

SOUND & SHADOW

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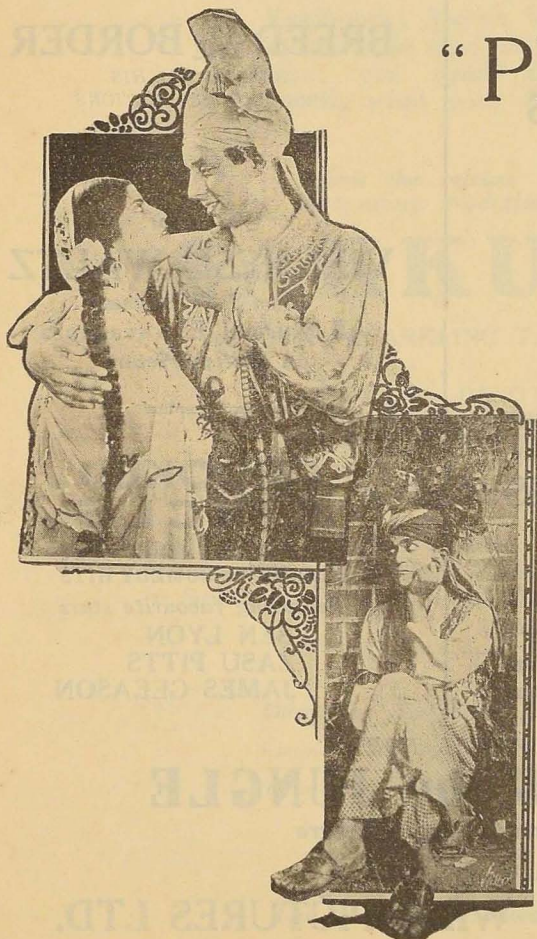
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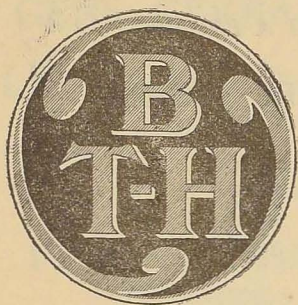
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By mutual arrangement Mr. A. Narayanan has relinquished the Agency of Aurora Film Corporation in Madras—

Rai Bahadur Motilal Chamaria is shortly opening a branch office at Bangalore for the distribution of his pictures. Mr. Thuluja will be incharge of this office.

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A scene from "Yahoodi-ki-Larki"—an Urdu Talkie which is said to be one of outstanding productions of the year.



A scene from Aurora's Tamil "Sakkubai"

Caught in our Lens

By "ZOOM"

THE DANGER AHEAD:

Mr. Sydney R. Kent, the able president of the Fox Film Corporation of America, is reported to have said in an interview in England in connection with the salaries of motion picture players, now under the consideration of the president of the United States "There are not enough big people to go around. I can get plenty of cheap people, but the people who can do things have to be made." How true the statement is when you consider conditions in this country. The big people whose very name is a Box Office draw are naturally very limited in this country. Gohar, Sulochana, Kajjan, Zubeida, Mukhtar Begum, Sabita Devi and probably one or two more can be included in this class. Most of them have been with us since the beginning of Indian films and age and perhaps the arduous nature of their work are slowly undermining their influence with their audience. Where are the others, new faces, to take their place? As Mr. Kent says such people will have to be made and I wonder how many Indian studios are alive to this problem which is facing the Indian Film industry.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT!

You know that famous definition of news —*of man biting the dog*. Well here is something that appears to transcend it. Offer any girl or boy a screen career and I ask you is there any person who will refuse it? Add to that the offer is that of co-stardom for an entirely new comer! Yet we are told that at first such an offer was refused. That remarkable person is Margaret Sullivan who is now appearing in the Universal's "Only Yesterday" with John Boles. When John Stahl who is directing this picture offered her the part she blankly refused. "I loved the theatre and I wanted to stay there. I didn't think I'd like Hollywood," she is reported to have said "didn't think I'd like pictures, didn't want to come." A director is no director if he cannot make a girl even a Margaret Sullivan to agree to his proposal. But she consented only after Universal incorporated in her contract a set of conditions the like of which even Hollywood had never seen before, we are told. One of these conditions referred to a small mole on her face which the director wanted her to remove. But she absolutely refused saying that she

did not want to be beautified. Imagine a girl saying that! and a cinema player at that! Curiously inspite of the contract, the mole had to be removed. Of course, not because she wanted to be beautified. But the people in the Universal lot appeared to have called it a wart. She couldn't possible keep it after that, could she. Is it not a strange world in which we live?

KHADDAR IN HOLLYWOOD:

Who would have thought that Mahatma Gandhi's message could find an adherent in Hollywood yet such seems to be the case for, his favourite wheel is humming in the residence of a Columbia player in the motion picture colony. According to a report, Fay Wray who screamed her way into motion picture fame, astonished the entire production company of Columbia's "Master of Men" when she arrived on the set followed by her chauffeur bearing one of the ancient and picturesque spinning wheel. Everybody on the set naturally thought it a huge joke until the actress seated herself behind it and began actually to spin. "Homespun is the most popular fabric for winter suits" said Miss Wray smilingly. We who admired Mahatmaji for his tenacity of purpose for braving the rigours of winter in Britain when he went to the Round Table Conference with his homespun now know why he stuck to his usual dress. Anyway considering that the message of the spinning wheel has spread to Hollywood, perhaps Mahatmaji will change his opinion about the cinema.

INDIAN DANCER IN HOLLYWOOD.

Regarding Uday Shankar, or as the Americans write "Shan Ker" the Motion Picture Herald of America says: "May be yes and may be no. The great Hindu dancer with his company is about to invade Hollywood and all points around. If he isn't the greatest sensation that ever hit Southern Calif, I'll swap my new camels' hair coat for Bill Powell's moustache.

The "maybe yes and maybe no" was in regard to pictures. Whether this consummate artist, this great interpreter of the soul of India in music

and dance, has any intention of going into pictures, I do not know. But I would like to see him and his company there inserted somewhere in some kind of Anglo-Indian "Cavalcade."

Shankar himself is youthful and has the beauty of an amorous god.

If sex-appeal, beauty, grace and erotic charm are picture assets, Shankar is a Find with a capital f."

Now India's position in the film world seems to be assured.

SHOWMEN, BEWARE!

The way in which a theatregoer shows his dislike of the picture shown is perhaps as varied as their temperments. We are all familiar in this country of the continued hisses and whistlings which our pit lords indulge in when a picture is not to their liking. Not so with the people of Buenos Aires if we are to believe Mr. Guy Morgan United Artists' representative over there as reported in the Motion Picture Herald. "Disliking a feature, the disgruntled patron makes no plea for returned admission, but whips out a long bladed knife, takes it out on inoffensive seat upholstery, lifts handy portable objects, tosses them into fixtures with a distinct preference for mirrors. It is indeed a matter for gratification that he does not vent his wrath on the theatre manger's up-



Madhav R. Kale and Akhtar in "Malti-Madav.

holstery, by which we mean his skin, and also on his head ! Perhaps the easiest way to show displeasure without hurting anybody is to carry a few flashlights and project them on the screen if the picture is not to your liking ?

AN OUNCE OF PRACTICE.

According to the information received from Australia it is understood that the Federal Government of that country have decided, in order to encourage local production of pictures, to award prizes to the value of £ 4,750 for the three best films produced every year. We do not know definitely at the moment how the scheme is to be financed but when a similar scheme was contemplated sometime before, it was proposed to add an extra farthing per foot on foreign pictures. Here is an idea which the Indian Government might easily copy. Delhi has always protested of its overwhelming interest in Indian pictures but will it do at least something similar to Australia ? An

ounce of practice is worth tons of verbeal sympathy which leads no where.

MEXICO'S EXAMPLE.

Time and again we have referred to the manner in which Indian subjects have been handled or mishandled by certain Hollywood producers intent to cash on the credulity of people. Such travesty of truth might pass unnoticed in this country but not so in Mexico. Writing on M. G. M. "Viva Villa," the El Grafico of Mexico proclaims that the Mexican government should refuse permission to make such as these "Derogatory" films. It concludes "we shall see foreign companies picturing in purely mercantile enterprises to please a foreign public that will not be able to imagine Mexico other than murdering and robbing and in a condition of the most extreme misery." I would like to know how many Indian papers wrote anything at all about that picture "India Speaks." Yet many of these papers publishes a "cinema supplement" and charges, I am rebellly informed, a certain amount for the photographs published therein !

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Screen Sidelights

By Gleanor.

CINEMA MAGNATE HONOURED:

It is very rare for cinema magnates to receive Government's recognition, but this year we are glad to note that a prominent gentleman connected with the film industry Mr. Motilal Chamria has been given the title of Rai Bahadur. Mr. Motilal is the youngest son of the late Rai Bahadur Hurdutroy Chamria whose name is familiar to the Indian business world not only as an enterprising business man but also as one associated with many public charities. Rai Bahadur Motilal Chamria has inherited all the good qualities of his illustrious father. A notable instance of Rai Bahadur Motilal Chamria's public charities is his substantial contribution to the Government Industries Department for the relief of unemployment of young men in Bengal. Last year when about 4,000 repatriated labourers from Fiji were stranded in Calcutta, Mr. Chamria sympathised with their helpless condition, and true to his traditional bent of mind hastened to offer succour to the distressed. Mr. Chamria gave shelter to the labourers and helped them considerably with food and clothing.

Mr. Chamria is the youngest Indian who had the keen foresight to gauge the great possibilities of the Indian Cinema Industry. Besides, Mr. Chamria is keenly interested in the Film Distribution line and hundreds of families all over India have been provided with employment as a result of his wise investments.

Mr. Chamria is running the charitable institutions founded by his father and has also donated several lakhs of rupees to the famous Dayal Bagh Institution at Agra.

This is indeed a creditable record of business enterprise and public charities for such a young gentleman as Rai Bahadur Motilal Chamria and we wish him greater success and higher honours in the near future and congratulate the Government for its wise selection.

Paramount it is reported has spent more than 417,000 dollars in an effort to make a picture out of the Lives of Bengal Lancer for

which the readers of this journal will remember a party visited this country. Still the picture is under preparation, we are told.

* * *

Misfortunes they say never come in singles. So perhaps Tamil pictures also. We have had three pictures already released, two Vallis and one Prahlada. Two are scheduled for early release, Prabhat's Sita Kalayanam and Aurora's Sakku Bai. One picture "Dhruva" is now under production, and I understand two pictures are under negotiation for productions. If the rumour is to be believed, East India will shortly have a screen version of "Two Sisters", with Ratnabhai and a well-known amateur actor in the lead and Sagars will be producing Lava Kusa, with the boy who enacted Prahladh in one of the roles.

The Telugu and the Kanarese people need not envy their Tamil brethren for they too will have pictures produced in their languages. Jayavani Talkies are producing a Kanarese picture at Ajanta Studio on "Dhruva" while the South Indian Film Co. of Bangalore are producing at Chhatrapati a version of "Sati Sulochana". Pioneers are producing "Ahalya" in Telugu and if rumour is to be believed East India also are producing another Telugu picture.

There will be thus no dearth of pictures but whether these pictures will kill the interest in provincial talkies or kindle a taste for them we cannot say at the moment.

Meanwhile attempts to have a studio here are progressing rapidly. Vel Pictures have already fixed a bungalow covering about 9 acres near Mylapore and their Fidelytone truck is expected to arrive in a fortnight's time. They have also secured the services of Mr. A. Kulasekaran, well known Madras artist whose work has been well appreciated by big advertisers and Magazine readers throughout the south and he has gone to Bombay to have a thorough experience in Sound recording and cinematography under Bombay Radio and Mr. Quiribet of Kodak. Another noteworthy addition to their staff is Mr. K. Ramanathan who went to Prabhat to

COMING !

BHARAT LAKSHMI'S

MIGHTY SUPER DE LUXE TALKIE

RAMAYAN

The world famous story of the Golden Past, when India was young in Might, Melody and Magnificence and Indians knew both the beauty and duty of life. Written for the screen by the Great artist story writer Pt. Sudarshan.

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A Mythological story with universal appeal and beautiful ideals. Dialogues and songs by poet Gulab and Dhruvad.

Story, Scenario & Direction by :

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A powerful love of thrills, suspense and stunts in which Mr. Vithaldas Panchotia shows wonderful talent of wit and humour.

Written and Directed by :

Mr. VITHALDAS PANCHOTIA

MORE COMING ATTRACTIONS:—

Chand Sadagar (Bengali) *Direction* Profulla Roy.

Kunwari Widhwa (Hindi) *Story & Direction* Pt. Sundarshan.

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BHARAT LAKSHMI PICTURES

TOLLYGUNGE, CALCUTTA.

co-direct "Sita Kalyanam" and who is also now in Bombay undergoing necessary training. The first subject will of course be a mythological one but great interest is taken to bring out the inner meaning of the story in the transference to the screen—a very rare thing in Indian mythological productions.

National Movietone, it is understood, will be reissuing their "Valli" completely recast introducing more popular songs and situations. The picture as reissued will be named "Subramania Leela".

"Les Miserables" Victor Hugo's masterpiece is to be filmed by the Twentieth Century with Frederic March as Jean Valjean. This novel has already been produced in silent version many times.

Ajanta has now two pictures under production. The "Royal Musician" directed by Altkar and "Sair-e-Paristan" which Bhanuani is directing.

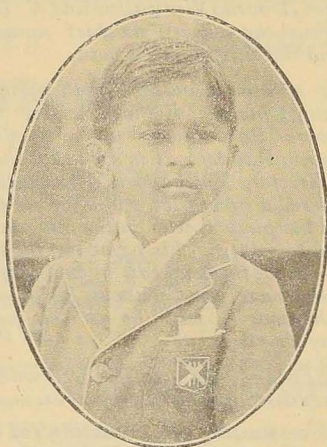
It is understood that the Danish Government have banned entry into their country of pictures produced by the major American film producing companies except the United Artists stating that films of these companies have violated Danish patents for noiseless recording.

The Motion Picture Society of India will be holding an exhibition of Photo Cine Radio and the first India Motion Picture convention during the first week in April in Bombay.

A new marvel machinery has been installed in M. G. M. studio which automatically gauge and adjust the light passing through negative film to photograph on other film. The machine is sensitive to one hundredth of a single candle power.

A new film company will shortly be started by Mr. Ganpat Bakre in partnership with Khandubhai Desai at Belgaum.

According to the Motion Picture Herald of America, the following pictures made the largest collection at the box office in the United States during September: M. G. M. "Tugboat Annie," RKO Radio, "Morning Glory," M. G. M. "Penthouse," United Artists "The Masquerader," Warner Bros. "Captured," Columbia "Lady for a Day"



Master Muthu who acts as Dhurva in Jayavani's Kanarese Talkie.

and Fox "Paddy the Next Best Thing." The box office champions of October are: "The Bowery" (United Artists) "I'm no Angel" (Paramount) "Too Much Harmony" (Paramount) "Dinner at Eight" (M. G. M.) "Night Flight" (M. G. M.) "Lady for a Day" (Columbia) and Power and Glory" (Fox).

The magnificent new studio of Prabhat completely equipped with modern machinery will be ready by the end of this month and the shooting—it is expected—will commence from the next month. A well known author and novelist in Marathi, Mr. Narayan Hari Apte, Editor, Madhukar, is writing the story based on the life of Shiv and Parvati.

Chhatrapati Cinetone, Kolhapur, are making the Hindi version of "Domestic fiend". The rehearsals for the new picture "Virat Paro" are going on.

In the meanwhile the studio is busy in producing a Kanarese picture "Sati Sulochana" for South Indian Movietone of Bangalore.

The rehearsals of the new picture "Akashwani" being complete Kolhapur Cinetone are waiting for their recording equipment, which will be in their hands in a week or so. The shooting of the picture will commence in the middle of January in both the languages Marathi and Hindi. A super cast including Vinayak, Leela, Phatak, Baburao Pendharkar is going to appear in this picture and it is rumoured that even the director, Balchandra Pendharkar will also play a small role.

Messrs Baburao Walwalkar and V. B. Joshi have joined the concern as chief sound engineer and the chief camera man.

After strenuous endeavours the proprietors of Shyam Cinetone, Kolhapur, have finished the picture "Parthkumar" under the direction of Baburao Painter. It is said that their previous director, Balchandra Pendharkar has been offered a sum of Rs. 5,000 for his partnership in the picture, who on the other hand has objected to putting his name on the title as Director since the final editing and the retouching work was done without his knowledge. "Parthkumar" will be on the screen of Bombay shortly.

All appears not to be well with Lalit Pictures Corporation of Kolhapur.

Before starting the shooting of the new picture dispute seems to have arisen among the proprietors and it is feared that the work will not proceed at least for a few months.

Sarat Cinetone is a new film company for Kolhapur. The Kasar-brothers who have taken the Prabhat studio are going to start a concern in a short time. They are prominently supported by some of the persons of the late "Surya Film Co," Bangalore, including Mr. Pawar the director and the actor Ganpat Bakre.

Maharani Cinetone is yet another new concern for Kolhapur. There is a strong rumour that the well-known director, Mr. Baburao Painter is going to start a new concern under the above title and that he has ordered for a "Fidelitytone Recording" set, Debri Printer and Mitchell camera for fifty five thousand through Bombay Radio Co. It is said that some of the higher authorities from the state are going to finance him and the studio is to be erected near the railway station in a place known as the "Yellow Bunglow" of Kolhapur.

James Bryson, formerly London Manager of Universals, is promoting a novel form of film producing unit, called the Empire Co operative Friendly Film Society. It will be financed by the independent exhibitors and will produce pictures for them, the subjects being chosen also by these exhibitors themselves.

The Marathi Version Saraswatis "Prahlad" is released at the Majestic Cinema, Bombay since 16th of December. They are busy shooting the half finished production "Thak-sen."

It is leant that Miss Rathnaprabha is leaving the concern.

Camera man Mr. Pandurang Naik, Director, Nandlal Jaswantlal and recordist, Jamnadas of Ranjits—are starting for an All-Europe tour by the middle of January.

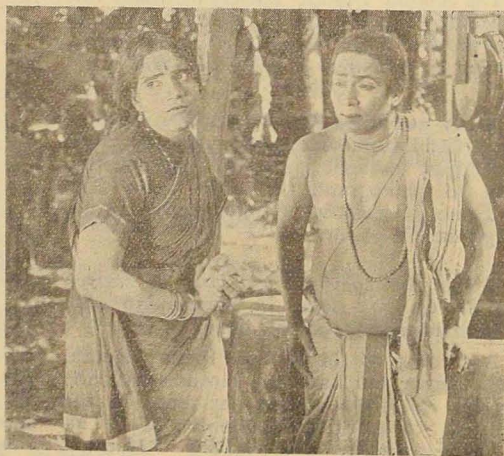
It is said that Krishna Film Co. are going to re-new their producing business in a short time and as such their manager Mr. Shukla has gone to arrange for the location in a Hindu kingdom by the side of Himalayas.

Jal Merchant it is reported is going to join Mahalaxmi Cinetone of Mr. Nanubhai Vakil and Miss Zubeda.

Mr. A. M. Kumar of New Theatres—it is said—is going to join the Sagar Film Co. though this is denied as all cinema news in this country.

"Sulochana" will be released at the Majestic Cinema immediately after "Prahlad." "Gulsanovar" of Director Homi and "Kala Nag" of the Majestic Movitone are having their completion.

While the Sarada proprietors have decided to produce Marathi Talkies for which they



A scene from Aurora's Tamil Talkie "Sakkubai."

COMING!

VERY SHORTLY!!

COMING!!!

VASANT MOVITONE'S
FIRST TALKIE HIT
VASANT-SENA
OR
MRUCHHAKATIK

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have engaged a new artist Miss Indra Wadkar who is going to play in the first historical Marathi Talkie based on the life of Shivaji."

The stunt Talkie "Kala Pahad" or "Masked Terror" of Sharada Movietone featuring Stunt King Navinchandra and Gohar Karnataki, has been released in Bombay, at Super Talkies, from the 4th January. This picture will also be released at Karachi, Calcutta and Ahmedabad, from Idd.

The Company has already ordered out for an Audio Camex Talkie Recording set. The same is expected in Bombay shortly. Miss Nurjehan has been engaged by the company. The shooting of the Marathi Picture will commence, within a week's time. Also a Hindi version thereof will be produced.

"Veerangna Panna", featuring Shivrani, Gulab, Amritlal is nearing completion. It will be released in Bombay at Krishna Talkies in Feb. "Black Tiger", featuring Master Navinchandra, Gohar, Nurjehan, Amritlal, Apte directed by Nagendra Mazmudar, is half completed. It will be ready for release by the end of the current month.

"Parshuram". Director Mr. Luhar, B.Sc. has finished the script. Navinchandra features as "Bhagwan Parshuram". Gorgeous and Magnificent settings are being erected for this production. The shooting will begin very shortly.

Radical changes have taken place in Sagar Studios. The company have made the whole Studio 'Sound-Proof' with all the modern mechanical equipments. The 1934 schedule is specially made to produce really artistic production. Eminent Pen-men have been engaged to supply stories to the company. Mr. Ezra Mir the celebrated screen-craftsman is editing the Phantom of the Hills. Big offers are made for this mighty production. Jal Merchant plays the young Pathan, under the tropical Moonlit sky with a lovesong on his lips. Sabitadevi of Bengal and Panna enact feminine roles. Famous Kawaals sing catchy Gazals. This film will be shortly released in all parts of India. Badami is busy with "Educated wife" starring Sabitadevi and Jal Merchant. The theme is a social one depicting the ideals of Indian womanhood. "Sati Anjani" is awaiting release.

"Yahudiki Ladki" of The New Theatres Ltd. Calcutta, has been released at Minerva Talkies' and is very popular.

"Malti Madhav" produced by Saroji Movietone directed by Mr. A. P. Kapoor has been released at West End Cinema is going on well.

"Sati-Mahananda" produced by Gandharve cinetone directed by Mr. Baburao Patel has been released at Imperial cinema and it is continued for the second week but could not impress much.

"Surya kumari" produced by Shree Vishnu Cinetone has been released at Krishna Cinema the picture is directed by Mr. Dhirubhai Desai. It is reported that the picture is very fair and also liked by the public.

Vasant Movietone:—Their new picture Vasant Sena, story by the famous writer Mr. Mohanlal Dave and directed by Mr. Advani, J. P. is in making.

The National Council of Teachers of English in America have reported that units of instruction be introduced into the nation's schools, with a view to improving popular standards and tastes in motion pictures.



Miss Zohra as she appears in "Vasantsena."

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East India Film Company have just completed their first year of working. A dozen releases within the short space of one year in five different languages viz. Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Tamil and Telugu must be considered a remarkable achievement on the part of the producers. We understand that two of their initial South Indian releases, viz. "Ramayan" in Tamil and "Savitri" in Telugu have proved to be Box Office hits. "Ramayan" had a record run of about nineteen continuous weeks in Madura and "Savitri" an uninterrupted run of seventeen weeks in Bangalore. Other noteworthy photoplays are "Aurat-ka-Pyar" (Urdu) featuring Mukhtar Begum, "King for a Day" (Urdu) and "Prahlada" (Tamil). Much of the credit for the splendid results is due to the initiative and great ardour of the proprietor Mr. B. L. Khemka with the able support of Mr. A. M. Gopala Iyer M. A., the manager of the concern.

"Ab-E-Hayat" (Urdu) is ready for release. "Chandra Gupta" (Hindi) will most probably have its premiere this month. Pessi Karani has finished all interior scenes of his great Urdu epic under way "Kismet-ki-Kasauti" featuring Miss Nurjehan and Khalil. Preparations are under way for taking exteriors in Rampur State. Mr. Devaki Bose is still hard at work with his classic production "Seeta" (Hindi). Mostly he has finished all exteriors and he is now busy with interior sets. Mrs.

Khote is said to have done remarkably fine work.

According to a census conducted by La Cinematographie Francaise, the number of theatres in France including Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco is: wired, 2,481; silent, 1,335, a total of 3,816. The number of wired theatres in the British Isles is 4,414, out of which 4,156 are wired.

To exercise control over motion picture publicity and advertising a new appointment has been made by the motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America and Mr. J. J. McCarthy has been chosen for the job.

R. K. O. Radio's "Little Woman" starring Katharine Hepburn has created a new record at R. K. O. Music Hall, the gross collection for six days being 103,004 dollars.

According to the estimates given before the stock market investigating committee, the loans advanced by the bankers to the motion picture industry amounts to 78 million dollars.

It is announced that the United Artists will handle all Marx Brothers pictures after "Duck Soup" but their first under the United Artist's banner will not be ready before September.

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Out of the recent International Catholic Cinema Congress at Brussels, Belgium, has come the formation of a group to check moral standards in films produced throughout the world with the objective of discouraging immoral and anti-religious films. A full-time secretary will be named to travel to various countries, communicating with organisations sympathetic to the aims of the new group.

* * * *

A meeting of the foreign sales managers of American motion picture distributors was recently held to discuss the advisability of withdrawing from the Czechoslovakian market.

* * * *

London Films have signed Maurice Chevalier and Charles Laughton to three year contracts. Laughton will make five pictures in all, while Chevalier will star in one each year. Their contracts permit their appearing also in Hollywood.

* * * *

London Films Henry VIII was banned in Calcutta—though it was shown in Bombay.

Shri Darbar Cinetone is the latest film company to be started in Lahore. Their first production will be a Socio-mythological picture entitled "Golden Temple" dealing with a Sikh historical legend connected with their sacred shrine at Amritsar. Some scenes, it is understood, will be shot at the actual temple itself.

According to a report received from Delhi, New Theatres' Raj Rani ran for two weeks and Prabhat's "Sairandheri" for three weeks at the Royal while Ranjit's Easy Vic. tin" ran for eight weeks at the Majestic. Imperial's Sowbagyasundri ran for three weeks in two cinemas, Amrit and Krishna.

A new talkie house called Roshan Theatre was started in Delhi last month.

Delhi Films have acquired the land near Kings Way for the construction of their studio and have engaged the services of Mr. Chand Narainas a director.

Delhi Films Co's initial production will be "Narada Moh" of which rehearsals have started.

During the 2nd International Exhibition of Cinematograph Art of Venice it has been decided to announce a meeting, not only of producers but also of renters. In this way the Exhibition will become an important

economic centre and will serve to promote the film industry. The secretary of the Executive Committee has already received notice of the participation of many countries that will send their best films to be shown, for the first time, at Venice. So far the following countries have officially entered:—England, India, United States, Germany, Russia, Japan, France, Poland, Holland, Switzerland Hungary, Austria and Czechoslovakia, and the Committee is in communication with Spain and Argentine. Italy will also be represented, but first it is necessary for the Italian producers to examine the possibility of an agreement for the definite choice of the films to be shown.

It is possible that a great historic film will be among those sent by Italy. The Committee has heard from the "London Film" that it will participate by sending a film interpreted by Douglas Fairbanks. This film will be shown for the very first time at Venice and in the presence of the famous American actor. Furthermore, films of a high artistic value and of an ultra-modern character, made by independent producers who have been specially invited by the Committee, will be projected. A series of coloured animated cartoons, purposely produced for the Exhibition by the world-famous creators Disney and Fleischer, will also be shown.

* * *

The following pictures have been received by Universals in India and will be released shortly:—"Myrt and Marge" "S. O. S. Iceberg" "Love, Honour and Oh Baby!" "Only Yesterday" "Saturday's Millions" "King for a Night"

Jagat Narain of Jagat Talkies distributors will shortly have a studio at Delhi. So also Mr. Ram of Roxy theatre, Delhi.

Carl Laemmle, Universal chief, returned to America after his usual visit to Europe. While over there he successfully ironed out the difficulties which stood in the way of Universal's deal for the services of Kiepura. It is now definitely settled that Kiepura will make several pictures for Universal but whether they will be made in California or in Europe is not settled yet.

Miss Jaddan Bai to appear in Mahaluxmi Cinetone's next picture "Seva Sadan".

"Virgin Widow" will be a social talkie to be produced by Bharat Laxmi Pictures written and directed by Pt. Sudarshan.



One of the gold diggers in Warner's Gold Diggers of 1933 shortly to be released in Madras.

Seen on the Screen.

PRAHALADA: (Tamil) Produced by East India Film Co., Calcutta. Cast: Master Krishnamurthy, (Prahallada), Srinivasa Bhagavathar (Hiranya) and Saradambal (Kayadu).

After many months of patient waiting, for which we as a nation are supposed to be an outstanding example, Madras cinemagoers were afforded an opportunity of witnessing a picture produced in the Tamil language. The credit for this goes to the East India Film Co. of Calcutta whom the readers of this journal will remember as the producers of the film "Ramayana". The enterprise of this concern in taking advantage of an opportunity presented by the introduction of talkies is indeed praiseworthy; I wish it were possible for me to compliment them also on the way in which they have produced this picture.

At the outset I wish to record that the film has proved popular and perhaps financially successful also but I submit that this box office success is more due to circumstances rather than to any inherent strength in the picture itself. I am quite certain that with a little more care, a better picture could have been produced considering the vast resources which East India Film Co., command.

The subject of this film is so well-known that I do not think any recapitulation is necessary. Its predominant characteristic is in the threefold conflict so beautifully blended, namely of a boy's natural love for his father overpowered by his love for his creator, of the father's spirit of revenge making him forget even the affection for his own boy and of a woman's duty to her husband conflicting with her love for her only son. Such a story is so to say surcharged with intense dramatic possibilities and the incidents offer such unlimited scope for filmic treatment. Considering the film from this point of view it must be admitted that East India Film Co. have not adequately brought out the central theme of the story in its transference to the celluloid. To my mind the responsibility for this must be shared by the scenarist, director and the actors themselves.

It is one of the elementary facts of good workmanship, why, in fact of doing anything at all satisfactorily, that before you take up any work you should understand the possibilities and limitations of the medium in which you are going to work. Mr. T. C. Vadi-

velu Naicker, it is said, has got a good experience of the South Indian stage—and of this I am not going to judge—but it appears to me after seeing his picture that his knowledge of the new medium of the screen must be very limited, limited in fact to that extent only where he is aware that, instead of having one or two crotons to do duty for a forest as on the stage, real outdoor scenery can be introduced in films. And when I saw Prahallada, it seemed to me to be only a stage play with forests and mountains interpolated here and there.

This, of course, I know is one of the common faults of the majority of our pictures and in expecting the use of outdoor cinematographically I am perhaps asking too much from Mr. Vadivelu Naicker considering the fact that his experience of picture production is limited only to about two pictures and that two when talkie production was in its infancy in this country.

Again the failure to vary the length and angle of shots, which is another common fault of stagey pictures, is very much in evidence in Prahallada. Many instances can be cited to substantiate this statement but for our purpose the sequence where Prahallada is asked to drink the poison will be sufficient. Any one who has a rudimentary knowledge of the medium, would by taking suitable shots of the persons and also the cup of poison and judiciously arranging them in a well thoughtout manner with the requisite tempo could have created a sequence which for its dramatic intensity would have indelibly impressed itself on the minds of the audience. But as it is this sequence is so tame that it appeared to me that Prahallada is being asked to take a cup of coffee rather hot and his mother is only concerned to that extent that the drink might perhaps prove a little too hot for her young son.

The sequence where Narasimha appears stands as an unchallengeable testimony to the director's—or is it the producer's—lack of appreciation of the wonderful mobility of the medium. In this connection I am reminded of that masterpiece of movie made monster King Kong and though I fully realise that under the present conditions of Indian picture industry it is not possible to create a King Kong, my contention is that it is not impossible to have made something better

than the lifeless and absolutely unconvincing representation of one of the avatars of Vishnu. I was told that when the old Hindustan Film Co. screened their silent Prahlada people went into hysterics when this particular scene was unfurled and compared to this and considering the fact that we now have the advantage of sound also to add to the effect it must be said that this scene in the East Indian Film was a complete failure.

Leaving the story and its development for the present and coming to the cast, I must say here again no attempt has been made to give the story plausibility by convincing characterisation. As regards the selection itself for the respective parts, it appeared to me that except the boy all others appeared misfits. I am no doubt conscious of the difficulty of securing good players to go outside of the presidency but I am confident for the money East India is reported to have paid to these people, a better Hiranya and a more queenly Kayadu could have been found. Sreenivasa Baghavater's representation of Hiranya appeared to me to lack the majesty and physical prowess of the mythological figure, whose destruction only a God could accomplish. He lacked even the small strength necessary to sing a difficult piece without gasping! With such materials, it will indeed be a job to build up convincing characterisation but in the picture under reference, what is surprising is that not even an attempt is made in this direction. I would particularly refer in this connection to the most notable incident, namely the scene in which the maid of Kayadu, while her mistress is in great anguish, sits just as if she is posing for her first photograph.

This review has expanded more than I anticipated. Any further reference to the dialogue and its delivery, the songs, their composition and rendering would only serve to lengthen this review. I consider that these matters are mere incidentals and in writing this appreciation of the picture my sole concern was only with the fundamentals of the cinematic art, for I feel that there is no hope for the improvement of our pictures unless more attention is paid to the story, and its proper filmic development with a suitable cast able to give a convincing portrayal. I know that the East India Film Co. with their ample resources can do something really worthwhile for the advancement of the

Indian Film Industry and incidentally for the improvement of their pictures also I would consider myself compensated if any of my remarks would make our producers think a little more before they shoot; otherwise, I am afraid it will be mere waste of powder.

—A. V. S. Mani.

VALLI (Tamil) Produced by National Movietone, Madras, in association with the Imperial Film Co. of Bombay. Cast: T. S. Santhanam as Subramania, Serukalathur Sama as Narada and Pankajam as Valli.

One of my friends after seeing this picture which was recently exhibited at the Paragon Talkies in the city, remarked half jocularly that it contained all the crudities of an initial production with apparently no promise for the future. Whether we agree with this sweeping remark or not, anybody who has seen this picture must admit the truth of the first part.

National Movietone is the first company that has been started in this Presidency after the advent of the talkies and naturally their success or failure in their initial production cannot but be of great consequence to the progress of the picture industry in this presidency. This is a great responsibility. But in addition to this, perhaps eager in their attempt not to allow anybody to anticipate them, they chose one of the very well known stage plays, which indeed, instead of being an asset as they seem to have anticipated, proved a great liability. Whenever any famous stage play is transferred to the screen it is advisable to keep to the popular version as much as possible for the people having become so accustomed to certain songs in certain situations, naturally become dissatisfied when those songs are not there as they anticipate. Moreover, another defect in such plays is that the audience generally compare the performance of the players that take part in such films with the best of the players on the stage. These are indeed very great handicaps which National Movietone might have avoided if they had not chosen such a stage play as Valli.

Another difficulty they had to contend with in choosing this subject was they had to produce a peculiarly South Indian subject which depends to a large extent for its success and appeal on its proper atmosphere in a Bombay studio. I do not mean to say that such atmosphere cannot be duplicated elsewhere but to one familiar with the position of our studios and the fact that the producers of this particular picture are not themselves the

masters of the studio, the difficulty of such studio built up scenery will be apparent.

Above all these, it seems to me the major factor that spoiled the film was of course the selection of a person, who perhaps owing to her being new to acting, was utterly unsuited for the part of Valli. It is one of the most elementary considerations of picture making that the cast selected should suit the characters they are to impersonate, at least it is very necessary so far as the leading players are concerned. The co-director of this film is perhaps the oldest man in the cinema line in this presidency and the producer can also claim an extended if not so long an acquaintance with picture production and it passes my comprehension how two such people should be so obvious to this simple fact.

Such a picture as this could have made money if the recording had been alright. Poor recording and bad selection spoiled whatever chance it had for success. Before I conclude this review there is one point on which I would like to compliment the producers namely, here in this picture for the first time in the production of a vernacular picture, a proper appreciation of the mobility of the medium of the screen is evident.—
A. V. S. Mani.

✓ VALLI. ✓

Produced by PIONEER FILM CO. with Rajalakshmi as Valli.

History repeats itself and even in that of the Motion picture industry, the manifestation of the adage is strangely visible. Whether it is Harichandra, Savitri or Valli, it is all the same—nothing comes in single! This plurality of pictures can be accounted for, only by the producer's anxiety to work up a popular stage hit and bring it to the screen before any other one does it—and the worst of it is that the other one also invariably does it. And we had recently a pair of Vallis, one by National Movietone Coy. with Santanam and Pankajam and the other by Pioneer Film Coy. with Miss Rajalakshmi in the title role.

I am always of honest opinion—excuse my Goldsmithian diction—that whenever one of our South Indian stage hits is transferred to the screen, there is more scope for fuller realism and better narration of facts together with fairly accurate environs than it is possible on the stage. In fact the screen can convey better realism than footlights. And if one, with an eye towards beautiful execu-

tion, treats a story in the screenlike way I am sure any of our popular stage plays can boast of becoming screen epics. But I insist that we must adapt it to the screen, and not tag on a scattered list of scenes as represented on the stage and call it a picture.

And in this respect the National Movietones' effort in presenting "Valli" is quite welcome but the picture was not a success consequent on the lack of star appeal as well as poor recording. Whereas the other one drew full houses, chiefly owing to the audible song numbers, this failed, which incidentally shows to what an extent clarity in recording accounts for the success at the box-office. We hope, the National Movietone Coy., will pay much attention to this defect in their next venture and give us a really nice screen story.

Now, Pioneers 'Valli' has in fact nothing to boast of as a screen success. It is a list of song-numbers more or less parodying the popular ditties—not the least of them, being the much talked of Dhoby Song—interpreted by a few smoky scenes of some of the shrines of South India, which was done more for publicity purposes than for making it a part of the picture. The screen looked more or less a stage and if there was anything strikingly absent, it was the cinematic treatment of the plot. And all the song numbers were recorded very well and this proved an asset to it. The photography was uniformly good except of course the outdoor shots and the most deplorable thing is the way in which the so-called 'trick shots' were executed. The scene where Lord Subramanya sails in the sky on the peacock is perhaps the most purile way in which it could be shown. The model peacock with its mechanical openings of its mouth as if it gasps for breath and its being pulled inch by inch across the screen takes one to ages back when the Hindustan Film Coy. asked us to believe that Hanuman crossed the ocean and reached Lanka when a small card board figure was thrown before the camera and it went right down hip downwards! And after the 'shot' at Palni what a mammoth figure they have put in as the idol of Subramanya! Cannot a smaller one do? Hasn't anyone seen the idol at Palni? Why not better attention be bestowed on these. And in the later stages when the elephant comes to the screen we can actually see the movements of a person just driving the elephant to the eye of the camera! And almost at most of the locations in the "Thinai

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fields" more of plaitain trees alone are visible. And while even on the stage the transformation of Subramanya into a tree is spectacularly shown, the screen is not able to give us a good transformation. Subramanya disappears somewhere and we were then shown an 'iris' of a tree with numerous branches, and this we were asked to take as the tree that sprang up at once. Further I always thought that the stage with its limitations cannot but ask the hero to appear in all the forms that the story compells him to. But what necessity is there in the screen to ask the hero to don the wigs of an old man and act as such. Cannot a really old man be substituted for it and be made to act that scene. Will that not be impressive? It is but meet, that the advantages which the screen offers must be availed of to the best advantage. Let us wait to see who opens his eyes to them.

Rajalaxmi takes the title role of 'Valli' and gives us a fairly good performance with her stage talents. One wonders who made her choose that Dietrich-like garments but withal she is a popular star and sings almost uniformly well. Her songs in the fields seem to be out of tune on the screen since there seems to be neither birds to drive off, nor any possibility of an

accompanying instrument there. If 'Savitri' made her popular the 'Valli' in no way has decreased popularity.

Mr. Dorai who acts the role of Subramania sings with an effort and always looks upon with disdain with one of his lips always in a higher altitude. And in the scene when he meets Valli in the garb of the hunter, there is a particularly good vein of music and talk but in the name of Heavens we ask, why he should be "sexy" in his conversation! Is it to cater to the popular taste?

Mr. Sundaram as Narada is perhaps the best executed role in the picture. His opening song is a nice choice highly reminiscent of the sterling stage star who is no more, and his other song numbers are also equally good. He sings neatly without unnecessary mannerisms and talks with good accent. His role is really wholesome.

The supporting cast is hopeless. The maid of 'Valli' look maids that were 'made.' The father of 'Valli' is over-acting personified and there is none worth speaking of. But ere I close I feel the whisper of Poiner's "Now Emmen! In spite of what you have said you will see that my 'Valli' is going to prove a first rate box-office picture in South India" well, I don't doubt it.

—M. N. Parthasarathy.

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BEST OF THE MONTH

CRADLE SONG (*Paramount*). Dir: Mitchell Leisen and Nina Moise. Cast: Dorothea Wieck, Evelyn Venable, Sir Guy Standing, Kent Taylor.

Adapted from the play by Gregorio and Maria Martinez-Sierra. In the superb and deeply religious setting of a Catholic convent there is unfolded the poignantly beautiful story of the love of a young nun for a child who is entrusted to her care, who grows to young womanhood and finds love and marriage to be her calling. The gentle, gracious women, their peaceful life and selfless devotion for the foundling are pictured with rare delicacy of feeling. The photography is exquisite and the beautiful story tugs at the heartstrings.

NIGHT FLIGHT (*M-G-M*). Dir: Clarence Brown. Cast: John Barrymore, Helen Hayes, Clark Gable, Lionel Barrymore, Robert Montgomery, Myrna Loy, William Gargan, Leslie Fenton, C. Henry Gordon.

From the French prize novel Antoine de Saint-Exupery. Beautiful and unusual photography, finished acting and notable direction, have made of this film one of the best of screen history. A gripping drama which reveals the spirit and psychology that has built aviation and the courageous men who fly the mail through darkness and fog, over mountains and jungles of South America.

SOCIAL DRAMA

ANN VICKERS (*RKO-Radio*). Dir: John Cromwell. Cast: Irene Dunne, Walter Huston, Sam Hardy, Bruce Cabot, Conrad Nagel.

From the book by Sinclair Lewis. Social tragedy of a young settlement worker whose affairs of the heart do not conform to conventional standards. Although very ably directed and acted by an excellent cast, and possibly less objectionable than the book, the value of this type of film for the average motion picture audience is decidedly questionable.

BROADWAY TO HOLLYWOOD (*M-G-M*). Dir: Willard Mack. Cast: Alice Brady, Frank Morgan, Madge Evans, Russell Hardie, Jackie Cooper, Tad Alexander, Eddie Quillan, Mickey Rooney.

Three generations carry on the traditions of the "Hackett" family from Broadway to Hollywood with their joys and hardships, but always together in spirit. A clever and exhilarating account of theatrical family life together with the development of the theatre to talkies, punctuated with good stage entertainment by well-known stars. Notable portrayals by Alice Brady and Frank Morgan, a fine cast and good direction.

CHANCE AT HEAVEN (*RKO-Radio*). Dir: William Seiter. Cast: Ginger Rogers, Joel McCrea, Marian Nixon, Lucien Littlefield, Andy Devine.

From a story by Vina Delmar. An ambitious country boy, dazzled by urban sprightliness, forsakes his small town sweetheart for a brief marriage with a wealthy city girl only to return with real loyalty to his first love. A human little story, pleasantly told.

THE GOOD COMPANIONS (*Fox-Gaumont-British*). Dir: Victor Saville. Cast: Jessie Matthews, Edmund Gwenn, John Gielgud, Mary Glynn.

J. B. Priestly's leisurely and delectable novel has been made into a well-balanced picture full of quiet humour and a buoyant spirit of youthful courage. The story recounts the adventures of several mildly eccentric and very likable persons who wander over England in the company of a troupe of stage folk. Their amusing contretemps and the charming English setting supply unusual diversion.

GOLDEN HARVEST (*Paramount*). Dir: Ralph Murphy. Cast: Richard Arlen, Chester Morris, Genevieve Tobin, Roscoe Ates.

A strong story based upon the struggle of the wheat farmers against the Chicago "wheat pit." Interesting contrasts between rural and city life, and a character study of two brothers who become enemies. The story presents rural scenes of unusual beauty and exciting shots of the stock market, as well as the case for the farmer in a way which will appeal to many. It is a play of likable people and is humorous if sometimes crude. Well acted and directed.

MY WOMAN (*Columbia*). Dir: Victor Schertzinger. Cast: Helen Twelvetrees, Victor Jory, Wallace Ford.

Through his wife's efforts a Panama dance-hall entertainer becomes a popular radio star, only to fail through drinking and his own conceit. Interesting shots of the tropics and of the radio studios enhance this rather thin plot. It is well directed and acted.

SATURDAY'S MILLIONS (*Universal*). Dir: Edward Sedgwick. Cast: Robert Young, Leila Hyams, John Mack Brown, Andy Devine, Mary Carlisle.

A football "hero" puts up a stiff fight, but loses his last big game for his alma mater because of an injury sustained when he secretly broke training. The picture is finely directed and acted and has high entertainment value, but due to the introduction of unnecessary and unsavory situations it misses the high mark.

STAGE MOTHER (*M-G-M*). Dir: Charles Brabin. Cast: Alice Brady, Maureen O'Sullivan, Franchot Tone, Phillips Holmes.

From a book by Bradford Ropes. A vivid picture of back stage life, wherein an over-ambitious mother almost wrecks her daughter's life in her determination to see the girl a "headliner" on Broadway.

Well staged, strongly cast, emotionally entertaining but has many discrepancies, and one glaring and unnecessary smirch.

SWEETHEART OF SIGMA CHI (*Monogram*).

Dir: Edwin T. Marin. Cast: Buster Crabbe, Mary Carlisle, Florence Lake.

An exciting boat race adds zest to the lively romance in this interesting college story.

WILD BOYS OF THE ROAD (*Warner Bros.*).

Dir: Wm. A. Wellman. Cast: Frankie Darro, Dorothy Coonan, Ann Hovey, Edwin Phillips.

Dramatizing the plight of boys thrown on their own resources and drifting from city to city in search of actual livelihood, the film has timely interest and stirring action to hold one's undivided attention. The boys around whom the story centers are sympathetically pictured as normal enough lads who lead a reckless life until poverty brings out their latent generosity and kindness, but it entirely overlooks the other class who make these gangs the breeding place of crime. It sentimentalizes the groups and romanticizes the nomadic life they lead in such a way as to under-estimate the hardships and dangers and make it all an alluring adventure. What seems a happy ending is in reality no suggestion for the solution of the problem. The film is evidently not a preachment but is thought provoking for adults.

THE WORLD CHANGES (*First National*). Dir:

Mervyn LeRoy. Cast: Paul Muni, Aline MacMahon, Alan Dinehart, Patricia Ellis, Margaret Lindsay, Mary Astor, Donald Cook, Guy Kibbee, Alan Mowbray.

Stirring drama of the western plains and the growth of the beef industry in the United States, linked with the life story of the family who were pioneers in this field. The picture stresses the need of every human being for creative effort and the rapid deterioration of stamina which follows the pursuit of artificiality and loss of contact with the vital forces of every day life. Splendidly acted and at times majestically photographed, the film is forceful in its teaching and inspiring in its appeal for adults and young people.

HISTORY

PRIVATE LIFE OF HENRY THE EIGHTH

(*London Film Productions*) (*United Artists release*). Dir: Alexander Korda. Cast: Charles Laughton, Elsa Lanchester, Binnie Barnes, Robert Donat, Franklin Dyall, Wendy Barrie.

With wise discrimination this British production brilliantly depicts the intimate life of Henry VIII concerning itself for the most part with his martial adventures; and is based on a sufficient amount of truth to make it authoritative as well as entertaining. Admirable direction, with the spirit and flavor of the sixteenth century cleverly caught, both in the lighter nuances and in the broad, sometimes bawdy humor. Convincing, amusing dialogue and a capable cast add to the success of the picture whose chief adornment is the superbly intelligent portrayal by Charles Laughton.

MYSTERY, MELODRAMA & CRIME

THE MAD GAME (*Fox*). Dir: Irving Cummings.

Cast: Spencer Tracy, Claire Trevor, Ralph Morgan, Howard Lally, J. Carrol Naish, John Miljan, Kathleen Burke.

A forceful, exceptionally well produced picture dealing with a serious National problem. Convicted of tax evasion, a beer baron on his release from prison, aids the Federal authorities in capturing a band of kidnapers. It is difficult to judge whether a picture of this type will do more good than harm, for it so cleverly balances sympathy and is apt to sentimentalize the role of a reformed criminal.

POLICE CAR 17 (*Columbia*). Dir: Lambert

Hillyer. Cast: Tim McCoy, Evalyn Knapp, Edwin Maxwell, Wallace Clark.

The work of the radio police is the basis of this picture in which a radio officer outwits the plans of an avenging gangster by saving the life of his sweetheart and her father, the Sergeant. A forceful picture in which the police are given well merited recognition for their courage and bravery.

COMEDY

BOMBSHELL (*M-G-M*). Dir: Victor Fleming.

Cast: Jean Harlow, Lee Tracy, Frank Morgan, Franchot Tone, Pat O'Brien.

Hollywood once more laughs at itself in this hilarious, noisy, somewhat vulgar farce portraying the exploitation of a temperamental motion picture star by her ambitious press agent. Dynamic, hectic tempo, clever acting and direction.

THE BOWERY (*Twentieth Century Productions*)

(*United Artists release*). Dir: Raoul Walsh. Cast: Wallace Beery, George Raft, Jackie Cooper, Fay Wray, Pert Kelton.

A robust, elemental comedy featuring an historical era of New York in the gay nineties. Humor and pathos intermingled with stark brutality are excellently portrayed in the faithful characterization of two tough Bowery politicians, whose rivalry in love and business ends in an unexpected challenge.

I'M NO ANGEL (*Paramount*). Dir: Wesley Rug-

gles. Cast: Mae West, Cary Grant, Gregory Ratoff.

From an original story by Mae West. Threatened with the companions of a torrid past when involved in a breach of promise suit, a wily, sensuous, gold digging lion tamer finally wins the man she loves. A very risqué play in which the light hearted suggestiveness will prove amusing to certain types of audience.

MY WEAKNESS (*Fox*). Dir: David Butler. Cast:

Lilian Harvey, Lew Ayers, Charles Butterworth, Harry Langdon.

An amusing farce based upon a successful attempt to prove that fine clothes make the lady, developed in a novel manner with lively rhymed dialogue and some attractive tunes.

TILLIE AND GUS (*Paramount*). Dir: Francis

Martin. Cast: W. C. Fields, Alison Skipworth, Baby LeRoy, Clifford Jones.

A farcical, slapstick comedy in which two old card sharps cleverly outwit the villainous family lawyer when he attempts to defraud their niece of her inheritance.

THE WAY TO LOVE (*Paramount*). Dir: Nor-

man Taurag. Cast: Maurice Chevalier, Ann Dvorak, Edward Everett Horton, Arthur Pierson, Minna Gombell, Blanche Frederici, John Miljan.



Sabita Devi who has now joined Sagar and is appearing in their "Phantom of the Hills" and "Educated Wife."

A gay, carefree, loveable fellow adopts a dog and a girl, and, ultimately achieves his greatest ambition—that of becoming a guide in Paris. A flimsy plot, resorting to burlesque, light, pleasing and entertaining to Chevalier admirers.

ADVENTURE

S.O.S. ICEBERG (*Universal*). Dir: Tay Garnett, Arnold Fanck. Cast: Rod La Rocque, Gibson Gowland, Reifensahl, Ernst Udet.

S.O.S. ICEBERG is the gripping and thrilling story of an Arctic Expedition made in the interest of the International Exploration and Research Society. The scenery is magnificent, glittering snow fields, ice caverns, treacherous majestic icebergs, dangerous ice floes, and fatal crevasses. A tense story is told of the rescue of the leader and his party when hope has almost failed. An over melodramatic touch to this otherwise remarkable exposition of photographers daring, skill and endurance.

WAR

AFTER TONIGHT (*RKO-Radio*). Dir: George Archainbaud. Cast: Constance Bennett, Gilbert Roland, Edward Ellis.

A war romance in which an Austrian officer tracks down a troublesome Russian spy only to find her the girl he loves. A war picture in which the spy system is glorified. Exciting, well acted and directed but with improbable ending.

NOT RECOMMENDED

GOODBYE LOVE (*RKO-Radio*). Dir: H. Bruce Humberstone. Cast: Charlie Ruggles, Verree Teasdale, Mayo Methot, Sidney Blackmer, Phyllis Barry.

Adventures in matrimony and alimony of a wealthy young man and his valet, who, unknown to each other, become involved with the same woman. A cheap, vulgar, inexcusable story which could not be redeemed by the humor of Charlie Ruggles. A waste of time.

The following feature pictures—not yet reported by the West Coast Committee—have been reviewed by the General Federation of Women's Clubs—East Committee.

ABOVE THE CLOUDS (*Columbia*). Cast: Robert Armstrong, Richard Cromwell, Dorothy Wilson, Edmund Breese.

A story of two newsreel reporters, one, unscrupulous and boastful who takes all credit, and his hero worshiping assistant who takes all the risks. The unworthiness of the older man is made clear in the end and the younger one is given the recognition due to him. A mild romance carries throughout the story and a terrific air storm adds to the entertainment value. It is unfortunately marred by an overemphasis on drinking.

ACE OF ACES (*RKO-Radio*). Cast: Richard Dix, Elizabeth Allan, Ralph Bellamy, Theodore Newton.

A grim and impressive study of the effect of war on the soul of a man. A simple romance and a happy ending detract from the strength of a story whose major emphasis is on the futility of war and its power to destroy the finest qualities in man. Beautifully photographed and admirably acted.

AGGIE APPLEBYMAKER OF MEN (*RKO-Radio*). Cast: Wynne Gibson, William Gargan, Charles Farrell, Zasu Pitts.

A weakly told story of self-sacrifice amid the rough surroundings of a second rate boarding house and the efforts of a girl to make a he-man out of a timid pampered one. A good idea suffers from lack of intelligent treatment but a capable cast does its best to make it convincing.

THE BIG BLUFF (*Tower*). Cast: Reginald Denny, Claudia Dell, Donald Keith, Jed Prouty.

A good comedy plot of an actor called upon to pose as an English lord for a family of social climbers who do not wish to be outdone by a socially ambitious neighbour who has secured a real lord as a guest. The various humorous situations are entertaining and a pleasant romance adds to the enjoyment. Inexpert direction weakens an otherwise exceptionally good comedy.

EAST OF FIFTH AVENUE (*Columbia*). Cast: Wallace Ford, Dorothy Tree, Mary Carlisle, Walter Connolly.

A human interest story of the joys and sorrows, the struggles and tragedies in the lives of a group of people living in a boarding house east of Fifth Avenue. It is convincingly told, ably acted and carries a powerful heart appeal.

FOOTLIGHT PARADE (*Warner*). Cast: James Cagney, Joan Blondell, Ruby Keeler, Dick Powell, Frank McHugh.

A spectacular musical comedy built around the difficulties of a production manager whose employers cheat him, whose ideas are stolen by a rival, and who is enmeshed by a designing siren. His problems are eventually solved for him by his devoted secretary who brings him love and happiness. The picture is beautifully photographed, lavishly produced and contains several ingenious dance sequences. It is marred by occasional vulgar and suggestive dialogue. The music is enjoyable and the production will probably be popular with those who like this type of picture.

HELL AND HIGH WATER (*Paramount*). Cast: Richard Arlen, Judith Allen, Charles Grapewin.

The above lurid title has been attached to a water front story by Max Miller called "Captain Jericho." The picture as photographed in the harbor of San Pedro and scenes of the United States fleet add interest to the story of a garbage boat captain and a girl he has rescued from drowning. A darling baby plays a part in bringing the romance to a happy ending. Good acting makes an unimportant story convincing.

THE KENNEL MURDER CASE (*Warner*). Cast: William Powell, Mary Astor, Eugene Pallette, Ralph Morgan.

S. S. Van Dine's mystery story has been made into a swift moving and satisfactory film with Mr. Powell again interpreting the suave detective, Philo Vance. The latter's friend, District Attorney Markham, begs Vance's help in solving a series of murders that have baffled the police, and the clever detective, with a remarkable Doberman Pincher assisting, discovers the murder. A thoroughly entertaining mystery film.

LADIES MUST LOVE (*Universal*). Cast: June Knight, Neil Hamilton, Sally O'Neil, Dorothy Burgess, Mary Carlisle.

A tawdry type of picture outside the realm of good taste. Risqué dialogue and a cheap story conception places this picture on the non-recommended list.

LOVE, HONOR AND OH, BABY! (*Universal*). Cast: Slim Summerville, Zasu Pitts, Lucille Gleason, Donald Meek.

A poor vehicle for the talents of Zasu Pitts is offered in a story based on a breach of promise racket. Its evident satire has been burlesqued until all genuine humor is gone and only vulgarity and suggestiveness remain. The result is an objectionable and at times an offensive picture. Not recommended for any discriminating audience.

MEET THE BARON (*M-G-M*). Cast: Jack Pearl, Jimmy Durante, Zasu Pitts, Edna May Oliver, Ted Healy.

A nonsensical, semi-musical comedy dealing with the hectic adventures of Baron Munchausen and his partner in a girls' college. An all-comedian cast does its best with unoriginal scenes that are sometimes humorless slapstick.

STRAWBERRY ROAN (*Universal*). Cast: Ken Maynard, Ruth Hall, Harold Goodwin, Wm. Desmond.

The old ballad of a wild roan horse that refused to be captured has been retold in a screen story of exceptional interest. Beautiful photography, a thrilling battle between the roan and a rival horse make the production a notable one.

WALLS OF GOLD (*Fox*). Cast: Sally Eilers, Norman Foster, Ralph Morgan, Rosita Moreno.

The story of a girl who chooses luxury in a loveless marriage and realizes too late her mistake. The lack of theme originality is made more glaring by the unconvincing treatment given the story. The tawdry infidelities of a rich man do not make acceptable entertainment for a discriminating audience. Recommended with reservations for adult audiences.

WHITE WOMAN (*Paramount*). Cast: Charles Laughton, Carole Lombard, Charles Bickford, Kent Taylor.

The story of Prin, a product of the London slums, who becomes a brutal overlord and "King of the River" in a Malayan settlement. Married to a white woman whom he finds singing in a cafe he makes her life a torment through his cruelty and domination. His end comes at the hands of the natives whose chiefs he has insulted. The story is a fantastic one with a strong vein of realism and is filled with gripping situations. The settings are beautiful and the acting excellent. Mr. Laughton, as the semi-insane overseer, adds another remarkable characterization to his already notable list.

THE WORST WOMAN IN PARIS? (*Fox*). Cast: Adolphe Menjou, Benita Hume, Harvey Stephens, Helen Chandler.

A sophisticated story of an English girl whose notorious affairs have won for her the dubious title of *The Worst Woman in Paris*, her attempt to escape to a new type of life and romance in a small mid-western American town and her ultimate return to Paris to help the man she has left there regain

prosperity. The picture is distinguished for its beautiful photography, fine settings and excellent acting.

SERIAL.

THE PERILS OF PAULINE (*Universal*). Cast: Evalyn Knapp, Robert Allen.

One of the first film serials of silent picture days remade in twelve chapters with sound. The story, highly melodramatic, is episodic in style and concerns the attempt of an American scientist in China to secure the formula for a deadly gas. The secret of its hiding place in an old temple has been told him by a trusted Chinese friend. Pauline, the daughter, shares in the search which is doubly dangerous as China is in the throes of revolution. The serial is an outmoded type, over melodramatic for adults and highly exciting and mature in thought for children.

SHORT SUBJECTS

STEEPLE CHASE (*Walt Disney. Mickey Mouse*) (*United Artists*).

Mickey, with the aid of the two attendants, saves the day for the Colonel when his horse finds the jug of cider and succumbs to its contents. Inferior to the usual Disney output.

PIED PIPER (*Walt Disney. Silley Symphony*) (*United Artists*).

A delightful reproduction of the old nursery story, done in color, wherein the Pied Piper rids the city of rats, and leads the children to Joyland.

SERIES OF FOUR ON INSECT LIFE (*Tolhurst Prod.*).

Distributed by Principal Pictures Corporation.

The entire series is highly recommended as high in both entertainment value and information. The accompanying descriptions are clever and interesting.

COCOON TO BUTTERFLY. The life history of a butterfly.

INSECT CLOWNS. Stories of the flea, the fly, the spider with amusing illustrations of their strength.

QUEEN BEE. Intimate life in hive and flower.

FARMER'S FRIEND. The scale that infests citrus trees and the lady that fights it.

The following short subjects are approved for the family audience by the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae and the General Federation of Women's Clubs—East Coast Committee.

BETTY BOOP'S HALLOWE'EN PARTY (*Paramount*).

Betty and a scarecrow arrange a halloween party for the animals, only to have it broken up by a huge gorilla.

BLOW ME DOWN (*Paramount*)

A Max Fleischer cartoon featuring the antics of a sailor in his escapades with a dance hall queen.

BUDDYS DAY OUT (*Vitaphone*)

A Looney Tune. Buddy makes the most of his day out.

EXPLORING THE PACIFIC (Vitaphone)

Wonders in the Pacific that are infrequently seen by travellers.

THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY (Fox)

Edison's first one reel picture. The announcer comments on the old fashioned technique.

HOT FROM PETROGRAD (Vitaphone)

Haunting melodies from Russia.

I LIKE MOUNTAIN MUSIC (Paramount)

An amusing subject dealing with a modern Rip Van Winkle. Enjoyable mountain music by The Eton Boys.

I YAM WHAT I YAM (Paramount)

A display of strength on the part of Popeye, the sailor.

THE KICK OFF (Principal)

Howard Jones, coach of University of Southern California, explains and illustrates tactics that have made football coaches and players famous.

THE LITTLE BROADCAST (Paramount)

Several well known radio stars are introduced in an excellent musical short subject.

MIDSUMMER MUSH (M-G-M)

Featuring Charley Chase. Charley, a well meaning but witless chief scout master, takes his troop to the country where his good intentions get him into constant trouble.

MUSICAL MOODS (Electrical Research Products)

A commendable experiment in better sound recording of music together with a different treatment of the accompanying picture has been made by the Electrical Research Products in a series of short subjects that are unusually fine both in their scenic treatment and in the musical selections offered. The photography is used as an artistic supplement to the music and is made subservient to it. The series has strong entertainment value and will be unquestionably an aid in the appreciation of good music. The musical compositions presented with visual accompaniment include: Waters of Minnetonka (Lieurance); Hula Moon (second version); Waltz in A-Flat Major (Brahms); Afternoon of a Faun (Debussy); Liebestraum (Liszt); dance of the hours (Ponchellii); Hula Moon (A Pacific Medley).

ON THE AIR AND OFF (Universal)

An effect to put a radio sales campaign on the air proves to be a difficult proposition. Several of the artists shown are well worthwhile. The slapstick antics of other detract from the entertainment value.

OPEN SESAME (Universal)

A clever comedy, slapstick in parts and genuinely funny in others.

PARAMOUNT PICTORIAL NO. 4 (Paramount)

The subjects pictured are:

1. Let's Go Crabbing

Underwater views of the shell crab,

2. Manhattan Nocturne

Lovely night views in and around Manhattan.

3. Irvin S. Cobb

An interview with one of America's best known authors.

THE PAWN SHOP (RKO-Radio)

A revival with sound effects of one of the Chaplin films.

THE ROAD IS OPEN AGAIN (Vitaphone)

Dick Powell sings the theme song and scenes of industry and progress are shown in explanation of the work of the NRA.

RUSSIA TODAY (Principal)

Mr. Corveth Wells presents interesting sidelights on Russian life as lived under Soviet rule. His comments are entertaining and instructive.

SANDMAN TALES (Columbia)

An enjoyable Scrappy cartoon with several original ideas well worked out.

SCREEN SOUVENIRS NO. 4 (Paramount)

An entertaining review of some of the silent pictures.

SOCIETY CHEATERS (RKO-Radio)

My Bridge Experience with Ely Culbertson. Mr. Culbertson gives his expert judgment on a game in which the serious social crime of cheating occurs. Interesting subject for bridge enthusiasts. Of special interest to adult audiences.

WHAT NOT DO IN BRIDGE (RKO-Radio)

My Bridge Experiences with Ely Culbertson. Mr. Culbertson points out in a radio talk several vital things to be considered in playing the game of bridge. Interesting subject for bridge enthusiasts. Of special interest to adult audiences.

WHAT THE SCOTCH STARTED (Columbia)

A brief history of golf beginning with its introduction at St. Andrews in Scotland and carrying through to present day golfing.

WILD POSES (M-G-M)

An Our Gang comedy. Spanky has his picture taken while the gang looks on. The photographer's life is made miserable by Spanky's antics. An amusing subject.

WONDERS OF THE TROPICS (Principal)

Unusual views of wild life in the jungles along the Amazon in South America.

The following short subjects have been seen and approved by the East Coast Committee of the General Federation of Women's Clubs but have not yet been reported by the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae,

ACROSS THE ACROPOLIS (Fox).

Magic Carpet series. A potpourri from the ancient city of Athens.

ACROSS THE SEA (Educational),

One of the Romantic Journeys series. Mr. Claude Fleming takes his audience to the Hawaiian Islands, the paradise of the Pacific. Charming Hawaiian

music and lovely scenic effects in color give this an exceptional entertainment value,

BEDTIME WORRIES (M-G-M.)

Our Gang comedy. The clever Spanky sleeps alone for the first time and keeps his parents busy and worried most of the night.

THE BIG BENEFIT (Universal).

Impersonations of several well known vaudeville actors by a group of children staging a benefit for a swimming pool.

DIRTY WORK (M-G-M.)

A Laurel and Hardy subject to which the two comedians working as chimney sweeps, get into serious trouble in the home of a scientist who has discovered the secret of rejuvenation.

ENCHANTED TRAIL (Educational).

A Romantic Journeys series. The scenic beauty of Colorado forests and of the famous Canyon is pictured in a series of views that are exquisite in their loveliness.

FAST FINGERS (Columbia.)

One of the Minute Mystery series. Professor Fordney, the famous criminologist, finds the missing clue in a stolen money mystery. A clever screen development of an interesting problem.

FINE FEATHERS (M-G-M.)

An Oddity with explanatory remarks by Pete Smith, Done in Technicolor. Remarkably beautiful picture of birds showing the gorgeous colorings of many species. The strained humor of the narrator detracts from the fine educational value that the picture would otherwise have.

HOLLYWOOD ON PARADE No. 4. (Paramount.)

Douglas MacLean acts as master of ceremonies and introduces some of the best known screen stars.

HOT DAZE (Columbia.)

Smith and Dale are featured in an amusing comedy.

KENNEL KINGS (Paramount.)

A Grantland Rice Sportlight. Various breeds of dogs are pictured while Grantland Rice comments on them in interesting manner.

MARCHING ALONG (RKO-Radio.)

The kingdom of the Little King of O. Soglow's well known cartoon is benefited by co-operation with the NRA program.

MICKEY'S TOUCHDOWN (Columbia.)

With the help of Howard Jones, famous coach of the University of Southern California, Mickey's team, the Scorpions, wins a football victory from its rivals.

A MOMENT OF MADNESS (Fox.)

One of the Movie Tintype Series. A reshewing of one of the old silent melodramas from the days of '98 called "A Moment of Madness." Clever comments add to the entertainment value.

THE NEW DEAL (Warner).

A review of the economic situation in the United State during the past few years, together with a discussion of the objectives of the Recovery Act, Timely, interesting and informative.

PATHE REVIEW (RKO-Radio.)

The following subjects are photographed and commented on:

1. **Pittsburgh**—Very fine photographic effects indicate a new prosperity at the steel center.

2. **Soap Magic**—Unique and attractive figures sculptured from soap.

3. **Swing Low, Sweet Chariot**—Photographs, showing the glory of the Alps, taken from an aerial cable car.

4. **Body Sculpture**—A demonstration of rhythmic exercises for grace and beauty.

5. **There's A Fortune in It**—A picturization of a few simple and amusing patents.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS No. 32 (Universal.)

The following unusual subjects are pictured and commented on in interesting fashion;

1. A men's sewing circle of Louisville, Kentucky.

2. The large market places of Mexico City.

3. A remarkable legless baseball player.

4. The Navajo Indians who never shave but pluck out their whiskers.

5. John Saylor's Page, the rubber face man.

6. Tom Reed, a resident of Lost Lake, Florida controls thousands of wild ducks that come to his place to feed.

7. A granite structure of a church which is being built by one man, Father Albert Braum.

8. Little Jack Fowler, eighteen months old baby of Grand Island, Nebraska, smokes a pipe and also cigars.

9. Dr. J. J. Parsons of Monrovia, California, who has become the friend of the timid humming bird.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS No. 33 (Universal).

This instructive collection of the strange and unusual includes the following,

1. The Australian duck-billed platypus the strangest animal on earth.

2. The three-eyed Artura lizard found in New Zealand.

3. The flying dogs of Java.

4. A pyramid under construction in Arkansas to last 10,000 years and to contain everything that will interpret present day civilization to future generations.

5. An armless Texan who is a proficient knife thrower.

6. A Californian whose dangerous occupation is the collecting of reptiles and tarantulas.

7. A strange human in Virginia who possesses a tail-like growth of hair at the base of his spine.

8. A kite flying celebration in Japan that heralds the birth of a son.

9. A Mohammedan cobra charmer of Tunis, Africa.

10. A Polynesian village built around the thermal activities of hot springs.

TRANSATLANTIC BRIDGE TRICKS (RKO-Radio.)

My Bridge Experiences with Ely Culbertson. Mr. Culbertson, travelling to Europe under an assumed name, has an opportunity to expose a group of card sharps and to save one of their victims from a serious money loss.

WE WANT A TOUCHDOWN (Columbia.)

A World of Sport series. A detailed study of the great game of football.

YOUR LIFE IS IN YOUR HANDS (Educational).

Mr. Joseph Ranald presents certain facts which he has discovered in an intensive study of famous hands, that show, as he believes, that the life and character of an individual is indicated in his hands.

THE MASKED TERROR

THE CAST

<i>Master Navinchandra</i> ...	"Masked Terror"
<i>Miss Gohar Karnataki</i> ...	Dilaram
<i>Mr. Bhim (Villain)</i> ...	Jalimsingh
<i>Master Kanti</i> ...	Sajansingh
<i>Miss Shivrani</i> ...	Queen Mother
<i>Mr. Nizam</i> ...	Kalapahad



Ambition! What immense possibilities for good and evil lie concealed in this simple word. It has created empires and has also wrecked as many as it has created. It has sent men to the four corners of the world and also to the deepest perdition. It has been the advance guard of success to some but to many a surest and easiest road to degradation and destruction.

Jalimsingh, the wily Minister of Mehwar was an easy victim to this passion. It led him from one excess to another till at last he was possessed with the desire to rule the kingdom himself. The path for this ambition was cleared for him since the Crown Prince was given to pleasure and idle company. The indulgent Queen Mother's fondness for her son only encouraged him in his idle ways. The scheming Minister was therefore free to oppress the people which he did by imposing new taxes on them.

The lives of the people were made more miserable by the menace of a certain bandit called "Kala Pahad" whose cruelty was matched only by the mystery of his practices. He always wore a black mask and struck terror into the hearts of the people.

Jalimsingh took this bandit into his confidence and together they concerted a nefarious plan whereby they were to loot the state-treasury and remove it to the bandit's den. Accordingly one day Kala Pahad raided the treasury with his followers and removed all the jewels and money to his own den. But unknown to them two eyes were witnessing this scene—two mysterious eyes which peered through the darkness from inside a black and sinister mask.

This man with the black mask followed the plunderers and entered unseen into the cave. Here he overheard a heated discussion which ensued between the bandit chief and his men.

With a chuckle of triumph Kala Pahad unfolded before the eyes of his men the contents of the bags he had looted. He told them that a half of it would go to the minister and the other half to himself.

The men then asked him what part of the booty they would have. The bandit chief grinned and said "Of course you get what remains after I have been satisfied."

"No! No! We must have our due" shouted the men with one voice.

"Stop! They must have their due!....."
All turned to see the stranger who had suddenly broken into their discussion. It was the masked man who had shadowed them through all their proceedings.

Kala Pahad was taken aback. But soon recollecting himself he measured the intruder with menacing eyes. But the masked man who was not to be starred out of countenance whipped out his sword and drew Kala Pahad into a combat.

Their swords flashed fire, and for a time neither seemed to gain the vantage of the other but at the end the stranger's superior skill prevailed and Kala Pahad lay slain.

The bandits stood dumb-founded. Here was one who had made short work of their chief whom they had been looking on as a god. They acclaimed the stranger at once as their new chief—their new Kala Pahad.

Next day at sunrise Jalimsingh was told by his private secretary that several heavy bags had arrived from Kala Pahad. The minister smiled contentedly. He had the bags opened. But instead of gold out rolled stones! Jalimsingh bit his lips in anger and swore he would see the last of this treacherous dog.

Meantime the crown prince had fallen deeply in love with Dilaram the lovely sister of the minister. And well might one fall in love with a lady of Dilaram's beauty. For indeed she was a phantom of delight born to enthrall the hearts of men. But though the prince pined for her, Dilaram had nothing but cold words for him. For was he not a creature of sloth—given to pleasures and idle ways? The love-mad prince sought the help of his body-guard Sajjan to recommend him to the good graces of Dilaram and through him he sent a love-letter to her.

* * *

Jalimsingh paced up and down his room brooding with violent rage over the villainy practised on him by Kala Pahad. Suddenly this bandit chief entered the room and confronted the minister. Jalimsingh vented his wrath on him and summoning his men tried, to arrest 'Kala Pahad.' But that desperado proved more than a match for the minister's men. Wriggling out of their hands most valiantly 'Kala Pahad' escaped into the next room. Here he found the charming sister of the minister, Dilaram. To her he revealed the atrocities that had been contemplated by her brother.

Meantime Jalimsingh balked of his revenge traced 'Kala Pahad' to the prince's room. But he found "the bird flown" and the Prince complaining that he had been harassed by the bandit chief.

That night Jalimsingh, intent on his revenge, stole out to 'Kala Pahad's den disguised in a black dress. But at the entrance of the den he was suddenly set upon by the bandit's man who bound him hand and foot gagged him and left him on the street to be scoffed at by the passing crowds. This episode added to the Minister's vindictiveness. Strenuously he strove to arrest 'Kala Pahad.' But his efforts were in vain.

The Crown-Prince was in the meantime prosecuting his overtures of love to Dilaram. But that 'haughty beauty' repulsed him every time calling him an imbecile to his face Sajjan entreated her to marry the Prince if only to save the kingdom from the ruin to which it was hurrying—if only to nerve the Prince up to exterminate 'Kala Pahad' who was daily becoming an increasing scare to the land.

But these entreaties would not win the heart of Dilaram. They only made her throw out a challenge—that she would marry the person who would kill 'Kala Pahad.'



Meanwhile the Minister, still pursuing his diabolic schemes of enriching himself, thought of drawing Sajjan into his confidence. Calling for this confidante of the Prince he exposed to him a plan of attaining the throne by killing the Queen-Mother and the Crown-Prince. But Sajjan did not respond and went away silent.

Not long after this, one evening, Dilaram was kidnapped by 'Kala Pahad' to his den. Here, documents incriminating her brother were placed before her. What a revelation it was to poor Dilaram to learn that her brother was the most dastardly of traitors! For the first time she felt pleasure in the company of 'Kala Pahad.'

The minister's plans at last succeeded. His men captured 'Kala Pahad' and threw him into a dungeon. Dilaram also, who was languishing of love for him was sent into imprisonment.

One cold night Sajjan contrived to procure Dilaram's escape from prison. Once at large, Dilaram set a wave of patriotism in motion and put herself at the head of a party of enthusiasts. In the midst of her activities, however, one day, she heard that 'Kala Pahad' was about to be executed. She determined to avert this event: the man she loved *must not die*.

But a revelation was in store for her when she rushed to the place of execution. For it was discovered that the man who had been known as 'Kala Pahad' had been none other than the Crown-Prince.

The minister ordered Sajjan to proceed with the execution. But Sajjan knew whom to obey. He drew the minister into a combat and slew him.

The moon hung over the distant cliffs bathing the world in soft silver. The kokil was heard fluting a wild love-song from a grove of champak trees. In this scene was witnessed the union of the Crown-Prince with Dilaram whom he held in a long embrace of fervent love.

A Mehta Luhar 100% Stunt Talkie. Produced by Shree Sharda Movietone Co., Bombay.

Director	...	Mr. Apte
Cameraman	...	Mr. Sarpotdar
Sound Engineer	...	Mr. Minu Katrak

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Recording Sound for Motion Pictures.

CHAPTER 1.

By Charles Felstead, Contributing Editor.

In charge of the construction and operation of limited commercial radio stations KDBG, KFQI, and KZY at the Thos. H. Ince Studio, 1923-24. Attended University of Southern California, 1924-27, majoring in Journalism and Electrical Engineering. Assistant to Chief Engineer of the Gilfillan Radio Corporation, 1928. Supervising construction and installation of radio stations KHGV and KGHW at the Universal Pictures Corporation, 1928. Sound Engineer, Night Foreman of the Sound Department, Universal Pictures Corporation, 1928. Technical writer on radio and motion picture sound recording engineering for the past ten years with more than three hundred articles published. A pioneer in radio in Los Angeles, beginning as an operator in 1915, and holding a commercial radio license almost without interruption since that date. Special writer for the National Radio Institute. Author of two of their text books on sound motion pictures. Associate member Society of Motion Pictures Engineers and Institute of Radio Engineers. Honorary member National Advisory Council of the American Radio Association. Associate Editor, INTERNATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER. Hollywood, California. Lieutenant, 977th, (AA) CA-Reserve, Communications Officer, 1st Battalion.

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Recording sound for motion pictures is both a science and an art. It is a science in so far as the operation and maintenance of the sound equipment is concerned; and it is an art because the placing of the microphones and the operation of the monitoring controls determine whether the sound record will be pleasing and effective or harsh and unnatural. Just as the efficiency at which the sound equipment is maintained and operated is dependent on the knowledge and ability of the sound engineer, so is the proper recording of sound dependent on the experience and skill of the monitor man. Only when the microphones are so located that they take full advantage of the acoustic conditions existing within a set and the electrical power delivered by them to the recording amplifiers is skilfully regulated does the finest type of sound record result.

In the succeeding chapters of this series, which will consider all phases of sound recording from the sound stage and the microphone to the completed film sound record, the importance of the artistic side of sound recording will not be neglected in favor of its more practical aspects. So in addition to describing the construction of the recording apparatus and its operation, these chapters will discuss the elements that are necessary to produce artistic and faithful sound records. A brief but comprehensive survey in this chapter of the whole system of sound recording will perhaps make the material in the following chapters more easy to understand.

A SOUND STORAGE SYSTEM.

A sound recording system such as installed in a motion picture studio and a sound

reproducing system like that of a motion picture theatre may be considered together to represent an electrical delay circuit. That is, they form a storage system for sound, the film on which the sound is recorded being comparable to the storage tank. The sound recording system serves to convert the sound to electrical energy and to amplify it to an intensity sufficient to permit it to be recorded on the sensitive medium, which in the systems to be considered in these chapters is the emulsion of motion picture film. The reproducing system is provided to convert the sound record on the film to electrical energy corresponding to that which produced the sound record, and to amplify that energy to an intensity great enough to operate the loud speakers which reconvert it to sound waves in air.

The combined recording and reproducing system is considered as a delay circuit because sound is preserved in permanent form in the emulsion of the film and may be reproduced therefrom after any desired interval of time. The sound is stored in the film sound track just as certainly as electricity is stored by means of a chemical process in a storage battery, as water is stored in a tank, or as words that represent thought are stored on paper. The storage of sound on film as a variation in exposure differs from the storage of electricity or water in that the sound record is not in any way depleted by the action of the reproducing system, and may be used again and again indefinitely; while the electricity and water are dissipated when they are released from their storage mediums to provide power or irrigation.

Disregarding now the reproducing system for this series is concerned only with sound recording, we will consider the individual elements that combine to constitute a system for recording sound on film. Wax recording has intentionally been omitted from the discussion.

A sound wave in air is formed of alternate compressions and rarefactions of the air which move outward in spherical shells in every direction from the source of sound, following one another at the speed of travel of sound in air. The particles of air do not themselves move appreciably from their normal positions in transmitting the sound vibrations, but oscillate at the frequency of the sound, passing the vibration from one to another.

Sound is produced by a body—such as the membrane of a drum, the string of a violin, a reed, or the human vocal cords—which has been set into rapid vibration by being struck, bowed, or subject to a blast of air. The vibrating body must have a sizable contact with the air in order to transmit its vibration to a sufficient number of air particles. The *intensity* of the sound is dictated by the amplitude of the to-and-fro movement of the vibrating body, the greater the movement the

louder the sound. The speed at which the body vibrates governs the *frequency*, or *pitch*, of the sound, the more rapid the vibration of the moving body the higher the pitch of the sound produced. The *quality* of the sound is determined by its vibration form. Differences in intensity, frequency, and quality provide the three characteristics by which one sound may be identified from another.

THE RECORDING SYSTEM.

The microphone is the device that converts the sound energy to electrical energy. In the ideal microphone, this electrical energy has a wave form corresponding exactly in amplitude and frequency to the intensity and frequency of the sound wave. The most common type of microphone employed for sound recording has a thin metal diaphragm that corresponds to the diaphragm of the human ear. The metal diaphragm is set into vibration when a sound wave strikes it. Theoretically, the rapidity with which the diaphragm vibrates is exactly the same as the rapidity of vibration of the vibrating body producing the sound wave, and the amplitude of vibration of the diaphragm is proportional to the amplitude of movement of the vibrating body. By means of an

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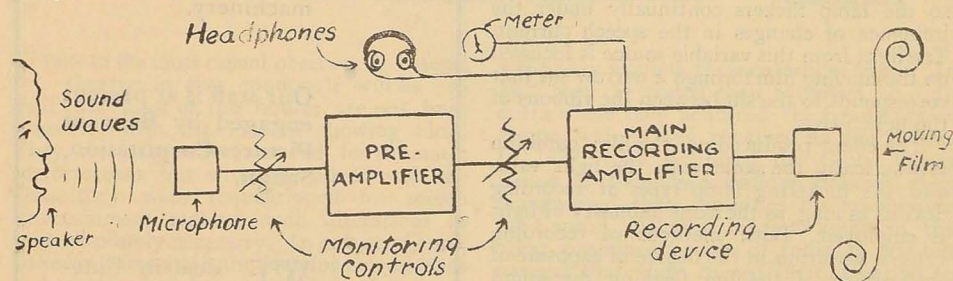
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electrical circuit that will be discussed later, the vibration of the microphone diaphragm is converted to electrical energy, which is *amplified*, or increased in amplitude, by vacuum tube in the microphone amplifier. This electrical duplicate of the sound wave is known as *speech current*.

The electrical output of the microphone is fed through a long cable to the monitoring controls, which are a series of adjustable devices known as *potentiometers*. The monitoring controls permit the electrical energy supplied to them by the microphone, or microphones, to be regulated to an amplitude suitable for recording. By operating these controls, the monitor man is able to maintain the speech current at the *level*, or amplitude that has been found most satisfactory. A sensitive meter and headphones through which he hears the sound that is being recorded aid him in his work. A small pre-amplifier, known as "booster" amplifier, provides a certain amount of amplification at this point.

After passing through the monitoring controls and the preamplifier, the electrical energy representing the sound is supplied to the main recording amplifier. This amplifier increases the amplitude of the energy to a level that is great enough to cause a variation in the recording device sufficient to produce a satisfactory sound record. The amplification is provided by several vacuum tubes in a standard audio amplifying circuit similar to that used in radio receiving sets. Current to operate the vacuum tubes is provided by batteries in the usual manner. The amount of *gain*, or amplification, in the amplifier is adjustable within wide limits; but the gain is not varied during recording, the entire variation being provided by the monitoring controls.

The accompanying diagram will serve to make this explanation more clear. This type of diagram is known as a block schematic, because each piece of equipment is shown as a square or rectangle and the pairs of wires that connect the pieces of equipment are represented by single lines.



Block Schematic Diagram of a Simple Recording System

THE SOUND RECORDING DEVICE.

From the output of the main amplifier the energy is supplied to the recording device, the construction of which varies with the type of recording system. There are three principal types of film recording devices: the light valve, the rocking mirror, and the flickering lamp. Only the last two recording devices will be considered in detail in subsequent chapters, because they are the types most widely used in India. All of these devices have for their purpose the variation, or *modulation*, of a light source, the variation to correspond in intensity and frequency with the sound wave picked up by the microphone. Each recording device represents a different method of accomplishing this single purpose.

The light valve of the Western Electric system is formed of two thin ribbons spaced one-thousandths of an inch apart, the ribbons being held under considerable tension to keep their resonant frequency high. Light from a source of constant intensity shines through the space between the ribbons on to the moving film. Under the influence of the speech current acting against a magnetic field these ribbons vibrate, thereby continually varying the spacing between them and so the amount of light that reaches the film.

The rocking mirror of the RCA-Photophone is formed of a minute mirror cemented to two ribbons similar to the ribbons of the light valve. These ribbons are likewise held under tension in a magne-

tic field. Light from a source of constant intensity shines on the mirror, and a portion of the light is reflected by the mirror through a narrow slit on to the moving film. The speech current from the recording amplifier instead of varying the spacing of the ribbons causes them to twist rapidly, turning the mirror so that it reflects more or less light on to the edge of the film. The degree and rapidity with which the mirror vibrates depends on the amplitude and frequency of the speech current. Since the position of the mirror is continually changing with variations in the sound that is being recorded, a constantly varying area of exposure is produced on the moving film.

The flickering lamp type of recording device is used by the Art Reeves and other recording systems. This is a more direct method of recording, because the variations in the speech current produce a corresponding variation in the light source itself, which is a small glow lamp of special construction. A portion of the electric current that illuminates the lamp is provided by the speech current; so the lamp flickers continually under the influence of changes in the speech current. The light from this variable source is focussed on the moving film through a narrow slit that corresponds to the slit between the ribbons of the light valve.

The effect produced on the film emulsion is practically the same with the light valve and the flickering lamp types of recording devices as long as the same intensity of light is employed. Both methods of recording cause a variation in the degree of exposure of the portion of the film forming the sound track. For that reason, this form of sound record is known as the variable density constant area type. The rocking mirror does not produce a change in the degree of exposure of the film; it varies the area that is exposed. So the form of sound record produced by a rocking mirror recording device is known as the variable area constant density type. The relative merits of the different types of recording devices is a debatable question.

The next chapter of this series will discuss sound stages and the construction of motion picture sets to provide the most satisfactory acoustic conditions for recording; and the third chapter will contain a more comprehensive description of the microphone and the manner in which it should be handled. The following chapters will attempt to present mostly the practical side of sound recording, with only such theory as is necessary to explain the functioning of this equipment.

(to be continued)

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Regal Bombay.

EVEN to the most casual observer of cinema theatres in this country it will be evident that most of the houses are not built primarily with the idea of showing films. They were originally intended for dramatic performances but with the advent of the films, they were requisitioned for screen entertainment making such alterations as were absolutely necessary. In course of time, however, when a certain taste for convenience and comfort has been created in the minds of the audience it was but natural that theatres should be built with the sole idea of showing films.

Among these enterprises we can mention the New Empire in Calcutta, the Regal in Colombo and the Regal in Lahore. But the number of such theatres is indeed so small that they can be counted on one's finger. Among these, the Regal of Bombay stands prominent. This picture house is due to the initiative and enterprise of the well-known firm of Talkie circuit owners the Globe Theatres Ltd. and marks a landmark in their onward growth. The beginning of this firm must be looked for in the early part of 1915 when with characteristic insight Mr. F. H. Sidwa opened the Globe in Rangoon in partnership with Mr. K. A. Kooka. By careful management and giving the public

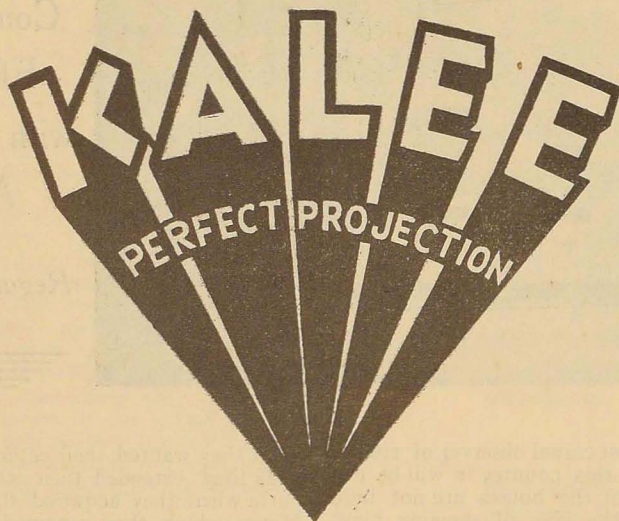
what they wanted, their enterprise grew. In 1922 they extended their activities to Calcutta where they acquired the Grand Opera House which they renamed as the Globe. In 1927 they acquired the Globe Opera House in Bangalore while in Bombay they inaugurated their activities by taking over the Capitol. With a cinema house in the other prominent cities of India it was but natural that they turned their attention to Madras where they took the management of the Globe which under them came to be known as the Roxy.

SITUATION.

The Regal occupies one of the prominent position in Bombay being situated in a splendid site facing the Hornby Road at its junction with Apollo Bunder within easy reach of the wealthy residential quarters. The first impression one gets of this new theatre is one of modernity combined with extreme simplicity. The handsome appearance of the outside wall is obtained by the use of reconstructed stone which is being used in large quantities in England and America and consists in casting a real stone surface on to a concrete building block, at a fraction of the cost of cut stone.

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The concrete blocks forming the walling are cast with an integral face which is made up of a rich mix in which sand or stone chips of the particular material it is desired to copy, are used.

As if to break up the severe simplicity, a neon namesign is introduced which serves during the nights not only to advertise the theatre but also to impart a vivid glow to the whole neighbourhood.

As one enters the interior, its careful planning to afford maximum comfort and convenience will be evident on all sides. From the main foyer two staircases lead to the vast auditorium on entering which one gets an immediate impression of great size and of luxury rarely met with in theatres in this country. The decorations has been very artistically executed in soft gradations of pale orange and jade green giving a complete sense of restful harmony which is enhanced by the wise choice of seats. Simple in design and exceptionally comfortable their colour matches exactly with the surrounding walls. The seats are so arranged that a distorted and uninterrupted view of the film is obtained from any seat in the auditorium.

CONCRETE FLOORS.

The floor of the theatre is of concrete and there are some excellent examples of cement tiles in the lobbies exemplifying the beautiful effects which can be obtained with coloured cement.

PROJECTION AND SOUND EQUIPMENT.

One of the most interesting features of the Regal is the exceptional clarity, depth and stereoscopic effect of the pictures thrown on the screen. The cause of this improvement is in the employment of a lens of constant aperture in the 'Ernemann' projectors supplied by the Eastern Electric and Engineering Co.

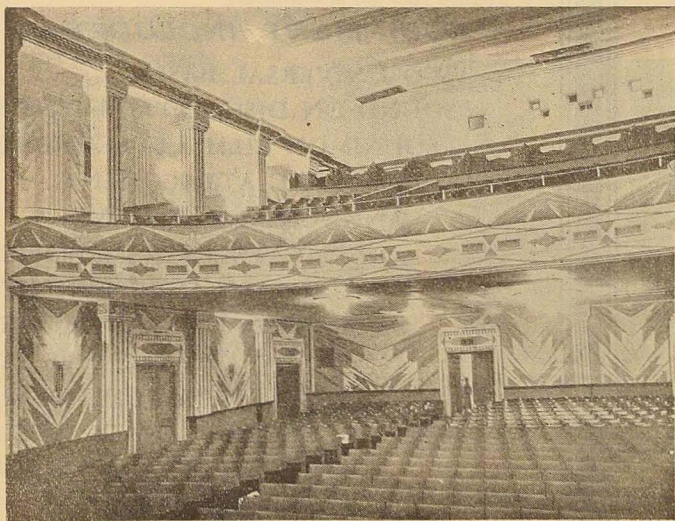
The sound equipment consists of two Universal Bases and synchronised repro-

duction of sound and scene can be obtained by both the 'sound on film' and 'sound on disc' methods. The amplifier equipment consists of two complete and separate systems known as the "A" and "B" systems. This is the first duplicate amplifier system of its size to be installed in India. A third amplifier system is also installed and is intended for the reproduction of music in the auditorium. bar and soda fountain at such times that the main equipment is in operation for other purposes. This is also an innovation. The complete amplifier system weighs over half a ton.

An attachment for reproducing music from ordinary commercial gramophone records is capable of being switched into any one of the amplifier systems.

An extra large capacity battery has been installed to cope with the very large demand of this large and elaborate installation.

Another feature of the installation is the twenty seats located in different parts of the theatre and equipped with special devices to enable patrons who may be hard of hearing, to enjoy sound films in a manner they have never experienced before. Each individual making use of the benefits of this apparatus is able to control the volume of his own individual requirements without interfering with



A general view of the Auditorium.

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REPRODUCER SET PROVIDING

MUSIC AT ALL TIMES FOR BAR

AND SODA FOUNTAIN.

TWENTY SEATS SPECIALLY EQUIPPED

WITH APPARATUS FOR DEAF PERSONS

others. The Regal is the first theatre in the East to be so equipped.

Again, special apparatus is installed which will enable the management to personally address the audience on any matter. This apparatus consists of a microphone and control and switching devices which can be used in conjunction with any of the three amplifier systems.

The stage equipment consists of two double exponential loud-speaking horns each weighing nearly two hundred pounds. These are located behind the special sound screen which is the largest in India and measure 26 feet wide and 20 feet high. This screen was specially supplied to the theatre by the Western Electric Co. Ltd.

Two smaller horns for providing incidental music are concealed in the auditorium.

All the control and switching devices for the equipment, which is situated in different parts of the theatre, are installed in the Operating Room and indicating lamps show how equipment actually outside of the operating room is functioning.

The layout was specially designed by the Western Electric Co. Ltd., Bombay and the installation is the only one of its kind in the East.

In this connection we desire to express our obligation to Mr. Keymer the chief projectionist who kindly took us through the operating room and explained all these matters in detail with a facility of one who has a thorough knowledge of the subject.

ACCOUSTICAL

TREATMENT.

In order to give the best possible reproduction great care is taken in proper acoustical treatment. This deluxe cinema is entirely panelled with the British Acoustical correcting board. This board which is of British manufacture is called "Insulwood" and it is distributed in India by Messrs G. D. Peters (India) Ltd., of Bombay and Calcutta.

"Insulwood" possesses exceptional acoustical correction properties.

COOLING SYSTEM.

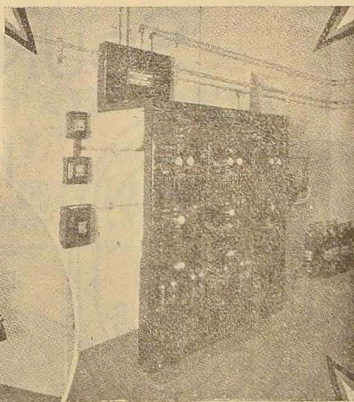
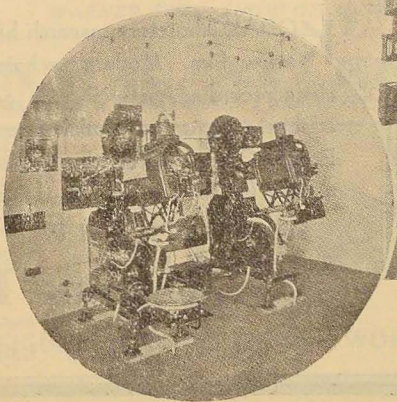
One peculiarity which immediately strikes a cinemagoer as he sits in the vast auditorium of the Regal is the entire absence of any kind of electric fans. But at the same time he feels the air around him kept very pleasant.

This is due to the combined Air Conditioning and cooling plant which maintain a very pleasant atmosphere in the theatre throughout the performance.

It is not only the comfortable temperature which is noticeable but also the dryness of the air obtained in the auditorium.

SODA FOUNTAIN AND BAR.

On the ground floor to the left of the main foyer is one of the important conveniences which Regal affords its visitors namely the soda fountain which is open day and night for those who want soft drinks, sandwiches, ice and other light refreshments. Done in the same colouring as the main building, the restful pleasure one derives from cool drinks is considerably enhanced. Above the soda fountain is the bar which is characterised by



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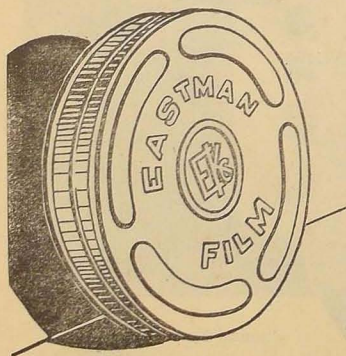
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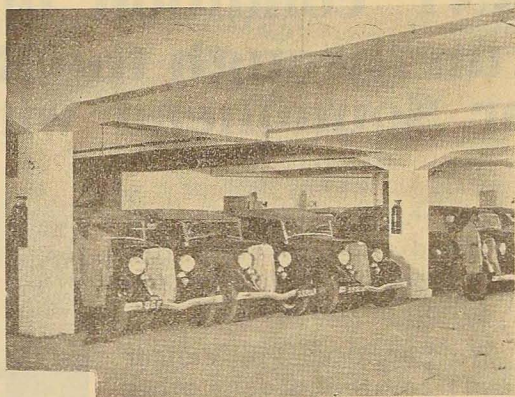
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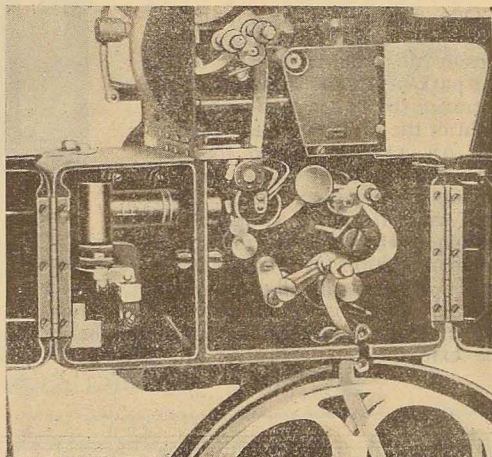
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Automatic Cooling.

Below are given particulars of the automatic cooling system installed in the new Regal in Bombay. The advantages of such a system to theatres in this country are obvious.

In the Bombay climate and for that matter in the Indian Climate it is not so much the heat which makes people feel so uncomfortable, but the great contents of moisture in the air throughout the year and most particularly during the rainy season. In an Air conditioning plant for this climate, great attention must therefore be paid to the control of the humidity in the air.

The air surrounding us contains always a certain amount of water even if it appears to be extremely dry, like for instance, it is found in most of the inland places of this country, during the hot weather. Dry air has the property of absorbing water; if water is added to a given quantity of air, it evaporates and is no longer visible. By adding more water, a certain point is reached at which the air cannot absorb any more of it. This point is called the "Saturation point." If still more water is added, it can no longer evaporate into the air, but appears in the form of a mist.

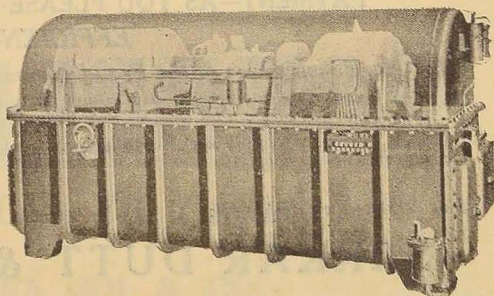
The warmer the air, the greater its capability of absorbing moisture; on the other hand the cooler the air the smaller the amount of water it can absorb. If therefore, a given quantity of air is cooled down a point will be reached at which it becomes fully saturated with water. This point is called the "dew point." If the cooling is continued the air will rid itself of a part of the water which means the formation of a fog or rain. This is exactly what happens in the Air Conditioner where the air is first cooled down to this point which is called the "wet bulb point" and at which the air begins to get rid of its humidity. The cooling can be continued so that more and more humidity is taken out of the air until the desired moisture contents of the air is reached.

Air conditioning is the simultaneous and independent control of the temperature, moisture contents, motion, distribution and cleanliness of the air within a given premises. The treatment of the air takes place in the Air Conditioner proper. In this apparatus, the air is first passed through a range of filters where all impurities suspended in it are disposed off. It then enters the

spray chamber where it mixes with a spray of finely atomised water, the latter passing under high pressure through spray nozzles into the chamber. The air as such brought into intimate contact with the icy-cold water, is immediately brought down practically to the temperature of the cooling water. By regulating the temperature of the cooling water, the "wet bulb" temperature of the air can be adjusted according to the requirements. The passing through the spray of cold water, purifies the air of any odors and smoke.

A powerful centrifugal fan takes the air from the conditioning chamber and presses it through a main duct into a system of distributing ducts placed in the Auditorium. These ducts have got adjustable openings at convenient places. A system of distributing ducts collect the air from the Auditorium and lead it back to the Air Conditioner. The air leaves the distributing ducts at the pressure slightly over the atmospheric pressure. In this way, the Auditorium will always have a slight pressure which will prevent the inrush of hot air when the doors are opened.

A refrigerating plant of a special design provides for the cold water necessary in the spray chamber of the Air Conditioner. This plant consists of a Turbo compressor, evaporating coils and condenser, all in one block and hermetically sealed. The Refrigerator maintains a constant temperature in the cold water by means of thermostats.



Refrigerating Turbo-Compressor.

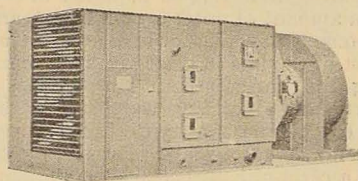
The refrigerating plant has a cooling capacity equivalent to the melting of 90 tons of ice per day. During the wettest part of the year, the Air Conditioner has to extract up to 65 gallons of water out of the air in the Theatre.

Similar as in other refrigerators of a large size, a great amount of cooling water has to be sent through the condenser. This water enters the condenser at the normal temperature and leaves it hot. In order to make use of the same water again, a cooling tower with artificial draught has been installed. The entire installation of the Air Conditioner, the refrigerator and the recoler is housed in a machine room of a very small size. This has been made possible by the great compactness of the various machines.

A special feature of the Air Conditioning installation, is the control board where the temperatures in the different parts of the building can be read and the shutters in the air ducts be controlled from the machine room itself. This together with the automatic

working of the refrigerator and the Air Conditioner, make the control of the plant extremely easy.

The plant has been designed and installed by Messrs. Volkart Brothers, Refrigerating Engineers. We understand that a similar installation is in progress at the Taj Mahal Hotel for the cooling of the Ball Room and the Restaurant. The time is not very far away when Air Conditioning installations will be a common feature in leading Cinemas and Hotels as well as in office and private residences thereby doing entirely away with the unsatisfactory "cooling" by Ceiling fans.



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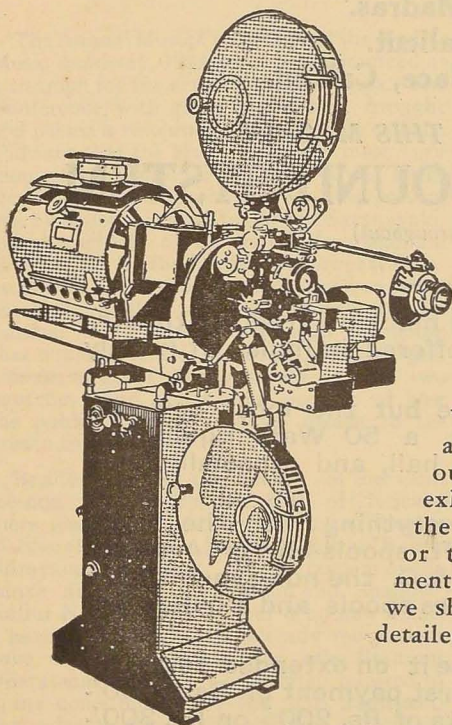
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The Theatre Arts Section

Bharata Natya.

Mr. Bharatam Nallur Narayanaswamy Iyer.

(Bhava Raga Tala).

The Annual Music Conference of the Madras Music Academy, 1933, must be pronounced as a triumph for the art of Bharata Natya. The Conference, with great enthusiasm, brought and passed a resolution supported by all the Vidwans that the Music Academy must very soon start a school for Bharata Natya. There were two nautch performances this season, one by Srimatis Varalakshmi and Saranayaki, granddaughters of Gowri of Kumbakonam and another by the local artist, Srimati Bala-sarasvati. There was a record crowd on both occasions; neither vocal nor any instrumental musical performance could draw the house that nautch was able to draw. The largest amount of gate-collections were for the two nautches; and this is proof positive of how the public has begun to be awake to the greatness of the art.

Besides, during the session of the Conference, on Sunday, the first of January there was an interesting address on the Art of Bharata Natya by Bharata Vidwan Nallur Narayanaswamy Iyer. To the readers of the dance articles in the "Sound and Shadow" Nallur Narayanaswamy Iyer is no new name. I have mentioned him already more than once and he is almost the sole Brahmin Bharatacharya left. I have often referred to in my contributions to the old traditional dance-drama going on in certain villages in Tanjore District. The artists belonging to this theatre are Brahmins and they, in the days of the Tanjore kings, constituted what was called the "*Bhagavata Mela*" as contrasted with the set of Devadasi lady-dancers trained by Nattuvanars—the "*Nattuva Mela*." In the Bhagavata Mela, the votaries of the art of Bharata Natya are boys of the age between seventeen and twenty-three. They are trained from an early age in the Nritya and Nritya, in rhythms and gestures and they take part in a set in old traditional dramas which they do

collectively and some of them, dress like girls and perform Bharata Natya like nautch girls. To this class of Bhagavata Mela does Nallur Narayanaswamy Iyer belong like nautch-girls. In his early years, he had acted such dramas and has taught Abhinaya to many students and now, for some years, the fall in the value of the art, had made him a mere music teacher in the Municipal Schools of Kumbakonam. He is as much proficient in music as in Abhinaya. He has learnt the Sanskrit texts and the Attam and Abhinayam of his, are of a superior kind.

Students working in the field of Bharata Natya must have heard of Mrs. Stan Harding, an English lady, who has done and is still doing wonderful research work in the Kathakali of Malabar and in our own Bharata Natya. While she was here, to see the first Nautch performance in the recent Conference of the Madras Music Academy, I arranged for a private exhibition for her of the art of Nallur Narayanaswamy Iyer. It was not a regular performance. It was just to acquaint her of the existence of such a master of the art and to just give her a few things as sample. I have seen the Abhinaya of Mr. Nallur Narayanaswamy Iyer before, but now, on seeing it again, I was convinced of certain points of superiority in his gestures. He did Abhinaya for four Sanskrit verses from *Krishnakarnamrita* depicting the sports of Krishna. He also rendered into gesture a beautiful Sanskrit verse on Lord Siva, exhibiting all the nine Rasas as embodied in His body. The Telugu Sabda '*Sarasi Jakshalu*' on Lord Anantapadmanabha at Trivandrum was then gestured by him, as also bits of another Telugu piece. Finally, he gave samples of Nritya or Attam, explained how the Adavus and Jatis are done in Nautch and how they do it.

Abhinaya of the hand, he also explained further, in the lecture on Bharata Natya,

in the Conference. He took two 'hands,' 'Pataka' and 'Sikhara,' and showed how one 'hand' or one 'gesture-hand,' by turning its position and by variously moving it, applies to and suggests various objects. He explained this point called 'Hasta-prana' as also the means to create new Abhinayas for new ideas given to us. Of this, I have already spoken in my previous contribution in this section. Suffice it now to say that in Nallur Narayanaswamy Iyer's Abhinaya, I could clearly see the basic principle of the art of gesture. Abhinaya, the Sanskrit text will say, is Anubhava; it naturally arises out of emotion; if it is not so, it cannot clearly suggest the idea.

The revival of Bharata will restore 'Bhava' and 'Abhinaya' to our soulless dramatic performances; it will restore 'Bhava' to our music. It will be really a great service for the art (and it is already late,) if the Music Academy starts in this year a school for Bharata Natya with such a master of that art as Mr. Nallur Narayanaswamy Iyer as the teacher. The Vidvan is getting older and the sooner he is utilised, the better.

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The late Mr. S. G. Kittappa.

A TRIBUTE.

BY M. C. PILLAI.

Very deep indeed is the grief of the Tamil drama going public. One of the greatest favourite, Mr. S. G. Kittappa passed away at the early age of 28. Ever since he mounted the stage at the age of seven, he has been an idol worshipped by his admirers. He has played chief roles in Cunniah's Krishna Leela, Dasavatar, Andal & Ramanuja and [after a time he appeared in many plays like Nandanar, Valli etc., along with the equally famous Srimati Sundarambal. Mr. Kittappa has never been an actor; he has been a great personality in the realm of stage-music. His Loss is deeply felt by lovers of his enrapturing music.

In the sad and premature demise of Master Kittappa on Saturday 2nd December 1933, the South Indian stage nay the Carnatic music firmament has lost one of its lustrous stars. He was ailing for some time from acute lung trouble and in spite of the best medical aid, he succumbed to the ravages of the dire malady, leaving his countless 'fans' and admirers to bemoan his loss. Heaven alone knows as to when the void created by his demise is going to be filled in. . . .

Born in a family of gifted musicians 29 summers ago, young Kittappa showed signs of his budding genius even while he was a mere stripling of a boy. His brothers Subbiah and Chellappa are well-known stage actors and Kasi a good Harmonist and chorist. At the age of seven this talented boy artiste, Kittappa, took up to stage acting as a profession and no wonder he began to earn for himself a permanent niche in the Temple of Fame. His rise to stardom was phenomenal. Very soon he became the fond idol of the stage-craze-stricken public of South India. He appeared on the dramatic horizon like a shooting star, casting a streak of dazzling brilliance and alas! the star has now vanished away for ever behind the sombre-looking curtains of eternity!! But the colourful effulgence which he has shed will live for ever. The Wheel of Fate has been moving with relentless severity in nipping such an exceptionally brilliant career in the bud itself!

With the keen insight of a shrewd businessman the late Mr. Cunniah of Madras took a fascination for young Kittappa. The fact should not be forgotten that it was he who gave him the necessary training in stage acting. Kittappa owes his enviable position to this worthy and he was till his death cherishing this fact in his heart of hearts. Mr. Cunniah may be styled as the rejuvena-

tor of the professional Tamil Stage, since he was the solitary professional Dramatic artiste who tried to reform the degenerated South Indian Stage. Kittappa was lucky enough to secure the services of a suitable female counterpart for him in the person of Srimati K. B. Sundarambal, another melodious "warbler", who alone can stand on a par with him in singing. Unquestionably, this happy pair was hard to beat and they proved themselves to be sure Box-Office hits.

Kittappa's "Soprano" voice is still ringing in my ears and no lover of divine music can

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easily forget its sirenish charms. This versatile artiste of "the purest ray serene" has been able to gather around him a horde of devoted admirers by his masterly command and subtle exposition of the intricate technique of music in its highest and lowest pitch, "Harmony of time and gradation" happily blended with the easy flow of a celestial voice mark him out as a marvellous exponent of true Carnatic music. Who can erase out of one's memory the charming song hit "Kodayilaya", which he has sung in a variety of soul-stirring Ragas! Now that, he is no more, we can only feel gratified that he has left a rich legacy to his 'fans' in the shape of a few beautiful records which shall ever keep his memory fresh in our minds.

Kittappa was more a music-hall artiste than a top-notch stage star. However much my friend that versatile "Kalki" may find fault with him as a very poor exponent of the art of histrionics, he was unrivalled in the field of stage singing. His 'Gamakas' and 'Brikas' are sure to enthral, emulate and thrill even the most fastidious music lover. It is indeed a pity that the "Mike" has not given a permanence to Kittappa's voice. How often he has taken us to ethereal heights making us forget for the moment at least the troubles, cares and worries of human existence. The sweet chirpings of this talented "Song-Bird" has proved itself to be an ambrosial elixir to drooped up spirits. His mellifluous rendering of difficult ragas with perfect ease has been remarkable. His enchanting voice stands supreme in its sphere and sustains itself indefinitely to the delight of his audience. The amazing manner which this "veritable music mine" as a musically inclined friend from Bombay put it aptly the other day, bridles his voice is another unique feature with him. As is pertinently remarked of this 'Wizard', "he soars up to the highest pitch and then suddenly a cascade of semitones and quartertones gush out, enrapturing and keeping his hearers spell-bound".

Alas! that ringing voice which has thrilled the listeners for about a score of years has now been most mercilessly stifled by the icy hands of death. Dame Music has lost one of her best sons and Mother India, a silver throated Nightingale! May his soul ever rest in peace!

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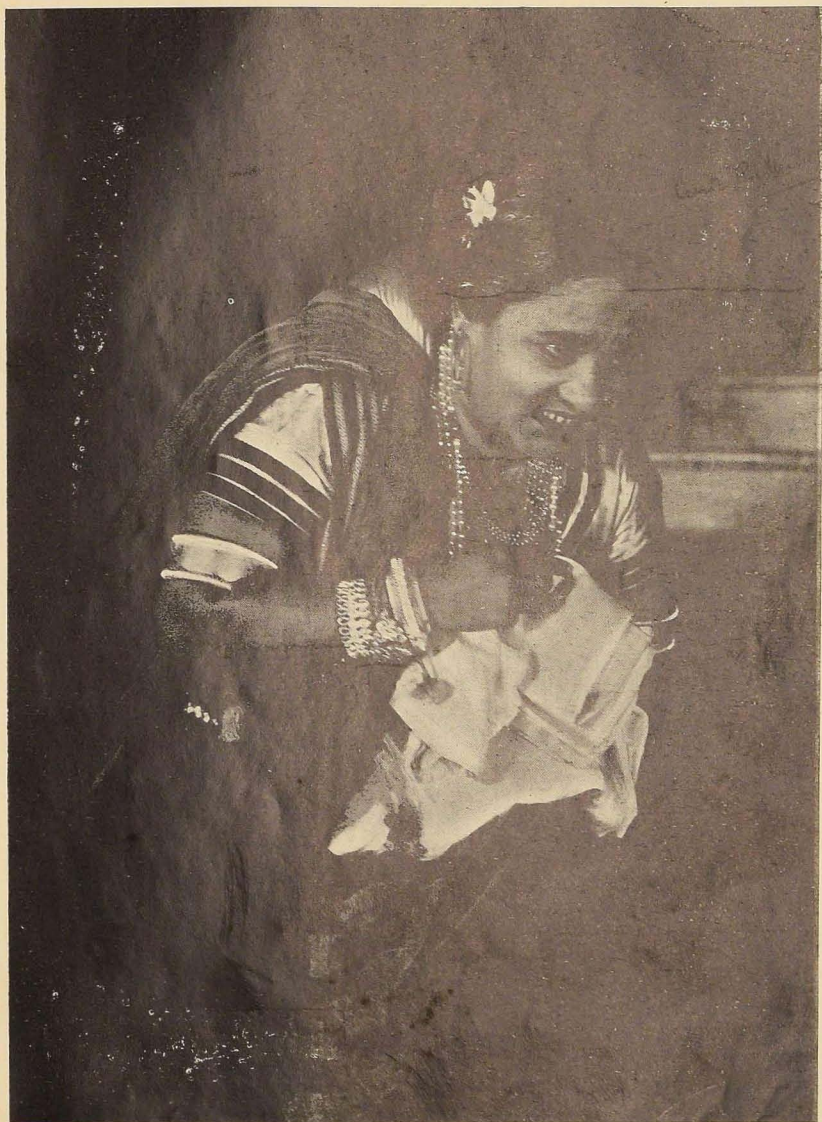
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Rao Bahadur P. SAMBANDAM.

As one who has been continuously before footlights for nearly half a century, Rao Bahadur P. Sambandam easily tops the list of our South Indian amateur actors, though doubts have been entertained in certain quarters as to whether he is more celebrated as an author or as an actor. He has had one great advantage and that was, almost all the characters he rendered were the creations of his own fancy and, as is but natural, his portrayal has always been accepted as the standard. His "Manohara" stands still unrivalled, his "Sreedatta" is still looked upon as the ideal, his "Sarangadara" has seldom been surpassed, though his "Satrujit" fell flat as compared with that of one of his junior contemporaries. The Rao Bahadur is a living example of what an actor can achieve without the aid of music.

C. RAMANUJACHARIAR.

Mr. C. Ramanujachariar another veteran of the older generation, has been never famous for his music, but as an actor he is certainly well above the average. He has tackled different types of characters, but his repertoire is limited. "Dasaratha" may be said to be his masterpiece and as "Kabir" he acquits himself quite well. As "Vikrante" he is not quite up to the mark.

A. KRISHNASWAMI AYYA.

Mr. A. Krishnaswami-Ayya has portrayed different types of characters with very great success. His ringing voice and melodious music helped him not a little; his combination of enchanting music and flawless acting, was a real treat to the audience. It is almost impossible for any one to come up to the heights of his "Mira Bai" and as "Ashabi" (in Fall of Vijayanagar) he shows himself as an even greater artist. But as the hero in "Mrichakati" he was greatly handicapped by his feminine touches.

T. RAGHAVACHARI (Bellary).

Originality is the keynote of Mr. T. Raghavachari (Bellary). A versatile genius, he handles any character to perfection. We don't think he has attempted anything in Tamil, but in the Andhra stage, he is the acknowledged master. As "Hiranya" he is superb and as "Pathan" (in Fall of Vijaya-

nagar) his genius comes out in all its rich professional stage and has't even the ambition to improve his acting. He places too much reliance upon his music which does not always please. His angle of vision requires to be changed. As "Lord Krishna" (in Bhama Vijayam) he is good and as "Prince Bhoja" he is fairly satisfactory.

P. SUBRAMANIAM.

Mr. P. Subramaniam, or "High Court Mani" as he is popularly known, does very well in certain types of female roles, but unfortunately his appearance is not very prepossessing.

NAGARATHNAM.

Mr. Nagarathnam has stepped into the shoes of the late Mr. Rengavadivelu, but, even at his best, he is but a poor substitute. His personality is alright but his actions require a good deal of improvement. They lack the grace and charm of his predecessor. He gets very opportunities to improve his art as he belongs to the school of faithful "heroines" who would not star with other "heroes"!

R. V. NARAYANASWAMI.

Mr. R. V. Narayanaswami has an insatiable passion for powder and puff and avails himself of every opportunity—his enthusiasm is well high infections. As "Satya Bhama" he has an established title for recognition and, as "Jaya" (in just a Peg) he displays histrionic talents of a high order. But his music, is very poor.

KANNAN and RAMIAH.

Of Messrs Kannan and Ramiah we hear very good reports but we refrain from walking any observations as we have not seen any of their performances.

T. V. SANKARAN.

Mr. T. V. Sankaran has a very bright future ahead provided he takes greater care of his throat. Yet in his teens, he has already won a name for himself in many a difficult female role. But he has a treacherous voice which betrays him every now and then and mars the effect of his performance. As "Indrasena" (in Satrujit) he rises to the peak of his prowess and as "Princess Sarojini" (in Devadasi) he maintains the same level.

Dr. N. SREENIVASAN.

Dr. N. Sreenivasan, was till recently the boy prodigy of the Suguna Vilas, and showed remarkable talents both as an actor and as a songster. But now, he is somehow or other quite disappointing. He shows a glimpse of his earlier days as "Mrinalini" (in Rajabakti), but he needs to be constantly in touch with the stage.

C. M. DORAISWAMY.

Mr. C. M. Doraiswamy appears to be still groping in the dark, not knowing his own depths. One day he appears as the hero, the next day as the heroine and the third day probably as the messenger boy! Gifted with a melodious voice, he fails to turn his music to proper account as he lacks facial expression. His acting requires considerable improvement. "Leelavati" (in Bhoja) and "Leelavati" (in Pahlada) are two of his outstanding achievements.

R. KRISHNAMACHARI.

Mr. R. Krishnamachari, is both ambitious and industrious and with greater experience should certainly achieve more. As "Madalasa"

(in Rajabakti) he is very fine, but his music requires improvement.

C. VENKATARAMAN and P. K. BALASUNDARAM.

Messrs C. Venkataraman and P. K. Balasundaram, another group of Comedians, are both perfectly at home on the stage, while the former specialises in high class comedy, the latter is clever at portraying the lower strata of society. Both are good songsters but the former lacks the volume necessary to make his music effective on the stage.

JAGANNADACHARI.

Mr. Jagannadachari, has very great ambitions and has received a good training under Mr. A. Krishnaswamiah. As "Mandara" (in Rama's Exile) he does very well indeed, but in the other characters he has attempted he seems to be out of his elements.

Among others in the field, may be mentioned Messrs. Tirunavukarasu Mudaliar, T. N. Balasubramaniam and M. Narayanan.

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Music Section

THE JOURNAL OF THE MUSIC ACADEMY, MADRAS.

Nos. 3 and 4 of the above journal are just published. The journal keeps its standard as also its snail-slow pace. It is really a pity that a high-class music-journal, having nothing else like it in the field, should come out so irregularly and at such very long intervals. We hope that in the coming year the Madras Music Academy will concert measures for the regular publication of their journal.

This issue opens with a general article on Indian Music by Mr. A. Vaikuntram Pandit, Bombay, who closes his article with the observation that, in North India, where many Ustads in classic music are Muslims, the art of Indian Music is solvent of communalism and a sure means of national unity. Mr. V. Raghavan continues his account of the Sanskrit works on Music. The text of the Sanskrit Music treatise 'Sangita Sudha' of Govinda Dikshita, which is being published serially in this journal, is continued. In this connection, the Academy deserves our congratulation for having taken up for publication another Sanskrit classic of Carnatic Music, viz., the Chaturdandi Prakasika of Venkatamakhi, son of the above-mentioned Govinda Dikshita. There are extracts from other music periodicals and news and notes on the music activities of the Academy and of similar institutions elsewhere.

There is an obituary note on the late T. R. Rama Rao of Tanjore, great Jalatarangam Vidwan, who died at the ripe age of 70, on the 4th July, 1932. "He learnt music at the feet of his brother, the illustrious Venkoba Rao", famed in violin and mridangam. "Mr. Rama Rao was an authority on Ragas" and "a staunch defender of the Carnatic style".

A new feature of these two numbers of the journal is the Academy's starting of publication of the "notational versions" of not only

unfamiliar compositions of high merit but of also well known pieces as expounded by traditional 'Sishya parampara' of acknowledged authority. Vidwan T. S. Sabesa Iyer "the great grandson of *Pallavi* Doraiswamy Ayyar and disciple of Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer", and Principal, Annamalai Music College, has presented in this issue his version of two Kritis of Tyagayya, "*Giri Raja Suta Tanaya*" in Raga Bangala and "*Rama Bhakti Samrajyame*" in Raga Suddha Bangala.

There are two Tamil articles in the present numbers, one by Srimati Sarasvati Bai, well known lady Kalakshepam artist, on the past and present Harikatha Bhagavatars. The article notices the late Tanjore Krishna Bhagavatar, Tillasthanam Narasimha Bhagavatar, Brahmasri Lakshmanachariar, Tirupayanam Panchapagesa Sastriar, Tanjore Panchapagesa Bhagavatar, and among those in our midst, Brahmasris Sulamangalam Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar, Mangudi Chidambara Bhagavatar, Harikesanallur Muthia Bhagavatar, Chidambaram Srirangachariar, Satagopachariar of Srirangam and finally herself, the premier lady Bhagavatar. The article is accompanied by the portraits of some of these artists. The other Tamil article is a short contribution on the life of Sri Purandara Das, the great Kannada saint and composer, from the pen of Brahmasri Krishnamachariar.

The most noteworthy part of this journal is however its publication of the first instalment of a treatise on Bharata Natya in Tamil called *Abhinaya Sara Samputam*. The public will be eagerly awaiting the next numbers of the journal of the Music Academy, especially for the further instalments of this very useful Natya treatise which will help, just at the present moment of Natya-awakening the understanding of what all is involved in that art—*Bhavuka*.

MADRAS SANGITA SABHAS

RASIKA RANJINI SABHA.

3rd December, 1933.

“VIKATAM” by Mr. RAMASWAMI SASTRIGAL of Tiruvisanallore.

The art of “Vikatam” is a very delicate one which, if it were to thrive, must inevitably depend upon royal patronage; because, as easily as it wins the hearts of the hearers, it loses them. There is no other art which so instantaneously carries the hearer off his feet, and none also the pleasurable effects of which are so quickly forgotten. In the busy occupations of life scarcely does an audience treated to delight by a jester, realise, that its neglect of the artist almost amounts to ingratitude. Again, however difficult to achieve may be perfection in mimicry, it is justly or unjustly, regarded as one of the meaner arts, even as iron, the most useful of metals, is reckoned to be the meanest of metals. It is so much a luxury that it can be dispensed with by the common people and for the very same reason, so helplessly a foster-child of royal patrons. The *Vidusaka* as an ever present court-figure with the pleasantest of associations, is in evidence even in the earliest literary records of our country. He was not only a man of perverse fancies, irony and wit, but often times a practical joker like TENALI RAMA KAVI, whose unnumerable practical jokes in the court of Achyuta Raya are preserved to us in tradition. The most recent representative of this illustrious class of funny boon-companions of kings we had in KRISHNA AYYAR OF TALAINAYAR whose practical jokes in the court of the last Mahratta ruler of Tanjore are even now remembered with great delight by a few. After the disappearance of the line of native kings in Tanjore, the genius for mimicry trotted out into the streets sullenly from the court hall and has been since dragging on its famished existence up to the present times. Poverty and neglect have brought upon this homeless art deterioration in their train. But even in this predicament the art has not lost its native verve and toning, so habitually infused into it by hoary tradition. In all its strength and beauty, the art is in evidence today in the foremost of its present day expositors, MR. RAMASWAMI SASTRIGAL of Tiruvisanallore whom I had the good fortune to hear for the—th time the other day in the above sabha.

Ramaswami Sastrigal is a deliberate artist in an art which of all art is the most deliberate in its nature. It is not difficult to see that his performance falls into three academic divisions in respect of the art of mimicry: namely (1) imitation of sound, natural and artificial (2) caricature and (3) the comic.

He begins with the song of the Vanambadi and after imitating the sound of the cock, the frogs, the tiger etc., etc., he proceeds to reproduce the artificial sound which include the station-master's whistle and the hand-drum of the gipsy beggar among others. Under this head also come the musical sounds of ghatam, mridangam, kanjeera gottu vadyam and violin. The second class consists of ludicrous representations of the tobacco chewer, snuff taker, different varieties of laughers, cardplayers, cinema-actors, the physical contortions of vocal musicians, local mannerisms in speech and so on—not to mention the ridicule of the blind, the deaf and dumb, the maimed etc., etc. This series produces quite a storm of laughter in the audience—there is scarcely anybody who is not affected by it. The third class is of a humanistic type and depend upon comic situations, perverse representations of characters and characteristics, for its mirth-giving efficiency. Mr. Sastriar herein displays an extraordinary penetration into the human mind and analysis of its motives and its workings, its changeableness, its huge follies, foibles and guilts. He is an ardent student of mankind and his observations are very wide. Of his several snapshots of humanity two portraits may be mentioned—the improvident minor who finally falls into the hands of a warrant-bearer and the generous but rustic Chettiar who travels by the 2nd class in the S. I. Ry.

Mr. Sastriar is very much of an understanding artist and is not a mere mechanical master of mimicry. He shows that the essence of laughter lies in human indignity and that the animal and human lines could form part of an instructive synthesis. For instance, the reproduction of the sounds of the cock in its old age reminds him of the inefficacy of old men, the ludicrousness of their pretensions to power and so forth. Again the vociferous glee of the frogs in the rainy season makes him digress into a description of dinner and tea parties on joyous occasions in the society of

men. The frog in the grip of the serpent calls forth from him a pathetic portrayal of a financially ruined youngman in the clutches of a warrant-bearer. This correlation of created life in its two branches is a masterful stroke of art which is pregnant with high moral and philosophical bearings—indeed it is the way of a poet—and here of a perverse poet—a *vikata kavi*. Mr. Sastriar does not disguise the didacticism pervading the presentation of his art. His tenet is that to ridicule men is the best way of reforming them; nobody likes to be told his faults, in a direct manner, but everybody could be made to laugh over his own foibles when they are universalised,—though not unconscious of the home thrusts—minus the poignancy intended to reform him.

However Mr. Sastriar's speciality is the music section of the performance, success in which depends not merely upon imitative power but more essentially upon the imitator's grip over the technique of music itself. Mr. Sastriar reproduces not merely the sound of the *ghatavadyam* or the *mridangam* but the *ghatavadyam* of Palani Krishna Ayyer and the *mridangam* of Alaga Nambi Pillai; which means that the subtle individualistic artistic modes of the experts are themselves reproduced. I have not heard Palani Krishna Ayyar; but so far as Alaga Nambi Pillai is concerned I can vouch for the fact that Mr. Sastriar is his veritable "record", in human form. Similarly, his reproductions of the whole sections of the difficult and intricate time-keeping schemes, without a single pit fall, of Mamundia Pillai (Kanjira) and Pakkiri Pillai (Konnakkole) are admirable.

Mr. Sastriar is perfect in what he does. His weaving the several items of his performance into a well-designed fabric of presentable shape, bears testimony to his genius for classical precision and skill of arrangement. But his genius shows no signs of expansion and he lacks variety of material. Though there may not be much room in the art of mimicry for extempore imitations upon momentary impulse, it is possible, no doubt, to widen the range of study so as to be abreast with the newer perversities of the times and to eliminate all comic material which have been obscured by over-growths of a fresher kind. For example the Chettiar affair might have been an admirable piece ten or twenty years back but it is now an antiquated theme having lost its realism with the civilized sophistication of the present

day Chetty community. His portraiture of a minor running out his ancestral estates through his infatuation for "Ratnam" of Madras and becoming a prey to arrest-warrants is not presumably so interesting and true as any account of the modern kind of insolvents who have devised a hundred civilized ways of running into debt and at the same time escaping the liability for answering for the same, or any account of the fashionable society—women and their movements, is likely to be. To add to this interesting list I may mention the high-souled beings who have come down to reform and rehabilitate this sin-ridden Earth and also the mush-room tall-takers in scientific jargon without an iota of practical skill.—*Raktilla*.

NAGASVARAM PERFORMANCES.

I
Mr. Veeraswamy Pillai ... *Nagasvaram*
Mr. Meenakshisundaram
Pillai ... *Thaval*

Variety was a notable feature of the programme of musical entertainments organised by the Music Academy during the Music Conference recently convened under its auspices. Among the wind instruments in vogue, the flute and the *nagasvaram* were represented by two great artists in them. Mr. Veeraswamy Pillai takes a very high rank among pipers, and it is always a pleasure to hear him. There are many here in the city who yearn for the *nagasvaram* music of the southern districts but the occasions on which our audiences are entertained by eminent pipers of the South are far and few between. And the Academy ought to be thanked for providing such an opportunity at least once a year.

Mr. Veerasami chose *kirtanas*, all in *madhya kala*, except one. His treatment of the *Thodi Kirti*, his *svara vinyasa* for "Rama Neepai," his elaboration of *Harikambhoji* and his rendering of 'Upacharamulu' in *Bhairavi*, impressed me much. Mr. Pillai's handling of *Todi Raga* and the *Pallavi* was as sweet as it was deep, carrying the weight of erudition, with cultured ease.

In fact, he seemed to be expressing himself with greater facility and freedom in *raga* *vistava* of this major kind and *Pallavi*, than in the smaller pieces which do not allow so much compass and which rather tend to restrict his expression. But I felt that he could have given us much more beautiful music if he had been left to play according to his pleasure; people who

have heard him play a few ragas at random throughout a whole night to huge audiences will bear me testimony. But by saying this I do not mean to belittle the educative value of the printed programme.

Mr. Meenakshisundaram Pillai deserves very great praise for his wonderful demonstration on the thavl. He showed what a power this drum could be in the hands of a master of the art like himself, and how it could not only speak in rhythm for itself but also interpret the music of the nagaswaram. His drumming is as sweet and as eloquent as the most charming effusions of the pipe. As I heard his wonderful playing, I recalled my mind the following words of Heine:—"Monsieur le Grand knew only a little broken German.....but he could always make his meaning clear on the drum. If I wanted to know, for instance, what was meant by 'Liberte' he would drum the *Marseillaise* and I understood him. If I did not know the meaning of 'Egalite' he would drum *Ca ira, Ca ira*.....—and I understood him. If I did not know what 'betise' was he would drum the Dessau march.....and I understood him."—N. S. Ramachandra Sastry.

II

KEERANUR BROTHERS

The Nagaswaram performance by the Keeranur Brothers, with Meenakshisundaram Pillai for Thavl, at the Midland Theatre, was a most successful function. The brothers were at their best that day, the elder brother shone in his raga alapana and the younger in his niraval and Swaras—The Swarams in "Rama Niyada" and the Kalyani Pallavi were

most lively and entertaining. The Kalyani raga which was the main raga that day, and the Pallavi therein, were rendered in a masterly way and Meenakshisundaram Pillai, both while following the music and in his *thani avarthas*, was at his best that day—The performance deserved a larger and better audience. A small audience going back with ears saturated with good music, is any way better than a large audience going back with disappointed looks at a poor performance, though big with expectations.—By Sabari.

HINDUSTANI ARTISTS IN MADRAS.

Prof. ABDUL KARIM KHAN

On the 24th evening, last December, a tall, lean figure, with a profound head dress walked into the arena of the Music Academy and ascended the platform. It was Professor Abdul Karim Khan. Only few people could discern his greatness at the first glance. But on closer view one can easily discover that his deep set eyes are the result of a most searching vision and insight into the rare realms of music, where others would dread to tread. His head is a little bent down, weighed down with the profound music that it carries in it. Many have levelled the criticism against Hindustani music, that it is tedious and tiresome, and though sweet at the beginning, it surfeits you by the monotony of sameness all the time through. But Prof. Abdul Karim is above such criticism and his only fault is, if at all it is any fault, the other way; and his rich imagination, and unthinkable varieties baffle you, and are beyond praise. Hindustani music ordinarily does not employ the *gamakas* and *anusvaras* as our Carnatic music, but Abdul Karim's Hindustani music was full of *gamakas* and *anusvarams*, and one could say with pride that in Prof. Abdul Karim's Hindustani music, all the great features of Carnatic music, are found in their truest glory. Though his meek voice did not carry him to the gallery, those seated near him enjoyed a rare treat of Hindustani music, which set the Carnatic music Vidwan, well nigh to blush. His raga development, his 'niraval' of a song, his svaras, were the envy of many Vidwans, and if he had only a rich voice equal to the richness of his knowledge, he could have made a larger audience spell bound with wonder. But his feeble voice could carry him only to a limited audience, and to them he made himself most impressive. His genius to blend with the sruti even in most difficult curves, slides and



jumps, is remarkable and it was only a pity that such high class music was shorn of its better effect, by having had to be demonstrated in a big pandal, instead of in a small compact hall. Though helped by two disciples on either side, now and then he bore the full share of the burden, and unaided by a Violin or Sarangi, he poured out his music treasure abounding in depth of knowledge, infinite varieties and rich imagination. His tablaman, from a Carnatic point of view, was not equal to the high level of the musician and very often his *theermanas* and timings, could have been much better. Abdul Karim must make his appeal to any Carnatic Sangeetha Vidwan, because he sings from his *Nabhi*, (naval) and it is no superficial lip music. Of his several ragas which he sang that day, his Durga or Carnatic Suddha Saveri, was the most remarkable. His singing of swaras, though good, cannot be said to be of such high excellence as in our Carnatic music. His Ramapriya and Carnatic Kamboji were equally pleasing and learned. Probably as time was up and as he was anxious to finish, he rather hurried through his Carnatic Kapi, which he could have sung at greater length. The Vidwans never felt the passing away of time, and when he was going to finish, some Vidwans repeatedly requested him to sing *Yaman* and *Bihag*, which he took occasion to introduce in his *Ragamalika*. His, was perhaps, the best model performance among the many arranged by the Music Academy, this session, and the function came to a close after the musician was thanked by Mr. Shafi Muhammad on behalf of the public and the Music Academy.

The Music Academy arranged a performance of another Hindusthani artist also, Prof. *Ratanjanker* of Lahore. It was unfortunate I could not hear him and I am told that his music was very good.—(Sabari).

Prof. NARAYAN RAO VYAS

At the Midland Theatre, last week, Prof. Narayana Rao Vyas gave his fourth public performance in Madras, before a large audience. He sings with great ease, has a rich, loud and melodious voice and is readily pleasing to many. He never strains himself like others, but seems to sing as easily as a bird, so much so that people are apt to mistake that his music is most easy to sing. Very often, he enraptures the audience by the long *Karvai* which he gives, which, blending with the *Sruthi*, for several seconds, im-

menses you in joy. He had a *Dilruba* and a *Tabla* to accompany him. His chief merit is his easy, loud and melodious voice, which can readily please a monster audience. Though not as strong in *ragalapana*, as his co-visitor to this city Prof. Abdul Karim Khan, his *Bhup*, *Talang*, were quite appreciated. His "*Radhakrishna Bhole*," and "*Shyama Sundara*" are his favourite songs and even if he omits them, the audience would not leave him unless he sang them. He also sings them remarkably well. He has a knack for blending with the *Sruthi*, has a sure and accurate ear for *laya*, and with a gifted voice, he endears himself to the audience very soon. The national song "*Bharatha Matha Desa hai*," he renders quite pleasingly. Very often he prefaces his performance by asking his disciple to sing for some time. He also plays on the harmonium and *Jalatharangam* with remarkable ease. Some songs he sings to his own harmonium. Invariably he plays on the harmonium while singing "*Shyama Sundara*," and his long *Karvai* showing the two *Nishadhas* gradually merging into the *shadja*, accompanied by his own harmonium play, fills every one with joy and wonder. A young and cheerful figure, a pleasing look, an easy voice, a loud, yet melodious tone, an attempt at *madhyama kala* songs, and swaras instead of a droning long *chaukakala*, and the nature of his music in its approximating to our Carnataka type of music, all contribute to the pleasing effect and the success of his performance. Though his *Soundarya Mahal* performance is said to be his best, his performance at the Midland Theatre was quite enjoyable.—(Sabari).

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What our readers think.

PRAHLADA.

By R. Murti.

After months of continued absence of Tamil Talkies, East India Film Co's "Prahlada" had a welcome release at Crown Talkies, Madras. The story of Prahlada, being from the Hindu Mythology dealing with one of the 'Avatars' of Lord Vishnu, is not only too well-known to every person in India, but illustrating as it does, the conquest of passive resistance, is the most opportune for the moment. The company must also be commended for the production, which, with an impressive realism, brings out the full force and significance of the story.

The cast, which includes such popular actors and songsters as Master Krishnamurti, Saradambal and Mr. Srinivasa Bhagavathar, has been well-known over the Tamil stage, and they can be said to have carried their reputation to the screen also. It must, however, be admitted here that the last-named, who played the part of Hiranyakasyappa has not done full justice to that part, in that he failed to express the conflict of feelings between his innate cruelty and the natural paternal love towards Prahlad, which should be quite apparent in the earlier punishments which he imposes upon him. He had of course shown the grief natural to a father when the young boy was being subjected to a series of punishments in the latter stage in an endeavour to make an end of him, but has failed to express the least joy when Prahlada returns unscathed, feelings both of which were so adequately represented by Kayadhu.

The roles of Prahlada and Kayadhu have been played with a marked success by Krishnamurti and Saradambal respectively, although it must be admitted that the former is too elderly for the part he has taken, especially in the earlier part of the story, where, in his innocence he is supposed to be praying to God Narayan, and prattling about his songs in praise of that God, to his father. They must, however be given high credit for their commendable acting in their difficult roles.

The minor roles have all been acted successfully, excepting Kayathu's maid. She is a failure in so much as the concern and attention which she should have shown towards her mistress who is torn between her devotion to her husband and her love for her dear son, were poorly evident in her. We note in her a distinct aloofness from the feelings of Kayathu, which, in spite of hers being a minor role, could easily have been corrected by a little more directional guidance.

The technical features of the film are quite praiseworthy. In the opening scene itself, which is a prologue to the story, Lord Vishnu is seen reclining on Adishesha, which is quite impressive and portends some of the excellent settings which will be met with in the course of the film. Special mention must be made of the Pushpakaviman of Indra in which he carries away Kayathu.

The photography is very good and has indeed enhanced the beauty of the scenes throughout, unlike in many other films, where, in spite of the settings being beautiful, they do not impress one as such due to bad photography.

As for sound recording, it is admitted on all hands that East India Film Co's recording being on R. C. A. High Fidelity System is perhaps the best in India; but it needs to be mentioned that whatever the system is, it is possible that it may be quite bad if not properly done. It is here that a compliment must be paid to their Recording Engineers for the exquisitely fine sound witnessed in 'Prahlada', commendable for its entire freedom from ground noise and the adequateness with which the distant and nearer voices are recorded, and last though not least, the absence of any appreciable difference between the sound recorded in indoor and outdoor scenes which is something we cannot hope to find in most of the best talkies produced in India by first-rate concerns. Add to the recording, the songs themselves are composed to the tunes of some of the best 'kriti's' and other songs by the masters of music in South India, which being sung by such popular artistes as Saradambal and

Master Krishnamurti, have a rightly interpreted melody that carries its appeal to the worst lover of music.

It is noticeable that an unnecessary large number of songs have been introduced, more especially in places where Kayathu is in the worst agonies of sorrow due to her husband's cruel attempts to kill her little son by the most merciless methods; a situation in which she would have either the sense or sanity to carry herself about even, is extremely doubtful. But it is a regrettable fact that the Tamil stage, as it is now, demands that it must be so there, which has induced the producers to follow that even on the screen.

The synchronized music evidenced in 'Prahlada' is a very artistic addition and adds the adequate touch to the several incidents wherein it is introduced, enhancing their impressiveness.

Finally, the most important thing about a film is the direction, which alone is responsible for the success or otherwise of any picture, and success comes only when it beams with a rigid realism that could bring home to the minds of the spectators the situations presented with their full significance, and not merely a kaleidoscopic view of the several incidents in the story. The direction of 'Prahlada' is quite good in as much as the varied tortures that Prahlada was subjected to and the string of incidents culminating in the death of Hiranya have been presented with the proper sequence and due realism to carry their appeal strongly.

It is, however, noticeable to the shrewd eye that some minor points are unnoticed by the director (a case with most of them in India) which could, with a little more careful attention have easily been set right. These defects are of various kinds.

We notice that in the first view of Indra's pushpakaviman, each of its two wheels on the side shown turns in a different way and yet it moves forward. This was however corrected in the second view shown. Next, Hiranya, while in view, is always found to stand in the same position, with his feet fixed up at definite points and does not move them even when he become suddenly emotional;

which defect, remembering the fact that all the actors are inexperienced in screen acting should not be entirely attributed to him alone, but must be shared by the director also.

It is also noticeable, that in the end reels there is a scarcity of songs, while in the others there are too many. It apparently looks as if it was thought that they were becoming too numerous for the proper length of the picture, and so it has been decided not to have more.

The most important drawback of the film is the appearance of Nrisimha Avathar, which is not so impressive and awe inspiring as it should be, and it does not create the idea to suggest the event as the all-important in the story, being the culmination of the evil doings of Hiranya in the appearance of God himself in the terrible role of a lion-man, perhaps the fiercest of his avatars. It is a pity that he is not even shown with the four hands with which he is supposed to have incarnated himself as Nrisimha, nor has he the bulk and stature to credit such a mighty figure.

On the whole, the film is a great success; notable for its uniformly good characteristics in regard to acting, settings, music and development of the story, not to speak of the faultless sound, which places 'Prahlada' in a position far excelling all the other talkies produced in either Tamil or Telugu.

UNIVERSITY LECTURES ON INDIAN MUSIC.*

By T. A. Subbavenkatarama Aiyar, Madras.

In the December issue of the "Sound and Shadow", I happened to note a Review of the University Lectures on Indian Music by one who conceals his name but figures himself (contrarily to what he really is) as Isai Anban. The reviewer expresses his surprise that the Madras University chose Messrs. M. S. Ramaswami Aiyar and P. Sambamurti for delivering lectures on Indian Music. This, surely, is beginning at the wrong end. He must first quote facts

[* Sound and Shadow is not a newspaper open for controversies, replies and counterreplies. The reviewers of performances, lectures, journals and books are chosen by the Editor who is convinced of the credentials of his reviewers. If this reply is permitted publication here, it is out of mere courtesy to Mr. M. S. Ramaswami Iyer. It is not for Mr. T. A. Subbavenkatarama Aiyar to advise the Editor in choosing his contributors. Mr. T. A. Subbavenkatarama Iyer is entitled to have his own respect for Mr. M. S. Ramaswami Iyer and his lectures. Isai Anban assures both Mr. Ramaswami Iyer and Mr. Subbavenkatarama Aiyar that he is not prompted by "personal bias bordering on jealousy." Isai Anban has nothing to say except this that he continues to be an Isai Anban, lover of music, anxious for its pure and proper spreading, as much as Mr. M. S. Ramaswami Iyer, or Mr. Subbavenkatarama Iyer.—Editor.]

and figures and, then, lead his reader to his conclusion.

His review proved to be a veritable illustration of the well-known proverb: "No case; abuse the other side".

Any reviewer, worth the name, must first, re-view the whole of the lectures under consideration and present it to the public, though briefly, before he proceeds to comment thereon. Then and then alone, will the public be in a position to determine the tenability or otherwise of the reviewer's view. But how did Mr. Isai Anban fare in this respect?

Look, please, at his very first statement which is as follows: "Mr. Ramaswami Aiyars lecture on the origin of music reminded us of the 1st chapter on genesis in the Bible."

The public, I am sure, won't allow itself to be misguided by such an unwarranted, ill-founded, unproven, and probably prejudiced statement.

Again, the reviewer finds fault with Mr. Ramaswami Aiyar's interpretation of some such musical terms as *Ahata* and *Anahata* on the one hand and *Marga* and *Desi* on the other. What is the reason that he adduces?

As regards the first pair of terms, his reason is that the savants hold it to be wrong. Why do the savants hold it to be wrong? Who are the savants? What are their credentials? Is the reviewer one of them?

A reference to Yogic literature in the review in connection with this point is inelegant and out of place and is also calculated only to dazzle, not illumine, the public and to mystify, not clarify, the mind of the reader.

As regards the second pair of terms, our reviewer's opinion is that Mr. Ramaswami Aiyar's interpretation remains as a conjecture as yet.

The word 'conjecture' suggests the idea of an opinion formed on insufficient evidence. But he, who had the benefit of studying Mr. Ramaswami Aiyar's Introduction to "*Svaramelakalanidhi*", will emphatically differ from our ignorant reviewer and, as evidenced in pages 62-73 of the said Introduction, will note that Mr. Aiyar's interpretation of *Marga* and *Desai* precedes step by step with cogent reasoning to a desirable conclusion. To label, therefore, the lecturer's interpretation as a mere conjecture is a travesty of facts.

In him, I find one more undesirable, nay, questionable trait; and that is an itch for

misquoting the lecturer, misapplying his lecture, and misleading the public.

I shall first place before the public an extract, on the point at issue, from the summary of Mr. Ramaswami Aiyar's Lectures that appeared in "The Hindu" Literary Supplement of the 5th November 1933 and then, place—in juxtaposition—the misquotation of the same extract made by our unwary reviewer. Let the reader judge for himself how he was attempted to be misled by the reviewer.

A TRUE EXTRACT FROM "THE HINDU."

"The lecturer (Mr. M. S. R. Aiyar) began with the observation that the ability to sing was one thing but not the only thing. He reminded the Diploma Course students that they were going to be dubbed as the finished products of the University and that they should therefore acquire not only the ability to sing but also a knowledge of the history of music. Suppose an inquiring person put the following question: "Is the present state of music a matter of progress or retrogression? Will the singing of Thiagaraja's Bhairavi song "*Koluvaiyunnade*", however excellent, form an adequate answer to that question? One will surely be ridiculed for singing it as an answer to the question raised. Hence, the lecturer repeated that the ability to sing was one thing and not the only thing."

This is surely a sensible view; and, for aught I know, it was given out as a corrective of a wrong opinion to the contrary that unfortunately lurks in some undesirable quarters.

But see how our reviewer, like a butcher, distorts the extract and rushes to wrong conclusions. "If any one asked the students whether the music of to-day is progressive or not, without theoretical drill, the lecturer (Mr. Aiyar) said, they might sing a song and stop with that."

Here I pause and ask the reader whether our reviewer's extract, quoted above, tallies in any way with the extract taken from "The Hindu." Mr. Ramaswami Aiyar never said that "they might sing a song and stop with that."

Having distorted the fact, our reviewer continues: "The lecturer sang, in illustration, and, well, the argument staggered me."

Here, again, I pause and ask the reader whether he makes out any sense from this sentence.

Our reviewer goes on: "To avoid all such happenings, the lecturer gave a list of 18 books including his own publications."

Once again, I pause and ask the reviewer himself; "What are those happenings which you seem to have in your mind? How did giving a list of the 18 books avoid those happenings? Why is a special mention of the lecturer's own publications made, if it does not proceed from a personal bias bordering on jealousy?"

Our pitiable reviewer seems to have a vague and indefinite notion of the status of a lecturer. The very University Lecturer (on any subject, not necessarily on music) is none else than a teacher and, as such, is not expected to always deliver a formal lecture of the type of Dr. Annie Beasant's but may be required even to spoonfeed the students, if need be. Further, these lectures were intended not alone for the public but mainly for the Diploma students in Indian Music. Mr. M. S. Ramaswami Aiyar was therefore perfectly correct in adopting this method in these lectures. The lecturer is an orator and a good public speaker himself and the reviewer must have known it, if he had attended Mr. Aiyar's lectures on music elsewhere. Surely, the lecturer prudently avoided giving formal lectures of the usual type; and that was because he was addressing not the public but the Diploma Students who will be expected to make use of their knowledge of these lectures in their examination. The lecturer alone knows what the students require; and he is entitled therefore, to change his method of presentation, in accordance with the receiving capacity of his audience.

The most offending portion of the review is yet to be mentioned; and that is as follows:—"Many half-truths, unproved hypotheses, debatable generalisations and doubtful definitions form the bulk of the matter which he dictated". In the first place, I doubt whether our reviewer makes the above infer-

ences from what the lecturer dictated or from what the students took down. For, many a time, the students take down something different from the dictation or a modified form of it. But the public cannot be wire-pulled to believe the reviewer on the face-value of his dogmatic assertion.

What are these half-truths? Here our reviewer proceeds to cite an example, *viz.*, the explanation that the Carnatic music proceeds step by step and Hindustani music tends to proceed by leaps. It is too hard to swallow? But so says our reviewer. So, he must be spoonfed. Let him first refer to Mr. Fox Strangways' book and see whether he has not made a similar statement therein, as the result of his vigorous research.

Now comes the cat out of the bag. Says the reviewer: "Though the lecturer was to speak in his 4th lecture on 'the music of the mediaeval age,' I was not prepared to hear his recitals of his own Introduction to his edition of 'Svaramelakalanidhi'. In the first place, the title of the 4th lecture was announced to be 'Ramamatya and his Svaramelakalanidhi' and not 'the music of the mediaeval age'. How could the lecturer (or, for that matter, any lecturer) who has published a book on the subject-matter of his lecture, help referring to it and even reciting therefrom? But the reviewer changes, at this stage, his color and proceeds to find fault with the lecturer's digging out fossils from the dead past and making them live in the present.

Ramamatya was a person of the 16th century. When therefore the lecturer proceeded, according to the programme, to describe the old (or call it you may—dead) system of music of the 16th century, how on earth could such a lecture be called a misguidance? It is the function of the University to enable and even encourage the researchers to dig out fossils from the dead past and see whether a study of them throws any light on the modern system.



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