

International Press Cutting Bureau,
329, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.

Extract from
MORNING POST.
London

Date..... 9 MAR 1928

A FIRST NOVEL

"THE COUNTERFEITERS." By André Gide.
A. A. Knopf. 10s. 6d.

M. Gide refers to this novel, in his dedication, as his first; and, indeed, it lacks the qualities which have made his more recent novels so notable. Yet it is no immature first novel. M. Gide is completely master of his matter, and his characters move inconclusively, yet exactly, in parallel lines of their dissolute and hopeless existence. One is not overmuch concerned with this unsavoury crew; Bernard Profitendieu, a schoolboy in his early teens, who finds himself born out of lawful wedlock, and sneers at his presumed father because of his mother's infidelity, is only one of many. The episodes of the book remind one constantly of a recent notorious murder trial in Berlin. The book ends with a suicide compact among these preposterous schoolboys.

The book's chief importance lies in the revelation, through the character of Edouard, of M. Gide's own artistic beliefs and theories. Edouard is writing a novel to be called "The Counterfeiters," and one chapter is boldly headed "Edouard explains his theory of the Novel." He complains that the novel has always clung timidly to reality, and that the only hope for it is to represent reality on the one hand and on the other to stylise it into art. But M. Gide rather leaves his readers in the air by making Edouard something of a vague and incompetent windbag; and to what extent the theories which he enunciates are those of M. Gide himself remains in doubt. Indeed, when one ponders upon them, one sees that many of them are definitely in opposition to those which he puts into practice.

London and elsewhere, romances are touched up.
"The Counterfeiters" must be known to a great number of readers in the original. It is a proof of Mr. Gide's immense talent, his originality of temperament, and alive and inquisitive mind; and it shows quite clearly that his gift is not for the imaginative portrayal of life, and that he is not a novelist. The book is highly interesting, however, even if the final impression it leaves is one of emptiness. Those who have not read it in the original may turn with confidence to this unusually fine and sensitive translation.