

SOUND & SHADOW

An illustrated Monthly devoted to Films, Music and Theatre

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A Scene from Aurora's Tamil Talkie "Sakku Bai."

In and Around Madras.

There is too much activity in the kinematic front in Madras these days. In fact, if you prefer I would put that the film air now is so thick with alarms and excursions that it is positively nerve-racking. I have already written about Vel Pictures in my previous issues. From what I gather they seem to be going on their business slowly and steadily, a little too slowly, perhaps. But the death of one of their Directors, Mr. G. D. Swami is, indeed, a great loss to them. I understand that they have the script, dialogue, and songs all ready for *Markandeya* but this subject seems to have been postponed for the present, and the latest news from this quarter is they might be making *Lava Kusa* in two versions. It is almost certain that with the influence and experience of Mr. P. V. Doss of Masulipatam who is one of their Directors, their Telugu party will be the very best so far appeared in film. From present indications I gather they will be in a position to start shooting in the beginning of next month. Meanwhile their setting work is going ahead and from the working drawings which their artist showed me I have every confidence this picture will be outstanding from the settings' point of view.

By

"onlooker"

While Vel Pictures' affairs are thus slowly taking shape, there have been a lot of rumours of further studios, of which one has taken some tangible shape. Mr. A. Narayanan's name is absolutely not new to any person, even to those who have given the most cursory attention to film affairs in this city. He was the original promoter of the General Pictures Corporation of this city and lately his name was prominent in one of the Tamil films "Sakku Bai" as its Director. He and his always co-worker, Mr. Prakasam have joined forces and have come back from Bombay with a Blue Seal recording apparatus and one day Madras film lovers were startled by an announcement that a film city has come into being in this town which appeared so unpromising for any growth of that nature and this film city would be under the direction of Srinivas Cinetone—I wonder why they have left their names out in view of the fact that their extended experience should command confidence in the film circle—and their first picture was to be *Dumbachari*. Before we were able to assimilate this startling innovation in a benighted city as this Madras, we were given to understand in a further announcement that they proposed

letting out their studio for Independent producers. Well, there is a studio in Bombay for such producers, and one I hear also in Calcutta; and Madras also should have one if not at least for the sake of her good name. But I have some difficulty because I would like to know where is the studio in which they will have take shootings. And even if they choose an all outdoor picture where will they have the film developed and printed? But I remember an old adage that enthusiasm will carry you through many obstacles and people who know Mr. Narayanan cannot accuse him of want of enthusiasm. The other attempts at studio building seem to be still attempts though I find two name boards *viz.*, Maharah Cinetone and Lalit Cinetone added to the many in Madras.

I think that is all the news so far as regular studios are concerned. But there is a lot more so far as picture production is concerned. You know Mr. C. V. Raman who produced one of the two *Vallis* that recently appeared on the screen of Madras. His ardour seems not to have been damped by the somewhat cold reception given to his production attempt, for I hear that he is still contemplating to produce a picture at Srinivas Cinetone's Studio. I wonder what an interesting pastime this picture production is! Its votaries once they are lured into it never seem to tire of anything, and every failure seems to add to their ardour. His subject will be *Markandeya* and here again we are in one of those unexplicable mysteries of picture production, namely the same subject being thought of by at least two producers at the same time for filming.

There are also various other attempts to gather a party for picture production in Calcutta and Bombay. As a matter of fact one party is now working at the Pioneer Studio in Calcutta at *Krishna Leela* which is expected to come in about a fortnight's time. This is an attempt by the proprietor or one of the proprietors of the Oriental Talkie of Salem, and if the rumour is to be believed, it seems he has contracted for three pictures for which the studio hire will be in the neighbourhood of Rs. 50,000, for which amount a well equipped studio can be built!. You should have heard of that old lady called Luck and Pioneer's star seems to be in the ascendant and here is our hearty congratulation to them. But let us wait and see how the Oriental Talkie's luck is going to be. Mr. G. Ramaseshan of the Aurora Film Corpo-

ration of Calcutta and who recently produced *Saku Bai* is now in the city and though he has not informed me, I anticipate he has come here with the idea of gathering a party for the production of *Lava Kusa* in Tamil at the New Theatres Studio in Calcutta. In fact the two boys to enact the parts of Lava and Kusa have been selected and advance only remains to be paid. Mr. Ramaseshan, it is understood, is negotiating with an exhibitor to finance his scheme and he had been recently to Madura, combining I hear this purpose and with the purpose of selecting some artistes. Here is my good wishes that he will fare very much better this time than in *Sakku Bai*. I also hear that Mr. Vincent of Coimbatore had been here recently and that he had also tried some boys for the part of *Dhruva* which it is understood he is contemplating to make, perhaps in Calcutta.

You will remember that I mentioned in the last issue that Bharat Laxmi of Calcutta intended to produce a picture. Every thing seems to have been settled for this. The subject was to have been *Sati Sulochana* and Rao Bahadur P. Sambanda Mudaliar was prominently mentioned as the organiser and director. But things seem to remain where they were owing to some difficulty in arranging contracts. I sincerely wish that this difficulty will be got over as I am anxious to see how this noted amateur-author playwright fares in a new medium of artistic expression. I also hear that another prominent man of this city, Mr. S. Satyamurthy, is to take part in a film to be produced at Poona by Prabhat. This rumour is given credence because in addition to his multifarious activities Mr. Satyamurthy has on various occasions recently used his gift of expression to plead for the cause of cinema as a probable outlet to relieve middle class un-employment. I have no doubt about his interest in the medium but how far he is likely to enhance the reputation of the cinema by his personal appearance is a matter I cannot decide till I see him in it. I hear he has acted in some Sanskrit dramas but I have seen him in a Tamil Play only once as Manohara and he did not impress me much. There are still many attempts I understand of exhibitors and producers vying with one another in the production of Tamil pictures.

All these confusing activities is no doubt due to the success of Tamil films so far screened. It began with Pioneer's *Valli* and was supplemented by *Sita Kalyanam*. It is of course human nature to take advantage of

proven ways of money making and since Tamil pictures have proved successful, it is no wonder that attempts are made for their further production. But the question is, how far will this mania for Tamil pictures hold. Already signs are not wanting that the popularity has begun to decline, and the days are fast passing when any Tamil picture will pass muster. In the circumstances it seems that Tamil picture producers should be very careful indeed before they risk their hard-earned money. But who cares! It is human nature, I am told, to learn by experience though in many cases this seems far from the truth, considering the number of similar mistakes that are repeatedly made in this God or dained world.

One curious result of this feverish activity is that the stock of the Tamil players have risen and that too enormously. Ask any woman who has any pretension to stage experience or who has appeared in any film before and she will demand a sum which many of us will not think of getting even in a life time. I was told that one woman demanded about Rs. 15,000 for a picture while another a little modest would not think of picture acting for anything less than Rs. 10,000! Many of these women have been nowhere and some of them at least had become back numbers but film has given them a new life. Instead of being grateful for what it has done them, it appears they want to make as much money as possible while they are in the run. But will it pay the producers to pay this exhorbitant amount? And that too when the novelty of Tamil pictures have already diminished to a great extent.

The whole position seems to be so anomalous. How will it all end? That is a question easily asked but particularly difficult to answer.

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Screen Sidelights

By Gleanor.

With the coming in of Calcutta, Kolhapur and Poona in the film line, Bombay seems to have lagged behind.

The good old Imperial have released their "Temple Bells" part of which was hand coloured. Just now they are busy retaking "Anarkali" and producing "Gulsanover" and "Devaki", with Sulochana taking the lead in the first two. Can't they get some other girl?

"Kala Nag" produced by Majestic Movietone, which seems to be a subsidiary of Imperial, is reported to be ready. "Manjari" another picture produced at the same studio is also reported to be ready. This we have been hearing for sometime now.

"The Three Musketeers" of Ranjit have returned home, and in an interview have given out that they were given every chance to see everything in all the Continental and British studios. Hope they have learnt a lot, and their future pictures will be as good as those made outside.

Krishna Studio is full of people from outside taking pictures. When somebody else comes and pays you money for keeping quite and just letting out the Studio, why worry yourself making your own pictures!

Wadia Bros are taking their picture "Shan-E-Islam" at Mr. Fazalbhoy's studios. Much depends, we think, on how it comes out.

Somebody wrote to us that Mr. Ezra Mir is leaving Sagar, because of the bad recording system, and joining Madans. Is Mr. Mir going to get his ideals satisfied at the Calcutta Studio? The studio report gives out that Mr. Mervyn Le Roy, the noted director of Warner Bros. paid a visit to their studio, and commented on its 'most modern technique'. We do hope that conditions merited the statement! Rammik Desai is busy with "Nautch Wali", S. L. Badami with "Educated Wife." Hope he does not find her as difficult as some of us do. And if Mr. Mir stays, it is said he will begin work on the "Magic Horse." Pritivi Vallabh" is also said to be in the 1934

schedule, and they say, there will be plenty of 'highlights'. Please, don't let it be all that.

Mr. Baburao Patel, of Gandharva Cinetone seems to have taken as his next vehicle, "Bala Joban" an epic romance written by Director Choudhary. Does Mr. Choudhary also find selling scripts a more profitable business than directing? It is said to be an all-star production with Padma, Gulab, Madhukar Gupte, Mubarak, Maruti Pehelwan, and a lot of others.

Ambika Movietone are producing "Ambarish" with Messrs Bhagvandas of Ranjit, Bandopant Sohni, Inamdar, and Kamlabai Badodker, sister of Hirabai Badodker, Gulab, and Ermeline. Mr. Gunjal is to direct. The picture will be made at Ajanta Studio. What with producing in quick succession and letting studio on hire, Mr. Bhavanani seems to think he can make more money. Our suggestion to Mr. Bhavanani is to make less but better pictures. Your ingredients put in for mass appeal are proving a little stale.

And then, of course, you have got all those movietones and cinetones, with nothing but their address, who seem to be doing a lot of things.

Charles Laughton who made such a hit as Henry VIII in "The Private Life of Henry the Eighth" has been signed by M. G. M. to play the part of Louis XVI in Marie Antoinette, in which Norma Shearer is to star.

As I said in our last issue, Kolhapur seems to be coming up.

Kolhapur Cinetone are busy with their first picture "Akashwani" featuring, as their advertisement sets out, Miss Leela. We are glad that she has got on well-Master Vinayak, Baburao Pendharker, Bhalba Pendharker, the director, and Mr. Phatak. And we are waiting for the unique Varo shots and other camera effects which they have promised us through their Studio bulletin. Their next picture is said to be an Urdu play. I do not know if the rumours prevalent in this city

that they are contemplating to produce a Tamil picture is to be believed or not. Anyhow I am waiting to hear from them and share the information with our readers soon.

The Domestic Feud at Chhatrapathi is not to be revived, we hope. Things seem to have settled down after their new Manager, Baburao Pendharker has taken charge. Sardar Bala Saheb Yadav, who had been to Panhala in connection with the New Hindi Picture "Amar Shaheed" has returned. Their studio bulletin reveals that "some of the locations are selected at the most difficult angles on the hilly fort, which are sure to cut a figure on the Indian Celluloid." We do thank the Chhatrapathi Cinetone for bringing out this new commodity, Indian Celluloid. Much of the difficulty over the duty on raw stock is sure to be settled now.

Lalit Pictures Ltd, also have sent us a statement showing that their internal difficulties have been solved and that they are beginning serious work on their picture, "Pratima" in two versions, Marathi and Hindi. We wish them success.

The Studio of Shalini Cinetone is under construction. Their Fidelitytone truck is being fitted up in Bombay, and their Mitchell camera is arriving. Mr. Baburao Painter is in charge of the Studio, and Mr. Govindrao Tembe is in charge of Music.

"Barretts of Wimpole Street" is to be the next assignment for Norma Shearer with Charles Laughton.

"Gypsy Melody" a musical comedy will be the first picture to be made in Hollywood by Erik Charrell, director of "Congress Dances."

Mr. Torney of Sarswathy Studio is busy with "Mysterious Prince." He is the sort of man I like. He welcomes obstacles and is there to overcome them. They first shot nearly half the picture when unfortunately Netra Bandrekar, who had a very charming face died, leaving them in the lurch. They set about for another girl, and finally found in Usha, a girl who had an equally charming face. But when they heard her voice, defeat again stared them in the face. Nothing daunted, Torney again set to work, and he is now half way through the picture with a new girl. He has high hopes for the picture, and believes that it will provide novel entertainment. Their director Mr. K. P. Bhave has

left them and joined Mr. Vankudre's Studio at Kolhapur. Their next picture is to be "Chhatrapathi Sambaji" a subject dear to Maratha hearts, and Master Vithal is expected to play the lead.

Prabhat, of Poona are coming up. Their extensive studio has been completely fitted up, and they are beginning work very soon, with Nalini Turkhud, Shanta Apte, and Suresh Babu in the main roles. The Studio is a very convenient one, as a result of their practical knowledge in picture production. There is an extensive balcony running all around, for lights, of which they have got plenty. A special line has been taken from the town supply especially for the Studio. The Laboratory adjoins the Studio on one side, and upstairs they have got the make up costume rooms, and an actor coming into the studio, can make up, go to the set, remove make up and go out, without at any time being necessitated to go out. The other wing is for office, etc. They are having three automatic plants, for processing. They have got a colour printer as well as machinery for making cartoons. Their first cartoon, "Jumbhu the Jackal" is said to be in the course of production. And Mr. Shantaram hopes to have in two years a studio that any Hollywood Producer might be proud of. We share his view. "We came into the business with very little capital. We are putting all we have earned in the new studio and God willing, we will make more"—s a i d

जंबु काका



"Jumbhu The Fox."

A PRABHAT PICTURE



ANNA STEN :

Samuel Goldwyn's new Russian discovery making her successful debut as "Nana" and on whom the producer has spent a small fortune.

Mr. Shantaram to me when recently I met him. That is the spirit, Is it any wonder that Prabhats have made good! Advance, Prabhat, and India advances with you.

"A Tale of Two Cities" is to be filmed by Warner Bros, with Leslie Howard as Sidney Carton.

"Yahoodi-Ki-Larki" New Theatre's Urdu talkie was recently released here, and I did a lot of canvassing asking all my friends to go and see it, and the universal opinion was that they liked it immensely, and that it is the best Indian picture to date. Certainly, it carries away the palm, and New Theatre's are certainly to be congratulated on marching forward. Hope their new picture "Ruplekha" will go one better. I am also looking forward to their Hindi "Chandidas". Firstly because it has the unique distinction of having one of the longest runs in Calcutta, and secondly because I want to know how Nitin Bose fares in this. Debki Bose is said to be rejoining New Theatres with Krishna gopal as Camaraman. And arrangements, it seems, have been completed, by Aga Hashar Kashmiri, and Muktar Begum to produce their own pictures in New Theatre's Studio.

We heard that East India was closing down for a month. We also heard that there is a likelihood of Radha and East India amalgamating. East India's Hindi "Seeta" is said to be ready. Arrangements are being made for the production of one Tamil and one Telugu talkie. Days when any Tamil picture can make money are rapidly passing away and East India must be mighty careful if they want to make money on their Tamil and Telugu pictures as they did of old.

Bharat Laxmi's "Chandsadagar" and "Ramayan" have been released. Work on "Insaf-ki-top" is proceeding. Mr. Ganesa Iyer had been to Madras, and it seems they will next concentrate on a Tamil Talkie, "Sati Sulochana" probably with Rao Sahib P. Sambanda Mudaliar.

Pioneer Films, along with their Hindi Pictures, have also taken in hand, Angel Company's first picture, "Krishna Leela" with P. S. Sivabhyam, Samanna and others. Their "Ahalya" is being completed.

In memory of the death of the proprietor's son, India Films have been renamed "Kali Films". They have purchased the rights of

"Annapurna Mandir" and will be making it into a picture soon.

Dicken's "David Copperfield" is to be picturised by M. G. M. with Jackie Cooper acting the name part. Dora is to be played by Elizabeth Allan, the English actress. There will be sixty eight speaking parts in all—seven short of the record set up by "Rothschild" with seventy five. George Cukor will direct.

Rouben Maumoulian, director of Frederic March in Dr. Jekyll, and Mr. Hyde Maurice Chevalier's "Love Me Tonight", Marlene Dietrich's "Song of Songs" and Greta Garbo's "Queen Christina" is next to direct Anna Sten, the new discovery of Samuel Goldwyn, in "Resurrection".

The title of the new film that H. G. Wells is writing for production by Alexander Korda for London Films is likely to be "Whither Mankind?" It will be based upon Mr. Well's book, "The Shape of things to Come."

Harold Lloyd is to sing for the first time in his new comedy, "Catspaw".



Bibbo & Nisar in Ajanta Cinetone's "Shane-Khuda."

Defeat an Unknown Quality

By Helen Maurice Lewis.

Meet Mr. Samuel Goldwyn.....a man who is true to his ideals.

HE needs no introduction, his reputation for producing outstanding successes has made his name familiar the world over. He will not put a production on the market which does not come up to his standard. It takes a lot of courage to put "thumbs down" on a picture which cost a quarter of a million dollars. It was evident money didn't count when he ordered the first film version of "Nana" to be 'scrapped' because it wasn't quite right.

He had the courage to spend thousands of dollars on the Russian actress, Anna Sten, a girl who could not speak a word of the English language two years ago. He had a vision of a 'new star'. He knew if Anna Sten could master the language for the role of "Nana" he would have discovered a sensation. His prophecy was realized when a new version of "Nana" was previewed a few nights ago and pronounced a veritable success, and all Hollywood is talking about Anna Sten, the girl who was regarded as a "myth". One admires the courage of a producer who invests his own capital to make pictures with stars unknown to cinema patrons. He has no stock-holders, no board of directors.

Upon arriving at the studio to interview him I was somewhat astonished to meet quite a young man having visualized him as quite mature. His friendly greeting soon paved the way.

Same old trite question of "How did you

start in this business?" Mr. Goldwyn gave a quizzical glance in my direction, settled back in his chair apparently satisfied that I did ask the question merely to be inquisitive, began to reminisce. I will try to relate the colorful story "Down Memory Lane" with Samuel Goldwyn:

"Getting introduced to my life-work—not that I knew it at the time...it was a hard seat in the middle of a stuffy crowd...up



above a white screen...whirring noises...jiggly lettering and then a growing speck at the end of converging railroad tracks which suddenly comes out of nothing.....the little speck grows bigger and bigger.....the fellow with the sandpaper blocks rubbing harder and faster...and a huge iron monster rushing out of the screen right down our throats...women screaming...men, and me among them too scared to utter a sound.....that was my first movie...it told me I had to make movies as new thrills were being born.

The cradle cries of a mighty giant as an exciting toy is turned into an industry...getting the nerve...and the money to make the first full length pictures.....stories as long as plays and novels...the incredible length of five reels...Jesse Lasky and I trying to argue D.W. Griffith into directing, all we had was about \$ 10,000 in cash...Griffith's idea was \$ 250,000...so we laid hands on Cecil B. De Mille, the young playwright...Dustin Farnum for the lead...and all of us scared stiff.

We hired a barn for a studio in Hollywoodand the agony of getting the thing going ...carrying it through to an improvised projection room and then finding out that defective film had ruined everything...investigations and alibis...nothing certain but that all our money was spent and the picture spoiled.

Sigmund Lubin happened to drop in and he looked the film over...he knew a way to doctor it up...this film was "The Squaw Man" which turned out a success...the grandfather of them all!"

"Out of that comes the Lasky Company... and combining with Adolph Zukor's Famous Players...and then with Paramount, named after an apartment house that Mr. W. W. Hodgkinson had happened to pass while riding with Zukor to the fire at his studio that burned up all his fortune...millions of dollars in negative gone up in smoke...and all he thought of "Do you think anybody's hurt"... Zukor walking, planning, plotting, always walking...seeing fifteen years ago the world we now live in...hundreds of theatres all over the world...audiences that number millions on millions.

Plenty of excitement while we were learning in the middle of a whirlwind.....Mexico and Pancho Villa in the headlines.....and Roosevelt coming home from the River of Doubt...great names in the theatres that looked down on the movies...new names

making a sensation on the screen.....our screen.

Some of those names are still great...some have passed on.

Mary Pickford, Charlie Chaplin, Broncho Billy, Blanche Sweet, Francis Bushman, Mae Marsh, Mabel Normand, Wallace Reid, Clara Kimball Young, Douglas Fairbanks, Anita Stewart.....companies bidding and outbidding for the new fame these names had won...raids on stars.....raids on directors...patent wars....."the trust"...and all the time learning how to tell stories in pictures...lots of them bad, some of them getting better..... and the revelation of power and strength in Griffith's "The Birth of a Nation".

Swinging the Goldwyn Company into action ...bringing Maxine Elliot and Geraldine Farrar and Mary Garden into the new art... seems funny now that we hired opera stars and couldn't let them sing...persuading famous others to lend a hand...new pictures with a bite in them....."Greed", "The Merry Widow" "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse"..."Madame X"...yes, with Pauline Frederick.....what pictures!

That preview of "The Kid"...Chaplin trying to conceal his nervousness...every one waiting to see what he has this timethe world's first look at Jackie Coogan's big eyes ...laughter...sniffing.....more sniffing...tears and handkerchiefs...laughter right in the middle of tears...and then the finish...lights up...shouts of applause from sceptics.....Chaplin whispering..."Do you really think they like it?"...Elinor Glyn said it was the finest she had ever seen...she had never seen any other.

Size beginning to get important in the post-war boom...the picture cathedral beginning to sprout...bigger and bigger every time ...seating so many thousands the old-timers lost their breath...more and more softer chairs...more ushers...all gilt...dirt abolishedthe picture industry turning into real estate speculation.....chains of theatres..... high pressure on production to keep them filled,....hundreds of features per year..... pictures made to schedule and all alike like a box of biscuits...may be the old days had gone for ever, but there's no law against being an independent producer if you want to...I wanted to.

The first look at Ronald Colman in "The White Sister".....May be it was Lillian Gish's picture...but Colman got my cable right away as soon as I saw it...that first glimpse of Vilma Banky's photograph in a

shop window in Budapest...failure to find her in person...Vilma just catching me at the train when I was leaving for home...and the team she made with Colman in "The Dark Angel"! a team of winners that paved the way for romance-teams...Garbo-Gilbert and the rest of them, the woods full of romance-teams "Stella Dallas" and Lois Moran persuading Lilly Damita to try her luck in America.

The shooting-galleries where they played phonograph records of dialogue for the first talking pictures... and twenty years later "The Jazz Singer".....just when everything was peacefully going along.....sound had come to stay...pictures had to talk...or did they?...nobody knew...everybody scared... stars falling over themselves for voice lessons...New York moving to Hollywood while the old timers said sound wouldn't last...the awful sounds that came out of the first talkies...the time the disc went crazy and the heroine barked like a dog...and the dog told the hero "I love you"...and jumping on the writer to see if the screen-dialogue had to be as bad as that.

"Bulldog Drummond" opening...crowds milling so thick the photographers couldn't set off their flashlights...calls for extra policemen...Jack Dempsey swept off his feet in the

rush for Ronald Colman...Constance Bennett, just back from her Paris divorce from Phil Plant, stopping off on her way to a try out in Hollywood...and the proof that the movies could absorb dialogue and still be movies... that was what the critics said...the audience said it was a wonderful show.

"Eddie Cantor, sage, prophet, clown... making "Whoopee" with Eddie and Flo Ziegeld...the burning lights as we struggle with colour in films...searching for beautiful women, the most cruel and heartless task in the world...finding them at last for "The Kid from Spain"...Eddie and Sidney Franklin as matadors...Charles Chaplin crying with joy at Franklin's breathlessly dangerous grace...Sinclair Lewis, doubled up like a paper clip, crying as he watched Ronald Colman in "Arrowsmith"...making that and "Street Scene" both in one year...argument over titles...things are always moving in the movies".

It is practically impossible, dear readers, to do justice to Memory Line, only listening to Mr. Goldwyn could one read between the lines...trials...dissappointments, but through it all one could feel the indomitable force that has made the industry what it is today... Courage.....



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Some Film Directors and their Moods.

A word or two about the men of whom the picture public hears a good deal and sees little or nothing—the film directors.

Their qualifications must embrace an unusual blend of artist and business man, for film directors must be possessed of the creative urge without forgetting the importance of time and effort in terms of cash. They must not "spoil the ship for a ha'porth of tar," but must work precisely and with one eye on their filming costs.

One might suppose, therefore, that in type, the film director would be almost as uniform as the city clerk one can so easily identify on the 9:5 a. m. bound for town. Not so. Let us sketch the chief British International film directors.

Paul Stein; sensitive; artistic; continental; a man of moods. His intellectual face is the index to his every thought. Sometimes he is elated; sometimes sad. Always he is going to be right in the end, but he develops every idea through tense emotions. While he was directing "Red Wagon" he lived, ate, and slept with the circus. Now he is going all Schubertian. The music of Vienna has taken hold of him. He is starting on his Tauber film.

John Daumery, tall and painfully thin, dark, pensive, and unexcitable. Wears a tiny black beret perched on top of a deep receding forehead. Is directing Bobby Howes and Marian Marsh in "Over the Garden Wall." It is a comedy with music. You would never guess it from the director's face . . . but he knows it will be.

Thomas Bentley, just an English country gentleman. Might be a farmer. Is middle-aged and robust. Calls everybody "laddie." Wears a disreputable old velour hat and tweeds . . . sometimes plus fours, and then he shoots. He looks like that. Just now he is back in the late Victorian days with "The Magistrate," Pinero's family farce. He is a Dickens "addict" and loves old time stories.

Arthur Woods, youngest of B.I.P. directors. Typical young University Graduate. Wears flannels with yellow or red pullovers. Full of spirit and enthusiasm. Collects antiques. Tall hefty fellow with a breezy style which never deserts him. He directed his first film "On Secret Service," with Greta Nissen, and was not heard to raise his voice.

Drives huge car "to the danger of the public" (more or less).

Robert Milton, of Russian origin and Hollywood experience. Loves the stage. Looks something like George Robey only his hair (at the back) is red. On top it isn't. Small, rotund, and benevolent-looking he beams on his company and calls them "boys and girls." Sometimes he can shout, but they still like him. Carries a heavy walking stick on his arm; never uses it. Directed "Contraband", in which a king and his court came under his command.

Paul Merzbach, slim fair-headed German. Looks like a school teacher. Wears glasses and speaks with soft accents. Persuades rather than "directs" his artists. Made "Love at Second Sight." It was his first film at Elstree but everybody fell for him at first sight.

Fredrik [Zelnik, embodiment of good humour. Stout and with heavy features. Middle aged, but youthful in spirit and outlook. Directed "Happy," with Stanley Lupino, Will Fyffe, and Laddie Cliff. Made all his company happy while they worked on it.

Walter Summers (Captain to you). Short, dark, alert. A sinewy individual, with a permanent passion for pace. Tongue like a rapier. Has directed lots of B.I.P. films. His latest "Fleet Street Murder" is all mysterious. Fond of perfect English and speaks it.

Marcel Varnel, short lithe Frenchman direct from Hollywood. High-pitched voice. Friendly air. Likes England very much . . . better to live in London than in Paris. Has produced on the stage and directed several American films. Is starting up with his first B.I.P. film, "Freedom of the Seas," starring Clifford Mollison. His face is permanently creased through smiling. After his first British success they'll have to iron the crease or it may crack.

Norman Lee, former newspaper man. Tall and thick-set, with bald head. A natural humorist and student of human nature. In love with life. Writes all his letters with caricatured illustrations; makes fun out of difficulties. Is directing Leslie Fuller in "The Outcast," a story of the dog course. Might easily play the role of a benevolent bookie himself.

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Story of the Newsreels

When the idea of presenting news through the eyes of the motion picture camera was conceived by the far-sighted Parisian, Charles Pathe, in 1909, one of the first things he sought was an editor for the United States release. Leon E. Franconi, who officially opened the embassy Pathe News Theatre, the only theatre in New York exclusively showing Newsreels was the man he found.

"The Father of the American Newsreel" is a title that has been bestowed upon Mr. Franconi. Today he sits in his office in the Pathe Exchange building and looks back on the early years with a mellowed humor that brings him many a chuckle as he recalls those first struggles.

"The first cameramen we had," he'll tell you, "were all studio men. Good cameramen, artistic lads and all that, but they didn't know what made news anymore than a two months old baby. It took me a long while to convince them that they shouldn't wait for the right light to make a picture of an explosion. Didn't seem to realize that the explosion wouldn't wait for the light along with them.

"It was early in 1910 that we started to operate. I had about fifteen men under me, scattered throughout the United States. In the meantime Mr. Pathe had launched his new idea in news throughout Europe. London, Paris, Berlin and other continental capital cities soon became enthusiastic about the latest dodge of the flickers and it wasn't long before the name of Pathe had spread to every nook and corner of the world.

"Those early pictures were pretty crude, I guess, compared to the ones that are turned out now, but they got a tremendous response from the public. And we worked hard, hard I tell you. I remember the great fire in Galveston in 1911. I was in bed one night when my phone rang. A friend of mine on one of the papers was on the wire with the news that the Texas city was being wiped out by fire. The only man I had near Galveston was our staff man in New Orleans. What to do! I was thinking about that when my phone rang again. It was the New Orleans man. He had heard about the fire and asked for instruction. There was no train for several hours. 'Hire a special locomotive' I bellowed. 'Get going.' Things weren't as high pressure nor was the pace as swift in those days as it is today. He was a little

baffled by the order, but he did as he was told and he got some fine pictures. But didn't I have to do some explaining to the accounting department when I presented a bill. 'For hire—One locomotive.'

"Another stunt, unheard of at the time, occurred at the inauguration of President Wilson in 1912. I had eight cameramen in Washington placed at advantageous spots along the line of march and in front of the Capitol. Just as soon as one cameraman would finish a roll of film a messenger would grab it from him and rush it to New York on the first train out. That night, we had a twelve hundred foot subject on Broadway, of the Inauguration. That was pretty revolutionary stuff then, even if it is commonplace now. Yes, sir, those were the days."

Mr. Franconi estimates that in the 24 years of its history Pathe News has released some 550 miles of edited negative nationally and some 250 miles more locally. This material has been selected from thousands of miles of film that have come to its laboratories. The positive prints which Pathe News has sent to the theatres assembled into a single film would stretch six times around the earth at its equator.

Every known country in the world has been presented in its news. Its own expeditions have invaded Arctic ice and tropic jungle. Its cameramen have travelled from Timbuctoo to Kamchakta, from the Nile to the Amazon. They have marched with the marines into Vera Cruz, Nicaragua and China, ridden with Black Jack Pershing after Villa in Mexico, ground away in the bloody marches of the World War. They have graphically reported the high spots of war and peace for a quarter of a century.

Today Pathe News has permanent representatives in 37 countries.

In every centre of world interest the pioneer newsreel is waiting to bring the latest world events to the screen. Pathe is credited with establishing in America the idea of newsreels. And its policy today under the guidance of Courtland Smith, who founded the talking newsreel, is not greatly unlike that of Leon Franconi, who gave America a new idea in news presentation. Impartial, prompt presentation of events in sight and sound is the motivating factor of this great news agency.

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WITH

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M. G. MARI RAO, the comedian whose histrionic talents and humorous actions need no description

KANAKALAKSHMI DEVI, M.A., the amateur actress whose sublime and melodious music and highly tragic actions are sure to break the heart strings of the literate as well as illiterate section of the audience.

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Seen on the Screen.

YAHOOUDI-KI-LADKI (Urdu)

Produced by:—THE NEW THEATRES, CALCUTTA

Featuring:—SAIGAL, RATAIN BAI, and NAWAB.

WHAT a shock and a half! A surprisingly pleasing shock! The Indian Films are really improving. Yes, see Saroj Movitone's "Naksh-e-Sulemani" and New Theatre's "Yahoodi-ki-Ladki".

It may now be said with pride that our actors and actresses have learnt to act, that they are now no longer shy of the camera or nervous of the microphone.

Still, the first picture has not attained true perfection, though the story, plot, and acting are good enough. In the first place, the introduction is very poor. It leaves the audience guessing and drawing its own conclusions. A Talkie does not deprive the film of having written statements, which is a great help to its lookers. "Yahoodi-ki-Ladki" very distinctly brings before the people what is being done, and where. This makes the story easy to follow. Not so "Naksh-e-Sulemani". It is all confusion and jerks, and takes the audience full half an hour before it settle down to understand what is what of the film.

The hero looks too much of a coward for the role allotted to him. If, in contrast to Sardar, Kaikobad was pictured to be thin and delicate, it does not mean that the player should be effeminate. Somebody, with a slim body, but more grip and activity, would have done much better than Bali, who is of the *alamort* type.

Yekbal plays her part to perfection, while no other could have enacted Badi, the Evil Spirit, better than Zebunissa. The acting of these two meet the object perfectly, and if the beginning had been clear, and if the hero had been suited to the type of Yekbal, the film would have been a first grade success. The songs are a bit too many, and a little too long, and of the strain that tends to rock one to sleep. Since each line in our Indian songs is wont to be repeated at least three to four times, why can't the songs be composed of

four to six lines only? It becomes rather tedious—this listening to flat, lengthy songs.

And now for "Yahoodi-ki-Ladki". In all the Indian pictures seen by the writer, not another has up to now beaten this one for its beauty and originality. It is a film of films. It is the best tutor for those producers who believe that mythological pictures alone are profitable. For, according to information, the rush to the theatre was so great, that seats were not available. And there were three shows every day for the whole week!

An Urdu Talkie in Roman settings, it looks gorgeous! The Producers and the Director have with great precision selected each player, and every player is suited to his or her role. Life and a lifeful exuberance brims in every one of them. The dresses are very minutely chosen, and changed at proper intervals. The beards and moustaches are not flying cotton or bristly horse-tails, but have the natural touch to them. The beauty of the players is more beautified by their voices for every one has a good, well-trained voice. The acting is that of the experienced. The film does not lack the Roman back-ground, and the music and the songs are aptly selected. There is absolutely no blemish in the film, but one cannot help saying that the back-ground music, when conversation is going on, is in some places a bit loud. It should be milder and softer, as not to interfere with the words. New Theatres may well be proud of their achievement, but may they not stop there!

The picture would have been better still, were a different ending given to it. Instead of the gay appearance at the royal household after the departure of Ophelia, it would have been more becoming if this merry-making had taken place at the first marriage festival, and the film ended with the princess (Ratan Bai) walking away with the sage, singing the song "mai to Jogan bani". But here arises a problem.

Indian producers fear tragic endings. They think that people should go home smiling and cheery. Moreover, they are afraid that tragic ends will not bring crowds, and that

was exactly what happened to the Talkie "Madhuri." * Ezra Mir wanted to keep the same tragic end as of the silent, but his employer wished otherwise, saying the film would not go well in the South. The end was, the employer had to get another director to give the finishing touches, as Ezra Mir said he did not wish to spoil his picture. Yet, really speaking, the tragic picture was the better. In time India will learn that too.

Some people delight in saying that Indian films are still in their infancy. They are wrong. It is time they became adults—and they have, to some extent, as the above pictures show. Bad direction or inartistic acting, as some pictures still have, cannot be excused. These only show the inferiority complex of the Indian mind, while to coolly say that they are still inexperienced, is to suggest that the Indians want to cling to imperfection.

—Miss Dilla F. Byramshaw.

*Our information is that 'Madhuri' was directed by Mr. Choudhary.

SITA KALYANAM (Tamil)

Produced by;—PRABHAT CINETONE, POONA.

Featuring;—all Amateur Cast. *

IT is often true to say that it is only through hostile critics that the good qualities of a picture can be gleaned. And Prabhat's Sita Kalyanam is a case in point. Ever since the inception of the idea of producing a tamil picture, the sponsors of this venture had only one idea in their view—to raise the standard of our productions and incidentally impress the fact that the Public can always be touched and be made to respond to a befitting achievement. In short, industry is never ill spent. And if today "Sita Kalyanam" tops the list of tamil pictures so far produced, it is by no means, a fluke, but is the fruit of the work of an industrious band of artistes, who were accelerated by an inconceivable zest to do their best unfettered by less mundane considerations, and always had in their mind's eye the heavy responsibility of meeting the public.

A better example of sophistry can hardly be fished out, than that of the film-magnate who, by giving a swell credit title hopes to see his picture glide right up into the hearts of the public and fatten his purse. But instead, if only better attention is devoted to the intrinsic value of the picture than for the

methods of trade puff how many of our pictures would tell a different tale! While allowing that a swell cast or a credit title might go a little way in deciding a wavering theatre goer, it is to be pointed out that unless the picture itself is sustaining enough, no amount of padding in that respect could cover up the hiatus. The rush at the opening show is surely not the index of a picture but if only the person who comes out of the theatre feels that he very discriminately spent his few annas and really got an entertainment he was in quest of, then all well may it be said that there is substantial justification for the production of the picture. In fact the infliction of the pictures must be made a cognisable offence.

Well, well, it is all because of the refreshing feeling which one experiences after seeing "Sita Kalyanam". Even from the sparkling way in which the first title swings into the screen one could easily see the audience feeling pretty optimistic about the programme. Prabhat's "Sita Kalyanam"—really, I do not know to whom the honours go, yet as it is called 'Prabhat' I repeat it—is not above fault, but it is certainly above all common faults to which every picture stoops to wade in. It has a most beautiful and balanced cast, a splendid page from the greatest epic Ramayana for its theme, most apt and spectacular settings for its background and with these, excellent photography and recording have all conspired to make this a success. And if it has proved a success, not a little is due to the real work turned out by the respective persons.

As is well known, "Sita Kalyanam" has not the privilege to feature mighty names of professionals of either the stage or the screen. Most of them have stood before the cine-camera for the first time in their existence, and really it is rather hard to swallow it, looking at their performances. Master Rajam who impersonates Rama has done all that could possibly be desired. He is stately, youthful, with a countenance that more or less spells divinity. He talks with a distinct charm and while he sings he is perhaps at his best. Either by accident or otherwise he opens with a song in Kalyani—an auspicious tune as many would tell—and treats us with delightful music. And the few other songs he renders are equally entertaining and make us wish for more. If Rajam gives us a most pleasant execution of the role, Jaya does her part pleasanter still. She is exclusively charm-

ing and the scene, where she joins her hands with her playmates and sings must linger long in one's memory. Again with what an amazing and impressive way she sings the song modelled after the great "Purandardoss" composition that is so highly reminiscent of Mr. Raja Iyengar's modes of rendering it. Her voice is delightful and falls on our ears with quite a sweet cadence. And young as she is, what remarkable acting talents she displays in the bow-breaking scene! Her court chums impart a wholesome air of vivacity and joyousness that is so delightful to watch! Timid, elegant and graceful as she certainly is, one cannot but be impressed by the execution of her role. About Lakshmana it looks as though he couldn't bear the studio lights—perhaps they were so powerful for his young eyes that he seldom looks up. He too can sing and that quite well as evidenced by his short piece sung in part with Rama. While Janaka looks stately and respectable, one feels that Dasaratha could not successfully put on a cloak of senility. It looks as though his youth persists in coming out and his singing is neither impressive nor necessary. Visvamitra is a happier choice and his leading the brothers to the Swayamvara hall at Mithila is brought home to us in a vivid manner. Ravana very correctly looks more docile and the other characters are all worth their choice.

The compelling element in the picture is of course the Prabhat atmosphere. The court of Ravana, the Palace at Mithila and finally the grand scene of Sri Rama's breaking the bow, very strongly smells of their aptitude for inspiring sets and these are particularly well suited here. The stately atmosphere is well achieved. And the picture is again particularly commendable as a very well-photographed production. There is not a single scene where the best portion of it are not brought to light. The features of the characters are very well brought out from appropriate angles—these ably assisted Rajam in his exhibition of a good screen-face and not a shot can be censured of as either ill-lighted or over lighted. The trick shots again are done impressively although perhaps Ravana's air chariot might not satisfy a critical audience. The song numbers, though few—rightly few I should say—, and the talk are of more polished diction than is hitherto associated with the tamil talkies. The recording is satisfactory though perhaps the violin accompaniment has come out a bit louder. The final shot is a glorious end to the picture.

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And that is Sita Kalyanam. One more word please! Never miss the first parts of the picture. The Kanjira boy is so entertaining that your regret for having missed his performance can never be balanced. In short, here is a fine tamil talkie—when comes such another?—*M. N. Parthasarathy.*

KARMA (English)

Produced by:—Indo International Film Corporation.

Featuring:—Mr. HIMANSURAI and DEVIKA RANI

It often happens that Indian ventures in art which have been praised overseas in extravagant terms fail to impress an Indian audience. Mr. Himansu Rai's Karma with Devika Rani in the leading lady role is the latest instance. It intends to depict India and it is surprising how an Indian has to offer us the same kind of notion of India a globe-trotter or a foreign reader of Kipling has. 'Karma' is, as far as the story goes, a 'big zero.' Rajas, Sikhari, Pagoda, Snake-bite and Snake-charmer are the chief ingredients of this 'mechanical mixture' of a story. One hears often in the picture of 'progress' 'progress'; what 'progress' is meant is not known; the idea is not worked out into picture; even the title in the story is not realisable on the screen.

Mr. H. Roy seems to be an allround failure, and in speaking English, he is at his worst, even as his 'fair' partner is at her best. We sat through, hoping to pick a few good points for praise but landed only on other kinds of points. As for instance, the opening scene of the picture can be cited. There is a serene and vast expanse of water; and a soft strain of music from Devika Rani raises in a *slow time measure*: but Mr. H. Roy, who is plying the oars at the other end of the boat, does not keep time, and out of harmony, splashes the oars at a quicker time-measure. One more instance can be mentioned; this sound picture suddenly becomes silent often. A murderer creeps up the mansion to murder the prince but when the saviour catches him and hurls him down from the high storey, the body falls down as in the silent days, without making any noise on the floor. There are some lasses singing and dancing, with a Harmonium (Think of a Harmonium of all Indian musical instruments.) And then, little of the singing and clapping of the hands of the women who are dancing is heard. The snake-charmer who plays on the pipe recites a Sanskrit verse on Rama! Surely there are higher-caste healers and

others who recite incantations and charms. But what kind of charm is the verse on Rama? and how is it that a snake-piper recites Sanskrit verses? But why linger on our failures? May Karma and its reception abroad inspire Indian talent, rich in no mean measure, to greater successes.—*Chitra Chitta.*

SAKKU BAI (Tamil)

Produced by:—AURORA FILM CORPORATION.

Featuring:—SARADAMBAL.

Sakku Bai is a very good story in the collection of the lives of the Maratta saints connected with the temple at Pandharpur. It is popular on the South Indian Stage. The action of the actors is good and Saradambal especially does well all thro'. But her make-up is defective and is not in harmony with her character. Her's is a spirit of renunciation of worldly things and she is in deep love with God but she is decked with 'dolak' in her ears which is in consonance only in a loveheroine and not in a devotee. The story is of Marathi locality and the husband of Sakku is got-up like a votarie of the Chaitanya-sect of Bengal dualists. The photography could have been improved immensely. Emotionally valuable situations have not been emphasised and the camera has lingered over emotionally less valuable items. As for instance, Sakku's husband runs up to the Bhajana party bound for Pandharpur to request his father to break his resolve to leave for Pandharpur and to return home. The scene of the meeting of the father and son is cut short while we are shown many minutes' noise of the Bhajana party. Although, the minor climaxes, the 'points' lack emphasis. Many insignificant things are shown. The closing picture in the inner shrine of Panduranga at Pandharpur is not at all properly composed. Neither God Panduranga nor Sakku is emphasised.

When Sakku is branded, Krishna could have effectively shown his own hand as receiving the brand; Krishna was too wooden for that; further, when Krishna appears and blesses Sakku that the brands on her arms may fall off, the pictorial effect of the brands falling off is not shown. Sakku's husband asks his mother how the brand-mark on Sakku's hand disappeared. This we come to know only from his speech. The disappearance of the brand-mark, or the wonderstruck husband's look at her brandless hand—these are not to be seen.

The dialogue has tendencies to break into literary and rare words like 'Ehuvadu' for going; and this speech is delivered by Sakku and others more like lectures or expositions by Bhagavatars. Regarding the songs, we are not raising our fingers against duets and conversation songs etc.; but we must surely voice our protest against low tunes (Mettus), so profuse in this picture,—Bus-driver-mettus, in which Rajalakshmi specialised in her 'Valli'. These, we can never get ourselves to even stand, not to say, admire; but there seems to be a contemporary of yours who is very fond of these Mettus and was very much disappointed, according to his own remark, at the Prabhat 'Sita Kalyanam'; for he had to return dumb without being able to whistle his way home. The music was evidently superior there. May I draw the attention of this contemporary to an article in his own journal on Music in Tamil Talkies which appeared some months back?—*Chitra Chitta*.

DHRUVA KUMAR (Kannada)

Produced by:—JAYAVANI TALKIES, MADRAS
AT THE AJANTA STUDIO, BOMBAY.

Directed by:—PARASWANATH Y. ALTEKAR

Featuring:—Master MUTHU, G. NAGESH RAO,
MARI RAO, SITARAM, DWARAKA NATH,
Srimati KANAKALAKSHMI DEVI,
SHRI DEVI and others.

Following the able and talented leadership of the late Nataka Siromani A. V. Varadachar the Kannada stage has reached high perfection which the Tamil stage could not hope to achieve in the near future unless a radical reform sweeps over its methods. The Kannadians have made another step forward in producing Kannada Pictures. Dhruva Kumar is the beginning of the awakening of this side of activity,

The photography is very good. Sound recording is superb. Editing has been done with much common sense. There are about 38 songs of beauty, variety and charm.

As if to perpetuate the memory of the Nataka Siromani the producers have taken pains to gather together men and women who have been either connected with him' or by selecting them from among his family members. But has this selection done any good? The acting of the artistes in spite of the high sounding titles and the pedigree they have, cannot be said to have reached a stage

of perfection. Nay, it is even wanting in some respect. G. Nagesh Rao, with the startling title of "Abinaya Visaradha" has not even attempted even once to defend his title. It is too late to question the award of this title and question the credentials of those who have given this title to him, but he is always shy of the camera with the result that he appears more as a robber than a king. The one saving grace in him is his melodious music and in this cine fans will find him as a master, second to none. Mari Row as Vidhushak has done a good piece of work. His shiverings in rain, his run to Dhruva in the forest, and his actions while feasting are all quite good. Sitaram coming with the reputation of Aryaka in Vasantasena in which role he has received encomiums from cine critics both national and international shows how well he can act the part of a villain. His fright in the forest, and his death scene all give a natural colour to the picture. But it is Dwarakanath, as Naradha who is sure to receive praise from all. He



A Scene from Dhruva Kumar,

has neither flowed to the arrogance of a professional nor descended to the ignorance of an amateur. He keeps a happy medium and has done his part with sincerity and devotion. Master Muthu as Dhruva brings back the puranic boy to reality. He has just the age, charm, dignity, grace with an excellent voice. More vigorous and impressive is the acting of Master Tara who as a comedian companion exhibits a natural pose. His winks are more polished than a trained artiste's, his acting praiseworthy and last but not the least he will send the cine fans in a fit of laughter whenever he is on the screen.

Shrimati Kanakalakshmi Devi as Suniti has failed miserably. She is a mother without the emotions of a mother. Her looks are unexpressive, vacant, dull and monotonous. When Dhruva disappears suddenly to the forest instead of going into a grief and sorrow she just looks around as if she is dumb. What is more, when she swoons she takes care to fall on the bed whereas she ought to have fallen on the floor unmindful of the physical comforts or discomforts she might suffer. She had a situation which alone could have elevated her to martyrdom but in her failure she has made her first and last appearance on the silver screen. Shri Devi as Surichi is a better type. She has a good voice and in some places she is not poor in acting. With a little more experience she can be made to do better.

The animal effect is superb in the picture. The shots of a tiger are very realistic. Even experienced European cine producers could not have done better. The outdoor scenes have all been taken in surroundings reverberating natural charm and effect.

A word of praise should be given to Mr. Jitan Bannerjee for the trick photography, and with his vast experience and love for art he is sure to make a name in the cine world ere long.

Praise is also due to the producers who have done their best with the available talent and their second venture in this direction will prove even a greater triumph than this one, with their added knowledge as to avoid the mistakes in their first venture. The picture is also sure to be a financial success as it will appeal immensely to the religious minded folks. There are also interesting features in the film which alone could efface the other defects.—*Nivas, M.A.*

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BEST OF THE MONTH

BELOVED (*Universal*) Direction and music: Victor Schertzinger. Cast: John Boles, Gloria Stuart, Albert Conti, Dorothy Petersen.

An exquisite love tale, traced through three generations. The musical genius of Karl Hauseman creates symphonies which are transmuted by the talent of his grandson into jazz. Poignant in its pathos and delightful in its humor, this picture has an excellent cast, fine direction and photography and serves as a splendid vehicle for the musical ability of John Boles.

SOCIAL DRAMA

ALL OF ME (*Paramount*) Dir: James Flood. Cast: Fredric March, Miriam Hopkins, George Raft, Helen Mack.

Romance of a college professor and a girl in one of his classes, contrasted with that of a gangster and his "moll," from whom, it is implied, they learn the true meaning of loyalty and devotion. A good cast in an absurd story which outrages ethics and conventions, belittles the forces of law and order, and sentimentalizes over criminals.

HOUSE ON 56TH STREET (*Warner*) Dir: Robert Florey. Cast: Kay Francis, John Halliday, Gene Raymond, Margaret Lindsay.

A well acted and directed picture with a hackneyed plot adapted from a novel by Joseph Santley. When her daughter becomes involved in a gambler's murder an unrecognized ex-convict mother sacrifices herself in order to protect her child.

LONG LOST FATHER (*RKO-Radio*) Dir: Ernest Schoedsack. Cast: John Barrymore, Helen Chandler, Donald Cook, Alan Mowbray.

A gentleman adventurer, charming but of doubtful reputation, discovers in a dancer his young daughter whom he deserted in babyhood. He wins her regard when he rescues her from threatened disgrace. Clever dialogue and excessive drinking are found in this ably directed social drama, featuring John Barrymore.

SEARCH FOR BEAUTY (*Paramount*) Dir: Earle Kenton. Cast: Buster Crabbe, Ida Lupino, Robert Armstrong, James Gleason, Toby Wing.

Three crooks plan to make easy money by using Olympic stars as bait in a health and beauty contest. How they are outwitted in their scheme is told in an entertaining and amusing manner but the picture is cheapened by innuendoes and emphasis on sex.

TWO ALONE (*RKO-Radio*) Dir: Elliot Nugent. Cast: Jean Parker, Tom Brown, Zasu Pitts, Arthur Byron.

Romance of two lonely public wards, working for a brutal farmer. An unattractive story, told with excess frankness. Despite good photography of rural life and some excellent characterizations the film is not pleasant cinema fare.

MELODRAMA

CROSBY CASE (*Universal*). Dir: Edwin Marin. Cast: Wynne Gibson, Onslow Stevens, Alan Dinehart, William Collier, Sr., Warren Hymer.

Five persons, each with a shady past, through circumstantial evidence are suspected of a murder. Before the solution of the mystery is reached we see four violent deaths and much grueing by the police. Though well acted and directed it will appeal only to detective story addicts.

CROSS COUNTRY CRUISE (*Universal*). Dir: Edward Bruzzell. Cast: Lew Ayres, June Knight, Alice White, Alan Dinehart, Minna Gombell, Eugene Palette.

A rather rough comedy of transcontinental bus travel, sardonically realistic and slyly suggestive in dialogue combined with a cheap triangle story which develops into a fairly well handled melodrama.

SHADOWS OF SING SING (*Columbia*). Dir: Phil Rosen. Cast: Mary Brian, Bruce Cabot, Grant Mitchell, Harry Woods.

A well directed gangster picture which is treated in an ethical manner. Through the capable direction of the head of the Intelligence Department in a District Attorney's office, a baffling murder mystery is solved. Good cast with honors going to Grant Mitchell.

The University Club feels that the plot is trite and too much emphasis is given to the power of gangland.

MUSICAL

LET'S FALL IN LOVE (*Columbia*). Dir: David Burton. Cast: Gregory Ratoff, Ann Sothorn, Edmund Lowe, Miriam Jordan.

A charming cinema romance behind the scenes in Hollywood. Several attractive musical numbers, a fine cast, excellent photography and a good story.

MOULIN ROUGE (*United Artists-Twentieth Century*). Dir: Sydney Lanfield. Cast: Constance Bennett, Franchot Tone, May Robson, Boswell Sisters.

The story of a stage-struck wife who impersonates a famous French entertainer whom she strongly resembles. She wins her unsuspecting husband's approval of her talent as an actress and fascination as a woman. The picture maintains a mediocre standard with a good cast and direction and leaves much to be desired ethically.

COMEDY

THE POOR RICH (*Universal*). Dir: Edward Sedgwick. Cast: Edward Everett Horton, Edna May Oliver, Leila Hyams, Andy Devine, John Miljan, Grant Mitchell.

Their exchequer entirely depleted, two cousins return to the family homestead where they find romance and a solution of their problems. A rollick-

ing farce which can be recommended because of the good cast and direction, interesting plot. Clean humor and an air of mystery.

BROAD COMEDY

FOUR FRIGHTENED PEOPLE (*Paramount*). Dir: Cecil DeMille. Cast: Claudette Colbert, Herbert Marshall, Mary Boland, William Gargan.

Four frightened people—a bespectacled school teacher, a club woman, ardent advocate of birth control, a suppressed chemist and an egotistical columnist—flee from a plague-ridden ship and have many exciting adventures as they make their way through the jungle. Praiseworthy direction, fine character portrayals and beautiful and authentic photography combine to make this an entertaining picture. Marred by some suggestive dialogue.

MEANEST GAL IN TOWN (*RKO-Radio*). Dir: Russell Mack. Cast: Zasu Pitts, El Brendel, Pert Kelton, James Gleason, Skeets Gallagher.

A travelling salesman and a show girl manicurist complicate a ten-year romance between a small town barber and a spinster shopkeeper. This mediocre comedy is marred by superfluous suggestiveness.

WAR

I WAS A SPY (*Fox Gaumont-British*). Dir: Victor Saville. Cast: Herbert Marshall, Madeleine Carroll, Conrad Veidt.

Innate artistry in production, sympathetic direction and superb fidelity in characterization mark this World War picture as one of the best. An excellent authentic portrayal of the bravery and self-sacrifice

of patriotic Marg Knockhardt who cleverly aids Belgium while nursing German invaders.

MADAME SPY (*Universal*). Dir: Karl Freund. Cast: Fay Wray, Nils Asther, Edward Arnold, John Miljan.

A well cast, ably directed war theme picture. Love for her Austrian husband and loyalty to Russia present a difficult problem for a woman spy, which is happily solved through some clever manoeuvres and exciting adventures.

TRAVELOGUE

ANGKOR.

Separating the legendary and unconvincing story from the background, which is not entirely authentic, much that is interesting and educational can be enjoyed in this travelogue which features the stupendous architectural wonders of the mysterious vanished Cambodian civilization, Angkor.

SHORT SUBJECTS.

SHANGHAIED (*Disney-United Artists*).

A mediocre Mickey Mouse cartoon. Much cruelty and little to recommend it.

CHINA SHOP (*Disney-United Artists*).

Silly Symphony cartoon. Another artistic achievement in which the figures in a China shop become animated.

EAST COAST PREVIEW COMMITTEE.

BEDSIDE (*Warner*) Dir: Robert Florey. Cast: Warren William, Jean Muir, Allen Jenkins, David Landau.

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An unscrupulous medical student, moral weakling, buys the diploma of a drug addict, a former physician, and with the help of a clever press agent establishes a reputation as a famous doctor. The story is an unpleasant and unconvincing one and some of the hospital scenes and incidents wholly unbelievable. Although well acted in parts it will probably irritate anyone seeking good entertainment.

THE BIG SHAKEDOWN (*Warner*) Dir: John Francis Dillon. Cast: Bette Davis, Charles Farrell.

A frank expose of the work of racketeers who turn to the drug business and the faking of cosmetics when driven away from their big profits in liquor. It is well acted and if more intelligently written and directed might have proven a timely interpretation of the much discussed revision of the Pure Food and Drug Bill. Its inconsistencies, its unsound ethics and its unconvincing melodrama offer poor entertainment for any intelligent audience.

CAROLINA (*Fox*) Dir: Henry King. Cast: Lionel Barrymore, Janet Gaynor, Robert Young, Henrietta Crosman.

Paul Green's stage play, "The House of Connelly," is the basis of this fine drama of life in the Carolinas before and following the Civil War. The story concerns an old, aristocratic, impoverished family living in the shadow of a past glory, resenting the present and fearing the future. A delightful romance between the son and a charming Northern tenant on the estate eventually brings happiness and prosperity. Splendid Negro characterizations and singing, notable direction and acting, beautiful costumes and photographic effects together with authentic settings and material are all combined in what is unquestionably one of the excellent pictures of the year.

CATHERINE THE GREAT (*United Artists*) Dir: Paul Czinner. Cast: Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., Elizabeth Bergner, Flora Robson, Gerald du Maurier.

An historical romance dealing with the prearranged marriage to the semi insane Grand Duke Peter, the subsequent unhappiness and the final accession to the Russian throne of the German Princess who became Catherine the Great. The gorgeous pageantry, the acting of exceptional quality and settings which are entirely in keeping with the spirit of Old Russia furnish excellent entertainment. Those familiar with the history of Catherine of Russia will commend the pictorial restraint of the interpretation given in the picture.

DARK HAZARD (*Warner*) Dir: Al Green. Cast: Edward G. Robinson, Genevieve Tobin, Glenda Farrell, Robert Barrat.

An interesting study of a gambler unable to overcome his weakness even when his marital happiness is at a stake. His interest in whippet racing brings him in contact with Dark Hazard, a dog for whom he develops a deep affection. A lack of sympathy and understanding on the part of his wife turn him finally from his home and he eventually finds success on the racing track with Dark Hazard and domestic happiness with his old sweetheart. The story, which moves slowly, is an unworthy vehicle for Robinson's strong, dramatic talents. Questionable ethics carry throughout.

DAWN TO DAWN (*Cameron MacPherson*) Dir: Josef Berne. Cast: Julie Hayden, Ole M. Ness, Frank Eklof.

A tense and powerful drama based on a father's obsession that causes him to bar all men from his farm and his daughter. A profound and imaginative study in the Chekov manner with all the action confined to one day. The picture is notable for its unusual detail technique.

EVER SINCE EVE (*Fox*) Dir: Malcolm St. Clair. Cast: George O'Brien, Mary Brian, Herbert Mundin.

An entertaining comedy of three old, woman-hating miners and the problem that arises when their foster son falls in love and marries a society girl he has met on a business trip east. Influenced to believe that he has been married for his money, the young husband is finally convinced by his wife that she really loves him. The clearing of the misunderstandings brings the picture to a hilarious conclusion.

FASHIONS OF 1934 (*Warner*) Dir: William Dieterle. Cast: William Powell, Bette Davis, Frank McHugh, Hugh Herbert.

The adventures of an unscrupulous promoter of nefarious money-making schemes form the story outline upon which an elaborate, spectacular and semi-musical extravaganza of costume designs, models and dance sequences is built. Story is logically developed and the acting, scenic and comedy effects are exceptionally good. Crooked business ethics carry throughout and the usual scantily dressed dancers are much in evidence. It will entertain those who enjoy this type of thing.

FIGHTING CODE (*Columbia*) Dir: Lambert Hillyer. Cast: Buck Jones, Diane Sinclair.

A rapid action story of the west at the turn of the century and of the successful efforts of the hero to clear the mystery of a man's death and to bring to an end villainous deeds of an unscrupulous lawyer. Although not clearly developed, the story is entertaining and the scenic effects are very enjoyable.

FRONTIER MARSHALL (*Fox*) Dir: Lew Seiler. Cast: George O'Brien, Irene Bentley, George B. Stone.

Interesting highlights of outlaw life in Tombstone, Arizona, in the nineteenth century are shown in a well told and intelligently acted western story that has a likable hero, a charming heroine, a crooked mayor and a saloon owner who is a frank copy of Mae West.

GIRLS IN UNIFORM (*John Krimsky and Gifford Cochran*),

An English-speaking version of the German masterpiece, "Maedchen in Uniform," made in response to a widespread demand. The film is the original one starring Dorothea Wieck ("Cradle Song") and "Miss Fane's Baby Is Stolen") and not a remade English version. The method used in recording the English dialogue is called "phonetage," perfected by Ernest Dille.

HELL ON EARTH (*Aolian Pictures Corp*) Dir: Victor Trivas. Cast: Vladimir Sokolof, Ernest Busch, Georges Declat, Hugh Douglas, Louis Douglas.

A drama of the war with the interesting precedent that the picture was taken in four countries and has fragments of dialogue in four languages. It has been

heralded from Europe as one of the most effective anti-war films ever made. Five men—a German a Russian Jew, a Frenchman, a Negro and an Englishman—average humans, caught in the maelstrom of war, meet in a shell hole in No Man's Land and, forgetting nationality, face unitedly their common enemy, war. The story is admirable in its simplicity, and the acting is fine with moments of high distinction. The drama, which omits the horrors of war, is one of futility or of hope, according to the individual interpretation given it. All commendation is given to a picture of this kind which aims to show the uselessness of war and the common need of all men to unite against it.

HI, NELLIE (*Warner*) Dir: Mervyn LeRoy. Cast: Paul Muni, Glenda Farrell, Ned Sparks.

A thrilling newspaper story in which the managing editor loses his post through his faith in the integrity of the president of a bank which has failed. The terms of his contract with the publisher keep him on the staff of the paper, but as the editor of the "Hearthrobs" column, and the picture title is the derisive greeting extended to him by the newspaper staff. Despite the ridicule, the demoted editor triumphs in the end, when through a lead furnished by one of the readers of the column he vindicates himself and proves that the banker who has been unjustly accused by the entire press of the city really met with foul play. Strongly dramatic, with acting of a high order and excellent entertainment value.

HIPS, HIPS, HOORAY (*RKO-Radio*) Dir: Mark Sandrich. Cast: Bert Wheeler, Robert Woolsey, Ruth Etting, Thelma Todd.

A light song and dance comedy with an unimportant plot that has to do with the selling and promotion of cosmetics for women. It carries the usual Wheeler and Woolsey songs, dances, vulgarities and scenes that are occasionally original and amusing but more often silly and suggestive. Poor entertainment for any discriminating audience.

HOLD THAT GIRL (*Fox*) Dir: Hamilton Mac Fadden. Cast: James Dunn, Claire Trevor.

A plausible and amusing story filled with interest and action outline the trials and tribulations of a girl reporter and her efforts to obtain last-minute news from the police court. Generally enjoyable light entertainment with the exception of a disappointing opening scene.

I AM SUZANNE (*Fox*) Dir: Roland V. Lee. Cast: Lilian Harvey, Gene Raymond, Leslie Banks.

A wholly charming and whimsical romance between a puppet show operator and a dancer, in which fantasy and realism are combined in a clever and original manner. The performance of the Podrecca Piccoli marionettes offers delightful entertainment as does the ballet dancing of Miss Harvey. Excellent photography, lavish sets and skilful direction.

THE LUCKY TEXAN (*Monogram*) Dir: R. N. Brodbery. Cast: John Wayne, Barbara Sheldon, George Hayes.

A better than ordinary western story of a ranch owner of gold discovery and the complications that result from wrongfully accusing a man of a crime. A mild romance fast action, some mystery, clever comedy scenes and good acting are all to be found in a commendable picture that is pleasantly different from the usual run of westerns.

MASSACRE (*Warner*) Dir: Alan Crosland. Cast: Richard Barthelme, Ann Dvorak, Claire Dodd, Dewitt Jennings.

A novel by Robert Gessner is the source material for a thoughtful and well worthwhile picturization of the injustice of the white man toward the Indians on a Sioux reservation. An educated Indian who has lived among whites uncovers the abuses of an Indian agent, uses himself as a test case and wins justice for his people with the help of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Although melodramatic in part, the picture is an effective presentation of a tragedy of the American Indian today and a plea for better treatment for him. A vivid and sincere portrayal of a young Sioux is given by Mr. Barthelme who is admirably supported by a fine cast.

NANA (*United Artists*) Dir: Dorothy Arzner. Cast: Anna Sten, Lionel Atwill, Richard Bennett, Phillips Holmes.

A screen translation of Emile Zola's sad and sordid story of the ambition of a young and beautiful peasant girl to acquire wealth, and her sacrifice of everything worthwhile for the luxury and prestige that a life of easy virtue brings.

The artistic setting is the period of the Franco-German War, and an excellent cast gives it and the consistently developed situations a vivid and fresh interpretation. The direction is noteworthy but the story theme is so essentially commonplace and sordid that as entertainment it cannot be called anything but unwholesome.

ONE TO EVERY WOMAN (*Columbia*) Dir: Lambert Hillyer. Cast: Ralph Bellamy, Fay Wray, Walter Connolly, Walter Byron.

Against the background of the operating rooms and wards of a woman's hospital is built a drama of human needs and suffering lightened by the romance of the supervisor and a young surgeon, and some enjoyable comedy. The story treatment is natural and believable and the interpretation by a good cast is restrained and intelligent.

ORIENT EXPRESS (*Fox*) Dir: Paul Martin. Cast: Heather Angel, Ralph Morgan, Norman Foster, Herbert Mundin, Una O'Connor.

Two days on the express between Ostend and Constantinople change the lives of a young dancer, a wealthy manufacturer and a Balkan doctor, keenly alive to the social needs of his countrymen. The charm and interest of the Continental atmosphere are clearly pictured, the native wedding scenes add an artistic touch, the situations are tense and both photography and acting are fine. Unnecessary drinking used for comedy effect is an offensive touch in an otherwise entertaining picture.

PALOOKA (*United Artists*) Dir: Benjamin Stollhoff. Cast: Jimmie Durante, Lupe Velez, Stuart Erwin, Majorie Rambeau, Robert Armstrong.

A gullible country boy, son of a former prizefighter, falls into the hands of a clever promoter and, against his mother's wish, enters the fight game and becomes a champion. The Ham Fisher comic strip character is the basis for a story so poorly constructed, so replete with suggestive situations and so coarse in its general atmosphere that even the excellent cast fails to lift it to the point of good entertainment.

PIRATE TREASURE (*Universal*) Dir: Ray Taylor. Cast: Richard Talmadge, Lucille Lunt, Walter Miller, Pat O'Malley, William Desmond.

A serial in twelve chapters.

The attempt to steal a map that identifies the location of hidden treasure and the hunt for the gold on one of the old islands of the Spanish main is the background of an amateurishly acted serial story. There is action and excitement enough to satisfy followers of the serials.

SIXTEEN FATHOMS DEEP (*Monogram*) Dir: Armand Schaefer. Cast: Sally O'Neil, Creighton Chaney, George Regas, Maurice Black.

A moderately entertaining melodrama of the spongefishing industry in tropical waters, a treacherous moneylender, and a likeable athletic hero in love with a girl of the fishing village. The photographs of outdoor and underwater scenes of multicolored tropical fish and of sponge divers at work are of special interest.

SORREL AND SON (*United Artists, British Dominion*) Dir: Jack Raymond. Cast: H. B. Warner, Margot Grahame, Peter Penrose, Hugh Williams, Ruby Miller.

Warwick Deepings, impressive and widely known story of the sacrificial love of a father for his son and the latter's response to it has been given an exceptionally fine screen treatment. It is excellently directed, with a profound understanding of deep spiritual values and of post-war psychology, and the acting by an English cast, with H. B. Warner in the lead, is of a high order, simple, natural and beautifully restrained. The English country scenes are exceptionally lovely and the interior photographic light and shadow effects exquisite. This is screen entertainment par excellence.

SWEDEN LAND OF THE VIKINGS (*John W. Boyle*) An excellent feature length travel picture photographed entirely in Cinecolor by John W.

Boyle, a former president of the American Society of Cinematographers. The charm of Sweden has been caught and the audience not merely sees but seems to be living in that interesting country with its lovely scenery. The comments of the narrator do not always measure up to the excellence of the picture.

WHEELS OF DESTINY (*Universal*) Dir: Alan James. Cast: Ken Maynard, Dorothy Dix, Philo McCullough, Frank Rice.

A collection of old style western and cowboy scenes that include an Indian attack, a buffalo stampede, villainous deeds, a covered wagon trek west for gold, a prairie fire and a torrential rain storm are strung together in an artificially constructed story that is amateurishly acted. Lovely outdoor photography and the interest provided by a beautiful horse and a clever goose furnish the real entertainment.

THE WOMEN IN HIS LIFE (*M-G-M*) Dir: George B. Seitz. Cast: Otto Kruger, Ben Lyon, Una Merkel, Isabel Jewell.

A lurid, tiresome and artificial story of a criminal lawyer whose life is wrecked by his wife's unfaithfulness. His dissipation and laxity result in a client being unjustly sentenced to death, and disbarment follows. The persistent efforts of a junior partner at the last moment from the chair. In spite of skillful characterizations and commendable direction the commonplace melodramatic material, filled with continual and offensive drinking and suggestive dialogue, is altogether unworthy of the excellent cast.

SHORT SUBJECTS

AIR MANIACS (*Educational*).

Frank Clark performs many hair-raising stunts in his plane.

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BYWAYS IN BANGKOK (Fox).

The temples, markets, amusements and canals of this "Venice of the Far East."

CANYON OF ROMANCE (Educational).

A Romantic Journey with Claude Flemming. The deserts and canyons of the west are shown in a series of lovely color pictures.

THE CLOWN DIES (Columbia).

A Minute Mystery. Jealousy lurks in every heart and comes to the surface in many unexpected ways.

FLEMISH FOLK (Fox).

Exquisite scenes of Belgium, showing the industries, cathedrals and folk dancing.

THE INVENTORS (Educational).

Those who admire the radio team of Stoopnagle and Bud will enjoy this.

KEEPS RAININ' ALL THE TIME (Paramount).

A Max Fleischer cartoon featuring Gertrude Niesen.

SENTINELS OF THE SEA (Fox).

Interesting and educational views of lighthouses, light-ships and buoys.

STRANGE CASE OF HENNESSY (RKO-Radio).

A take-off on Philo Vance in an amusing comedy.

STRATOS-FEAR (M-G-M).

While Whopper has fantastic dreams while in the dentist's chair.

TUNISIAN TRAVELS (Fox).

A Magic Carpet travelogue through Tunisia.

WHERE'S THAT TIGER? (Paramount).

Borrah Minnevitich and his harmonica players—a cranky man and a tiger.

AIR FRIGHT (M-G-M).

Featuring Thelma Todd and Patsy Kelly. The attempt of an inventor to demonstrate a new airplane device is complicated by an untrained and slow-thinking air hostess.

AUTOGRAPH HUNTER (Columbia).

A Krazy Kat Kartoon. Krazy goes to the Brown Derby in Hollywood and secures autographs of some of the best known film star.

BUBBLING OVER (RKO-Radio).

Featuring Ethel Waters. Enjoyable singing and dancing.

CARRIE JACOBS BOND (Master Art).

Glimpses of the well known woman composer and some of the most familiar of her vocal and instrumental music.

THE CHINA SHOP (United Artists).

A Silly Symphony. A fanciful tale in color of China shop that comes to life at night.

COLORFUL PORTS OF CALL (M-G-M).

A Fitzpatrick Travel Talk. A brief history and some facts of interest on three far ports of call—Mombasa, Seychelles and Zanzibar. Mr. Fitzpatrick includes some fine comments on the moulding of ivory history and on the old crime of slavery.

DOUBLE-CROSSING THE RATTLER (Tom White).

The method of locating and catching rattlesnakes and extracting their venom is pictured.

FINE FEATHERS (M-G-M).

Effective technicolor photography of gorgeous bird plumage in various countries of the world.

GIANT LAND (United Artists).

An amusing cartoon of Mickey Mouse in the land of the beanstalk and the giant.

HOLLAND DAYS (Educational).

A Paul Terry-Toon outlines an animated process of cheese making.

HOLLYWOOD ON PARADE (Paramount).

A bird's-eye view of movie celebrities presented in fairly constructive fashion.

HORSE POWER (Paramount).

A Grantland Rice-Sportlight. Horse power, horse speed and horsemanship all play an important and constructive part in the sport of the present day.

ITALY, THE OLD AND THE NEW (Vitaphone).

A Musical World Journey with E. M. Newman to Italy where modern civilization is contrasted with the old.

LET'S ALL SING LIKE THE BIRDIES SING (Paramount).

An amusing cartoon of three kittens who are properly punished for attempting to catch song birds.

MICKEY'S MINSTRELS (Columbia).

Mickey McGuire and his gang stage a show in an attempt to raise some money.

THE MISSISSIPPI (Educational).

A Tone Journey. The changing moods of the famous river are interpreted in picture and by the music of the composer, Ferdinand Grofe.

MOORISH SPAIN (RKO-Radio).

A journey through the land of wine showing some of its lovely spots, one of which is the Moorish Court of Lions at the Alhambra.

PARAMOUNT PICTORIAL No. 7 (Paramount).

A variety of interesting subjects provide excellent entertainment.

- (a) Queer Fish—Strange and peculiar denizens of the deep.
- (b) Liquid Air—Professor Kenny demonstrates the unique properties of air that flows.
- (c) Lanny Ross sings delightfully.

PARDON MY PUPS (Educational).

One of the Frolics of Youth series. A small child overcomes her fear of dogs.

THE RASSLIN' MATCH (RKO-Radio).

An Amos 'n' Andy cartoon-voice combination in which the voices of the comedians are synchronized with a cartoon of one of their radio episodes.

SCREEN SNAPSHOTS (Columbia).

More intimate views of the Hollywood stars at work and at play.

THE SEVENTH WONDER (First Division).

Port o' Call Series. A brief preliminary history of the Panama Canal is offered, together with views of its massive locks in operation.

SINISTERS STUFF (RKO-Radio).

An animated cartoon of fair interest depicting the adventures of Cubby the Bear.

SOCK-A-BYE BABY (Paramount).

Popeye, the Sailor, attempts to quiet the world around him in order that his adopted baby may sleep.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS No. 34 (Universal).

One of the John Hix novelty series showing the Australian Koala bears, a hand axe wood carver, electric eels, cultivation of pearls in Japan, etc.

THE SUPER SNOOPER (Educational).

An amusing comedy in which Andy Clyde solves a jewel robbery.

THE THREE BEARS (Educational).

A Paul Terry-Toon cartoon. A delightful animated cartoon of the three bears and Goldy Locks.

WILD ELEPHINKS (Paramount).

Popeye, the Sailor, made strong by his can of spinach, overcomes the largest animals of the jungle.

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ASK FOR FURTHER DETAILS TO

FAMOUS PICTURES

Bombay, Delhi and Bangalore

Trade & Technical

NEWS AND NOTES

DUTY ON RAW FILMS:

On the 14th of February, 1934, Mr. B. V. Jadhav, M.A., LL.B., M.L.A. got an opportunity of placing before the Assembly the various handicaps under which the Industry was labouring all these years. He had to move a resolution which if passed would have certainly given a very strong impetus to the Indian Film Industry. It ran thus:—

“This Assembly recommends to the Governor General-in-Council that the present duty on raw (unexposed) films should be abolished for a period of fifteen years in order that the indigenous film industry may derive substantial benefit and encouragement.”

The objects of so doing were quite obvious since nothing, practically, had so far been done by the Central Legislature by way of direct help to the important Film Industry of the country. Moving his resolution Mr. Jadhav traced the relations of the Assembly with the Film Industry in the country to show how it was for a long time neglected. He drew the attention of the House to the importance of the industry and appreciated the attitude of the Government since a little change for the better had been seen in it. Welcoming the move of the Government in distinguishing topical films from the feature ones he said that the increased valuation per foot of the two classes as newly introduced by Government was certainly a desirable step. But he could not accept that such enhanced valuation afforded any relief direct or indirect to the Indian Film Industry as such, although it was quite plain that it brought in additional revenue. His contention was that raw films, being the raw material of an important industry, should be imported duty-free. And he took his cue from the obvious principle as laid down by the Indian Fiscal Commission, that the raw material of any Indian Industry should be imported into India duty-free.

In supporting his view Mr. Jadhav next referred to the excessive cost of production of the films of the Talkies, and quoting figures proved that the return on capital invested could not at all keep pace with cost incurred.

Talkie films were being produced on a comparatively larger scale while the number of houses wired for exhibiting talkies had not increased in that proportion and hence the return on the investment had its limitation. The speaker's suggestion to remove this difficulty was to remove a heavy import duty on talkie machinery which was rather costly. The suggestion was not at all complicated since the machinery for the film industry was not at all used in any other line of business.

The speaker also pointed out many instances in Europe where the Governments of the respective countries had taken special measures not only to protect but also to foster the film industry of their own. Why such similar help, asked Mr. Jadhav, could not be given by the Government of India. What he was trying to obtain by getting the resolution passed was not a direct help for which the Government will have to spend at this moment. It was only removing one of the greatest handicaps. He concluded by saying that apparently it was a sort of loss of import duty to the Government of India. But he knew that the loss there could quite amply be made up by an additional revenue somewhere.

To the following questions by Mr. B. V. Jadhav at the Legislative Assembly on the 16th February,—

(a) Will Government be pleased to state what the revenue is from import duty on raw Cinema Films during 1931-32 and 1932-33 and the estimated revenue in 1933-34?

(b) What additional revenue per year do Government estimate in consequence of:—

(i) the change in the rates in the revised valuation per foot of exposed films imported into India.

(ii) the change in policy about rebate on imported articles when exported out of India as shown in the Bill to amend the Sea Customs Act of 1878 now before the House, and

(iii) the amount estimated from the saving in rebate on the export of exposed films previously imported into India by the policy referred to in (ii)?

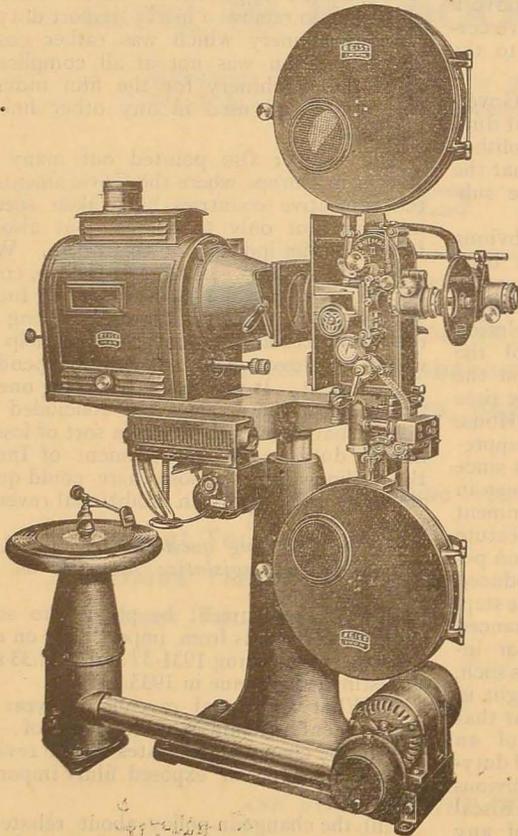
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Experiments costs a lot of time & money—sometimes useful lives. Believe others who have experimented for you at immense cost to themselves—buy faultless, durable machinery that will cause you *no* worry or expense in the future.

The Shah Jehan Talkies Syndicate, Chalapuram Post, Calicut, write under date 17th February 1934:—
“We are perfectly satisfied as regards the reproduction on ZEISS IKON.

Mr. T. B. Russel, our Collector formally opened our New Talkies on the 12th. There was a very big gathering present on the occasion and the function was a grand success.”

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(c) Will the Honourable the Industries Member state whether Government still adhere to the policy enunciated by him in the House on March 1st, 1933, when he said "we are prepared to reduce the import duties pro tanto to anything we get from the reduction or abolition of the rebate on exposed films"?

The Honourable Sir Franc Noyce answered as follows:

(a) 1931-32 ... Rs. 2,34,000
 1932-33 ... " 2,72,000
 1933-34 (estimated) ... Rs. 5,00,000.

(b) (i), (ii) and (iii). I regret I am unable to give the Hon'ble Member any figures that would be at all reliable. The effect of tariff valuations must naturally vary from year to year and as I pointed out in my speech on the subject the day before yesterday, the amount that may be secured by the modification of the law relating to drawback is at present hypothetical and can only be deduced from experience.

(c) Yes.

Statement showing the amount of fees paid to members of the Bombay Board of Film Censors.

YEAR	Rs.	A.	P.
1920 (August to December) ...	1,312	0	0
1921	1,624	0	0
1922	1,920	0	0
1923	1,794	0	0
1924	2,276	0	0
1925	2,889	14	0
1926	2,660	0	0
1927	3,782	0	0
1928	3,694	0	0
1929	3,108	0	0
1930	2,982	0	0
1931	4,118	0	0
1932	3,224	0	0

Statement showing the income of the Bombay Board of Film Censors from fees for censoring films & its expenditure.

YEAR.	Income from fees for censoring films.		Expenditure	
	Rs.	A. P.	Rs.	A. P.
1920 (August to December)	13,245	0 0	9,685	2 0
1921	15,034	0 0	28,043	14 11
1922	12,062	0 0	27,211	2 1
1923	13,962	0 0	23,892	11 7
1924	14,532	0 0	14,782	9 7
1925 (August to December)	13,681	0 0	16,230	11 4
1926	19,105	0 0	15,330	14 11
1927	20,221	0 0	17,117	15 11
1928	24,082	0 0	19,502	12 4
1929	27,753	0 0	20,498	14 9
1930	30,203	0 0	20,304	0 0
1931	27,992	0 0	22,354	14 9
1932	19,730	0 0	23,274	6 6
TOTAL ...	2,51,602	0 0	2,58,870	2 8

Mr. Mayashanker M. Bhatt, President, Motion Picture Society of India, has sent the following telegram, to the Finance Dept., Government of India, New Delhi:—

"Motion Picture Society India greatly disappointed with Budget proposals stop Society protests against omission expected relief for film industry stop promises of sympathetic considerations were given by Commerce Industries Members thrice to Society's deputations as also in several Assembly debates".

FLOURISHING HIGH SCHOOL PHOTOPLAY CLUB

"One Hundred Movie Critics" is the title of an illustrated article in a recent issue of the Junior Red Cross Journal, dealing with the flourishing Photoplay Club of Central High School, Newark, New Jersey. This club of one hundred amateur movie makers and alert students of professional movie productions has been so successful that inquiries come to it from all over the country asking how to form such an organization.



Mr. V. G. Motwane, of the Eastern Electric and Engineering Co., Bombay, who has just returned after a year's tour round the World during which time he has studied methods of talking film production in different countries in order to be able to give advice to film producers in India, so that where possible the quality of production may be improved. Mr. Motwane has visited Italy, Germany, France, Belgium, England, the United States, Japan, China, the Straits Settlements and Ceylon. He has made a study of reproducing talking films in the average theatre and took special training at the Zeiss factory at Dresden.

The club was founded about five years ago as a result of student demand. Local newsreels and original photoplays are made, edited, titled, and projected as featured activities. Serious and intensive study of current theatrical movies has resulted in an understanding of motion picture technique that has been translated into outstanding results in the club's own productions.

The students use Bell and Howell amateur movie making equipment.

"For the first year or so, the club had to depend upon individually owned equipment to do their photoplay work. While the students were learning a good deal, the club felt hampered and decided to put on a show in the high school auditorium, earn the money, and buy their own equipment. The show was made up of newsreel shots of events in and around Central High and included a picture entitled 'A Page of Bronze in the Book of Newark'. Central students were featured in the film. Ten cents admission was charged. The school has a large enrollment and the show was a big success. From the proceeds the first equipment was bought."

ULTRA MODERN EQUIPMENT FOR EASTERN PRODUCERS

New, ultra-modern equipment and a specialized study of effects are among the innovations Audio Productions, Inc., is introducing into Eastern motion picture production and which have already been used, in connection with its services to producers, for Krimsky-Cochran's "Emperor Jones", Sobel shorts, Fox Films and Educational Productions.

Outstanding in the improved facilities that the company has made available for production work is George Lane's new design for an optical printer. Used in conjunction with the improved properties of the new Eastman fine grain emulsion film this optical printer introduces advantages for camera work never before available. Its most distinct merits are the ability to combine a number of prints into a single negative and the mechanism for simplifying zooms by moving up on a shot with the speed of which the average camera has been incapable because of wobbling and distortion.

Audio Productions has assembled what is believed to be the largest assortment of wipes in the industry, namely 117, all of which are available in any footage.

WIDE RANGE IN FAR EAST

Colonel W. E. Dennis of the technical staff of Western Electric, who was for some time

in charge of Western Electric's branch in India, and had been there to install, the first Wide Range system in India at the New Empire, Calcutta, has returned.

Wide Range has been installed at the Pathe Theatre, Bombay, and Plaza, Lucknow also.

MOVIE TRIP TO THE MOON

Ru Roy Sibley, well-known astronomer and geologist, announces the preparation of a popular film on astronomy, to be known as "Looking Through Great Telescopes", which is also the title of a book by Mr. Sibley soon to be published.

This film will give the audience the equivalent of the actual experience of looking through the great telescopes of the world. Features of the film, all of which is being made with Bell & Howell equipment, will be a really remarkable series of stellar systems, studies of the Milky Way galaxy, the sun and planets of the solar system, including the great white spot of 1933 on Saturn. There will also be an imaginary trip to the moon and close-up views of many lunar mountain forms and topographic features. A presentation of the latest theories of stellar formation based on the structure of the atom and the flow of energies in the universe will be particularly interesting and instructive.

This film will be released in both silent and sound versions, and will be available in 16 mm. and 35 mm. widths.

PHOTOGRAPHY SAVES DELAY AND EXPENSE

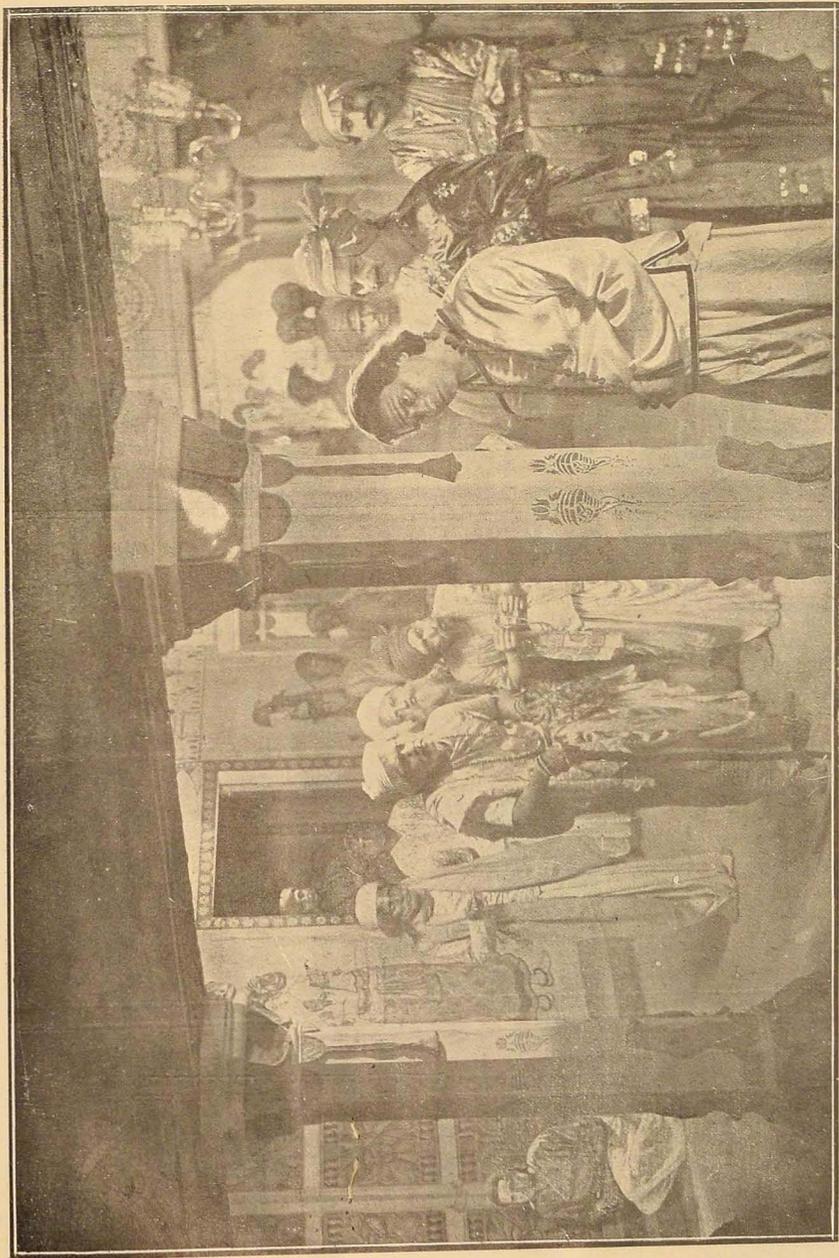
Photography will play a big part in a new system for the issue of copies of probates and letters of administration, which was introduced on Jan. 1st in the Principal Probate Registry.

In a leaflet issued from the Lord Chancellor's office it is stated that the new process will greatly expedite the winding up of an estate.

When probate is granted at the Principal Registry, executors can now obtain sealed copies of the probate for a fee of one shilling each. These copies are made by the well-known Photostat process.

By the new system, an executor will be able to deal with the assets of an estate within a few days of the grant of probate;

The accuracy with which legal and other documents can be cheaply reproduced by the Photostat process has also led to its adoption by the British Government for use at Somerset House and at the Patent Office. Copies



A scene from Hindi "CHANDIDAS".

of patent specifications and of birth, marriage, and death certificates required by the public are all now made by the Photostat process, which has proved perfectly satisfactory in use.

ATTEND WIDE RANGE DEMONSTRATION

A Demonstration of Wide Range, Western Electric's latest reproducing improvement, was held at the Western Electric theatre, Bush House on Friday last, (January 12th.), at which the Governors of the British Film Institute were present. The audience also included members of various Government departments, including the Board of Education and the Ministry of Agriculture, and heads of other Educational bodies.

62.2% FOR W. E.

According to T. P. Drew, Sales Manager of Western Electric, contracts were signed during 1933 for new cinemas representing a seating capacity of approximately 110,819. Out of this amount, Western Electric's wiring contracts represented 73,306 seats, or 66.2% of the sum total.

An interesting fact to note is that the figure of 110,819 seats represents 83 new cinemas and theatres which contracted for sound equipment installation in 1933, out of which Western Electric obtained 51 contracts.

RUSSIA AS IT IS

Julien Bryan's popular motion picture lecture made with a Bell & Howell Eyemo camera is drawing big crowds in many American cities this season.

Mr. Bryan's pictures are interesting both from the standpoint of subject matter and photography, some of his interiors being exceptional in detail and clarity.

Last season Mr. Bryan appeared in a lecture with Burton Holmes entitled "Russia Then and Now." Mr. Holmes used pictures which he had taken a quarter of a century ago showing Russia under the old regime, and Mr. Bryan showed pictures taken recently.

Martin Johnson, noted African explorer, recently purchased a 48-speed Bell & Howell Eyemo camera for making animal movies from airplanes. This brings his Eyemo battery up to seven machines.

Among his other Eyemos, Mr. Johnson has one with motor and 400 foot magazine, which is also used in airplane work: two with special triggers for photographing wild animals automatically; and three more as accessories to his battery of Bell & Howell standard cameras.

The special trigger Eyemos were first used for Mr. Johnson's gorilla shots in the film "Congorilla". The arrangement is such that an animal passing before the camera strikes at a string which releases the trigger and starts the film in motion. At the same time a flare is ignited electrically. This permits pictures to be taken automatically at night or in the deepest jungles. Sometimes the camera is set up and left for a week or so before getting the desired pictures, but eventually something worth while is sure to be "shot."

SELL WITH TALKING PICTURES

How to sell commodities and services by the use of talking motion pictures is discussed in an illustrated folder just issued by the Bell & Howell Company. This company has developed a really portable 16 mm. sound-on-film projecting outfit, the Filmosound. The new folder lists a number of representative commercial companies which have used Filmosounds in making sales in widely diversified fields, and indicates the methods of procedure. This is highly valuable information for any sales manager who is interested in new sales ideas.

FOOTBALL MOVIES

The use of motion pictures in connection with football was discussed for almost a full afternoon session at a recent meeting of College and University football coaches in Chicago, according to F. G. Roberts of the Bell & Howell Company, Educational Department, who was present.



A medal presented by the Amateur Cinema League of England to

Alexandra Korda for his production of Henry VIII.



Head Coach Bennie Bierman of the University of Minnesota reported that at Minnesota they have taken 16 mm. movies of all games for years. Approximately 1000 feet of film are taken at each game, and then on the Tuesday following the game the pictures are shown to the players to bring out faulty playing technique or to call attention to good work.

CINEMATOGRAPHIC ART IN VENICE

The preparatory work of the Second International Exhibition of Cinematographic Art in Venice is being actively pursued with the support of all the Nations' producers of films which have officially notified their wish to participate in this Exhibition in August next.

This Exhibition which is organised under the auspices of the "Biennale", due to the fame of the celebrated city in which it will take place and to the authority of the I. C. E. in Rome, has aroused great interest in the Press of all countries.

The Italian Government has given two cups to be awarded one to the best Italian and one to the best foreign film, and set aside for distribution a gold medal of the Italian Confederation of Industries, a gold medal of the Ministry of National Education, a gold medal of the Confederation of Theatre Exhibitors, one cup given by the Confederation of Professional Men and Artists and a cup of the City of Venice.

The Secretary of the Exhibition has already in hand the titles of the films which will be presented in Venice. We can mention, so far, some of the countries which have promised their participation:—

Austria will present a film by the "Sacha" of Vienna.

The United States will participate as follows: "United Artists" will send "The life of Venvenuto Cellini" or else a big film on the life of Rothschild. "Paramount" will send "Death on Holiday" by the new director Michell Liesen. "Fox" will choose between "Lilion" directed by Pommer and "The World Goes On". "Warner Bros" will send either "Napoleon" directed by Borzage produced with Ludwig's collaboration, or "Wonderbar". "Metro Goldwyn" has not yet chosen the film which will represent them at Venice. "R. K. O.", "Universal", "Columbia Pictures" have also promised their participation but have not yet sent in the title of their films.

Czecho-Slovakia will send in a film by Karel Cliko and a production of the "Elekat Film" of Prague, directed by Machaty.

France will send together with some films, produced by big studios, also some made by independent producers; the latter films will present a particular interest of their own, because of a vanguard character.

Germany's contribution will be very interesting and will include also independent productions by Kaskelin, Basse and Fischinger.

The presence of Japan at the "Biennale" will be of great interest since it is the first time that the motion picture industry of that country will be represented in Europe.

British India is also expected to bring to Venice a contribution which will be of great interest and value.

Italy will compete with her best production, Forzano, Blasetti, Margadonna, Pasinetti, will probably all be represented. What is certain for the present, is that the Institute L.U.C.E. will present a film illustrating some of the features of the Fascist Regime, and will also send another important film.

England will be worthily represented by several important films such as "Don Juan"

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produced by "London Films", with Douglas Fairbanks.

Holland, besides a film directed by Joris Ivens, will also send its first big film "Dead Waters" of the "Rutten Film Soc." of the Hague.

Poland has notified her intention of sending two of her best films.

Russia which obtained such a big success with the film "Towards life" by Ekk, two years ago, will send 2 or 3 new films.

Spain will send the 2 best films of spanish production "Se hafugado un preso" by Perojo and "La Hermana San Sulpicio" by Palacio Valdes.

Switzerland has also expressed its intention of sending one historical film.

Hungary has announced the presentation of one film recently produced which will illustrate the high artistic and technical value of modern cinematography.

The Committee is now negotiating about Argentinan, Portuguese, Turkish, and Norwegian participation.

As it has already been said, a series of animated cartoons, which have been especially produced in view of the Exhibition by creators such as Disney and Fleischer, will be screened in Venice. It is possible that for

this occasion some animated cartoons which are being produced by one big cinema concern in Milan, will also be presented in Venice.

The importance of the Venician Manifestation is fully realised not only by the great picture producers' organisations of the world but also by the Directors and artists most of whom have expressed their wish to come to Venice for the occasion and have in the meantime sent their autographed pictures with appreciative words to the organising Committee of the Exhibition.

The I. C. E. is preparing a special number of its "International Review" which will be published on the occasion of the Exhibition, and will contain writings by eminent international authorities as well as a great number of photos of directors, producers, artists, besides some stills of the films to be shown in Venice.

The Exhibition will be a unique occasion for artists, producers, distributors, and technicians to meet, and will therefore afford opportunities for an exchange of views without precedent.

The colourful posters on the Venice Exhibition have been recently distributed to the various countries.

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Recording Sound for Motion Pictures.

CHAPTER 3.

By Charles Felstead,
Contributing Editor.

The third of the series of exclusive articles from the pen of the noted authority on sound recording which Sound & Shadow is publishing for the benefit of Sound recordist in this country. The first two articles appeared in the months of January and February.



Now that the two earlier chapters of this series have served to outline the general subject of sound recording and the construction of sound stages and sets, this chapter will begin the discussion of the actual sound recording equipment by describing that first unit of the recording system—the microphone.

There are four types of microphones, or “transmitters” that are generally used for sound recording and similar work: the double-button carbon microphone, the dynamic or “moving-coil” microphone, the velocity or “ribbon” microphone, and the condenser microphone. This latter type of microphone is the one most widely employed for sound recording, due to certain inherent qualities that make it superior in many respects to the other forms of sound pick-up devices.

THE CONDENSER MICROPHONE.

The condenser transmitter is constructed like a miniature fixed condenser with two metal plates that are insulated from one another and separated by a space of from one to two-thousandths of an inch (one to two mils). These plates are cut from a metal known as duralumin. One plate, which is so thin that it vibrates readily when acted upon by a sound wave, is exposed on one side to the air through an opening in the drum-like housing of the condenser transmitter. This flexible plate forms the *diaphragm* of the transmitter,

and is protected from damage by a heavy brass-wire screen.

A threaded ring provides a means for stretching the thin plate, just as the membrane of a drum is stretched. The tension on the metal plate is increased until its resonant frequency is well above the audio frequency range handled in sound recording. This high resonant frequency, usually above 9000 cycles per second, avoids any possibility that certain recorded sounds will be accentuated and distorted due to resonance with the natural period of the diaphragm.

THE BLACK PLATE.

The other metal plate, which is known as the back plate is quite thick and heavy, but perforated with many small holes. The surface of this back plate that faces the other plate is carefully machined to be absolutely plane; then grooves, or channels, which cross each other at right angles, are cut in the smooth surface. The holes are located at the points where the channels intersect. The grooves are provided to broaden the resonant peak of the diaphragm, thus further lessening the possibility of particular emphasis of certain sounds.

Some condenser transmitters have the space between the plates filled with an inert gas, usually nitrogen; others have in this space, ordinary air that is admitted freely through the openings in the back plate. Gas

is superior to air because it prevents oxidation of the sealing compound and corrosion of the metal surfaces within the transmitter; but it makes necessary a rather complicated pressure compensating arrangement consisting of two gas chambers back of the thick plate. The holes in the back plate permit the flow of gas to the pressure compensating chambers when a sound wave drives the diaphragm backward, and the return of the gas when the diaphragm moves forward.

FUNCTIONING OF THE CONDENSER TRANSMITTER.

The back plate is thick and stationary but the thin diaphragm is free to move under the influence of the smallest change in the atmospheric pressure on it. A sound wave consists of alternate compressions and rarefactions of the air, which travel outward from the sound source in all directions, taking the form under ideal conditions of a perfect sphere that grows steadily larger in radius as the sound wave travels through space. When a sound wave impinges on the diaphragm of a microphone, the alternate rarefactions and compressions cause the diaphragm to vibrate at a frequency corresponding to the frequency of the sound wave. The amplitude of the diaphragm movement depends on the intensity of the sound: the louder the sound, the greater the excursion of the diaphragm.

The vibratory movement of the diaphragm varies the spacing of the two plates, so varying the capacity of the condenser in direct proportions to the movement. The diaphragm and the metal frame of the transmitter are grounded; but the back plate is insulated from the frame and is connected to the positive terminal of a high-voltage battery through a very high resistance, R , as shown in Figure 1. This resistance is in the order of ten to fifty million ohms. The charging

current drawn by the condenser transmitter varies with the variation in the capacity of the condenser, thus producing a continuously changing IR drop through the series resistance, R . The frequency, amplitude, and waveform of this varying voltage drop across the resistance is a faithful copy of the sound wave causing it.

THE VACUUM-TUBE AMPLIFIER

Since the actual capacity change in the condenser transmitter is extremely small, the variation in the charging current is likewise minute; so the change in voltage drop across the resistance is too feeble to be of any use until it has been increased to a more practicable value. In order to do that, it is applied to the grid circuit of a vacuum tube through the coupling condenser C . The grid leak, R_g , permits a fixed negative potential to be applied to the grid. The changing voltage drop across the resistor R is fed through the coupling condenser to the grid circuit of the tube, producing there a changing voltage drop across the grid leak, R_g .

The vacuum tube amplifies the minute voltage changes in its grid circuit and sends them through the transformer T along a microphone cable to the monitoring apparatus. The output impedance of the transformer is adjustable to 50 or 200 ohms to match the impedance of the transmission line. Where greater amplification is required, a second amplifier tube is connected between the plate circuit of this first tube and the transformer. Due to this difference in amplifiers, condenser microphones are classified as one-stage and two-stage microphones, diagrams of which are shown in Figures 1 and 2. Thus, besides amplifying the tiny voltage variations to a value that may be transmitted without interference from cross-talk along a cable, the vacuum tube serves to match the extremely high electrical impedance of the condenser

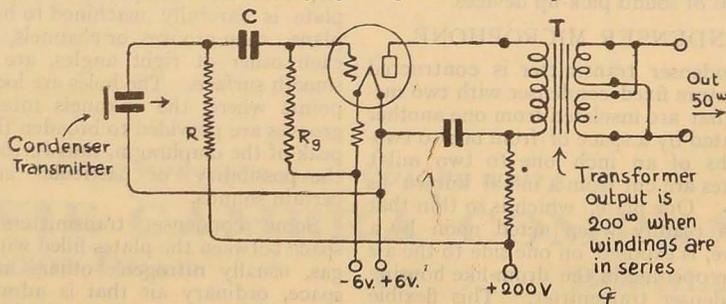


Fig. 1. Single Stage condenser microphone.

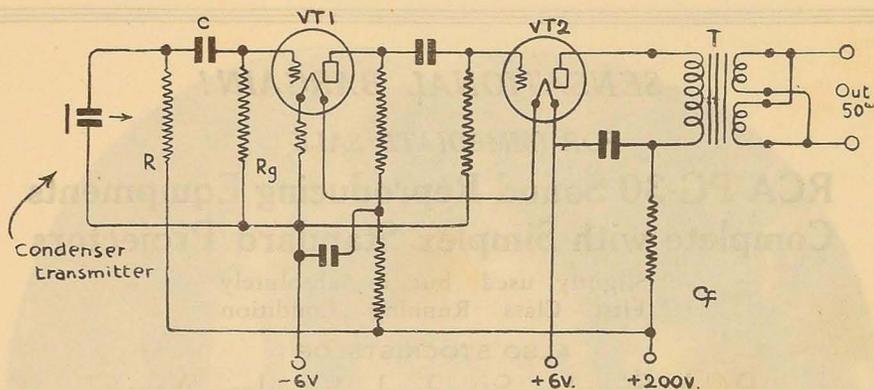


Fig. 2. Two-Stage Condenser microphone.

transmitter to a low-impedance transmission line.

Because of this high electrical impedance, the condenser transmitter must be mounted close enough to the first amplifier tube to keep the connecting lead under about four inches long. As a result, the condenser microphone (the combined transmitter and amplifier) is quite bulky and heavy—not at all easy to handle on the end of a long microphone boom. Another disadvantage of the condenser microphone is that it is extremely susceptible to moisture, particularly if the transmitter is not filled with gas. Dampness within the condenser will cause the microphone to crackle and sputter.

THE CARBON MICROPHONE

The double-button carbon microphone is occasionally used for recording, particularly in locations where the humidity is high; but the quality of its output is not very satisfactory, and an annoying carbon hiss is always present. Briefly, it comprises a solid ring supporting a thin diaphragm of duralumin metal, on each side of the center of which are mounted small chambers filled with polished carbon granules. The movement of the diaphragm to one side or the other compresses or lessens the pressure on the granules, causing a corresponding change in the resistance of the chambers. A steady electric current flowing through the carbon-granule chambers is varied by this variation in their resistance. After passing through a microphone transformer, this current variation is suitably amplified by vacuum tubes.

THE DYNAMIC MICROPHONE

The dynamic or "moving coil" transmitter is little used outside of the United States

as yet; so it will not be described here in detail. It, likewise, has a duralumin diaphragm, on which is mounted a tiny coil of a few turns of very lightweight wire. Another and much larger winding of wire on an iron core is connected to a battery, forming an electromagnet. The tiny winding on the diaphragm is supported so that it is in the magnetic field of the electromagnet; and an impedance-matching transformer connects it to the grid circuit of the first tube in the transmitter amplifier.

The movement of the diaphragm under the influence of a sound wave causes the coil to move in the field of the electromagnet. A conductor moving in a magnetic field has an electromotive force (voltage) induced in it by its action in cutting the magnetic lines of force. So any movement of the tiny coil in the electromagnetic field causes an electric current to be set up in it. The magnitude of this current depends on the rate of change of the magnetic flux through the coil, and that in turn depends on the amplitude of the movement of the diaphragm. The frequency of the current variation in the coil is dictated by the rapidity with which the diaphragm moves.

The several advantages of the dynamic transmitter are: (1) that it is small, rugged, and light in weight, (2) that it is not affected by moisture or changes of atmospheric pressure, and (3) that, because its impedance is low, the line connecting it with its amplifier may be quite long, permitting it to be operated at some distance from the amplifier. Its only real disadvantage is that it has been impossible, as yet, to produce a moving coil which has sufficiently low mass to prevent its

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Miss Gohar Karnataki as Madhuri in Shree Jaydevi Cinetone's
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inertia from partially suppressing the higher musical frequency.

THE VELOCITY MICROPHONE

Despite the fact that the loose suspension of the ribbon makes it extremely sensitive to the slightest physical shocks to itself or its support (even a small movement being sufficient to cause the introduction of troublesome extraneous noises in the sound record), the velocity, or "ribbon", transmitter is becoming increasingly popular for recording.

The velocity microphone does not employ a diaphragm of the usual circular type, but instead has a rather wide though very thin ribbon of duralumin for its diaphragm. The ribbon is corrugated by running it between the teeth of coarse gear wheels; and then is mounted loosely by its ends between the poles of an electromagnet, transversely of the magnetic field of force between the poles, just as the moving coil of the dynamic transmitter is supported in a magnetic field. The corrugation of the ribbon is provided to prevent standing waves on its surface, and to aid in keeping the natural period of the ribbon out of the frequency range normally recorded.

FUNCTIONING OF THE VELOCITY TRANSMITTER

A sound wave striking the flat surface of the ribbon causes it to move back and forth under the influence of the alternate compressions and rarefactions of the air. This swaying makes the ribbon cut the lines of force of the field, which causes a current to be induced in the ribbon. The magnitude of the current thus generated is dictated by the amplitude of the movement of the ribbon; and the frequency of the current is dependent on the rapidity with which the ribbon moves.

Because the ribbon is short and straight, its impedance is extremely low. A transformer connected directly to the ends of the ribbon steps up the impedance to a standard value, and feeds the current into a transmission line that may be of any convenient length. At the other end of the line, another transformer matches the impedance of the line to the grid-circuit impedance of a vacuum tube. This may be seen in simplified form in Figure 3. Standard two or three stage transmitter amplifiers employing small vacuum tubes are used with this type of transmitter.

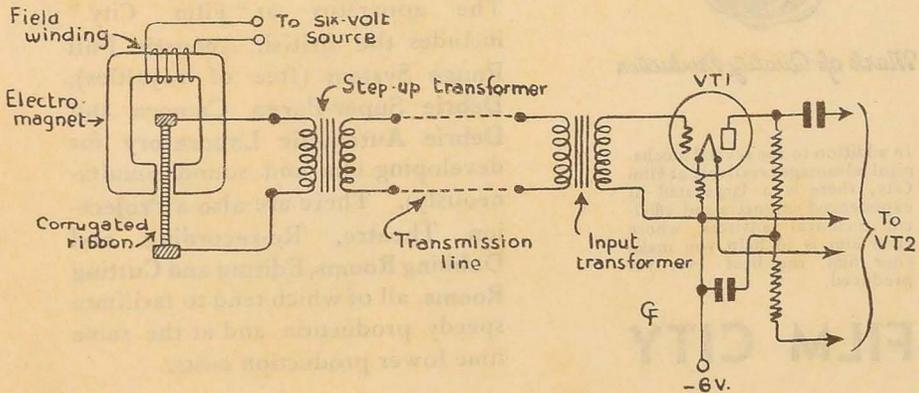


Fig. 3. The Velocity microphone.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RIBBON MICROPHONE

The velocity microphone has all the advantages of light weight, compactness, and simplicity; and it is small enough to be hidden in a set directly in front of the camera. It also has a great advantage not possessed by the other types of microphones: it is directional in a high degree. Only sounds that strike the two flat surfaces of the ribbon are recorded. Sounds produced in the two quarters adjacent to the edges of the ribbon do not cause the ribbon to vibrate

and so do not generate speech current. This feature permits the transmitter to be so oriented with respect to the sounds originating in a set that sounds from certain directions are not recorded to an appreciable extent, or are not recorded at all, while sounds from other directions are recorded at full strength.

The next chapter will carry on with this discussion of microphones by describing their care and handling. It will in that way prepare for the succeeding chapter on monitoring.

Production News for Independent Producers

The facilities available at "Film City" are now at the disposal of all independent producers. At "Film City" there have been installed two large independent sound stages, so that producers can now save a vast amount of time, and also considerably cut down their production costs, by shooting in one stage and building in the other.



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FILM CITY

The apparatus at "Film City" includes the British Acoustic Full Range System (free of royalties), Debie Super-Parvo Camera and Debie Automatic Laboratory for developing film and sound simultaneously). There are also a Projection Theatre, Re-recording and Dubbing Rooms, Editing and Cutting Rooms, all of which tend to facilitate speedy production and at the same time lower production costs.

You are cordially invited to "Film City" where you may inspect the Studios, and see for yourself the facilities which we have placed at your disposal.

Sound Studios (India) Ltd.

106, TARDEO ROAD,

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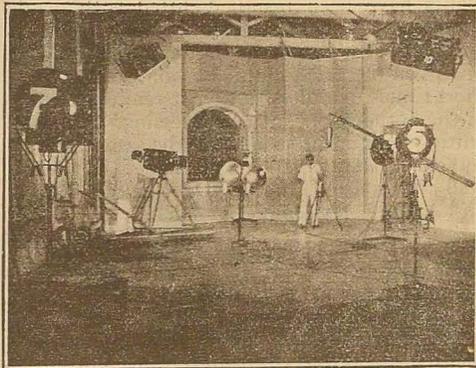
A Well Equipped Studio for Independent Producers.

Recently, two big and well equipped Studios were completed. One that of Prabhat at Poona, and the other, Sound Studios (India) Ltd. at Film City, Bombay.

Work started on "Sound Studios (India) Ltd., about December last year, and now the first feature picture, "Shan-E-Islam" produced by Wadia Bros., is being made there. The organization has been started with the idea of raising the standard of Indian talking pictures, by making available to the independent producers, all the latest and most-up-to-date equipment necessary for the making of modern quality pictures. And we can say that money has not been stinted for making it possible. Sound Studios, being not interested in producing pictures on their own account, we can also expect that the technical advice they give will be equally unstinted and unbiased.

Two acoustically treated sound stages are provided, one on the first floor of the main building, absolutely sound proof, which is eminently suitable for small interior sets, and another, on the outside, which covers an area of 80 ft. x 60 ft. with a height of 30 ft. for bigger settings. There is also space at Film City for small outdoor scenes.

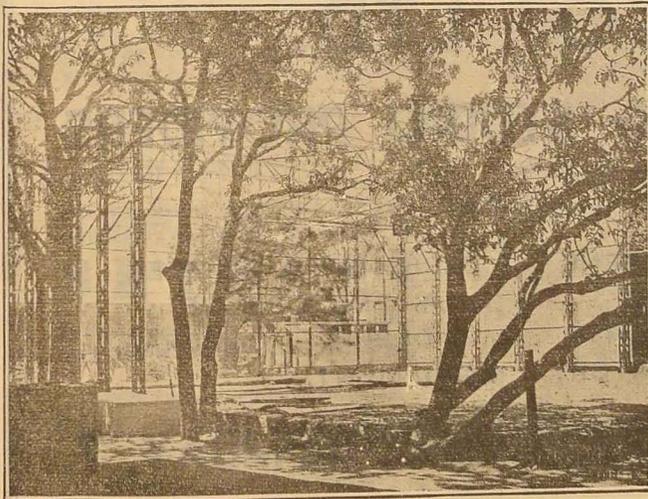
The Sound Equipment is the British



A view of the Camera, Microphone and boom and, Lights.

Acoustic Full Range Recording System, fitted with background elimination panel, thus providing for absolutely noiseless recording. The equipment is said to be capable of recording, without distortion, frequencies from 30 up to 12,000 cycles. A mobile equipment is available for location work. The two together make an equipment that is identical with those used at the Gaumont-British, Gainsborough and Triumph Studios in London. There is provision for dubbing and post-synchronisation as well as re-recording, which facilitates production of multilanguage pictures. The Oscillograph method is employed, but with the British-Acoustic multi-track system, which reduces to a great extent losses in processing. The drive is three phase synchronous motors, which provides for the constant speed of 90 ft. per minute. The microphones used are of the velocity type, which are intensely directional, and is a great help in eliminating floor and other superfluous noises by proper placing.

The picture equipment consists of one of the new Debie Super Parvos, designed as a silent camera



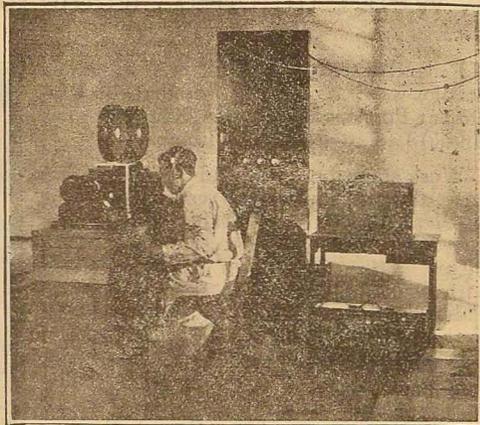
Steel Skeleton of No. 2 Sound Stage about 30ft. high to permit vast settings.

by Andre Debrie, of Paris, and completely eliminates all trouble due to camera noise.

One of the Debrie Automatic Processing plants have been installed, fitted with air-conditioning and cooling arrangement, which, automatically develops, hardens, fixes, and gives you the dried film in a comparatively short time. Needless to say, it removes 90% of the bother from sound processing. Their editing equipment is also of the same high standard, being completely designed by the well known firms, Andrew Debries, of Paris, and Andrew Ityslop of London.

A well equipped demonstration theatre, fitted with double projectors and capable of seating 300 people, is also provided, for viewing rushes, for censoring and similar purposes. Attached to it is a dubbing room providing facilities for re-recording and post-synchronization.

Needless to say, the technical facilities provided at Sound Studios are far in advance of what you get in most other Indian Studios, and we do hope that Independent producers would take advantage of these conveniences



A view of the Sound Recording Camera with the Recordist.

and produce pictures which would be a credit to the equipment used. The technical staff of Sound Studios (India) Ltd., have also a responsibility and we expect they will rise to the occasion.

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Australian Film News

By Lawrence Montfort.

Cinesound Studios, Sydney, are in the midst of filming "The Silence of Dean Maitland," with British picture star John Longdon in the name part. This should near completion shortly. Centenary Films, Melbourne, have completed their first offering, a dramatic air film of the lost air-mail plane, "The Secret of the Skies" and will begin work on "Something Different", a musical that is expected to live up to its name. Universal are shooting sequences of "The Old Bus", another aeroplane epic. As it stars the famous airman Sir Charles Kingsford Smith, in all his major world flights it should be something out of the box or camera?

Efftee Films have previewed in Melbourne their current attraction "Lottery Luck", starring the inimitable comedian George Wallace. General release in the theatres is expected before long. In the Blue Mountains of New South Wales a company is enacting and filming a dramatic talkie version of early Australian days when the pushrangers and outlaws rode abroad. Originally titled "The Kelly Gang" after the notorious and most famous of all Australian bushranging gangs, our film censor disliked the word "Gang", so much that he forced an alteration to "When The Kelly's Rode".

The New South Wales film trade is experiencing one of the biggest "scraps" in its history. The Government has been called in to arbitrate the matter, which at the time

of writing has taken the form of a Governmental enquiry.

Both film distributors and theatre managements have become embroiled and the "brawl" has been getting yards of not altogether (to the parties concerned) welcome publicity in our newspapers. While it lasts it is undoubtedly a *cause celebre* and has been aptly dubbed by the press the "Film War."

To detail its origination would be to step back to 1931 when a number of the American film exchanges metaphorically came to blows with Union Theatres over supplying films to them at certain rates. It was some months before either side could see reason and reluctantly come to terms with one another. It was cleared up for the time being, but has now broken out again with renewed force and on a much larger scale than previously.

With the 1934 seasons films available M.G.M., Warners-F. N., and Paramount have flatly refused to "sell to Greater Theatres Corporation (a combine consisting of Union and Hoyts Theatres controlling almost 200 theatres throughout the Commonwealth) on the terms that G.T.C. desire. These exchanges—and it is likely that orders may follow—are up in arms against hiring any of their supplies to a combine, who has in the past, for this very reason been more or less able to dictate its own terms. G. T. C.

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were in the habit of passing on their film supply (after release in their first and second run city theatres) to suburban exhibitors.

The three above mentioned distributors are determined to rent direct to the independent showmen and have nothing to do with combines and "buying pools". G. T. C. has a stock of films that will probably last for some time yet. They also have the complete Fox films programme to work on as Fox are financially interested in Hoyts to the extent of very large holding, which naturally gives first preference to all Fox talkies in the G.T.C. theatre chain. In addition G. T. C. are handling direct from Edgland the line up of certain British Studios and Fox-British-Gaumont releases.

M. G. M. have decided, following their "blockade" with G. T. C., to invest their capital in building their own chain of theatres in Sydney, Brisbane, and Melbourne for the exclusive release of their own product. Paramount in the last couple of years have controlled a Melbourne theatre and have a Sydney outlet for their pictures in the Prince Edward. Another company, Liberty Theatres, has also announced its intention of entering the theatre building race, by erecting a huge one in Sydney, as well as remodelling an existing G. T. C. house, whose lease they took over. Fullers are also to build a huge Melbourne Theatre to seat 4000.

G.T.C. is deadly anxious to block any further theatre erection fearing that if the distributors start building their own theatres it is going to radically reduce their chances of

getting satisfactory film supplies. They claim that Sydney is both over-theated and over-seated—which it undoubtedly is. At present all Sydney talkie theatres can only point to half filled houses; it's only once in a blue moon they actually "sell out". Stuart F. Doyle (managing director G. T. C.) quoted figures at Film Enquiry to prove this contention. Only 38.4 per cent of existing seating accommodation was filled and before the Government should allow any further theatres to be filled at least 60 per cent of this should be utilised.

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Music Section

Kivalur Ramachandra Iyer.

By K. Vasudeva Sastry, B.A., Nagapatam.

OF the musicians who succeeded Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer, the name of Kivalur Ramachandra Iyer deserves to stand foremost. He was in fact a musician of musicians. His name is well cherished by all the great Widwans of this day, his greatest admirers being Gayaku Sikhamani Brahma Sri Muthia Bhagavathar, among living artists and Jalatharangam Subbier, and Panchapakesa Bhagavathar of Tiruppayanam and Fiddle Govindasami Pillai among those who have passed away. Gifted as he was with a keen aesthetic sense and insight into the artifices of the art, disquisitions on the soul of the various ragas and his incisive criticism of hidden faults, have been very valuable to his brother artists.

He was the custodian of the faultless style of Dikshitar's School which he drank in through the sweet Nadaswaram of Kandan of Kivalur, a player on Veena and Nadasvara, and the perfectly malleable style of Sri Tyagarajaswami which he mastered at the feet of Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer. He was not the formal pupil of either Kandan or Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer; but in his early life, he could be seen in all the performances of both these artists in whatever place they may be, exchanging understanding looks with those masters.

He was born about the sixties of the last century at Kivalur, sanctified by Sri Akshaya-lingaswami, the subject of the famous kriti of Deekshitar in Sankarabharanam. The place which is but 9 miles from Tiruvarur, was already fragrant with the music of Dikshitar and had produced the famous Kandan. His father was the chief singer and conductor the Brahmin Histrionic Sabha of Kivalur which regularly entertained the villagers during Vasanta with their dramas enacted in all classical purity. Young Ramachandra had his share of English education up

to the matriculation and began as a school-master at Ammayappan, a village near Tiruvalur. He had already mastered the elements of music and was giving performances as an amateur. Gifted as he was with, a fine silvery, feminine voice which could easily reach the higher pitches, he was welcomed everywhere as the heir-apparent of Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer. The writer of this article has heard that Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer himself was charmed by the sweetness of Ramachandra Iyer's voice and gave him his blessings. His madness for music made his attendance at school very irregular and Nagoji Row, the music loving inspector of schools who was one of his greatest admirers was very indulgent towards him. It was soon found that he must change his profession into a musician and began giving performances as a professional during the last decade of the last century. The famous Dolak Nannumian came under the spell of his voice and took him under his charge and arranged to give him tuition in Hindustani music for which his voice was eminently fit. They both travelled together throughout the Madras Presidency giving performances in many places. And during the life time of Mahavaidyanatha Iyer, he was chiefly known as Hindusthani Ramachandra Iyer. After the great master died, Ramachandra Iyer made bold to claim his place in Carnatic Music as well and occupied the highest place among the professionals in public estimation for about 10 years. He then yielded to the temptation of a high fee, (it may be called fabulous in those days) offered by certain people for undertaking tuition and from that time forwards which was somewhere about 1905-10, he was mostly a tutor to budding musicians. Tutorship is the last thing a professional musician must accept. And from the time he became tutor, his fame as a musician among the masses was eclipsed

first by Pucchi Aiyangar and later, by Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Iyer. After 1910 he was mostly occupied with giving fruitful interviews to Vidwans and influencing the music of the day by his constructive criticism and incisive comments. He had a fund of sparkling humour which enlivened his conversation and everyone of his admirers could recollect even to this day his characteristic remarks on musical modes and little faults in society. And whenever he gave performances he always chose a very high sruti and maintained it with marvellous energy. The writer who has had the fullest benefit of his music, specially remembers almost his last concert at the age of 62 or 63 when he sang with perfect ease at a high sruti.

He lived an exemplary life of purity and lived to the age of about 65. He has left his unmistakable impress upon the music of his admiring co-artists like our Gayakasikamani. The writer, can in fact, point to the very sangathis in the performance of the late Fiddle Govindasamy or the late Panchapakesa Bhagavathar or of Muthia Bhagavathar which bears the imprint of Ramachandra Iyer.

He was probably the only musician who could sing faultless northern music and faultless Carnatic music as well.

He had a partiality for Tyagayyar's Kritis whose artistic excellence he would expound with rare insight. His favourite ragams were Nayaki and Varali among Karnatic Ragas and Mandu, Hindol, and Behag among Northern Ragas. He was the only musician who could successfully imitate Mahavaidyanatha Iyer's mode.

MAHA VAIDYANATHA AYYAR

M. M. Dr. U. V. Swaminatha Ayyar has contributed the third instalment of his account of Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar in the *Kalaimahal* for March '34.

Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar was a devotee of Siva; he studied at the Tamil and Sanskrit works relating to Saivism and soon became, besides a musician, a Bhagavathar performing kalakshepams and expounding with songs the stories of Saiva saints.

This instalment expatiates upon Vaidyanatha Ayyar's piety, learning in Tamil and Sanskrit and relates some anecdotes connected with his learning in Sanskrit. The account will be continued.

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Vani Veena.

(Account of a Newly Invented Instrument.)

By M. Rangaswami Ayyangar.

[The following is an account of a newly invented stringed instrument by the inventor himself, the father of Srimathi Vydehi who plays the instrument, which has been christened 'Vani Vina'. Our reviewer has reviewed a performance of Srimathi Vydehi in the Review-section in this issue; his opinion of the musical value of this invention is also published below.—Ed.]

To the list of musical instruments now in existence, a new instrument, named Vani Veena may be added. The instrument is Veena itself to which certain improvements have been made. The inventor had in mind to bring out to the world an instrument, which can be easily learnt, but at the same time it may not fall short of full technique. Veena has been in existence from a very long time. The swaras are produced distinctly in 24 marked places. Though the instrument is said to be perfect, it is not to be heard to

a long distance; nay it can be enjoyed only by a few persons, sitting all around. To make it more audible has been the attempt of the inventor. Moreover when handling the instrument, one has to thrust his hand under the bar and bring out the finger from the other side and then lay them on the strings and then begin to play on it. Passing and pressing the fingers all through the play furrows will be deeply formed on them. These two are not quite suitable to the fair sex. This long felt need for improvement was thought of and the present one has been brought to light after a number of experiments.

The general structure of Vani Veena is the same. On the right side of the player there is a hollow, and round wooden chamber. On the top of it near the strings are made two holes in the shape of 'S' as found in the Violin. The main strings are four as in Veena. Under these strings, thirteen thin strings are provided; each represents one swara, from lower shadja to higher shadja. The function of these is that when the main string is set to one swara, the corresponding

lower string will vibrate adding more sound for the same swara. For thalam, this has got 2 strings while Veena has three; one is discarded in this, finding it unnecessary. Not only that, the total strings ought to be of odd number. Instead of fingers being pressed over the strings, long bronze plates are set over the strings, which are fixed up to a wooden plank suspended over the strings. These plates are placed across the strings and are made to touch or press the string by spring movement, with their sharp edges

which look like pen-knife blades. So the sound produced is purely metallic without the touch of the finger. It is another device to produce extra loudness and sweetness. The blades are fixed up, with springs attached to long and thin iron rods which emerge out from the lower part of the plank. These rods terminate within oblong wooden

pieces which look like those of a type-writing machine, so much so when the player presses these buttons down, the brass rods strike the strings. The strings are struck with fingers, provided with 'misrop' at the ends. 'Misrop' is a thumble like thing, made of brass wire, as is used in 'Sitar.' This is another device to make it more metallic. The adjustment during pressing will produce gamakas, due to spring action. At the left end to the player of the instrument, the hollow wooden rod ends in to the tail of silver swan with a double head, indicating the purpose of the instrument. Out from each mouth hang down two green stones, adding beauty. The sound produced is at times like that of Jalatharangam and at times of Gotu Vadyam. A few days back an instrument by



Srimathi 'Mrs.' Vydehi Vijayaraghavan, the player on the Vani Vina: she has prodigious musical talents; sings, plays on many instruments, performs kathas and is also taught Abhinaya. A review of a performance of hers appears elsewhere in this number.

name 'Sampurna Veena', which was in existence from a very long time in Tanjore Palace had been brought for repair to the machanic, who made this also at Madras. The sound produced by that instrument exactly corresponds with this. This instrument is very charming to look at. The daughter of the inventor, Srimathi Vydehi Vijayaraghavan has been playing on it and within a period of three months she has become an expert on it. So it can be easily learnt as well. Every instrument has got some defect or other. It is not with the purpose of claiming greatness, through favouritism, over the other instruments, already existing, that this is submitted to the public but it is with a desire to add to the list one more which may find favour with some at least; for tastes differ. So far it has not passed the infant stage and yet it has earned its name as far as some of the friends who have closely attended the performance are concerned. It has a general approval. Any suggestions and improvements will be thankfully received.

Raktilla writes on this new Vina :

"Whatever might be the nature or history of the instrument, I venture to think that it is no improvement upon the ordinary type of Vina, either in the character of the

sound, or in any added facilities for the rendering of "ravais" and "gamakas". It appears to be a degradation of the Vina to the Harmonium type. If the "Vani-Vina" has not made any progress intrinsically as a higher evolution of the Vina, it has surely gained much in extraneous equipment and decoration." - *Raktilla*.

Regarding its name, Vani Vina, i.e., the Vina of Saraswati, we have to point out to its inventor that in Sanskrit literature on Music, there are special Vinas connected with various gods, goddess and mythical personalities. As for instance, Siva's Vina is called Rudra Vina; Narada's is called Mahati; Ravana played on the Vina called Ravana Hastaka and so on. Similarly, Saraswati, the presiding goddess of learning and arts, has a Vina called *Kacchapi*. The Kaccapi is not living now in South India; but there is a Vina played upon in the North called Kaccap Vina, a truly beautiful variety of the Vina. Sometime back, a Hindusthani Vidvan named Prof. Wahid Khan gave a performance on the Kaccap Vina under the auspices of the Music Academy, Madras. In view of this traditional association of Vani or Saraswati with a Vina called Kacchapi, we would suggest to the inventor of this new Vina to name it a fresh by some other name. - *V. R.*

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Monthly Review of prominent performances given in the various Sabhas in the city.

RASIKA RANJINI SABHA, MYLAPORE.

18th March 1934.

"Vani-Vina" by Mrs. VAIDEHI VIJAYA-RAGHAVAN.

This "Vani-Vina" was only one—perhaps the least notable—of the several novel features of the performance given by that precocious girl just in her teens, Srimati Vaidehi displaying a singularly sure mastery of the puzzling intricacies of musical scholarship. She dealt with Ragas well, managed the spreading-out of sahitya skilfully, and heaped up swaras with extempore ease. She gave evidence of an intimate acquaintance with the perverse-looking Hindustani tunes, she played upon the Kanjeera for a few minutes, she sang all sorts of songs, dignified and low, serious and ludicrous. She managed the "Vani-Vina" with much familiarity and sureness of touch, though it must be observed that the instrument apart from its novelty, did not materially add to the success of the performance.

In fine, the performance owed its attraction not a little to the several interesting stage effects among which the novel get up of the instrument was one. A married Brahmin girl, in the nature of a musical prodigy, bearing her principalship with firmness and dignity over a miscellaneous batch of older and more experienced experts was an interesting phenomenon in the annals of platform music. The performance, in fact, marked a new phase in the life of musical demonstrations, partaking as it did, more of the nature of a variety entertainment or a chow chow, than of the hitherto well-known type. In it figured both the Hindu and the Muslim artists in perfect unison of spirit; in it Karnatic and Hindustani styles flowed side by side; in it Telugu and Tamil composers were both served aright; in it scientific feats and unadorned plainness of the pure song-element were equally in evidence; and in it both the serious and the ludicrous were allowed equal opportunities for appearing to advantage. Perhaps, Mrs. Vaidehi is the harbinger of a new era of musical entertainments, in which, when it sets in, in right earnest, many of the

novelties above recounted will cease to be novelties at all.—*Raktita.*

RAMA NAVAMI CONCERTS AT MYLAPORE.

I

Mr. MUDIKONDAN VENKATARAMA IYER.

It was a fortunate occasion in the Rama Navami celebrations at Mylapore when Mr. Mudikondan Venkatarama Iyer was a unique success, in his performance there on the 3rd April. Mr. Venkatarama Iyer has had excellent training, study and practice in Karnatic music to his credit. There was hitherto a strange feature in his voice which interfered with perfect consonance with the Sruti and the result was that all his excellence was being allowed to be overshadowed by less talented artists. In the performance under review however it was happy to find his voice in perfect consonance. This was the best music in Madras for a long time and was indeed a triumph for Karnatic music itself, more than for Mr. Iyer.

Mr. Iyer began with a Varna in Kharaharapriya, composed by himself, indicating at the very outset the rich feast that was in store for the audience, which gathered on the occasion larger. The large audience, which was due more to the announcement of Mr. T. Chowdia as the Violinist for the night, was held although in enjoyment by Mr. Ayyar. Some Kritis of Tyagayya were then sung—: Panduriti' in Hamsananda, 'Ela Ni daya' in Atana, 'Koluvaivunnade' in Bhairavi, 'Ninuvina' in Navarasa, Kannada. The Bhairavi Kri 'Koluvaivunnade' deserves special mention; it was rendered in all its classic grandeur ornamented with Niravalas and Svaras and took a full hour. A Ragamalika then followed with some fine singing of Begada, Nayaki, Nilambari and Mohana. An old Jenjhuji piece was then sung and two gazals finished the programme. The performance and the interest the audience had on that occasion proved how wrong the assumption is that the popular taste demands marketable mixture.

—K. Vasudeva Sastry, B.A.

Continued on page, 64.

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The Theatre Arts Section

The Indian Theatre

V. RAGHAVAN

THIS is the latest book on Indian drama. It deals with the subject in two parts: part one being an introductory survey of ancient Hindu theatre and the medieval theatre of the people, and part two being the main study of the modern Indian Stage and the influence of European theatres.

The author opens his account of ancient Hindu drama with an examination of Sage Bharata's Sanskrit treatise called *Natya Sastra* 'an ancient encyclopædic work which aims at embracing most of the departments of dramatic art.' There is a vast Sanskrit literature on the subject of theatre. Ancient Sanskrit drama, as conceived by these treatises, was helped by music and was full of Abhinaya or gesture, besides mere dancing. The secondary purpose of drama was to teach, but its primary end was to evoke in the heart of the tasteful spectator the fountain of Rasa, the enjoyment of which has been compared to Brahmañanda. Great literary critics have also formulated a theory of suggestion called Dhvani in Sanskrit, regarding the manifestation of this Rasa. The Sanskrit drama has no tragedy in the common accepted notion of that word, though in pathos and in the tragic element, it is not wanting. Dr. S. K. De adds a note on the absence of tragedy in Sanskrit drama at the end of the book in which he explains why Sanskrit dramatists have avoided the type of tragedy that kills its hero and others at the end. Another noteworthy feature of the Sanskrit dramatic criticism is that it formulated the 'stage-decencies'. Propriety and decorum were emphasised and the dramatist had to observe the 'decencies' of the stage. Grim realism was not to be practised for this could not exalt the human mind. Painful, disgusting and debasing things were to be avoided on the stage. "One should not visibly represent a long journey, murder, fighting, revolt of a kingdom or province, a siege, eating, bathing, intercourse, anointing

the body, putting on clothes or the like." This tendency towards refinement progressed more and more....." Attempts to reproduce unconvincing things on the stage such as fight, siege etc., would prove merely ridiculous.

The Sanskrit drama is poetic and full of lyrical verse. The plot has been analysed by Dramatic theorists and the scheme laid out that each action has five junctures from its beginning to its fruition, and that the dramatic plot should be constructed in these five junctures. They are, in the words of Dr. Yajnik, Opening, Progression, Development, Pause, and Conclusion. These involve five stages of the action in the main character *viz.*, beginning, effort, hope of success, certainty of success, and obtaining of the fruit. A third analysis of the plot is: the sowing of the seed of the action, the continuity of the thread, the major and minor helpful episodes, and the end. Sanskrit works have also studied at length, from the point of view of emotion and character, the various types of man and woman. An actor who is to imitate a hero or a heroine has to understand the role, the type of character, the mental and emotional situation of that character and so on.

Dr. Yajnik then devotes a section to a consideration of the Rasa theory which he rightly describes as "the principal original contribution made by Sanskrit criticism to the dramatic theory of the world." There are numerous dramatic types in the Sanskrit Theatre, the heroic Nataka, the social Prakarana, the comic piece Prahasana, the erotic monologue called Bhana, etc. In the next chapter, Dr. Yajnik describes the architecture of ancient Hindu theatre as described in Bharata's *Natya Sastra*, with a sketch of one type of theatre. The account of the ancient Hindu theatre closes with a comparison with the English Elizabethan theatre with which it has resemblances.

The Indian Theatre: Its Origins and its Later Developments under European Influence. With special reference to Western India. By Dr. R. K. Yajnik, M.A., Ph. D., Professor of English Literature, Samaldas College, Bhavanagar, India.—Published by George Allen & Unwin. Price 10s. net.

This subject of ancient Hindu dramaturgy i.e., the Sanskrit *Natya Sastra* deserves greater attention and more detailed study, especially at the present stage of evolution of modern Indian vernacular drama. Sanskrit Dramaturgy has ideas which form very valuable contribution to the dramatic criticism of the world.

In Chapter 3 of the first part, Dr. Yajnik describes the forms of popular dramas which existed and still survive to some extent in the various provinces. This, he calls, the theatre of the people. In our own part of India, the South, we have the *Tamil Terukkoottu*, the *Kanarese Yaksha Gana*, the *Telugu Vithi Nataka* and the *Malayalam Kathakali*. Corresponding to these, Bengal has the *Yatras* which Dr. Yajnik describes elaborately. Dr. P. Guha-Thakurta's Bengali Drama and Dr. S. K. De's Bengali Literature are two original treatises on the subject. In Upper India, in and round about Mathura, there is the picturesque institution of *Rasadharis* played by Brahmins, a type that has not yet become extinct. Events of Krishna's life are played and the show ends with Krishna's *Rasakrida* dance with the cowherd damsels in a circle. Similarly *Ramalila* or recitation and enacting of Rama's life is the popular play in Benares. Dr. Yajnik describes at length the popular dramas of western India, in the Maharashtra and Gujarathi parts. "In Maharashtra, the most popular type of medieval play is *Lalita*, generally associated with a dramatic representation of Dasavataram." The brahmin community led in the *Lalita*. In Gujarat there is the popular type called *Bhavai*, a 'lineal descendent of an ancient primitive drama.' The *Bhavai* seems to be a low type and as in our own *Terukkoottus*, the clown has his usual license. The *Bhavai* differs from *Lalita* and others in that it has no continuous theme but represents detached pieces "like a quarrel between an ill-matched couple, a high way robbery, or a corrupt frailer (*Sadha*) in the company of a seduced widow and a credulous wife." Those interested in studying these provincial varieties of the popular Indian theatre can see the collection of *Lalita* dramas and *Bhavai* dramas published from Bombay and Ahmedabad.

It is out of these medieval plays that the modern Indian drama rose up. Though 'lacking in refinement or in artistic production' they possessed vitality and appealed profoundly to the masses. These, the classic heritage of the ancient Sanskrit drama and the example of the European, chiefly Eng-

lish drama are the three things that have moulded the modern Indian drama. The next section in part one is a survey of the complete background in which the author notices the good points in classic Sanskrit drama represented by two outstanding plays, the *Sakuntala* of Kalidasa and the *Mricchakatika* of king Sudraka and compares the Sanskrit drama with those of Shakespeare.

Then begins the theme proper of Dr. Yajnik's work, the modern Indian Theatre. The first section of part II traces the very interesting stages of the rise of the modern Indian drama in the various centres of India: Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras. In Calcutta there came into existence about 1757 an English Theatre. After 1770, sparkling comedies like *The School for Scandal* and Shakespearean tragedies like *Hamlet* were produced by English actors. The second stage is 1795, when a Russian adventurer built an Indian theatre and translated two foreign dramas into Bengali and produced it with Indian actors of both sexes. The third stage is 1841; Dr. H. H. Wilson and other eminent Sanskrit Scholars and amateurs like educationalists and journalists began to play English dramas. All these performances were patronised by Bengali gentlemen of position and these shows inspired them for a new method. The most important addition is elaborate and costly scenic apparatus. In 1857, the first original Bengali play, called *Kulinakula Sarvasva* was produced "with all the novelty that latest designs of the stage could produce." Then began a modern production of vernacular versions of classic Sanskrit plays. The theatres up to this time were in private houses and improvised. It was in 1858 that the first permanent stage was constructed. Private and rival theatres came into being but it was Girishchandra Ghosh, the 'father of Bengali theatre' who boldly launched the idea of a public theatre for the middle class run by amateurs. His 'National Theatre' was established in 1872. In 1873, a rival theatre called "The Bengali Theatre" introduced actresses. Girishchandra Ghosh was himself a dramatist and an actor. He excelled as Macbeth.

Coming to Bombay, conditions differ at the gateway of India, a city most cosmopolitan, where theatre pioneers had to experiment in Urdu, pure Gujarathi, Parsi-Gujarathi, and Marathi. The Parsis, who easily adapt themselves to western ways, are the pioneers of

modern drama in Bombay. At this western centre, plays have not also been literary masterpieces as in Calcutta. 1770 marks the beginning of the modern theatre in Bombay, when European amateurs played and influenced Indian minds. 1842 is an important year in the history of Marathi drama. The chief of Sangli saw some plays by travelling kanarese players and then ordered some of his men to collect men and produce plays in Marathi, "with music on a karnataki basis." "This experiment was a purification of medieval performances on indigenous lines. All this time, the Parsi theatre was developing on an English model with several devices and stage-tricks. The Marathi drama of to-day arose out of the old *Bhavai* play. Music was reigning supreme but one company, The Maharashtra Company made a heroic effort to produce only prose plays. Marathi adaptations of Sanskrit and Shakespearean dramas now followed. The type of historical dramas began about 1890, plays like *Baji Rao*, *Sivaji*, *Pratap*, etc. Next arose social plays and social satires. *Sarada* was the first social play. After 1910, playwrights like Mr. Varkar began to write under the influence of Ibsen and Shaw. The Marathi theatre is best in the Bombay Presidency. It ranks next to the Bengali theatre in India.

The Parsis started as amateurs at Bombay in about 1851. They concentrated on costly and involved stage-settings. The Gujarathi theatre arose out of discontent with the Parsi theatre. Ramachodhai Udayaram is the pioneer dramatist in Gujarathi. "He translated some Sanskrit classics, wrote the most popular puranic play called Harischandra and also produced the first social tragedy."

Dr. Yajnik opens his account of our modern theatre here in Madras with the remark that we are several decades behind Bombay and Bengal. In the Tamil, Telugu, and Kanarese Theatres, the first, says the author, is the most backward. In 1875, the Madras Dramatic Society was formed and Europeans performed there in English. About 1880, the Poona Sangli Dramatic Troupe visited Madras and the late Govindasami Rao began the modern production with scenery after the manner of the Marathi visitors. In 1890, Mr. Krishnamacharya of Bellary started the first amateur dramatic society of southern India, the Sarasa Vinodini Sabha. Mr. P. Sambandha Mudaliar and others then founded "the premier amateur dramatic institution of India", the Madras Sugana Vilas Sabha. The society had a periodical called 'The Indian Stage.' The

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society is the father of the modern drama in South India, for it has toured to distant parts of the peninsula. Further visits of dramatic troupes from Bombay also influenced Madras. Mention is here made by the author of Cunnia Co., the rise of the Boys' Cos., and of the women's troupe, the Balamani Co. Select Telugu specimens are mentioned and a paragraph is devoted to the kanarese drama. In a subsequent section again, Dr. Yajnik says that the Madras theatres are several decades behind all the rest in India.

The western influence is the greatest factor in the rise of the Modern Indian Drama. Scenic setting and tragedy are the two contributions of the English models. The greatest master that has invaded the Indian theatre is Shakespeare and to a survey of Shakespeare in the Indian Stage is devoted the rest of the book of Dr. Yajnik.

In three succeeding chapters Dr. Yajnik catalogues stage-versions of Shakespearean comedies, Shakespearean tragedies and of non-Shakespearean plays, in the various Indian vernaculars. The Marathi *Hamlet* is described by the writer as the best Indian version of a Shakespearean play and its actor Mr. Ganapat Rao Joshi, of whom a sketch appeared in one of the previous issues of this journal, as the greatest Shakespearean actor in India.

Coming to non-Shakespearean plays, Marathi writers sought Sir Walter Scott's novels—particularly *Woodstock* and the *Talisman*—and Marie Corelli's, *Thelma* and *The Temporal Power*. The Urdu playwrights went to the popular novels of G. Reynolds. *Shorab and Rustum*, *Enoch Arden* and Lytton's *Last Days of Pompeii* are some other adaptations. Moliere has exercised "the greatest direct and indirect influence" on the comedy of the Indian stage to-day. Restoration comedy has also been translated; the Bengali version of Congreve's *The Double Dealers* is an example. 18th century plays of Goldsmith and Sheridan are also represented. The latter is very popular.

There are two important chapters at the end of the work called the general influence of British Drama and the retrospect, prospect and some evils of thoughtless imitation of western dramas are pointed out in the latter chapter. The superimposition and political inferiority complex helped to foster a sense of huge admiration for everything in the English drama. Attempts at erection of realistic

situations, love of spectacle, embraces, kisses etc., on the stage, eating of beef, drinking etc., in wild fashion, especially on Urdu stage, the sex technique as found in the western drama,—these are the evils of imitation, found side by side with the benefits which, in the opinion of Dr. Yajnik, are compared to the evils, overwhelming. It is a true remark that is uttered on p. 258 by the author: "So far the Indian Theatre is in a state of utter confusion, since the country does not know its own mind and has not yet reached the proper period of self-unfolding. It simply borrows and crudely imitates." Dr. Yajnik believes in the amateurs as the real workers for the cause of Indian Drama and he diagnoses that "what India really needs just now is an independent development of the legitimate drama on a three-dimensional stage and a thoroughly Indian Ibsen or Shaw who would tackle contemporary problems with the earnestness and artistic appeal of these writers."

Continued from page 59.

II

VADAKKANJERI MANI BHAGAVATAR.

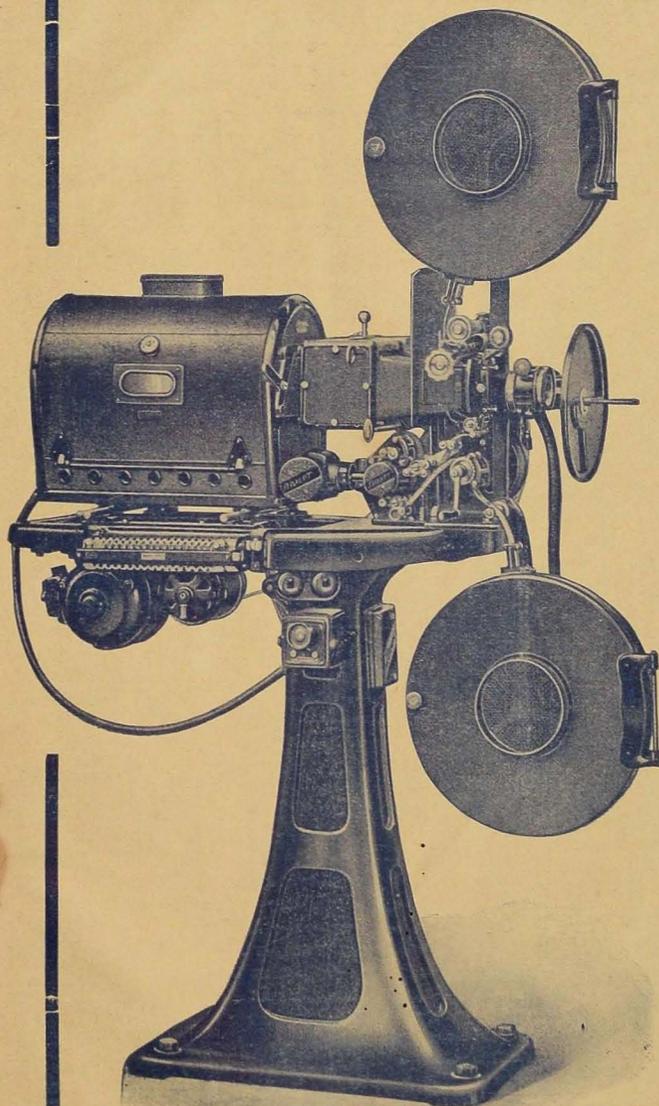
Mr. Vadakkanjeri Mani Bhagavatar was one of the many musicians who responded to Mr. C. R. Srinvasa Ayyangar's invitation and gave music performances during Mr. Ayyangar's Rama Navami Celebrations in Mylapore. The first thing that strikes one when he hears this musician is the rare energy of his voice and it is a relief to see that voice especially in these days of the musicians' neglected health and neglected voice. His voice is of the 'ghanam' variety, never hollow and capable of receiving higher polish. In the performance under notice, refreshing originality in the Sangatis and Niravals relieved a round of songs which were very oft-handled pieces.

The Raga-alapana of this musician reminded me of the late Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Ayyar whose style is now slowly vanishing out. I must not also fail to point out that the Raga-singing displayed an eagerness more for originality than for faithfulness to the pure style of Carnatic Music. The 'alapana' of Manji on that night was a failure.—K. Vasudeva Sastry, B.A.

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