

# PROBLEM PEOPLE

## THE INTRUDER

(London Films-Ivan Foxwell)

SO much has been said (from between pale, tight lips) about the unsentimental and right and only way to deal with post-war crime that three cheers seem too few to give for a film which shows a bit of understanding. Now don't get me wrong. This isn't a heavyweight sociological piece. In fact, with someone so damned English and decent as Jack Hawkins in the lead, *The Intruder* should have almost universal appeal. But it is a story of post-war crime to this extent—that Ginger Edwards would never have gone wrong if the war hadn't changed things for him.

Ginger (Michael Medwin) is the intruder found by a stockbroker, Merton (Jack Hawkins), burgling his flat one night when he comes back from a round of golf. The intruder gets away, but for the rest of the film Merton spends his time trying—as the title of Robin Maugham's original story suggests—to get a "Line on Ginger." Merton, you see, was Ginger's wartime colonel in the tanks. If the present is to be understood the past must be looked at, and this, I'm afraid, involves an incredible number of flashbacks, and some war sequences, both

### BAROMETER

FAIR TO FINE: "The Intruder."  
FAIR TO FINE: "The Star."  
FAIR: "The Man Who Watched Trains Go By."

realistic and humorous. If you're the sort of purist who hates flashbacks on principle you'll probably hate this film. I found them in this context very easy to take.

Among the people *The Intruder* calls up from the near or distant past are several members of the old unit—including a good pal (George Cole) and a bit of a swine (Dennis Price)—and Ginger's old girl friend (Susan Shaw). There's also his little brother and a too-old-fashioned guardian-uncle. These last three have between them a big say in the pattern of Ginger's future in one of the film's most telling journeys into the past. Linking all these characters and their stories is Merton in his sports car.

I liked this film, for what newspaper men call human interest, but also for its humanity. The ending didn't quite convince me, and for once Mr. Medwin's engaging grin seemed a little out of place. But that's something the scriptwriters (Robin Maugham and John Hunter) and perhaps the director (Guy Hamilton) should be blamed for, if blame

there is—for there's room here for a difference of opinion. Some of the scenes are most moving, and the acting throughout is excellent. This is a film everyone should like, even if only as entertainment. But after the entertainment it's also a film worth thinking about.

## THE STAR

(20th Century-Fox)

THE new Bette Davis film, directed by Stuart Heisler, is the story of a faded film star who can't bring herself to believe she will never again be the public's darling. Even more than in *The Intruder*, the ending is the least convincing part—or maybe I'm just becoming a sourpuss. On the other hand, Miss Davis carries us along with her so completely almost all the way that we seem very close to her, especially when she is suffering, though the character she portrays could hardly be more remote from our experience. It's the sort of part that only an experienced actress could play well, and she really lets herself go in it. Often not quite sure herself whether she is sincere or merely acting a part, her film star talks to her agent, visits her daughter in her ex-husband's home, throws out her sponging relatives, gets drunk and goes to jail, is rescued by a boat mechanic (Sterling Hayden) she once gave a part in a film, takes a job in a store, and in an absorbing studio sequence makes her bid for a comeback. This is a Bette Davis film. She hasn't



MICHAEL MEDWIN  
*The war changed things*

forgotten a thing. No one else really has a look in, but with her about no one seems to need one.

## THE MAN WHO WATCHED TRAINS GO BY

(Eros Films-Raymond Stross)

I HAVEN'T read the Georges Simenon thriller on which this film is based, but I'm assured by one who has that it's much better than Harold French's script and direction manage to convey. The film



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