

THE MEN OF THE NINETIES

art of the previous age. At the same time French art and literature were never stationary but always developing. It was only in 1890 that we find the real Régnier appearing. In the same year Paul Fort, just eighteen summers like Beardsley, founded the Théâtre d'Art. All this French art at high pressure had a stimulating effect on English art; and, in fact, remained its main stimulus until the Boer War, when the imperialism of writers like Kipling became the chief interest. So it was in no small degree the literary symbolists, the plein air painters and all the motives that lay behind them, that awoke the Englishmen of the nineties to new possibilities in art and life. In Paris, in 1890, Rothenstein met Conder, and at once the two became lifelong friends. There they encountered artists like Toulouse Lautrec and Anquetin.

The first men, of course, to realise this feverish activity in France were the elder men, who handed on the tidings to the younger majority. Thus the men of the eighties turned the attention of the unknown of the nineties towards France, so that Englishmen again began to remember that something else counted in Paris besides lingerie. In dealing then with the influences that helped to beget