The BOOK SHELF

Late Book Reviews *and* Literary Criticism

by Doris Flint

TYPICAL MIDAMERICA "Middletown in Transition"—Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd (Harcourt, Brace $5.00)

Back in 1924 and 1925 a case study of a typical small city in inland America was made by Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd, both professional sociologists who teach in Eastern colleges. The result of their survey was "Middletown," a book about which H. L. Mencken said "it is the richest and most valuable document ever conocted by American sociologists." "Middletown" is Muncie, Indiana and Muncie's Number One family is the Ball family, makers of Ball mason jars, and referred to all through the book as the "X Family."

They found the typical small town "philosophy of unemployment" which is that anyone who really tries can get work and that every person has within himself the power to climb the ladder of success—the Lynds' statistical information shows that in a year and three quarters there was a chance for one man in 424 to be promoted to a foremanship.

Last week marked the publication of a sequel to the first study, "Middletown in Transition" (Harcourt, Brace $5.00). The Lynds with a complete survey staff came to Muncie in the summer of 1935. The new book is as completely detailed and scientific as the first and follows the general plan of it in order to facilitate comparison with special attention given to the following: the response of both the business-class and the workers, the growth of business-class control; religion, social and educational activities; commercial and political practices and boom and depression theories. The gist of their findings is that, in spite of the awful realities brought upon the American people by the depression of the past eight years, "Middletown" is still living "by the values by which it lived in 1925."

Because they were criticized locally for "underplaying" the Ball family in the first volume, the Lynds, after finding that their power (the Balls) had grown extensively during the past ten years, wrote an entire chapter on the "X Family." The authors say that this resulting domination in power "may be viewed as epitomizing the American business-class control system." A member of the community told the Lynds: "If I'm out of work I go to the X plant; if I need money I go to the X bank, and if they don't like me I don't get it; my children go to the X college; when I get sick I go to the X hospital; I buy a building lot or house in the X subdivision; my wife goes down town to buy clothes at the X department store; if my dog stays away he is put in the X pound; I buy X milk; I drink X beer; vote for X political parties, and get help from X charities; my boy goes to the X YMCA and my girl to their YWCA; I listen to the word of God in X-subsidized churches; if I'm a Mason I go to the X Masonic temple; I read the news from the X morning newspaper; if I'm rich enough, I travel via the X airport."

They describe the Ball family as alert, capable, democratic, Christian gentlemen trained in the school of rugged individualism, patrons of art, education, religion, and a long list of philanthropies." Many thinking people look with alarm upon this growing trend toward employer paternalism. Instead of one family giving all these things (with the money made for them by the workers) wouldn't it be better to pay more in wages and let the people plan their own libraries, parks, etc., financed through direct taxation?

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Odds On Beethoven

Dublin Opinion: "My son is playing Beethoven this evening —"

"Does he expect to win?"

Simple

Philadelphia Bulletin: Hudson—Such a bother deciding about holidays!

Herman—It doesn't bother me. My boss tells me when to go and the wife tells me where.

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Social Briefs

Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Farquar entertained a few friends with a late supper, last Saturday evening in their home on Lake Park Drive.

* * *

Mrs. Guy E. Parker was hostess at a bridge-luncheon in her home on Oakland Ave. Monday. Included among the guests were Mrs. Lowie Thom, Mrs. Charles D. McCall and Mrs. Ford Merritt. From Pleasant Ridge came Mrs. D. E. Goodwine, Mrs. Ralph Lyons, Mrs. F. A. Smart and Mrs. D. C. Broadbridge for the afternoon.

* * *

Virginia Ford entertained twenty six guests at a slumber party in her home on Beverly Road, last Friday. The guests were, Carol Kruesser, Virginia and Biggins Farrar, Noel Dwelly, Betty Elliot, Betty Miller, Lucy Preston, Peggy Bailey, Mary AeMong, Annette Lambie, Barbara Pratt, Barbara Martin, Constance John, Jean Ellis, Patty Blackmore, Suzanne Keller, Joan Seligman, Beulah Martin, June Pointer, Fern and May Townsend, Lucille Wayman, Jane Thomas, Elizabeth Lynd, Barbara Rhodes and Shirley Hersey.

* * *

Miss Joan Baker, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. L. M. Baker of Harrow road will have Francis Bishop of Grosse Pointe as her week end guest. Previous to going to the formal dance at the Community House Saturday evening Joan will entertain at dinner in honor of her guest.

* * *

Mrs. Lane Bishop will be the guest of her daughter, Eleanor, at the Mother's Day festivities at Michigan State College, this Saturday.

* * *

Mrs. Maurice Smith has issued invitations to 40 of her friends for tea in her home on Ingrim road Friday afternoon. Spring flowers will be used about the house and Mrs. Ladda Porter and Mrs. C. V. Crockett will assist Mrs. Smith at the tea table.

* * *

Mrs. Charles H. Soderberg, of Puritan Road, entertained at a luncheon at Devon Gables before the meeting of the Birmingham Musicale, today. Her guests included Mrs. Harry Wise, Mrs. Wm. E. Mosher, Mrs. C. C. Richards, Mrs. Wm. B. Rosevear Jr., Mrs. H. H. Gardner, Mrs. R. H. Whitlatch, Mrs Howard Estes, Mrs. M. C. Cern.

* * *

Mrs. S. A. Stolberg entertained the members of her badminton group at a bridge-luncheon Tuesday, in her home on Rivenoak Avenue. Her guests were Mrs. R. K. White, Mrs. William Holler, Mrs. Herbert Hatch, Mrs. Donald Bay, Mabel Hardig, Mrs. E. T. Smith and Mrs. W. G. Lewellen.

* * *

A reception and wedding supper for 45 guests will be held at Devon Gables, Saturday, May 7, following the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Harder of Detroit, at Epiphany Lutheran Church, Detroit. Miss Edna Rather, of Cranbrook Foundation, and sister of the bride, will act as maid of honor at the ceremony.

* * *

Mrs. Rolfe C. Spinning was the guest of her daughter Betty the early part of this week in East Lansing, where Betty is a student at Michigan State College. Betty will spend this weekend at Kenyon College, as the guest of Thomas Navin with whom she will attend the college Junior Prom.

* * *

Following her graduation this evening from Grace Hospital School of Nursing, Katherine Vahey will entertain at a reception for a few intimate friends in her apartment on Euclid Ave.

* * *

Mr. and Mrs. George T. Jeffers have as their house guests, Mrs. Jeffers' sister, Mrs. Carl Heym, her son, Robert, and Louis Jost, all of St. Louis, Mo. In honor of her guests, Mrs. Jeffers entertained at tea Saturday, in her home. She was assisted by Mrs. M. R. Mead, Mrs. R. O. Mead, Mrs. Wilfred Thompson and Mrs. Arthur E. King.

This week witnessed many other affairs honoring Mrs. Jeffers and her guests. Mrs. M. R. Mead entertained Monday with a luncheon at the Detroit Athletic Club, having as her guests, Mrs. R. O. Mead, Mrs. Raymond Vogel, Mrs. Leo H. Bartemeier and the honor guests.

Tuesday night was the occasion of a dinner given for Mrs. Heym by Dr. and Mrs. L. E. Settemeier, while Wednesday, Mrs. R. O. Mead was hostess in her honor at a bridge-luncheon. In addition to Mrs. Jeffers and Mrs. Heym, the party included Mrs. M. K. Carpenter, Mrs. Raymond Vogel, Mrs. M. R. Mead, Mrs. L. H. Bartemeier, Mrs. Ralph A. Grier, Mrs. Rawson Vaile, Mrs. Hilton Grier, Mrs. Frank Gerry and Mrs. Lyman Wine.

That same evening, the Russell Fishers entertained at dinner for Mr. and Mrs. Jeffers and their guests.

* * *

Nancy Murray attended the Phi Psi party at Ann Arbor, Saturday, as the guest of Fred Schwartz. Other residents of Birmingham who attended the party were Marilyn Ely, escorted by John Neerkin, and Barbara Rupp, escorted by Bud Hill.

* * *

Mrs. Frank Denney will be hostess to a number of Birmingham women Wednesday, May 12 at the Detroit Athletic Club. Invited in for the bridge luncheon are, Mrs. H. S. Burlingame, Mrs. Arthur L. Genung, Mrs. (William Holler, Mrs. Burton Pheatt, Mrs. W. G. Lewellen, Mrs. W. C. Byers, Mrs. H. B. Hatch, Mrs. E. T. Smith and Mrs. R. K. White.

* * *

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Shuart, of Adams road, will entertain at a family dinner in their home Sunday. Guests will be Professor and Mrs. W. L. Shuart, of Battle Creek; Mr. and Mrs. Harry Shuart and daughter Margaret, of Detroit; Mrs. Mary Gonzales, Santa Fe, New Mexico; Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Pooler, of Detroit and Wallace Watt, of Ann Arbor.

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Wife—Oh, John, I dreamed that a man ran off with me, I'm so frightened.

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Chopped roasted almonds in the rich chocolate coating.

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All the rich fruits and fresh nut meats usually found only at higher prices.

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