

## IVORY TOWERS

Ivory towers are cast like castles in Spain. But while these castles are simply meant to adorn the imagination and to exist in the realm of phantasy, ivory towers are designed for some specific conditions of life. To be sure they are not made of real ivory or of similar rare and beautiful materials. They are not even built of wood or stone and mortar standing in silent solitude; they are rather symbols of an attitude of withdrawal and a spirit of non-involvement.

Ivory towers do not usually have certain purposes which an individual or a group may decide to pursue. They house institutions that have set themselves apart from the social milieu. Within them men may dwell for various reasons.

The college professor who has no contact with the day to day problems of practical life has often been traditionally branded as a creature

living in an ivory tower. The monk in the loneliness of his convent also lives in another ivory tower. So is the hermit in the wilderness pursuing in isolation a path towards a life hereafter. He is in an ivory tower.

But there are other kinds of ivory towers. The specialist who has concentrated his mind in a narrow subject of study to the total exclusion of other interests lives in an ivory tower. Learning more and more about less and less, he loses contact with the significance of human personality.

The professional, whether in engineering, medicine, law, or other profession, lives in an ivory tower when outside the narrow confines of his field he knows nothing at all. He has become a captive of his profession. Outside the pool where he moves, he is as helpless as a fish on dry land.

The ivory tower has its

dangers, the dangers of isolation. It could be social isolation; but it could be worse than that. It could be intellectual isolation which may spell moral impoverishment and mental decay. For time in an ivory tower is not a moment for just a pause for refreshment. It is a withdrawal from other men, other thoughts, other feelings, other influences. But it may serve a good purpose for some specific occasion. It may be used to provide a temporary place of convenience where some special service may be performed effectively and undisturbed by a recluse of science qualified to explore the unknown.

### WHAT OF THE CINEMA?

Get more out of life, see a movie. Movies are better than ever.

So goes the gag line in the movie sections of our newspapers. Actually, what does one get out of a movie? What does the cinema 'teach'? As "entertainment" it passes off an entire philosophy.

For instance: Movie audiences have been learning that no woman over twenty-five can be handsome or attractive, though men can be both to a fairly ancient age; that the feminine landscape should be as visible as possible (Bardot?) without being actually seen; that the most interesting people are those who are well-dressed, well-loved, and acquainted with cabarets. Above all, they have been learning that there is nothing fundamentally wrong with our society.

Cinema comment is the kind that enforces a certain set of values, and therefore influences action.