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"ISKRA" [1859-1873] is the best of the Russian satirical magazines of the last century. The aggravation of class contradictions, which created the "social upsurge" of the late 50s and early 60s, led to the flourishing of satirical journalism. Topical caricatures appear in "Son of the Fatherland," and the famous "Whistle" appears in "Sovremennik"; a number of satirical illustrated publications appeared: "Cartoon sheet" by K. Danilov, "Sheet of acquaintances", edited by N. Stepanov, magazines: "Veselchak", "Harlequin", "Gudok", "Entertainment", "Spectator", "Splinter", "Wasp", finally, a lot of ephemeral sheets, the nature of which can be judged by the titles: "Idle talker", "Fun", "Idle talker", "Bardadym", "Gossip", "Fly", "Tutus on wheels", "Laughter" Smekhovich", "Stringless balalaika", "Uncle the pea jester", etc., etc. While most magazines, not to mention the "stringless balalaikas" and "pea jesters", set themselves the goal of, for example, "Harlequin", "to amuse ... avoiding extremes", to be a "fleeting reading ... of people with pure and educated taste", "It" emphasized her journalistic character. In the announcement of the release of "It" formulated its main task as "the denial of the false in all its manifestations in life and art." The editors emphasized "everyday practical satire," promising "perseverance ... in the persecution of social anomalies."

The founders and editors of "I." were the above-mentioned editor of "List of Acquaintances," the famous cartoonist Nikolai Aleksandrovich Stepanov, and the talented poet [Vasily Stepanovich Kurochkin](#) (*see*) . The first number "I." was published on January 1, 1859, then the magazine was published weekly until June 24, 1873. In the first years [1859-1864], the magazine enjoyed great success, and its circulation reached a huge figure for that time (seventy thousand copies). A significant part of the success of "I." must be attributed to the high artistic level of the magazine.

"AND," managed to attract the best forces of journalism of that time, among whom we note the names of Almazov, Burenin (wrote under the pseudonym V. I. Monumentov), Weinberg, Gaideubov, Herzen, Gorbunov, Dobroyubov, Eliseev, A. Zhemchuzhnikov, Vs. Krestovsky, Leikin, Mey, M. Mikhailov, Minaev, I. Panaev, Polonsky, Pleshcheev, Potekhinych, Kuzma Prutkov, Stopanovsky, Al. Tolstoy, N. Uspensky, Shcherbin, Yakushkin and others. From the artists "I." let's name: A. Bordecelli, A. Volkov, K. Danilov, N. Ievlev, V. Labunsky, M. Mikeshin and especially N. Stepanov. The diversity of the staff is indicative: in "I." Representatives of various social groups united on the basis of a rather vague liberalism. It was not difficult for all those dissatisfied with the surrounding reality to criticize the shortcomings of the existing system, and this socially undifferentiated position was the second reason for the success of "I." among different readership levels. However, as class contradictions deepened in the 60s. in the depths of "I." the process of demarcation is intensifying: B. Almazov, A. Druzhinin, Vs. are leaving the magazine. Krestovsky, Al. Tolstoy, N. Shcherbina and others, who find refuge in the conservative "Russian Bulletin" and organs close to it. Political satire "I." is now becoming more clear-cut. Two Western European poets had a great influence not on the work of the "Iskraists": Beranger [V. and N. Kurochkin, G. Zhulev, V. Bogdanov, N. Krol] and Heine [P. Weinberg, V. Burenin, A. Snitkin, V. Tikhonovich, A. Palmin, P. Loman]. The social orientation of most of these poets is undoubtedly bourgeois in nature.

No matter how interesting the poetic output of "I." is, the nerve of the magazine was the journalistic department "They Write to Us." This department, compiled by M. M. Stanopovskiy based on letters from the provinces, successfully performed accusatory functions. Public effect of such denunciations was equal in strength to the effect of Herzen's "Bell": It's not for nothing that there was a special expression - "Put in I." Censorship forbade speaking in a full voice, but the reader perfectly learned to read between the lines, and everyone knew that Gryaznoslavl means Ekaterinoslav, Chernilín - Chernigov, Krutogorski - Vyatka, etc. About the seriousness with which "I." related to this matter, one can judge by the fact that a large-scale publicist, G. Z. Eliseev, who was far from frivolous jokes, was introduced into the editorial office, who led the "Chronicle of Progress" there. "AND," fiercely attacked serf owners, bureaucrats, bribe-takers, censorship; fought against the ideology of the nobility (it is enough to recall the favorite object of attacks of "I." - Leon Katkovskiy, the transparent pseudonym of Leontyev and Katkov - leaders of the conservative camp). The objective meaning of the activity of "I." The first period consisted of criticism of government policies and practices from bourgeois-democratic public opinion. This is the third and deepest reason for the magazine's popularity.

Since the mid-60s, the development curve of "I." is falling rapidly. The growth of the daily press, which has the ability to respond more quickly to events and cover them more fully, deprives I. a large part of its significance. Soon a split occurred in the editorial board itself: the representative of its "moderate" part, N. Stepanov, left the "I." at the end of 1864. and founded his own magazine, Alarm Clock. The pressure of censorship intensifies: in 1862, by order of the Ministry of Public Education, the department "We

From "Iskra" cartoons

Illustration:

Caricature of the Minister of Internal Affairs, Mr. P. A. Valueva. Liberal balancing act, deftly vacillating in all directions, looking for a prudent middle (Iskra, 1862, No. 21)

they write," in 1864 the censorship committee demanded a change in the responsible editor, and from No. 37 of 1864 Kurochkin's elder brother, Vladimir Stepanovich, became editor. Censorship persecution of "I" do not weaken in the future: according to Minaev's apt words

From "Iskra" cartoons

Illustration:

- Oh, my dear! You have come again, and I have not yet had time to do anything for you. Really, I don't know how to help your grief... Except this... And wonderful! Find yourself a place somewhere, and I will give you a letter of recommendation.

“

A doubly civil rite is performed over the articles:
They are circumcised like Jews
and baptized like Catholics.”

The results are immediate: the theme “I.” becomes smaller, issues of literature and theater come to the fore . . . “The harsh tone of the magazine,” censorship stated with satisfaction in 1865, “has softened significantly with the removal of V. Kurochkin from the editorial board.” An attempt to save the situation was the refusal of “I.” in 1870 from illustrations, which freed her from preliminary censorship. But this didn’t help either: “I.” without caricatures she was, in Skabichevsky’s words, “a fly without wings.” In recent years, “I.” a number of populist writers and those close to them in color take part in it: Bazhin, Zasodimsky, Zlatovratsky, Kushchevsky, Levitov, Omulevsky, Reshetnikov, Slepstov, Stanyukovich, G.I. Uspensky, Sheller and others. Poetry “I.” This period comes under the sign of Nekrasov’s influence (D. Minaev, A. Lakida, Uncle Pakhom, etc.). But the broad social meaning of “I.” lost forever. The magazine changes hands, ends up with the shady businessman Leontiev, finally in 1873 tries to interest the reader in translated novels (E. Zola, G. Malo), switches to a three-day release, but this is already agony; it does not last long, and in June 1873 Iskra, at issue 31, ceases forever. At the same time, far from big social issues, vulgar humorous, semi-tabloid, obscene magazines like “Entertainment”, “Alarm Clock”, “Dragonfly” (*see separate notes* about them), the purpose of which is to be entertaining afternoon reading, fully satisfy the needs and tastes of the established bourgeoisie.

From "Iskra" cartoons

Illustration:

The era of classicism has arrived. I am a Greek poet and I undertake to teach Russian youth alone all the sciences of ancient Hellas (caricature of Shcherbina, Iskra, 1865, No. 48)

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I. Ippolit