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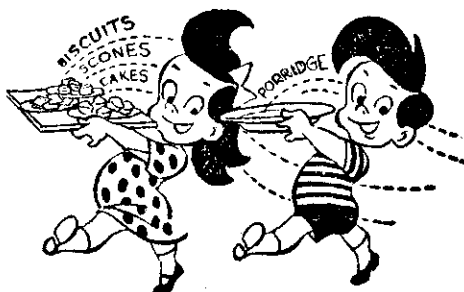
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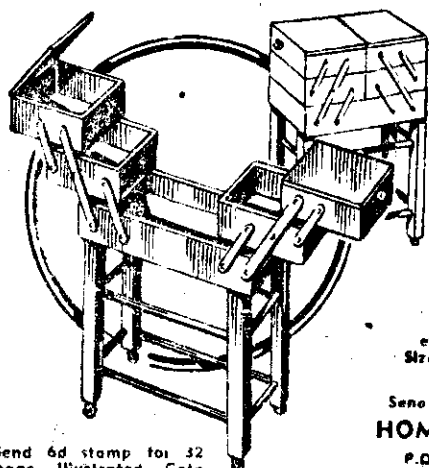
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FILM REVIEWS BY JNO.

Red-White-and-Blue Lagoon

SATURDAY ISLAND

(RKO-Radio)

IF you had a portable gramophone, a dozen carefully-selected records, and an unlimited supply of needles, what sort of desert island would you like to be marooned on? Almost any kind, of course, might do—I have no means of knowing at the time of writing what Thursday night's big broadcast holds in store—but if you're feeling fenced in, don't rush your fences. Pause a moment and consider *Saturday Island*. If this is not the desert isle to end all desert isles, then it's at least Penultima Thule—or I'm a flying Dutchman.

On the relatively important point of sailing directions, there is, unfortunately, little information I can give you. I made the first leg of the trip (in company with Miss Linda Darnell and a large blond youth called Tab Hunter, who looks—and sounds—like a masculine edition of Judy Holliday) on board a U.S. Navy supply ship. The time is circa 1944, the place somewhere about mid-Pacific, though as it happens the credits have already told us that the film was made in the West Indies with the co-operation of H.M. Government in Jamaica and British and U.S. Forces in the Caribbean.

One has scarcely time to become acquainted with the ship, and its cheerful cargo of Marines and Canadian nursing sisters, before a skulking Japanese submarine sends them all to the bottom in a shocking inferno of blazing ammunition and gasoline—all except Miss Darnell and Mr. Hunter. This tragedy struck me as a singularly maladroit introduction to romance on a tropic isle, but when morning disclosed the two survivors bowling merrily along in a rubber dinghy before a fair breeze neither seemed to be suffering any pronounced psychic trauma. Young Mr. Hunter is, in fact, so mately cheerful at the prospect of an indeterminate spell of leave that Miss D. feels impelled to stand on her dignity and remind him that though the dinghy has no lower deck that, metaphorically, is where he belongs.

Before you can say Robinson Crusoe, however, they make their landfall on Saturday Island, and nothing quite like it has been heard of, I'm sure, since the Swiss Family Robinson hit the headlines a century and a half ago. The trees groan beneath their burden of uncontrolled oranges, bananas and breadfruit, the sparkling lagoon teems with fish that don't know a hook from a handsaw whatever quarter the wind is sitting in. There are even a few saws conveniently to hand in an old wreck, and with these and sundry other tools Mr. Hunter shows just what a Marine can do once he has established a beach-head. The only evil in this Eden appears to be the tropical rot which attacks Miss Darnell's wardrobe.

* * *

THESE asterisks may be taken to represent the emotional storm aroused in Mr. Hunter by that process of erosion, and the calm idyll that supervenes. It lasts a year and is then

BAROMETER

OVERCAST: "Saturday Island."

DULL: "The Girl Who Had Everything."

thoroughly shattered by a dashing R.A.F. type who prangs his dive-bomber on the beach. By the time he is nursed back to health and the trio are rescued young Mr. H. is once again the odd man out.

Saturday Island, as you will have gathered, is second-grade entertainment, made tolerable only by its unconscious humour. Of one thing I can be certain, the U.S.M.C. Publicity Division was not co-opted for this production.

THE GIRL WHO HAD EVERYTHING

(M.G.M.)

THE Girl is Elizabeth Taylor, and the title is slightly hyperbolic. She may have most of the things which go to make the Good Life as it is interpreted in the advertising sections of the smart magazines—good looks, snappy clothes which she wears with the outré charm of the splay-footed lovelies in the fashion pages, streamlined surroundings, and the heady warmth of masculine devotion. But one doesn't need to be a Freudian to recognise that there are other and more prosaic commodities—like commonsense and self-control—which she does not possess. What, perhaps, she needs most of all (and Father doesn't perceive this until it is too late) is a stern measure of parental discipline. I could not, however, become greatly concerned at what might happen to Miss Taylor in this depressing and occasionally sordid screen play. But I was irritated to see William Powell, a polished actor who has given me much pleasure in the past, wasted in a part (that of an ageing attorney with a gangster client) which allowed so little scope for his talents. I was delighted with his showing in *Life With Father*; I think most filmgoers were. That was in 1948. I haven't seen him satisfactorily employed since then.



LINDA DARNELL
Victim of tropical rot

N.Z. LISTENER, AUGUST 28, 1953.