

has Mr. McAuslan been unfortunately unfortunate? Oh poor Titian, poor Rembrandt! In much finer words than I could conjure up, Mr. Denis Glover postulates the whole problem in the first paragraph of his article on typography. Read it.

I don't know much about poetry, but I have an idea that there are some good poets in New Zealand. It is good to see that some people are writing verse instead of writing about it.

As to the reproductions of paintings, drawings and sculpture, etc., all I will say is that in comparison with the same kind of work as illustrated in the London *Studio* and other overseas publications, I am not depressed, nor do I feel elated. I am sure that the New Zealand artist is no more satisfied with his own work than the British or French artist should be with his. I think all written criticisms should be headed One Person's Opinion. The written word is so awesome and final. I have in mind in particular the subject of dramatic criticism. Recently the Chicago dramatic critic, Sydney Harris wrote, "Anne of the Thousand Days is one of the worst plays ever A falsified history, perverted psychology, repudiated morality and degraded literature." But Mr. Don Iddon, also from America, says, "A superb play, superbly acted." There you are. Let us buy the London *Studio* and book our passage to Chicago.

A QUEER BOOK

ALL THINGS BETRAY THEE, by Gwyn Thomas; Michael Joseph. English price, 10/6.

A ROMANTIC novel with its scene set in early 19th Century Wales, it combines a number of elements not always found in the same work — symbolism, eloquent dialogue, violence and unashamed yearnings for those far-off hills, forever green, to which the heart is so easily, and so unrewardingly, lifted up. The romanticism is facile. The conflict — between enclosing landlords plus faces-of-the-poor-grinding ironmasters and the People — is phoney, a revision of history in terms of a partisan view of the present or the recent past. And yet the book has a subdued success. Mr. Gwyn Thomas batters his way through his own misty visions to an ending, if not shapely, at least coherent. The flashes of wild poetry in the mind and speech of the chief character have a certain truth and a disordered beauty. No one would call this a good novel; I cannot call it a bad one.

—David Hall

TALES OF TRAVEL

THE RESTLESS VOYAGE, by Stanley D. Porteous; Harrap. English price, 10/6.

SIX-LEGGED SNAKES IN NEW GUINEA, by Evelyn Cheesman; Harrap. English price, 12/6.

THE NEW CONGO, by Tom Marvel; Macdonald. English price, 15/-.

THE *Voyages of Captain Cook* were an inspiration to many an adventurous youth in the early 19th Century, and they filled Archibald Campbell, a Paisley weaver, with a longing to journey to the romantic Sandwich Isles. He endured much before he reached his goal, including illegal impressment into the Navy, flogging, and shipwreck in the Aleutian Islands. When he reached Hawaii his strength of character and talents as a weaver made him a favourite with the island's ruler, King Tamaahmaah, and he eventually returned to Scotland, where his story was printed, in edited form, under the title *A Voyage Round the World from 1806 to 1812. The Restless Voyage* is a re-telling of this tale. It is not history, nor is it strictly biography. The author has modernised the

style and rounded out the story with additional incidents he has discovered about Campbell's life. The result is an exciting narrative, picaresque in tone, which reveals incidentally something about maritime conditions in those days, and the customs of the early Polynesians.

Evelyn Cheesman visited both Dutch and Australian New Guinea during 1939 and early 1940 to collect specimens for a South Australian museum. She was primarily interested in insects, but she had encounters also with crocodiles, tree kangaroos, geckos, paradise birds, flying squirrels, turtles, and even (at Hollandia) with a couple of Japanese spies. *Six-Legged Snakes in New Guinea* is a matter-of-fact and often amusing account of her day-to-day experiences, with much valuable commentary on the anthropological peculiarities of the tribes who assisted her in her research.

The Belgian Congo is of interest because of its immense uranium deposits and because of the enlightened attitude of today's white colonisers to the Negroes. *The New Congo* is a topical study, with maps and photographs, of its history, industrial potential, and administration, based on a recent visit to the territory.

—P.J.W.

POPULAR SCIENCE

THE ROMANCE OF MEDICAL SCIENCE, by Patrick Pringle; Harrap. English price, 10/6.

"ROMANCE" of the motion picture pattern and science make odd bedfellows. In this book, more than fifty pages are devoted to unscientific pre-Renaissance myth and legend. What our author calls the "medicine of the mind" is dismissed in three pages. But surely this is one of the growing points of medical science. The viewpoint that Pringle brings to his task is given further emphasis in a fulsome chapter on the R.A.M.C.

Many of the illustrations are ill-chosen. For example, the plate facing page 224 could be of girls packing sugar. We are told it is M and B 693, by which Pringle means "sulphapyridine." This heavy leaning on trade information and trade illustrations is a weakness throughout the whole modern section. Half the plates, too, are portraits which, of course, are useless in advancing the theme. By contrast, the illustrations of an operation in 1840 and one today should have been placed to be visible at one opening. The impact would then have been immense.

The facts are here: inventions such as the stethoscope, microscope and X-rays; discoveries such as the germ theory, anaesthetics and antiseptics; men such as Pasteur and Banting. All that one could reasonably desire to know of the great struggle for health is here. Unfortunately it is so overlaid by trivial "human interest romance" that one is first cloyed and then annoyed. It is a pity that Pringle, with all this good material so carefully gathered together, could not have let it tell its own story.

—J. D. McD.

NATIONAL FILM UNIT.

Aspects of the amateur theatre movement in New Zealand are dealt with in *Beginners Please*, the National Film Unit's Weekly Review released for the week beginning January 6. *Beginners Please* takes a quick look at the early background of the amateur theatre, then at present-day trends, and finally takes the spectator on a tour of the North Island with the Auckland Adult Education Centre Theatre Group, which recently presented Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man* on a professional basis to 40 small towns. The group put in a tremendous amount of work, using for theatres anything from converted factories to modern cinemas, and travelling practically every day.



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