The great Russian writer Maxim Gorky passed away in Gorki near Moscow on June eighteenth.

During the last few months three great Russians have left this world: the great physiologist Pavlov, the composer Glasunov and now Gorky. All three were known to the entire world. Who has not heard of the famous experiments in the field of reflexes, conducted by Pavlov? Who has not admired also Glazunov next to Tchaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov? And who has not read amongst other Russian classics the works of Gorky who has recorded unfading images of Russian life?

Over half a million people went to pay homage to the remains of the great writer, and over seven hundred thousand accompanied the funeral procession. The representatives of the Union stood on guard of honour and after the cremation carried the urn to the Kremlin Wall where it was immured. The entire diplomatic corps was present. Gun salutes thundered in honour of the great writer. Some French papers were amazed at the scale on which a whole nation paid tribute to its national hero. There were wreaths from the French and Czechoslovakian Governments. The foreign press unanimously hailed the achievements of Gorky.
It had been resolved in Moscow to erect monuments in honour of Gorky at the expense of the state in Moscow, Leningrad and in Nijny-Novgorod—the latter bearing his name already.

The Municipal Council of Praha decided to name a street in the Czechoslovakian Capital in his honour.

Benesh, the President of Czechoslovakia sent the following telegram to Moscow:

The death of Maxim Gorky will compel the entire world and Czechoslovakia in particular to remember the progress of the Russian people during the last fifty years and of the Union since the revolution. The participation of Gorky in this process was in the spiritual respect most important and convincing. For me personally, Gorky and all other Russian classics were my teachers in many respects and I remember him with gratitude.

H. G. Wells sent a hearty message from England and Romain Rolland telephoned from Switzerland to Moscow the following message:

At this painful hour of parting, I remember Gorky not so much as the great writer nor even his colourful path of life and mighty creativeness. I remember his full saturated life which like his motherly Volga flowed richly in streams of thoughts and images. Gorky was the first among the world artists of the word, who cleared the path for the people, who gave them his strength, the prestige of his glory and his wise life-experience... Like Dante, Gorky emerged from hell. He brought out and saved his friends in suffering with him.

The Paris papers which have reached the Himalayas record many signs of a world-wide esteem to the deceased. He was honoured not only by friends but by all sectors of cultural life. Even the most reluctant obituaries highly comment upon such of Gorky's works as "The Lower Depths," "Mother," "Letopis," "Childhood," "Artomonov's business," "Chelkash," "The Town of Okurov" and conclude: "a man and an artist has passed away, whom we all loved." Thus art has united both friends and foes.

From the very beginning of his vivid literary career Alexis Maxim Peshkov, whom the whole world knows better by his pen-name Maxim Gorky, achieved an exclusive position amidst Russian classics. About every great man there are many legends—also around the name of Gorky there were woven much truth and invention. Some tried to represent him as a severe cold-blooded materialist, others based themselves on single abrupt words, by which it is impossible to judge a man and his work. But uncorruptible history will depict to a full extent his great image and people will find in him many unexpected traits.

About his last minutes Dr. L. Levin writes in the "Izvestia" of June 20:

Alexis Maximovich dies, as he lived, a great man. In these painful hours of illness he never once spoke about himself. All his thoughts were in the Kremlin, in Moscow. Even in the interval between two oxygen cushions, he asked me to show him the newspaper with the project of Stalin's new constitution. During the short periods of relief from his illness he spoke about his beloved subject: literature, and also about the possibility of a future war which worried him very much. The last day and night he was unconscious. Remaining constantly at his bedside, I discerned the following abrupt phrases which he said: "There will be war... One should be ready... Fasten up all buttons!

N. Berberova writes in the Paris Press of a characteristic episode in the life of Gorky:

This was on the day when the current issue of "Sovremennye Zapiski" (Contemporary Review) was received with the concluding chapter of Bunin's novel "Love of Mitia." Everything was put aside: work, correspondence, newspapers. Gorky locked himself up in his study and was late for lunch and absent minded... Only at tea it became clear: "A remarkable work... Truly remarkable"—in these words he characterized the "Love of Mitia"
It is difficult to believe but Gorky could cry with real tears when reading the poems of Lermontov, Block and many others. Further N. Berberova quotes from a letter she had received from Gorky, in which his devotion to poets and poetry was expressed:

I am deeply enchanted by the broadness and multifacetness of themes and subjects in poetry. I consider this as a real quality, as a good sign. It shows the broad outlook of the author, his inner freedom, the absence of chains with any conventional moods, with any preconceived ideas. It seems to me that the definition: 'the poet is the echo of world life' is the most correct. Of course there are and should be ears which perceive only the bass-tones of life, and souls who hear but the lyric of life. But Pushkin heard everything, perceived everything and therefore has no equal. Can there be anything higher than literature—the art of words?—Certainly not. It is the most astounding, mysterious and beautiful in this world!

Those who do not know the groups of Russian literary thought, should be told that Gorky's praise of Bunin shows his broad judgment, for Bunin belongs to another camp. Many valuable traits of Gorky will reveal themselves in the course of time. I happened to meet him on many occasions in private talks and at numerous committee meetings, gatherings, etc. and I cherish his friendship. On all occasions I could trace some new remarkable details of Gorky's character, which very often did not correspond to the outwardly austere appearance of Alexis Maximovich. I remember how once during the organization of a great literary enterprize, when an urgent decision was required, I asked Gorky his opinion. He smiled and said:

There is nothing to argue. You as an artist will feel what is needed. Yes, yes, precisely you will feel—you are an intuitivist. Often above reason, one should reach the very essence!

I also recollect, how once at a friendly gathering Gorky revealed quite unexpectedly for many, another interesting side of his character. We spoke about yogis and various psychic phenomena whose home is India. Some of the guests suspiciously looked at Gorky who kept silent, and they apparently awaited his severe criticism. But his resume amazed many. Kindled with an inner radiance he said:

The Hindus are a great people. I will tell you of my personal experience. Once in the Caucasus I met a Hindu, about whom many remarkable stories were circulating. At the time I was rather inclined to doubt. At last we met and what I will tell you I saw with my own eyes. He took a long thread and threw it up into the air. And to my surprise it remained hanging up in the air. Then he asked me, whether I would like to look at an album and what pictures I would like to see. I said I would like to see pictures of Indian cities. He gave me his album and looking at me said: "Please, look at these pictures of Indian cities."

The album contained polished brass sheets, on which were reproduced beautiful views of different cities, temples and other views of India. I looked over the entire album attentively studying the pictures. Then I closed the album and returned it to the Hindu. He smiled and said:

Well, you have seen views of India; then he blew at the album and returned it into my hands inviting me to look at it again. I opened the album and to my surprise found only polished plates without any pictures whatsoever. These Hindus are indeed remarkable people. What refined thought!"

Does not this characteristic trait of Gorky prove his all-containment and broad consciousness?

He very much wanted to have my painting. He selected from those which I had at the time, not a realistic landscape but one of the so-called pre-War series—"The Doomed City". This painting precisely corresponds to the mood of a poet. Indeed, the author of the "Storm-Finch" was a great poet. Coming from the depth of the people, Gorky fear-
lessly walked across all obstacles of life—he went the path of the Russian people, encompassing its multifacetedness and the richness of the Russian soul.

The Moscow newspapers of June 21, under the title "Gorky in the role of Harun-el-Rashid" tell the following story accompanied by a photo of Gorky dressed as a tramp:

This was in 1928. Gorky wanted to see what goes on in public bars, what kind of people visit them, whether he would find there any types similar to his old novel "The Lower Depths," what became of them, what the new visitors are like, etc. But how to arrange such an expedition? Gorky decided to disguise himself as a tramp. With a huge beard, well made up, he entered into intimate talks with the people there and as a result wrote a new novel, which forms part of his "Across the Soviet Union."

Those who know Gorky will understand that this episode is indeed typical of him. Being a true realist in the broadest sense, he considered it necessary to convince himself in life, not so much in order to enter into his diary leaves sketches of new types, but in order to affirm a synthesis for an actual expansion of his consciousness.

He was trustful and he trusted. He loved to trust and he was often cheated............

Once he came out from his study singing and his face expressed utter joy, so that everybody was amazed. It turned out that he had read a newspaper report that somewhere, somebody has discovered some new microbe.

Gorky thus expressed his enthusiasm at the prospect of helping humanity through combating yet another disease.

Once I met Gorky in business relations when the publishing company of Sytin in Moscow and the "Niva" were merged into one big concern. A colossal unifying programme in the literary and educational field was in project. It was interesting to witness how every conventionality and formality tortured Gorky, who wanted to overcome all formal obstacles without delay. He knew how to build on a broad scale. Take for example the three mighty cultural institutions outlined by him: "The House of World Literature," "The House of Scientists" and the "House of Art." All these three gigantic ideas show the creative scope of Gorky's thought, who was striving to find across all difficulties the eternal words—words of enlightenment and culture.

He carried his chalice of service to humanity throughout life unspilt.

In the name of the League of Culture let us offer our sincerest, heartiest thought to the great memory of Gorky which will remain for ever radiantly affirmed in the Pantheon of World Culture.

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