

ing wealthy farmers: "If ever again you turn away a poor man and revile him you will have Giuliano to reckon with." Finally, in his account of the handsome, dashing young man's death, Mr. Maxwell's book attains a brooding atmosphere almost operatic in flavor. But, again, it is impossible to be totally satisfying. For who betrayed Giuliano no one really knows. Mr. Maxwell says he does—but he won't tell.

—ALLEN CHURCHILL

OLD DAYS IN EAST AFRICA: Once upon a time in the Old Africa a white hunter could make a fortune poaching ivory, and could wander about the bush indefinitely, living by his gun and his wits. But this was before the First World War, when John Alfred Jordan was still a young man. Now seventy-five, this British-born, Oregon-raised, and Africa-scarred hunter has, with John Prebble, written a colorful narrative of those wild and dangerous years in British and German East Africa. The reader may be a little annoyed with the Hemingwayesque rhetoric of these stories, but he will soon forget that as he becomes engrossed in hunts for elephant and man-eating lion, an encounter with "leopard men" (who turn out actually to be rather squalid bush-bandits), a hilarious magic competition with a witch-doctor, a barroom fist fight in a Kenya frontier town, and countless anecdotes about snake-bite, crocodile shooting, Cape buffalo, gorillas (who grieve over their dead like human beings), and pygmies. Despite their pretentious style of writing Jordan and Prebble have produced a book about Africa that has much more dash and flavor than is usual in that genre.

—THOMAS E. COONEY.



—By Paul Galdone for "A House of Children."

"... a celebration of an idyllic childhood."

FICTION

The Shimmer of Youth

"A House of Children," by Joyce Cary (Harper, 276 pp. \$3.50), one of its author's early novels now published in this country for the first time, is an autobiographical celebration of an idyllic boyhood summer in Ireland.

By Milton Crane

THE gratifying success of Joyce Cary's works in the United States in the past several years has sent his publishers back to those earlier novels, which long ago won him deserved renown in England. One of these, "A House of Children," now offered for the first time to American readers, shows Mr. Cary in an (to us) unfamiliar role, half-evoking, half-creating the memory of a boy's summer in Ireland in a house of children half a century ago.

Those who (with good reason) regard with misgiving every novel of childhood or adolescence, fearing an undigested mass of hypersensitive sentimentality, may be assured that Mr. Cary has brought his own highly individual approach to this material as to everything else he touches. The story of Evelyn Corner's summer in Dunamara is the story of a child's world, as blissful in its promise of eternal sunshine as Kenneth Grahame's wonderful "Golden Age." Mr. Cary himself said that he intended "A House of Children" to be "a book full of that clarity, the large skies, and wide sea views, which belong to the vision of my childhood."

All this the book is, and more. For some of Evelyn's cousins are already leaving the world of Dunamara, the gentle Frances for marriage, the unsure Robert for boarding school, the headstrong Delia for elopement with the children's former tutor, Pinto. And Evelyn himself is changing, as he abruptly realizes in the middle of the Maylins' party, a long and brilliant narrative that catches up most of the threads of the first part of the book. Until this time Evelyn and his fellows had "gathered sensations, smells, various excitements; only now and then consolidated into an idea by an accident of attention, some remark. But at the party, while Evelyn is alternately dancing sedately with his cousin Kathy and frolicking wildly, a

strange boy speaks slightly of the children's antics, and Evelyn feels himself suddenly drawn apart:

I don't mean that nature or some mysterious power ended my childhood at eight years old. I don't know when my childhood ended or if it is all ended now. The only certain distinction I can find between childhood and maturity is that children grow in experience and look forward to novelty; that old people tend to be set. This does not mean even that children enjoy life more keenly than grown-ups, they are only more eager for experience. Grown-ups live and love, they suffer and enjoy far more intensely than children; but for the most part, on a narrower front. For the average man or woman of forty, however successful, has been so battered and crippled by various accidents that he has gradually been restricted to a small compass of enterprise. Above all, he is perplexed. He has found out numerous holes and inconsistencies in his plan of life and yet he has no time to begin the vast work of making a new one. . . . I think that is the reason for the special sadness of nearly all grown-up faces . . . you read in their lines of repose the sense that there is no time to begin again, to get things right. The greater a grown man's power of enjoyment, the stronger his faith, the deeper and more continuous his feeling of the waste of life, of happiness, of youth and love, of himself.

But for children life seems endless, and they do not know a grief that has no cure.

Above all, "A House of Children" is a celebration of an idyllic childhood, caught for all time by an artist who knows that the past can be recaptured only if it is recreated. Hence, as Mr. Cary disarmingly tells us in the prefatory essay to the Carfax edition of this novel (and could not Messrs. Harper & Brothers make available all these remarkable essays in self-criticism?) the young Joyce Cary was divided for the purposes of this book into Evelyn Corner and his elder brother Harry (an invention), lest a fusion of the two characters mar the simplicity and clarity for which Mr. Cary was striving and which he so signally achieved.

No Hunter Is Alone

"Harry Black," by David Walker (Houghton Mifflin, 316 pp. \$3.95), is a tale of big-game hunting spiked with generous dashes of love and courage, suspense and exoticism, and the dilemma of arrogance vs. humility.

By J. G. Hitrec

IT IS probably safe to say that David Walker's novel "Harry Black" is the longest fictionalized account of a tiger hunt ever to hit a printed page and drive a reader to nail-biting. The quarry is the man-eater of Rimli, called the Bad One by the villagers of Rimli, a valley in the Himalayan foothills of Behar. The hunter—pursuer might be a better word—is a man called Harry Black, an ex-army colonel with a game leg, a man who has been soured by life and has retreated from it into an almost perfect cocoon of haughty self-sufficiency. Harry Black "thinks he walks alone." He talks tough and acts tough, a sort of combination Captain Hornblower and Francis Macomber with a clipped accent.

The story opens with Harry stalking the man-eater of Rimli and having his first crack at the Bad One. He misses and has to come back again and again. On the second or third try he is mauled and nearly killed. By that time he is no longer "alone," but surrounded by a few people who in their various ways make claims on him and jeopardize his independence. One is Desmond Tanner, an old comrade in arms and now a sugar planter at Rimli, whose bond with Harry goes back to the last war when they shared a prison camp in Germany and staged a mass escape. The other is Desmond's wife, Christian, whom Harry has met once before and secretly loved ever since. At this point, healing in their bungalow at the sugar factory, Harry falls for Christian all over again. He has always helped himself to whatever he wanted, and is now inclined to do the same with Christian, but Desmond and his friendship are in the way. There is also Rabat, an Indian army brigadier, another old friend; and Bapu, the old jungle tracker who is Harry's *shikari* and a living symbol of the sort of primitive life that Harry would gladly swap for his own complicated existence. All of these people

impinge in their individual fashions on Harry's fondly-held notion that he is a "solitary" and doesn't need anyone—and he resists them obstinately.

Harry's exaggerated obsession with personal courage may have something to do with it; a man who has never been afraid is apt to look on others as inferior species. What Harry needs is a good dose of humility that will drive such Aryan nonsense from his mind. He gets it, too, and quite soon. The tiger hunt is resumed and eventually concluded, but not before Harry learns a few edifying things about courage and about the grace of being weak and humble at the right time. In one sense, therefore, Harry's quest of the man-eater of Rimli was synonymous with his search and finding of himself.

David Walker's narrative is taut and deftly paced, with a cumulative suspense that is enormous. And he is a smooth storyteller who has no qualms about picking his material and situations for utmost effect. He can be as electrifying in the jungle as in a German prison camp or on a polo field.

The story of the Bad One of Rimli is the biggest big-game adventure value you are likely to get in a long time. To paraphrase the cool and unfazeable Harry Black himself: "Personal advice. Walk to nearest book store and get book. Loads of fun!"



—Robin Watt.

David Walker—"... taut ... deftly paced."



Notes

NEW ORLEANS WITCH: Anybody knows what a witch is. It's an old lady with a hooked nose who rides a broom, had a bit part in "Macbeth," and was badly treated in New England. But in "The Voodoo Queen" (Putnam, \$3.95) Robert Tallant, a native of New Orleans, tells us that a New Orleans witch can also be a Robin Hoodess in disguise. He does it by lightly fictionalizing the exploits and home life of a beautiful quadroon voodooienne named Marie Laveau (1794-1881) whom he labels "the last great American witch." Madame Laveau certainly emerges as a lady well worth having at one's side in any occult contest. During the past century she officiated in a host of conflicts of love, hate, and worldly ambition among Louisiana Negroes and whites. She confronted the wounded of two wars, tended the sick during the yellow-fever plagues, and shared her wealth during the great bank panic of 1837. But somehow in presenting his heroine as a wholesome do-gooder against a background of sunshine and saccharine Mr. Tallant never manages to get her off the ground. Instead of a high priestess of the dark arts Madame Laveau seems like a remarkably faithful reproduction of the lady next door, and Mr. Tallant gives the reader only a string of incidents and suppositions about a real-life person who would have been better presented as non-fiction. There is, however, one uneasy closing note: if Madame Laveau's daughter, Marie Jr., lives as long as did her illustrious mother she must be still around and operating.

—JAMES KELLY.

NEW YORK APPLE-KNOCKERS: John Brick, the young Hudson Valley novelist who has come up with a lively historical narrative every year since 1950, offers