

taken seriously and becomes a literary feature only in comic periodicals, it is difficult to understand the extraordinary extent of tramp life in some European and Asiatic countries, and it is almost impossible to conceive of the tramp as the hero of great tales. The author has in this work presented the tramp problem in Russia so as to explain not only those strange followers of the Wanderlust but to explain Gorky also. For Gorky is, after all, the product as well as the analyst and novelist of trampdom. We cannot become sympathetic with those repulsive, sodden creatures with whom he was for so many years identified; we can, however, admire and applaud the genius which will tell their tales so that we are at last interested in and attentive to their plaints and their sad condition. But the Russians, imbued with that strange mysticism which makes them so childlike in practical affairs and so slavish in religion, go much farther and embrace Gorky as a sort of demigod. Even the ruling classes treat him with respect, and we must recognize the truth of our author's judgment, although we cannot understand the reason for such a verdict, when he tells us that Gorky is honored by Russians as their greatest author.

And yet some of Gorky's history is merely commonplace, *i.e.*, it is the same experience which every young man from rude surroundings must have in emerging into intellectual society—with this difference, that in most countries the youth would hide his hurt and wait for time to heal his wounds, while Gorky ran away, unable to remain in civilization with his bitter heart.

The author has given extracts from Gorky's works, presenting many sketches, some of which are now familiar to Americans. Many of these are so full of horror as to obscure their beauty to us; others, which are not found in this work, many of us know are coarse and even obscene. The author in closing expresses the hope that Gorky will continue on his apparently marked-out new path of teaching moral lessons by the finest art and leaving the horrible and the merely political in the slough where it belongs.

### MAXIM GORKY.\*

THIS is the first biography or extended estimate which the great Russian author has inspired, and it would be most flattering to denominate it as wholly satisfactory. It is, possibly, as complete and accurate as one writing from London and having little access to first-hand materials could obtain. But, in short, it is woefully lacking in facts and details. Thus as a biography it is painfully scanty; but in the realm of criticism, it is a masterly production. The author seems to sense the real Gorky and to be able to interpret him with skill and faithfulness. He furnishes to us a sympathetic consciousness of the environment, the atmosphere, in which Gorky lived and lives. We appreciate fully the conditions of his birth and the imperfect barbaric forces about his up-bringing. Thus we secure what is, of course, the prime end and aim of all character sketches—a real, vivid and true impression of the man; and so we must call the work a model and a finished product. Still, we shall all be glad when the painstaking collector of details and petty facts about the early life and difficulties of this genius publishes them to the world.

In this country where the tramp is never

\*Maxim Gorky: His Life and Writings. By E. J. Dillon. London: Isbister & Co. New York: McClure, Phillips & Co. \$1.50.