

(continued from previous page)

their kitchens and bathrooms reflect what they are, and their fluffy, period living-rooms indicate the women they would like to be. While they dress themselves in the exact fashion of the moment, streamline their housekeeping to a minimum, they pick their way around each other's houses with a cocktail in one hand and a cigarette in the other, avoiding collisions with end-tables, coffee-tables, and what-nots, fashioned after the taste of generations whose traditions, opinions, and frustrations they deplore.

Not all the middle-class is brittle and cynical. Much of it is sentimental and solid, holding its homes together in spite of the tensions and disruptive influences of a society that knows all about designing its comfort and very little about a design for living. There are thousands of middle-class women who carry their social conscience into charities and Church clubs; who give time and energy to creative activities like pottery and painting, music and drama; who spend time and energy on their children; who served long hours on canteens and at clubs for servicemen; who belong to the Red Cross and do the collecting in drives for public funds. These women make homes which survive the corruption of the intense worship of the almighty dollar. Less obvious than the pacers of the social sets, they are the women who know more about international affairs than they do about keeping up with the Jones's; who make some use of the time they save with their gadgets; who are good neighbours and good citizens.

'Teen-Age America

But sentimental or cynical, corrupt or courageous, the middle class is what predominates. It is the target of the radio, the Press and the magazines. Its men depend for their opinions on *Time* and *Newsweek*, the *Saturday Evening Post* and the *Reader's Digest*. Its women read a dozen magazines on home-making and fashion, child raising and gardening. Its 'teen-age girls have a choice of three or four magazines designed to direct their fashions, cultivate their social poise, and develop their dress-sense.

'Teen-age America, whether middle-class in origin or not, is constantly being pushed in that direction. Instead of going to exclusive private schools, the 'teen-agers from the wealthier homes gravitate to the school in the residential district in which they live. This means, of course, that each city has a snob-school in spite of itself. The prestige attached to East High in Salt Lake and to Grant High in Portland was out of all proportion to their academic standards. American 'teen-agers are at once more serious-minded and more attractive than Hollywood and unfavourable publicity would suggest. Their manners are easy and informal, the boy's corduroys and jeans are almost uniform and the girls' sophistication is kept in reasonable check. These kids work their way through high-school, not to pay their fees, but to have that old jalopy and those half-dozen blouses. From a high school where their social education is as thorough as their academic they go on to colleges and

universities, always able to escape from the assembly line of their parents to the businesses and professions. At the university they enter sororities and fraternities on a competitive basis that is more social than academic, marry young, divorce early, and almost without exception repeat with little variation the pattern of the older generation.

If there was any one thing about America that shocked and surprised me more than another it was this great majority, this levelling-off, this stifling of the impulse and impetus that has made a conscious nation out of so many diverse immigrants. And among these people, first impressions are everything. What you are wearing, and the car you are riding in, are the measure of your worth.

(To be concluded.)

ITEMS FROM THE ZB's

THE George Melachrino Orchestra, which specialises in symphonic treatment of popular dance tunes and light classics, is widely-known through its BBC shows which have been broadcast by the NZBS. Melachrino is a composer, arranger, versatile instrumentalist, actor, singer, and general entertainer. Among his many imaginative background scores which have been used in British films were those for *Appointment with Crime* and *Woman to Woman*. He first became a band leader in 1939, joined the Army in the same year, and toured with concert parties. Later he was appointed Director of Music to the Army Broadcasting Department. In 1944 the British Army authorities decided to form a British band to join in with the U.S. and Canadian bands, and Melachrino was appointed its director. This saw the formation of the Melachrino Orchestra which, with the exception of a few minor changes, is the same to-day. Recordings by his 26 string players will be played from 22B on Monday, October 27, at 8.30 p.m.

* * *

INTERESTED listeners to 22B's *Dusty Labels* session have lent the Station a number of recordings of tunes that were popular during the 1914-18 war, and these will be presented in the session at 10.30 p.m. on Sunday, October 26. Patrons of "Fullers" in the old days will remember Billy Williams ("The Man in the Velvet Suit"). Born in Australia, Williams produced recordings that were best sellers for a while. He will be heard in the song "When Father Joined the Territorials." Another item in the session will be Harry Lauder's "The Lads Who Fought and Won," which he made famous at the Shaftesbury Theatre, London. Ivor Novello's "Till the Boys Come Home," of 1914-18 vintage, better known as "Keep the Home Fires Burning," will be sung by Herbert Payne. This patriotic hit is said to have netted its composer a tidy £16,000. Station 22B also has the 1914-18 recorded version of "A Broken Doll," composed by J. W. Tate, who wrote several numbers for *The Maid of the Mountains*, and who was the step-father of Jose Collins, whom war veterans will warmly remember.

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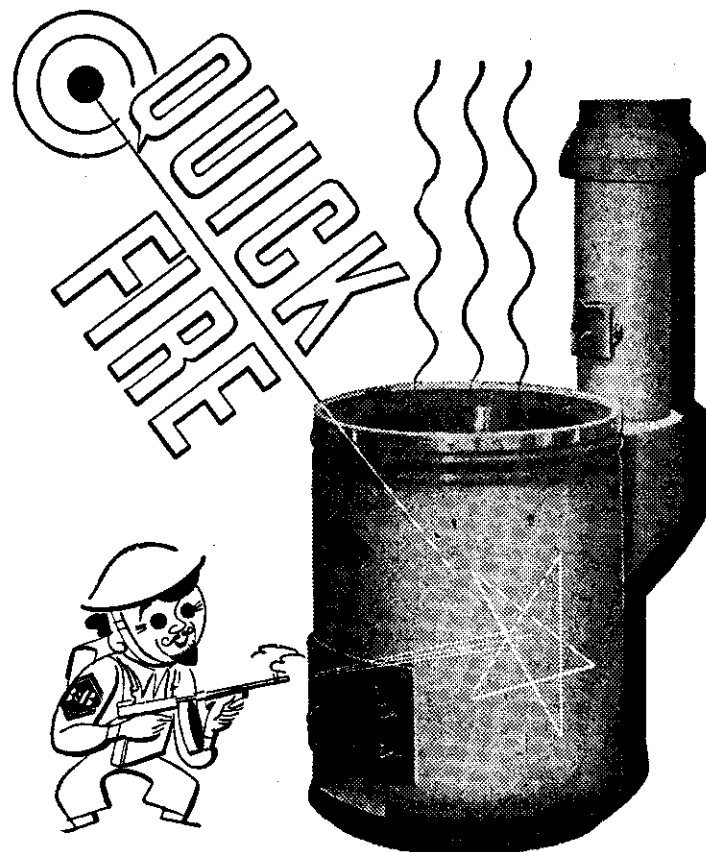
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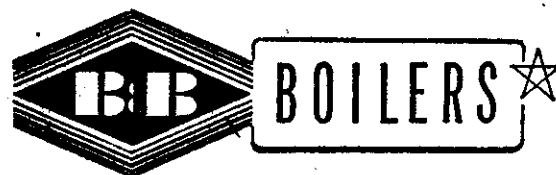
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