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Book of the Month Club News

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The Journals of André Gide

Translated and annotated
by Justin O'Brien



ANDRÉ GIDE

This, the second instalment of André Gide's journals to appear in English translation, covers the period from 1914 to 1927. It is difficult to characterize briefly the contents of a book so formless, yet so rich in suggestions, so personal and yet so universal—for Gide is continually passing from the particular to the general, and the most casual incident may be the point of departure for soaring flights of the mind, ceaselessly searching the mysteries of life, death, good, evil, religion and art. Gide himself calls the journal "a collection of intimate writings," but this should not mislead the reader—his curiosity perhaps aroused by Gide's somewhat scandalous reputation—into expecting personal revelations of a sensational nature. "There is nothing secret that does not deserve to be known," writes Gide; and this is the keynote for his fight against any kind of hypocrisy or sham. He might take as his motto, "Know thyself," for the journal, though it contains a variety of things, from the most trivial to the most sublime, is essentially an account of Gide in search of himself, in search of the truth by which man lives. The truth has never presented itself to him in absolute form—at least not for long. The value and fascination of *The Journals of André Gide* lies in the complete honesty with which a great mind has revealed itself. (Price, \$6.00.)

GILBERT CHASE