

artists without having to peruse long and complicated treatises" — and, further, to students as well.

We get our most authoritative styles in men's clothes from London, most of our standard children's toys from Germany, our smartest women's fashions from Paris. And France is the prime source of art criticism. Thus a piquant interest may be felt in the circumstance that, as a flyleaf line states, these little volumes in English have been "made and printed in France". The subjects of the four volumes of the "Masters of Modern Art" series now issued are French painters, the authors are Frenchmen. The general theme, which may very loosely be termed Impressionism, has been a very ticklish one.

Camille Mauclair, who writes the "Claude Monet", is one of the most sensitive, charming, thoughtful, and penetrating writers on painting anywhere to be found today; his little study of Watteau, published a number of years ago, stands as a gem of art criticism of the first water. A good deal has gone under the mill since Monet first opened the windows of painting and let in the sunlight. From being attacked as an insane radical he has come to be questioned as an established master. M. Mauclair presents with admirable clarity and justness both the case for Monet and the truth of great painting which preceded him.

Any real appreciation of Cézanne is necessarily bound up with more than a little comprehension of the processes of painting, and so it is quite appropriate that the brief essay on him here, by Tristan L. Klingsor, should stress, in language not overtechnical, this aspect of a painter who "drew by color", whose method of work was quite unsuitable for the expression of contours, and who, at the same time, was much

more of a realist than an Impressionist, recording "the solidity of things". The value of the text on Renoir, by François Fosca, unfortunately is pretty negligible; about the only thing given the reader worth taking away is the recognition of the affiliation between Renoir and the painters of the eighteenth century, such as Fragonard and Boucher.

Though that strange genius Gauguin had some picturesque affiliation with the Impressionist group at the beginning, he later turned into very much of another story, being deeply of the decorative temperament, "classically minded without knowing it". The essay on him, by Robert Rey, is both decidedly illuminating as a study and highly colorful as a biographical narrative. The reader becomes increasingly aware that the trouble with Gauguin was that he had too much to say to be a painter only.

Each volume of this series contains a bibliography and includes forty illustrations in colotype.

Masters of Modern Art. First four volumes. Dodd, Mead and Company.

WITHIN THE QUOTA

By Ernest Boyd

THE variety of this group of translated novels testifies to the diversity as well as the keenness of American interest in European fiction. The books range from the "very latest thing" by Jean Cocteau, "Thomas the Impostor", to J. P. Jacobsen's classic, "Marie Grubbe", first published in 1876, translated in 1917 by Hanna Astrup Larsen for the American-Scandinavian Foundation's series, and now reprinted from the original plates of the "Scandinavian Classics", but without

the notes which adorned it on its first appearance there. That this charming story of seventeenth century Denmark should have two incarnations in Miss Larsen's version may be regarded as evidence of a continued demand for it. As a matter of fact, only one of these six volumes, "Thomas the Impostor", is by an author not already presented in English to the American public. And Cocteau's "Le Grand Ecart" is announced for publication by another publisher, who is still, apparently, baffled by the problem of rendering that title in English, a problem which is a mere foretaste of the exceedingly difficult problem which the book as a whole offers to the translator.

Jules Romains will be remembered by discriminating readers as the author of "The Death of a Nobody", translated some years ago, but without more than a success of esteem. I still meet people who speak of it, but it would be rash to pretend that Jules Romains is known to the general public. Waldo Frank has made an excellent translation of this most recent of the novels of Romains, which *nearly* won the Goncourt Prize in 1922, an achievement whose publicity value almost equals that of winning the Prize! If I am not mistaken, "Lucienne" turned out to be the most successful, or least unsuccessful, of all his works, which enjoy high esteem and critical praise rather than popularity. Mr. Frank rightly says that it is "as easy an approach as Romains could have contrived to the terror and mystery of his vision", for we must not forget that the author is the leader of a school known as the *Unanimités*. The translator explains the term by saying that it is "roughly an æsthetic expression for the sense . . . of the actual organic unity of life beyond the conventional units of individual things and persons". "Lucienne",

however, will appear to the uninitiated as the story of how Lucienne comes to teach music to two young girls in a provincial town, of the rivalry of the two sisters for a cousin, of his preference for the music teacher, who becomes engaged to him, and who barely succeeds in saving one of her pupils from suicide.

There is a curious fascination in the telling of this banal story which will make the reader who expected more of Jules Romains continue out of an old allegiance, while its very lack of originality will endear it to the new reader in search of an exciting story. Mr. Frank hints that there is more in the novel than meets the eye, but I confess all I can see is that Romains can do that sort of thing extremely well, but not so well as the kind of work to which "The Death of a Nobody" belongs. Jean Cocteau, on the other hand, positively gains by being introduced through such a book as "Thomas the Impostor", for the excellent reason that this story can be translated, whereas "Le Grand Ecart" must be recreated in English and become variations on a theme of Jean Cocteau's by Lewis Galantière, the skilled translator both of this book and the one announced. "Thomas the Impostor" is what the author calls "a text without psychology, or with a psychology so rudimentary that it corresponds to the captions of a well made film". William Fontenoy, known as Thomas, is a bizarre creature who thrives only on imposture, and who finds in the topsyturvy world of wartime France just such an opportunity for the employment of his peculiar talents as most charlatans crave in vain. In "the vacuum of the early stages of the war" Thomas runs the whole gamut of unreality, and by carrying his imposture to the point of heroism and

death becomes a sort of symbolic figure of an epoch of madness, madness in which there was method, of reality so harsh that it is unreal.

Thomas Mann's "Buddenbrooks" probably had more success than Jules Romains's first book in English, and so he, in his turn, receives the honors of a second attempt to make America acquainted with the outstanding figure in contemporary German literature. There are three long short stories here, "Death in Venice", "Tristan", and "Tonio Kröger", all three as characteristic of Mann's genius as "Buddenbrooks", but—as in the case of Romains—easier of approach. Mann's theme, as always, is the conflict between the artist and the bourgeois, between the interior and the exterior world. In each of these stories external circumstance, the atavistic element of philistinism, prove too much for the artist, for Thomas Mann sees the type as the degeneration of the solid human species upon which society is founded. "Death in Venice" is the most daring exposition of this idea, illustrated in its most extreme form, yet beyond the reach of Mr. Sumner.

Knut Hamsun is now so well established among that select band of foreign authors who are successfully transplanted that this tenth volume of his works to appear in English no longer occasions the comment which once attended such appearances. "Segelfoss Town" carries on the story which began in "Children of the Age". Lieutenant Willatz Holmsen and Adelheid of Segelfoss Manor are dead, and Segelfoss is now a town; when the story is resumed Holmengraa, who strove so hard to dominate Holmsen, is master. Holmsen's son lives abroad and Holmengraa has a free hand, but he has not the habit of commanding men, and his overthrow by the very forces which he

himself introduced to displace the old aristocratic and agricultural social order is powerfully drawn. The selfmade man eventually falls before the prosperous shopkeeper, and in the struggle of these two modern forces Hamsun sees the opportunity for the old family to reassert itself. Willatz Holmsen the Fourth is as aristocratic as his father, but he is an artist and he has a sense of modern ideas which will preserve him from going under before the pressure from the rabble. But he can never restore Segelfoss Manor; industrial progress has made Segelfoss a town. Hamsun sees in that progress the worst fate of mankind.

No such ideas, nor ideas of any kind, burden "Prisoners", the first novel by Molnar to appear in this country. The book is distinctly what the Germans call "literature of entertainment"; even at that, I suspect his admirers will prefer his plays as aids to digestion.

Marie Grubbe. By J. P. Jacobsen. Alfred A. Knopf.
 Lucienne. By Jules Romains. Boni and Liveright.
 Thomas the Impostor. By Jean Cocteau. D. Appleton and Company.
 Death in Venice. By Thomas Mann. Alfred A. Knopf.
 Segelfoss Town. By Knut Hamsun. Alfred A. Knopf.
 Prisoners. By Franz Molnar. Bobbs-Merrill Company.

LABOR'S GLADSTONE

By Charles R. Walker

THERE are some men who not only typify a movement or an era, but who through superabundance of energy and industry seem to have given shape to every event of importance in their time. Such a man was Gladstone. Free trade, manhood suffrage, separation of Church and State, Irish reform