

and building up a great publishing establishment in St. Petersburg, of which he has been the head. Associating with himself the four most prominent authors of the new Russian school—Andreyev, Chirikov, Yushkevich and Bunine—he formed the Knowledge Publishing Company, which for the past few years has issued not only the books written by the five members of the firm, but also those of Petershoy, Yablonovsky and other well-known Russian authors. So successful has this venture been that it is said Gorky has made more than a quarter of a million roubles (\$125,000) in the business."

Of his writings it has been said that "the day has not yet come for us to crown the vivid reporter of the filthy lives of more or less professional tramps," and further, that "he really grasps nothing in men and women except animalism, sensuality and materialism."

All this is perhaps a scarcely fair criticism and is possibly an extreme view. If a writer living in a land where animalism and sensuality prevail as they certainly do to an alarming extent in Russia, by holding up to his people the reflection of their own hideousness seen as in a mirror through the medium of his writings can create a feeling of loathing and disgust for that which he has portrayed, he has done his country good service. It is well nigh impossible to judge the people of Russia from afar. They are not all drunkards, they are not all thieves, they are not all bestialists. There is possibly a larger proportion of this element in Russia than among many of the other nations of Europe, but is it fair to judge them by the standards of modern civilization, when they have never enjoyed the softening and refining influences of civilization. Fifty years ago forty millions of their number were slaves, to-day only one man in ten can read or write. Education has been denied them, "lest they should all want to be priests." The common people have been oppressed and down-