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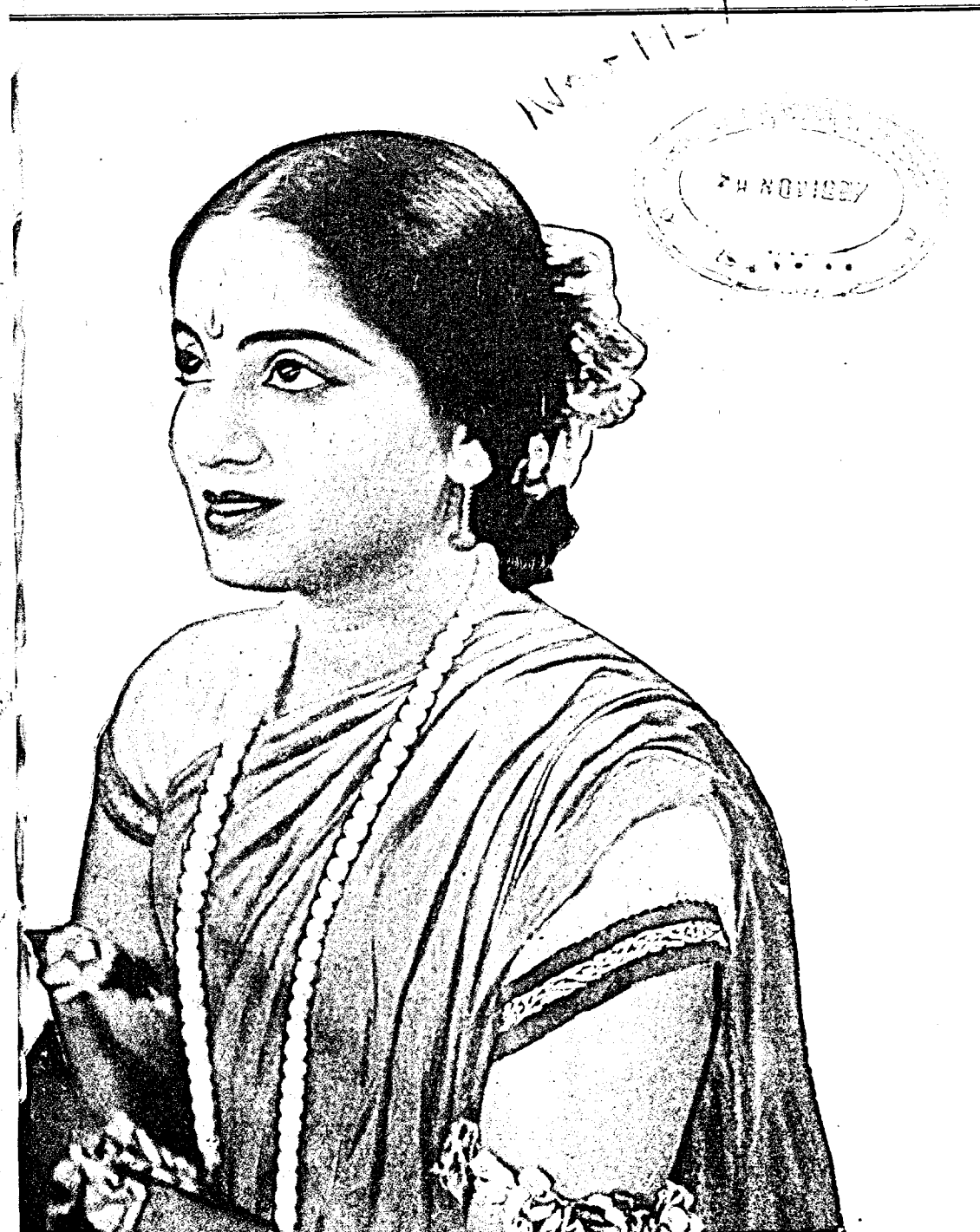
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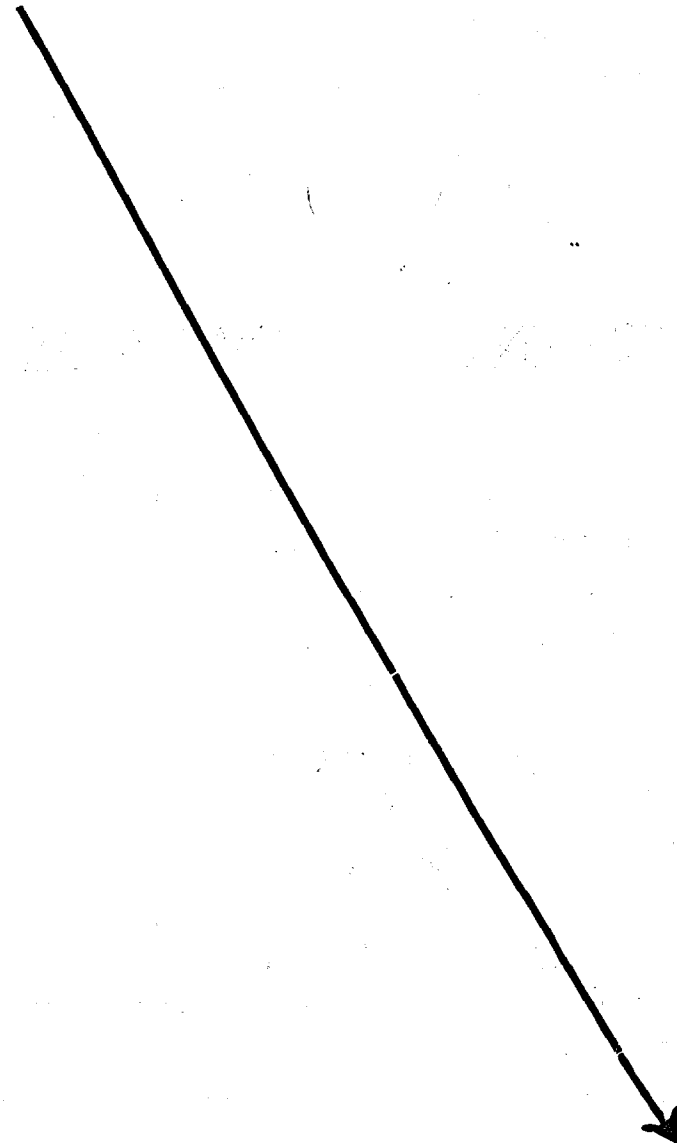
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KANCHANAMALA as DEVADEVI
in Telugu
VIPRANARAYANA
(Aurora Film Corpn.)

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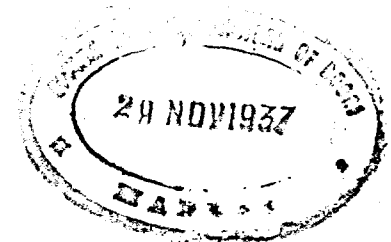
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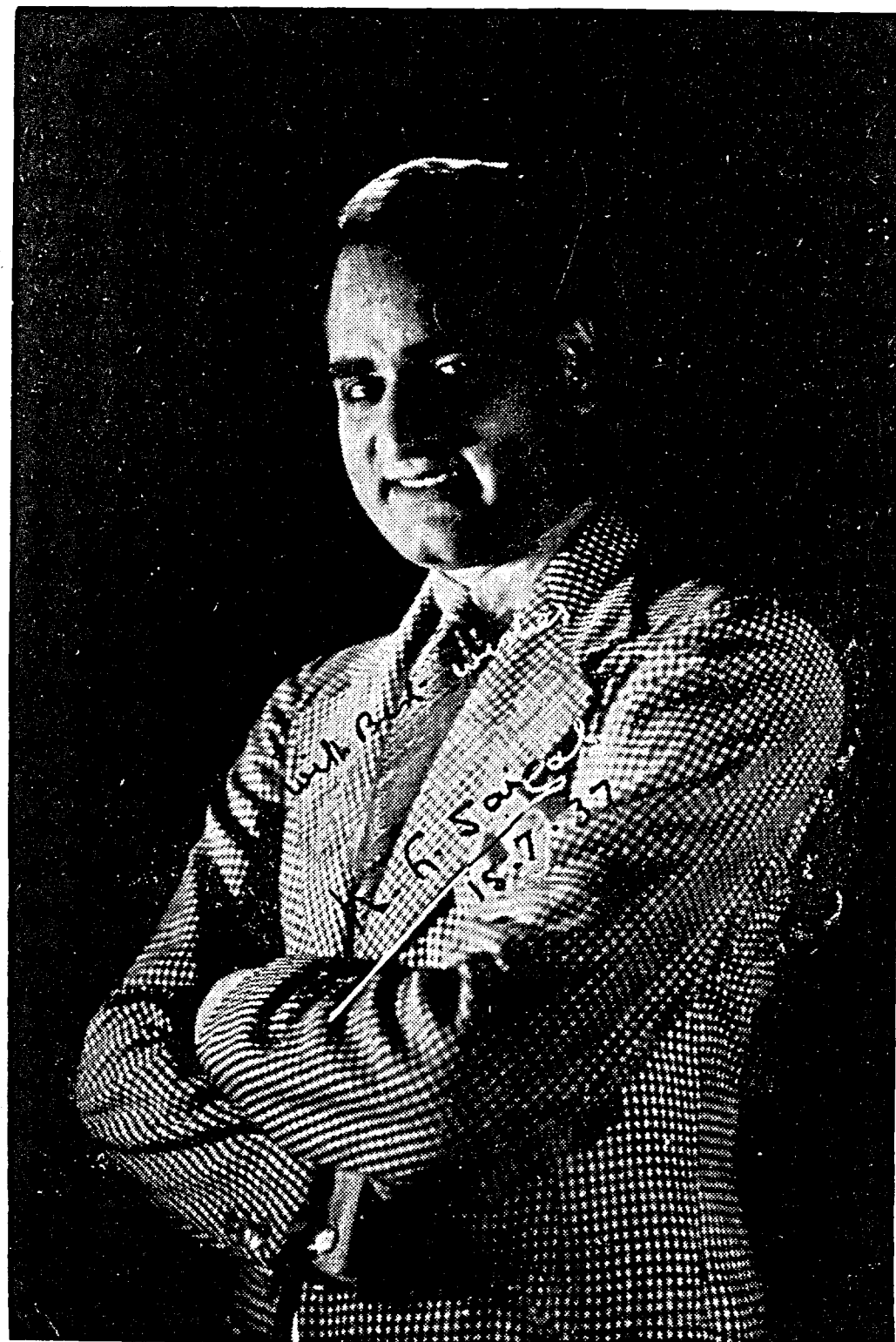
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A. Lakshmi as Dasi in Mayura's "SAINT ARUNAGIRI"

NOVEMBER 1937

TALK-A-TONE

VOL. II No. 9

The Psychology of Outright Sales

THE problem of outright sale of pictures is one akin to a two-edged sword. By such sales the producer finds himself paid far less than what he deserves, while the permanent distributor finds a deserving chance to prove his worth slipping off his hands for the nonce. The time has come when pictures should not be sold to any one though the temptation of a lump sum payment for the time being is a temptation which few human beings could resist with the cool resignation of a born philosopher.

Pictures do find a market for outright sales only as and when they fall in a class which should at all events be superior to the common herd. The buyer is not a fool to pool out his resources for a picture when it is not worth it. No doubt the buyer takes some risks—usual in all business dealings—in paying out a price, but pictures

have been bought only when they are supremely good. The buyer therefore minimises the risk of a financial loss and if pictures of either New Theatres or Prabhat are bought the buyer's gamble of outright purchases is a safe gamble. It should not be forgotten that both the producer and the buyer take it as an accepted fact that pictures when sold out should necessarily be Extra-good.

The sales of pictures of N.T.—a series of them is an example worth mentioning. The sale of "Achut Kanya" of Bombay Talkies is another notable example. Pictures of New Theatres like those of "Devdas," "Dhoop Chaon" and even old pictures like "Puran Bagat" and "Chandidas" pool out big amounts at the gates even at the third and fourth runs in any leading Theatre. They fall in a class that by the first

8/62/84

TALK-A-TONE NWm2, N36 N37-2-7 NOVEMBER 1937

release in a city like Bombay alone, the probable sale price which the buyer might pay is obtained by the regular distributor of the concern and the extra amounts which these might get in other places flow into the coffers of the buyer thus depriving the producer a legitimate share for a deserving work on the screen. Look at the unique run of "Achut Kanya" at Calcutta and if this picture has also been sold out—as we are afraid it had been—the Bombay Talkies is poorer by such a sale than a gainer. Good pictures pay well and therefore they should not be sold out at all costs and at all events.

We cannot but commend in this connection the policy of Prabhat not to sell however tempting the offer may be. Many times offers have come to them but pictures find themselves in the hands of their regular distributors thus bringing money both to the producer and the distributor. The unique triumph of "Tukaram" is a standing triumph of this policy. Rumours are afloat that the "Unexpected" is offered a huge amount but Prabhat intends to stick to its policy of passing on its pictures to their own regular distributor.

The tragedy of outright sale is never more graphically brought than when the case of the distributor is considered. The regular distributor is an honest man out to help his producer and thank him for good productions. By long association with the producer, he has a soft corner for his producer—nay, considers the pictures as his own and thus exploits them to the best advantage. He waits only to find himself deceived of a

good harvest by a stroke which is unkindly dealt on him by the producer as a penalty for his being honest and sincere. Sometimes when a regular series of pictures are sold out, he find himself even without one picture in his hand and he is compelled to run his office merely for running it with empty hands. He entered into an agreement with the producer with the hope that he will be fed with pictures at regular intervals and when pictures after pictures go out of his hands by reason of outright sales, he finds his patience exhausted and his goodness and sincerity mangled and maltreated by the producer. On the other side the buyer makes up all the money depriving the producer and the distributor a legitimate share of profits even though the risk of outright sale is shouldered by him, which in case of good pictures are always minimised to a large extent. It should be remembered that howevermuch the producer might think himself to be clever it is impossible to measure the price of good pictures by exactly scaling them as it were in a balance by having the pictures on one side and the coins on another side. Experience has proved that outright sale prices have always proved to be on the favourable side of the buyer and more particularly so in the case of the pictures of N.T.

For Heaven's sake, let this outright sale stop. It is a menace to the progress of the Industry—a financial loss to the producer and lastly without your knowledge you kill your regular distributor who is more or less a son to you and therefore fathers your interests always with a fatherly care. Again we plead for Heaven's sake to stop this practice and to stop it immediately.

Late News

EAST INDIA FILM CO.

Daksha Yagna in Tamil is proceeding faster than ever. They have purchased an Ultra-Violet recording set which will be used in this picture.

Premier Cinetone: *Skanda Leela* is in the finishing stages. Their next picture *Bandit Chief* a drama by Rao Bahadur P. Sambandam has been commenced on the Vijaya Dasami day.

Kalidas Films: *Kannappa Nayanar* is forging ahead with all speed. Director M. R. Kapoor with the co-operation of P. V. Rao is directing the piece. V. N. Sundaram appears in the title role. Recently some beautiful shots have been taken in the forests of Kumaramangalam. The film will be ready shortly.

Modern Theatres: Their Malayalam hit *Balan* is now in the shooting stages.

Jupiter Pictures: They have completed the preliminary arrangements for the *Orphan Girl* a story by the Kothainayaki Ammal. The shooting will be in the Motion Picture Combines studios.



HUMS BANOO AND YESHWANT DAVE in "VASANT BENGALI" (Imperial.)



PADMA DEVI in "KISAN KANYA" (Imperial's First Colour Picture)

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

C. K. SACHI'S IGNORANCE :

The article of this gentleman in the "World Film News," on the Indian Film Industry, entitled, "India Rope-Trick-Talkies," is unworthy for one who is born an Indian and is replete with his ignorance of the events and the state of the Film Industry in India. It is people like Mr. Sachi who pose themselves as a Miss Mayos that knowingly or unknowingly decry our national aspirations and honest aims. This either displays ignorance or a wanton desire on his part to belittle India's fair name in the International Market.

"But even now, in the South, mythology is the first favourite," is not a fact as almost all the concerns have made it a point to produce socials and even granting that mythology is being produced in India, one picture like "Savitri," the latest triumph of the Bombay Talkies is worth a thousand Socials because of its absolute adherence to the mythological atmosphere in settings as well as in the story representation.

Writing about Stars, he says, "that their acting remains largely stogy." This is a naked lie in as much as we have our Usha Sashi, Shanta Apte, Vasante, Durgabai Khote, Sabita Devi and even in South India, there are enough talents among the artistes who are good enough to claim an equal and honourable place among the pre-eminent stars of the North.

He then speaks of the difficulties placed by the producer or financier to the director. We would particularly bring to the writer's mind of what he did in his own picture "Radha Kalyanam," which is not much of a picture. If as Director who lives for the production of artistic films as he rightly claims to be, he finds himself in embarrassing predicaments, his duty lies more in resigning his directorial responsibilities than produce something which is least picture like. That he should for the sake of remuneration play the willing clown in the hands of the producer speaks of his own mentality to place money first before anything else.

In our opinion remarkable progress has been made by the Indian Film Producers in the past five years. A Tukaram, A President, A Two Brothers and many such pictures have come in the year and these are signs of the coming change for the betterment of the Film Industry which speaks for themselves and of the great future which the Industry holds in India.

What surprises us most is that men who have neither experience of the Industry, nor made a name as a director of eminence should think of writing about films when they are least fitted to transcribe anything on paper and waste the paper and ink. Let them think ten times before they take the paper and ink next time.

WASTAGE OF MONEY.

Too much time and money are spent in the creation of spectacular pictures when first-rate acting and direction often produce a more pleasing result. We, for one, think that some producing units which produce artistic picture might as well follow the suggestions in the above. The high cost is naturally attributable to high artiste's fees and conversely some producers think of cutting the cost of production which rises alarmingly as the production progresses, by resorting to cuts and economies in items which need no economies at all. It is time when complete reorganisation of the studies should be made and the elimination of wastage effected, under proper heads.

MORAL IN FILMS.

Whether films have a positive or a negative influence on character seems definitely important. The Kinema instead of being merely an escape from reality might oftener educate people into a happier moral frame of mind than at present. Some people who mainly seek entertainment in films particularly hate teaching in films and the films while not teaching morals through pictures can unconsciously teach morals and educate the public through instructional films. It can be safely stated that people unconsciously absorb morals while positively enjoying an entertainment film. Such films as the "Good Earth,"

"Fury," or "Mädchen-in-Uniform," present a moral value without the audience knowing, it is moral at all and even in India we have films that teach good truths in the shape of entertainment films. In fine, it is better to combine entertainment and morals in films by a happy and judicious blending of both and make people more moral without unnecessarily making moral films pure and simple, and preaching morals as they do in the pulpit.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE PICTURES ON HUMAN MIND:

How pictures affect the human mind while they see the pictures even without their knowing what they do, can be seen by a close study of the picture-goers while they see the pictures in the theatres. We have seen many folks who light their cigarettes or feel an immediate craving for a puff when they see on the screen some one having a whiff. There were cases when even children when they see some one munching a sweet calling for sweets from their attending mammas or nurses. Pathetic scenes bring tears to the eyes and why should they at all cry, if they know that it is after all a picture based on a story coming from the imagination of a fertile brain. The films may all be celluloid but even without the fan's knowledge the unconscious mind works and reacts to the scenes on the picture.

DRINK AND FILMS:

With the Prohibition scheme in full swing it is high time for us to think of the effects produced in the minds of the cine-goer by seeing drinking scenes on films. We can certainly claim that in about 95 per cent of the films which are titled Socials we see invariably at least two or three scenes of the drinking habit. The actors of the film drinks, swear and make fools of themselves in such a way that even drinking folks are ashamed of their actions. Too much exaggeration of the drinking results and drinking bottles after bottles are the main features of such films. Something should be done to check this exaggeration and bring out intelligently the evils of the drink. Much more than the drinking scenes which are vulgar, the evils of the drinking should be cleverly brought out in the screen, since as said in the foregoing observations in another

head films do have an unconscious effect in the minds of the audience.

UNITY IN DIVERSITY:

Much more than all the preachings of the Politicians the unifying effect of films in this diverse India of cast and languages can hardly go unrecognised. Which Bombayite does not like Saigal? Which South Indian does not worship a Shanta Apte or a Devika Rani? Which Tamilian does not sing the songs of the hero Saigal? Even though coming from a different province they are worshipped and admired and there is a unity built among Indians all over India by these films. Even in the case of popularising Hindi as the national language the films could do much more than all the education. A regular use of Hindi first-class films while giving first-class entertainment can educate the people better in Hindi than all the compulsory education in Hindi for several years.

U. P. MINISTER'S SPEECH ON FILM INDUSTRY:

"The Film Industry," said the Hon'ble Dr. Kailas Nath Katju, the Minister for Justice, Agriculture and Industries for U. P. Government, "had the greatest scope for progress, but it was with regret that one noted foreign film producers were draining away Indian wealth through their films." According to him, Indians, though they have taken to this industry, yet in most cases, have not encouraged the art.

UNEMPLOYMENT:

Regarding the attitude of the Government toward the industry, he said that it was always prepared to help and encourage it and no sooner had it noticed some material progress in this industry through the efficiency of its promoters than it would lose no time in extending a helping hand. Business considerations apart, the Minister said that through this industry the burning question of unemployment could also be easily solved to a great extent. He acknowledged that we had talents in our youth but they needed exploitation in the right direction.

The Minister's remark that Government will help the Film Industry provided it establishes a case for such an encouragement should specially noted by our Film magnates.—Ed.

A BAD HABIT:

The habit on the part of many producers to hire out the Theatres for their pictures should be stopped. In Madras, many producers hire theatres by paying Rs. 1000 a week from the pictures as long as they like. The people in the Districts measure the excellence of the picture by the run of the picture in the Metropolis and when they read that it has run for several weeks they blindly mark it as a good one to be seen only to be deceived later. The producers try to

make even bad pictures popular by such contrivances and ingenious methods and while in the long run the truth will be known to the public, there is the grave danger of even good pictures which run for many weeks on their own merits being misjudged. The Theatre-owners should run pictures only as long as they could run while producers are specially requested not to attempt on such cheap popularity which will in no way make even their own pictures popular with the public.

(Continued from page 31)

would be utilised, and the composer and writer would all bring their indispensable talents to the creation of such a real work of art. In the realm of painting, sur-realism could be employed for cinematic backgrounds, with its strange rendering of the things of the sub-conscious mind, its visualised thought.

If it be advanced that the pictorially experimental cinema would have no public beyond the hysterical vapourings of the clique or the coterie, it can be replied that this possibility would all depend on the method of approach and the genuineness of the final effect. Certainly, at the present day, there is a growing unrest with the

orthodox cinema, largely amongst its 'middle-brow' patrons. It neither affords them the solid, three-dimensional satisfactions of the theatre nor the unreal, imaginative appeal which modern pictorial art could bring to the screen. It is a half-way house, in which both mediums effect a sterile compromise. If it is to live at all as an integral part of the cultural life of the people it must, on the one hand, raise the naturalistic film into a real association with life, and, on the other, employ the resources of pictorial art, with its peculiar aptitude for the medium, to intensify the life of the imagination.

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His Highness is a keen sportsman, being specially interested in Tennis, Cricket, Badminton, Croquet and Squash Rackets and motoring; and has a taste for literature, especially poetry, music, agriculture and fine arts. He is a member of the Royal Institution of Great Britain, Bombay Natural History Society, The Delhi Flying Club, Imperial Gymkhana Club, Cricket Club of India, Punjab Wanderers Cricket Club, Western India States Cricket Club, Kennel Club of India, life member of Indian Research Institute, Calcutta, etc., etc. He was a Lieutenant in the I.T.F. 11-19th Hyderabad Regiment, and was attached for some time to the 1st-19th Hyderabad Regiment (Russel's) at Fort Sandeman, Baluchistan. He is now Honorary Lieutenant in 1st-19th Hyderabad Regiment (Russel's).

He takes keen interest in the welfare of national industries. He is the Patron of Film Corporation of India Limited and various other Indian industrial concerns.

Permanent Salute: 13 guns.

From the days of Poet Kalidasa Kings of India have always extended their patronage to art in all its manifold forms. True to those

noble traditions Indian Royal houses are even to-day patronising art as it exists to-day even in its modified up-to-date forms on account of changes in the habits due mainly to civilisation.

Cinema to-day is an art and recognised as such all over the World. To-day India is keenly at it, propagating our culture and art through the celluloid. The Film Corporation of India Ltd., (Calcutta) a strong cine concern has set as its ostensible object—the spread of Indian culture—Indian art and Indias' best at everything on the Silver Screen.

His Highness the Maharaja of Jhalawar has rightly extended his gracious patronage to the concern. It is not a patronage merely in its lighter aspect but active patronage and co-operation for the development of Indian traditional culture and Indian art at its best. The coming in of distinguished Royalties in the Indian cine folds marks a new era, in the Film Industry in India and as the Film Corporation of India launches its production activities from time to time the satisfaction it might evoke in the heart of His Highness can as well be imagined than described.—*Ed.*

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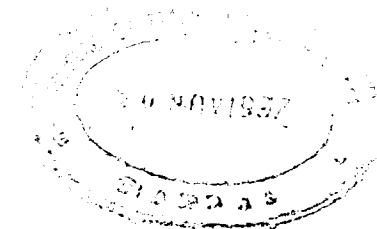
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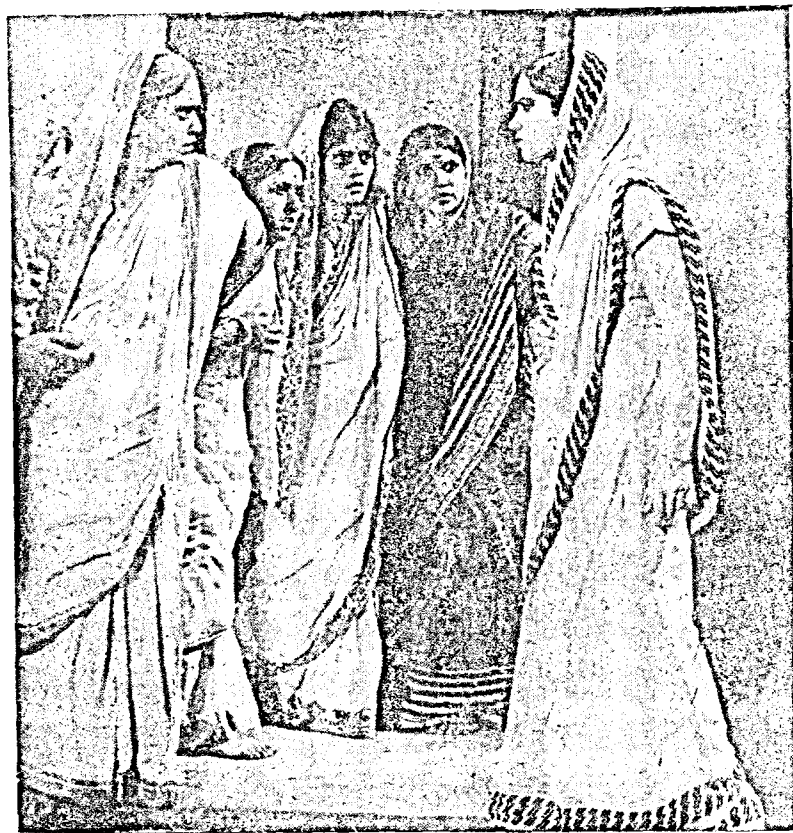
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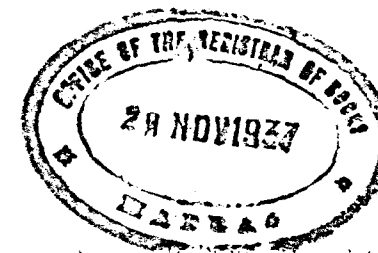
MEHTAB AND YOUSUF in "MOTI-KA-HAR" (SANGEET)



(Top) SHAKUNTALA PARANJPYE & VASANTEE
(Below) MRS. VIMALA BAI VASISHTA & SHANTA APTE in DUNIYA-NA-MANE
or "THE UNEXPECTED"
(A Prabhat Picture)

Historical Background Of Indian Dance Art

By
Nataraj Vasi



[The following article comes from the brilliant young Bombay dancer, who recently delivered an interesting lecture on the subject in Java where he has gone to study the art of the country. It contains many items of great interest to the dancer as well as to the scholar containing things which are as rare as the art of dancing itself.—Ed.]

DANCING is that form of art which faithfully reflects the cultural heritage of a nation ; and it attains the acme of perfection only in that nation whose civilisation has reached the zenith of both cultural and aesthetic development. The cultural wealth of India is immense and it is a rare heritage that has come down to us. Every branch of Indology is so rich in its contents that it can provide genuine material for research work of any nature. India's religion, art and culture were greatly influenced by foreign dominations. India was the cradle of many religions and cults, and also became their grave yards. Every religion that made its appearance on the Indian soil made a free use of all the art forms solely for its own propaganda. New literature was produced, new temples were erected and all other art forms were given new garments. Thus Indian art and culture were greatly coloured by religious motives. To-day, we have many monuments and buildings, many temples and scriptures as lasting evidences of the repeated religious conflicts in India.

But the most ancient current of the Hindu culture that was strong enough and therefore destined to be immortal, always sprang up whenever it found its opportunity. The religiously philosophic quality of the Hindus which is their special characteristic can be easily detected anywhere. To them art is as religious as divine. Through art they realised their duty of religion ; and therefore, it is a peculiar trait of the Hindu mind to trace back every art and science to a divine origin. The Hindus, like the Greeks, have a perfect Pantheon to represent all the arts and sciences including that of erotics. Thus the origin of the graceful art of dancing, like the origin of all other arts and sciences, is lost in the labyrinth of the mythological legends.

Historical facts are not wanting to prove the sway of dancing from times as old as civilisation itself. It is said more than often how ritual dances were performed in Vedic times with the chanting of incantations. No ceremony was done without the accompaniment of dancing. Thus dancing like other ceremonies was employed to secure a better spiritual existence. To enter completely into the ecstasy of dancing was to be in a close communion with God.

As tradition would have it, Brahma is the author of scriptures on dramatics. When the whole of Jambudvipa was pestelled by demons and "nagas," and the people deviated from the righteous path, became selfish and morally corrupt, Indra with the other Gods went to Brahma and requested him to produce a fifth Veda, which could be heard and seen by all people as all of them were not entitled, either by birth or creed, to hear the four Vedas. The new Veda should be composed by taking the necessary material from the four Vedas, so that it can show people the righteous path and make them understand their duty.

Thereupon Brahma, the first of the Hindu trinity, well versed in all the Vedas, composed what is called the "Natya Veda." He collected for this noble purpose themes of recitation from Rig Veda, vocal music from Sam Veda, abhinaya, i.e., acting from Yajur Veda and *rasas* or sentiments from Atharva Veda. A drama was then prepared and taken to Shiva for exhibition by Brahma. Before the great Shiva he performed the drama of the churning of the ocean and the drama of the burning of the seven cities—an exploit of Mahesh Himself. The Lord was greatly pleased with the performance ; however, he suggested to introduce dancing in the drama

which would considerably enhance its charm. Shiva asked Tanduv to teach this noble art to Brahma. Brahma after perfecting the Natya Veda, bestowed it upon Bharat and so it saw the light of the earth.

Masculine Attribute

The divine art of dancing that came down to us through Tanduv, was named after him as Tandava. Every dance of Shiva who is worshipped as "Nataraj"—the Lord of Dancers, has thus come to be called "Tandava." Tandava is primarily a dance for men, and it requires fierce virility and great agility. Its charm lies in the manly grandeur and boldness of the performer. Its swiftness and vivid majestic movements characterise the Tandava. But it is no less graceful and sublime.

Shiva also taught dancing to Parvati, his divine consort. This dancing demands feminine grace and lyrical charm. This is a softer kind of dance and its delicate movements has a poetic appeal. This dance is named "Lasya" which is suggestive of softness and grace.

Parvati taught this dancing to Usha, the daughter of Banasur, who in her turn gave this lyrical art to the milkmaids of Dwaraka. Thus the women of Saurashtra learned Lasya, and we see it even to-day surviving to a certain extent in the "Ras" and the "Garba" dances of Gujarat and in the "Gumar" dance of Marwad. The Ras dance is either performed by men or women or by both. They carry two wooden sticks in their hands and strike against each others while dancing in a circle. Their movements of the hands make very beautiful patterns especially when they turn and sit down and again move along in a circle. The sweet sound produced by striking the sticks and their song make a happy musical combination. The Garba dance is only performed by girls in teens. While playing Garba the girls move in a circle with the clapping of their delicate hands. This clapping gives the correct beats for their song. They turn round and round and their clapping made faster and the singing sweeter. They take sudden steps in front, go back in the same tempo and again in front.

The whole of Hindu dancing is divided into two principal parts, "Lasya" and "Tandava,"

the dancing for men and the dancing for women. But none of the either sex is debarred from practising any of the two.

They are symbolic to a great extent and it is very difficult for an uneducated audience to comprehend the full meaning of the dances.

But it has its own charm and beauty. The lack of understanding its meaning does not debar us from enjoying it. The "mudras" are beautiful rhythmic movements of the hands which are very attractive and graceful. The sparkling eyes, the softly moving eye-brows, the lips with a ripple of gentle laughter are all things that make the face of a dancer greatly alluring and it is indeed an experience to watch the performance.

The word "Kathakali" means a dance-drama and it could be appropriately translated as "Ballet". Today in "Kathakali" we have episodes taken both from Mahabharata and Ramayana. In this performance, the whole drama is recited by the musicians to the accompaniment of drums and symbols; and the Kathakali actors never speak a single word during all their acting, but translate the whole drama into gestures and dance movements. The dialogue, therefore automatically is translated into "mudras." Unlike Bharat Natya dances that are practised by Tamil girls, the "Kathakali mudras" are more expressive and direct. Their conventional code of gesture-language is complete to the last point. The Kathakali artistes possess a rare mastery over their facial muscles, and they can make a sad episode utterly poignant and agonising even by shedding tears. The fighting-scenes are so exciting and terrifying that children and women get easily frightened.

The "Kathakali" artistes execute "Rasa-abhinaya," very skilfully and artistically. The "mudras" and the "Rasa-abhinaya" along with the dancing feet that produce bells-idioms, combine to make "Kathakali" a classical art of universal appeal. The "Kathakali" actors of repute at times take dance-license like the great poets that take poetic-licence. They omit at times the lengthy foot-work or the bells-idioms and digress to emphasise their own sentiment.

India has dances, perhaps the most beautiful dances in the world, but their accessories are lost. But to-day, thank God, we have sufficient material

to help us to revive them. "If winter comes can spring be far behind?" In India, I am happy to say, the spring has set in. Educated people and devotees of Hindu art and culture have started in right earnest to revive and restore them to the original high pedestal.

Foot-work

The foot-work in Hindu-dancing is very intricate and extremely difficult. To start with, we take up a single traditional rhythm, may it be of six or eight or sixteen or any number of beats having a certain number of emphasis. The dance is arranged according to it, and in between the emphasis of this rhythm are inserted elaborate bells-idioms. What I mean by bells-idioms is a set group of words having no meaning but an intrinsic rhythm of their own. It is these bells-idioms that a dancer reproduces by performing his foot-work. The Hindu-dancer that ties those tiny little tinkling bells round his legs, is a primal factor that make Hindu dancing not only expressive but also musical. The music of the bells is controlled with an extraordinary mastery by the dancer with his foot-work, and it can be made as violent or as sweet according to the sentiment that is being danced. This clearly shows what an important part a pair of bells plays in Hindu dancing. As the dancer performs his dance, the music of his bells creates the very required atmosphere. And it is these chimes of the bells that make Hindu dancing nationally distinct and significant.

Every province in India has developed its own art forms, and this tendency is distinctly noticed in drama, dance, music and folklore. In the North India we have a highly finished dance called the "Kathak" dancing. The centre of this dancing is Jaipur but now it is spread all over North India. As all Kathak dancers were Vaishnavites, they drew their main inspiration for dancing from the life of Lord Krishna.

This dance technique has a highly elaborate and most difficult foot-work. It is a great pleasure even to recite its bells-idioms, and in fact they have become a part of the vocal music. Dancers often compete with each other in performing its intricate foot-work. The Kathak dancer ties nearly 200 bells round each leg and the music produced by them at times rises to the highest pitch like that of the roaring sea and

at times is subdued into the sweet tinkling of a single bell like that of a rivulet. To achieve such a mastery in Kathak dancing requires a serious training of at least five years. The drummer that accompanies this dancing has to reproduce all bells-idioms executed by the performer on drums, and it is no easy task.

An epidemic has sedulously spread amongst the Indian aspirants of Oriental Dances, to have some name tailed with their dances whatever they might mean. Of late, the "Kathakali," "Kathak" and few other dances have practically plagued upon the present Indian Dancing Messiahs(?) and they are adamant to have these dances wherever they get opportunity, despite their utter ignorance of what these mean. Many of them again, do not know even, where these dances come from. They have neither a following nor a programme while they are on with their dancing bouts, writes Miss Auzurie in an article for *Sunday Standard*.

"As most of the audience, these dancers can have, are spectators rather than pupils of this Art, they may be made easy victims to the nonsense of these dancers. Moreover the public generally having less time in scrutinizing the dances, swallow what they are asked to, like pills of quinine; because once they fall prey to the high sounding publicity with self-made certificates, the poor public accept the recitals more from the standpoint of enjoyment to give respite to their tired limbs and bamboozled brain, than taking it from the artistic point of view.

"To be concise, let us take the example of Kathakali and Kathak. The Kathakali and Kathak dances have become the pursuit of many Indian and foreign dancers—the former both in films and on stage, the latter for their world tour mania. But if these dances are analysed, it would hardly fall into the category of real Kathakali or Kathak.

Dravidian Origin

"Many hardly know that Kathakali is not only a dance but a dance drama having its origin from Thattakali. And the solidarity of my statement may be best proved by having a look into its origin from the land of the Dravidians in the lower parts of Deccan. These Thattakali dances were prevalent amongst the Dravidians, during the days when civilization did not

start its propaganda. And by that time these Dravidians used to express their valour, chivalry and freeness of mind through these Thattatakali dances, especially these dances were their best medium of paying homage and of showing loyalty and devotion to their some particular god. And only the males used to dance but in the female costume, although costumes were very seldom used.

"As time passed, people began to take interest in these dances but in a civilised form by adding not only music with it, but also songs, wording of which having in keeping with the movements of the body. So when these Dravidians became more civilised they performed these dances having songs to be sung simultaneously, by a host of others, accompanied by music. And still these dance dramas are recited by the Dravidians in season and out.

"But alas, how many of my contemporaries observe these rules when they tell the world with Kathakali, nor even they know sometimes.

Need for Real Productions

"As to the Kathak dance which to-day must lead the programme of nearly every dancer, I would like to break the slumbers of many who

need to, that there had never been any dance nor shall ever be, in the name of Kathak. In Northern India, there had been a class of people who were worshippers of Lord Krishna the emblem of purity and all pervasiveness and the symbol of love and romance, according to Bengal Vaishnavism. And these people used to worship Lord Krishna in their own way, i.e., by slow and rhythmical movements of their bodies along with holy slogans. Their dances signified something quiet, all-romantic and melodious—as if in the dream land of love and devotion. Heavy steps and sudden jumps were out of question in respect of such devotional dances of these people. And these people were called Kathaks (teller), but not their dances. The dances of these Kathaks owe its origin to the house of late-lamented Janki Prasad Giriji, a real Bhakta (staunch worshipper of the Lord) and Pandi Gopal is responsible for its having been practised by many other people of his own belief. So we find, there had never been the existence of any dance in India in the name of Kathak. But yet there must have been in the opinion of some of these dancers in helping them to have their programme attractive and bulky.

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"Filming in Kashmir"

BY

Enakshi Rama Rau, M.A., (Hons.)

[Enakshi Rama Rao, the popular star of *Awakening* needs no introduction to S. India belonging to S. India itself. The star had recently been to Kashmir, featuring in a picture directed by her distinguished husband Mr. Bhavnani entitled *Himalaya-ki-Deti* or the *Daughter of the Himalayas*. Kashmir had long been the lure of the world tourists not to speak of Indian love as well on account of its natural beauty and scenic splendours. The article below gives some of the places visited by her and Kashmir which has long been the resort of Tourists can also be the lure of the screen.—Ed.]



Filming scenes in Kashmir, has been a very different experience to that of filming in India. To my mind, it must be the most beautiful country in the world. That makes it most difficult to choose scenes; for the Director has a desire to shoot every spot that he sees. We were very fortunate to get permission to take scenes in the State. Our first place of work was Srinagar. The Dal Lake, which has become famous for its beauty was in the month of July just perfect. The silver birches and willow trees drooped with limpid grace over the water's edge and cast on it feathery shadows. Deep pink and gold sunsets surrounded by heavy white clouds painted the lake a rainbow tint. Fields of lotus buds were in full bloom, and there were literally thousands of these pink flowers forming a veritable carpet on the green surface of the lake.

In the Nishat and Shalimar Gardens, giant pink, white and yellow roses; many multi-coloured blossoms were profuse on the trees and in beds set between the playing fountains. The high chenar trees peculiar to Kashmir, were spreading their pretty tree foil leaves in masses along their branches and the tall popular trees standing like many soldiers formed a gorgeous cavalcade along the avenues that ran between the rice fields.

Again, the Jhelum river replenished with a large stock of melted snow dashed in foaming cascades all along the mountain roads and fell in waterfalls over the gorges. Manasibal lake, blue in the sunshine, carried many lotus buds on her gleaming surface, and looked calmly at the drooping walnut, pear and apple trees laden with young green fruit added hundred-fold to its

beauty. While Harbin Lake, set like a gem in a frame of pine-covered mountains and banks surrounded with garden flowers, reminded one, of a giant emerald.

The ancient temple of Sri Shankaracharya called Thakt-e-Suleiman, situated right on the top of a high hill and overlooking the Dal Lake commanded a rear view of the whole of Srinagar and the neighbouring valleys. At this time of the year, it was a pretty picture indeed with the winding Jhelum far below picking its way between tall crags and masses of Pine and fruit trees. The little villages, with their quaint wooden huts and fields full of maize, pumpkins, cucumbers, and rice, gave that human touch which discriminates nature from civilisation.

Then again, the road from Srinagar to Jammu, with its curving turns now in the mountains, now in the midst of fir trees with a glimpse of the Chenab river speeding over the stony vales. To come at last we come to the temples of Ragunath in Jammu with their circular arrangement of tall domes and spirals.

These were some of the beautiful locations that we have been fortunate enough in getting for our latest picture. There are many exterior scenes in the story and so Mr. Bhavnani has made full use of these. Especially unique are the quaint shikaras shaped like small gondolas that are rowed along the Dal Lake and the river that runs through the town. These have been included in many exciting scenes. Altogether a visit to Kashmir is worth its weight in gold.

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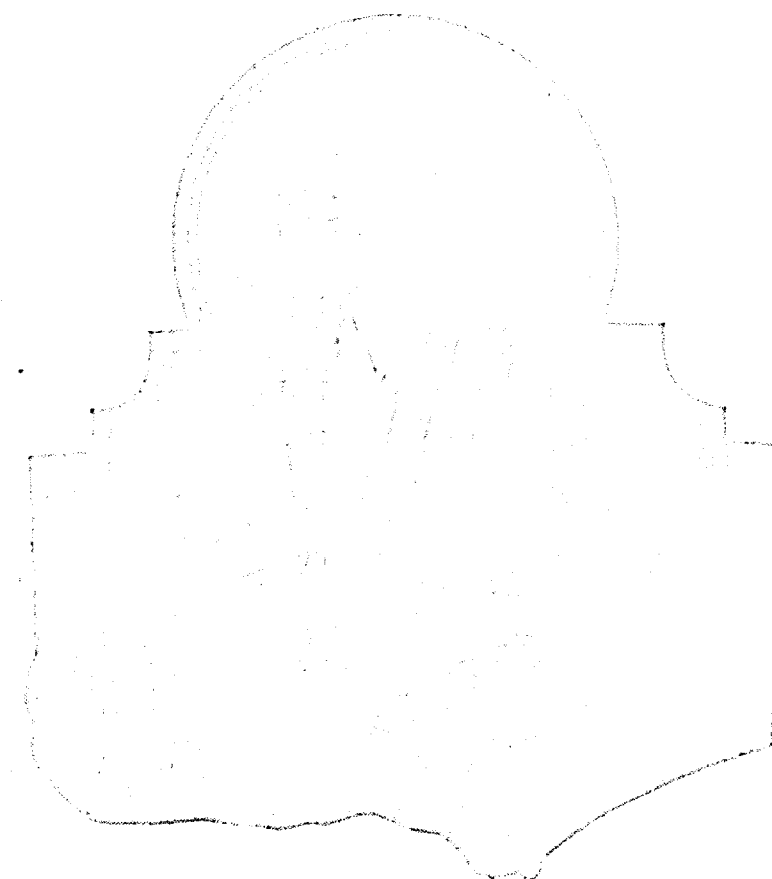
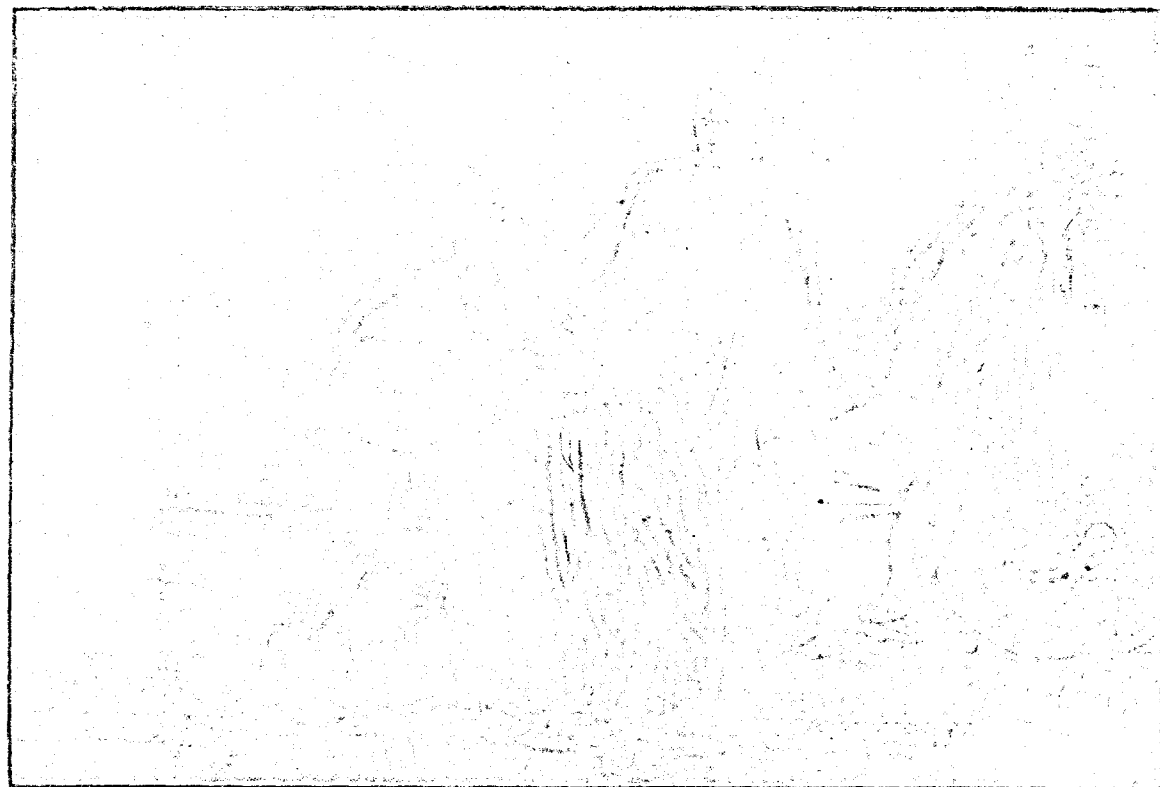
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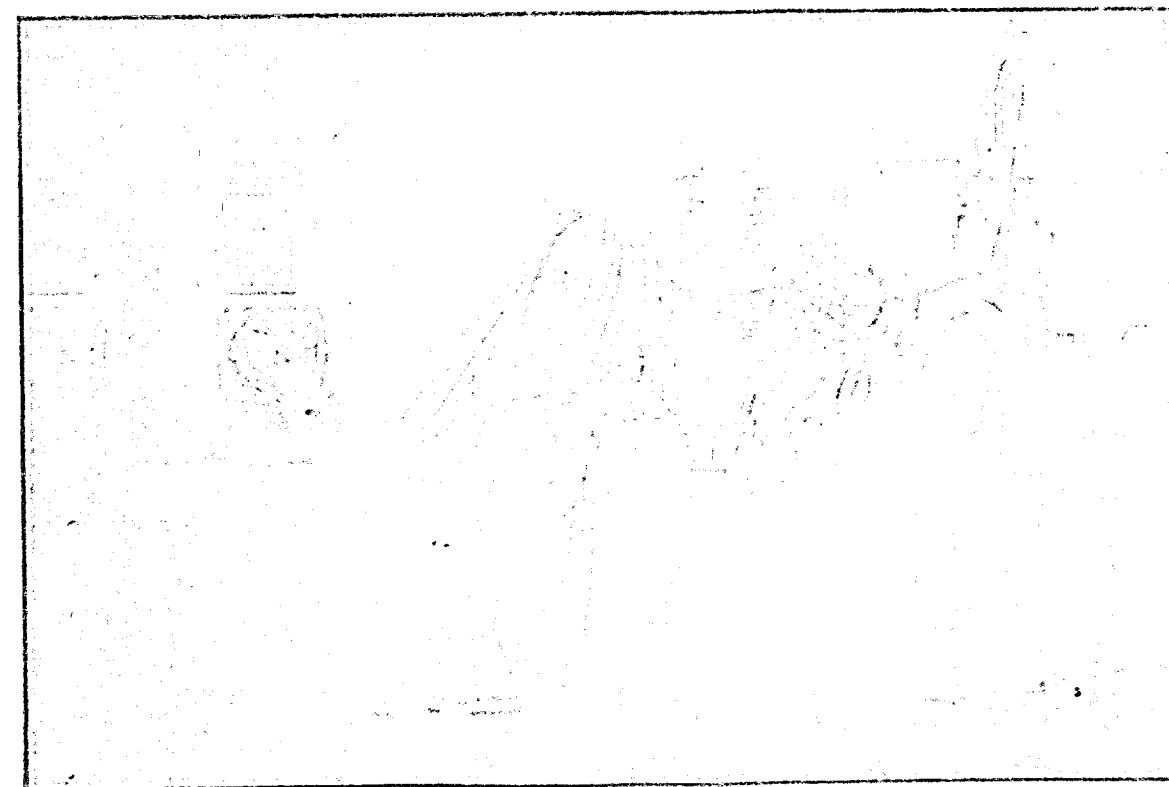
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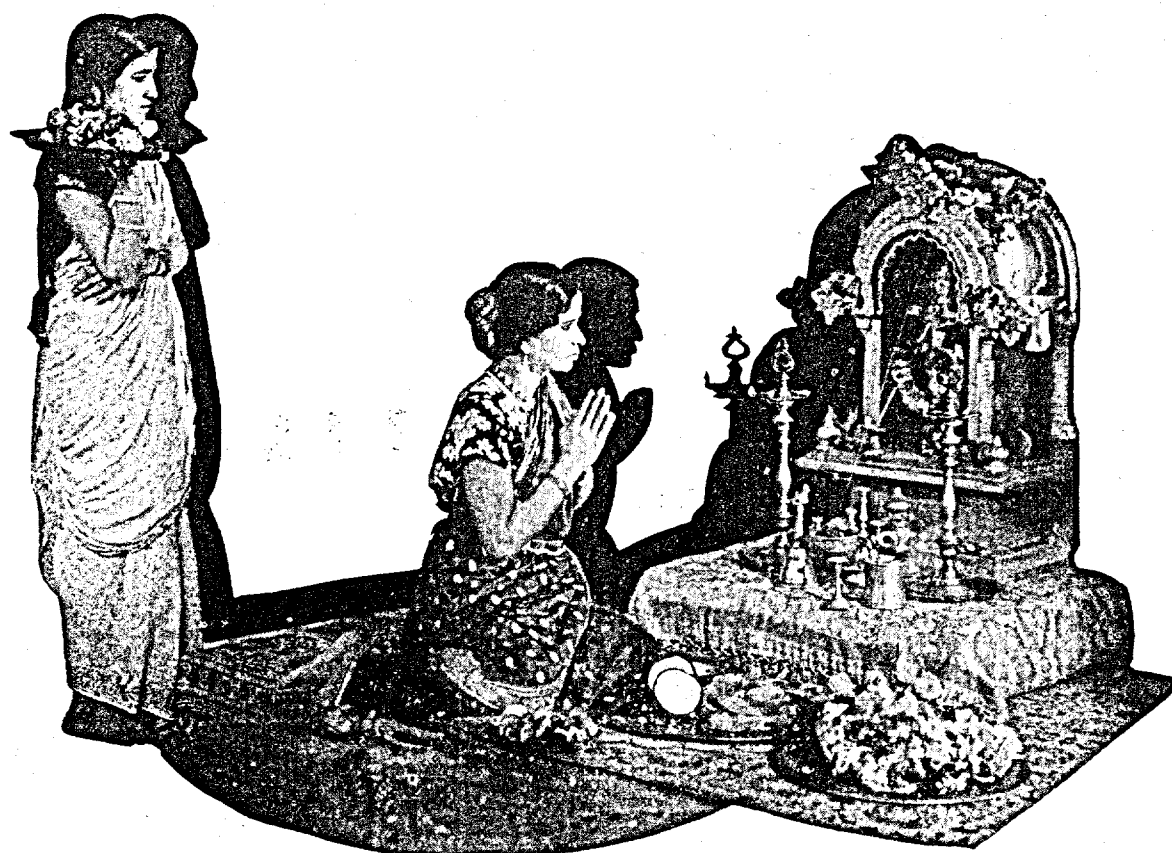
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The Artist and the Film

BY

Sheikh Iftekhar Rasool

[Mr. Sheikh Iftekhar Rasool, a regular contributor of intelligent, educative articles to our journal comes out with yet another in this article. As one with abundant practical experience in the cinematic art his article will doubtless evoke keen interest among those who love cinema as an Art first and foremost.—Ed.]

Up to the present, the contribution which modern art has made to the cinema has been practically negligible. With the exception of the Walt Disney cartoons, and all the trivial accessories of modernity in the shape of decoration and furnishing, the film, from the purely pictorial point of view, is very much in the position of the art of some seventy years ago. Neither modern



clothes nor modern gags, helped out by the feeble imitations of Gauguin or the emasculated examples of Archipenko which adorn film interiors, can hide the essential poverty and deprivation which the cinema has suffered in its ruthless exclusion of the artist from its making.

With it all, this rigorous concentration of the film in the hands of commercially-minded business men, it still remains a truism that the artist, and the artist alone, is the one person capable

of transforming the howling, lusty incontinences of present-day cinema into the terms of a real art. The film is so peculiarly his medium, from the visual point of view. It offers him the means of bringing to life those special qualities of plastic form and conception, that sensibility to design, which are outwith the scope of stage presentation.

There are undisputed angles of the cinema from which the artist should be properly excluded, except in his photographic capacity. Drama, in its essential meaning of the presentation of human destiny by means of the individual, will always stand or fall by the fundamental purpose which gives it life, but there are still many, and much-neglected ways, in which the artist can bring an almost wholly-original offering to the screen.

Something of what may ultimately be accomplished can be glimpsed from the Disney cartoons. Here we see the imagination of the painter at work in his own particular medium, the creation of significant form, divorced from the actual world of reality.

It would be rather futile to dispute at this date, in view of the vast popularity of Mickey Mouse, the immense influence which a mere pictorial symbol can have on the imagination of the people. Mickey is a star of the first magnitude, a creature of fantasy, who can yet exercise an appeal denied to all but the greatest of actors.

A New Approach.

A new approach, of course, would be needed on the part of directors if the modern experiments in the visual arts were to be properly incorporated into the film. The commercial Caliph, with his florid imagination, and entire lack of visual perception, would have to give way to the man who could weave the tragi-comedy

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of life out of the inter-relationship of masses and planes, of form, and eventually, colour.

A good deal of substantial support may be advanced for the belief that abstract cinematic art, when it comes, will be able to exert quite as catholic an appeal as the realistic drama of the present day. There is as vast a scope, within its symbolic bounds, as has been shown to exist between the blood-and-thunder crudities of melodrama and the more rare and subtle revelations of the higher drama. The intelligence of the film-going public is not the negligible factor which directors would have us believe. The average film at the present time, whether Indian or foreign, is definitely created for the rapturous attentions of the adolescent, but there is no basis for the belief that the whole of the cinema-loving public is in a state of juvenility.

Certainly to the more nature in mind, abstract art, if allowed free access to the cinema, would have a tremendous appeal, and it is here that the fallacy of technique must be exposed. Technique is not, and never will be art. Technique is applied thought, not creative thought, and it is creative thought which is so badly needed in the cinema of the present day. Technique can use the machine for all it is worth, but it cannot supply it with the life-giving material which is its real source of vitality.

Let us, for the sake of illustration, try to demonstrate how modern experimental art may help the cinema by the use of human material. Suppose we begin with a two-reel drama of the Edgar Allan Poe type, or the creation of a film round the story of H.G. Well's 'Invisible Man'?

The essential charm of such stories lies in their element of pure fantasy. They have little relationship to flesh-and-blood realities, but are definite creations of the imagination. If an actor appeared (as inevitably he would) in such a grotesque or imaginative film, with an ordinary make-up, and surrounded by the paraphernalia of the star system, all sense of fantasy would be dispelled, for the essence of fantasy lies, as has been said, in its separation from the everyday world, and actors (being what they are) are very much of the world of everyday. The illusion would have vanished, and it is here that modern art can come to the aid of naturalism.

Symbolic Effect.

Masks are the finest symbols obtainable for the elimination of the human, and the deeper conveyance of a sense of the unreal, and should be used extensively in experimental film. Light and shadow must also play a very important part, and an intelligent use of symbolic backgrounds, such as those of Miro, would be of invaluable help. Gesture and movement are of primary artistic importance, and only the actor who could express himself throughout the medium of his whole body could be utilised. The significance achieved by such mime has already been seen at its best in the Ballets Russes productions of 'Choreartium' and 'Les Presages.'

The entire film need not be pure mime, but all talk would have to be incorporated into the movement, and not allowed to escape as an individual aberration from the complete design. Music and sound effects could be made by illusion to emanate from various points of the action. The endeavour would be, in other words, to generalise speech effects, and localise music and sound effects, using all such as definite accent notes but no obstructive attractions. Tremendous use could be made of the revolving light and wheel, and it would be expedient to employ an inclined stage of perhaps one in eight or one in ten. The essential purpose behind all such abstraction of the human would not be the elimination of the flesh-and-blood actor, as such, but the attempted intensification of symbolic effect.

Cinematic Art

The naturalistic play has its unquestionable place in the life of cinematic art. It presents the human problem in a comprehensible form to the mass of the people. Its appeal rests primarily on the personality of the actor, and the authenticity of the emotions he is interpreting, but the experimental cinema has the unique opportunity, if it so wills, of wandering into the rare atmosphere of intensified life and thought, by means of abstract symbols. In such a world the actors themselves would be transformed into works of art, fitting as an integral part into the whole design. The abilities of the modern scenic painter, and not those of the mere property man,

(Contd. on page 14).

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Vocal Music...A Plea for A Short Programme

By

T. S. T. Chari, B.A., A.I.I.Sc., A.I.C.

[Mr. T. S. T. Chariar, the Chemical Examiner of Madras Customs is a brilliant vocal musician. He belongs to the reformist class of musicians who delight in preserving the traditional glory of S. Indian music. He has a rich pleasing voice which rarely fails to please any intelligent music lover at the same time satisfying all the technical aspects without making music mainly technical or a gymnasium of words. His article below should be read in the interests of music preservation and presentation to the public as it should be done and containing as it does many humorous remarks which but rightly present the modern mangled methods by some professionals—not all. His remarks should equally apply to cine-music on the silver screen which presents another gory aspect.—Ed.]

MUSIC hath charms' is an old saying as old as the world itself. I wish somebody could prove that old adage after staying inside a music hall for four long hours, very nearly asphyxiated by the polluted air emitted from a thousand nostrils ; surveying and hearing all the while, a fragile man who looks like a sucked orange—he is

end, both the musician and the audience join hands in defeating the very principle of good music.

I am putting in here a plea for a short programme which will not only enable the musician to give his best but also treats the audience all the time to good music. It is not uncommon when there is a long programme to be gone through, the musician distributes his favours to his auxiliaries whom people call accompaniments. In such instances, the audience are treated to an unwelcome contest on the platform. In this connection, I may point out the praiseworthy attempt made by the Madras Music Academy to restrict the programme and I should say such worthy attempts deserve better encouragement from the public than has been hitherto forthcoming.



the musician. The long programme which is in vogue to-day does neither good to the musician nor to the audience. The musician after a prolonged ordeal which is wrongly termed as music, presents an appearance like a mashed potato. The audience on their part, fresh with the intention of hearing good music when they come in, fizzle out in their enthusiasm and begin discussing race tips or the political situation. In the

My own experience as an amateur tells me that a short programme for two hours is not only a welcome change but will also be relished by music lovers in busy cities like Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, as a healthy diversion after the day's toil. If this short programme proves popular, good musical programmes need not wait for Sundays or other holidays.

It may sometimes be thought that a short programme can't do justice to the musician or to the music which he is called upon to sing. But I differ from that point of view. A short

programme can be effective and it will not be only a tabloid form of music.

A short programme to be successful should have two aspects fulfilled which I may term as internal and external to the musician. The musician should choose a locality with good acoustic properties where he may not be called upon to increase the intensity of the tone in trying to drown the noise outside. The musician should also limit his accompaniments to mridangam and violin. The accompaniments should play their proper role and should not usurp the place of the musician and try to relegate him to the background. Oftentimes, it does happen that accompaniments join hands and try to replace the musician while he, with folded hands looks helpless. These factors we may term as external to the musician, the judicious choosing of which, will certainly make a short programme successful.

There are many factors internal to the musician which when rightly understood and observed, will contribute to the success of a short programme. I have often wondered at the temerity of our Vidwans failing to come at the scheduled time. Some imagine that it just gives them added prestige, but if a musician is to be successful he should arrive at the appointed time. He should mean business. It makes him sure beforehand and also takes the audience in good spirit. I have known cases where musicians turn up late and find the audience stamping and booing. Instead of applause and good cheer meeting them, they meet a surly audience. Certainly, it is a bad atmosphere to begin with and the musician feels handicapped in allaying the resentment of the audience.

The musician alone is not to be blamed for this state of things. Even if the musician turns up at the scheduled time, he has to wait for some "BIG" man of the show to peep in. The Secretary of the Sabha whispers something in the ear of the musician. The musician nods and nibbles at some more cloves and looks sheepish. The whole atmosphere resembles that of a scene, in a Quaker meeting. The musician should start his programme at the appointed time whether the self-styled music critic or the patron is present at the time or not. For, after all, it is the business of the musician to entertain the audience

and it will be akin to insult to keep the audience waiting for the arrival of the "BIG" man.

The musician should not only be an adept in singing good music but also in the art of pleasing the audience. He should, before selecting the pieces, understand the nature of the audience. It will be bad choice for example to select ultra-classical pieces and look at rows of people uninterested. It may perhaps be very difficult sometimes to choose songs suited to the audience but it is easy for a trained musician to select some 'feeler' types before he warms up.

My own experience prompts me to say that when short programmes are gone through, the nature of the programme also counts much. I shall here point out that in a short programme the following procedure may be followed:

The musician can begin with a varnam which will occupy him about five minutes. He may follow this up by singing two or three madhyamakala kirtanas which he can do inside twenty minutes; after this for a change he can sing (a) either a ragam, pallavi with short swara sancharas or (b) Ragams, Kirtanams with short swara sancharas, depending on the occasions and the nature of the audience. This may extend upto forty minutes. After this, one or two padams, a ragamalika may be sung and the whole thing may be finished by singing minor interesting Javalis and National songs. All these will occupy about one hour. On the whole if the procedure outlined above is followed a two-hour programme should prove a successful one.

I am tempted to suggest some other internal factors which make or mar the musician. A musician if he is to be successful should avoid mannerisms and should present his pieces in a pleasant, and easy style. It should not be thought that he is labouring in bringing out good music. The musician should also take care that his voice is always attuned to the sruti. It will also be a point in his favour if the musician gives as much importance to the moods and sentiments of the composition as to the sancharakramas of the Ragam.

In the end, I can say with confidence that a two-hour music programme will be a welcome change and given the factors mentioned above, I have no doubts about its success.



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"VIPRANARAYANA"



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"SAINT ARUNAGIRI"



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NOVEMBER 1937

TALK-A-TONE

37

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BANGALORE CITY



WARNER BAXTER & ELIZABETH ALLEN in "SLAVE SHIP"
SLAVE SHIP:

The fascination and illimitable mystery of the sea have been the source of literature as greatest stories and the screen's most profitable pictures. Fox Twentieth Century comes out with "Slave Ship" in which all the emotional thorns surge, making the blood leap and the heart pound with eager excitement. It is a saga that only the Ocean could inspire and so heroic in its conception that only the screen could possibly depict it in all its naked truth.

The era of slave trading between 1750 and 1840 nurtured the most daring, the most unscrupulous and most hardy bred sea faring men in the entire history of sailing. Warner Baxter as a Yankee Captain plans to give up the slave traffic but is double crossed by his mutinous crew under the influence of Wallace Berry. Thus the voyage he planned as a honeymoon with his young bride, Elizabeth Allen becomes a slave-running adventure with the couple continuously in the jaws of death.

From The West

William Faulkner wrote the story, Tay Garnett one of Hollywoods experienced Yachtman directed the piece. "Slave Ship" once more brings to movie audiences the tang of the salt sea, the creaking timbers croaking under strain and the interesting melodrama with the dangers incidents to sailing ships on the punding the seas complete the entire picture of this sea saga.

EMPEROR'S CANDLE STICK:

An M. G. M. gorgeous production exquisite cameo-like work by Luise Rainer and the always satisfying performance of Bill Powell make this picture fine though it is said the creaking story built around spy activities is antique and melodramatic. Others in the cast are E. E. Clive, Robert young, Maurren O'Sullivan and Frank Morgan making a splendid team work.

HIGH WIDE AND HANDSOME:

A Paramount picture which as a combination of epic, musical and thundering melodrama this screen experiment is a clutter of good and bad

entertainment. At times it seems it curdles badly. But Ireno Dunne, in fine voice, is alone worth the admission price. She is presented as a carnival girl who marries farmer Randolph Scott. He discovers oil, sets up a battle for land rights, tries to make his wife happy.

VICTORIA THE GREAT:

News come from abroad that since the days of the 'Private Life of Henry VII' no other picture earned the unique homage of Filmgoers-critics-players and all as *Victoria the Great* has done. The film does not pretend to present a record of History but it succeeds because of its spectacular historical background with the main interest of the story revolving around the private life of the Queen with her consort. The film necessarily restricts its portrayal to the Queen and in this it has succeeded to present a good film of public interest.



Anna Neagle in & as "Queen Victoria" (R.K.O.)

Opening with the young Queen bewildered by the accession to a great throne we see the arrival of the first unwilling German Prince in Albert. Follows a courtship-a marriage-a brief

honeymoon and then the affairs of the Queen are claimed by the State. A tussle ensues for a brief while between the couple and Albert advises the Queen to invoke his help which he promises to a young Queen. Then it is always Queen Victoria and the husband Albert when out of overwork and selfless work the husband dies. The strong Queen now becomes the pathetic widow of Windsor. And then the film rounds about the pagentry and ceremonials except for one scene between Gladstone and the Queen after which she emerges out of her enforced seclusion and retirement from public and state life.

Helbert Wilcox's direction is said to be the best and highly imaginative. Authentic settings, a brilliant supporting cast and some wonderful make-ups mark this picture as its other distinguishing qualities.

Anna Neagle's Queen Victoria is brilliant. She displays great restraint and depth in her actions. When she threatens to abdicate when Palmerston attacks Albert she gives some powerful and forceful touches to her role. Her make up is perfect and she ages most naturally considering her freshness and youth. The rest of the cast is first rate living as they should live in the picture with life and blood.

Helbert Wilcox has done a magnificent job in *Victoria the Great* and the picture is acclaimed as really great in all respects.

EMILE ZOLA:

Paul Muni the noted character actor, looks into the role of Emile Zola, whose life-story is now being rendered into a film-drama by Warner Brothers. Paul Muni the academy award winner steps out and tops his "Louis Pasteur" performance with the "Life of Emile Zola. "When you see Zola you will probably marvel, therefore, at the close resemblance you find in him to the great personality. How he picked a rose from the streets of Paris and made the immortal Nana is graphically brought out on the screen in telling reels. The cast includes with Paul Muni, others like Gale Sondergaard, Joseph Schildkraut, Gloria Holden, Donald Crisp, Erin O'Brien-Moore, Henry O'Neill, Louis Calhern, Morris Carnovsky and others. It is directed by William Dieterle.

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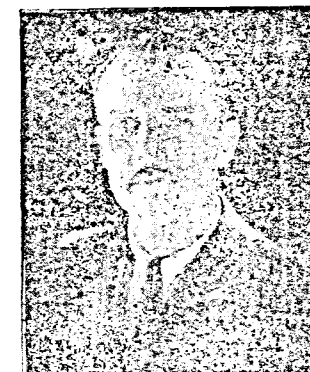
SELECT PICTURES CIRCUIT

BANGALORE CITY

Movie Personalities In Public Eye

B. C. MITRA.—(Camera-man, Berlin.)

Technical Training.—Studied five years in German Schools and Studios. Worked in many Bombay and Calcutta Studios as a photographer. Now at Modern Theatres Ltd., Salem.



Coming Hit.—"Ambika-pathi" of Salem Sanker Films.



S. B. NAYAMPALLY.—The South Indian Character Actor. Mastery over make-ups.

Noted Triumph.—"Satan Weeps" and "Zamboo." To join Sagar Film Co., Bombay shortly & likely

Noted Production.—"The Mill" of Ajanta Cine-tone.

Latest Production.—Devi Films' "Purandaradas" and Choudeswari Films' "Bakta Namdev."

ELLIS R. DUNGAN.—Of Hollywood Fame. Directed "Sati Leelavati," "Seemanthani."

Noted Directorial Triumph.—"Two Brothers" of Parameswar Sound Pictures.



to appear in some Tamil films. Married and has a son.



Y. V. RAO.—Entered film line in 1925. Began with Laxmi Pictures & Royal Art Studios, Bombay.



Brain behind technique in General Pictures Corporation, Madras. Worked in Mysore Film Co., Bangalore.

Noted Directorial Triumph. Royal Talkies' "Chintamani". Notable acting triumph as "Manohar" in Chintamani.

Coming Hit.—"Swarnalata" of Rajendra Films.

MUTHUSWAMY.—Better known as Murugadasa. Sometimes editor of



Film Journal *Sound & Shadow*. Entered Directorial line in Vel Pictures' "*Markandeya*."

Noted Directorial Triumph.—"Ramdass" of Parameswar Sound Pictures.
Coming Hit.—"Sundaramoorthy Nayanar" of Karthikeya Films.



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AMMAL**

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on the screen in "*Ramnuja*" of Srinivas Cine-tone.

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RATAN BAI & W. M. KHAN in "*USNE KYA SOCHA*" (Imperial)



SULOCHANA in "SEARCH LIGHT" (Imperial)



Uma Sashi and Nazam in
"Anath Ashram"

ANATH ASHRAM

Produced by the New Theatres Ltd., Calcutta.

Directed by Hemchander.

Photographed by Yusuf Mulji.

Audiography by Bani Dutt.

Music by R. C. Boral.

Featuring: Uma Sashi, Najam, Prithviraj,
Nawab, etc.

Released at the Select Talkies, Madras on
29-10-37.

Class.....A

The picture is not up to the high standard of the New Theatres and there is a distinct fall in many respects. The theme is a beaten one with the widow-marriage being made use of, while the title of the picture *Anath Ashram* is misleading in that, there is not much of orphanage scenes in the picture.

Uma Sashi has given an exhibition of pathos. One is not much thrilled with her as in the days of *Chandidas*. Prithviraj has been given a role which need not have been included in the film at all. Without his role the picture would not have lost its entertainment value. It is a

pity he is now-a-days being given only stop-gap roles. Jagadish as the coal miner gives a good performance after a poor beginning. Nawab gives a sustained and beautiful role and he is the one who gives his best in this picture. Najam has gone down both in appearance and acting.

The highlights of the picture lies in its excellent musical effects both vocal as well as background effects which are superb at places. R. C. Boral's work in this picture is highly commendable.

The photography and recording are of good standard. The outdoor shots have been taken very well.

With this picture the direction seems to have gone a step higher than that given by Hem Chander in the *Millionaire*. The lack of proper developments and weak scenario has made the picture presentation rather second glass in quality. Hem Chander is still a long way off to rise up in directorial line.

With New Theatre's name which has a bright reception among the public the picture is bound to be very popular wherever it is shown.

★ Editor's Evening With Pictures ★

DREAM LAND**Produced by Prakash Pictures, Bombay.****Featuring: Jayant, Sardar Akthar, Umakant, Shirin, etc.****Released at the Select Talkies from 14-10-37.**
Class.....B

A picture of the magic art with mysterious happenings which do not happen in real life form the main trend of the film with a love romance as its background. Comic interludes are well supplied and in short the picture is one that is bound to be very popular with the uneducated mass particularly.

I liked only Shirin in this picture since not only she presented a restrained action but came-raed well as a young girl of charm. Jayant is becoming fatter these days. Sardar Akthar was not up to much.

The Photography and recording were of a high order.

Much more than directorial ability the picture depends on its technicians for the trick scenes and therefore the work of the technicians especially the cameraman was highly commendable.

**KING VALLALA****(Tamil)****Produced by the Vel Pictures Ltd., Madras.****Directed by C. S. V. Shanker.****Sound by C. Biggs.****Featuring: Dhandapani Desigar, M. S. Deva-sena, C. S. Selvaratnam, M. L. Narayana Rao and others.****To be released at Broadway Talkies on 6-11-37.****Class.....B**

This is a semi-historical mythological hit of the screen bound to be very popular with the public of Madras. The story has been woven with lot of religious sentiments including sparkling and witty dialogues. The editing and direction has been done in a commendable manner and therefore the presentation on the screen is full of entertainment value to the public and is sure to result in a good box-office hit. There is undoubtedly a goldmine for the Vel Pictures in this picture.

The excellence of the picture lies around God-Paramasiva and his followers when they come down to the earth to test King Vallala. Added to this the role of Siva by C. S. Selvaratnam is well rendered and altogether gives a new conception of Siva hitherto not presented on the silver screen. Generally Siva is made a terrifying God with much of force and anger in him. But Selvaratnam's role gives the happier side of Siva and added to it the make-up and the calm manner in which he goes about his work is one that should be acclaimed by the public. Selvaratnam has given the best performance in this picture. Next to him comes the side characters with delightful touches that mark them particularly lifelike. The mama in dasi's house, the Brahmin portrayed by M. L. Narayana Rao, the mother Dasi, the villagers, have all been clothed in their own atmosphere giving real life and blood to their roles. Unfortunately I failed to like the principal roles in Vallala by Dandapani Desigar which was eclipsed by the masterly performance by Selvaratnam. The two wives of King Vallala again display great affectations and look stogy. But these main characters in no way affect the picture for they otherwise give prominence to the other minor roles and therefore present a picture of great entertainment and sustained interest.

The mass scenes in the Ichadanam by Vallala was realistic. The angles chosen in the picture, the lighting, the photography have all been done with commendable intelligence. The sound is good. The song-hits of Selvaratnam especially when he goes begging in the streets of Tiruvannamalai were gems and very pleasing to the ears. Dandapani Desigar comes next with his song hits. The songs of others could have been reduced to the minimum, thus even cutting the footage of the film to last for two hours only. The dialogues have been done with a sense of humour and without flowing to high literary Tamil and therefore understandable to the people in a dignified manner.

Direction should be given due praise. The picture runs smoothly throughout giving a sharp crisis with the coming of Siva and his followers to the Earth, thus enhancing the entertaining value with immense interest, and closing later on to a delightful end.

One more word about the excellent manner with which the followers of Siva crowd the houses of dancing girls. This scene was taken in a respectable and dignified manner while many pro-

The picture has immense potentialities to make Tamil Nad rave and bombard every box-office in South India. I am sure that this picture will run at least ten weeks in the city of



Paramasiva as Kumara Jangamar at Tiruvannamalai to test King Vallala

ducers would have descended to vulgarity. It has a great moral lesson bound to profit the erring-public to a great extent. All congratulations to the producers.

Madras and will positively result in a profit to the producers at the rate of Rs. 75 for every Rs. 100 invested in its production.

THE MIGHTY MYTHOLOGICAL MASTERPIECE**STUPENDOUS SETTINGS!****SPECTACULAR DANCE SCENES!****NAND KUMAR****IN TAMIL****with T. P. RAJALAXMI****NEW RAJALAXMI MORE
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BANGALORE CITY**

On The Sets

BOMBAY

Imperial: *Wah-ri-Duniya* has been released at the Imperial Cinema, Bombay on 16th October and is proving very popular with the public. With Sulochana in the lead it vividly portrays the social changes that were brought about in Hindu Society owing to the spread of education. The spirit of the revolting modern youth is also imparted in the film. The picturisation of some of the rich social pirates has an added attraction in the picture.

Kisan Kanya the first all colour picture is ready. Padma and Gulam Mohamed are in the main roles.

Mere Lal has been censored and awaits release. It deals with village life and treats with children effectively.

Vasant Bengali directed by Aspi is finished. He is to start work on *Flying Ranee*, *Royal Mail* and *Jaye Swadeshi* shortly.

Gunjal will start on *Mother India*.

Atorothy is busy with *Dulhan* with Ratan Bai in the lead.

Hafisjee has finished *Usne-Kya Socha* or *the Prisoner* with W. M. Khan, Ghaznavi and Ratan Bai in important roles.

Bombay Talkies: *Jeevan Prabha* the next starring the inimitable Devika Rani will be ready by the end of October. The story is about the India of today representing both the village and the city lives. Muntaz Ali the famous dancer and Kishore Sahu a young graduate from the Nagpur University and a new find of the concern will both appear opposite Devika Rani in this picture. Renuka Devi a highly educated lady featuring in this film will provide a surprise in this picture.

Dwaraka Pictures: *Parakh* awaits release. The high lights of the picture come in the court settings, lovely dance hits by Azuric, the acting of D. P. Bhargava and Madhav Kale and the song hits of Indira Wadker and Nurjehan. It deals with our own life and bound to be of great appeal to all.

Variety Pictures: *Saqi* is completed. Written by Dwaraka Khosla, dialogued by Munshi Sham, directed by J. P. Adwani acted by Khursheed, Jairaj,

Hari Shivdasani, Kamlaker it deals with the night club and is full of Romance? Rythm and Rapture. It is a breezy entertainment and the producers of *Shokh Dilruba* have yet another hit in *Saqi*. Already negotiations are afoot for the all India sale rights of the picture which may be concluded satisfactorily any day.

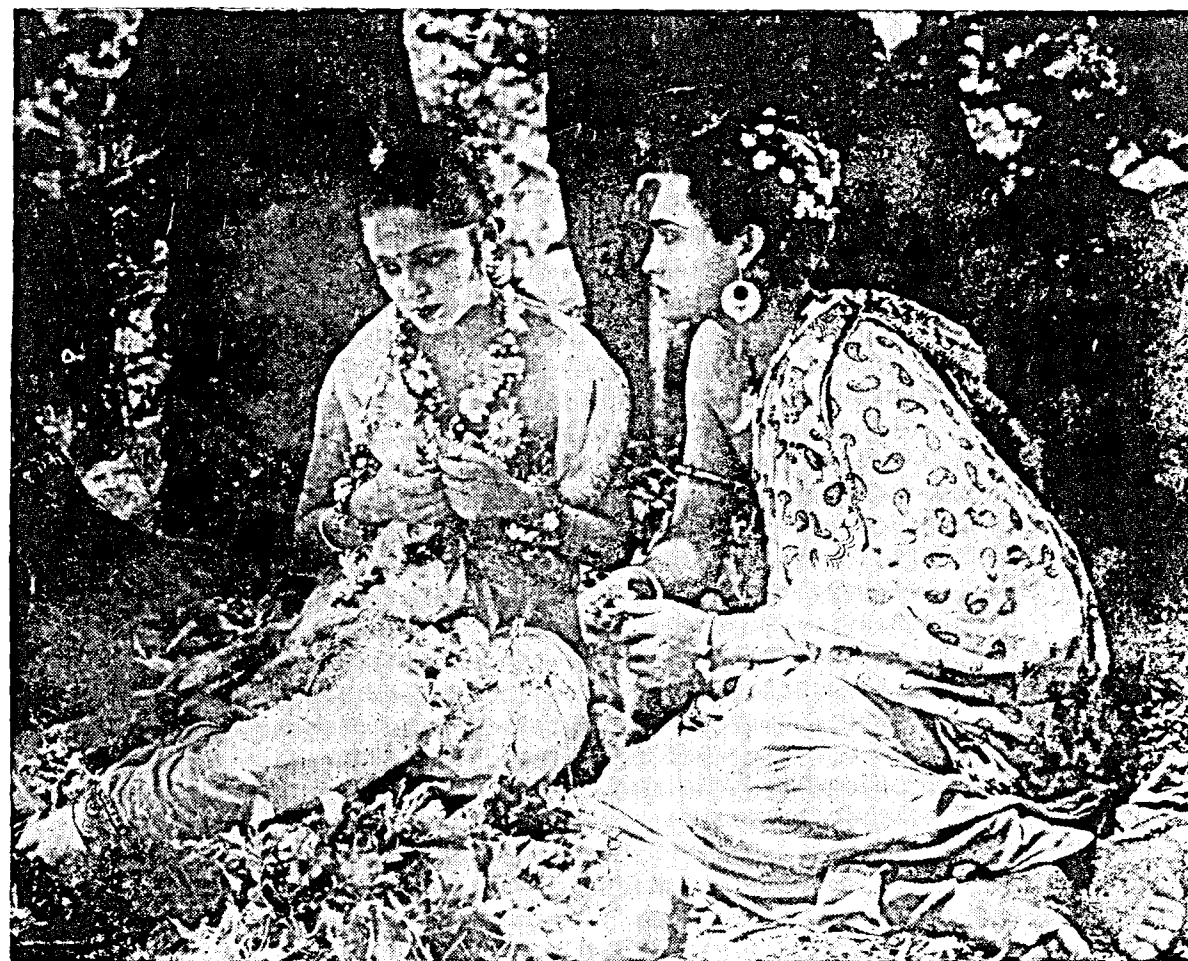
Wadia Movietone: *Toofani Tarzan* the all jungle thriller of the Company has been released both at the Lamington and the Edward of the Bombay city. It took 15 months to shoot the picture and Rs. 1,75,000 to picturise as cost. Directed by Homi Wadia the ace director of the Wadias this 100 per cent Jungle thriller is shot in actual Jungles with living Jungle animals. John Cavas plays the leading role with Gulshan, Dare-Devil Boman Shroff and the wonder dog Moti giving an able support to the main character. The picture is claimed by critics as the first of its kind on Indian soil.

Ranjit Film Co.: *Flame of Love* or *Shama Parvana* with Madhuri, Dilip and Ishwerlal is the coming hit of this Coy. Their next *The Three Warriors* is also ready and will be released at the Super Talkies, Bombay. Jayant Desai is busy with the arrangements for a gangster drama. Madhuri and E. Billimoria supported by Ishwerlal, Ghory and Charlie will feature in the picture. Limo the brilliant dog of Billimoria will be also cast in the picture.

Calcutta Film Exchange: The rumour that has been set afloat consequent to the sale of many New Theatre's picture had made some tongues wag, that the further pictures of N. T. may not be handled by them. This is at best the purposeless wagging of wagging tongues and while contradicting the same the N. T. authorities assure that the Calcutta Film Exchange will remain their permanent distributors for all times. If some pictures have been sold out that was due mainly due to certain prior obligations which compelled N. T. to sell.

CALCUTTA

New Theatres: 29th September was a red letter day in the annals of the company for on that day Nitin Bose started his picture. Saigal set the ball rol-



DEVIKA RANI & ASHOK KUMAR in SAVITRI
Shortly coming to Madras (Bombay Talkies)



S. D. SUBBALAKSHMI to come in "EKNATH" (Madras United Artistes)

ing with a neat speech about the lot of agriculturists in India. Nawab, Bhanoo Bannarjee, Pankaj Mullick, Sham Laha and others will be seen in this picture in very important roles. All of them looked like having reached the city only that day from the village and the village atmosphere in the picture will be preserved to the very letter both in the settings as well as in the roles. *Vidyapathi* the ace picture of the Coy is nearing completion. Director Barua will be starting a full length comedy shortly. Profulla Roy after shooting some scenes of *Abhignan* is busy rehearsing the subsequent scenes with Molina, Deb-bala, Sailen Chaudhari and Jiben Ganguli.

Film Corporation of India: When there is quiet and there is no fresh news from this concern you may be rest assured of a big surprise from them. They are now very busy with their programme of construction as well as the programme of shooting which may commence any day. So busy were all the executives of this concern that it is impossible to catch them to get some news. No sleep and no food unless things are made to come to a productive stage is the present motto of a'l in the Company.

POONA

Jayashree Films: *Nanda Kumar* is having a care and touch that only Dhaiber could give. A pair of finest breed were brought for the picture to be drawn by a beautiful chariot driven by Akrur carrying Lord Krishna to Dwaraka. The scene calls for wildest and reckless drive and Dhaiber who is Akrur will set his life to nought in this eventful scene which will evoke admiration and great thrill to fans. Govindarao Tembe as Nanda Kumar, Durga Bhai Khote as Yasodha and Dhaiber as Akrur will present the starring side with commendable histrionic talents. The Tamil *Nanda Kumar* is progressing side by side with the other versions.

Prabhat Film Co.: In more ways than one Prabhat's release of the *Unexpected* banged on Bombay fans. Firstly a new experiment was made in the release of the picture simultaneously in the Excelsior and the Krishna on the Dassera day, 14th October and secondly it is the first Social of Prabhat which by the presentation proved to many that Prabhat can equal any day any other concerns in the presentation of Social themes as well with a quality that we have seen in their other pictures. The story deals with an Orphan battered by an unscrupulous guardian, the pathetic faith of an old man that he is young enough

to bring home a boony young bride, the revolt of an educated young woman against being tricked into a mis-alliance and in short the carrying of the message of the war between the spirit and the flesh which is both familiar to both the East and the West were all brought with the dexterity of the great Shanta Ram. He has handled the picture with imagination and rare skill. It is claimed to be essentially a Shanta Apte vehicle. She gives a sympathetic turn to suffering and illuminates sorrow with a hit and humour so rarely seen by fans so far. Her vivid personality adds charm to her acting. Co-starred with her is Shakuntala Paranjpye the brilliant and much travelled famous daughter of the still more famous Vice Chancellor of the Lucknow University. A graduate of the Bombay University, she graduated at Cambridge and held a position of responsibility at the League of Nations at Geneva. In the home-soil she now makes her debut in the picture with the talents of a finished artiste. Gouri who made a sensation in *Tukaram* is another competent role in this picture. Kesharao Date is the leading actor and comes in the role of an old man who realises that hair dye cannot bring youth to an old-heart. He expresses some fine emotions and rises to great heights in the picture.

The Unexpected is therefore on both from casting point of view and the artistic presentations combine a rare treat which India is sure to appreciate and worship.

KARACHI

Golden Eagle Movietone: *Air Mail* is forging ahead in their studios at Karachi. It is a peculiar type of picture made to perfection with the co-operation of the aerial authorities. Navin Yagnik who appeared as ape man in *Zamboo* is risking his life every day by undertaking perilous stunts, jumping from the tops of gigantic cranes, ships and launches. Benjamin and Nazir are no way behind Navin in Stunts. Hansa Wadker the heroine is out for some thrills as well. She is one time up in the air, chasing air planes and supported by Vaidya and Rani she does the trick of picture making as it should be done. A scene was taken recently in which the roaring waves upset a launch carrying the actors and all of them have to be rescued with great difficulty and when they were brought ashore they were all unconscious. Clifton, Keamari Warf and Manora Islands all these form outdoor shots of the picture—all about sea and sea only. The filming of India's first air port-Karachi will be taken in next where you will see and

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TALK-A-TONE

NOVEMBER 1937

get astonished of the working of the Air hounds performing dare devil stunts between the earth and the blue sky. Wonderful thrilling are the only words with which this picture can best be described.

KOLHAPUR

Shalini Cinetone: Their next will be *Dhruva Kumar* in Marathi and Hindi. Bal. G. Pandharker will direct the piece with Leela in the main role.

Huns Pictures: *Jwala* is shaping grandly. In *Othello* their next Baburao Pandarkar and Chandra Mohan appear in two mighty roles as Othello and Iago respectively. Vinayak is also there somewhere. A star-studded picture with cine colour effect is to be taken.

Vipranarayana in Tamil of Madras Sound Studios is reported to have set a new technical standard for South Indian pictures.

An-all-children picture *Dhruva* by Prabha Pictures will also be taken here.

MADRAS

Aurora Film Corporation: Telugu *Vipranarayana*, has been finished by Director Ahindra Chowdry. With the expert advice of the Madras Manager Mr. Sundaresan the film has been specially made for South Indian taste. The story has been written by T. V. Veeraragavaswami of Tenali and admirably characterised by Kasturi Narasimha and Kanchanamala as *Vipranarayana* and *Devadevi* the film has all the entertainment attraction in it.

Their latest mythological production *Vipranarayana* Telugu having been passed by the Censors, awaits its "Gala premiere" at Bezwada, very shortly, and other important centres also in the Andhra Desa.

The story, it is reported, with Srirangam as its background is unfurled on the screen in a quite marvellously novel way, giving full dramatic intensity. The treatment is so nice without any unnecessary events and the tempo well-balanced. The musical side, unlike in other Telugu films so far released is a desirable departure, the songs and the tunes, being well composed giving them full literary value and grace.

Renaissance Theatre: They are producing two hits at the Sagar Studios, Bombay entitled *Jalaja* and *Jayaberigi*. *Jalaja* is a village girl imported to the city. Her mother is a dasi with money as the primary end of life. Song-hits, dance-hits mark the picture outstanding *Jayaberigai* is a musical attraction first and foremost. Every effort is being made by

the management to make them something different from the usual Tamil films.

Parameshwar Sound Pictures: They have announced the filming of *Bandit's Love*, written by Kalki the well-known writer of the *Ananda Vikatan*. The story has marvellous human twists and the producers being an intelligent lot will do full justice to bring the story in all its glory. Ellis R. Duncan will direct the picture.

Mayura Films: *Saint Arunagiri* is in the finishing stages. With the technical perfection of Shalini Cinetone the picture will be a marvel of art. The cast and the story is absorbing and experts handle it with care and thought. Their Hindi pictures *Kokila* and *Eternal Music*, of Sagar await release in the South. They have also *Savkari Pash*, of Shalini on hand.

✓ **Lakshmi Cinetone:** Mr. Gupta is on tour in the southern districts in connection with the selection of artistes for his tamil version. As soon as this is completed he will start for Bombay to commence shooting of his two pictures in Telugu and Tamil.

Kartikeya Films: *Sundaramoorthy Nayanar* directed by Mr. Muthuswamy is ready for release. For sheer presentation of a popular mythological plot there is no equal to it. A happy combination of acting combined with technique mark this picture a class by itself. Such technical jumbles as "Play back" "Re-recording" have been done in this picture with commendable intelligence. V. N. Sundaram is in the title role.

Mysore Fotofone Studios Ltd.: All is well with this concern and the management is keenly making its foundations stronger. The subscribed capital, we understand is mounting up and arrangements are completed to start production activities shortly.

Lotus Pictures Ltd.: The address of this concern will be "Sudharma" Ramasamy Iyer St., Lloyds Road, Cathedral P.O. Madras on and from 1st November 1937.

FIRST MADRAS PROVINCIAL FILM CONFERENCE

A report of the above Conference which took place in 1936 has been placed on the Editor's table on 29-11-37. It contains a detailed report of its proceedings and a balance sheet of the statement of Income and Expenditure which is sure to dispel the doubts of some folks about the donations collected for the purpose of meeting the expenses of the Conference.

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