

Recherche du Temps Perdu" there is a conclusion, called "Le Temps Retrouvé". The last page bears the word "End". It is said that a few days before he died, Proust wanted his books to be brought to his bed. "Look for the passages where I wrote about death," he said. "I think I must know better about it now. I want to rewrite the death of Bergotte . . ."

The prodigious interweaving of motives, from the first "Swann" book to the last volume, the conscious interrelation of episodes which makes this long series of books a single unit, will appear as he wanted them to, and there is some half absurd kind of consolation to be found in this fact. "The greatness of Proust", writes Edmond Jaloux, "is that he showed, accurately and in all its magnitude, the very canvas of our existence. On the action of time, on our feelings, on this pressure of relativity which modifies constantly our passions and our ideas, on the dangerous mobility of our mind and of our heart; on this continuous divorce between our actions and our motives — and also on sleep, on dreams, on awakening, on jealousy, on forgetting, on the unconscious, on pain, on illness, on death, Marcel Proust has written some definitive things which will not have to be done again."

Two years ago, in a book of poems, his friend Paul Morand had an "Ode to Marcel Proust" which reads today like a premature and delicate oration:

. . . Proust, from what nightly routs
are you returning
with eyes so weary, so lucid?
What fears, to us forbidden, have you
known,
that made you so indulgent and so kind?
and aware of the travail of souls,
and of what happens in many houses,
and aware that love hurts so much?

Some are now comparing him to Saint-

Notes from France

THE death of Marcel Proust has provoked a stream of literary comment whose strength shows no tendency to decline after these few weeks. It has also provoked a multiple manifestation of personal sympathy from such a number of writers, that we wonder if Paris and its literary circles deserve their reputation for cruelty, indifference, and lack of good comradeship. This death amounts to a personal loss for many admirers and for many friends. One cannot help recalling Péguy's words: "The only force, the only value, the only dignity of anything — is to inspire love." Proust was surrounded by love.

There remains some uncertainty — which will be dispelled by the time these notes appear — as to the exact quantity of books left unpublished by Proust. But we know that the capital work was finished. Following "A la

Simon or to Stendhal, or call him a Balzac of French society between 1890 and 1914. But these are only figures of speech—Proust is Proust. For those who want a careful and detailed comment on him and on his work, we suggest the reading of the January number of the "Nouvelle Revue Française", which will be consecrated entirely to him.

We have not to go a long way from Marcel Proust, to speak of the novel of Jacques Rivière, "Aimée", just published by the same N. R. F. Rivière is proud to consider himself one of Proust's disciples—the dedication of the book makes this explicit. There, the art critic of "Études" and the ethnical observer of "L'Allemand" writes a love story. The characters are few, the action contains a minimum of events, and everything centres on the progressive analysis of one feeling, from the first appeal of passion in a man who was only too ready to answer it, to the end of the long anguishing experience, an experience comparable to a fire that lasts as long as there is something to burn and abates only when it has given all its power, destroyed what was to be destroyed, and transmuted that which it left.

Two important contributions to the history of literature are "Servitude et Grandeur Littéraires" by Camille Mauclair (Ollendorff), and "Histoire de la Littérature Française Contemporaine" (since 1870) by René Lalou (Crès). The latter book is a very thorough compilation of 700 pages, written in a non-partisan spirit, and covering the Parnassian, Realist, and Symbolist schools and the more recent, less easily defined groups. As for Camille Mauclair, the author of "La Religion de la Musique" and of many books devoted mostly to literary criticism, he presents a survey of the

same period, beginning somewhat later than M. Lalou. Camille Mauclair has known personally every important writer of the last twenty-five years. Besides, there is in his work a constant ethical preoccupation, concerning the status of the man of letters, the social, economic, and moral situation of our days, which adds greatly to its interest.

Among magazines, I would like to point out the November issue of "Les Cahiers d'Aujourd'hui" with a series of delightful literary portraits (Valéry Larbaud by Marcel Ray; Vildrac by Durtain; Colette by Salmon; Salmon by MacOrlan; Marie Laurencin by Roché; Gignoux by George Besson). In the "Revue de Genève" under the leadership of Robert de Traz, a vast international inquiry is progressing on the subject of "The European Spirit". This is a sequel to the conversations of last summer at the Abbey of Pontigny, where the ethics of the League of Nations were defined and commented upon.

More literary prizes are being distributed. The Lasserre Prize came as a surprise to Elemir Bourges, who had not presented himself as a candidate. M. Bourges is a member of the Goncourt Academy, and has for many years collaborated in rewarding young authors with the much coveted Goncourt Prize. As there was no clause specifying that the Lasserre award should go to a young man, the jury seized the opportunity and paid a more than deserved homage to the writer of "Les Oiseaux S'Envolent et les Fleurs Tombent" and of "La Nef"—a book we mentioned here a few months ago.

As for the Goncourt Prize itself, we shall speak of it next month. It has just been awarded to Henri Béraud for his book "Le Martyre de l'Obèse"

(The Martyrdom of the Fat Man),
published by Albin Michel.

PIERRE DE LANUX

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