

Talk a Tee

XV

15th Birthday Number

April, 1949



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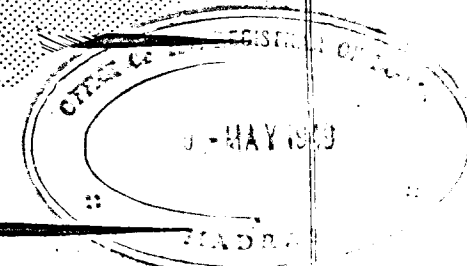
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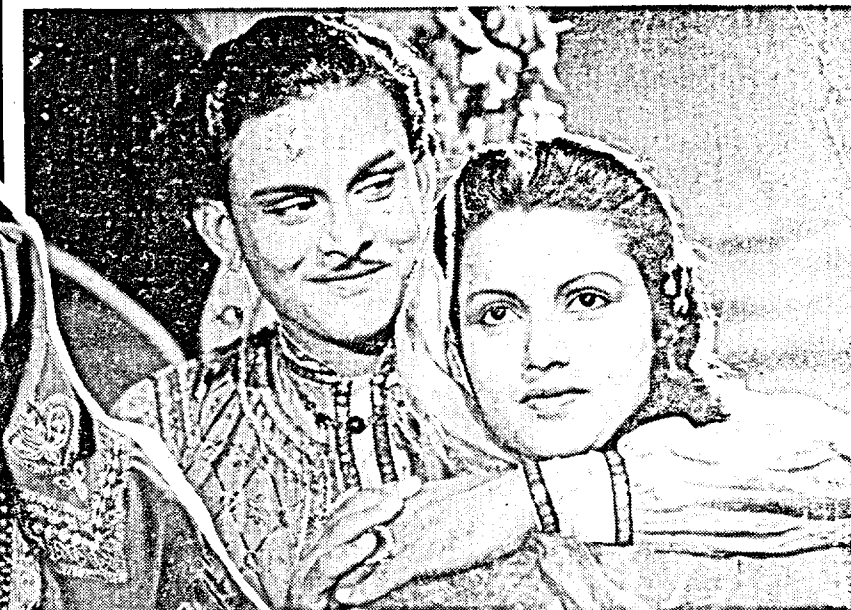
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Vol. No. XV

15TH BIRTHDAY NUMBER

No. 1

DON'T MUZZLE THE SCREEN.

The film censorship in India has always remained un-imaginative and obdurate, and the standards by which they measure Films submitted to them for censorship have been inconsistent.

So long as they were serving their British overlords, they were mainly concerned with political issues and exercised stringent measures whenever there was any clash of interests or political controversies. Beyond these, they cared two hoots: the quality and content of the Films did not matter.

But now, it looks as though these demi-gods are out to clean the Augean Stables. With their puritanical outlook, out-moded views of sociology and their antiquated ethics on sex-relations they have started bowdlerizing and annihilating the very hinges of the Film industry.

It is very apparent that they, in their over-enthusiasm to cleanse the industry of the evils, and bring about the desired changes, have more often blundered than not.

We wish to remind the Film Censors that if they should persist in the un-imaginative policy they would eventually stifle the art in the industry and the Cinema would become lifeless and ineffectual.

What really is needed is a better understanding between the film censors and the film personnel. This can be achieved only when the very set up of the Censor Boards is altered. As it stands today, almost all the Censors in India are members nominated by the Government, and majority of whom, unfortunately, have little or no knowledge of the intricacies of motion picture technique. And it is a pity that such a body should be called upon to pass judgment over a product which involves so many technicalities.

The need of the hour is not a frigid code, but intelligent men with high technical knowledge or with practical experience, who should be able to advise the cine-makers as to what they should show on the screen and what they should not. And when the Censors refuse to pass a picture, the member or members objecting to the picture should be in a position to point out the objectionable portion and also offer suggestions to rectify the errors, if any. This can be possible only when men knowing the film technique are on the Board.

For instance, American censorship of films is different from that of ours. "The Hays Office serves the purpose of both the Censoring authority as well as the advisory board. All scripts are submitted to the Hays Office before they are shot, and all the finished films must get a Code seal before general release. The Hays office acts as a liaison between the trade and the public. It seeks out what is honourable in the American public's intentions towards the Cinema and encourages what is best and cleanest.

And naturally when the trade is always in touch with the public, the former always offer such pictures that would satisfy their clientele. Thus, the mutual understanding that has been brought about by the Hays Office has gone a long way in strengthening the hands of the Film Industry in that country.

Why should not our country also follow suit?

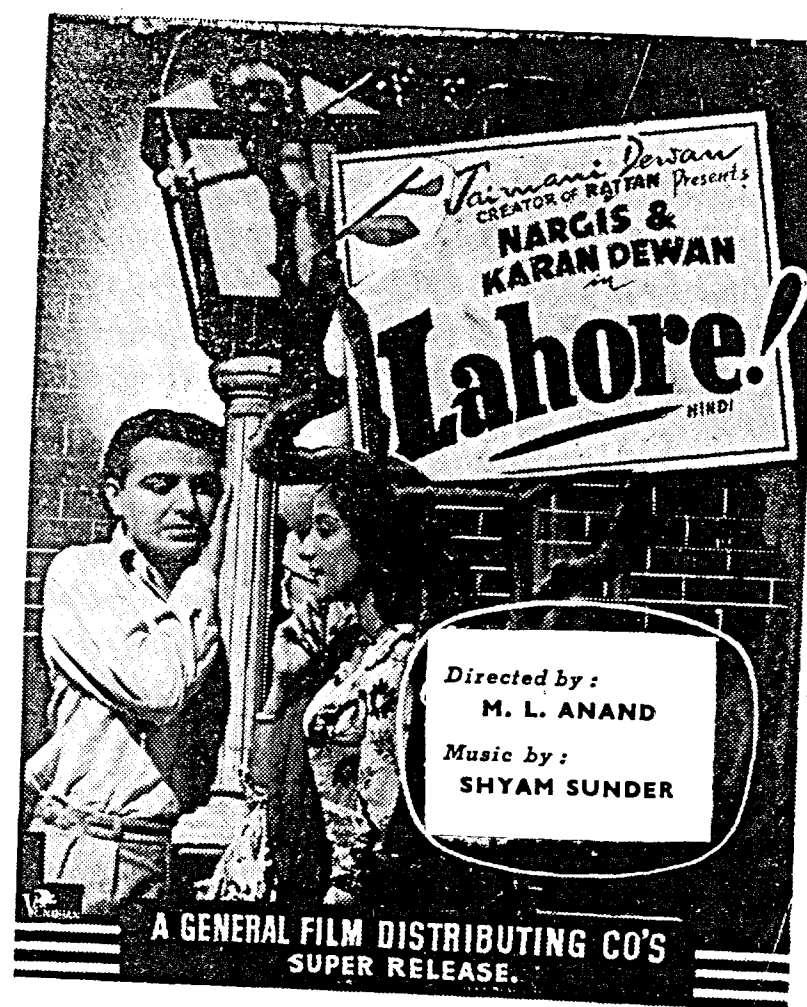
Now that an Enquiry is to be constituted, we would desire that this committee will take a note of this suggestion and do the needful in the matter.

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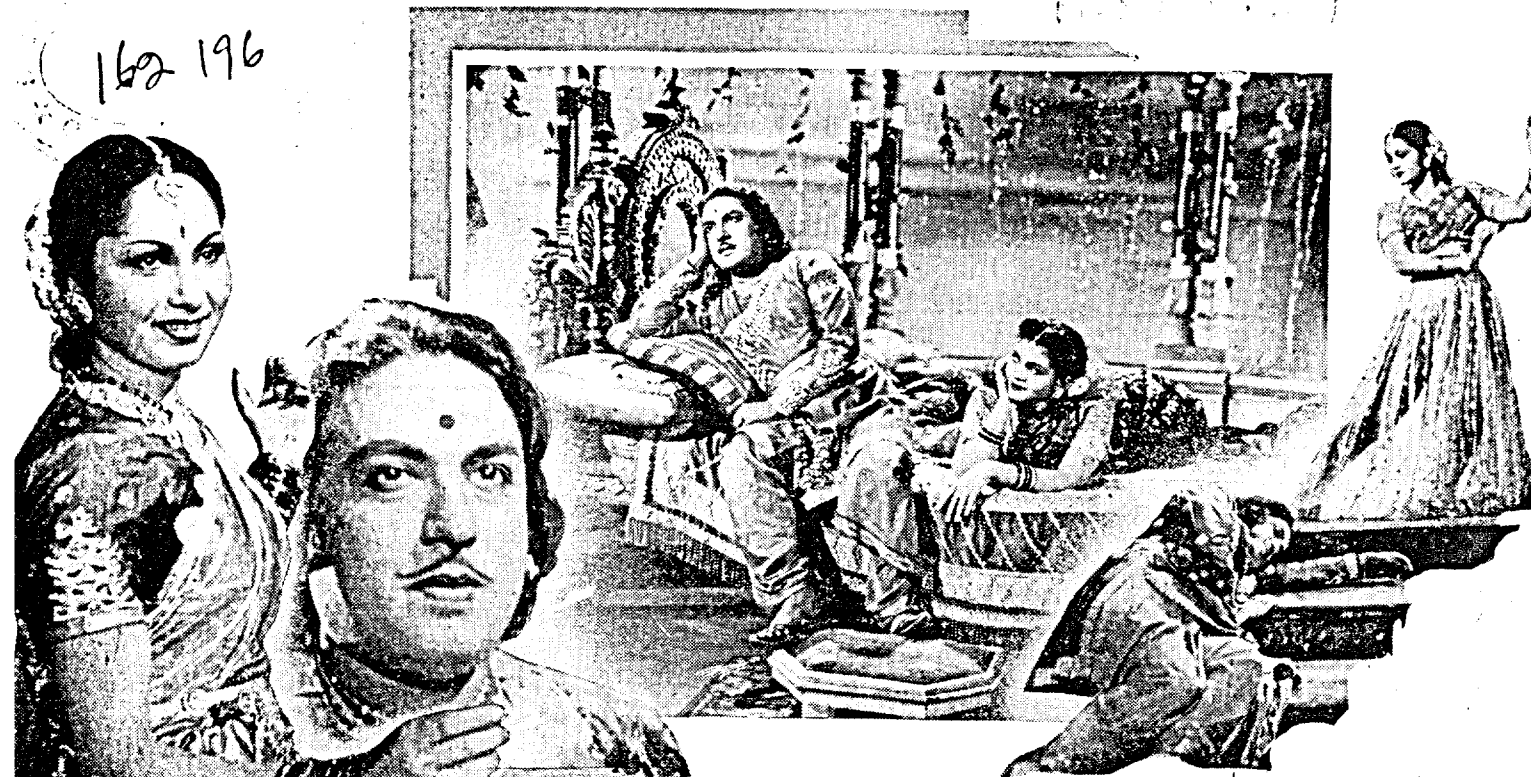
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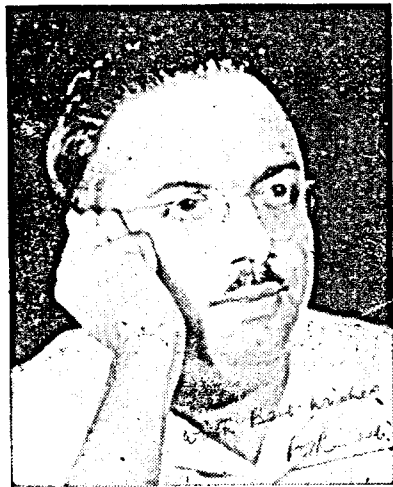
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AN INTERVIEW



B. N. Reddi ON This Film Business



Mr. B. N. Reddi was drawn into the films, principally by his devotion to the art in it. That was a decade and half ago, when this enthusiastic professor of the cinematic art became a Producer and the business-side of film-making began to make gradual inroads into his artistic outlook. His make-up, therefore, is symbolic of the Cinema industry itself.

After a *mahamaham* of consistent production activities, as an Independent, B. N. Reddi's Vauhini outfit has now zoomed into the portals of a magnificently laid-out studio-plant, whose excellence has to be viewed to be believed.

We were seized with a curiosity to see Mr. Reddi, which was further whetted by the frequent visits of film-magnates, from far and near, at the Vauhini Studios. Someone had talked about Vauhini Studios as the finest studio-plant in the East!

So, as fast as our Tin Lizzie could get us through, we were within the fascinating facade and drinking in the panorama of a palatial Vauhini creation in Kodambakam, just beside Vadapalani Andavar Temple.

Mr. B. N. Reddi himself materialized unobtrusively from nowhere, bespectacled but benign and attired, as usual, in

a simple dhoti and shirt. We were somewhat touched by the simplicity of the man.

We had expected some change in the personality, some veneer in his outlook—Cinema is a gruelling machine—the intrusion of some high-brow-or, at least the 'Boss' mind. But we were confounded as, needless to say, our fears were unfounded. Even the cigarette he offered us was the same brand—Three Castles—with which he greeted us two years ago, when his Studios were in embryo.

Bitterness comes out of disillusionment and Mr. Reddi had never entertained any illusions about the business. From the very start, his earnestness has been patent, his interest in the cinema serious and his devotion to the art very sincere. Going about his work with a thoroughgoing appreciation and realisation of its *pros* and *cons*, Mr. Reddi had hit the starry regions with the results of his work. Even as his pictures have proved, time and again, the stars of Vauhini creation also have an endearing homeliness and enduring stamina. They are all stayers. Kanchanamala, Kamamba, Nagiah and now Bhanumathi are the monuments of Vauhini's artistic initiative. Well, we are proud of Vauhini.

A Film Finance Corporation IS THE NEED OF THE HOUR

Film Business Is Still An ENTERPRIZE

"How about the Industry, Mr. Reddi? It seems to be on the rocks."

For a film-enthusiast or for that fact any other film-magnate, this would have been an embarrassing question, since it presupposes the arrival of the nemesis and the existence, in a fool's paradise, for the industrialist with irrevocable stakes in it. But Mr. Reddi is made of sterner stuff and his answer, naturally, was forthright.

"The condition of the industry," Mr. Reddi began, "is not so bad as to warrant the fear of a debacle, but it is in a mess, no doubt, due probably to the lightning advent of wartime adventurers who had later walked out, making their neat pile. The Houdinis have left a big gap for us to fill. It is the peculiar misfortune of the film in our Province, that it has to tolerate the greedy exploiters to make easy money and go scotfree after they have ruined the market for the Regulars! Blackmarket is their creation and we have to bear the brunt of their adventures. That is why the cinema industry is disorganised. The War might have saved us but the irresponsible interlopers have scattered its remains helter-skelter. As it is, the cinema is not yet an industry. It is working as an enterprise, in fact..."

"An Adventure!" we put in. That is how Mr. Reddi views the devious ways of film-makers who do it down here.

"As I said," continued Mr. Reddi, "if there had been a sufficient number of businessmen with finance, who had taken to the industry seriously, there should have been no truncated stacato in

the course of its smooth-working and we should have had a fluent and uninterrupted screening of new films week by week, subject, of course, to the business exigencies and the money market fluctuations. There are more than a score of studio-plants in the Province, apart from the recently started ones in Malabar, and each studio is competent to send out one new picture every fourth month. This way, if things had gone on efficiently, we should have had one new picture for every week that had passed. To the contrary, we find that the accumulated turnover of one year's work in all the studios has not yielded a baker's dozen. And, most of them have proved to be flops, in their own way, gigantic or miserable as the case may be, but flops all the same. The whole gamut seems to have gone out of joint. There is something inherently wrong, infernally wrong, with our set-up; there is the failure to appreciate the obligations implied in our enterprises and, above all, there is the lack of co-ordination and concerted action among the personnel. The order of the day, 'Every man for himself and the Devil take the hindmost', is sapping the vitals of this posthumus industry."

"Is not competition the life-blood of progress?" we asked.

"Quite, but not the kind of suicidal outbidding which is predominant in all the departments. The engagement of artistes at astronomical salaries is an instance. Boosting the star-salaries quite out of proportion to the production overall, has skyrocketed the costs. The stars demand payments in black and white at a level unheard of in any country. The people are

conniving at, and sometimes abetting, this procedure. The pity of it all is that this attitude of unconcern to what happens to the brother in the business reacts directly on the perpetrator thereof, when next he goes into production. It boomerangs upon him with a vengeance and kills the others meanwhile in the bargain."

"Why not regularise the artistes' salaries and the procedure relating to it by common understanding?" said we.

"That's it. There is no unity of purpose. Everyone is working alone, isolated in outlook and principle, actuated fundamentally by motives which are fundamental, making the most of the present and leaving the future in the laps of tingsods and Providence. This has a terrible disintegrating influence on the whole industry."

"The outlook, basically, has to change for the better and the relationship among the industrialists reorganised and cemented. Is it not time to do it?" We suggested.

"That is precisely what is wanted," said Mr. Reddi, with some heat, "but that means an effort at co-ordination, pre-planning and the inculcation of a wholesome business morality."

"This can be achieved by mutual consultations in the Film Chamber, now that the Government have recognised the body as representing the interests of the industry. The constitution of the Chamber is being reshaped and this should be an opportunity for ironing out the policies of the members," we suggested.

"The Chamber by itself can do precious little in the matter, unless there is the awakening to the common danger of intransigence and a willingness on the part of the constituents to spring-clean themselves. It might have been all right in the initial stages, when the Chamber was a common meeting place, a sort of social gathering for those in the industry. Stage by stage, the membership has swollen, embracing all the departments in the industry. We have reached a point where the very existence of the members with heavy stakes is threatened. The voting power of the members still

continues to be inequitably distributed. Clash of interests begins when the members who have nothing to lose should be empowered to determine the destiny of those others who sink or swim by the exercise of such anomalous voting powers. For this reason, the reconstitution is being undertaken, so that each section can present a united front, when the occasion arises. This will also facilitate the reaching of the Highest Common Factor when making representations."

"This change, we take it, is the anodyne for all the attendant evils," we ventured.

"Most certainly not," reported Mr. Reddi, "but this will be the jumping-offground for an institution genuinely broad-based on the various interests. At any rate, this will provide the basis for making the Chamber a well-oiled machine. Let us hope that something will come out of this. Besides the urgency for a common understanding and working for a common purpose, there is also the paucity of finance which is becoming acute. Procuring money for picture-making is a tough job."

"Is the financial stringency due to the shyness of the money market in general or to deflation or to the extravagance of the Producers or the public apathy to the cinema as a whole?" we asked.

"Each one of the conditions," said Mr. Reddi, "has something to do with the present tightness of the money market towards the film business. Money is shy for us, even though there are *crorepathies* without a demand upon their resources; there is deflation on the one hand and the promotion of scores of limited companies on the other; some pictures are being abandoned in their half-finished stage, while some others are being made at a cost of millions and there is also the antipathy of the financiers to the industry to consider."

"But why!" we asked.

"For one thing," said Mr. Reddi, "we are ourselves to blame, to a certain extent, for these deplorable conditions. By and large, we suffer from a general lack of pre-planning.

If a prospective financier asks for details, we have none to give him; at any rate, none which can convince him that we are *bona-fide* and competent. It also happens frequently that financiers are drawn into the line whose interest in it is neither serious nor sensible. Ulterior motives and whimsical dispositions actuate their enterprise. Sycophants fawn upon them, play up to their untutored assumptions, lure their money by some extraordinary means, fail in their attempts to achieve things and leave them in the lurch. Such happenings which are not few and far between, create a very unfavourable upon the public and tend to undermine what little status the industry has managed to gain in its existence of two decades. We must try to be fair both to our interests and to those who trust us with their money. The present period, in particular, seems to be very propitious for new entrants as well as for a new orientation of our production methods and morals. The dubious procedure of selling 'Stars', instead of fine film-products, is now rapidly getting out of vogue and the 'Star' obsession is also fast diminishing. Some of the successful pictures released recently, both in Tamil and Telugu, have borne out this aspect abundantly. I am not discounting, by any means, the exploitation of stars. To the contrary, I welcome them, but such exploitation must be thorough, satisfactory and effective, to be successful. Booking a single artiste for a dozen pictures at the same time, is another sacrilegious indulgence. At best, it can be an attempt to hoodwink the gullible public but, as a worthwhile enterprise, it is foredoomed to failure on all counts. An artiste, irrespective of his or her individual calibre, is, after all, a human machine, susceptible to the same reactions as any of us and cannot function in a dozen places, in different roles, at the same time, like Lord Krishna. Except as a publicity stunt, neither the pictures nor their anticipated profits, can materialise. Not all the stars in the country can make a picture run unless there is a well-treated story and efficient direction behind it.

The position is really very serious and should set every intelligent businessman thinking."

Anyway, it set us thinking. The business is stagnant, but the mal-practitioners are flourishing. The Government also seems to be powerless, either to check the recalcitrant forces or to encourage the industry in any other manner for its advancement.

"Is there no hope for the Cinema in our Province? What would you suggest for retrieving the business from its threatened doom?" we asked.

"There is one hope, There is one redeeming feature in this strange medley, which stands out in bold relief and augurs well for the future if we exploit it properly. That is the growing patronage of the public to the entertainment films. This is the silverlining in the otherwise gloomy landscape. The industry must earn the goodwill of the public by proving its worth. For all this, the essential prerequisite is Capital."

"But where is this Capital to come from?" we wondered.

"From the public, of course," replied Mr. Reddi and went on to amplify himself. "I mean the businessmen who have faith in the Cinema as a source of productive investment."

"What about state aid?" was our next question.

"This state, as it is, is overrun by red-tape and would not consider it worth while to undertake the rehabilitation of the industry, so long as their revenues are safe. They may take a long time to realise the danger to that revenue which is waiting round the corner. Even if they did come forward with all their paraphernalia, the whole thing will be ruined by the several 'isms' that control their attitude to the public. Nepotism, favouritism, red-tapism and the other unmentionable 'isms' will rule the roost and it is time we did something on our own and inspired the confidence of the public, rather than beg at the doors of the Government".

"Then, who is to bell this exusive cat? What are the immediate prospects?" we asked.

"A FILM FINANCE CORPORATION is the need of the hour. In establishing this Corporation, the leading Banks must take a hand and invest a lakh of rupees each, and nominate their directors to look after their interests. Once a Corporation of this type is initiated, it can function successfully with the aid of the men of experience in the line. Monies should be advanced to the parties whose stories and shooting scripts are scrutinised and passed by the Advisory Board comprising experienced men, qualified for sitting in judgement over stories and shooting scripts. Payments should be made in instalments, as production progresses, strictly in proportion to the work completed." Mr. Reddi interrupted himself to light a cigarette and we availed of the interval for another question.

"The procedure of making easy money available, seems to us to be very dubious, in view of the easy-going tendency of the personnel. How would you circumvent the abuse of public money?"

"There will not be much scope left for abuse or for malingering," explained Mr. Reddi, "as the payments will depend upon actual results and the producer-director will be paid only his monthly sustenance allowance and nothing more. Payments for other expenditures will be made directly by the Corporation; they will first collect their invested capital from the return on the picture. The producer-director can draw his share of the picture's profits only after the corporation's first charge is discharged. He will have to submit his periodical Progress Reports which will be subject to the Corporation's supervision and control. The Producer-Director will be held responsible for the delays, and, if no satisfactory explanation is forthcoming, either from the Producer or the Studios, the Corporation will take serious notice of it and sanction on legal action against the wilful defaulters for damages."

(Continued on page 59)

State Control And The Indian Film Industry

By
A. M. GOPALIAH, M.A.,

It is a sad commentary that in the field of Film Industry, India has not been able to keep abreast of other progressive countries of the World like Great Britain, Germany, Soviet Russia and the United States of America. Certainly, financial sources, spirit of enterprise, technical efficiency, cultural background, etc., are not lacking in India to furnish the necessary foundation for bringing the Indian Film Industry on a par with that of the countries mentioned above. Other things being equal, one begins to wonder why the Indian Film Industry, in spite of its growth over a period of nearly half a century, has managed to remain mostly stagnant, sterile, unbusinesslike, indifferent and superbly imbecile. Let me make myself clear presently.

Let us first consider the Production side of the Film Industry. On one side we find pictures produced in India vie on equal terms with the best products of other countries; while more often than not, we find the sorry spectacle of producers

just throwing out so much junk which put to shame even the crude products of the first decade of this century. This is the plight of Indian Production.

As for distribution, India can now boast of one cinema house for every two and a half lakhs of population, while in U.S.A. there is a cinema house for every 7,222 persons and in Britain there is a cinema for every 10,000 persons. A picture of the first magnitude in the West enjoys the patronage of nearly 50,000 cinemas, throughout the World; while a good All-India picture must consider itself lucky if it is shown in about a thousand Cinema Houses all over India with a population of 400 millions.

Coming to the exhibition side, barring a handful of Cinema Houses, mainly catering to City audiences and with a few honourable exceptions in certain other key centres of each province, all other so called Cinema Houses are mean, rickety structures, no better than cattle pens. One can hardly

call them places of amusement. It only demonstrates the proverbial and pathetic contentment tolerance or indifference, if you will, of the average Indian Cinema goer, drawn mostly from the lower ranks of society, who have enough philosophy still left in them to provide just the requisite amount of resignation to an inexorable Fate!

I shall try to elaborate the above points by tangible illustrations from the three branches of Film Production, Distribution and exhibition.

PRODUCTION: This must be said to be in a most chaotic and deplorable state, in all conscience. It is true there was some sort of artificial boom in film production activities during the war period, but as is inevitably the case, the aftermath of the World War II brought in its train the usual slump in business, general trade depression, currency inflation, fall in revenue following demobilisation and disbandment of wartime industries. It is notorious that the average Indian Film Producers, for reasons peculiar to the Industry itself, are chronic victims of private financiers, who have no other stake in the business than to filch usurious rates of interest and a lion's share of the box office collections. The producers are rarely able to discharge their liabilities and they have perforce to borrow afresh and produce again to meet the mounting liabilities. It is a wonder how even under these extraordinary discouraging circumstances, sometimes the producer succeeds in presenting to his patrons a real piece of motion picture art. This only shows that there is a mine of latent talent waiting to be tapped for the benefit of the trade in general. Only it must be properly canalised. The producers have no planning of their productions and they generally regard every production as more or less a financial adventure necessitated by their chronic state of indebtedness. In short there is

The author of this lucid article has given a very graphic account of the actual working of the Indian Film Industry. He feels that this industry in our country had remained stagnant, sterile and un-businesslike mostly on account of the step-motherly attitude of the Government towards this industry. He very strongly feels that unless and untill the Government of our land takes over the direct control and organisation of the three main branches of the film Industry, it is very hard for this Industry to be put on a stable and sound basis.

Considering the huge amount invested in this business annually and the enormous sums collected by the Government from this Industry alone, we feel, the author is justified in his plea for asking the Government to take over this industry or render all facilities and help as are being done to other industries in the country.

complete lack of co-ordination of work, security of investment and constructive art—all of which act as a great damper on the industry.

DISTRIBUTION: This is as bad as production. Chaos, cut-throat competition and a sad lack of integration and co-ordination between producers, Distributors and Exhibitors are the order of the day. The distributors in India mostly play the role of financiers. Their sole aim is how best and quickest to realise their dues with a decent, or is it indecent(?) share of the

spoils. He cares two hoots about the quality of the product. All that he is concerned is to get his money back to his coffers with compound interest by any and every means.

Besides taking up the role of financier, the distributor also acts the part of a speculator of Share Market. He buys and sells pictures and tries to make a cosy margin in the bargain. He does not concern himself with the actual quality of the product about which he speculates. He just banks upon a particularly highly paid artist or

film favourite and that is enough to sell his product piecemeal to the highest bidder. Or the distributor is interested in exploiting the picture under his control till it just covers his investment with a liberal margin of profit; and thereafter the producer concerned finds himself at the mercy of the distributor for the realisation of his share. Sometimes we have the unhealthy sight of a few unscrupulous distributors monopolising all key theatres to release pictures owned and controlled by themselves. They shut out all other pictures from being exploited in competition to their own product. Such pictures are thus forced to lie idle indefinitely to the ultimate loss of the producers. So we see the anomalous spectacle of monopolised theatres playing to empty houses while new pictures have to await release for indefinite periods. To quote an illustration in point, statistics reveal that 61 Tamil and Telugu pictures were censored in Madras during 1944-46; while during the same period no less than 120 Hindi and Urdu pictures were lying idle for want of an outlet in the City of Madras. These evils of unhealthy speculation and rank monopoly must be rooted out before the distribution of pictures can be considered a healthy commercial enterprise like any other normal trade.

EXHIBITION: This side of the picture is equally discouraging. There are about 2,000 Cinema houses in India. Of these about a third exhibit foreign pictures and a few other cater to mixed audience. This leaves less than half the number of theatres for exclusively Indian releases. Even then, some of the best theatres in key centres are commandeered by unscrupulous distributors by resorting to black-marketing in rentals. Thus the chances of releasing new pictures in good theatres and in important key centres are reduced to a minimum.

As for cinema houses which are supposed to cater to the entertainment of the public and as places of relaxation from a day's hard work, the less said about them the better. Real comforts to picture patrons are none of the concern of the exhibitors.



Ashit Baran in AZADI-KE-BAAD, (The Great Orient Pictures, Calcutta)

bitors. Why should the exhibitor bother himself, if the audience themselves are content to see pictures under every imaginable discomfort. I have already touched upon this aspect of the industry and there is hardly anything commendable to write about this branch.

So much for the actual state of affairs. One may ask—Is there any method whereby the Industry can be placed on a sound footing just as any other key industry of the country? I have a standing conviction that the Central Government should enact proper legislation to control all the three branches of the Industry. It may be a revelation to the public that so far more than Eleven Crores of Rupees have been sunk in the Indian Film Industry; while the Pay Bills of all branches constituting the same show a paid-up total of a little over forty Crores of Rupees to date. The annual salaries paid out amount to nearly a Crore of Rupees. The Government and the Local authorities share nearly a third of the Revenue from the Film Trade. Whereas in the U.S.A. the cinema Industry is considered the fifth largest national Industry of the Country, here in India, the Government seem to



Devanand whose rise in the film trade has been quick and staggering has, it is learnt, given yet another convincing performance in his latest picture NAMOONA.

evinced at best a cold step-motherly recognition of its existence and nothing more. Now and again we hear general rumblings of activity and renewed interest in Government circles to reform the Industry but somehow the Authorities fail to adequately appreciate the enormous value of the Motion Picture Industry in building up a strong and healthy nation with its own individualised character and tradition. The post-war reconstruction programme promised us the establishment of an Indian Film Council and Council of Research. Somehow the plan proved abortive. Again with the dawn of Indian Independence, we see its revival in a way in the new organisation constituting a branch of the Indian Information and Broadcasting department in charge of the Deputy Prime Minister of India Government. One chief defect is that the Government have concentrated on the organisation of news reels and Documentaries only leaving the other branches of the Industry to shift for themselves. I strongly advocate the Central Government taking over the direct control and organisation of all the three main branches of the Industry, namely, PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION and EXHIBITION. The functions of such a Central Body may comprise the following:—

PRODUCTION DEPARTMENT:—(1) Creation of a Film Financing Corporation guaranteed by the State. (2) Producers to be licensed. (3) Producers to deposit a share in the cost of production with the Financing Corporation before licences are issued. (4) State to contribute a share in the production cost as a first charge on the collections in order to create confidence in the Investing Public. (5) Control of Studios and Allied branches and fixing up a classified schedule of rates.

DISTRIBUTION: (1) These must be similarly licensed. (2) Classified list of film rentals must be fixed, and the distributors must be compelled to conform to the terms so fixed by legislation. (3)



Gay Kamini Kaushal plays the role of a Bohemian bird taking pleasure as it comes in M & T Films, NAMOONA, Devanand is one among the many that fall for her.

Number of release prints to be restricted. (4) Block booking to be made punishable. (5) Periodical submission of statements of bookings and realisation for check up. (6) Development of 16 MM pictures and exploitation of educational institutions through them.

EXHIBITION: (1) The Government should share the cost of constructing model theatres in all key towns and village groups. (2) Five or Ten year plan for constructing a fixed number of cinema houses throughout the country. (3) General controls to be applied to exhibition side as well.

This is, in brief outline, the task to be taken up by the Government of India under proper legislative enactment. The Industry is doomed if timely and adequate measures are not taken up by the Central and Provincial Governments.

Before closing the article, I give below some interesting data connected with Production, Distribution and Exhibition in India and other Countries for a comparative study. The figures have been collected from various sources and authorities.

ALL-INDIA INVESTMENT IN INDIAN FILM INDUSTRY. (1947)

No. 1.

1. Production and Distribution	...	Rs. 4,50,00,000
2. Construction and Equipment of Studio	...	„ 1,50,00,000
3. Construction and Equipment of Cinemas	...	„ 4,50,00,000
4. Pay Bills of all Branches & allied Industries	...	„ 40,00,03,200
5. Annual Salaries Paid out in all Branches	...	„ 1,00,00,000

No. 2. (A) PRODUCTION. (INDIA)

(a) No. of Studios in India	55	in Madras	14
(b) No. of Stages (Floor)	78	in Madras	15

No. 2. (B) FILMS PRODUCED IN INDIA AND ELSEWHERE.

Year	India	Britain	U.S.A.
1941	137	...	598
1942	165	...	533
1943	149	...	427
1944	124	...	442
1945	98	67	377
1946	200	83	...
1947	...	107	...

No. 3 DISTRIBUTION OF CINEMA HOUSES IN INDIA & ELSEWHERE. (1947)

Country.	Population.	No. of Cinema.	Persons per Cinema.	Percentage of Cinemas per 1000 population.
Britain	4,74,16,842	5,000	9,483	0.01%
U.S.A.	12,27,75,046	18,076	7,222	0.14%
India.	40,00,00,000	2,000	2,35,294	0.0040%

No. 4 (A) ALL-INDIA REVENUE FROM DISTRIBUTION (GROSS)

(a) From India Pictures	{ For 1941	...	Rs. 2,40,00,000
	{ For 1944-45	...	„ 9,22,60,489
(b) From Foreign Pictures	{ For 1941	...	„ 60,00,000
	{ For 1944-45	...	„ 2,30,65,122

No. 4 (B) PICTURE REALISATIONS FROM MADRAS PRESIDENCY.

Year.	No. of Pictures Censored.	1941-42	1946-47
1943	22	{	
1944	18	{ Gross ... Rs. 1,08,75,000	Rs. 2,54,75,000
1945	17	{	
1946	26	{ Nett ... „ 95,20,000	„ 2,03,98,000
		Ent. Tax ... „ 13,55,000	„ 50,77,000

[Continued on page 59]

THE MASS APPEAL IN FILMS

By Mrs. Amrutha Ramasubramaniam



Mrs. Amrutha Ramasubramaniam B.A., LL.B., Municipal Councillor, Madurai, the author of this thoughtful article has brought out in good relief the idiosyncrasies of our film moghuls. The article deserves the attention of both the film makers and the film-seekers for the thoughtful, lucid and practical manner the subject has been dealt with by the author—Ed.

If the modern school-boy were asked to define a God-forsaken place he would tell us without a moment's ado that it is a habitation which does not command a cinema theatre anywhere within a radius of a couple of miles. Life without pictures seems equally barren both to the elite as well as the man in the street.

Whether it is a question of accepting a job or concluding a matrimonial alliance, it is not as of old the astrologer that has got to bless the venture—the final decision rests on the issue—are there any picture-houses out there, to make life worth while for the new entrants! Today the film has become an indispensable adjunct to civilised existence.

The beginning of the twentieth century marks the birth of the



Kamini Kaushal...her quick and meteoric rise in the film horizon could never be forgotten and it is learnt that M & T's NAMOONA has given her yet another chance to shoot higher in emotional histrionics. Just wait and see.

cinema; the blurred and flickering pictures which greeted an astonished world some decades ago developed into the 'movie' which spoke an universal language. With the knowledge of sound technique the 'movie' has been perfected into the modern 'talkie' which veritably holds the world in thrall. The fascinating history of this process is a triumph of science no less than of art. The film industry is a multiple institution combining and fusing in itself the talents of actors, authors, masters of music, expert photographers, engineers, architects and industrialists, and latterly of educationists. It is a meeting ground of art and industry for the benefit of the common man. The film has been acclaimed as a commercialised entertainment, with immense potentialities for educating the masses. A mighty joint endeavour of this order involving heavy finance in its very nature cannot thrive unless it can count its votaries in terms of thousands and tens of thousands. And no doubt it does. In the modern setting pictures have an universal appeal to the young and old, the rich and poor, and to people of all grades of intelligence and acumen. The citadels of art and enlightenment which were once the guarded preserves of the favoured few have been thrown open to the humble peasant and the city labourer. And it is all for the good.

The fact that films have to provide amusement of a variety that will appeal to the vast majority does not involve any lowering of the standard of art or the purity of conception. Democracy does not mean mob-rule nor does democratisation of art mean degeneration of artistic standards and excellence. To hazard such a suggestion is nothing short of a libel against the masses whose instincts and tastes are perfectly sound, having been moulded

and chastened for ages past by the dictates of religion and the compelling influence of a well-formulated code of social conduct and propriety.

Contact with the masses, in truth, helps art and literature to develop in an atmosphere of freedom and freshness and makes for spontaneity and robust simplicity. Artificiality gives place to plainness and the mass-touch enriches and enlarges the scope of creative art. We must once for all disillusion our minds of the totally unfounded notion that the average film-goer has a craving for vulgarity or coarseness. No doubt it must be admitted to our shame and regret that these unsavoury elements are invariably associated with films as they go at present. This is just criticism which calls for careful analysis and treatment. The reason for this malady is not far to seek. In the early days of the film industry the pictures that invaded our country were of necessity of European or American origin and we could make no pretence to pictures of our own, worth the mention. Foreign films and Hollywood products glutted the field and it goes without saying that these pictures largely centred on wine and woman, promiscuous sex relationships and riotous luxury. Or they happened to be crime and gangster stories and thrillers. The 'tempo' of these films would not suit the Indian genius. These outlandish exhibitions must have been a staggering experience to the meticulous average citizen. Yet he had to

console himself as best he could with the explanation that perhaps varying standards of conventions and forms prevailed elsewhere in the world and it was beyond his province to sit in judgment on what people did, away in distant lands. When men and women of culture and status patronised these pictures with considerable alacrity and gusto, the masses were disarmed and had no 'locus standi' to raise their voices in protest, and the novelty of it all swept them off their feet.

The discerning public failed to sound the warning fearing that they might be charged with squeamishness and prudery or may be that they did not assess aright the gravity of the mischief ahead. This early impact, with the highly unconventional foreign films rendered blunt the keen edge of the otherwise sensitive mass-mind and resulted in creating a morbid tradition that vulgarity and cheap sex-appeal were the inevitable attributes of a picture. Yielding to the same fallacy of the so-called mass-appeal our industrial entrepreneur and promoters have been producing pictures which have been just puerile imitations of their foreign fore-runners and contemporaries. Our masses do not vouch for lewdness and obscenity. They are uncon-



Kishore Sahu does the role of a sort of modern Prometheus who jeers at conventions and jests at social hypocrisies in M & T's NAMOONA

promisingly conservative and demand a scrupulous observance of time-honoured customs and conventions. But they accept our pictures as they are, with an amount of indulgence because the ground for it had been cleared and prepared in advance by their predecessors. The masses are drawn to the films not because of its objectionable features but in spite of it. The average man would consider it outrageous for a daughter, sister or other relation of his to appear on a cast on the screen. Nor do our entrepreneur and promoters generally hold any different views on the subject. The artists submit themselves to appear in embarrassing 'costumes' and other allied indignities with painful reluctance; by and by they get hardened to it.

All this is done in the name of that illusory entity 'mass-appeal.' It must be owned that the common film-goer, continually fed on an unwholesome fare, develops by degrees a conscious desire for it which in turn degenerates into a strong craving for such unhealthy stimulation. If to-day amongst our youth there are many who hanker after such 'spicy' pictures, they have acquired this weakness—not by choice or birth—but because of their habitual attendance at such unseemly shows.

When we clearly visualise the dual purpose of a film as a potent factor which goes to entertain and at the same time educate the community on an extensive scale, the question of lowering the standard of art, as a pull to profits cannot be contemplated. Our pictures should be of high quality conforming to our ideals and cultural background and go towards elevating the tone and level of public morals and manners. It is only by cultivating the finer and nobler instincts in man that we could educate him in a liberal sense. Providing unhealthy stimulus to the baser traits in human nature leads only to widespread demoralisation. If the equivocal nature of our pictures today has created an artificially exaggerated demand for films it would be in the interests of the community to cure this abnormal condition. Social well-being and the sanctity of art make it imper-

ative that our films should be purged of these excrescences. Fabulous box-office returns cannot justify the exploitation of such a valuable industry for anti-social purpose.

The duty that film producers owe to the art as such is not inconsistent with the claims of the public. To degrade art, in its ultimate analysis is to degrade the community which thrives on it. According to the modern concepts of economy no enterprise could be regarded on a purely profit earning basis, irrespective of its repercussions on society at large. All business, trade and the professions should be practised with the welfare of the community at heart. The maxim 'cavaat empptor' (buyer beware) has long been outmoded.

The mass appeal mania has queered the pitch for the Indian film industry developing on healthy and beneficial lines. A plot, however unexceptionable, considered apart, unfortunately draws a good deal of dress when adapted in the screen. In keeping with popular sentiment, virtue is no doubt crowned with success and the good man rewarded. The villain is punished, the reprobate comes home full of contrition. The moral of the story is technically unimpeachable. But in the actual presentation of the plot, the philanderer's escapades and extravagances are rendered highly fascinating. Ravishing details of love episodes are featured with lavish precision. *Uncalled—for dance recitals by troupes of scantily clad women is a threadbare device and needs no chronicling.* Waywardness and irresponsibilities make for smartness: Sin and folly appear attractive.

In this context, it would be worthwhile to note the comment that our revered Rajaji offers in the chapter மதமன் எதிர்ப்பு in his Vyasar Virundhu. The gist of it runs thus: Our immortal epics as well as the present cinema stories strive to bear out the truth that flesh is heir to sin. But the gilded manner in which human lapses and grave indiscretions are portrayed on the screen have the baneful effect of creating a lure for such unworthy ways of life in immature and impressionable minds. The evil in-

stead of being repellent assumes a strange fascination for the young and adolescent with disastrous results. But our glorious epics shed a mellow lustre which leads us from darkness to light. In our Puranas we have instances of Maharshis and monarchs of noble lineage faced with mighty conflicts being overpowered and driven to sin. The world draws a suitable moral from such a tragedy. It perceives when powerful passions are unleashed, even the best of men get dragged into the mire. What of us, lesser mortals! The experience fills us with awe and deep questioning and makes us feel the humbler for it. It is a lesson and a warning never to relax our eternal vigilance in keeping to the straight path. It never provokes us to emulate the weaknesses of those who faltered and fell. And Rajaji pithily adds that this vital difference between cinema stories and our ancient epic compositions is a measure of the disparity in the moral stature and attainments of the epic poets and the cinema story writers.

Our film producers have a marked tendency to fall back on Hindu mythology for their themes. *Sometimes puranic titles are assigned to stories which are anything but puranic in origin. Here again the box office collections guide the powers that be. Epic stories are also subjected to modifications to answer so-called popular requirements and in the process lose much of their pristine charm.* While treating a subject of Hindu mythology our producers should never forget the fundamental fact that these stories whatever the degree of their historic authenticity are essentially symbolic expressions of eternal moral concepts. Great delicacy, reverence and imagination should be exercised while dramatising these allegorical themes. These stories unfold to the humblest of mankind great philosophical truths in a more simple and assimilable manner. It is not the mere letter of the story that counts but the spirit behind it. The ethical content is enshrined in the story like a priceless jewel in a velvet casket of exquisite workmanship. Often we find a high level of ethical excellence being

sacrificed for cheap popularity. Symbolism of this nature is readily appreciated by the lay folk in India. It does not constitute either obscurity or mysticism.

For the delectation of the common man scenes of unthinkable gruesomeness are exhibited which make grown-ups shudder and send children shrieking with terror. Beheading and dismembering of a limb are evidently not taboo in our pictures. May be—to chop off the dummy's head or tear off a limb in the studio may seem innocent. But such acts of horror and barbarity should never find a place in a picture. Such scenes, we are warned on high authority, shock the delicate nerve centres of the young and lead to serious nervous disorders. Except a few sadists, no normal human being finds any pleasure or entertainment in such ugly and lurid exhibitions. Sometimes these devices are employed to invoke pity and admiration for the suffering hero or heroine. It is totally wrong to imagine that an audience can't be moved to tears by the misfortunes of the characters in a story without such inquisitorial aids.

The question of reconstituting film censor Boards and reorganising the film industry on more rational lines has been exercising the minds of thinking people the world over. It is not a false alarm raised by austerity cranks and kill-joys. An extract from the "Harijan" dated December, 14, 1947 reads thus 'In the U.S.A. the motion picture research Council reported after extensive study that four out of five picture programmes are rated as unsuitable for children while 37 per cent contain injurious material.'

Under the auspices of the British Information Service, the Cinema Club movement for children is making rapid strides and new educational lints formulated by Mr. J. Arthur Rank.

An anxiety to rescue as a minimum measure at least the young from the influence of undesirable pictures is betrayed in many a quarter. The resolution on this subject passed at the annual session of the All-India Women's Conference recently



Devanand is also featured in M & T's NAMOONA

held at Gwalior stresses the need for (a) the proper classification of films as suitable and unsuitable for children and (b) the increase in the supply of films which are both educative and entertaining.

Films have a very responsible part to play in promoting amity and unity in the country. It is easy to play up communal passions and earn vulgar popularity. But films should never have the effect of fomenting class or communal animosities.

Reinforced by the Radio and the Press there is no limit in fact to the manifold benefits that films can confer.

That this industry which has been stigmatised as an 'ubiquitous curse' can prove an asset to humanity is amply borne out. We would be failing in our duty if we do not offer our tributes to those who have refused to compromise artistic standards and have given us pictures of rare beauty and quality. We know that they have had to work against severe odds.

The film touches the heart of the masses with a directness and simplicity that nothing can equal. If only the right chord is struck films could carry sweetness and light to many a Home.

An appreciation

Dances of India

By the TRAVANCORE SISTERS

By T. V. CHELLAHHA

The irresistible charm of music is universal. Music is the cement that welds together diverse elements in human nature. It is a creator of joy. Music is the vocal expression of one's feelings. Its counterpart is Natya which is the expression itself. It is an effective substitute for speech. Natya has no barriers. It is the language of hearts. It is with a view to renovate the interest in this art that pioneers in the field like Uday Shankar, Gopinath and Ranjan had established institutions to develop it. It is very heartening to note that the former two have unearthed real genius in the art of dancing in the Travancore sisters Srimathis Lalitha, Padmini and Ragini.

Coming from a family of high connections, the sisters found it too difficult to develop the art of their hearts. The age-long, blind traditions which still exist even in the modern day do not favour the idea of dancing among family girls. Woe unto these conservatives!

The Dances of India comprise of Kathakali, Bharatha Natyam and the Dance drama. Such a judicious mixture of the different types of dances always suits to the varied tastes of any dance appreciating audience.

The stage is well set. The first item is 'Ranga Pooja.' Lalitha and

Padmini perform deeparathana and pushpanjali to the Goddess of the stage and dance around the Sacred Lamp. What a divine look there is on their faces!

The next one is 'Sadbam.' This is classified under Bharatha Natyam. An invocation to Lord Krishna (Ragini) asking Him if it was fair on His part to indulge in tricks like depriving the Gopies (Lalitha and Padmini) of their clothes while they are bathing, stealthily entering their houses and stealing their butter and milk, enticing them from their household work with 'Venuganam' and inducing them to play and dance with him, forms the theme.

The highlights of the day's programme is the 'Snake Dance.' Padmini as the snake charmer, Lalitha as the charmer's wife rock the audience with their felicity of action and perfection of loveliness. Elusive, slippery, sly and darting with a swiftness that evades sight, the snake occupies a status in thought that is duly gained by the combination of alacrity and venom. A close association with such dreadful creatures and with abilities employed in the sagacious search, the musical lure, the dangerous catch and the deprivation of the fangs of the harmful being to be brought as harmless to public view, encircle the life of the snake charmer and his wife with a spirit



These irresistible charmers have become an indispensable entity in the South Indian pictures. Here you see them as they appear in a social picture VINODINI.

of awe transforming it to one worthy of portrayal. The mind stimulated to the like emotion that the portrayed action would naturally evoke would be imperative to the art of dancing; and remember when in the visible dark you hear the sweet 'Modi' and the air around you turns eloquent with the action of the dancer it is only Art, Form and Beauty!

The concluding item of the evening is Sri Valli's wedding, a dance drama. Lalitha as a simple village girl falls a prey to the magnificent love to Lord Subramania acted by Padmini due to the pranks of the sagacious and witty Naradar. The sequence of thought and action is brought before the audience with lucidity. So ends the evening with joy and divinity reigning supreme in the hearts of one and all.

In the young dancers of today, one finds either talent or beauty. But in the case of these charming ones there is in them the balanced combination of genius and beauty. The most pleasing quality in them is their equanimity in response to a small or huge gathering. The laurels they have earned and will in future earn are only secondary to their primary thought, Art for Art's sake!

Review

PAVALAKODI is good in parts

Mahalingam & Rajakumari give brilliant performances.

Sarojini and Varadan prove complete failures

Direction is antiquated and erratic

Quite an enormous amount of money, time and celluloid seem to have been expended in the production of this picture by the Pakshiraja Studios. Had only the producers realised that gorgeous sets, glittering costumes and top-ranking artistes alone do not go to ensure the success of a motion picture, we are sure they would not have given us such a hapless picture like PAVALAKODI which lacks in story values, treatment and presentation.

Firstly, the theme selected is hardly suited for filmic purposes. But having chosen a flimsy theme like PAVALAKODI, what was needed to do full justice to such a subject was a powerful screen-play bringing out the human aspect in the story, which unfortunately is completely non-existent in this picture. It not only lacks the human element in it, but also the dramatic denouement.

Secondly the picture suffers heavily due to mis-casting. To have assigned the roles of Alli and Arjuna to Sarojini and Varadan respectively, who have proved completely incompetent to do justice to such roles, is an inexcusable blunder. We feel that the picture would have fared better had Mahalingam and Rajakumari were assigned these roles instead.

Thirdly the people who wrote the dialogues do not seem to have used their brains or intelligence, for there is not even a single sequence which would have been useful for exploitation on the screen. There are hardly a few emotional sequences and even they are not properly brought out due to the inept direction and the lack of histrionics in the artistes who were made to interpret them.

Fourthly, when people go to witness pictures like PAVALAKODI,

they always do so with a certain amount of pre-conceived ideas and anticipations, which in fact is the case with all motion pictures which have for their theme a popular subject. In fine the audience that witness such pictures have all their critical faculties on the alert and every lapse on the part of the director, the story-writer, the artistes and even the extras are noted minutely. And so the excitement or the disappointment they derive is always in the extremes.

In such wise, Pakshiraja's PAVALAKODI suffers heavily by comparison.

The screen story centres round Alli who commissions Arjuna to bring enough Pavalam to make a toy-cart for her son. While on this errand, Arjuna comes across Pavalakodi, falls in love with her and with the help of Lord Krishna he manages to bag two things at one shot—Pavalakodi and Pavalam. This, in short, is the story.

DIRECTION.

Sarojini as Alli is introduced with the usual prayer song and then we are switched on to the Durbar scene where she is supposed to exhibit her proclivities. For those who are acquainted (and who is not) with the mental qualities and the pre-possessing nature of this traditional demi-god (Alli) her behaviour is rather docile and coquetish. And next when she wishes to upbraid Arjuna for his forgetful nature, she carries things too far. It is rather hard for any one to believe that a dutiful and devoted wife, would go to such lengths as to heap insult upon insult, scorn upon scorn and to humiliate him in the crudest possible language and that too before her servants and attendants. To desert her or to have offended her love might be wrong, but when

PAVALAKODI	
Producers :	Pakshiraja Studios
Direction :	S. M. Sreeramulu Naidu
Story & Dialogues :	Elangovan
Music :	Subbaraman
Cast :	
T. R. Mahalingam, T. E. Varadan, T. R. Rajakumari, M. S. Sarojini, N. S. Krishnan, T. A. Madhuram, Kumari N. Rajam and others.	

he had returned and was seeking forgiveness, it looks rather ungracious and unbecoming of such a great character to have given sudden impulse to madness and to have become brutal in her actions and inexplicably mean in her language.

And during these scenes, Sarojini renders her dialogues as if she is vomiting what she had got by heart. The face remains expressionless and immobile.

The mute submission of Arjuna to such vile accusations makes the character of this hero one of contempt rather than one to be admired or revered. Further Varadan when he is mute is tolerable as Arjuna; but once he begins to gesticulate, the audience begin to feel the criminal injustice done by assigning such a romantic and enviable role to such a nincompoop. It is rather a pity.

Mahalingam as Krishna in so many disguises gives splendid performances. We would add that the histrionics of this artiste have been well-exploited in this picture. As usual he has sung his songs very well.

Rajakumari as Pavalakodi has not much to do, but within her limited scope she has given a good account of herself. But the only draw-back is that inspite of all the make-up she does not look the young maiden she is supposed to portray.

The production values of the picture are praise-worthy. Photography is straight and clear and the cameraman has exploited the huge sets with skill.

There are 28 songs and quite a handful of dance sequences; they are good.

In fine, PAVALAKODI is good in parts, but a failure as a complete Motion Picture.



VYNATEYAN'S
VINODINI
 —an interesting story
 exposing the Black-
 Market racket indul-
 ged in by an unsocial
 element, presented on
 the screen with all the
 attendant ballyhoo
 of Motion-Picture
 Technique.

NOTES & COMMENTS

NEW YEAR AND PICTURE PRODUCTIONS.

Those interested in the film business were hoping that the Tamil New Year would bring in its wake a spate of new announcements. But to the utter chagrin of all, not even a handful were announced. The dailies of Madras who almost always come out in flying colours for the occasion, and usually serve as the harbingers of such happy tidings, carried just two announcements! One was from *Eusekey Films* proclaiming the picturization of the widely read Tamil novel **KALVANNIN KATHALI** written by Mr. Krishnamurthi, the Editor of *Kalki*, and the other from *Modern Theatres Ltd.*, Salem, of **PONMUDI** or **THE UNEXPECTED KISS**. This is a very popular and a highly engrossing subject written by the Poet Laureate of Tamil Nad, Kavi Barathi Dasan. This popular novel is so well known to the great populace of S. India, that we are sure this picture if properly presented will win the approbation of the entire Tamil film audience.

MYTHOLOGICALS TO SOCIALS.

Talking of adaptations of well-known novels, we are reminded of the sudden change in the mental make-up of the film producers to-day. Of late the producers have started selecting subjects of worldly interest leaving aside the much exploited Gods and Goddesses, the heroes and heroines of legends and folklores in peace. This sudden metamorphosis is rather surprising, but all the same it is a welcome change. It is evidently the aftermath of the small press note which appeared some time back hinting about the Govt. considering the banning of portrayal of Gods and Goddesses on the screen. Whatever be the cause for this change in outlook, we are happy over it. And we trust that more and more producers will come

forward and take up progressive themes for filmatization.

WOOING SHAKESPEARE.

Socials, did we say, yes, they are on the upward march today. This brings to our mind the producers who have started wooing Shakespeare and his immortal dramas. As it is we are aware of two producers who are at present engaged in the filmatization of this great poet's dramas.

GUNASUNDARI KATHA, in Telugu, which is nearing completion at the Vauhini Studios, is according to Mr. B. N. Reddi an adaptation of **KING LEAR**, broadly speaking. **KANNIYIN KATHALI**, in Tamil, produced by Jupiter Pictures, is a straight and simple adaptation of **TWELFTH NIGHT**, with of course some minor changes to suit our background.

While we appreciate the bold attempt made by these producers in adapting stories of such a great and renowned writer like Shakespeare, we wish to suggest that care and intelligence be employed in seeing that the inner ideologies and excellences in these dramas are never tampered with. We are forced to sound this note of warning since we have watched all these years the fate of mythologicals and puranic subjects, and hope anything similar would happen to these dramas.

We, however, agree that the plays now selected for the screen provide enough and more material for decent entertainment, but our contention is that on the score of catering entertainment the artistic integrity and the ideals behind these dramas should not be lost. We are well aware that these two productions are in capable hands and there is no gainsaying that the directors of both the productions are well fitted to handle such themes.



M. V. Rajamma plays the role of the love
 Leila in Balaji Pictures:
LEILA MAJNU

FILM VAULTS & GOVERNMENTAL ECCENTRICITIES.

The vague and not too clear act under the Cinematograph Rules, 1918, in respect of the storage of cine films, has created a ludicrous situation similar to that of the proverbial "Rats trying to play when the Cat is away."

According to this rule, it is incumbent on every producer, distributor and any one handling cine films, to keep them in a vault built according to specifications, in a non-residential area. But the site of the vault, according to the framers of this rule, should be approved by as many as six demigods of this province.

As it is, the film folks do not find any difficulty in building a vault as per specifications of the Central Government, but the whole snag comes in when the approval of the site comes in the fore-front. As a matter of fact the site for the vault has to be approved by the following provincial divinities:—

1. The Corporation authorities.
2. The Fire officer.
3. The Inspector of Explosives.

4. The Chairman of the City Improvement Trust Board.

5. The Director of Town Planning.

6. The Commissioner of Police.

To get the approval of all these departmental heads would not have been a serious job had only the Rule also specified as to whom the film folks should approach first and who last. As it stands today, there seems to exist a departmental warfare and the question of who is the superior authority still remains undecided. In between, the film folks are subject to all kinds of harassments and privations.

For instance, a certain producer got the 'no objection' certificate for a particular site from the Commissioner of Police and the Inspector of Explosives, but, it is learnt that the Fire Officer after inspecting the place and learning that the other two departments had already signified their approval, did not give his assent to build a vault in the place. So the producer had begun all over again.

So the chance of a site, even after being approved by the five departmental heads, stands being rejected by the last department, which means all the spade work done by the producer or the distributor, whoever it may be, would go in vain.

With such non-co-operation existing between the different departments, it is rather painful to note that the Government should throw the entire blame, in not expediting the building of the vaults solely, on the film folks.

In view of the divergent views of these departmental heads, and in order that the building of the vaults may be expedited, we would suggest that the Central Government (we mean the Chief Inspector of Explosives, Delhi) should appoint one of the six provincial heads (pointed above) as the final authority and the others as a consultative body. This would help the film people in approaching the right department early and get necessary sanction to proceed with the work quickly.

Will Mr. Sen look into the matter?

FILMS FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS.

The Minister of State for Information Mr. R. Diwakar has moved a Bill to amend the Cinematograph Act, whereby the Film Censors will be authorised to discriminate in the exhibition of films between children and adolescents of impressionable age and the rest.

Under the provisions of the Bill, the Film Censors would be able to restrict exhibition of films considered 'horrific' 'sexy' or 'crime pictures' to adults only and thus prevent children below 18 years seeing such films.

Under the provisions of the Bill, Mr. Tyagi pointed out the many practical difficulties that would arise out of the implementation of the Bill. For instance, how would parents go to see a picture? He also pointed out that the Bill would reduce the box office receipts and might also lead to riots by young men in front of cinema houses.

While replying to the debate, Mr. Diwakar admitted that the present Bill was no doubt of a negative character, but a positive line could be taken up only when there is a full enquiry into the whole subject.

From the course of events, it looks as though the Bill will be passed and the same may come into force very shortly.

Here is yet another ruling from the Centre which the producers should take note of. Hereafter the producers cannot be indulging in such cheap jibes and frolics as they had so long been indulging in as even if one portion of the picture is found to be suitable for 'children' it would mean elimination of near about half the present clientele for the picture.

So the producers will have to be more careful in the near future.

EASY WAY TO PRODUCE THREE DIMENSIONAL FILMS.

Cinema audiences throughout the world may soon be seeing the fulfilment of a 20-year old dream of the film industry if the claims of a Danish engineer are justified.

The engineer, Egon Vendelboe Schruver claims to have invented a cheap, fool-proof and easy method of three-dimensional stereoscopic films. 'It will be like watching a scene through a window', is how the inventor described it.

Film experts believe that if Schruver's claims are justified they will produce a revolution in the

world film industry as that caused by the introduction of the talking pictures.

The invention, as described by Mr. Schruver, consists of a special lens system fitted over an ordinary cine camera and a special plastic screen to replace those at present used. The projected film is thrown on to a special plastic screen which gives perfect three dimensional effect. The method can be used for colour as well as for black and white films.

NO BACKING FOR THREE DIMENSIONAL FILMS.

Talking of three dimensional films, a report says, that there will not be much backing for this new technique.

The three dimensional movies that pry actors away from the scenery and make a Lana Turner's curves look curvier are ready to hit the screen. But their inventor wails that no studio will dish out the money for his trick.

Joe Valentine, one of Hollywood's top cameraman, developed in 1940 a gadget that brings depth to the screen. It is gathering dust. No studio will cough the dough to back the project.

Two dimensional movies which we have now look flat—flat across against flat scenery. We use lighting to try to bring them away from the scenery and colours of costumes and sets are chosen carefully so that actors do not melt into the background. In three-dimensional movies the actor stands out with the natural roundness. He appears to be right in the theatre.

Lana Turner looks twice as glamorous and Humphrey Bogart appears to dash with his gun right into the audience. Trees look rounder and people look like the people which would be a change. And a movie-goer, who gets stuck inside a seat won't have to squint at long thin men on a distorted screen either. Miss Turner looks round no matter where you sit.

WARNING TO FILM MOGHULS.

Speaking on Films, Mr. R. R. Diwakar, the Minister for Informa-



A Scene from VINODHINI



The Pensive Rajamma dons the immortal role of Leila in LEILA MAJNU.

tion and Broadcasting to the Government of India, said "The film is not only an industry today, but a great art which is now vital to the development of our national life and culture. It is one of the most important media of information, education and entertainment," and called upon the representatives of the film industry to look upon their profession as a national service and not a profit making machinery.

He further added, "if you do not rise to the occasion and make the profit motive subserve the higher cause of the welfare of the people, a day will come when the nation will make us do so and then all grace would be lost."

The Government according to Mr. Diwakar have already decided to set up an enquiry at a very early date and the inquiry will be a thorough one.

ALL CINEMAS IN INDIA TO CLOSE ON 1ST JUNE.

The Central Circuit Cine Conference held in Nagpur (from 27th to 29th March) has decided to close down all cinemas in that province from 1st to 7th April 1949 and on the first day of every month thereafter as a protest against the increase in the entertainment tax to 50 per cent of the cost of admission. The only relief granted by the Government of C.P. in spite of the protest of the public and the trade is to exempt tickets costing less than two annas and to keep the one anna tax on tickets costing up to 3½ annas, unchanged. The Government of West Bengal has also increased the entertainment tax which now varies from 25 to 75 per cent of the cost of admission.

As a protest against this indiscriminate and inequitable increase in

the taxation of the film industry, a proposal to close down all cinemas in India on 1st June 1949 is under consideration.

THE INDIAN SCREEN LOSES A GREAT ARTISTE.

What is death? I fear, I feel, it is a dreadful thing; but what I cannot compass: 'tis denounced against us. Both them who sinn'd and sinn'd not, as an ill—What ill?

said Lord Byron. And so, the thing called DEATH takes its toll in its own fashion caring not for who the person is and what his worth.

Chandra Mohan, one of India's great character actors fell a victim to this monster on 2nd April, this year. Chandra Mohan it is reported died from a sudden heart attack. He was only 44 at the time of his death.

He was first introduced in the talking picture through Prabhat's AMRIT MATAN. He was such a glorious success in that picture that a series of other pictures that followed featuring him were also lively successes.

Chandra Mohan was one of the few artistes of the Indian screen who was able to transfer to the cold celluloid such dynamic qualities as withering passions, inexorable cruelty and implacable hate. Chandra Mohan's force is understood to be in the line of enacting dynamic roles. Yet he was not pleased with the label that was firmly fixed on him. And he has proved that he can do justice even to whimsical, affectionate and at times even romantic roles. Pictures like JHANKAR, RONAQ, SAHEED and SHAKUNTALA wherein he has been assigned more tender roles have proved it.

An artiste of calibre, great understanding and intelligence Chandra Mohan will long be remembered by the film fans. His contribution to the screen is not small and cannot easily be ignored.

We are sure the void created by the sudden demise of this artiste would long be felt.

HIGH COST OF LOVING!

The high cost of loving is becoming a problem in Hollywood. A romantic fella in almost any town in America may be a little disgruntled to find it costs twice as much to take a girl to dinner in 1948 as it did in 1940, but it may conform him to know that the movie makers are just as disgruntled to find the same thing true in the fictional flickers. Only more so.

The movie kiss that used to cost \$3,000 before the war now sets the producer back anywhere from \$10,000 to \$15,000. Where the price of a dinner date has risen about 100 per cent, from five to ten of those elusive bucks, the movie ante has risen to 200 to 300 per cent over the pre-war levels.

Out at 20th Century-Fox, where they keep elaborate books on the cost of everything romantic, from a flirtatious glance to a sexy love scene, the budget boys have just announced that it cost the studio \$121,000 to have Tyrone Power and Orson Wells make love to Wanda Hendrix in "THE PRINCE OF FOXES." They are kind of annoyed about the whole thing. But they are paying, because those love scenes pay off in Boxoffice.

"Humph", said one book-keeper disgustedly, "it only cost us \$2,600 when Tyrone Power kissed Linda Darnell in "Daytime Wife." Those were the days." He toted up the figures on a couple more romantic movies about to hit the country's picture houses. A picture does not have to be a romantic costume drama to hit the budget a knock-out blow. Even a romantic comedy like "Mother Is A Freshman" has one-fourth of its shooting costs taken up with romance. The kisses Loretta Young gets from Van Johnson, in six romantic sequences, cost more than Marc Antony ever spent on Cleopatra and more than

all the jewels Charles II gave his score of mistresses. The score sheet shows that Van's celluloid amour with Loretta nicked 20th Century Fox for \$543,000.

The operating cost on "I WAS A MALE WAR BRIDE", which has Cary Grant whispering expensive sweet nothings (the nothings are seros on the end of a multiple figure cost sheet, by the way) to Ann Sheridan, set a new kind of record for the high cost of loving. The zeros are seven, not in dollars but in francs, for the company is shooting the picture in France and Germany and its the first time it's counted its kissing costs in millions.

Imagine. Every time Cary holds Ann Sheridan's hand, it costs a million francs or so.

Director Joe Mankiewicz, who had six stars making love to each other in his marital story, "LETTER TO THREE WIVES", said it cost the company about \$3,000 an hour for the romantic interludes. Just one lascivious look from Broadway Recruit Paul Douglas to Linda Darnell hit the books at more than \$5,000; because it took that long to get the look and then Linda's reaction on celluloid. And further there romantic scenes between Jeanne Grain and Kirk Douglas and Ann Sothorn and Jeffry Lynn.

A comparatively passionate love scene between Dana Andrews and Maureen O'Hara in "IMPULSE" cost the studio \$215,000. In THE SNAKE PIT, an affectionate kiss on the cheek from Mark Stevens to Olivia De Havilland cost \$182,000, or almost as much.

"This love stuff," says Mankiewicz is a complicated business. "You cannot spare expense to make movie romances seem more believable."

And in the nation's boxoffices, we are reminded, there's no business like live business.

SEX and CINEMA

BY IGOYIRS

Sex and Cinema, fire and wind, flame and oil, extatic revelries amidst exotic scenes.

Sex and Cinema—the marriage of these two terms fills us with dulcet dreams and delicious sensibilities.

Sex and Cinema—Yes, sex, the oldest poetic theme woven into Cinema, the newest pattern of art.

Sex and Cinema—the fires of our passions are fanned by the delicate winds of love or deadlier storms of erotic ebullitions or the flame in the lamp of love shines with the oil of melting moods or mellifluous melody.

Sex and Cinema—we dream of epic heroes and heroines—the love of Sita and Rama, Shakuntala and Dushyanta, Leila and Majnu, Juliet and Romeo and the host of lesser divinities that live in our literature or art.

Sex and Cinema—we imagine the love life of Gods and Goddesses—Sati and Siva, Vishnu and Brindha, Yama and Yami, Venus and Adonis in short of Isis veiled and Osiris unveiled.

Sex and Cinema—we see in our minds' eye the original sin of Eve in the garden of Eden; we visualise the fall of man, we look into the mad eyes of Don Juan dangerously poised between a passion that was and a passion that was to be and hear of his prototype in the life of Casanova.

Sex and Cinema—We dive deep into the dim distant pages of history and find a Cheops, a queen of Egypt freely selling her body for building a pyramid; we find the loves and hates, pleasant amours and passion crimes of a Cleopatra and coming

nearer to our own times, we read of Borgia and her poisons.

Sex and Cinema—in a word, we wish to realise real transformations, perhaps made more real through art, of the *manana* Kavyas of love and lust into *Drishya* Kavyas of the Cinema. We wish to realise the full curve between the heights of love and the depths of passion, from the love—lit madness of a Majnu pining away for Leila to the criminal callousness of a Nero reviewing the naked body of Agrippina, his mother, and musing to himself "Had I known that you were so beautiful, I would not have killed you, I could have used you" or from that divine wife who carried her sick husband to a prostitute's house to the woman who killed her husband because they loved her too much.

SEX AND CINEMA—We at times may revel in the sadists and mesochists, the sirens and the psychopathic sexologists shocking us by their shameless excesses full of unnatural and un-thought of sexual angularities.

Sex and Cinema—picture after picture of souls peeping through eyes and the eyes sinking in souls or passions thrilling the flesh and the flesh thrilling the passions.

Sex and Cinema—Calm, cool, clear beautiful, balmy and blissful, slow, steady and sweet, sublime, soulful and serene—scenes of eternal loves and immortal passions ending in a creamy comedy or a creeping tragedy.

Sex and Cinema—a riotous succession of buxom bosoms, saxon thighs and Mae-westian curves, alluring and audacious intimacies of voluptuous lips, volatile looks and voluminous pouting contours, exulting arrays

of blondes, burnettes, red-heads, harem-houries, south sea sirens, oomph girls, trippers and teasers moving against a gorgeous turning, twisting, and shaking sets of illogical, irrational, intriguing, fanciful and fantastic mosaics of cubism and surrealism.

Sex and Cinema—rarely one come across sequences of deep passion and delving moods as in "Queen Chritina" but the common run of pictures stress on the other side of sex and the million dollar productions of Hollywood are mostly magnificent spectacles of maddening sensualities. So far we have had surfeit of Broadway melodies of naked dancing legs and more than suggestive tight fitting garments against glass branches with silvered grapes growing out of mirrored floors. Sufficient unto the day such superlatives of dance erotics and sexual orgies. It is time to call a halt to such costly entertainments and fortunately the number of such pictures are on the decrease.

Sex and Our Cinema—we must be glad that we do not see such super spectacles of simulated nonsense as above, but at the same time we cannot be proud of our love scenes. Mostly they are travesties of love or caricatures of passion or emotions.

Sex and Our Cinemas—there is more sex among our cine-stars and cine-producers than in the pictures they produce or make. Our heroes and heroines cannot walk straight because of their weights and cannot talk straight because of their sing-song phobias. They cannot run, frisk, frolic, flutter or dance with joy or down with sorrow. They move heavily like road-rollers and grin and giggle with castor-oil contour. And whenever an intense love scene is enacted in our pictures we feel like crying with Byron:—

God Knows what next, I am almost sorry why

I have begun this story

or

find fault with Plato with him Oh Plato! 'Plato!' with your confounded morality you have paved way for more immorality. You are a

charlatan, a cox-comb nothing else but a go-between.

Sex and our Cinemas—We see before us a garden, not of shrubs, flowers and fruits but of wire, paper and cloth. We see a man in his late thirties with his sagging face trying to ape the manners of a young man in twenties and a woman in the seventh phase of her life, according to the mathematics of 'Ulla', who moves as though on thorns and makes love as though she had swallowed some bitter pills. We see them both in a sequence of hide and seek. They sing a song that is as heavy as themselves. They try to be intimate but are careful not to be intimate; and between their intimacy there is always a branch, or a bush or a table or a chair. They can at rare intervals, supposed to be climaxes in claimaxless climacteric, touch each other, but never reach each other. And at last after much shilly shallying ameniss we arrive at the finale of love and a cold and lifeless statue in a compromising attitude is brought out in full relief on the screen in an attempt to compromise our expectations.

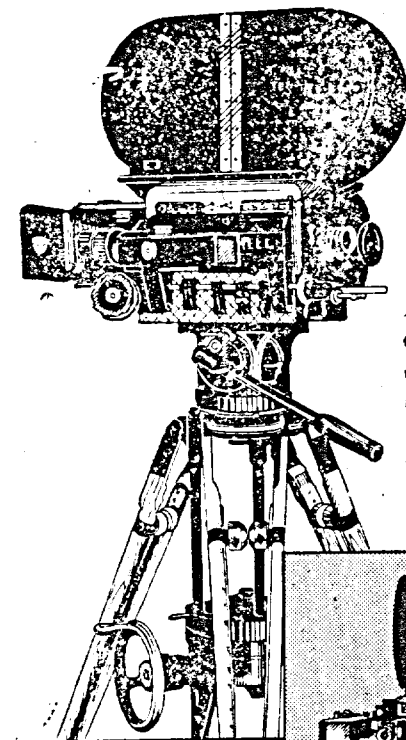
Sex and our Cinemas—This brings to my mind my own words which I wrote long ago "Sex is the privilege of the strong, the prattle of the weak and the folly of the perverse." Our Cinemas neither give us the strength nor the folly but the plain, vain prattle of the weak.

Sex and our Cinemas—the result of sex in our cinemas, if any, is only a neurosis. With our so called moral limitations, we only pave the way by shameless suggestions and suggestive shamelessness for more immorality.

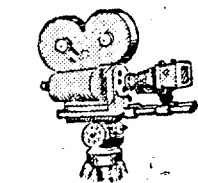
Sex and our Cinemas—we want healthy sex, the sensual often touching the spiritual and love lighting life into a glorious torch of supreme sensibilities. When can

we expect such pictures? It is time that our cine-makers and cine-seekers insist on such pictures and it is high time though.

SEX AND OUR CINEMAS
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APRIL 1949.



Sassi Kapoor is reported to have given a Splendid performance in **GOPAL BHAYYA**.



M. V. RAJAMMA—the much sought after screen deity of the day, plays the role of Leila in the immortal love-lyric of the Persian Poet **LEILA MAJNU**. Produced by Balaji Pictures.



KANNAMBA—the queen of emotional histrionics plays an important and powerful role in Bhagya Pictures' MANGAYARKARASI.

Introducing

KEMPRAJ, The Great Actor of the Karnatak

By Mrs. Lalitha Kempraj B.A., (Hons.)

It very rarely occasions that a wife is commissioned to render into writing, for public edification, a sketch of her husband. But such a task has befallen me by a request from the Editor. No doubt, I feel it a pleasure and a privilege to be called upon to give a graphic sketch of my beloved. Nevertheless, I feel it is a delicate job. However, since Mr. Thambi has given me no other choice, I am rendering hereunder the coloured life of Kempraj, the artiste, without allowing my sentiments to play on the better part of my judgment.

Born in a village near Mysore, he had his early education under the special supervision of the Mysore Koyal family and finally emerged from his High School, a tall and sturdy youth, full of noble ideals and a zest for sports. Even as a boy, he acquitted himself very well in the School Dramas. It was his privilege to win the approbation of the Maharaja and Yuvaraja of Mysore, great patrons of the fine arts. He not only made a fine impression as an artiste of calibre on the Kannada stage but also in English. His delineation of the role of the elderly Mayor in "The Dumb Wife of Cheapside" was highly appreciated by the College students and staff, as well as the general public. After he entered the college, he evinced a great interest in sports, and was the leading figure in Tennis, Swimming, Running, and other field-sports. He took regular and systematic training in Physical culture which has helped him to possess a perfect body even today which any man will envy.

His two great ambitions in life had been to shine as a famous actor and to become a benevolent Doctor. But when both these ideals clashed, he had to sacrifice the knife and needle of a surgeon to don the apparel of an artiste. As a medical student, he established a very fair name for himself and would have made a greater name in that profes-

sion had it not been for the driving inner urge in him to give up everything for the sake of realising the predominant ambition of serving the film art. It was this very same urge that made him to give up his studies just when he was about to complete the same, and take up to acting. It was while he was in the Medical College that he met the girl of his dreams, and married her (Excuse me, that girl happened to be myself!) in spite of the cantankerous attitude of his relatives, who wanted him to select his bride from the Royal blood. However this marriage proved to be a very happy event in his life and today Kemp-raj is the proud father of three little girls!

The shadow world extended a welcoming smile to Kempraj and he made his first debut as a dashing, young lover to both Shanta Hublikar and Jayamma in JEEVAN NATAK, his maiden picture. He went to Bombay to study the art of film making in right earnest. Visiting a number of Studios regularly, he studied closely the intricate technicalities of the celluloid world, and after three years, returned to his native place fully equipped to do his best for the improvement of the Industry, which was still in its infancy in Karnatak.

In Bangalore, with a group of three or four friends, he organised "The Jayasankar Film Corporation." His ambition was to make the film a mirror of the current social evils and inequalities, but he discovered to his chagrin that all his friends did not share his ideals. Confronted with a sharp cleavage in ideals and in sheer disgust, Kempraj had to dissociate himself from this firm, and had to leave for Mysore.

The mercenary attitude of the so-called guardians of the film industry proved a damning blockade to the enthusiasm of the young Kemp-raj. Disillusioned, he decided to prefer an agrarian life to that of the



Kempraj with his child

glamorous make-believe world, and retired to his lands, where with his small family he led an idyllic life, working in his lands. Shortly he started a Dairy farm also.

But he was not still in peace. The latent urge to realise his life-long ambition of being a famous actor propelled him once again into that realm and with the help of two of his friends he at last succeeded in producing three pictures in Kannada within a short period of one year and a half. His enacting the roles of Kamsa in KRISHNA LEELA, of the saintly guru in MAHANANDA and of the pious Muslim Tanesh in RAMADAS were superb and highly applauded and appreciated by all.

Ideals once again clashed and Kempraj left the concern.

And now he has decided not to bow his head before anybody and sacrifice his ideals for the will and pelayure of mercenary blokes. With this idea he has started his own production concern KEMPRAJ PRODUCTIONS and is currently producing SHANI PRABHAVA in Kannada and RAJA VIKRAMA in Tamil, both of which co-star Kemp-raj himself with the two great bilingual Kannada artistes, M. V. Rajamma and B. Jayamma.

About six feet in height, with a dark and handsome physiognomy and a stalwart well-proportioned body, Kempraj Urs is now running 31 and always bears a jovial smiling appearance in his face. Scion of the Ruling family of Mysore, he is never pretentious, arrogant or pre-possessing and is very social with any and everybody.

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PRODUCTION NOTES . . .

★ The film business in the South is still in a pitiable condition. A large number of productions which had to be suspended early in 1947 are still in the cold storage. The producers of such pictures are seen making herculean efforts to rope-in some financier or other to complete their pictures. But alas, all their efforts seem to bear no fruit.

While such is the lot of producers with half-finished pictures, even the few new units who came out with pompous announcements early in 1949 have not been able to start work on their pictures.

In between these two groups, who unfortunately jointly outnumber the rest, the lot of the studio owners has become pitiable. Many studios in the city are not having enough 'active producers' on hand to keep their 'floors' engaged.

For instance the NEWTONE STUDIOS which almost always had a dozen or more hirers on its list, is today having just seven producers on contract, of which four only are actively engaged in production. All the same certain remarkable changes that had been brought about in its working conditions, we are sure, will be of interest to the independents.

Under the able management of Mr. Dinshaw K. Thirani, the atmosphere inside the Studio has become pleasant and attractive. The working-conditions inside the studio have become more systematised and the work on the sets also well organised and regulated. Delay in giving call-sheets or cancellation of call-sheets at the last moment, has become a thing of the past in this studio. Any producer can get a call-sheet for his picture within 48 hours, provided it does not

entail special sets or properties. Also, the usual sight of groups of people strewn all over the lawn gossiping or conspiring is also absent these days. Truth to say, things have started moving in the right direction and in an orderly manner within this studio, and we are sure such an atmosphere would surely help in attracting more independents to this studio, which has produced the largest number of pictures for the South Indian market, as also some of the biggest box office hits.

Well, any way Mr. Dinshaw deserves to be congratulated for bringing about this re-orientation.

Seven pictures are at present under contract with this studio and the two pictures that expect to come out shortly are MANGAYAR-KARASI and RATNAKUMAR.

★ BHAGYA PICTURES' maiden hit MANGAYAR-KARASI is expected to be

censored before 21st May. Under the expert supervision and able guidance of Mr. Jitten this picture has been progressing at a rapid pace, and if things go according to schedule, the picture may be released in June.

MANGAYARKARASI with all its top-ranking artistes, the best technical assistance and a novel story, should prove a big draw. If our information is right, MANGAYARKARASI sports the story of a prince who without knowing what he is upto, falls in love with his own mother and the denouement shows how he is saved from this catastrophe.

It is also learnt that the producers have used some gorgeous sets for embellishing the production values of the pictures. To add to this, Chinnappa and Kannamba who play the main roles have, it seems, put in their best efforts to make this picture a highly emotional success.



A Scene from GHARANA

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SHAN-E-HIND PICTURES

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GHARANA

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Mirza Musharaf

Music:

Mohamad Shafi

Direction:

S. BHATIA

Production & Publicity Chief:

S. S. Bhatnagar

STARRING:

KAMAL ZAMINDAR

PARO

LEELA KUMARI

AMINA KHATOON

IFTEKAR, SIKANDAR

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SHYAMA DULARI (a new find)

Contact:

SHAN-E-HIND PICTURES

P 103, PRINCES STREET, CALCUTTA

★ MURUGAN TALKIES, the producers of RATNAKUMAR are also making an all out effort to complete the picture before June. And if work on this picture should continue at the same speed as they are at it today, it would be no surprise if they are able to release it according to schedule. One would understand the seriousness of our statement if only they knew that the producers were able to manoeuvre Chinnappa to the sets in spite of the artiste suffering from pain on account of an abscess. This only shows the eagerness of the producers to complete the picture early and the active co-operation of the artiste in helping the producers realise their dreams.

Banumathi and Chinnappa are cast in the stellar regions while quite a bunch of talented artistes lend the support. Krishnan-Panju are directing the picture.

★ BALAJI PICTURES are making the way with their costume picture LEILA MAJNU, a great romantic melodrama written some 700 years ago by the Persian poet, Nizam-uddin Abu Mohammed Ilyas Bin Yusuf. This story has won such reknown and greatness that it is to-day considered to be one of World's best short stories.

LEILA means the Pearl of the Night and Majnu means Mad with love. As the very title suggests it is a great love-drama enacted by these two lovers. Leila and Majnu plight their troth at the fountain spring where usually lovers meet, never to part again. But fate decreed otherwise to these two lovers, who, though meeting countless times at the fountain were destined never to be united in blissful wedlock in this mundane world. Loyalty and duty and her affection to her father prevented Leila from joining her lover Majnu and at long last, after years of patient and cruel waiting when the Moment arrived, and when Leila was free and was caught in the

wild embrace of Majnu, and as her lips touched his, Majnu's reason was wrenched away. JOY HAD DONE WHAT GRIEF HAD FAILED TO DO: MAJNU WAS MAD.

This in a nut shell is the theme of the great story which is now being picturized. Well, if it is properly picturized it should no doubt create a big sensation in the South since the audience had never had an occasion to witness a motion picture of this type in Tamil.

Mahalingam and Rajamma have been assigned the roles of Majnu and Leila respectively, who we hope will acquit themselves creditably. F. Nagoor is directing the picture.

★ CHANDRALEKHA PICTURES after a short recess of nearly two years have come out with definite plans to complete their maiden picture AMBIKA DEVI in a record time. T. R. Mahalingam has been contracted to play the hero's role while M. V. Rajamma continues to be the heroine. Vijayakumar who was previously assigned to play the male lead has been given the go by.

Producer Sivasamy has become very brisk these days, and it is hoped he would be able to cover the lost grounds in a remarkably swift space of time.

Recording of Mahalingam's songs have already started and picturization of these portions would follow shortly.

★ LEO FILMS may also go on the sets of Newtowne shortly with their in-complete production SHIVA YOGI. This picture was held up so long on account of certain complications. Now that Mr. Jagannathan, the producer has been able to effect a settlement, he is expected to go on the sets once again shortly. SHIVA YOGI sports Dandapani Desikar and Surabi in the stellar roles while Sarangapani,

T. R. Ramachandran and others are in the supporting cast. Krishnan and Panju are directing this picture.

★ LAVANYA'S PARIJATHAM with M. V. Rajamma in the lead is making slow but steady progress at Newtowne.

★ All the preliminaries having been completed, recording of songs is expected to be started early in May for AMARAKAVI M. K. Thyagaraja Baghavathar plays the main role.

★ Behind the office buildings of the Citadel Film Corporation, elaborate set materials are under preparation under the direct supervision of Mr. Thaliath. These materials will be used in his next production ITHAYA GEETHAM, which we believe will prove a worthy successor to their record-breaking GANASOUNDARI. This second production of theirs sports the popular stars Mahalingam T. R., Rajakumari, Periyayaki, Sarangapani, and the not to be forgotten T. P. RAJALAKSHMI. It is a historical subject bringing to play the Rajput chivalry and it is expected that Mr. Thaliath who directs this picture will make it go one better than his previous achievement.

They have started work on the out doors and the first unit has gone to Trichur for a location.

★ VAUHINI STUDIOS, the newest studio situated in the west of Madras, sporting the latest equipments and an automatic laboratory to boot, was hiving with activity when recently we visited this studio.

Vauhini's own production GUNASUNDARI KATHA under the Direction of K. V. Reddy is almost in the final stages of production. The theme of this picture broadly speaking, is akin to Shakespeare's KING LEAR and K. V. Reddy is giving it all the necessary touches to suit our audiences.

BOX - OFFICE JEWELS !!!

BHAGWATI PRODUCTIONS'

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1. RIVAJ

A DOWN-TO-EARTH DRAMA OF RURAL INDIA WHICH IS ENSLAVED TO THE EVILS OF SUPERSTITION & CUSTOMS—

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Story & Dialogues:—Munshi Dil

Music:—Reva Shankar

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"APALA"

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CREATOR OF

"SOHNI MAHIVAL" "TULSI VRINDA" "HEERA"

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ALK-A-TONE

43

APRIL 1949

The other picture which is making rapid strides at this studios is BHARANI PICTURES' LEILA MAJNU in Telugu. Ramakrishna Rao the producer cum director is utilising the floors at both Vauhini and Star Combines to shoot this picture. At this feverish speed, it is reported the picture may be completed before May. Well, we wish him God-speed.

G. Balaramiah's SWAPNA SUNDARI is yet another which is on the sets at Vauhini, and also Eastern Art's LAVANYA.

With but one floor, Vauhini's making every effort to satisfy their clients in every way possible.

STAR COMBINES STUDIOS is yet another where production activities are going on at a feverish speed. Mr. A. Ramiah the proprietor of the studios has become so active that one finds it extremely difficult to get at him these days. What with the construction of the studios still going on and with four active hirers on hand, Mr. Ramiah finds hard pressed for time.

KEMPARAJ PRODUCTIONS' two version picture RAJA VIKRAMA (in Tamil) and SHANI PRBHAVA (in Kannada) is making fast progress. Mr. Kemparaj's swift and systematic working has set many a tongue wagging. The record time in which he has made the entire technical crew and the other producers working in the studio look at this young man from Mysore with awe. Now that the recording is over, he is busy making arrangements to start shooting on both versions of his picture. It is hoped that he will start picturizing the songs early in May.

The songs so far recorded have gone off marvellously well and those who heard them have only

praises for the song composer and the singers. If one can complete recording 26 songs within 10 call sheets, well then, it is a sure indication that Mr. Kemparaj is in for real business and not for any baloney purposes.

★ DEVAMANOHARI and JEEVANMANI are also on the sets of this studio

ARVIND PRODUCTIONS, it is reported, will start recording songs for their KALIDASA by the end of this month.

★ At SOBHANACHALA, Mirzapur has completed dubbing his MAGIC HORSE in Tamil and it is expected to be released early.

★ MANADESAMU & VILLAGE GIRL are also reported to have progressed well.

★ MODERN THEATRES have announced the picturization of Kavi Barathi Dasan's love drama PONMUDI which will be directed by Ellis F. Duncan.

★ JUPITER PICTURES emboldened by the success of their social VELAIKARI have speeded up their work on their next subject KANNIYIN KATHALI an adaptation of Shakespeare's Twelfth Night. Mr. Ramnath is in charge of the megaphone while Sekhar is helping him to embellish the production with artistic sets and costumes

BOMBAY

★ LIBERTY ART PRODUCTIONS' maiden production LEKH has been censored and the copies are now being distributed to the various purchasers for exploitation. Famous artistes like Suraiya, Motilal, and Sitara with Ishu Jagirdar, Chamanpuri, Anand Pal and many others are featured in this picture. The highlight of the picture is the six melodious songs by Suraiya

out of the fourteen set in the picture. The novel dance piece rendered by Sitara, the producers claim, is such a rare piece of art that anyone seeing it would only love to see it over and over again. The picture is directed by G. Rakaish.

★ The renowned actor Prem Adib has floated his own concern titled PREM ABIB PRODUCTIONS and the first off-shoot of this concern is titled RAM VIVAH. The picture sports such talented artistes like Sobhana Samarth and Umakant in the lead. The screen story is by Pandit Anuj and the music direction is by Shankarrao Vyas. The picture is fast progressing at Laxmi Studios, Andheri, Bombay.

★ ASIA FILMS' first picture to go on the sets is KHAIL. It is directed by Rafiq Razvi.

★ M & T FILMS LTD., have undertaken a bold and praise worthy experiment in their maiden social picture entitled NAMOONA. The story of NAMOONA has a great psychological import and it assumes added significance as a result of its introducing a character who may be described as a Social Automaton, that is a person who through the process of intellectual evolution has attained that stage of detachment when emotion count for nothing and one looks at life and its problems from a cold-blooded, logical and utilitarian angle. This role is played by Kishore Sahu.

In vivid contrast to this is the assignment of Kamini Kaushal who has an emotional and romantic role. She acts the love-lorn maiden of the Ivory Tower who snatches love and happiness till in the end disillusioned she finds herself stranded on the burning sands of an emotional catastrophe.

Devanand, Leela Chitnis, Sanyal, Madanpuri, Gulab, Pratima Devi

and Cuckoo are also cast in this picture.

It is directed by Hari Singh.

- ★ FILMLAND's ambitious offering **THE LAST MESSAGE** has been censored recently. This picture which took just nine months to complete, is directed by Muzammil Khurshid who has exhibited rare skill and creative artistry of a genius. **LAST MESSAGE** depicts the trials and sufferings of an unknown patriot who battled for the emancipation of Mother India and also battled with equal zeal and devotion against the communal hatred which engulfed the country.

Muzammil Khurshid plays the role of the unknown patriot while Leela Chitnis and Shashikala lend him the supporting roles.

The picture is expected to be released all over India shortly.

- ★ **BANKIM CHANDRA'S** well known romantic drama of the blind girl titled **RAJANI** is now being rendered into a Bengali motion picture by the well known Director Niten Bose for the Bombay Talkies. Ashok Kumar is to play the male lead while Sunanda Devi, one of the top ranking artistes of Bengal, will play the important female character. A new find will act the role of the heroine. The shooting of the picture has already begun in Bombay.

CALCUTTA

- ★ **SHAN-E-HIND PICTURES'** maiden venture **GHARANA** is now complete and is awaiting release at a number of theatres in the city. The picture is produced by the well known comedian Mirza "Mushraf" and is directed by S. Bhatia. The cast includes such names as Paro, Leela Kumari, Amina Khatoon, Itikar Sikandar and Mizra Mushraff.
- ★ Their second production **WAAHARI DUNIYA** starring Sulochana Chatterji, Amarnath,

Rirkoo, Sikandar, Mizra Mushraff and others is on the sets. This picture is produced and directed by Mizra Mushraff himself under the capable supervision of S. M. Yusuff, the super box office hit maker.

- ★ **I. N. A. PICTURES'** maiden Hindi picture **SWAYAM SIDHA** starring Shanta Apte, Molina Devi and Bepin Gupta is now ready for release. Producer Moni Guha expects this picture to be a great box office draw just like the Bengali version of this picture which ran for more than 50 weeks in Calcutta.

- ★ **ROOP KALA NIKETAN** have completed **BAPUNE KAHATHA** which is now ready for release. It is directed by K. A. Varma and features Mira Misra, Paresh Banerjee, Pabari, Hira Lal and others. The picture was produced at the Kali Films Studios with A-Class technicians working on the picture.

- ★ **GREAT ORIENT PICTURES'** forthcoming picture **AZADI KE BAAD** is fast progressing at the Indrapuri Studios under the able supervision of B. R. Tandon. The story for this screen play is written by Netti Bhatlacharjee. It is a live drama of the teeming millions thrown out of gear by the sweeping blow of dreadful destiny. It is a dance packed drama with throbbing passions. The cast consists of veteran artistes of New Theatres like Ashit Baran, Mira Misra, Sham Laha and Parbati and Tandon. D. K. Chatterji directs the picture.

- ★ **GHARKI NUMAISH** is the title of the newest production of Shanti Pictures. This picture which is nearing completion at the Indrapuri Studios, features such top ranking stars like Mira Misra, Paresh Banerjee, Bhupen Kapoor, Bela Rose, B. R. Tandon, Vithaldas, R. P. Kapoor, Nazma, Nurjehan Jr., Gita Bose and Jayashankar. The picture is directed by Vithaldas.

- ★ **NEW THEATRES'** forthcoming picture is titled **CHOTA BHAI**. The story is an adaptation of Sarat Chandra Chatterjee's "Ramer Sumati" which has been acknowledged by the critics and the reading public as one of the best piece of Bengali literature. Molina plays the role of 'Bhabi' with amazing conviction and human sympathy while Sukkar as Ram gives a pleasing and balanced performance. Add to this is Pankaj Mullick's luring music.

- ★ **MARIADA** is yet another Hindi production progressing at the studios under the direction of Subodh Mitra. The story for this picture comes from the pen of the great writer Benoy Chatterjee who gave us themes like **WAPAS**, **MY SISTER**, **SAUGAND** and many other N. T. hits. **MARIADA** depicts the story of a nurse, a woman, who is hindered, humiliated and made to undergo hardships in her attempt to occupy her rightful place in Society. Bharati Devi is assigned the role of the Nurse with the youthful Ashit Baran playing the hero. Pankaj Mullick supplies the music.

★ SURYAKALA CHITRA

Finally titled "Chardin-Ki-Chandni" the maiden attempt of Surya Kala Chitra, is now in the editing room for final touches.

Featuring a galaxy of front rank stars headed by Ismat Sultana, Paresh Bannerjee, Indu, Kokila, Nayampalli, Deepak, Mehru Nissa, Navin Yagnik, Pitu and Shaheeda Banu, a tantalizing new comer, the picture is directed by W. D. Daldani, a young man who is bent upon introducing new technique in the art of film making, under the personal supervision of that Veteran Rafiq Razvi, who has to his credit a number of hits.

The excellent music contributed by Gulshan Sufi and D. C. Dutt and the number of dances by Ismat Sultana and Shaheeda Banu, are the high lights of the picture.

The Strip Tease Business is a Century Old Today

Whether the advent of the strip tease to the burlesque stage was accidental or pre-meditated makes no difference at all. There is a legend that the unscheduled snapping of a chorine's shoulder strap back in 1924 gave birth to the idea and before long the things were slipping off with daring regularity. But really, Sex first reared its ugly head on the American stage in the year 1827, and has continued ever since to play a very big part in the show business.

Come rain or come shine, come hell or high water, burlesque over the years has risen to the position of an unrecognized but embarrassingly well patronized American institution—that is, the bump-and-grind variety with its tantalizing beauties and its unsavory humor.

Denounced by saint and sinner alike and supported by both, the flesh shows have flourished against the tirades of religious and civic moralists. In fact, many of today's top-bracket entertainers were burlesque-bred. Every now and then, Hollywood waxes nostalgic and in its own limited way captures as much of the spirit and atmosphere of burlesque as the law allows. Television, too, promises to draw heavily

upon that source for show people. Indeed, video came like a shot of adrenalin to put new breath of hope into the gasping, withered spectre of vaudeville from which modern burlesque has sprung.

Whether the advent of the strip-tease to the burlesque stage was accidental or premeditated makes no difference at all. There is a legend that the unscheduled snapping of a chorine's shoulder strap back in 1924 gave birth to the idea, and before long the things were slipping off with daring regularity.

Be that as it may, burlesque shows in the broader sense have appeared under different names and formats since the earliest days of show busi-



ness. Both the ancient Roman festivals and the French musicals of the late nineteenth century would have put modern burlesque to shame. Originally, burlesque had a considerably different meaning than the present-day connotation. It stood for a show that was merely a travesty or parody on some existing institution or occurrence.

Sex first reared its ugly head on the American stage in 1827 when a Mlle. Hutin appeared in a shocking pair of tights that resembled women's form-fitting slacks of today. They kept her as well covered as an Eskimo on a cold day, though to the New York wolves of that age it was a startling sight. But alas, Mlle. Hutin lacked what is now known as sex appeal, and so her fleeting popularity promptly faded. Some three decades later a buxom lass named Adah Isaacs Menken put sex on a paying basis with a Lady Godiva act.

American producers began to take notice, and a few years later one enterprising gentleman with a new play on his hands added to its cast a foreign ballet troupe stranded in New York. Apparently all they did was stroll back and forth across the stage in tights. Like wildfire, the rumor spread that ladies' limbs were on display and the show ran 16 months.

In those pioneering days of burlesque there was no attempt to reveal anything more than the outline of the female figure. Costumes covered more of the body than today's "New Look" does. However, burlesque was beginning to take definite shape and all it needed was one smash hit to send it on its way. Lydia Thompson and her British Blondes supplied that impetus as



they took New York by storm in 1863 with a dance called the can-can. Newspapers were swamped with violent denunciations, sermons blasted the English maidens mercilessly and one reviewer put down his binoculars long enough to write—"for him (the manager) to shorten the skirts and reduce the bodices of his ballet is simply to play the part of a panderer to a degraded taste."

But the forbidden fruit had been tasted and the public wanted more. Burlesque houses sprang up in every major city and the rush was on for buxom beauties. Strangely enough, it took a suffragette's complaint against "the new vogue for nudity" to spread the gospel of sex on the stage far and wide. Miss Olive Logan protested long and loudly about the lusty displays, and when she was finished every male in the country was clamouring for a look-see.

Burlesque has since become a staple item in the nation's theatrical appetite. The producer of a legitimate show always has the spectre of a flop hovering over him, but the burlesque proprietor is continually assured of a good audience. There are now scores of burlesque units travelling organized circuits so that the local connoisseurs may have a variety of entertainment each week. With wartime wages as a stimulant, admission prices soared to an all-time high and featured strippers such as Margie Hart Ann Corio and Gypsy Rore Lee were receiving salaries of four figures per week. The number of burlesque houses has skyrocketed with sedate old Boston high on the nation's list with a scandalous two. The Hub City also boasts of having the oldest burlesque house in the country, the Old Howard Theatre having been built before the Civil War. In addition to seeing the latest and fastest "girlie" shows, the erudite spectator may study a valuable collection of old prints picturing the theatre in its hey-day which are prominently displayed about the walls.

New York, once the burlesque capital, hasn't a single such theatre in operation. At least a half dozen once scattered throughout Manhattan and Brooklyn did a land-office business while jealous legitimate theatre owners watched their box-office "take" shrink. A dozen different factions banded together and gave burlesque the squeeze

play in New York when in 1937 Commissioner Paul Moss suspended the theatres' licenses. A few weeks later they were allowed to reopen, but permits were issued only for a three-month period and the words "strip-tease, burlesque and Minsky" were banned from advertising.

Burlesquers, however, took this in stride; the shows were called Follies and yearly petitions were made to have the banned words restored to them. Of course they were always flatly rejected but the attendant publicity did the theatres no harm. In 1942 the uproar swelled to a crescendo finale when the late Fiorello La Guardia, then mayor, declared it was a fight to the finish—the forces of decency against those of sin—and over theatrical protests against Moss's dictatorial powers, burlesque houses by any name were banned.

During the last hectic days of that memorable battle the metropolitan newspapers were covered with risqué accounts of the proceedings and house lights went up in the middle of shows so that plain-clothed detectives could round up all the juvenile delinquents in the audience. After the theatres were darkened, one last attempt was made to revive burlesque when it was produced as a legitimate Broadway show under the title of "Star and Garter" at standard main-stem prices (\$4.40 top at that time). Again religious, civic and business groups cracked down, and at last the smoking dragon of burlesque disappeared from the city. Even with La Guardia's death the situation hasn't changed and New Yorkers continue to make their pilgrimages to the girlie shows of nearby Union City and Newark.

Burlesque was the training ground for many of America's leading comedians. Fanny Brice, James Barton, Jack Pearl, Jimmy Savo, Leon Errol, Bert Lahr, Eddie Cantor, Al Jolson, and Abbott & Costello are a few examples of the top-notchers who learned show business through the medium of burlesque's four-a-day. Billy Watson with his famed "Beef Trust" was the first to bring low comedy into the format of the shows. He introduced a chorus line in which every girl tipped the beams at over 200 pounds and then further livened things up by severely pinching these monstrous maidens at every opportune moment. In a short time a

new brand of comedy had arisen and basically it has remained the same ever since.

About this same time a girl billed as "Little Egypt" was making a sensation at the Chicago World's Fair of 1898. She and Mlle. Fatima, a competitor, had introduced the specialty bit or, as it was known then, the "sex dance." Dressed in flowing veils and harem costumes they swayed and wriggled their hips in a provocative manner. Soon the golden era of burlesque was in full swing and in the next quarter of a century it coined big dough.

Finally, attracted by the shower of gold falling upon this stepchild of the legitimate theatre, the Schuberts in 1923 brought out a Broadway revue labelled "Artists and Models" which in effect was glorified burlesque. Sex was set to good music, placed in gorgeous settings, adorned with glamorous costumes and sold at prices that would cause a Minsky fan acute dismay. It was an immediate hit and soon others were following suit. With the flowering of the Earl Carroll Vanities, The Ziegfeld Follies and George White's Scandals, burlesque saw its nemesis and tried to clean house. Signs warning that "any actor who curses will be fired immediately" went up. Occasionally, a daring player was bounced but, for the most part, it was realized that if the institution were to survive something new had to be added. That's when the strip-tease was invented and it began sometime in 1924. As the story goes, it was about then that the chorus girl's shoulder strap gave way. The audience liked it so much that it "accidentally" broke the next night and pronto it was a part of the act.

Yes, it is a fabulous institution—this burlesque. Colorful as a broken kaleidoscope, raucous as auto horn, it holds an undisputed position as the black sheep of the entertainment world. Throughout its turbulent career it has fought off the wolves of censorship and civic virtue to keep its lusty appeal intact and hold its fatal fascination over the American male. It has proved conclusively that showmanship plus a patch of black lace can pack a theatre and pad a bankroll. More important it has written an indelible chapter in the history of the theatre and its tinsel brilliance will likely shine on long after its last critic is gone.

[COURTESY PIC]

A Short Story

I NEVER WILL

by Telang, B.A.

If I am born again—I think I have got to be born again. According to the theory propounded by an eminent pre-historic biologist, a chappie is supposed to go through not less than 4 million rounds of births and deaths before he is free to enjoy a quiet smoke by himself. This may at first sound phoney. But it is not. To my knowledge many modern scientists have voted in favour of this ancient dictum. It is quite natural that a bloke like me should fall in line with this scientific thought. Now-a-days I feel so done up that I have a hunch that sooner or later I will kick the proverbial bucket and come into being again. When I come to breathe the free air again, may be in the form of a cat, or a rat or a bat or an ant, I will never blunder into this mistake.

This is how I committed that dreadful mistake. The other day I was reading a book written by a blighter who had devoted all his time and energy to elevating the minds of children. In the said volume the author unwittingly offered a homily to all daddies and mummies. This is how he goes, "A new and sounder educational system has sprung up in this country. It is known as the cinema. A medium of instruction more potent, more efficient and within the easy reach of the masses has so far been not known to their country."

"Parents, send your children to the cinema once a week, even twice a week just as you send your children to school daily. The film is their friend, philosopher and guide. Entrust your children to the care of this benevolent instructor. There is no end to the good it can do to your children."

Rightly said, I would have the fellow patted on the back and even fallen on his cheek and cried with sheer joy for putting me on the right

track but unfortunately I did not know the guy's whereabouts.

As every father knows, children off school are such a nuisance. This writer guy had given me a swell idea. Golly, I said to myself, now the atmosphere in the old place will ease and I can settle down to a comfortable smoke and even day-dreams.

The word had gone round that Daddy was going to take the kids to a show. There was unprecedented jubilation in the house.

The day being a Sunday I was just beginning to enjoy my usual postprandial nap. All of a sudden I felt that somebody was pulling my leg at the one end and somebody tugging at my hair at the other extremity. I woke up hastily to find that my son Kishore was pulling my leg and my daughter Prabha fiddling with the remnant of my bald scalp.

"What is the matter with you two?" I asked angrily.

"It is one o'clock Daddy!"

"What, if it is one o'clock or for that matter any bally hour?"

"Are not we going to the pictures, Daddy?"

"Sure we are! Not so early. The show starts at 3 o'clock. There are still two hours. Will you go and attend to your studies till then?"

"But Daddy, we will not get seats!"

"How do you know that? There are plenty of seats in the theatre. Do not worry about them."

"People are all already standing in the queue and if we go late all seats will be sold out."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes. The paper says that. See Daddy."

They showed me the screen page of a local daily which published comparative photographs of queues of people in front of a cinema theatre and a Government grain-shop. People waiting before the booking office numbered nearly 5 times more than those waiting for their quota of foodgrains.

The children were right. We must start immediately. At long last after waiting in the queue of people who were spitting and smoking alternately I managed to book our seats. When the gates of the theatre opened there was a falling on a carcass. It was with extreme difficulty that I manoeuvred the children safely to their seats.



Tandon & Mira Misra are teamed in The Great Orient Picture's AZADI-KE-BAAD a live drama of the teeming millions.

Nigaristan (INDIA) Films

Present

**GEETA BALI★RANDHIR
KULDIP★GULAB, SOFIA
RAMESH THAKUR★RAJPAL
★SHAMLAL★
and
DM PRAKASH★**



in

BANSARIYA



Directed By
RAM NARAIN DAVE

Music **HUSANLAL BHAGAT RAM**

Written & Produced By
M. R. BHAKRI

NIGARISTAN (INDIA) FILMS, VERSOVAR, ANDHERI, BOM.

MOZELLE EXHIBITS
Tala shotkar

TALK-A-TONE

(49)

The din of the vendors and contestants for seats died down and the curtain went up at last.

The exhibition of advertisements and other uncalled for thingummies over, the main picture began. The picture opened with what appeared to be a romantic interlude. A female of the species sauntered aimlessly round the studio shrubbery waving a nosegay of ersatz flowers. She crooned a lugubrious song and occasionally made faces to deroute she was love-stricken. Stealthily from behind a ply-wood (a tree made of play-wood) an undersized colossus with a protruding jaw and spreading paunch arrived on the scene. In a staccato tone he picked the refrain of her song and then began a series of vociferations known to film-goers as a duet. The termination of the duet was marked by a love chase.

The female technically known as the heroine gambolled away from the male the hero with a gait that befitted only a bally elephant. The hero manoeuvred to keep away about ten paces, behind her uttering endearness.

"Daddy, why does that man call that woman 'oh, Bulbul of mine.' My son queried.

"He admires her so much that he likes to call her a Bulbul." I answered.

"But why call her a Bulbul? Can he not say, 'Oh, lady or something?'"

"He can, but he loves her so much that he likes to imagine she is a Bulbul. He thinks she sings as sweetly as a Bulbul."

"Do you think so, Daddy? But anyway she is not like a Bulbul. She is as big as a buffalo."

"Oh, shh will you be quiet? You are disturbing other people."

Quiet reigned for a few minutes. "Oh, what a man! He can't catch up with a woman. Shame on him!"

My daughter involuntarily shouted. "Prabha, will you stop shouting? The man can easily catch up with her. But he does not want to."

"But why?"

"Because, you see, he is playing a game of make-believe. There is more fun in that."

"Do you think so Daddy? Daddy did you run after Mummy like that and play the game of make-believe? Did you ever catch up with mummy?"

"Prabha, you are talking so loudly."

To my great relief the hero at last overtook the heroine. He stood

behind her with his arms round her waist. It looked as if this was a prelude to another duet. But to everybody's surprise the heroine turned back with the agility of a tigress and gave the man a stinging slap across the face. The expression on the hero's face indicated that it was not a game of Make-believe. It was the real stuff. The hero stroked his cheek shamefacedly. There was a loud applause. The love scene slowly faded out.

"Ouch! My son exclaimed.

"What's the matter with you?"

"Oh nothing! Oh yes! The bugs!"

"What do you mean the Bugs?"

"There are bugs in this seat."

"I think they are domesticated."

"What does that mean?"

"It means that these bugs are harmless like our pussy cat or our pup, Tom. They do not scratch nor bite."

"They do, see Daddy."

They did. I felt a stinging bite right in the seat of my trousers.

"Never mind", I said, "follow the story and forget the bugs."

The story seemed to have made no progress at all. The hero and heroine broke into songs in alternate scenes.

"Daddy, can you not ask that man to remove his cap. I can't see a thing." My daughter entreated.

I looked in the direction of her finger. A man sat bolt upright in the seat in front of her covering his nut with a headgear that resembled a fair-sized dustbin in shape and size. He had apparently heard Prabha. From the expression he was wearing on his face I wished I were a mile away from him.

"I can't ask him. It is not gentlemanly." I tried to pacify Prabha.

"Then I will." Saying so she poked the man's back with her fingers and asked him to knock off the chimney, otherwise she threatened to do it herself.

The man turned to me and barked, "It is against my religion to remove my cap. Tell your children."

"Oh is it so! Isn't it against your religion to cause inconvenience to other people?" Kishore tried to cross-examine him.

The man ground his teeth, roled his sleeves and stood up uttering profanities.

This was a signal for general uproar. There were shouts, cooings jeers, raising of fists and throwing of unidentified missiles.

The authorities arrived on the spot and after much haranging, calm was restored.

By this time the story had taken a rapid stride; the hero having been juiced in love had developed the drink habit to an alarming extent. He now appeared to be the guiding hand of the underworld. His remarkable rise to the status of a decoit from the humble position of a pic-pocket was picturised in a series of fast moving scenes known to the cinema world as montage.

When the gang outwitted the public and returned to their den with large booties under the direction of the hero there were deafening cheers from the audience.

"Isn't it nice to be a bandit Daddy?"

"Certainly not!" I retorted.

"Then why are all these people bucking up the bandit in the picture?"

"They are just amusing themselves!"

"I think they like the bandit very much. When I grow up I will like to be a bandit, the King of them all with many assistants and plenty to spend!"

"Wait till the police hunt him up and send him to jail for six long years."

"They will never hunt him!"

"How do you know that?"

"I have read the story."

I was speechless, dumb founded like the rock of Gibraltar. I wondered how they would end the story without the element of retribution or public justice. They had done it. Later events proved it.

Meow! Meow! Came feline sound from underneath my seat.

"Now we said meow!"

"The Kitten! What do you mean the Kitten?"

"Our Kitten, our pussy!"

"Who brought her here?"

"She travelled in my pocket!"

I kicked the Kitten away. It went mewling from seat to seat. There were cat-calls from seat to seat. Thinking discretion the better part of valour I marched out of the theatre with the children. My son left the theatre with the ambition of becoming a bandit firmly planted in his juvenile heart. My daughter, God only know what ambitions she might have cherished in her bosom.

So if I am born again I will never commit the blunder of taking my children to cinema Show.

ONE SIDE OF THE MEDAL

The avowed and declared policy of the Government, as implied in the previous G.Os. and as applied in day-to-day administration and practice, is to save the permanent cinemas from the unhealthy competition from the touring cinemas. The reasons from the main health point of view are obvious and it is from this point of view, various Rules have been framed by the Government which are very stringent and which are applicable only to permanent cinemas and not at all to touring cinemas. It is not necessary to dilate upon the advantages of a permanent cinema, its equipment and cleanliness and upon the disadvantages, from the health point of view, apart from the others, of the touring cinemas. A compliance therefore with the strict and onerous conditions imposed upon the permanent theatres involves great initial cost and heavy recurring charges—all of which are saved for the touring cinemas. All this means that the nett profits and proportion to the initial cost and outlay for permanent theatres are too disproportionate when compared with those of the touring cinemas. It is common knowledge that relying upon the avowed policy of the Government to protect the permanent theatres from such unhealthy competition, many businessmen have, in very recent years, invested huge amounts in designing building and equipping permanent theatres.

The proposed Rules will adversely affect the permanent cinemas and at their cost, and in many cases, benefit the touring cinemas. The capital required for designing and building and equipping a permanent theatre runs into lakhs, while a touring cinema can be started with a few thousands, a negligible initial outlay when compared with the margin of return or profit they would get. And this, no doubt, accounts for the large increase in the number of touring cinemas. And it is to protect these touring cinemas from unhealthy competition among themselves, that the four-miles distance was prescribed by the existing Rules, as framed in 1946. These Rules have the double ad-

vantage of giving such protection to the touring cinemas themselves and also of giving protection to the permanent theatres from competition by the touring cinemas.

The necessity for the proposed changes as set forth in the preamble is,

(i) that there will be no scope for the increase in the permanent theatres in view of scarcity of materials, and

(ii) that in view of increased necessity for amusement due also to the advent of prohibition, greater facilities for amusement should be provided. In providing for such a contingency, the Government, as stated in the preamble itself, are

aware of the absolute necessity to avoid unhealthy competition between the touring cinemas and permanent cinemas.

An examination of the proposed changes will clearly show that the permanent theatres in towns stand in danger of being put to that very suffering and disadvantage which the Government are so anxious to avoid.

The very wording of the proposed changed Rules as regards the determination of the population of a place will give rise to difficulties and anomalies. It is said that, in determining the population, that of the immediate environments should be taken into account. The words

Permanent Vs Touring Theatres Cinemas

The Government Order stipulating the time and fixture of Touring Cinemas in South India in relation to the Permanent theatres and the population basis has once again kindled the dormant embers of bitterness in both. For nearly two years a lively feud had been going on between the Permanent and Touring Cinema owners. Now it has reached a stage when the issue has to be settled once and for all. It serves no purpose either to

In the matter of the location of Touring Cinemas in places where there are permanent theatres, the existing procedure has been laid down in

- (i) G. O. No. 3816 (Home Department) dated 19-10-1946; and
- (ii) G. O. No. 4454 (Home Department) dated 3-12-1948, the cumulative effect of which is, that,

(a) Where there is one permanent theatre, touring cinemas may be permitted at the discretion of the District Magistrate;

(b) Where there are more permanent theatres than one, no touring cinema is to be allowed within four miles except for special reason to be recorded in writing; and

(c) no site in any place should be used for the exhibition of a temporary cinema for longer than six months, in the year.

the one or the other or to both, to continue this fight.

We feel that the country needs the services of both. Therefore, it would be better, in their mutual interests, to submit to some kind of a restriction or a convention which would save them from coming into a conflict at least in the future. This can be achieved only by joint planning and not through an arbitrator.

2. The present proposals seek to introduce population factors as indicated below:

(a) places with a population upto 25,000 and one or more permanent theatres will not have a touring cinema allowed;

(b) places with a population exceeding 25,000 but not exceeding 40,000 can have a touring cinema if the number of permanent cinema is less than two; and

(c) in respect of place whose population exceeds 40,000 discretion is to be vested in the District Magistrate who will be enjoined to take the population into consideration, the term "population" being defined as covering not only the population of the place, "but also that of its immediate environments".

"immediate environments" are so uncertain and so capable of interpretation, that they would result in anomalies and different standards in different places and different applications at the same place in different times. There is no distance or radius prescribed. This cannot in the nature of things be done, for, while one town may have a number of environments within a particular radius, say, four miles, another town may have very few. Thus the very wording will give rise to difficulties and will in practice be difficult of uniform application.

Further, under Clause (3) of the proposed Rules, discretion is given to the licensing authorities in

the cases of towns with a population of more than 40,000. This again will end in anomalies and will not tend to secure uniformity of treatment not only as between district and district but also within the same district, when one officer succeeds another. Thus, the very basic principle of legislation, viz., certainty and uniformity, will, in a large measure, be affected in the nature of the very wording of the proposed Rules.

Taking the reasons one by one for the necessity for the proposed change and taking the first reason, viz., dearth of building materials, it can be safely said that this has not affected the construction of

new theatres in many places, and in fact, new theatres have sprung up in many places and many are actually under construction. Building materials such as cement and iron are negligible when compared with will have the effect of killing the permanent theatre, for the income of the latter will be considerably the other requirements for the construction of a permanent theatre and instead of retarding the construction of new theatres by restricting the supply of iron and cement, an exception may be made and a maximum amount may be prescribed for them, thus encouraging construction of permanent theatres.

But the whole case for the proposed changes does not really depend on the possibility of new theatres being constructed easily, but on the sole question, whether in towns there are, or, there are not, at present, more facilities for recreation and amusement, in other words, sufficient and adequate facilities. The necessity for this increase may be due to prohibition or due to increase in the cinema-going public.

First of all, such increase has been apparent not only now, also for some years past and that is why in many places private enterprise has come forward to sink large capital and build permanent theatres. It cannot be gainsaid that in recent years, the number of permanent theatres has actually increased. Secondly, in almost every town, there have sprung up and come into existence very many other forms of recreation and amusement which are cheap enough and which provide more amusement than the cinemas. It is notorious that in recent years, there is, so to say, a revival of the stage and in almost every town there are dramatic troupes running their performances and attracting very good crowd. In fact, the permanent theatre owners feel these dramatic companies a greater competitive force than any other. Then, there are circuses, and in many towns, exhibitions are organized and run with advantage not only to the public but also to the local bodies concerned. The need for increased amusement and recreation cannot simply be met by introducing these (in many cases) unhealthy touring

cinemas with their noise and other nuisance to the residents of the locality, into towns. That cannot be the real solution at all. It can only result in great harm to the public besides unhealthy competition to permanent theatres. But the solution will be for the Government to initiate, organize and encourage and thus provide for various other forms of recreation and amusement. In big towns with a population of more than 40,000 or 50,000, periodical exhibitions can be started and run. This will have manifold advantages. It will encourage every kind of industry. Such exhibitions, have, in recent times, been held in many places and have provided great amusement. Thus, the difficulty is not solved by encouraging the touring cinemas to come to towns. If that should be done, what about the countryside and villages? Instead of taking amusement and recreation into the heart of the villages and thus providing amusement and recreation for them at their very places, the rural population is lured to towns for amusement and recreation. This, for one thing, entails greater expenses besides undue pressure on the transport facilities which are, as they are, very meagre. The very wording of the proposed Rules, viz., population includes those of the immediate environments lends support to this argument, encouraging touring cinemas to come to towns. You will be tempting and encouraging the villagers to come to towns for amusement and recreation instead of providing these for them at their places.

12. The situation can be met easily by encouraging these touring cinemas to go into the countryside. They do not have load to transport. The return that they can get in the remotest village will bear a good proportion to their capital and outlay, nay, a higher ratio—than the permanent theatres in towns are obtaining.

13. By inviting the touring cinemas into towns, a lot of nuisance, inconvenience and unhealthiness will be caused to the inhabitants of the locality. The touring cinemas cannot, in the very nature of things, and in fact, are not expected to,

have, good sanitary arrangements. The flooring cannot be hard or impermeable. It will be dust-laden in summer and wet, chilly and slushy in winter. Spitting from unhealthy persons is likely to spread contagion and infection. The touring cinemas are not soundproof and so let out sound to a great distance in the nights, a nuisance to the residents in the circumstances. In permanent theatres, the halls absorb all sound and let no sound to escape which is the case with the touring cinemas. Thus, the touring cinemas will be a nuisance in towns and a source of annoyance to the residents.

14. As things are, the touring cinemas, even in the countryside, are able to compete with the permanent cinemas. There are many permanent theatres in many towns, who, for no fault of their own, and in spite of efficient and experienced management, are not able to get sufficient income. If to such places a touring cinema were to come, it will have the effect of kitting the permanent theatre for the income of the latter will be considerably diminished while their expenses will remain constant and stationary. The touring cinemas, as has already been pointed out, can exist in any place with a small collection, because, their expenses are comparatively low and their outlay and capital negligible.

15. Then again, permanent cinemas constructed in the margins of towns already suffer from the competitions of the touring cinemas. The latter begin their shows just outside the town and are able to compete with the permanent theatres within the town, just near the town boundaries.

16. At any rate, the present yardstick with reference to population and with reference to the figures now given in the proposed Rules, will cause great hardship. It is very difficult for even one permanent theatre to pull on in a place having a population of 25,000 to 40,000 and if in such a place a touring cinema is introduced, the loss that can be caused to the permanent theatre will be considerable. The figures at least must be raised to, say, 30,000 and 50,000 for the purpose of clause (2). The uncertainty and non-uni-

formity that will result in the application of the proposed Rule (3) has already been pointed out.

17. Considering all circumstances, the Rules now in force are sufficient to meet all ends, and they may be continued and the licensing authorities requested to adhere to the four-mile distance limit from the nearest permanent cinema in the grant of licences to touring cinemas.

THE OTHER SIDE

Touring cinema occupies an important place in the history of motion picture trade in South India. It forms the foundation on which the structure of the film industry has been steadily built up. At a time when picture production was unknown to our country and the theatres as we see now did not at all exist, it was the touring cinema, which came forward, much against heavy odds and difficulties, and carried the cinematic entertainment to the masses in the urban and rural areas. And so we claim, with pardonable pride, that the entire progress and development of the film trade is due to the pioneering efforts of the touring cinemas. And it is a pity that the existence of such a pioneering and the most important section of this trade has been of late threatened with a series of restrictions and handicaps.

There are about 700 touring cinemas in the presidency but 50 per cent of them are operating and the other 50 per cent are languishing under difficulties and losses due to the various rules of procedure and restrictions.

It is a well-known fact that a touring cinema will not function for more than 6 months in the course of twelve months. The result is not only the capital invested in 50 per cent of the sets is going waste without returns but also the owners are incurring heavy losses maintaining huge staff all thro' the year.

Delays in issue of licences: The chief difficulty experienced by the touring cinema is the procedural delay in the issue of various licences and certificates required for running the shows.

In this connection, we would like to make the following suggestions:

TALK-A-TONE

Site for location of touring cinemas: In every place or panchayat or municipal area there should be at least one or two sites approved as being suitable for location of touring cinemas. The said approved sites should be completely exempted from the periodical inspections by the Health authorities so that the Panchayat or Municipalities should without delay or without further reference to the Health Officer grant licence under P.P.H. Act when an application is made by a touring cinema for the said site.

Need for cancellation of G.O. No. 4454 (Home), dated 3rd December 1948.—G.O. No. 4454, dated 3rd December 1948 restricting the location of a touring cinema to only 6 months in a consecutive period of twelve months may be cancelled. It would be rarely possible to secure a single site in a panchayat or Municipality as suitable for public resort and if that site is disqualified by virtue of the above said G.O. the place would be completely deprived of any cinematic amenity. However, the G.O. goes counter to the spirit of the G.O. Ms. No. 533, dated 10th February 1948 wherein cinema entertainment has been recognised as a welcome attraction to ex-addicts.

The Procedure for obtaining licence: We suggest that the application for cinematographic licence accompanied by the licence under the P.P.H. Act, electrical certificate, chalan, the letter of the owner of the site, etc., may be allowed to be submitted to the Sub-Magistrate or Tahsildar of the place where the touring cinema is proposed to be located. The Sub-Magistrate or Tahsildar should be empowered to receive the application on behalf of the licensing authority and also take action immediately by conducting the inspection of the cinema and recommend to the District Magistrate for the grant of licence. The District Magistrate should thereafter automatically grant the licence irrespective of any other objection that may be raised by some interested parties; the whole procedure should be over in a week. If there should be any objection to the loca-

tion of the site, it may be disposed of in the usual course but on that account the District Magistrate should not delay the grant of licence to the applicant.

It is suggested that there should be a machinery by which the procedure involved in the grant of various licences be simplified and a provision made for securing due remedy in a Court of Law in case of misinterpretation of the Rules.

Need for one year's licence: We request that Government may be pleased to grant a yearly licence for a touring cinema in a place instead of for six months, as now granted.

Uniformity of Procedure: The procedure adopted not only in the matter of issuing licence but also in the instructions issued to the licensee vary from district to district and from Officer to Officer.

In the first place, there are too many officials administering the P.P.H. Act and the Cinematographic Act, whose instructions are overlapping and even conflicting. For instance, the recent G.O. No. 4454, dated 3rd December 1948 is interpreted by one District Magistrate as imposing a complete ban on cinema shows in a place where there has been a touring cinema for previous six months. Moreover, the discretionary powers are vested with the licensing authorities which are varied between one applicant and another applicant, as also from time to time.

Bogey of unhealthy competition: The touring sets are branded as causing unhealthy competition and condemned as not being worthy of functioning alongside a permanent theatre. This is an unjustifiable charge. It is the touring cinemas that have explored fresh fields and pastures anew and have built up the cinema trade in areas where none existed. But it is a strange irony that every time they create a new market and establish new centres, they are being slowly and steadily elbowed out of such camps in the name of unhealthy competition.

There is an impression that touring cinemas are a danger to



Leela Chitnis as usual seems to play the motherly kind in M & T's NAMOONA, a highly laudable social subject.

public health and public safety. It is not so. There have not been any accident or danger to the public through the touring cinema. On the other hand, they provide more airy accommodation and give better reproduction of pictures. They also help to tone up the business inasmuch as the latest pictures are being shown simultaneously in semi-urban areas. Moreover, it is very necessary to encourage the activities of the touring cinema in the interest of free trade and healthy rivalry.

We therefore plead that Government should not be preferential as between permanent and touring cinemas and submit that the proposal to limit the number of touring sets in a place, where there are permanent theatres, be dropped. If, in spite of our pleadings, the Government should insist upon such a proposal, we would like to make the suggestion that in a place with a population of 10,000 or above, where a permanent cinema is functioning, a touring cinema may also be granted a licence if an application is made thereof.

16mm sets.—We understand that the possibilities of 16 mm sets functioning in our presidency are bright. While we welcome the utilisation of such sets for screening educational or instructional or documentaries in schools and public institutions, we would like to request the Government to be pleased to take steps for grant of licence for running 16 mm sets on commercial basis exclusively to the touring cinema owners, in view of the pioneering efforts and services rendered by them in the past and the present.

Septic Tank Latrines: The insistence on the construction of septic tank latrines involves heavy cost, and much hardship to the touring cinema. In view of the itinerant nature of business of a touring cinema, the provision need not be enforced.

Property Tax, Installation & Running Fees: The property tax, installation and running fees are being levied by the Municipalities or Panchayats on the touring cinemas. It would be fair to levy such fees on the permanent residents owning property in their locality. But the touring sets are not permanent residents in the place and so the tax may be waived.

Entertainment Tax—Procedure: Considerable difficulty is being experienced in the matter of payment of tax to the officers concerned at times resulting in dislocation of shows.

It is therefore suggested that the Commercial Tax Officer should not insist upon the production of the licences for issue of permits. He may be empowered to issue the

same soon after an application is made by a touring cinema owner and the licence may be checked in due course if necessary.

It is also suggested that the same officer may himself be authorised to receive payment of the tax amount due on the tickets stamped as is done in the City of Madras. The Officer also should, while leaving the station, keep the seal with the responsible subordinate officers so that stamping of tickets required by the cinema may not be hindered.

In conclusion, we beg to request you to kindly give your best consideration to the representations raised herein and save the touring cinemas from the plight of penury if not actual extinction.

Ah! What Strides, What Progress!!!

BY K. V. DEVAN.

The pile of correspondence on my table was gaining height and weight each day, and the Telugu New Year day offered me the time and opportunity to scrutinize them. While consigning a major portion of them to the W.P.B., I filed a few. And getting to the bottom most portion of the pile, I chanced to lay my hands on the article published below. If I remember right I wrote it in the year of grace 1943. As would be evident to the readers, I have tried to render in this article, a candid and dispassionate review of the Film Industry in the South then. But when I find that the industry has not changed a wee bit in any of its departments, I have requested the Editor to publish this article without any alteration since it would give the readers and the general public what stock of mugs we have in the film domain. And will it ever improve with the same pigmies at the helm of the industry?

NEWSPAPERS and Film Magazines are flashing vehement criticism of the ways in which our South Indian Film Directors are executing the onerous job that has fallen upon them. It has been pointed out, times without number, that instead of their professed intention of ameliorating the deplorable state of the Indian Film Industry, they are actually retarding the progressive course of the industry by their thoughtless actions conducive to such rapid degeneration. But, in spite of all that, one is pained to see, that our "big men" of the South Indian Studios remain adamant, thus proving that they are quite insensitive to reasonable and relevant criticism and are self-complacently adhering to the policy of "Let the dogs bark, the caravan will move on."

Generally, the Indian Film Industry suffers from an inferiority-complex when compared to that of other countries, not because we are lacking in the genius needed for its rapid development, but because of the incongruity in conceptions so

far as the utilitarian value of the industry is concerned. In most of the other countries, Russia and China for instance, the film industry is aptly considered to be a powerful medium for eradicating social, political, economic and spiritual evils and inequalities for the betterment of the general status of their population. They give only secondary importance to the monetary aspect of the industry. But in our country this industry is a medium through which "petty imperialists" rapidly rise up to the highest class of ardent millionaires. As long as this state of affairs continues to exist, the Indian Film Industry will have to suffer from the so called inferiority complex and it is gratifying to find that North Indian directors and producers have realised the actual value of this industry as a medium for social uplift and by trying to produce instructive social films they are actually effacing this alleged inferiority complex.

But our South Indian producers have not yet awakened from their dangerous slumber. They surpass the producers in other parts of the



Pritidhara, the popular Bengali Star plays a key role in Roopkala Niketan's ennobling film "Babu Ne-Kahatha" Produced by N. I. Jalan

country in their alacrity to exploit this medium for amassing wealth. They exploit the religious adherence and sentiment of our people by taking some old mythological story for the theme of films and present the story in a "completely modernised way" by changing and disfiguring the whole story actually amounting to a murder of mythology.

Why is it that these gentlemen go after mythological stories for the themes of their play? Is South India lacking in popular story-writers who can write stories on modern lines corresponding with the high ideals of the cinema in its proper perspective? A thousand times "No". They run after money and the best way to extract money from religious people is by presenting to them a story with a religious title.

Further, these gentlemen have a partiality towards Hindu Mythology. They select stories from old Hindu Puranas and Sastras and edit them. It is quite natural that religious people other than Hindus may not be able to understand or appreciate the trend of the story and they practically curse the film and its producers. This reluctance on the part of producers to select stories from

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PONDICHERRY: KARTHIKEYEN TALKIES.
MATHURAI: DINAMANI TALKIES.
COIMBATORE: PALACE TALKIES.

APPLY TO:- G. S. KUPPUSWAMY SETTY, MAKKAJI CHOWK, MYSORE.
**FOR MYSORE STATE, S. CANARA & COORG...
APPLY TO:- JEWEL PICTURES...
MAKKAJI CHOWK, MYSORE.**

other religious mythologies, embitter communal feelings which already exist between different religious sects in our country. And is it not the best way that other producers avoid mythological stories altogether and adhere to some beautifully written social stories so that no religion can complain about the selection of the story while the high objects and utility of films can be realised and appreciated?

The heroes and heroines of the majority of the South Indian films are mere gramophone records. They sing from the beginning to the end of the story, whatever the situation in which they find themselves placed in the story! Music, it must clearly be understood, is the result of the spontaneous outflow of pleasant emotions of an unperturbed state of mental tranquility. But our "Stars" are made to sing indiscriminately whether it be at the time of death, birth or marriage, divorce or murder! This converts the Silver Screen into a music conference. The S. I. Film producers should realise that we have got Gramophones and Radios in our houses if we want to enjoy music and it is with some nobler ideas that we go to see a film. Moreover, they much also realise that they are actually sacrificing the high acting talents of stars at the altar of film music by making them act and sing from the beginning to the end. Acting is more important and impressive than music. I am not advocating the complete elimination of music from the film. It is certainly essential for a clear appreciation of the film. Only that it should conform to the circumstances and situations in which characters are involved.

I think our respected S. I. Film producers are labouring under an irrevocable hallucination that Comedy is the "uncouth movements of some bodily limbs." The so-called comic actors of the S. I. films perform some foolish acts with their cheeks, brows, hands and hips and the producers complacently believe that they have given sufficient comedy to the cine-goers. The comedy in these films revolves round a woman beating her husband with

a broomstick or a bamboo or any other missiles, the poor fellow weeping, entreating and prostrating himself before his wife and his ultimate retention in or dismissal from the house. Wonderful Comedy! Is it natural that a wife beats her husband incessantly and the man submits to all these humiliations without defending himself? Is it manly? And are not our producers ashamed of depicting their comic characters in such an unrealistic and unnatural manner? Nobody would have heard of a man weeping and meekly submitting to his frail and fragile wife. . . . Everybody will laugh at a man who perambulates through the streets without any proper dress and exhibiting some absurd movements. The laugh is not due to the humour or wit involved in his movements but is due to his lunacy and foolishness! Similarly, if the comic actors of the S. I. films receive any ovation from the audience it is mainly because of their uncouth and shabby acting and not because of any humour.

The S.I. Film producers are doing the greatest disservice to the Indian Film Industry by the introduction of such comedy in their films. They create a story and present it interwoven with the main story so as to give their favourite comic actors a chance. Thus, they tax the patience of the cine-goers and sacrifice the interest of the film by advertising



Tandon in "Azadi-Ke-Baad"

some of their favourites. Indians are considered to be less humorous than people of other countries and there is some truth in it, for we are serious and straightforward people. But let not the little humour we have be so degenerated into foolishness!

Last, but not the least, comes the Technical side of the question. These directors have invented an innovation of giving the Fair sex the parts of male characters. Be that as it may, the only thing to be remembered is that a woman can never act the part of a male character successfully without subjecting herself to vehement ridicule. In "Savitri", a renowned female star had been given a male part; and really it turned out to be neither a female nor a male part. Is South India lacking in popular male actors? Not at all! The producers did it deliberately and really they were able to exploit the good name of that female Star to make their film a box-office success.

In selecting proper dress for the characters these directors have a lot to study from their comrades in other parts of the country. Sakuntala and Savitri were presented with pomp and show just in the status of the daughters of a Zamindar! Will these producers realise that the "modern Saris and sleeveless Blouses" were not in use in Mythological times?

Pages and pages could be written about the anomalies in our South India Film Industry. But neither space nor time will allow a detailed elucidation. It is high time for them to completely reorganise the existing system of their film production, at least following, if not surpassing, their comrades in the other parts of the country. Let them not sacrifice the high and noble ideals of the film as a medium for the betterment of humanity at the altar of their unlimited ambition for wealth. Let them not drag the infant industry through mythological lines; but let it travel along modern useful lines. WILL NOT OUR DEITIES COME TO THEIR SENSES EVEN AT THIS LATE HOUR?

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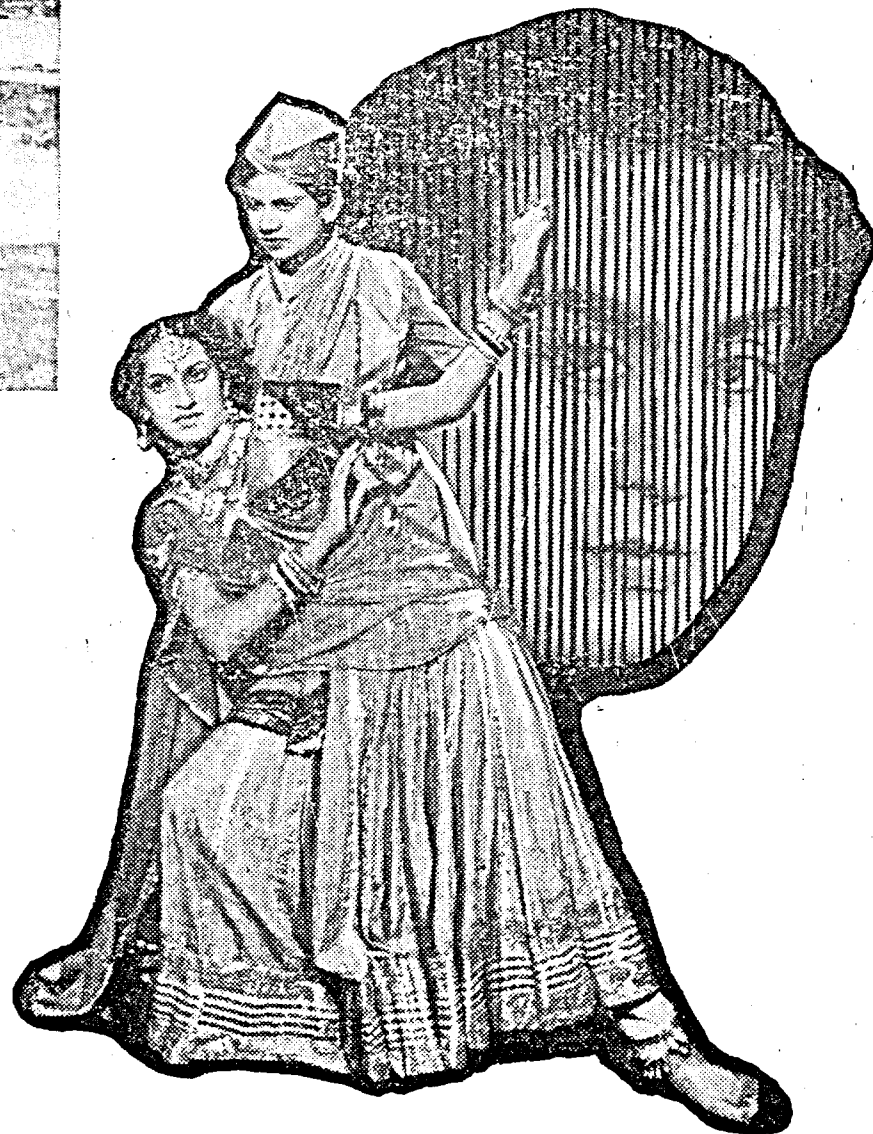
Direction:-
AMIYA CHAKRABARTY.
Produced By:-
GYAN MUKERJEE. C. RAMCHANDRA · ANIL BISHNA.

Lyrics:-
PRADEEP.
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P A R A I A A G
(a C. F. E. Release)

(Contd. from Page 16)

No. 5 ALL-INDIA REVENUE FROM CUSTOMS DUTY (GOVT. OF INDIA)

On Raw and Exposed Film Since }
1921 to 1947 ... } Rs. 1,46,00,000

No. 6 CLASSIFIED ABSTRACT OF TAXATION ON INDIAN FILM INDUSTRY

- (a) Import Duty on raw & Exposed Films & Machinery.
- (b) Octroi or Terminal Tax : Levied by most municipalities.
- (c) Advertisement Tax : On Cinema publicity of every sort including Studios levied by important municipalities.
- (d) Government Electric Duty.
- (e) Entertainment Tax.
- (f) Income-Tax, Super Tax, E. P. Tax.
- Sum Total of these form 40% of Gross annual income.
- (g) Gross income from the Industry in }
1944-45 } Rs. 11,53,25,611
- (h) Amount paid by way of Taxes ,, 5,32,43,898
- (i) Entertainment Tax alone is ,, One third of the above.

N. B.—Statements marked 5 and 6 show the extent of benefit the Central Government and other municipal authorities derive from the trade; and the Industry is therefore justified in demanding proper protection of its interests.

It will thus be seen that the task of reforming the Industry is tremendous; and if it has to take its proper place in the economy of the country, the Government must take up its control and place it on a sound foundation. Only then can the Indian Motion Picture Industry be considered a potential force in shaping the destinies of the Indian Nationhood at large.

(Contd. from Page 12.)

The Advisory Board will be re-constituted every year. Any additional safeguards, as may be necessary for the proper functioning of the Producing section, will be incorporated from time to time."

We felt that the picture of the defaulters was being a little unduly overdrawn and our next doubt was : "How will the establishment of a Film Finance Corporation help to stabilise the industry?"

"Exactly. I am coming to that!" said Mr. Reddi warming up to the concluding part of our interview. By working hard and conscientious-

ly, we shall be able to show results even in the first year of the Corporation's work. We can tell the public the actual cost of production involved for a picture, its returns, the profits ratio on the capital outlay and the scope for its future development. Facts and figures are much more convincing than loose talk and the response from the public, provided we justify it by our earnestness and enthusiasm, will be unprecedented. So, let us hie ourselves to it."

The last point concerned the Vauhini prospects,

"Now that you have your own studio-plant, your productions will be cheaper, won't they?"

"I am sorry, no," replied Mr. Reddi. "We are in the initial stages of production in our studios which have cost us nearly two millions. The cost of production, in the first instance, is bound to be high, but we can assure you better quality and value for money than before and God-willing, our subsequent productions will be considerably happier for all of us. That is our ambition. Thank you!"

YOUR HOROSCOPE-THIS MONTH

From 20th April to 19th May

By P. V. S. IYER

MESHA RASI (Born with Moon in Aries)

Your ruling planet Mars is well situated and this denotes that you will have excellent health and undisturbed peace of mind. The aspect of Mars and Jupiter over 8th and 2nd house respectively indicates not only financial facilities but also some sudden gains and favours with great ease and in odd ways. The combination of powerful Sun and Mars occurring in the first house is likely to confer on you some recognition or reward, maximum of happiness and harmony at home, high popularity enhanced prestige and endearment to many. The exalted position of Sun marks the lift in position of one of your nearest relatives. In highly intellectual cases this combination marks a life of introspection or high thinking. You may in the first fortnight receive some unpleasant news with regard to either a friend or a relative. Although the whole period is good from the view-point of finance the climax of income, merriment and happiness seems to be on and in the neighbourhood of the 1st May. Although you may be free from big items of expenditure experienced before, still the minor items persist with Jupiter Navamsa position in the twelfth house. Since Sun (as the Lord of the house where Saturn is situated) is exalted merchants dealing in Iron, Steel, teakwood, oils, pepper, cotton, Jewellery and medicine will have a good time in their trade in the first two weeks. For lawyers, doctors, musicians and commission agents the first half of this period will be a definite switch over to a more prosperous time. I cannot say much with regard to those in services except for some extra income that may come in since Mercury is yet to

develop power. The lucky days in the month are 20th, 21st, 22nd, 30th April, and 1st, 2nd, and 9th May. Speculation may pay you well. On the whole the whole period can be said to be a great improvement over the past in all respects.

VRISHABHA RASI (Born with Moon in Taurus)

Your ruling planet Venus in the 12th house with the powerful malefic planet Mars indicates mounting expenditure on behalf of either the other sex or your children, or on your house, car or landed properties till about the 7th May. The position of Sun in the 12th house may deny you the sense of enjoyments and you may become crest-fallen to a degree due to lack of financial facilities and although you may have some good news and certain advantages and encouragements in your professional field on about the 1st of May yet from the second week of May alone definite improvements will set in. The position of malefic planet Mercury aspected by Jupiter is not good for you and you may have to tackle your budget position with great caution. In some cases of the less fortunate there will be further borrowings. Litigation and speculation are best avoided since they are likely to fail you. For businessmen the last week seems to be good since Saturn aspects the ruling planet. If in services you seem to be very steady and on firm basis of merit and talent and traces of extra income are observed in executive work. Short term contractors, Exporters, mining concerns, cabinet-makers machinery dealers, hotel keepers, jewellers and iron and steel mongers will have appreciable income and will experience an upward

trend in their activities and gains from the 7th May. Since Venus happens to be under his own constellation, 29th and 30th April, 1st and 2nd May also can be said to be lucky days

MITHUNA RASI (Born with Moon in Gemini)

Your ruling planet Mercury is in the 12th House aspected by Saturn the lord of the 8th house and this indicates some sudden income and gains from distant places. The combination of Venus and Mercury in the 12th house indicates heavy expenditure on happy functions and on good causes. Financial facilities and good income are noted on the 1st and 2nd of May. On the business side the debilitate planet Jupiter in the 8th house may not promise any appreciable income and your establishment may be more expensive. But Saturn in the 3rd house is good for you and he intends to fling a piece of fortune in the immediate future. Except for the last week those in services will have easy access to sufficient finance. The first week seems to be excellent and the second week good in all respects, while in the third and the fourth week severe drain on your purse is noticed. Those who have to do with the film, the theatre and the art will have a happy time with good income and many favourable opportunities in the first 10 days. If you happen to be a capitalist you will do well to think twice before investing either on lands or houses etc., since Jupiter is debilitate. The debilitate Jupiter may cause illhealth to your partner in life and care may have to be bestowed in that direction. The aspect of Saturn over your ruling planet saves you from fret and worry, fear complex and other discouraging factors and keeps you buoyant and cheerful throughout the period.

KATAKA RASI (Born with Moon in Cancer)

Your ruling planet conjoins with Mars and on the 27th, 28th and 29th April you will experience something pleasant and profitable in your professional activities. On the 21st and 30th April and on the

TALK-A-TONE

1st and 9th May there are strong indications of good income and easy access to greater financial facilities. The lord of finance is exalted and there are indications of considerable brisk activity on your part, especially on the 21st, 22nd, 23rd and 24th of April and much good may come to you. Doctors, carpenters, machinemen and dealers in oils, iron and steel will get substantial gains and certain advantages. The lord of the 8th aspects the lord of the 12th and hence unexpected sudden income cannot be ruled out in many cases. Those in services too are likely to get extra income after the first week. Speculation, short-term contracts, prize-winning ventures, racing etc., may give you some success. Since the ruling planet is in *chara rasi* in an ascending order some of you may have a long journey perhaps on professional side. Gay time among old acquaintances, high popularity, great power and pomp, high independence, greater prestige, pleasant functions and good income are some of the general features in this period. In the first fifteen days you may spend heavily. Politicians will have a very brisk happy and profitable time. The position of benefic planet, Jupiter in his own Meena Navamsa is a great factor that gives great reputation and honor to those who are already in the public eye.

SIMHA RASI (Born with Moon in Leo)

The combination of Sun, Venus and Mars although occurring in the 9th house is good for you in that you are likely to share more of public or political activities and success comes in the last week when Venus and Sun combine in the 10th house. The lord of finance namely Mercury is in the 10th house and hence financial adjustments and facilities will come back within the orbit of your careful manipulations and better income in trade is observed. Your ruling planet Sun with Mars in *chara rasi* may cause a journey in the first week. Harmony at home, happiness abroad, much good from friends, movement in high

circles, greater fame and charitable disposition are some of the chief characteristics of this period despite the clarty influence of Saturn. Since Jupiter is debilitate you may have to be very vigilant and careful with regard to either the health of your children or the upkeep of your dignity and rank for some months to come. The position of Saturn in Leo may not give you the much wanted peace of mind and hence the necessity to exercise your will-power, constantly. Overseas-traders, hotel keepers, jewellers, film stars, musicians and cabinet makers will have good profits with the fading out of many difficulties in their field. In services due recognition and reward will be experienced only in the last week although lopes and symptoms of the same will be visible in the early weeks. The less fortunate will get financial relief and on the whole this period shows vast improvement over the past one.

KANYA RASI (Born with Moon in Virgo)

The position of your ruling planet in the 9th with Venus, although good, cannot give you any appreciable gains in your professional activities. You may have to be still careful about your health. The lord of the 12th house stands exalted in the 8th house and hence certain sudden gains in income can be said to favour you. Sun and Mars in the 8th house may snatch away your peace of mind and conspire to cause you illness or accident and it is therefore better you avoid them with some caution and care. If you are a capitalist you will do well to postpone further investment in any concern. With a debilitate Jupiter in the 5th and highly expensive Saturn in the 12th with Sun and Mars in the 8th. I cannot say that the period will be good although there is a royal combination of Venus and Mercury occurring in the 6th house in the last 12 days. Trouble due to the other sex, illhealth and many cross-currents in life, unnecessary blame, fruitless efforts can be said to constitute some of the general features during

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the first fortnight. Even in finance, I do not find much improvement and your budget position is not satisfactory. The weak Jupiter may give some of you some anxiety either with regard to your landed property or the health of your partner in life. Those in business have to wait till 1st of June before any improvement can set in and those in services will have to negotiate the period with great caution to avoid conflict and increase in liabilities.

THULA RASI (Born with Moon in Libra)

Your ruling planet Venus with Sun and Mars in the 7th house in a *chara rasi* point definitely in the direction of a pretty long travel with your family members. The finance lord is well situated in his own house and in the first 10 days there is an inflow of monies from outstanding collections and other sources. In the third week since the lord of the 12th house is in the 8th there are signs of sudden income too. Dealers in piece goods, yarn, jewellery, provision stores, journalists, authors, hotel-keepers and metal merchants will have good profit in this period, and their immediate futuro too seems to be bright. In partnership business there may not be much profit and the conflict or difference of opinion as between partners may still continue to a certain extent. Much cannot be said about those in services since Jupiter is weak. The unemployed may have to wait till the 3rd week of June for a good job. The more fortunate may go in for a new car. On the whole this month can be said to be good.

VRISCHIKA RASI (Born with Moon in Scorpio)

Your ruling planet is in the 6th house with Sun the lord of profession and this shows that in the 1st week you may be asked to shoulder greater responsibility and there may be some very agreeable and profitable news in your professional activities. 27th, 28th, 29th of April are the luckiest days for you in all respects. Sudden gains, favours from higher autho-

rities, enhanced prestige, movement in higher circles, acquisition of certain landed properties, successful arrangement to start fresh lines previously handled by you, timely help from friends, sufficient financial facilities are some of the important features in this period. In the last week you may go on a short journey. Dealers in all kinds of wood, iron, steel, oils, machinery, hotel-keepers and jewellers and contractors will gain enormously though they may be handicapped a little in their financial manipulations. Speculation and romance should be avoided totally till 6th May. The weak Jupiter indicates that you may be shorn of the gloss of rank and position and you may have to devote more attention to the health of your children. On the whole the whole period seems to be a mixture of good and evil influences.

DHANURASI (Born with Moon in Sagittarius)

Your ruling planet is weak and hence you may have to devote your attention to keeping your health in the best way possible. Problems connected with your landed property, house etc. are still unresolved. The first week seems to be best period in that you are likely to gain certain advantages and good profits in the field of your activity. Short term contracts, speculation within certain limits are likely to be successful, only in the first and the last week. With the lord of finance in the 9th house and the lord of the 9th in exaltation it can be said that your financial affairs in spite of complications will be resolved satisfactorily. The less fortunate may be baffled in their budget position. The position of the Venus in the 6th house indicates that you are likely to be involved in certain commitments or litigations in the last 10 days. Except for some favours from the fair sex and greater responsibility in that field, the life of those in services seems uneventful. In partnership there is enough harmony amongst partners. On the domestic and social side your activities seem to be prominent.

MAKARA RASI (Born with Moon in Capricorn)

In the first week some happy function may take place in your house. The combination of Venus and Mercury in the 4th place indicates happy company with relatives, access to greater financial facilities, help from new contracts good income in business, remittance from distant places all in the first week. In the second week although your financial aspects of your business will be under control, the income may not be upto your expectations. The combination of Venus and Mercury occurring again in the 5th house marks success in speculation, Races, short term and forward contracts in the last week. Overseas traders, musicians, jewellers and dealers in cotton, wheat, medicines are likely to experience an upward trend in their activities and gains. In service you may have to shoulder greater responsibilities which will ultimately benefit you. 7th and 8th May are not good days for you. Since the lord of the 2nd house becomes free from retrogression the family burden may be felt in its ever increasing phase. The transit of Rahu to a favourable position next month will give you sufficient support to get through very successfully in all your affairs. On the whole this period is a great improvement over the past in respect of finance, domestic happiness and professional activities. The lord of the 3rd house is debilitate and hence some have to guard against accidents and mishaps and ever increasing liabilities and blind commitments. Since the Lord of the 8th house is exalted a *kendra* bachelor in this rasi will get the last alliance and derive many advantages if married within 9th May.

KUMBA RASI (Born with Moon in Aquarius)

Although your position is much better from the 14th April, yet the real relief seems to be in the first two weeks. Exporters are likely to make good money over idle stocks in which quick returns were not possible, all along. Great opportunities, good profits, better financial

position, rise in the bank balance are some of the features that are indicated by the *nawansa* position of Jupiter. The inner structure of your establishment is now stronger than ever before in the recent past. The second fortnight too is very good in that you may devote more attention to domestic and social functions at home and merry making. In service or partnership you will be recognised as an important limb and your income is likely to increase to some extent. In the field of film production and art, journalism and writing this period will bring good encouragement and appreciable profits. The position of Jupiter in the 12th house indicate heavy expenditure on sickly persons and some loss in the family. Doctors, cabinet makers, jewellers and dealers in iron steel and oils are likely to get better profits in their trade.

MEENA RASI (Born with Moon in Pisces)

Your ruling planet is weak but the lord of the 11th house is well poised in the 6th house free from retrogression and hence your professional gains will be highly satisfactory in the 2nd half of this period. The 8th house is aspected by Saturn the lord of the 12th house and this indicates that you are likely to have sudden gains and unexpected advantages in the field of your activities and further the combination of the lords of 6, 8, and 12 in the 2nd house point in the direction of great gains in odd and unexpected ways in the first fortnight. The lucky days are 20th 21, and 30th, April, 1, 7, and 8th May. On these days you will receive either some pleasant news or get money. The finance lord, Mars, is in his own house and hence your financial manipulation will never go out of your control. On the whole your position marks great improvement over the past month. On the domestic and social fronts harmony and happiness prevail. If engaged in litigation, law suits etc., it would be better to finish the affair by the end of third week. In iron, vessels, printing presses, jewellery, hotel establishments there seems to be good profits.