

IDEAS & STUDIES

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probably talk about fear₁, fear₂, fear₃. . . Here is a teen-ager showing off his hot rod to a carful of young experts. He lets himself be prodded into ever greater speed and risk, even to the point of taking his hands off the wheel—not because he is brave, but because his fear of seeming afraid is greater than his fear of cracking up. The good, useful survival fear is overlaid by an artificial social fear, the product of hot rod culture in America, 1951.

Our author traces these complicated terrors with a practised hand. As a counselor she has handled many of them. Teachers, parents, everyone who deals with young children will find sound help in her analysis. She shows how fears can be unwittingly planted by parents themselves, to flower later in juvenile delinquency or mental breakdown. She shows how emotional insecurity leads to aggression and conflict, and how millions of hidden anxieties may affect great social issues by accentuating prejudice, intolerance, and suspicion.

I was particularly interested in her defense of psychology, psychiatry, and social science generally. She is no cold, quantitative scientist; her approach is warm, friendly, and human; you feel her love for her kind on every page.

Mrs. Overstreet goes on to identify four general principles upon which most social scientists, she says, will agree. Here they are:

(1) Normal people have the stuff in them to make a society vastly better than the present one. There is no cause for despair about "human nature."

(2) The sick personality cures himself. The strength to do it is part of the patient's own resources. The psychiatrist's job is to help him find his inner strength.

(3) Emotional disturbances always have their roots in human relations, almost never in physical terrors. The car skids dangerously, and an arrow of fear goes through you. But such shocks will never cause a nervous breakdown. If your mother did not want you, however, that fact can wreck your adult life. The loss we cannot tolerate and remain in emotional health is the loss of good will between ourselves and our group.

(4) A distorted personality is not marked by intense self-love, it is marked by an inability to love any one, including one's self. Guilt, self-doubt, even self-hate, may be at the bottom of the abnormality. The indi-

cated therapy is not to preach to the patient about his "selfishness," but to get him to like himself better, to trust himself more in action, and to withdraw his uneasy attention from himself and direct it out toward the world.

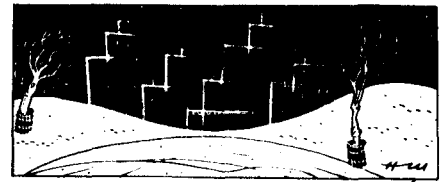
When social scientists, says Mrs. Overstreet, talk about these four conclusions (and others, too) they do not lay it on the line—"Thus saith the Lord." They say: "So far as present knowledge permits us to speak, this seems to be how things are." The profound difference between the soothsayer and the scientist could not be better expressed—the chasm between the Absolute and the most probable.

That "present knowledge" is piling up, and our author shows ways of putting it to work. Although we cannot use it in the current world crisis with the same certainty with which we use serum in a smallpox crisis, already it can aid us greatly, and in ten or twenty years it will be still more reliable.

Ideas & Studies Notes

STRUCTURE, METHOD, AND MEANING: Essays in Honor of Henry M. Sheffer. Edited by Paul Henle, Horace M. Kallen, and Susanne K. Langer. Liberal Arts Press. \$4.50. One of the rarest tributes which students and colleagues of a scholar can pay to him is the publication of a volume of essays in his honor. What distinguishes the present book from most of its kind is that the man so honored is so little known outside of his own special and abstract field of endeavor—that of symbolic or mathematical logic—and that his bibliography contains only two articles, a few abstracts of papers read before mathematical and philosophical societies, a few reviews, and not a single book. The number and size of a man's publications, however, are never adequate criteria of the power and originality of his thought, and nothing could serve as superior evidence for this proposition than an invocation of the name of Henry M. Sheffer. The nature of Sheffer's contributions to mathematical logic cannot even be indicated by those to whom this discipline is utterly remote and esoteric, but their value is well attested and annotated by such writers as Whitehead and Russell in the second edition of their "Principia Mathematica."

Those who join to pay tribute to this creative logician include, among many others, C. I. Lewis, Norbert Wiener, F. S. C. Northrop, George Sarton, Ralph Barton Perry, Horace M. Kallen, and Felix S. Cohen. In subject the essays range from highly



technical and abstruse problems in logic to matters of a more general intellectual interest.

MARSILIUS OF PADUA: The Defender of Peace. Volume I: Marsilius of Padua and Medieval Political Philosophy. By Alan Gewirth. Columbia University Press. \$4.75. Marsilius of Padua (c. 1275-1342) is one of the most provocative and controversial figures in the history of political philosophy. Some modern commentators acclaim him as the progenitor of ideas to be found later in such disparate writers as Machiavelli, Luther, Hooker, Bodin, Hobbes, Locke, Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Marx. Others contend that he said nothing essentially new and that the doctrines associated with his name are not to be found in his work. Still others maintain that his great book—the "Defensor Pacis"—provides an ultimate philosophic justification for the totalitarian state. Not all of these interpretations, obviously, can be correct. In order to adjudicate between them it is necessary both to consider Marsilius against the background of the medieval period in which he wrote and to extract from his arguments propositions of some sociological generality.

To the accomplishment of these tasks Mr. Gewirth, a young man who teaches philosophy at the University of Chicago, has brought an exegetical skill of a very high order and an almost incredible learning. Mr. Gewirth demonstrates that Marsilius was the first complete spokesman for the modern liberal democratic state, and demonstrates it so conclusively that his book assumes the proportion of a definitive work. In the second volume, to appear shortly, he will supply an annotated translation of the "Defensor Pacis." —ROBERT BIERSTEDT.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Brand. Scott: "Lady of the Lake." 2. methought. Clough: "Qua Cursum Ventis." 3. nest. Wordsworth: "To A Skylark." 4. sweep. Campbell: "Ye Mariners of England." 5. crawl. Old English Ballad: "The Wife of Usher's Well." 6. daughter. Shelley: "The Cloud." 7. Ides. Macaulay: "The Battle of Lake Regillus." 8. unslaked. Coleridge: "The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner." 9. thing. Nash: "Spring." 10. Byng. Browning: "Cavalier Tunes." 11. uncertain. Poe: "The Raven." 14. Seville. Tennyson: "The Revenge." 15. gale. Burns: "Jean."

THE FINE ARTS

CHICAGO'S ART INSTITUTE

I THINK I understand at last why children throw snowballs. In the goodness of their youthful hearts they are trying to get rid of the miserable stuff, heaving it out of sight or against a shattering target. At least this seemed a plausible theory when recently in Chicago, between trains, I struggled through a blizzard to revisit the Art Institute. I hadn't been there in twelve years—far too long a time for anyone interested in the arts to go without visiting what is assuredly one of the most exciting museums in the country.

I use the word "exciting" advisedly. For the Institute has an atmosphere of exceptional liveliness. One emerges from the Metropolitan or the Philadelphia Museum awed by the treasures and a little solemn. But one leaves the Art Institute with a different kind of elation, as though one had witnessed a living event of extraordinary beauty. I suppose the reason for this is that, though the Institute has numerous masterpieces from earlier periods, its late nineteenth-century French paintings, with their fervent interest in a not-too-remote way of life, make the deepest impression. They are a magnificent group of pictures, climaxed by Seurat's "La Grande Jatte" (see illustration), whose purchase by Frederic Clay Bartlett in 1924, while the French stood idly by, must be the most brilliant act of connoisseurship of our century.

I had seen "La Grande Jatte" many times before, but never under such memorable circumstances. Its gallery was dark when I arrived, and as the obliging guard flipped on the switches, this incredible work of art came to life gradually. Its dignity is so impressive that the surrounding pictures, many of them fine, seemed by comparison merely hand-painted. I mean by this that Seurat's masterpiece has an hallucinatory impact, over and beyond its identity as a canvas. It draws the spectator forcefully into its still, idyllic world, and the sense of its being a painted image is at least temporarily lost. How Seurat, devoted as he was to recondite theory, intent on formal solutions, could have achieved an almost supernatural intensity—that is the mystery. The scene depicted in "La Grande Jatte"

is a commonplace one of bourgeois holiday recreation in the open air. Its figures are engaged in the trivialities of leisure: they propose no crises; they are utterly relaxed. Yet somehow they become the protagonists of a drama far more acute than that conveyed by the earlier nineteenth-century romantics, for whom spectacular action was a requisite of pictorial theatre. "La Grande Jatte's" equations of form are, of course, intricate and careful. But how is it that its monumentality is not cold or placid, but warm and disturbing? Perhaps this is because of its strange temporal duality. On the one hand it is the summary of an epoch; on the other, an ageless image which might have been excavated from ancient burial, the oldest silences of the earth in its fibres. A superb, haunting, unforgettable work—probably the greatest of modern times.

Turning from "La Grande Jatte" to the impressionist and other post-impressionist works one regains a more exact awareness of specific moment in art's evolution. Yet some of these pictures are among the finest of the nineteenth-century — Degas' "The Millinery Shop," for example, or Renoir's red nude of the late period, which the Institute had the courage to buy when most museums were still clinging to the more obvious graces of that master's earlier styles. Certainly there is no better Gauguin than "The Day of the God," though for me at least that would not be extravagant praise. It is, I think, a picture drowned in artifice by comparison with Van Gogh's "Bedroom at Arles," wherein that tormented genius showed, full-strength, his power to invest inanimate, familiar objects with transcendental allusion. And Toulouse-Lautrec's "Moulin Rouge" is surely one of his two or three best works. It proves, among other things, that Lautrec was an artist unusually suited to the era in which he worked. The ravages of sin could not alone have satisfied his love of pallor in the human face. When one studies the woman in the foreground of "Moulin Rouge," one realizes how integral was gaslight to Lautrec's esthetic. Gaslight's fitful whites, together with its tendency to give flesh a greenish translucence—these attributes were made to order for Lautrec's

wry vision. The Mazda bulb, lighting skin flatly, would have been his natural enemy the impressionists' beloved daylight was not his instinctive friend. But he might have liked neon, in a later time.

The Art Institute has a number of good twentieth-century works, of course, but many of these had been temporarily displaced by a large exhibition of contemporary American paintings. The modern pictures on indefinite loan from the Chester Dale Collection were, however, all on view. They afford a striking commentary on the way in which the perspective of the past twenty-five years has dealt with the stature of the members of the School of Paris. A quarter century ago, for instance, Derain was quite widely considered the peer of Matisse and Picasso, thanks in good part to the eloquent prose of Clive Bell. I doubt that the Dales ever shared the usual high opinion of Derain as a powerful defender of tradition, for, if memory serves me right, Mrs. Dale around 1930 organized an exhibition at the French Institute in New York which compared Derain and Vlaminck in the latter's favor. Still, the Dales bought Derains, and they bought very good ones. But today these pictures look as dead as mutton and, where once we admired them as a hearty continuation of the Corot-Courbet tradition, we see now that they are merely its shallow, belated echo. And when, at Chicago, we come on the other defenders of representational as opposed to "modern" art, the situation is even worse. The pictures of Dufresne, Lurçat (once considered a rival of Miró, despite Henry McBride's perceptive warnings), of Oudot and Tondu—all are ready for the cellar, and nothing for long can keep them above stairs.

IN studying the pictures I have just mentioned, it is tempting to think that "taste," after many centuries of incalculable service, had become a boobytrap for French artists, leading them to empty facility at the expense of conviction. Yet this theory is discredited by the Dales' Braques, all of them painted in the 1920's. For here taste bolsters a talent that for a time dwindled in authority after its great contribution to cubism. Some of the Braques at Chicago are primarily decorative, and I find the two figure pieces rather ponderous and strained, as though the artist felt uneasy before a model more animate than fruit. But the two still lifes, "The Table" and "The Day," are fine indeed. We should remember them when thinking that the 1920's were an over-indulged decade in art as well as life.

The surprise of the Dale exhibition