the peasants' obligations to the landlords became more onerous than they were under serfdom.... The state taxes are collected by fair means or foul. If any trees grow on the peasants' lots, those lots immediately come under the forest tax; if another part of the lot is covered with water owing to a river changing its course, it comes under the fishing tax.... Things have reached such a state that walnut trees, planted and reared by the peasants themselves, on their own land, come under the tax.

"The peasants, whose land amounts to twice the area of that owned by the private landlords, pay twenty times as much as the latter in money taxes alone."

Three-fourths of the total area of land in Georgia belonged to the big landlords, the church and the state, and only one-fourth belonged to the peasants. In some gubernias, Tiflis and Kutais, for example, 90 per cent of the land belonged to the state. About half the total peasants in pre-revolutionary Georgia owned less than two and a half acres of land per family; only one in fifteen peasant households owned a plow, and only one in three or four owned a mattock, etc. This economic oppression was still further intensified by political and moral oppression. Out of the state budget for Georgia amounting to 4,670,000 rubles, the tsarist government allocated 57 per cent for the maintenance of the police force, and only 4 per cent for public education.

Exposing the policy pursued by the tsarist government in the border regions of the Russian Empire, Joseph Stalin wrote in 1920:

"Tsarism deliberately settled the best areas in the border regions with colonizers in order to force the natives into the worst areas and to intensify national enmity. Tsarism restricted, and at times simply suppressed, the native schools, theaters and educational institutions in order to keep the masses in intellectual darkness. Tsarism frustrated the initiative of the best members of the native population. Lastly, tsarism suppressed all activity on the part of the masses of the border regions." (J. V. Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, p. 82, International Publishers, New York.)

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Comrade Stalin played a decisive part in the Georgian people's struggle for freedom. Himself a son of the people, he began to take an active part in the revolutionary movement when he was only fifteen years of age. As early as 1896-97, he was the leader of the first Marxian circle to be formed in Tiflis, the capital of Georgia, and in 1898 he joined the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party, where, still a young student, he was prominent in the Left-wing and consistently Marxist group, known as the "Messameh Dassy" (The Third Group).

When Lenin's newspaper *Iskra* appeared, Stalin at once took up Lenin's position and later became the great leader of the Bolshevik movement throughout the Caucasus. Just before and during the first Russian Revolution in 1905 he was the organizer of all the big struggles conducted by the Georgian workers and peasants. Despite

the fierce national strife fomented in the Caucasus by the tsarist government, and by the "native" ruling classes, the movement that Stalin organized united Georgians, Armenians, Russians and Azerbaijanis in its ranks. That is why Lenin described the organization in the Caucasus as a model for proletarian internationalism. For his revolutionary activities Stalin was repeatedly imprisoned and exiled by the myrmidons of tsarism.

When the World War broke out, the long struggle that Stalin had waged against nationalism and against the Social-Democratic reformists (the Mensheviks) bore fruit. True, after the collapse of Russian imperialism, the Georgian bourgeoisie succeeded in retaining power for a time through the medium of the Social-Democratic government backed by German, and later, by British bayonets. But it was faced by the Bolshevik Party, which, conscious of its aim, was closely connected with the masses of the people, and thoroughly imbued by Stalin with the spirit of Marxism and proletarian internationalism. It was this party that subsequently took its place at the head of the whole nation and gave expression to the true will of the people.

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This period of Georgian history, the period of the Social-Democratic government (1918-21), is worth keeping in mind, for the Social-Democrats were not only the vanguard of Russian Menshevism, but also a bulwark of the Second International.

The leaders of the Socialist and Labor International, Kautsky, Vandervelde, MacDonald and others, visited Georgia to establish personal contact with the Menshevik government. On their return to Western Europe they published glowing accounts of this new land they had discovered, "the only land in which true socialist democracy reigned." The Second International held up Social-Democratic Georgia as an example of how socialism could be attained in a truly "democratic" way as opposed to the proletarian dictatorship, the method adopted by the Russian working class under the leadership of the Bolsheviks. But what did the Georgian Social-Democratic leaders achieve in the country where they had an absolute majority in parliament and wielded unlimited power? What did they do to secure the national independence of the Georgian people? What did they do to improve the conditions of the workers in town and country? What steps did they take towards socialism?

Let the facts speak for themselves.

First of all, how did the "Independent Georgian Republic" come into being?

On May 14, 1918, the so-called "Georgian National Council," in which the influence of the Social-Democrats predominated, decided to appeal to General Lossow, the commander-in-chief of the German army of occupation, to secure for Georgia Germany's support in all international and internal political questions, to continue the advance of the German army to the North Caucasus, to leave the German prisoners of war and officers in Georgia and entrust them with the military organization, so that the Georgian Government might employ these troops to maintain internal order. (Khachapuridze, *The Struggle for the Proletarian Revolution in Georgia*, p. 129, Zarya Vostoka Publishers, Tbilisi.)

Later, on May 28, in the presence of representatives of the German imperial authorities, the Social-Democratic Prime Minister Noah Jordania and the Metropolitan Leonid, the "independence" of Georgia was proclaimed. The army of occupation was so satisfied with the activities of the "independent" government that General von Kress recommended to the German Chancellor that on the occasion of the official recognition of the "Georgian Republic" by the imperial German government, certain Georgian "personalities" be decorated with high imperial orders and medals. Among a number of other Social-Democratic ministers and officials to receive these decorations were Prime Minister Jordania, Minister of Foreign Affairs Chenkeli, and Minister for the Interior Ramishvili.

After the collapse of Germany, a few weeks after these German decorations were received, the Georgian Mensheviks sought other protectors for their "independence." On December 3, 1918, Mr. Jordan, the representative of *British* imperialism was given an official reception with all due ceremony in Tiflis – in an almost empty square – for the people refused to witness the ceremony. The place of the German officers in the bed of the Menshevik prostitute was taken by British officers. Although the German army of occupation was replaced by the British army, the Social-Democratic ministers continued to crow about the independence of the country.

"We prefer the West to the Bolsheviks!" This was the chief motto of the Mensheviks. They set to work to carry out their "program" by dissolving the workers' organizations, flinging the leaders of the masses into prison and inciting the various

nationalities in Transcaucasia against each other. For this purpose they advocated the restoration of Georgia within its ancient historical frontiers, and directed the spearhead of their activities against the national minorities. They robbed these nationalities not only of the right to autonomy, but even of the right to use their own languages in the schools, in the courts, and in dealings with government officials.

At an annual meeting of shareholders of a certain oil trust, Herbert Ellen, the English chairman of a Baku oil company, said:

"Never in the history of the British Isles has there been such a favorable opportunity for the peaceful penetration of British influence, and for the creation of a second India, or second Egypt, for British trade.... The Russian oil industry... will, in itself, be a valuable asset to the Empire."

Thus, the real object of the British and American imperialists was to convert Georgia, and Transcaucasia, into a second India or Egypt. In pursuit of this object the British imperialists ruthlessly strode over mountains of corpses. In September, 1918, they already occupied Baku, overthrew the Soviet government that had been established by the workers, and set up a puppet, Social-Democratic government, the so-called "Trans-Caspian Dictatorship." The best leaders of the Georgian, Azerbaijani and Armenian people, the twenty-six People's Commissars of Baku, were tried by court-martial, set up by the wretched "government," and shot. The famous names of the murdered popular heroes, Shaumyan and Djaparidze, will live forever in the memory of the working people of Transcaucasia.

Thus, with the aid of the Social-Democratic leaders, the Transcaucasian republics of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan were transformed into British colonies, like India or Malay. The largest industrial establishments in Georgia, and the whole of Transcaucasia, passed into the hands of British, French and American concessionaires. They had no intention whatever of investing capital for the modernization and technical improvement of these undertakings; their object was to exploit them to the very utmost and then abandon them. The result was that many of the factories, oil wells, manganese works, and so forth, were quickly reduced to utter ruin.

At the Eighteenth Congress of the Georgian Social-Democratic Party, Ramishvili, one of the Social-Democratic leaders, "justified"

the preservation of capitalist and feudal private property in Georgia on the following "grounds":

"The objective conditions for the realization of our program are lacking. We have been compelled to serve the cause of bourgeois democracy.... A government which loses sight of the objective conditions serves the cause of reaction; that is why *our object has been moderate and restrained; we are no longer intensifying the revolution.*" (Khachapuridze, *Cited place*, p. 138.)

The Menshevik leaders thought that they were acting "wisely" in attempting to "leave everything as it was," so long as they could keep in the saddle with the aid of British bayonets. But everything did not remain "as it was." The real masters of the country, the bankers of the City in London, like Shylock, insisted on their bond. They supplied the bayonets to "maintain internal order," and demanded *all* the riches of the country, not only oil and manganese, but also corn and wine, vegetables and fruit. The Georgian landowners, whom the Social-Democratic government allowed a free hand, immediately began to sell for export all the agricultural produce of the country. In the ports of Batum and Poti, heart-rending scenes were witnessed. Foreign ships, protected by British troops and the Social-Democratic "Defense Corps," were being loaded with grain, cheese, tea, wine, fruit, vegetables, and so forth, while crowds of starving people saw the food going out of the country. Many dock laborers refused to load the ships on the ground that the masses in the country were starving; but their courageous resistance was broken by armed force. The economy of the country went to rack and ruin. Coal output dropped by no less than 85 per cent; it took *weeks* for freight trains to travel between Tiflis and Batum. Wages were reduced nearly every month, so that in the third year of the reign of the Social-Democratic government the average wages of the Georgian workers amounted to only 20 per cent of the pre-war level.

Disillusioned and embittered, the masses of the working people turned away from the Social-Democratic leaders and their masters, the British invaders. The hatred of the people for the foreign rulers was so strong that in the streets they gave the officers and soldiers of the army of occupation a wide berth to avoid touching these "hangmen," as they called them.

The influence of the Communist Party grew steadily. In this situation, the Menshevik government itself revealed what value it

attached to the "democratic liberties," such as free press, right of assembly and right of association, which the propagandists of the Second International made so much of in their boosting of the "Georgian paradise." In July and August, 1920, wholesale arrests were made among the Communists; the Communist newspapers were suppressed; the editors were thrown into jail; their printing presses were closed; all meetings were prohibited, and the revolutionary organizations were suppressed.

A reign of terror swept the whole country. The Social-Democratic government sent out numerous *punitive expeditions* against rebellious villages, whole provinces and even against whole nationalities. The following is an entry made in his diary by Valiko Djugeli, a Social-Democratic leader, and commander of one of these punitive expeditions sent against the Ossetians:

"Night has fallen. Everywhere fires are blazing. These are the burning houses of the rebels. All around us Ossetian villages are burning.... I gaze upon these smoking ruins, calm in spirit and with a clear conscience."

The Georgian Mensheviks in alliance with the Entente converted the land into a huge battlefield. The Georgian jingoism fostered by the Tiflis government resulted in sanguinary conflicts between Georgians and Azerbaijanis and between Georgians and Armenians. Not satisfied with that, the Social-Democratic leaders tried to find a way out of the situation that was becoming more and more dangerous by helping in the attempt to overthrow the Soviet Government in Russia and to defeat the Red Army. The Georgian Menshevik government helped both Denikin (in 1919) and Wrangel (in 1920) in the war of intervention against Soviet Russia. This reactionary and adventurist policy threatened to throw the ruined and starving country into worse chaos than ever.

Meanwhile, the neighboring countries, Azerbaijan and Armenia, freed themselves from the capitalist yoke and established a Soviet government. Thus, for the British and French imperialists the oil wells of Baku ran dry; but they began to flow more freely for the workers of the great Land of Soviets. As a result, the interest of the City in London in Georgian "democracy" waned. The Georgian people then determined to throw off the double yoke of foreign rule and of the Menshevik dictatorship. In February, 1921, the people rose under the leadership of Sergo Ordjonikidze. The Red Army gave the Georgian people a fraternal hand, and in the same month

the tottering regime of the Social-Democratic leaders collapsed like a house of cards.

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The establishment of the Georgian Soviet Republic ushered in a new era in the history of the Georgian people. The heritage left to the workers by the Menshevik government was indeed a terrible one: industry and agriculture in a state of utter ruin; an impoverished people; a devastated culture, and national strife.

This national strife was the main obstacle to the socialist reconstruction of the Transcaucasian Republic. In a speech he delivered at a meeting of the Tiflis Party organization on June 6, 1921, Stalin said:

"Obviously the three years' existence of nationalist governments in Georgia (Mensheviks), in Azerbaijan (Mussavatists) and in Armenia (Dashnaks) did not pass without effect. By carrying out their national policies, by working among the toilers in a spirit of aggressive nationalism, these nationalist governments finally brought matters to the point where each of these small countries found itself surrounded by a hostile nationalist atmosphere which deprived Georgia and Armenia of Russian grain and Azerbaijani oil, and Azerbaijan and Russia of goods going through Batum – not to speak of armed clashes (Georgian-Armenian war) and massacres (Armenian-Tatar), the natural result of the nationalist policy.*

It was no easy task to clear the atmosphere, to imbue the working people of all nationalities as speedily as possible with feelings of true, fraternal friendship for each other. The enormous importance that Lenin attached to this task can be seen from the letter he sent to the Communists in the Caucasus, dated April 14, 1921. In this letter Lenin wrote:

"...I permit myself to express the hope that their close alliance [of the Soviet Republics of the Caucasus] will serve as a model of national peace, unprecedented under the bourgeoisie and impossible under the bourgeois system."†

Thanks to the Lenin-Stalin national policy, which they faithfully pursued, the Communists of Georgia and of the other

* Quoted in L. Beria, *Stalin's Early Writings and Activities*, p. 172, International Publishers, New York.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 171-72.

Caucasian republics fully justified Lenin's hope. To-day, under the Soviet regime there is no strife over territory among the peoples of Transcaucasia, nor can there be any such strife. And this is due not only to the fact that the Soviet Government has found a correct solution for the problem, but also to the fact that all the nationalities enjoy the same conditions of life. The conditions enjoyed by Armenians living in Georgia, or in Azerbaijan, say, are equally as good as those they would enjoy in their Republic. Under the Soviet regime, Armenians in Georgia, or Georgians in Armenia, have opportunities of receiving their education in their native languages. They have their own national theaters. They can conduct any business they need in government offices in their own languages. They have the right to vote and be elected to all legislative, administrative, public and political organizations. They have their own newspapers, pamphlets and books printed in their own language. They can freely follow their religious customs, etc., etc.

Among the peoples of the Caucasus, as indeed among the peoples throughout the U.S.S.R., there can be no strife over land, for the peasants of any nationality, irrespective of where they live, in their own national republic or in some other, everywhere enjoy the same right to land. There is no strife over the factories, mines, etc., nor can there be, for all are public property. The oil that is obtained in Baku, the tractors that are built in Kharkov, or the shoes made in Moscow, belong equally to the working people of Georgia, Armenia, Turkmenia, the Ukraine, etc. Hence, in the Soviet Union the causes of strife between nations have been completely eradicated. In the U.S.S.R., friendship among the nations rests on the firm and unshakeable foundation of socialism. And an example of this Lenin-Stalin friendship and fraternity among nations is provided by the Caucasus, where formerly national hatred and strife prevailed, and where now all the nationalities are united by bonds of fraternity, mutual aid, mutual achievement and mutual joy.

"And friendship among the peoples of the U.S.S.R. is a great and important achievement. For as long as this friendship exists, the peoples of our country will be free and invincible." (J. V. Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question.*)

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During the twenty years or so that have elapsed since the day freedom came to Georgia and released the people from the yoke of

political, social and national slavery forever, the whole country has undergone a marvelous change.

It was certainly no smooth, paved road that the Georgian people have traveled during these twenty years. The success that they can proudly look back on now was achieved in the course of a continuous series of stern struggles. The deposed capitalists, the imperialists who had been driven from the country, the remnants of the shattered Georgian Menshevik party, and the representatives of the various chauvinist groups, in various guises and by various methods, made repeated attempts to hinder the work of socialist construction. Nevertheless, the consistent application of the Lenin-Stalin national policy by the Communist Party of Georgia thwarted all these attempts.

Twenty years! A very short space of time when regarded in the light of history. But for the Georgian people so much has changed during these years that the memories of what had existed before seems to go back into the dim and distant past. Not only has a new generation sprung up; far more significant is that a new world has been created. The working people of Georgia, like those of the whole of Transcaucasia, have caught up with giant strides that which they were prevented from achieving by the imperialist conquerors and colonial rulers. The formerly despised Georgians, who were not only denied the right to govern their country, but whose ability to do so was denied, have by their own efforts transformed Georgia into "one of the happiest corners of the world," as V. M. Molotov put it in a speech he delivered on the fifteenth anniversary of the establishment of the Georgian Soviet Republic.

What is the happiness of the Georgian people based on?

The people are happy because they need no longer serve foreign rulers; because they themselves control the factories, mines and oil wells; because the Soviet regime gave the peasants of Georgia for their use for all time 1,823,598 acres of land that formerly belonged to the princes and big landowners; because the whole country is covered with a close network of schools of every kind, from village schools to the highest universities in the cities. The Georgian people are happy because political and economic freedom has opened for them all the sources of culture. The people for whom had been mapped out the fate of downtrodden colonial slaves are now the masters of their country working as engineers and technicians, agronomists, tractor drivers, doctors, scientists, teachers and

authors; and they have raised their industry and agriculture, which formerly had been at a low stage of development, to an astonishingly high level. Georgia has become the main center in the U.S.S.R. for the cultivation of subtropical produce.

On the Black Sea Coast is situated that wonderful land Kolkhida. This is Colchis of the days of antiquity famed for its riches; the ancient Greek legends mention the voyages of the Argonauts to Colchis in quest of the Golden Fleece. The tsarist government was incapable of developing the immense resources of this sub-tropical country. Before the Soviet Government was established, a large part of this territory, about 543,620 acres, was submerged and represented a huge malaria-infested bog. The population either emigrated or died out.

Only under the Soviet regime were the immense possibilities of Kolkhida realized and measures taken to develop them. A huge reclamation scheme was undertaken. By 1939 the total length of drainage canals had reached 459 miles; and to protect the country from further inundation, dams have been erected of a total length of 72 miles. In the last ten years alone the area under sub-tropical crops has been increased by 160,615 acres. The main sub-tropical crop in Kolkhida is tea.

In Georgia, the tea crop covers an area of over 136,000 acres, from which the Government in 1939 obtained a total of 44,000 tons of green | tea, and in 1940, 51,166 tons. Before the Soviet regime, no tea was grown in Georgia; in 1932 the first crop of the state tea plantations amounted to 117 tons. There has also been a rapid increase in the cultivation of citrus fruits. In 1939 the state obtained 445,000,000 tangerines, oranges and lemons, as against 12,700,000 in 1932. These figures are a vivid illustration of the enormous successes achieved by Soviet Georgia in this field.

Vine growing has increased tenfold. In 1939 the vineyard area amounted to about 120,000 acres, and it is planned to increase this area to 198,000 acres by the end of 1944. About 150,000 members of collective farms in Georgia are engaged in the cultivation of silk worms as a subsidiary occupation. The quantity of cocoons obtained from oak-leaf silk worms from 1937 to 1939 increased tenfold.

An important place in the agriculture of Georgia is held by tobacco. Here the best brands of yellow tobacco such as "Samsun," "Trapezund," etc., are grown.

The collective farm orchards deliver hundreds of thousands of tons of luscious fruit; from 1930 to 1939 the fruit area increased from 89,000 acres to 164,000 acres.

Nearly all the collective farms in Georgia combine different branches of agriculture. For example, this year the "Beria" collective farm in the village of Asureti, Agubal Region, sent to the All-Russian Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow exhibits of vegetables, potatoes, corn, grapes and other fruit, as well as the produce of its dairy farms and piggeries, etc. This form of combined farming has resulted in a considerable increase in collective farm incomes. Poverty among the peasantry is a thing of the dim and distant past, never to return. During the last seven years the income per working day of the Georgian collective farmer in money alone has increased sixfold; and yearly incomes ranging from 10,000 to 20,000 rubles are by no means a rarity.

In 1936 there were nine collective farms in Georgia which had an income of 1,000,000 rubles; in 1939 there were 37 collective farms with such incomes. In 1939 there were in Georgia 54 machine and tractor stations, having a total of 2,334 tractors, 438 harvester-combines and 184 motor trucks.

The industries of Georgia have fully kept pace with the growth of agriculture under the Soviet regime. The country now has a machine-building industry which supplies machines for the principal branches of industry in Transcaucasia. In Tbilisi, the capital of the Republic, there are now factories producing machine tools, oil well equipment, land textile, silk spinning and vine cultivation machinery. In Batum there are factories which manufacture the machinery needed for the tea factories. In Chiatura, the manganese mines are fully mechanized. Batum is famous for its up-to-date oil refineries.

In many cities in Georgia, such as Tbilisi, Kutais and others, there are numerous silk and other textile mills. Large factories for consumers' goods, shoes, knitted goods and confectionery, and dozens of large sawmills have been erected and are now functioning. The oil industry, too, is making rapid strides in Georgia. At one time it was thought that there was no oil in Georgia; but prospecting operations undertaken by the Government revealed the presence of oil in twenty-one districts, and successful boring operations have been conducted at seven hundred different points. It is now estimated that Georgia has oil resources amounting

to over half a billion tons at least. To get an idea of the immensity of these resources, we must remember that from the earliest time that oil was obtained in Baku to the present day, that is, over one hundred years, about 400,000,000 tons of oil have been obtained.

Hand in hand with the development of industry and agriculture there has been a rise in the general standard of culture in the country. Tbilisi, the heart of Georgia, with its 520,000 inhabitants, has become one of the greatest cultural centers in the Soviet Union. Numerous lofty and comfortable apartment houses, theaters and Palaces of Culture, and wide streets and embankments have been erected. The River Kura, which formerly served as the sewage canal of the city, is now lined with concrete and granite, and its fine, broad embankments are planted with trees and flowers. The city is famed for its industry, its colleges and its scientific institutes.

Georgia is rapidly becoming a republic with 100% literacy. All children attend school, and schools are available for Georgian, Russian, Abkhazian, Ossetian, Armenian, Greek and other children. Before the revolution there was only one college in Georgia; today there are 19, covering different branches of learning. Since the Soviet regime was established, forty-five theaters have been built, among which are the magnificent Rust'aveli Dramatic Theatre, and the Georgian Opera and Ballet. Georgia, once a backward country, now occupies first place among the republics of the Soviet Union as regards the educational level of her population. Out of every thousand inhabitants of Georgia no less than 113 have had a high school education, and eleven out of every thousand have had a college education.

In a speech delivered at a meeting of the Central Executive Committee of Georgia, held in 1936 to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of the Georgian Soviet Republic, Comrade Voroshilov said:

"The tsarist lickspittles and literary hacks were fond of calling Georgia a jewel in the crown of the Russian Empire. But these gentlemen were very careful not to say that this jewel was drenched with the blood and tears of the working people of Georgia. Only today is Georgia becoming a real jewel, a treasure, not only for her own people but for the whole of the Soviet Union."

Situated on the borders of the capitalist world, Georgia shines like a brilliant Southern star in the constellation of the sixteen Union Republics; a living testimony of the inherent strength of the Soviet

system; the herald of peace and friendship among nations; the symbol of the power and invincibility of the great Soviet Union.