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By **JULIAN SYMONS**

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**A**NDRE GIDE and Thomas Mann are two of the very few men in our time who have dedicated themselves to literature as the task of their lives, and not as something to occupy the time between week-end parties. Both are Nobel prize-winners—Thomas Mann in 1929 and M. Gide this year.

In making the award a few days ago the Swedish Academy spoke of the way in which M. Gide "has exposed the problems and conditions of mankind, with fearless love of truth and psychological perception."

These are emphatically the qualities that show through this first volume of his journals. "In our form of society a great writer swims against the current," he says, and M. Gide has never worried about popularity or feared to expose himself to scandal. In consequence his influence, not only in France but in this country, and not only as a novelist but as a figure, has been enormous.

These journals, remarkably readable and remarkably honest, lead one on from page to page to follow the character of the man who wrote in his early twenties, "Never prefer oneself to the chosen end, to the work."