



A new photograph of Andre Gide at work

## The School for Wives

Three Novelets by Andre Gide Explore Problems of Family Life and Morality

**THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES, ROBERT, and GENEVIEVE** By Andre Gide. Knopf, \$2.75.

WHEN Eveline was married to Robert, in the elegant 1890's, she worshiped him. If there was ever a man who knew how to win friends and influence people, it was Robert. He was invariably amiable, thoughtful, considerate, poised, never at a loss in any situation. He knew the devious ways of the world, but he did not let them contaminate him. To a girl reared in the sheltered niceties of the period he seemed the ideal husband.

But as the girl became a woman and a mother, she saw him in a different light. He seemed now a living platitude, a fiction and a fraud. He was all surface, a piece of colored cardboard with nothing behind it but windy maxims out of a copybook. His self-assurance, his practicality, his dutiful devotion to his wife and children, even his ideals, were the mask of a vacuous weakness, of an inner uncertainty that poisoned the life of an entire family.

This is the situation that Andre Gide, Nobel prize winning French writer, examines in the three novelets that make up his present book. The first, "The School for Wives," consists of Eveline's diary. In the second, Robert offers his rebuttal. "Genevieve," the third section, completes the analysis in the words of their daughter.

Ostensibly the story of an unhappy marriage, Gide's book ranges over a much wider area. It is at once a study of the moral structure of the western family — which is shown as a rather shaky edifice — and an impressive and moving psychological document. The author's subtlety and insight have never appeared at better advantage.

The first section of the book was previously published in English. But though each narrative can stand alone, the full impact of the work depends on the combination of all of them, with their special pleading and their individual points of view.

And the impact is a dramatic one. It will be especially jarring to complacency and authoritarian moralism.

LESLIE CROSS

7  
5  
C  
hi  
"e  
ce  
00  
3  
w  
ti  
li  
a  
r  
b  
p  
ti  
  
si  
h  
P  
ir  
  
ir  
st  
w  
r  
b  
h  
a  
C  
  
si  
le  
y  
st