

MALAISIE

"Malaisie" is a psychological novel by a clever Frenchman—Hugh Fauconnier. It was a prize-winner two years ago, and because of its continental origin has been some time seeping into American reviews.

It is an outstandingly good translation. Its straightforward and lucidly simple diction savors almost of American directness. Bearing none of the ponderous grammatical constructions of the ordinary transcribed work, it is a marvel of clearness.

The author uses his own experience of fifteen years ago as a rubber planter in the Malay peninsula as material for a most amazing portrayal of the lives and emotions of the white men and natives.

It is a hard book to describe. Practically without plot and certainly lacking in informative description, it nevertheless holds one's attention as few literary works can. One retains only a blurred and fascinating picture of a strange country and stranger people. This picture does not come through the avenues of description and adventure, but rather through the mental impressions and spiritual wanderings of a man who is trying to find an inward peace, partly through beauty in nature, and more completely through his love for his friend.

It is not the usual story of the Oxford lad going to pieces over the shimmer of grass skirts and the heady "arrack" of the cocoanut. It is the story of a strong man, inclined to introversion, who creates his own happiness in hard work, in timely indulgences without regret, in a keenly developed appreciation of nature, and the

intimate friendship of a man, stronger than most.

We follow the author-hero on his daily work on the plantation, and we marvel how with one stroke here and another there, he gives us a vivid picture of the native Malays. His ability to make us feel beauty is remarkable. Nothing could be more exquisite than the love story of the young native poet and his "little Green Coconut." True, it ends in tragedy, but a tragedy which is singularly satisfying. The delicate feeling of the native love songs and the intense appreciation of tropical nature, suggests Fauconnier is more of a philosopher-poet than a writer of adventurous fiction.

This lyrical touch is most effectively silhouetted by the most startling realism. With a sudden masculine force, almost suggestive of the German Remarque's "All Quiet on the Western Front," the author gives us a gruesome portrayal, as perfect in its very completeness as the scenes of natural beauty. It is as if we had been gazing in admiration at a wonderful house, when suddenly the front is slashed away and we are looking in fascination and disgust at the filthy and uncared-for interior. Such for example is the sudden sight of one of the planters in a pitiable state of drunkenness—drunk not on any native concoction nor on English wine, but—and the very perfection of the phrasing fascinates while it repels—on the alcohol which had preserved his snakes in his amateur museum.

Although a study in personality harmony, unlike Douglas' "Magnificent Obsession," and Morgan's "The

Fountain," Fauconnier does not promise a lot and then let us down in his conclusion. On the contrary his opening pages offer no bribe or mysterious secret as an incentive to its complete perusal. He portrays the progression of a man's thought, a man's philosophy and blurred outlines each of us recognizes his own mental pregrinations.

It is essentially a man's book, yet it cannot fail to interest all who are lost in the maze of their own philosophy, welcome the story of a fellow wonder. Oct. 6/33.

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good. As a whole they dance with strength and eloquence.

Karen Kain danced Giselle with precision and a truly fine dramatic flair that gave her interpretation a rare emotional impact. As Albrecht, Frank Augustyn showed great strength and poise. He was a splendid foil for Kain's Giselle and an accomplished partner in setting her story off to advantage. Sergio Stefanski also offered some dazzling work. He pulled off some very demanding executions with flawless grace and impressive ease.

The corps de ballet tended to show a lack of precision that was

distracting at times, especially in the first act and evinced a greater unison than in the earlier movements. As the Wilis they proffered some exciting work but the occasional lapse of timing indicated that only greater experience as a company will bring them totally together.

Music for this production was under the Orchestration of George Crum who revised the music of Adolphe Adam for the occasion. He did manage to achieve the objective of a tight organization and was entirely sympathetic to the dancers' needs.

cinema slants

The other day when I first asked Bill, "What about a movie column?" he just tossed a couple of cold stares and went back to cutting paper dolls. "But Bill," I said, "practically everybody catches a show once in a while; one has to or else turn into either a mental wizard or confirmed alcoholic; there's just nothing else to do in this bustling metropolis. That's why a lot of people think it would be a fine idea to write up some of the pictures that'll be coming to town." Bill lowered the scissors wearily and sighed. "My friend," he said, "soon this weekly newspaper will have more columns than the Parthenon, but it is not on those grounds alone that I object to your suggestion. Once upon a time we did run

movie reviews; they were good, too. But before long complications set in; the attendance at many of Edmonton's theatres happened to drop right about then, and strangely, some of this decline at the box office was attributed to The Gateway's movie critic. That was unfortunate indeed. It is not our wish to antagonize anyone, especially not people who occasionally favor us with free passes. Our desire, instead, is to maintain friendly relations with the citizens over town, to uphold a high standard of neighborliness between burgher and student, and also to continue to receive free passes. So you see..." he broke off, bidding me rise from my knees. "Now, Bill," I said handing him a fresh Kleenex, "now Bill, don't talk so discouraging; if you'll just give us another chance, I promise..."

Mr. Noel Coward is a very smart man. His knowledge of New York City's favorite borough has recently been questioned severely, but the fact remains that he is one of our most popular modern authors, lecturers, and playwrights. Unlike many other legitimate writers, he knows a good thing when he sees one, and is therefore not adversely inclined towards the silver screen. Not only has he generously mingled with those dreadful movie people, but formed his own producing company which, like an English type Orson Welles, he dominates completely. You may remember him as the captain of "In Which We Serve," the man who swore so magnificently at the German Stukas, a picture, incidentally, produced and directed by him.

Well, about a year ago Mr. D. had a bright idea. His plays had been the rave of Broadway and Piccadilly for two decades; why not try out on the plebeians

who frequent the flickers. There was his own studio, with a lot of unexposed technicolor film in the cameras and some of his greatest successes just simply going to waste in a thousand little theatres.

The screen version of "Blithe Spirit," which resulted certainly won't appeal to one and all. The element of slapstick, so important to most Hollywood comedies, has been left out completely. No one throws cream pies at innocent bystanders; no monocled villain threatens to foreclose the mortgage unless the "dotter" marries him; no waiter drops his tray of ice cubes down the back of a low-slung evening gown. This show is strictly high comedy, Noel Coward at his very best, starting with those coyly floating ghouls, right down to his inimitably subtle bedroom scenes (and hilariously funny). His caustic humor is as refreshing today as it was at the stage play's premiere. His true and cutting characterizations, his witty dialogue, the deft plot and tightly woven story are still tops with the reader of Punch and New Yorker—or Esquire.

Co-starred in this vehicle are Rex Harrison, the British Cary Grant, who turns in a flawless performance, and Constance Cummings, who can't help it if she doesn't make a very convincing ghost. She is much too lovely to have stepped from a cold and clammy grave recently. Margaret Rutherford, whose portrayal of the medium steals the show, is amazing in her manipulation of spooks and spirits; her superb acting will send many scurrying to the nearest fortune teller.

On the whole, an extremely brilliant farce, that will help dispel some people's complex that English pictures "just natcherly, never ain't no good." You'll like it. Sept. '46.

A knockout of a movie

— CBS - TV

Brilliant

— Judith Crist, NBC-TV

The utmost in suspense

— New York Post

Dynamite

— Cue

Yves Montand

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