



HALDIA NANDA

Productions
SINGAAR

STARRING
SURIYA • MADHUBALA
JAIRAJ • K. N. SINGH
MADANPURI • RANDHIR
& DURGA KHOTE

music:
KHURSHID ANWAR
Coviscover:
R. B. HALDIA

Direction:
J. K. NANDA

For Particulars: **HALDIA NANDA PRODUCTIONS**, SHREE SOUND STUDIOS, BOMBAY



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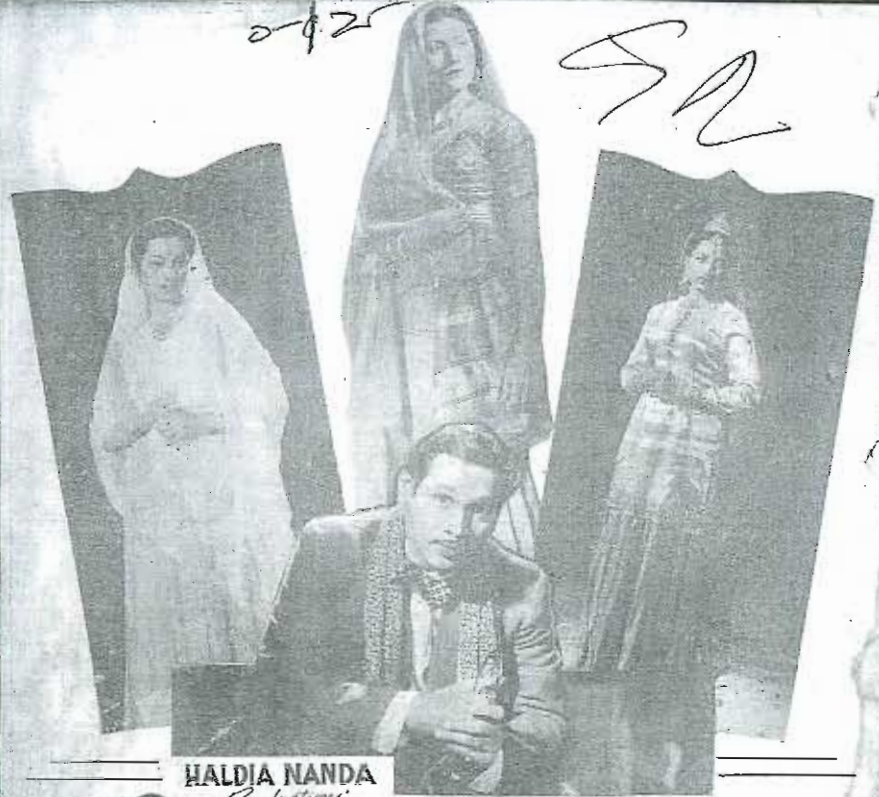


Simala Chitra Ltd.
PRESENTS

AHILYA

BY A KOTHNIS SAPRU & ULHAS

Directed by
VASANTRAO PA



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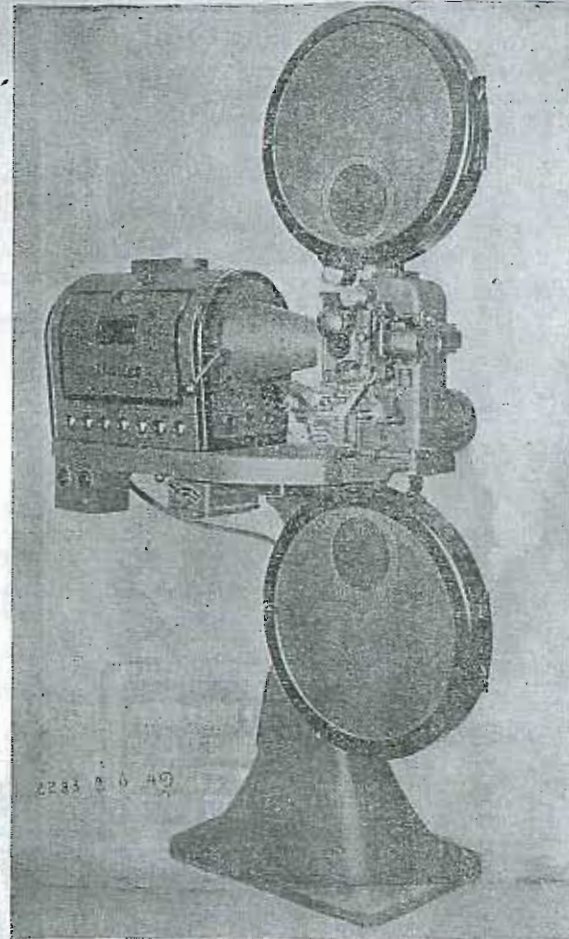


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EDITORIAL

THIS FREEDOM...?

LOOKING back over the past two years of our freedom from the thraldom of a foreign yoke, and gauging the gift of our masters—for in truth it was that and nothing more, whatever we may boast in our more exalted moments of having wrested it—one is liable to experience a curious feeling of shocked disappointment. That disappointment is not over the fact of freedom—that could never be in any true Indian heart—but with what it has proved to be.

Some there are who find in the departing Britons' gift a Pandora's Box cunningly prepared for our discomfiture and undoing. And in the cloud of troubles which darkened our fair Indian sky, and still continue to overcast it to-day with all manner of ills of body and of mind, it certainly has proved to be that, though whether we must blame the Britons or ourselves for it is not as surely settled.

There are others—and their number grows from day to day, mostly among the poor and more ignorant of our people who live upon the bare margin of existence and have mere animal comfort as the only yardstick of their progress, and they are the teeming millions of our people—who are like the Israelites in the desert on their way to the Promised Land. Suffering the pangs of privation, they hungered after the flesh-pots of Egypt and recked little in their misery of the slavery from which they had been emancipated, grumbling against their leaders and reviling them who had led them forth from beneath the Pharaoh's yoke into the barren wilderness.

We, too, in India were led forth by our leaders from beneath a

foreign yoke and a state of slavery to which from long use we had grown accustomed, almost to like it, finding in it the prancing pride of the haltered horse in the fable, who expatiated to his wild fellow upon the delights of his stall, which more than compensated him for the bit in his mouth and far outweighed the joy of freedom with its attendant risks and obligations. Long conquest had accustomed us to the "flesh-pots of Egypt" and the deceitful ease of spoon-fed emasculation. Our leaders brought us forth upon the trail to the Promised Land, and we find ourselves in the desert, hungry, weary, thirsty, and without the ease and comfort to which we were accustomed, like the stall-fed horse and the stiff-necked Israelites. And in our discomfort and our suffering, the vision of the Promised Land no longer beckons brightly as before. All we can see is the arid wilderness around.

The first fruits of freedom seem bitter, rough, and comfortless, and we wonder whether the bit and the bridle were so bad after all. And we cry aloud the names of our leaders, regretting the flesh-pots we forsook at their bidding, and reviling them for leading us into such travail and discomfort. Like those Israelites of old, we ask where is the Promised Land, believing in our folly that it was around the corner, to be conjured up with a breath and a word. Like those same Israelites we are on the way, and every way of travel in the unending road of human progress takes time as well as trouble. Our Promised Land is really around the corner, and the corner is in our hearts and

minds and bodies, in each one of our separate selves. In fact, the very land we live in is our Land of Promise. But the promise must be brought to fruition with our own toil and trouble, with our own sweat, and our labours and even with our tears.

No leader could have taken the Israelites along their road to the Promised Land. They had to travel it themselves in order finally to get there. No leader, however great and brilliant and able, can ever take us in our three hundred million individual selves to the fair land of glory that is our patriot's dream of India. We, each one of us, have to go there ourselves, and the promise of our Land of Promise must be brought to fruition and full realisation by, in, and through each single one of all our three hundred million selves. That single fact is what must be deeply and intensely realised, thought over, digested by every living Indian until it becomes part of the spirit by which he lives and moves and has his being, till it becomes the central motivating factor in every Indian's life throughout the land.

It will take time for that to happen. It may take half a century or more. What if it does? All good things take time, and this is a wonderful thing, for which even a century is not too long, if it is to happen and to ripen in the complete maturity of perfection which our leaders contemplated, and which the greatest of them all, Gandhiji our father and the Architect of our Freedom, defined in his unforgettable words and displayed for our learning in his unforgettable life and death. If that is the way of our progress, and

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its final goal, we shall bring the Republic of Plato to life, the millenium to pass, and we shall make of our India and of the world the Paradise that Eve and Adam lost. It is an end worth striving for, even dying for, if we can bring it to pass for those who will come after us.

Admitting all of which, we must ask ourselves at this point of our journey, two years after our setting forth on the road, if we are going right, if we have not strayed. Are we still headed for the goal which Gandhiji set for us, still on Freedom's road which is to lead us to that Land of Promise which was, which is, our dream of Free India? Are our leaders still true to the path and the promise? Are they leading us aright or astray? Have they gone astray themselves? In the answers to those questions lies the seed of our future, and it is of vital importance to our country and to ourselves that we answer those questions correctly. It is essential too that in coming to the answers we divest ourselves of the fleshpot complex, and forget the travail and the tears, and remember only the truth that nothing worth having can be got without trouble and toil, that suffering is the price of joy, that risk and responsibility are the twin handmaids of Freedom, that Rome was not built in a day, and that national prosperity is the slow work of generations of labour.

In the light of those reflections what is our score, what the achievement and endeavour of our national leaders? Admittedly, the period since our emancipation has been too brief for anything but preparation to tackle the formidable task of national regeneration, the most formidable such task that the world has ever known. Admittedly, too, the period, brief as it is, has been too packed with problems as colossal and formidable as the task itself, and too pressingly urgent to leave time or capacity for any work other than their

solution. In these circumstances, the only question which can be asked reasonably is whether our leaders, beset as they have been with difficulties which commanded their full energy, time and ability, have done what lay to their hand in the manner that was necessary, and if they still display the spirit which deserves and must command our confidence and support.

The answer is not easily found, nor in the present thick of things, with the dust of arrival still fogging our vision, and excitement distorting calm judgment, is it possible to assess our position with the precision that is desirable. It can be recorded however that the unification of India has been effected with a completeness which is most satisfactory. The political homogeneity of Hindustan today is thorough, without rift of any sort, an excellent, substantial, solid basis for the new edifice of national prosperity and greatness which has to be reared upon it. The vast turbulences set up by the upheavals of political change and partition have spent their first violence, and are now slowly but surely subsiding. The problems they created in the fields of administrative detail, economic readjustment, and the resettlement of migrated millions remain to be tackled, but at least they have been measured and met with temporary arrangements, which in due course will take shape in more permanent form after necessary and inevitable adjustment.

The public services are still being fashioned to the new needs of the world's largest independent population. The fighting services of what may some day, and quite easily, become the most formidable Power on earth, are in excellent hands, and developing daily into a complete bulwark of patriotism and independence on lines derived from the models and traditions of the earth's greatest Power, the splendid and still formidable British nation.

Abroad, the name of India was never higher, its prestige and culture never more brightly blazoned, its esteem never more vividly acknowledged than today. All this, and peace at home, enforced with the firm hand of wise statesmanship, resolved to create the atmosphere of security and public confidence without which no nation building activity can even be visualised, leave alone attempted, are easily to the credit of the country's leaders, to whom the nation's gratitude is due, and readily given, for these inestimable and essential boons.

So far so good. What beyond? Aye, there's the rub! Beyond these great basic achievements, so precious and remarkable in themselves, particularly in the conditions in which they had to be attempted, the picture holds much cause for doubt, and even for anxiety. There is a disparity of outlook, plan and endeavour between the nation's heart and its limbs, between the Centre and the Provinces, which is slowly but surely creating a rift between the administration and the people that is dangerous to the future of both. There is too much planning for a rich and glorious future, and too little attention to the immediate, poor and miserable present. There is not enough thought given to the fact that the future must grow out of the present, that tomorrow is the child of today. There is too much rule and not enough government, with too little reflection that rule is authoritarian and government democratic, that the former is based on the concept of power, the latter on the principle of service.

Essentially, and in fine, there is no visible appreciation in the bearing and behaviour of our leaders and of all who have the governing of us that first things must come first; that food, clothing, housing and work are primary human rights, the four pillars of human freedom; that failing them, neither society nor progress is possible;

that it is idle to preach to a hungry man; that progress is prosperity's inseparable twin; that all authority, even that of Government, derives from the people and reverts inevitably to the people; and that failure to appreciate these fundamental principles of human evolution must lead to chaos, revolution and calamity.

We have observed during the past two years a lamentable failure on the part of those who are now shaping our destiny, as Hitler said, for ten thousand years, to realise all the foregoing truths and principles. There is manifest among our administrators a deplorable attitude of *L'etat c'est moi* which is spreading a not ill-founded feeling among thoughtful elements that we are being insidiously regimented into a tyranny which may

strangle our democracy in its still puny infancy. That feeling, coupled with the spreading discontent of starving, unclothed, homeless, workless millions, is dangerous to the country's peace, and in the international set up of today, with conflict smouldering in the clash of radically opposed ideologies, it may well be dangerous to the world's peace.

Let our leaders meditate on these matters along these lines. That they are not doing so is only too painfully apparent in the state of the country and in the spirit of the administration. The former, with frustration on every hand, is ripe for that calamitous sowing which finds its most fruitful soil in the misery of discontented populations. The latter in Freedom's name has strangled Freedom until

the only freedom left to Indians, it would seem, is freedom to starve and die.

With a regimented press, bann on every activity individual and organised, from speech to association, movement, and even recreation and pleasure, which is remotely critical of Government, and all manner of unnecessary lets and hindrances confining and conditioning normal, not essentially harmful, human behaviour, a feeling of despair is being engendered which is bound sooner or later to lead to revolt. That Government alone do not appear to realise what is obvious to the common man provides fresh illustration of the old sayings that none is so blind as he who will not see, and that those whom the gods would destroy they first make mad.

Announcement

Owing to Establishment Changes and Office Reorganisation and with a view to Speeding up Production on account of Increasing Circulation, there will be no September issue of "SOUND". The October issue will be in the hands of readers and on stalls on October 1.

Subscribers will be compensated by being sent one issue beyond their subscription.

— The Editors.

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MOVIE ARTS

August 1949

By SABA

With Love & Irony

SECOND YEAR OF FREEDOM — NOT MUCH LOVE LOST IN THE WORLD
— NOT SO MUCH AT HOME EITHER — FAITH ADrift — FLEETING
FREEDOMS AND PITEOUS PICTURES — BAN RULE — TITLE THOUGHTS
— STRAWS IN THE INDIAN WIND — OH, MY DEAH!

IN the second year of freedom which every commentator has been reviewing, there was considerably more irony than love. Consequently, any review of the year attempted in this column is more than likely to suffer from a serious lack of the tender emotions and honeyed expressions.

Love, the ageless, timeless, immortal phenomenon, was very much at a discount in the last twelve months.

There was no love lost between the two power blocs into which the world has now come to be divided—the Anglo-American and the Soviet! If one side was threatening to blast not only Love but Life itself with a menacingly increasing stockpile of atomic bombs, the other side was using the even more potent weapons of ideological warfare. Between Atom Bomb and Ideology, India sat uncomfortably poised on a steel-spiked fence of neutrality, but every moment gravitating more and more towards the Anglo-American side, to which her rulers had bound her (hand and foot?) with the invisible "Crown Link" and the very much visible "Sterling link" and "Dollar link."

AH, LOVE, WHERE ART THOU?

Within the camp of Anglo-American itself, there was not much love lost between the two major

partners. The arrogant U. S. A. was refusing to share the atomic secrets even with Britain—for, fundamentally, the tycoons of Wall Street could not be suspicious of a British Government that is Socialist—at least in name!

"Irony" was very much evident on the other side, too, as the Tito-led Communists of Yugoslavia defied the edicts of the Kremlin and a not-very-civil war (of words) raged between the two different shades of Red.

"Love"—of man for mankind—was very much absent from the affairs of the world during the last one year.

In India, believed to be the home of Love and Non-violence, there was as little amity and good will between peoples and parties, as in the rest of the world. The Congress frowned on all the opposition parties; the Socialists were sulky and growling; the Communists were belligerent and violent; the Sarat Bose-ite Socialists were jubilantly rattling their sabres; the Mahasabhaites were threatening to throw their weight about after nearly two years of political *ban-waas*; and the R.S.S. boys were celebrating the removal of the ban by breaking a few Socialist heads here and there! There was no love lost even among Congressmen themselves: groups, cliques, parties-within-parties carried on a "cold war" against one another.

In all this confusion of political ideological and personal cross currents—not to mention whirlpools—it was difficult to search for a pattern of political development. One day the Congress would be miserably routed in an election in Calcutta; the next week Pandit Jawaharlal would get a rousing reception in the same city and draw a crowd of a million people to hear him, while the oppositionists failed to get more than a few thousands for their counter-meeting!

DISCONTENT ABOUNDING

And yet, if there was a pattern which emerged out of the second year of freedom, it was a pattern of widespread discontent, disillusionment, growing bitterness, a vaguely-formed but real enough dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs. Sometimes this discontent manifested itself in the voters plumping for Socialist candidates in elections, on other occasions in militant and impatient peasants and workers (as in the South and parts of Bengal) following the lead of the Communists. Refugee discontent might have been exploited both by Communalists and Communists, but the discontent was genuine enough.

By the end of the second year of freedom, it was clear that the people's old faith in Congress and its leaders was completely abandoned. No doubt, there was no clear

alternative; among extremists some looked towards the R. S. S., others towards the Communist Party. Like a goodly number were beginning to pin their hopes on the Socialists. But most definitely, public feeling was veering away from the old loyalty to the Congress.

TO FREEDOM IN FREE INDIA!

Political philosophers and economic analysts will doubtless investigate the reasons for this significant shift in political fortunes. But, from the point of view of the common man and in the common man's language, it was due to the fact that in the second year of freedom, Freedom was one of the commodities which had disappeared from the market—along with rice, wheat, cloth, coal and other necessities of life! This was the greatest irony of all—that in Free India one had to search in vain for freedom.

The Atlantic Charter (not to be confused with the Atlantic Pact) introduced a new phrase to the vocabulary of the world: Four Freedoms. Freedom of Expression; Freedom of Conscience; Freedom from Want; Freedom from Fear.

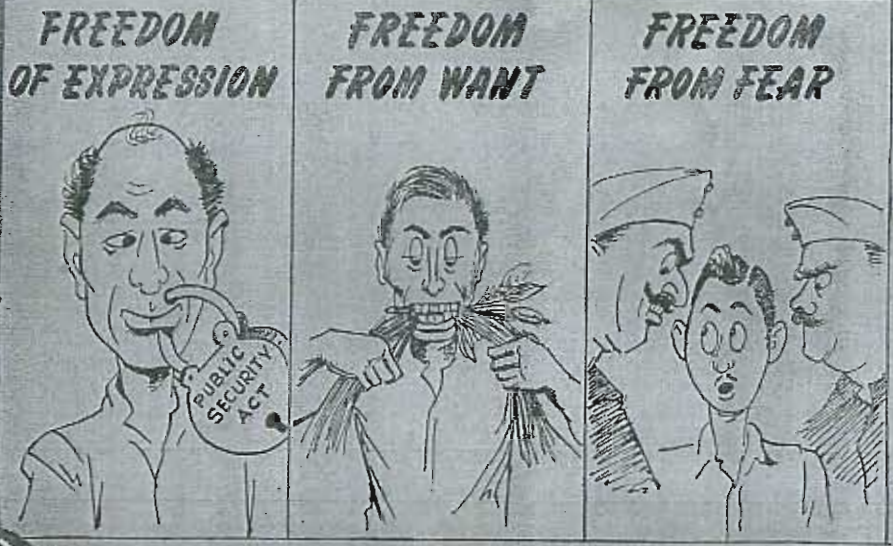
In India, during the second year of her freedom, at least three of these freedoms were conspicuous by their absence. Freedom of expression was gagged by the Public Security Acts, the Press Advisory Committees, the orders for censorshipships, the Securities and the bans on papers. Even well-known and experienced journalists, when they wanted to bring out papers of their own, had to submit to scrutiny by the sleuths of the CRIMINAL Investigation Department as if editors were members of some CRIMINAL TRIBE!

Section 144, bans on meetings and processions, gagging and externment or internment orders on opposition leaders made of "Freedom of Expression" a com-

plete mockery. As for Freedom from Fear, not only were the common people still menaced by the fear of their bosses, of the police, of courts and laws (including lawless laws); but there was the added haunting fear of being arrested without trial, of being detained indefinitely, not for any specific, publicly-proved crimes that one might have committed, but just on suspicion.

Freedom from Want—the most important of all the freedoms, so far as the common people were concerned—was non-existent, too. Unemployment, rising prices and falling wages, famine in many parts of the country, people eating grass and leaves and killing their precious cattle—it was a dismal picture of want and penury and privations.

TELL IT TO THE MARINES!
It almost appeared that the one Freedom still guaranteed to the people of India was the Freedom to Die—and the alarmingly incre-



asing number of suicides reported from all over the country provided a grim commentary on the state of the nation.

And yet who dare deny that we are free? Haven't we got a Constituent Assembly, a Cabinet, a Governor-General, dozens of Ambassadors scattered all over the world to prove that we are free? Free! Spell out the word—F-R-E-E! Roll it on your tongue. Whisper it—free! Shout it—FREE!

Tell your friends "We are free." Tell your wife who has been asking for another ear. Tell your kid who are growing rickety and spindly-legged on powdered milk and the kind of grain you get from the ration shops. Tell your neighbours, "We are free"—if you are not afraid of their sneers. Tell your boss when you ask for a raise in the pay. Tell the police when they come to arrest you without a warrant. Tell the Marines. Free! FREE!

Why does the word sound so hollow—though it should be

hallowed and halloosed? That's the IRONY of it!

THOU SHALT NOT... The Biblical Ten Commandments were only TEN.

Our present rulers' commandments—Thou Shalt Not Do This, Thou shalt Not Do That—are, by now, numberless.

Some time ago this column ventured to predict some of the bans that were likely to follow in the wake of Prohibition. The forecast has proved correct. Already the ban on Rummy has turned card-players into surreptitious criminals. The bans on winking, laughing, singing, and smiling will follow in due course. That is, if the present favourite, WHITE CAP (colours: Orange, white and green) stays the course!

Any way, it is interesting to note that while Rummy has been banned in Bombay clubs on the ground that it amounts to gambling, the Stock Exchange still flourishes. The Stock Market is still legal. It appears that the Government is

opposed only to small-scale gambling!

FREEDOM DAY TITLES

In democratic Free India, titles have been abolished—though still there are any number of Rajpramuks, Maharajas, Rajas, Ranis, Rajkumars, Nawabs, Begums, and what have you! The Governor of Bombay is a Raja, his lady is Rani, and the Health Minister is Rajkumari. Why, then, should we not confer titles on others, too? In the old days, titles used to be conferred twice a year—on New Year's Day and on the King Emperor's birthday. Let's have them at least once a year—on August 15. Most of the titles, of course, should be new ones, but a few old titles should be retained in honour of the CROWN LINK. Here is SABA's tentative list of suggestions—

- PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU — N.F.B.E. (New Friend of The British Empire).
- SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL — Mahamahatma's mukh.

The Farmer's Daughter

By M. Karunakar

... The Tragedy
of Love is not Death
or Separation

HER father had eaten his mid-day meal and returned to the fields. Leela was in the kitchen washing the pots and pans. The fire on the hearth was flying out. From time to time she picked up a *thali* or *wati*, washed it carefully and put it away, stopping now and then to gaze vacantly at a couple of venturesome chickens that were pecking at the crumbs of their recent meal. The smell of the poultry-yard and the cow-stall came in through the open door, and a cock was heard crowing in the distance. When she had finished the washing, she put the vessels away in the little wooden shelf built into the wall, swept up the spillings and wiped the floor with a rag dipped into a mixture of water and cowdung. Then she stood up and drew a long breath. She was feeling rather oppressed. She looked at the brown mud walls, the rafters blackened with smoke, from which spiders' webs were hanging amid the cucumbers and onions, sighed again and went out to get a mouthful of fresh air at the door. The fowls were lying about on the dung hill, some of them scratching with one claw in search of worms. The cock was seen strutting about proudly among them, now and then giving out a slight cluck of amorous invitation. The hen got up in a careless way, spread out her wings, shook her feathers to shake out the dust and was about to step in with the cock when the sky seemed to darken

suddenly and a huge shadow fell upon the ground. Leela looked up and saw a big kite swooping down. With a frightened screech the mother-hen rushed back to her chicks leaving her mate to strut off with a disdainful cluck. Leela looked at all this without thinking. She stood about aimlessly for a while, and then thought she would look for eggs in the hen-loft. There were six of them, which she took in and placed in the store-room. She went out again, round the back of the cartshed, where there was a little patch of grass, and lay down on her back, with both arms under her head and her tired, weary limbs stretched out. Gradually her eyes closed, and she was falling into a state of delightful languor when she heard a light step behind her head. She turned without getting up. It was Vijay the blacksmith. She looked at him idly, yet appraisingly. She had always liked this rugged youngster. She liked his fine black body, broad at the shoulders and thin at the flanks; she liked the tenderness and respect with which he treated her, unlike the other village gallants. For Leela, with her pretty face and figure, was not without admirers; but she had warded off their coarse and often brutal overtures by showing a distinct preference for the company of Vijay. In fact, he had been courting her for quite a while now in his own silent unobtrusive way. All the morning he was kept busy

at the anvil, but the afternoon was his to do as he pleased, and he used it up mostly in trailing after Leela. In the normal course, she might have yielded to this persistent wooing but... She blushed at the very thought, and Vijay noticed it. "Still pining for the *Shikari*, he teased her. "Don't be stupid," she pouted, pretending to be cross, although her heart inexplicably began to beat a little faster. Vijay shrugged his shoulders. "Well, if you don't like to talk about it, it's all right with me," he said resignedly, and took out his flute. When he was not chasing Leela, he played on a crude native flute. They were the twin passions of his life. As the first plaintive notes struck through the mild spring air, Leela's thoughts wandered off again, and her gaze instinctively shifted to the far-off hill where they had stood close together for the last time before they had parted, and he had promised most solemnly that he would come back. She sighed. Days, weeks, months had gone by and he hadn't come. She had expressly asked him not to write, because a letter addressed to her would have attracted the attention of half the village and let loose a flood of speculation on the part of the entire feminine community. Every action, every gesture, every word of hers would from then on be subject to severe scrutiny and comment ranging from caustic to fantastic. But now, as the days

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HANDA UNCHA RAHE HAMARA"
This year, again, there were

complaints against black marketing in national flags. Evidently there is blackmarketing going on both *in* and *under* the national flag!
NOW WE KNOW
In Kashmir, Shaikh Abdullah's Government has ordered public flogging and imprisonment up to seven years for blackmarketeers and hoarders.
That is why, perhaps, certain Indian capitalists (and the papers owned by them) do not favour the accession of the whole of Kashmir to India!
PUT OUT THE LIGHTS
This year, on August 15, there were no illuminations.
One by one, the Lights of Freedom are going out all over the country.
BEGAD, SIR...
These d-d natives are excellent pupils, I must say. Look, how they are carrying on the British tradition in the Government of

India. In some ways they beat even us hollow.
OH, MY DEAH...
Oh, Fifi, darling, you should have been there! We had such a gala party on the night of August 15—dancing right up to 2-30 in the morning—and drank gallons and gallons of champagne—and then Sodoo Sarkarwallah sang his slightly vulgar version of "Rule Britannia" to the tune of *Vande Mataram*. It was all very exciting and inspiring and, oh, so patriotic. You *should* have been there!
SAYINGS OF SABA
Freedom, like Christmas, comes but once a year—on August 15—and then departs!
Nothing—not even Freedom—was ever born without shrieking and blood!
Man was born but the Security Act keeps him in chains.
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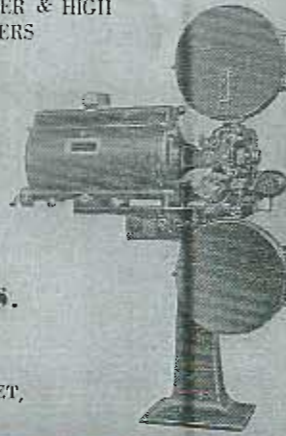
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 Music
GHULAM MOHAMAD
 Songs
WAHID QURAISHI
SHAKIL BADAUNI
 Photography
A.K. KADAM
 दिल کی بستی

slipped by without sign or word from him, she wished she had not forbidden him to write. In her present predicament she felt that she would rather have risked the prying eyes and wagging tongues than this suspense, this uncertainty.

The music stopped suddenly and Leela came back to earth with a jolt.

"Now look, Leela," Vijay was saying. "It's no use. If he had really cared for you he wouldn't have stayed away like that. He probably took the whole thing as part of the day's sport, and forgot all about it as soon as he got back."

Leela did not believe it. But she did not feel like discussing it either. She remained silent. Vijay, mistaking her silence for the beginnings of doubt, thought he would take the opportunity to press his own case.

"You don't know these city folks, Leela. You'll never be happy with them. You are a daughter of the soil. You belong here, the same as I do. I'm offering you love, home and security, a life you'll understand, a life you are used to."

Leela evidently was not impressed. She mechanically plucked a blade of grass and began chewing it meditatively. While she appreciated his point of view, she was still disinclined to analyse her emotions in a cold dispassionate light as he did. She preferred to stick to her own view, which was that the steins of Fate, weaving noiselessly, had brought them together with a purpose, and she would wait for that purpose to be fulfilled.

It was an accident that did it. It must have been about five o'clock in the evening. Leela had finished milking the cows and was carrying in the milk pots when she heard excited voices in the courtyard. Dumping the pots inside the kitchen, she went round to the front to see what the commotion

was all about. She saw three young men clad in khaki shorts and white shirts. One of them was squatting on the floor of the verandah with his head between his hands, while the other two were explaining something to her father gesticulating now and then with their guns for emphasis.

On seeing Leela, her father called her aside, and explained to her briefly that the young man on the floor had met with an accident, and asked her to make the necessary arrangements to accommodate him for the night. As she was

going in to carry out her father's instructions, she got a close glimpse of the young man and was horrified to see that he was bleeding profusely from a big gash on the forehead and that his entire shirt front was covered with bright patches of crimson.

It comforted her somewhat that her father was on the spot to handle this difficult situation himself, having come back from the fields earlier than usual owing to a slight indisposition. Normally, he did not come home till after nightfall, as he was one of those



"...As sure as the sun will rise tomorrow, Leela," he whispered, "I'll come back and take you as my wife".

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owner-farmers who loved to toil in the fields, like any of their hired men, and took pride in doing so. He loved his little patch of land with an almost religious fervour.

The young man was soon comfortably tucked up in bed, his wounds temporarily dressed and bandaged. After he had drunk the glass of hot milk which Leela brought in, he sank back with a groan, and almost immediately was enveloped in the unconquerable heavy sleep of the worn out hunter. His two friends then went away to acquaint his father of the accident.

She got the details afterwards from her father. It seems that Dhunwant and his pals had been out shooting that afternoon, and not having had much luck with the wild fowls down on the marshes, they were returning home feeling rather sore. As they were passing through the wood on their way back to the village, something grey suddenly shot across their path. With a wild cry of "Rabbit!" Dhunwant set out in hot pursuit.

The wild rabbit, as everyone knows, is an elusive customer and calls for some really fast and tricky footwork. As Dhunwant went barging through thickets and hopping from boulder to boulder in relentless pursuit, goaded by his recent unhappy experience with the wild fowls, his foot slipped on a rocky edge and before he knew what was happening he was rolling merrily down a steep rocky descent. During this natural but somewhat undignified process of gravitation his gun went off although the safety catch was on, and there was a good deal of confusion all round. By the time his pals caught up with him, attracted no doubt by the stray shot that went off so unexpectedly, they found him stretched out at the foot of the hillock, looking rather dazed and dumb, and they had to half carry, half drag him to the nearest farmhouse, which happened to be

Leela's. The rest we know.

The young man's father came in later that night. He arrived in his big flashy car looking very anxious, and was accompanied by another gentleman, looking very important and very efficient, with a bristling moustache and a shiny black leather bag in his hand. He was the doctor, and he went to work straightaway on the patient, while the other fidgeted about uneasily and self-consciously. Even the garrulous old farmer was tongue-tied for once, apparently overawed by the flashy car and the brisk businesslike proceedings. The doctor pronounced his verdict in his customary brusque manner. No reason for anxiety—wounds were not serious—no bones broken—but it was imperative that the patient be not moved for at least a week—seemed to have sustained a severe shock. In short, complete rest was the prescription. The country air would help quick recovery, he added.



Luscious lovely Shyama Dulari will have a good role in Mughal forthcoming production "Chhaon", still in the project stage.

The boy's father felt uncomfortable, not so much on account of his son, but out of embarrassment as to how further to presume on the kindness of the old farmer. Fortunately for him, the farmer himself came to the rescue by saying that the boy could stay as long as he liked. In fact, he insisted that he should not be moved until he was quite fit. The cal-

culating city broker, accustomed to view all things in terms of rupees, annas and pias, was taken aback by all this hospitality, so overwhelming in its spontaneity, not realizing that hospitality was mere tradition with the villager. Had he been aware of it, he wouldn't have been so tactless as to suggest compensation, which the proud farmer dismissed with the irate remark

that though they were simple, ignorant, peasant folk, they had their code of life, and they never looked for compensation for common courtesies extended.

The broker, feeling more and more uncomfortable, hastily mumbled his apologies and gratitude, all in one confused breath, and got up to go. The doctor, who had all along been looking on with an air of bored indifference, leaped into activity again, gave Leela brief, precise instructions how to bathe and dress the wounds, frowned into his bag as if he was looking for something and didn't find it, snapped it shut with a click, flicked an imaginary speck from his coat sleeve, and briskly walked down the steps to the car.

The broker thanked the farmer and his daughter once again as he was getting into the car, and promised to come back the following Sunday to take his son away. In the meantime, should anything untoward develop, he requested them to send word to him.

Under the tender administrations of Leela, and aided by the healthy country air and the plain but wholesome country food, Ramesh made rapid progress. The frank and easy manners of Leela and her father soon put him at ease in spite of the change of environment, and he began to take an interest in the sturdy, cheerful peasant folk and their way of life. Every morning the farmer would drop in for an informal chat, which would consist mostly of the weather, of the rainfall, or lack of it, and its effect on the crops. For the greater part of the day he would be left to himself, except when Leela came in to dress his wounds or brought in his food.

At first he was only vaguely aware of her coming and going, but as soon as he was able to sit up and the throbbing pain in his head eased up a little, he began to notice things, and almost the first

thing he noticed was the simple unadorned beauty of Leela. The frank smiling eyes, the delicious curve of her cheek, the tilt of her nose, the clear complexion—all these little details slowly registered themselves on his mind. Above all, it was her freshness, her abundantly vitality that attracted him most. He found himself longing for it to be dressing time so that he could feel her nearness, warmth, and freshness.

He wanted only to look at her, to feel her cool soft hands tending his wounds. As he had nothing to do all day but loil in his bed, he would indulge in the harmless pursuit of weaving around her graceful person a web of beautiful fancies. The lovely country air and the pleasant landscape full of sun and light awakened in his soul, in his heart, and in his veins a vague and powerful emotion, and he began to feel a growing tenderness for this simple country girl. It was with an effort that he prevented himself from getting up and following her about the house. Whenever she came in, he would implore her to stay and talk to him saying he was feeling utterly lonely, and she would take pity on him and stay.

She was beginning to feel shy and self-conscious in his presence, slowly becoming aware of the growing tension between them, of ~~the~~ invisible spark flashing from one to another. Dhunwant, however, would keep up an incessant chatter to suppress his inward excitement. He would tell her of his home, his people, and that was how she learnt, bit by bit, that he was the only son of a wealthy city broker, that he had lost his mother when he was still at school, and how his father had started in a small way and had managed to amass a tidy fortune. She would listen to this romance of big business with open mouth, hanging on every word of his. It was obvious that she was deep in love with him. There was a light in



A delightful snapshot of accomplished and beautiful actress Manwar Sultana in a pensive moment in Prakash's new vehicle "Sawan Hadron".

her eyes that was unmistakable, and her lips were slightly parted as though in a sigh of despair. And so began an interlude which might have been in another world, and almost was.

As soon as Dhunwant was able to move about, he went out for little strolls. Drinking in the clean,

crisp air in eager gulps, he would ostensibly set out to enjoy the beautiful countryside, but his wandering feet would inevitably lead him to Leela, busily engaged in the daily routine of her duties. He would come upon her milking the cows, or feeding the cattle with oilcakes and rice water, or washing the clothes by the wall, depend-

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on the time of the day, and he would attend and gaze with wonder and awe at the ease with which she performed these complicated operations.

The happiest part of his day, however, was the twilight hour when he would walk round to the little patch of grass behind the cart-shed, and Leela, free from her household duties, would join him. It was another hour before her father would return from the fields after settling the day's accounts with the hired men, and they would have a delightful hour all by themselves. Enveloped by the profound peace of the picturesque countryside, they would sit and gaze at the brilliant Indian sunset, their hearts full of song and laughter.

Sometimes he would talk. He would tell her about the mysteries of Nature. In simple language he would explain to her how rain is caused, how an eclipse is brought about, thereby shattering to pieces all her pet theories which were based mostly on superstition and ignorance. He would speak to her about far-off lands across the seas, of the marvels of electricity and mechanization, and she would listen with awe and respect to his accumulated wealth of knowledge. Her own education had not gone beyond the reading and writing stage, having been cut short by the untimely death of her mother, and the manifold responsibilities of a housewife had absorbed all her time and attention since then. Just as the first stars began to appear, they would reluctantly turn indoors. They would dream of each other as soon as they were asleep, and think of each other as soon as they awoke and, without saying so, longed for and desired each other with their whole soul and body.

The week flashed past like a dream. One evening they were seated together on the grass as usual, but there was no song in

their hearts, no laughter on their faces. They were both silent, their hearts thumping away, each of them staring at the dim oval of the other's face, staring and wondering, waiting, for some miracle of understanding and tenderness. "Well?" And it came from her almost like a sigh. "Well?" And even in this one short word the strain in his voice was apparent.

That was all they said between them for a few moments, but the air between them was thick with



Srimati K. Jayalalshmi, who hails from the place where they grew "Chandalekha", writes to say that she is keen on acting in Hindi pictures. She is no neophyte either. She is acting right now in Hindi and Tamil pictures, and "can speak Hindi, sing and dance", which are qualifications to catch any producer's these days with ruling stars, and even starlets, being signed on in half a dozen films simultaneously.

unspoken questions. One thought was uppermost in their minds. Tomorrow was Sunday, the day his father had promised to come and take him away. Tonight was their last night together. Dhunwant was quite fit and well now, and there was no reason, no excuse to prolong his stay at the farm.

"Listen, Leela," he said at last, pulling himself out of that constraint, "let's have a few moments together tomorrow morning before

I start. We'll go up that hill first thing in the morning, and watch the sunrise." Leela merely nodded. Her throat refused to function.

The stars grew dim and the birds began to twitter. Day was breaking. Two young things, entirely wrapped up in each other, were slowly making their way up the incline, hand in hand. As they came over the brow of the hill, the sun was just peeping up above the distant horizon, and with playful malice, as it were, it shot out a golden ray, then another, yet another, now playing on the thatched roof of a hut, now on the green clusters of a banana plantation, or again on the silver breast of a dove in flight.

Suddenly, without warning, even as they stood watching, the whole valley below was revealed to them in bold relief in all its morning glory. People were moving about already, looking like black specks amidst the green and yellow paddy-fields, which seemed to extend endlessly on every side and were dotted with the tiny mud-and-brick huts the labourers. A cock crowed, other cocks from the neighbouring farms took up the challenge. Somewhere a shepherd called to his flock, a dog barked. The lovers pressed closer, and smiled to welcome another day.

His emotions seemed to paralyse his strength, while the girl, who was standing close to him, gave herself up to the enjoyment of the scene. She felt disinclined to think, felt a lassitude in her limbs, a complete self-relaxation, as if she was intoxicated. A vague wish for pleasure, a fermentation of her blood seemed to pervade her whole body. She was also a little agitated by the proximity of this young man who thought her so pretty, whose looks seemed to caress her skin, and whose eyes were as penetrating and exciting as the sun's rays. Their inability to speak increased their emotion.

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and they looked about them. At last he made an effort and was about to speak when they heard the song of bird which seemed a long way off.

"Listen" he said.

"Shh! We mustn't make a noise," she whispered, "let's go into the wood and sit down closer to it."

They went beneath the trees flanking the hill. "Stoop" she said. So, he bent down and they entered a thicket of creepers, leaves and grass, which formed an impenetrable retreat. Just above their heads, perched on one of the trees which hid them, the bird was still singing. They did not speak for fear of frightening it away. They were sitting close together and slowly his arm stole round the girl's waist and squeezed it gently. She took away that daring hand, but without anger, and kept removing it whenever he put it round her, not feeling all embarrassed by this caress, just as if it had been something quite natural which she was resisting just as naturally.

She was listening to the bird in ecstasy. She felt an infinite longing for happiness, and felt such a softening at her heart and such a relaxation of her nerves that she began to cry. There was pain in the contemplation of perfect beauty. The young man was now straining her close to him and she did not remove his arm. She did not think of it. His head was on her shoulders and he caressed her soft brown neck with his lips. Suddenly the bird stopped and still they did not move.

"As sure as the sun will rise again to-morrow, Leela," he whispered softly, "I'll come back and take you as my wife."

Time moved on relentlessly, inexorably. Leela could not go to anyone for comfort, because she had not dared to share her secret

with anyone. Her father did not suspect anything. Vijay had only sensed something with the instinct of a lover.

Every Sunday afternoon she would hurry through her work, wash herself, and changing into a fresh "sari" and "choli," she would go out. With bent head and a forlorn look, she would wend her

way through the valley with its large meadows watered by trenches and separated by hedges. Further beyond you could see the vast marshy land, the best shooting ground you ever saw. She would walk through the narrow path that had been cut, brushing against the rushes that covered the marsh and surprising the wildfowl disporting

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themselves. Not a soul was in sight, not a sound was heard.

She would go trudging up the hill flanked by dense woods with magnificent trees, where some excellent feathered game was to be found. Here again she would be confronted with the same dead silence, and a feeling of drowsiness, as if Nature herself lay gasping for breath under the scorching summer sun. Occasionally she would come upon a shooting party, but he or his friends would never be there. Sick and tired, she would ultimately end up in the leafy retreat where they had last parted, and would sit there hour after hour, the tears streaming down her cheeks, wistfully hoping that he would come and find her where he had left her. As the light began to fail, she would drag herself wearily back to the farm.

Then the blow fell. It fell quietly, as blows often fall. It came by way of a friendly discussion between father and daughter. The farmer was relaxing after a heavy meal and Leela was cleaning up. His eyes followed her every movement and there was a soft affectionate light in them. Now and then he belched loudly.

"I've been thinking," he said suddenly, "this sort of thing can't go on for ever."

"What can't go on, father?"

"How long do you think you are going to look after me?" he asked with a twinkle in his eye.

"Why, what a question!" she exclaimed.

"Tut, tut, my girl. I know you are a good daughter, but I can't be selfish and think of myself always. People are beginning to talk, for keeping a girl of your age at home without... without..." He found himself floundering. He was not good at that sort of thing. He shifted uneasily in his seat and wished the girl's mother had been there. She would have handled the situation with tact and firmness.

Leela, however, had been expecting this. She had known it

would come sooner or later.

"I'm not so keen on marriage, father," she said, "Besides, who's going to take care of you? What would a hired woman know of your needs?" she argued.

The farmer patted her affectionately. "I know I'll miss you terribly, my dear. The same as I missed your mother not so long ago. But one gets used to such things. It's life."

He remained thoughtful for a while. The cows moored hungrily from the stalls. "How about Vijay?" he asked suddenly with another twinkle. "I see that he's been trailing you a lot these days, the young rascal!"

She did not answer. Even now, when her whole future seemed to be at stake, she dared not tell him her secret. He might either laugh the whole thing off or take her to task for allowing a stranger to take liberties with her.

"He's a good boy, Vijay," he mused loudly. "Steady young fellow. Got some money, too, and a decent roof over his head. H'm, I must think it over."

He got up, stretched his limbs and went out. Leela continued her cleaning up with a heavy heart. She knew what it meant. Consulting her wishes in the matter was a mere formality. She knew perfectly well that the will of the parents held absolute sway in such matters.

It was an unusually sultry afternoon, and the farmer sprawling on the verandah, clad in nothing but a loin cloth, chewing "pan." He was almost falling off into a doze when he perceived a young man in flannels walking up to the house. He had seen the youngster somewhere; his face was familiar.

"Namaste!" said the young man coming up to him. "Remember me?" he asked respectfully. The farmer had it at last. His slow-moving mind had registered. "Of course, I remember," he shouted, clapping at his naked thigh vigorously. "You are the Shikari

who had the accident."

He welcomed the lad heartily, bade him sit down, and called for refreshments in a lusty bellow.

"Haven't seen you in these parts lately. Given up shooting?"

The young man's face clouded a little. "N-no, it isn't exactly that. In fact, I'm rather ashamed that I should have neglected you all this while after all you did for me. But you see, my father fell ill suddenly after I went back. Had a bad attack of paralysis, and what with looking after the business and attending on him I just couldn't find the time. He suffered a great deal. He... he... died last week."

"Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. Awfully sorry. Tough luck!" He was at a loss what else to say, and in order to cover his embarrassment he called out to his woman again. "Radha, hey Radha," he roared. "Confound that woman! I can never find her when I want her."

"Why, where's Leela?" asked Dhunwant.

"Oh, I almost forget. She got married only last week. To Vijay, our blacksmith."

Dhunwant felt his little world of love come down crumbling about head. He felt stunned. He got up slowly. "Please don't bother," he said huskily. "I... I... only dropped in to say hello. Thank you once again for everything."

He scarcely heard the farmer's protestations. He went down the steps in a daze, boarded his car, which he had parked a little further off, and drove off blindly, not knowing, not caring where he went.

The skeins of Fate, weaving noiselessly, had snapped somewhere throwing them apart. Perhaps they should thank the ruthless Fate that separated them when their love still seemed to be its height. They suffered, but they suffered in beauty. They were spared the real tragedy of love. The tragedy of love is not death or separation. The tragedy of love is indifference.

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faces Without Names

REEL SEVEN

(In Which the Hero Agrees to Accompany the Heroine on an Unromantic Mission)

THE STORY SO FAR

Kundan, born plain Surajmal, with ambitions of becoming a film star, has been promoted from coolie to peon in the Studio where he is employed. Having been spoken to once by the Seth who is the Studio boss, and run an errand or two for the Star, he hopes to land a role in a picture which is being made from a story by the famous novelist Nirmal, whom he admires. He meets, snubs and begins to like Indira, a girl extra at the Studio, takes her to a picture and accompanies her home. There he meets her mother and finds Indira far better than he had thought. Next day at the Studio.....read on.

NIRMAL, the writer, was getting puzzled and angry.

"Look here, Basu Sahab, if you do not like my story, why did you buy it in the first place? If you want to make so many changes, it would be better if you return my story. I can't understand why you are paying me Five Thousand Rupees if you like nothing in my story?"

Director Basu calmly explained to him "We are paying five thousand rupees for—your name! After all you have achieved such fame in the literary world. Your short stories and novels are popular. Moreover, this story of yours has a good title—*Subha Savera!* The Red Dawn! It has a revolutionary ring about it. Such names are popular these days—*Naya Sansar, Hamrah Shaheed, Apna Desh*, and now *Subha Savera!* Some of the incidents in your story are quite good and we are keeping them. We have not changed the hero's character—except for making him a radio singer—instead of a mill-worker. After all we must have songs in the picture. But we want

real red-hot revolutionary songs—just like—just like—oh, yes—just like *Duniya men gharibon ko aram naheen milta* in *Khandan*. Now, that's what I call a real revolutionary song."

Out in the verandah Kundan could hear all this conversation. More than even the writer, he was angry with Basu's attempts to change the story. What right had these directors to change a good story like that? Nirmal was no amateur. He was one of the greatest living authors in India. Kundan had read somewhere that his stories had been translated not only in English and published in British and American magazines, but even in French and German. Who was Basu to order changes in the story of such a great writer? Who gave him this right? But this was the usual routine in every Studio. One particular director had 'murdered' a famous novel of Munshi Premchand, another had produced a story of Kishenchander and made only this 'slight' change—that the hero had been changed from a Kashmiri peasant to a

landlord of Rajputana and the heroine who in the original, had been the daughter of a poor boatman, was transformed into the daughter of the gardener of a royal palace who was proved in the last reel to have been really a princess by birth. (Due to a palace intrigue the babies had been changed at birth and the princess replaced by the gardener's son).

But Kundan was sure that, for once, the studio bosses had met their match. A revolutionary writer like Nirmal would never submit to director Bose's bullying. He would point-blank refuse to make any changes in his story. Hadn't he written in the Preface to his last collection of stories, "In this capitalist-dominated world everything is bought and sold—clothes, houses, position, honour, fame. Even a woman's love can be bought. You can buy Votes, Politicians and Leaders. But the one thing that cannot be bought is the free pen of an independent writer?"

Any moment Kundan expected that Nirmal would silence Bose with one devastating remark.

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August 1949

then pick up his story and walk out. That, indeed, would teach these directors a lesson.

Basu was still speaking. "Listen, Nirmal-ji, this is a film studio. Here we mould the stories of the greatest writers in the world—even of Kalidas and Shakespeare—to suit our own requirements. Please remember that literature is one thing, cinema is quite another. We have to keep our eyes fixed on the box-office. Sethji is going to spend not less than three lakhs on this picture. He must cover up M.G.'s from the distributors. And the distributors would not touch a film with a barge pole if it does not contain at least ten song-situations."

Kundan expected to hear Nirmal shouting, "To hell with you and your box-office! I cannot allow you to change my story." But Nirmal did not utter a word. He remained utterly silent.

And Basu's tone became increasingly rude and belligerent. "If you don't want any changes in your story, then you may please

return the thousand rupees we have paid as advance to you. We will get Munshi Padesi to write another story for us."

"Here take your money! But I am not going to sell my pen—no, not at any price!" This is what Kundan expected Nirmal to say but the writer made no retort whatever to Basu's challenge. After a few moments of silence, he muttered apologetically: "No, no, Basu Sahab, I didn't mean that. You understand the requirements of a film better than I do. If you think these changes are necessary, it is all right. I will re-write the dialogues. Please give me a day to think about the new line."

Kundan could hear Nirmal collecting his papers and stuffing them in his portfolio. Then Basu spoke—in a soft but poisonously ironic tone. "We want to help writers like you, Nirmalji, otherwise there are dozen writers willing to write the story and dialogues even for thousand rupees."

"Thank you, Basu Sahab, I will

see you tomorrow. Namaste."

"Namaste."

Kundan moved away from the verandah. He felt that a sacred idol in the temple of his mind had been shattered. Nirmal—the revolutionary writer, the free, undaunted spirit—had sold his pen for a thousand rupees! The pen that once was the very symbol of progressive literature, defying the corrupting powers of money!

When Nirmal came out of the room, there were tears in his eyes. He did not talk to Kundan but, with head bowed, hurried out of the studio.

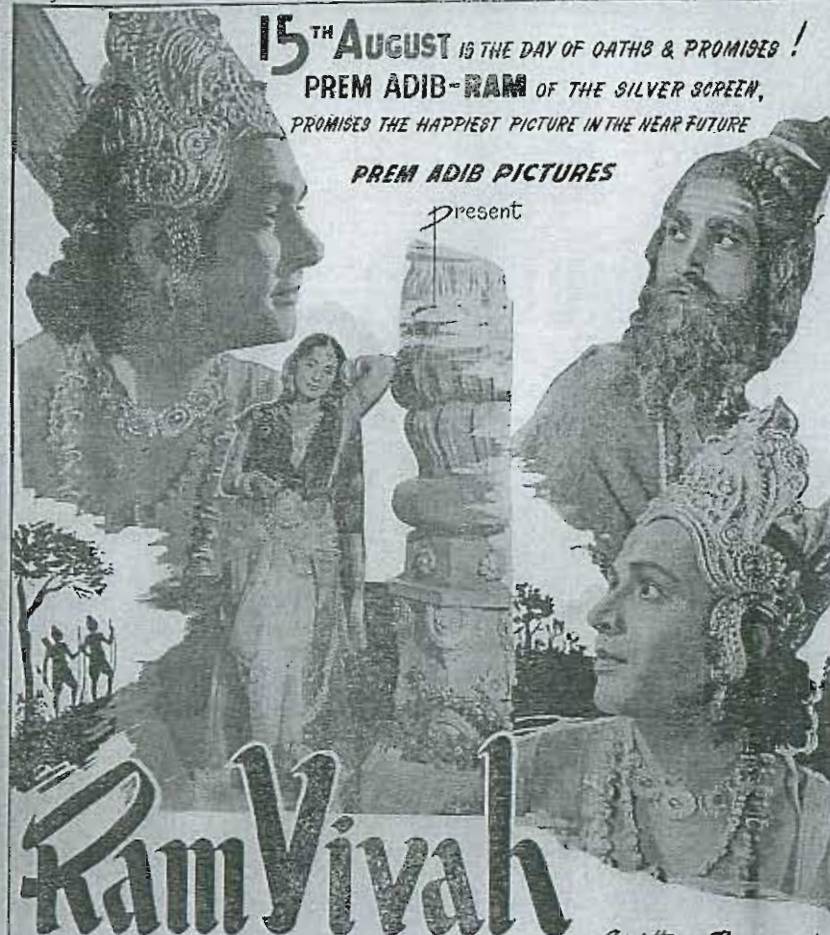
Kundan did not get much time to ponder over this abject surrender of a free spirit. Chopra and Ram, the two assistants of director Handa, bchoved him and all three of them sat down on the platform under the willow tree.

"Namaste, Ramji. Namaste, Chopraji. What is the news?"

"Kundan, this evening there is a meeting of the Union. You must also come there."



"Look here, Basu Sahab, if you do not like my story, why did you buy it in the first place?"



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Photography:

YUSUF MOOLJI

"Film Workers' Union. We are all members and you must also join.

"But, Chopra-ji, I thought these Unions are only for mill-workers and such like."

"Aren't we also workers—though we work in a studio and not in a mill?" Ram answered him. "Aren't we exploited and starved by the studio-owners, just as the mill-workers are exploited by their bosses? I have been your assistant for five years and still my pay is only seventy per month. What do you get?"

"Thirty per month," Kundan had to confess, rather reluctantly.

"And do you know what a mill-worker earns? Sixty to seventy rupees in a month." Ram informed him and Chopra added, "Even a municipal sweeper gets more than you get."

Kundan did not like his status to be compared with the mill-workers. But Ram gave him no chance to speak. "And do you know why mill-workers and sweepers are better off than us? Because they are organized and we are not. Because they have their Unions to fight for their rights, while we have none."

Just to avoid further arguments, Kundan promised them that he would come to the meeting. But he had no intentions of doing so. Today he had got his pay and he wanted to go and see a picture. Seeing Saroop coming out of the Production Manager's office, he extended a cordial invitation to him.

"Come on, Saroop, let's go and see *Dari Bahen*. I am in a generous mood today."

But Saroop did not accept the invitation. "No, you go, Kundan, I am going to the meeting?"

"All right, as you like." Then, curious about the reference to the meeting, "What meeting?"

"Meeting of the Union."

"You mean... you... are also in the Union?"

"Why of course!"

"And Mira?"

"We both joined today. Why don't you also join. Come to the meeting."

Somehow, Kundan always had had a prejudice against Unions. In his mind they were associated with un-washed, dirty-looking labourers, long-haired, fiery-tongued Communists, sticks and bombs. But today everyone seemed to be talking of nothing but the Union, and that seemed to make him more stubborn in his prejudice. Moreover he had just had a glimpse of Indira. Why waste one's time in an unromantic business like a meeting when one had money in one's pocket and could take a girl to a cinema? So he got rid of Saroop also by making him a vague promise which he had no intention of keeping. "All right Saroop, I will try to drop in and attend your meeting."

Saroop who seemed to be in a hurry dashed out of the studio and Kundan was able to give undivided attention to Indira. As usual she wore a home-washed cotton sari but, somehow to Kundan today she looked prettier than ever before.

"Hello, Indira Devi, namaste," he greeted her with warmth and cordiality.

"Namaste, Kundanji." And she joined her pale, delicate hands which reminded Kundan of that brief but memorable episode when she had held out her hand to guide and support him on the darkened stair-case. After several days he could still find the electric thrill of that soft, friendly touch.

"Today we are definitely going to see a picture." Instead of a formal invitation, he intimated his decision to her.

"I am afraid you will have to excuse me. Today I won't be able to go"—with a slight emphasis on "Today" to make it clear that on any other day she would have no objection.

"Why, have you an appointment today?" he asked slightly suspicious and jealous.

"You can call it an appointment, if you like," she answered, with a

smile. "There is the Union meeting today. Aren't you going?"

"Oh, Union meeting!"... and in a moment Kundan changed his mind as he realized that even that could be a romantic occasion I am glad you reminded me. Yes, of course I am going. Let's go together."

"Let's go."

On the way, he asked; "Didn't see you for several days. Where have you been?"

"I had been to Panchgani."

"Panchgani? But that was a holiday resort for the rich or a sanatorium for T. B. patients. How and why could she, a poor girl, have gone there?"

As if reading his unspoken suspicions, she added, "A friend of mine is in the sanatorium there—she had called me to see her. We met after ten years. We were at the same school in Meerut."

"Does your friend stay alone there?"

"Yes—but Nirmal Sahab goes there now and then."

"Nirmal Sahab."

"Yes, Nirmal, the famous writer. My friend Kamla is his wife. He loves her very much. She is in the third stage and doctor don't give her more than six months, but he has not given up hope to save her. He is doing everything possible—he has taken a bungalow for her, there is a nurse, and a doctor comes every day. Must be costing at least a thousand rupees every month... But why are you suddenly so silent and thoughtful. Do you know Nirmal-ji?"

"No." And that was the truth. Like the world, he knew only Nirmal the writer, not Nirmal the man, Nirmal the lover, Nirmal the husband!

Today Kundan knew why great and free spirits were forced to sell their pens in the market place... and for what.

"No," he lied to reassure her, I was thinking of something else."

(Next Month: The Heroine Revives a Revolutionary Story Instead of Singing a Sad Ghazal)

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The Magic World of the Movies

... As I Remember It

(As described by the Well-known film star and actor, Jiraj,
in an interview with the writer)

TWENTY years in the movies! What a host of memories and pictures it conjures up! Enough to fill a whole life time, nay, many a lifetime.

My very first recollection of the movies was a long, long time ago. I was eighteen then, a rather tall and hulky youth for eighteen. I was sitting on the floor of a ramshackle, old, barn-like room, along with a score of two others, who, like me had paid a two-anna bit for a "seat" in the pit. This unpretentious room, with the unpretentious name of the Puddle Bowree, was one of the first "Cinemas" in Hyderabad.

In those days we were not allowed to go to the cinema. I had managed to sneak out of the house on the pretext of going for a walk. I remember, quite vividly, the feeling of amazement, rather of bewilderment I felt as I saw those magic figures move and act on the screen just as if they were real, live human beings. The picture was called "Vishva Mohini," a social drama with the usual triangle—husband, wife and the other woman—as its theme. You can just imagine how enraptured I was by Miss Gohar. She was such a slim, pretty thing then, with big, soft eyes and a sweet look that went straight to your heart. Gohar was no glamour girl, but she had plenty of homely appeal. And when the film ended with Good triumphing over Evil (as it always does in pictures) I was so overjoyed for Miss Gohar, the long suffering wife, that I clapped myself numb.

It is true I never saw that very early Indian movie, "The Light of

Asia," based upon the life of Buddha, directed by Franz Osten, and with Himansu Rai playing the central role; nor that other popular and exquisite early movie, "Shiraz," which told of the love of a youth for a maiden who later became the famous Mumtaz Mahal, the consort of the great Moghul Emperor Shah Jahan. That memorial in stone at Agra built after her death to commemorate her memory and the Emperor's love, and the builder's unjust reward of being blinded by the Emperor, formed the heart-rending tale of that picture. The ravishing Seeta Devi played Mumtaz, a role which has been played by a many a modern actress after her.

But I saw numerous other movies, mostly romantic dramas and action films, popularly known as "Stunt" pictures. They were naturally the type that would appeal to any athletic-minded fellow of eighteen, for he would easily associate himself with the dashing, swash-buckling hero of the "action" picture. And the most popular swash-buckling hero of those days was Master Vithal, known as the "Indian Fairbanks." This young Maharashtrian, who captured the imagination of every filmgoing youth of the day, is now one of our old character actors.

I remember him in "Raj Tarang," an adaptation of the



Shyama Dulari, Dev Anand and Aashu make a talented trio in Jagat Pictures' forthcoming release "Shah".

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KHATAU WADI, GIRGAUM - BOMBAY, 4.

"Prisoner of Zenda." The film was produced by the Sharda Film Company, with the Mehta-Luhar combination in charge of direction and photography.

My entry into filmdom, and how I came to be a star has become a stale and hackneyed subject. Suffice it to say that in 1929, being forced by circumstances to seek a profession, I came to Bombay and in the course of time became an assistant to a cine cameraman, and later on an actor.

NOT AN INDUSTRY

In those days film-making was a comparatively easy process. There were very few film producing concerns. The old Imperial Company, which has now been renamed Jyoti Studios, and Ranjit, I think are the only two film producing units of those early days which still survive in Bombay. The rest, like the Sharda, Krishna and Kohinor studios, have long since been extinct.

There were no divisions of the work of production such as producers, distributors and exhibitors at that time. A producing concern distributed its own pictures and some even had their own theatres.

THE "SILENT" STUDIO

Compared to the present, our technical equipment then was very little. The film "studio" was a huge stage constructed with a muslin screen on top, which could



be shifted from side to side to let in the sunlight. Our technical equipment consisted of a camera (cranked by hand) and a few reflectors. There were no electric installations, no arc lamps, no floodlights and no mechanical devices. The reflectors could be shifted about and adjusted in such a way as to reflect the sunlight on the actors. Even the laboratories were hand operated.

NO MAX FACTOR

Artists rarely had make-up rooms; a pot of grease paint, a powder box, a puff, some rouge and a tooth-brush sufficing for actor and "extra" alike. Make-up



was a community affair. You put on grease paint on somebody's face, while he in turn glued your whiskers or adjusted your curls. No elaborate Max Factors creams and lotions and no hair-dressers, though, of course, the studio barber was an important person. Every man from actor to studio-hand lined up before him for the morning shave.

A DEMI-GOD

In the studio itself the director was a demi-God. He had all the responsibility. He was a master of all trades. Story-writing, editing, costumes, set-designing, and anything else that could possibly be needed on the sets—all came within the compass of his duties. The



cameraman was his only helper, the other staff usually consisting of untrained boys. A scenario as such was seldom written, the script being generally in the director's head.

We rarely had huge studio sets, the shooting taking place amidst natural backgrounds. You could wheel your camera anywhere, from a street corner to a roof-top, and be able to get a perfectly natural scene, an advantage we miss with the talkies, where one has to take into account sound effects as a major factor.

It usually took us four to six weeks to complete a picture. A good "B" class film could be easily made for less than ten thousand rupees, as compared with the two to three lakhs spent on such pictures today.

A studio had its own junior staff, and actors who played small roles were hired on a monthly salary basis. Rs. 35 a month was considered a very lavish remuneration for most of the higher grade staff.

Working hours stretched from sunrise to sundown, no fixed interval being given for lunch. You could munch a "chappati" in the few spare moments you happened to get.

Though film-making was neither an industry, nor a respectable profession for the educated, working in the old "Silents" had a charm all its own. We worked and behaved like a family, and a happy one at that! There was so in harmony and co-operation—no labour strikes! This spirit

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comradeship is essential in any creative art. I regard film-making as one, but unfortunately the spirit of comradeship has become a rare commodity these days.

REIGNING FAVOURITES

Among the stars, the reigning favourites were Sulochana, Gohar, Zubeida, Zebunnissa, and Madhuri on the female side, and Master Vitthal and D. Billimoria on the male side. Looks counted more than talent at that time, so stately and glamorous Sulochana was naturally at the top of the list. Two hundred to four hundred rupees a month were the salaries received by these stars. Film folks lived a simple life. There was less of temperment and more of honesty then and they spent more time in each other's company. Only Sulochana and D. Billimoria owned cars, if I remember right.

INSIDE A THEATRE

Apart from the industry, picture-going itself was quite an experience, in the days of the silent movies. There were about 300 to 400 picture houses in India. Most of them were old rooms with rickety furniture and a single projector, which entailed a break after every two reels. The lowest seat was in the pit, a pit in the real sense of the word, for one had to sit on the bare ground. The running time of a film was two to two and a half hours, the same as it is today. If a picture ran for four weeks it was considered a great success, just as today the celebration of a film's "Silver Jubilee" is considered a mark of success.

Inside, even whilst a picture was running, there was a constant din—people munching away and calling out to one another. An orchestra, consisting of a tabla and a harmonium, played during each show, to give a sort of background music effect. Unfortunately, all the wrong tunes were played and you heard the oddest conglomeration of noises when a climax was reached.

Then there was the "Barker," who read out aloud the sub-titles for the benefit of those people who could not read. They were in great prominence then, as the Indian silent movies were patronised mainly by people from the labour class and sometimes by errant students.

Let me tell you it was no fun for the man who could read. Every time a sub-title appeared on the screen, (and Heaven knows that was often enough), one or the other of his neighbours would nudge him hoping for an explanation. The "Coroners" of the picture-houses today, who love to criticise or explain the film in loud tones to the annoyance of their neighbours, would undoubtedly have en-

joyed going to the old silent movies!

SILENT FILM FARE

What type of fare had the producers of the silent movies to offer us? Stunts, mythology and social drama played an important part in almost every picture. Social dramas mostly concerned themselves with the evils of drink and immorality in the shape of the "Other Woman."

Like history, movie history too, I find, repeats itself. Movie-making advances in cycles, whether it be the silent film, the talkie or technicolor. Our producers always start by tackling mythological subjects, as these have mass appeal. When this theme has been thoroughly exploited, they turn to the pseudo-historical romance, with the emphasis on romance and not on history. Then comes the turn of the action or the "stunt" pictures, and lastly of the social drama. Undoubtedly, the silent movie offered more of the escapist type of entertainment, whereas the modern trend is towards realism.

Whenever a silent picture proved a success, there was always a spate of "carbon copies" from other studios. Needless to mention that this practice of "copying" is still in the forefront. To quote an example, the old Kolisoor Company presented a social problem in "The Barrister's Wife." Not long after Jagdish Films and Ranjit Movietone tried their hand at the same social problem.

Imperial was the first studio to film that popular love-story of the Punjab, "Heer-Ranuja." Since then there have been many copies of it, both on the silent and the talking screen. Other themes on the lines of *Roméo and Juliet* like "Soni-Mahival," "Sassi-Punna" and "Prithviraj-Sanjuktha" have been presented umpteen times both in silent films and in talkies. Suppose in course of time, they will be repeated once again. Technicolor versions, and late perhaps when television comes



Glamour Queen Sulochana and Ashok Kumar are teamed together for the first time in Talwar Productions' forthcoming picture "Khalati", which Director-Producer Talwar plans to make a melange of music, melody and romance packed with entertainment.



Golden voiced Saranya promises to be the chief attraction of "Shair".

comradeship is essential in any creative art. I regard film-making as one, but unfortunately the spirit of comradeship has become a rare commodity these days.

REIGNING FAVOURITES

Among the stars, the reigning favourites were Sulochana, Gohar, Zubeida, Zebunnissa, and Madhuri on the female side, and Master Vithal and D. Billimoria on the male side. Looks counted more than talent at that time, so stately and glamorous Sulochana was naturally at the top of the list. Two hundred to four hundred rupees a month were the salaries received by these stars. Film folks lived a simple life. There was less of temperament and more of honesty then and they spent more time in each other's company. Only Sulochana and D. Billimoria owned cars, if I remember right.

INSIDE A THEATRE

Apart from the industry, picture-going itself was quite an experience, in the days of the silent movies. There were about 300 to 400 picture houses in India. Most of them were old rooms with rickety furniture and a single projector, which entailed a break after every two reels. The lowest seat was in the pit, a pit in the real sense of the word, for one had to sit on the bare ground. The running time of a film was two to two and a half hours, the same as it is today. If a picture ran for four weeks it was considered a great success, just as today the celebration of a film's "Silver Jubilee" is considered a mark of success.

Inside, even whilst a picture was running, there was a constant din—people munching away and calling out to one another. An orchestra, consisting of a tabla and a harmonium, played during each show, to give a sort of background music effect. Unfortunately, all the wrong tunes were played and you heard the oddest conglomeration of noises when a climax was reached.

Then there was the "Barker," who read out aloud the sub-titles for the benefit of those people who could not read. They were in great prominence then, as the Indian silent movies were patronised mainly by people from the labour class and sometimes by errant students.

Let me tell you it was no fun for the man who could read. Every time a sub-title appeared on the screen, (and Heaven knows that was often enough), one or the other of his neighbours would nudge him hoping for an explanation. The "Coroners" of the picture-houses today, who love to criticise or explain the film in loud tones to the annoyance of their neighbours, would undoubtedly have en-

joyed going to the old silent movies!

SILENT FILM FARE

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Golden voiced Suraiya promises to be the chief attraction of "Shah".

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Biographical

By Simon Pereira

RAGHBIR CHAND TALWAR

In Courage Stout as a Shining Sword, in Faith Trusty as a Blade oft tried,
Veteran Producer Begins all over again in Bombay
after Losing All in Lahore.

RAGHBIR Chand Talwar, Founder, proprietor, producer, director of Talwar Productions, is another of India's displaced producers who, having lost their all in consequence of the Partition and the slaughter and destruction which followed in its wake, are now tackling with admirable grit and courage the task of beginning all over again in conditions which have never been more difficult in the entire history of our motion picture industry.

Born in affluent circumstances in the North Indian City of Rawalpindi, Mr. Talwar had his schooling there, and graduated from Daryasingh College at Lahore in 1933. At home shortly after, his father found him with a book on careers, and discovering that he was reading a chapter on screen careers asked if he had thought of one for himself. As a result of the ensuing conversation Mr. Talwar wrote to Rai Bahadur Chuni Lal, an old friend of his father's, who at that time was General Manager of Bombay Talkies, India's foremost studio of the day.

With the idea of specialising in some branch of film production technique before actually seeking employment, Mr. Talwar decided, however, to go to New York first. There he spent two years at the Institute of Photography and the R. C. A. Institute of Sound Engineering, and in due course was awarded diplomas by those institutions in the respective subjects. Mr. Talwar recalls that there were four other Indians with him at the time in New York all attending the same class. One of them S. C. Lall is Ama's Managing Director in Calcutta; another Robin Cha-

terji is, I believe, Sound Engineer at the Famous Laboratory at United Provinces.

From New York, Mr. Talwar went to Hollywood, about the year 1936, in order, he told me, to drift



Raghbir Talwar could be a film star with all that glamour.....don't you think?

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August 1949

around the studios with a view to picking up what knowledge was going. There wasn't much that he could pick up and, of course, he soon discovered that it was not so easy as that. Nevertheless, he stayed six months in Hollywood which he came to know rather well though he never got within speaking distance of a single star, producer or director. But he did get inside some of the major studios, and was able to see for himself how things were done and to pick up what knowledge he could by himself, for he knew nobody who could really have given him the know-how with an expert's authority.

Not satisfied with this introduction to the career which he had now resolved was to be his own, he next crossed the herring pond into England. With an old family friend in Sardar Bahadur Mohan Singh, then a Member of the India Council in London, and another in Dewan Sharar who was a well-known figure in Fleet Street and film circles in the British Metropolis in those days, Mr. Talwar found access easy to the places he wished to see and the persons he wanted to meet. He spent a very profitable six months going round the English studios, which were just picking up their pre-war brilliance to which the war was to put an end a couple of years later. That was the first half of 1937. In August of that year Mr. Talwar landed in Bombay, and on the very day of his arrival, he found himself on the laboratory staff of Bombay Talkies as a technical assistant.

He worked a full year there, leaving to join the Film Corporation of India as the laboratory head of that organisation on terms which represented a substantial advance upon what he was getting with Bombay Talkies. On taking over his new job, he found a state of rare chaos and mismanagement. Two European technicians who had been imported to run the place

hadn't got the hang of Indian conditions, and had gotten themselves and the studio into a rare mess. Mr. Talwar discovered almost at once that he had to reorganise the whole laboratory from top to bottom. Undismayed, he set about the job, and soon had the laboratory functioning to a properly arranged schedule and turning out excellent work. Three consecutive flops, however, namely "Asha," "Aulad" and "Rais," proved too much for the Corporation, which went into liquidation in 1939.

With that quiet resolve which is his chief and most brilliant characteristic, Mr. Talwar collected all his immediate staff and launched into production under his own banner, founding Talwar Productions, which operated in the Film Corporation's excellently equipped Tollygunge studio. Its first two pictures, "Pardeshi" "Dhola," were produced in Punjabi for the Punjab. They proved to be a great success, but not for Mr. Talwar and the financiers, both of whom lost money. But those pictures won Talwar a reputation which stood

him in good stead through many a more difficult time which followed. His third picture, "Khamoshi," was just average, and he was girding up his loins for a super duper effort when the Japs bombed Calcutta, and once again Mr. Talwar was put by circumstances beyond his control on the march.

Collecting such of his staff as wished to go with him, he moved to Lahore and re-started production under his banner in that City in 1942, almost simultaneously with Dalsukh Pancholi, another of our displaced producers now in Bombay, who had just launched his Pancholi Art Pictures there too.

Talwar now turned to production in Hindi, and his first two pictures in that language, "Manchali" and "Shukriya" proved to be jubilee hits which brought him much kudos as well as money. "Shukriya" was made in 1943. Followed "Albeli" "Razdar," and "Tute Sapne." The last has not yet been released. It had just been completed when trouble started and intensified into the fearful rioting and slaughter which turned the



Northern lovely Meena with the lark's voice and debonair Motilal a moment from Director Shorey's new musical comedy "Ek Thi Larkhi" now in the editing room.

once gay city of Lahore into a place of horror, tears and death.

Followed the Partition and worse horrors, and for the third time in the space of a single decade, Mr. Talwar found himself faced with the task of beginning all over again. He was able to get away with the precious negatives of his last picture, "Tute Sapne." But that was about all. From Lahore, he went back once more to Calcutta, towards the end of 1947. He found conditions so changed there, however, and the atmosphere so charged with trouble that he could not even make a new start. In 1949 he migrated to Bombay, and made up his mind to re-establish his unit in the city which can now claim to be India's film capital.

He got himself a floor at Bombay

Talkies, and last June, he launched his first Bombay production under the Talwar banner, "Khilari," starring the Indian screen's top attraction, Suraiya, and former glamour boy, Ashok Kumar, who are teamed together for the first time. Mr. Talwar, who appears utterly unperturbed by all the ups and downs, (which were enough in all conscience to have downed a lesser man and damped anybody's ardour, and in fact is more resolved than ever to going on out-doing the fabled Phoenix), told me he will have "Khilari" finished and premiered by September, which is very good going, indeed, considering the prevailing conditions and the fact that Suraiya is working in more than half a dozen pictures simultaneously.

He did not seem very eager to talk about "Khilari." Knowing the peculiar genius of our producers for snapping up ideas, I do not blame him either. The picture's name indicates, of course, that the story is built around a playboy—one of those rich young bloods with pots of money and nothing to do but spend it.

"It is most ambitious and lavish," said Mr. Talwar to me. After an hour with this extraordinary man, quiet, modest, charming and well-spoken, yet exuding an unmistakable air of steel-like resolve and utterly unshakeable courage, I can well believe it will be both. He is well-named, for his courage is as a shining sword and his faith as stout as a sword's trusty blade.

Screen Personality

Nawab

An Appreciation of a Great and Versatile Character Actor

By B. D. Garga

"... Your guests approach.
"Address yourself to entertain them
sprightly,
"And let's be red with Mirth"
—"The Winter's Tale".

Warm, tender, glowing, expressive. That is how I would sum up Nawab. Nawab has no equal today as a versatile artiste. He ranks among the foremost in India, and may safely be placed in a galaxy of artistes anywhere abroad. But perhaps I grow laudatory! Why not? Nawab is one of those rare human beings who madly, passionately, and devotedly pursue a thing—to attain the highest in it. Acting to him is like *Yoga Bhakti*—his very life blood! And if an "artiste must be like one of those sounding discs which vibrate to every wind, and are agitated by the slightest breeze," as Sarah Bernhardt put it, Nawab is an artiste of superb sensitivity.

While playing a role Nawab forgets his own individuality, loses his ego and acquires the behaviour and mannerism of the character he is portraying. That may look quite simple in cold print; but in actual practice, to forget one's own individuality is extremely difficult. Some theorists of Dramaturgy believe it impossible.

Nawab hates being typed. Cast him in a tragic or comic role, he will come out with flying colours. Goethe said that only a great tragedian can be a great comedian, and this was further proved by Dickens, author of *The Pickwick Papers* and *David Copperfield*, who also wrote the tragic *Tale of Two Cities*. Nawab, the grim, dominating, effervescent *Sardar* of *Sapera* became suddenly alive and animated in *Cronepati* as the care-

less, gay, foolish, "Pista-chewing" producer of "Soundless Movitone." In *Lagan*, again, his task was more than usually difficult, for he had there to portray a jealous old husband of a young and beautiful girl whom he suspected of being in love with another man. He did it with remarkable skill displaying a variety and profound integrity. Again, he was inimitable in *President*, *Wapas*, *Bari Didi*, *Maya*, *Dhooop Chhaon*, *Kashi Nath*, *Mukti*, and *Mari Bahon*.

It was a rich and varied panorama of human behaviour and mannerism which Nawab has portrayed so dexterously in his numerous vehicles. What is the secret of his success? Nawab is a great observer of men, their faces, their behaviour, their habits. As in all true and imaginative artistes, nothing escapes his eye, not even the most minute and seemingly insignificant trifle. You may find him any day chatting with a pickpocket or hobnobbing with a beggar, a drug addict, a patiwalla, a snake-charmer. He loves these simple and unspoiled types. "It is from them," he says, "that I learn what I portray."

His young daughter told me that



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ON SETS

SHADI-KI-RAAT

Director: YESHWANT PATILKAR
Music: GOBINDRAM
* GITTA BALI — BEHMAN
VIJAY LAKSHI — LILA MISRA
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and

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Two famous character actors of the Indian screen, Durga Khote and Nawab, both still going strong, in a highly dramatic scene from the old hit "After the Earthquake", based on the catastrophic Bihar earthquake.



Directed by **ROOP K. SHOREY**

Music: **VINOD**

SHOREY PICTURES, KARDAR STUDIOS, PAREL, BOMBAY.

Starring:

MEENA

MOTILAL

KULDEEP

MAJNU

JOHAR

once while travelling from Calcutta Abboo (that is how his children lovingly call him) saw a beggar on the platform. The beggar made a strange sound with a flick of his fingers. The action interested Nawab so much that he called the beggar, gave him three rupees, and told him to repeat the movement again and again until Nawab himself could do it.

Yet another anecdote tells how, when Barua once told him to play the role of a drunken leader of a band of pickpockets, Nawab refused. But the same evening, as he was going home he saw a hooligan crowd drawn by a quarrel between two persons over some trifling matter. One of the fellows was a cunning, domineering and bullying type. He kept shouting: "Man Kasam Kharab Kar Dunge." This appealed to Nawab and aroused his curiosity so much that the same evening he went to a drinking den near Lona Talao in the hope of meeting some more such characters. There he saw mill-workers, addicts, pickpockets, drinking, quarrelling. Soon he became one with them... and the next morning he told Barua that he would play the role.

Nawab has learnt in the school of life the hard way, and has a strong conviction that no one can be a true artiste unless he has a profound and varied experience of life, and of the people around him. He is against all who ape the West, whether in writing, directing or acting. He believes that our own soil is so rich and pregnant with possibilities that we hardly need look to the West for inspira-

tion or imitation, apart from purely technical matters.

So proud is he of his profession that at a time when the status of a film actor was very often decried and scorned by moralists, religious fanatics and the bourgeoisie, Nawab filed a defamation case against an outrageous and vulgar Sethia who had dubbed him and all other artistes as ignorant *nachnewale*. Nawab retorted "We are not *nachnewale*, but your educators."

Artistes in every medium he admires. But to acting he gives the supreme place. "Our art is the finest, the noblest, the most suggestive, for it is the synthesis of all the arts," he says.

To-day Nawab is growing a bit bitter and disillusioned at seeing the gross commercialisation of films and the low standard of acting. "Money is the cause of this—this mad gold rush. It must stop, otherwise there won't be any artiste

left. We may have an abundance of *Hajams* but certainly not artistes," he said.

He still treasures the memory of his days in Calcutta when he worked for New Theatres, where he found real creative fulfilment. His favourite director is Devaki Bose, for whom he has a profound regard. "But Barua" he reveals, "is a true artiste." If only he had worked with single-minded devotion and sincerity of purpose, he would not have any equal today, he said with a sigh, as if mourning a premature death.

Born in 1897 at Lucknow, Nawab comes of a Kashmiri family. His early hobbies were outdoor sports, wrestling and volley ball etc. He is extremely sociable and very interesting to talk to. But he keeps away from big gatherings and noisy parties. He enjoys playing with his children when he is not busy on the studio floor.



Nawab in the title role and in one of the most powerful moments of that unforgettable screen masterpiece "Sapota" which, despite its round excellence, was the major flop of its year.

worth the paper on which they are written; for no producer acts upon them. Thus while all of them complain about the free-lancing and exorbitant fees demanded by stars, they have taken no step to put an end to the situation by resolving not to engage a star who is working in more than two pictures. On the contrary, they do not mind if he or she is working even in eight pictures. Result: the cost of production is steadily going up.

Then there is no planning. Even Shantaram and Mehboob have not been able to start their new pictures since March when "Andaz" and "Apna Desh" were released. Surely, the fact that both these producers have remained idle for five months is not a healthy sign. If this is the case with two such top-notch, sober and comparatively well organised producers, one can just imagine how other producers work. If ever statistics are compiled, it will be realised that the industry wastes lakhs of rupees every year because the production work is not conducted according to plan or schedule.



Usha Kumari in a scene from Prajapati's massive mythological in "Vivah", reported to be nearing completion.

Besides, there is so much personal rivalry and jealousy and politics rampant in every studio, that it is impossible to expect any producer or director not to be involved in some tangle or the other. At the moment of writing, we know that the personal affair of a film star has withheld the shooting of a half finished picture, and even if ultimately the star works, the quality of the picture will suffer while the cost has already gone up beyond the budgeted amount.

These are the internal problems facing the industry; though the biggest problem is finance, which is not easily available in the ordinary market. The rate of interest, commission and royalty which a producer has to pay is so enormous, that he can hardly make ends meet. Indeed, unless bank or finance co-operation is established to finance the production of films reasonable rates of interest, the industry on the whole will never thrive.

THE INDIFFERENT GOVT.!

In this respect the Government, which collects more than three

crores of rupees by way of entertainment tax alone, could be of great help to the industry. But the Government looks to the film industry only as source of revenue as is evident from the imposition of every conceivable form of tax on the industry.

It is true that the spokesmen of the Government have admitted the importance of the screen as a medium of entertainment and of education; it is also a fact that the Government itself has undertaken the production of 52 news-reels and 36 documentaries for the year. Even then, it cannot be gainsaid that the Government has been utterly indifferent to the needs of the industry. To the general demand for new theatres, the Government has replied with a ban on construction of new cinemas. Instead of liberalising the censorship, the Government has tightened it, banning not only innocent fun but even the depiction of the freedom struggle as is evident from the recent ban on a Bengalee film "42". This in a way compels the producers to resort to escapist and inconsequential films. Even the pretence of instituting a thorough inquiry into the condition of the film industry and appointing a central Censor Board remains to be fulfilled.

And as far as production of documentary and newsreels films are concerned, the present Film Division is committing the same mistakes of the old Information Films, though we must admit that the documentary films produced now are of much better standard. But even in this field, incompetence and red-tapism seem to be so rampant that one fears that the Film Division may suffer the same fate as that of its predecessors.

Any way, let us hope that the Film Division makes good progress in the ensuing year and that the Government fulfills its other promises as well.

RAY OF HOPE

Considering all these factors, it is really surprising that the Indian Film Industry could produce such hits as "Chandralekha," "Bari Bahen," "Grahasti," "Mela," and "Actress," and on the other hand such artistically significant films as "Andaz," "Apna Desh," "Chhota Bhai," "Swayam Siddha," "Hum-Bhi Insaan Hain," and "Pugree." And the most encouraging fact is that almost all artistically good pictures have also proved box-office hits. "Chhota Bhai" and "Swayam Siddha," released as "gap" pictures, have for instance proved major box-office attractions in Bombay; "Andaz" has created an all-time record for one theatre by collecting record income at Liberty. "Pugree" has been popular everywhere and "Apna Desh," too, has proved a jubilee hit and a box-office sensation all over the country. Only "Hum Bhi Insaan Hain," a sincere portrayal of delinquent children and their problems, has failed at the box-office.

"Chhota Bhai" and "Swayam Siddha" reveal the important fact that not formulas but popular novels of great human appeal are a sure guarantee of good pictures, provided of course these novels are faithfully presented and enacted on the screen. That way, "Chhota Bhai" is a real screen classic.

"Andaz" on the other hand, reveals that good technique, clever direction and superb acting can atone for a hackneyed story and transform it into a great motion picture. "Apna Desh" shows how a socially alive director like Shantaram can utilize himself for exposing the black market and other evils in post-freedom India; it emphasises the screen's power as a significant social commentator. And "Pugree," though borrowed from a foreign picture, is the most glowing example of clear and wholesome satire.

"Chandralekha," which will be better known for its box-office



Meena and Mitalal in another scene from Shorey's "Ek Thi Larki", on which that veteran film maker has staked everything. Filmmakers, if studio gossip is true, can look forward to a feast of music and comedy in "Ek Thi Larki".

records, is also a filmic achievement, as in lavishness, craftsmanship, and spectacle it puts Indian films on par with Hollywood.

It is pictures like these which give us hope and restore our confidence in the Indian film industry and its glorious future.

INDIVIDUAL CREDITS!

This resume cannot be complete without the enumeration of individual contributors of merit which deserve special mention. The list of significant pictures has already been given above.

Outstanding direction: Shantaram (*Apna Desh*), Mehboob (*Andaz*), Karthik Chatterji (*Chhota Bhai*).

Outstanding female performances: Ramola (*Hum Bhi Insaan Hain*), Molina (*Chhota Bhai*), Shanta Apte (*Swayam Siddha*), Nargis (*Andaz*), Kamini Kaushal (*Ziddi*), and Lalita Pawar (*Grahasti*).

Outstanding male performances: Dinkar (*Pugree*), Raj Kapoor and Dilip Kumar (*Andaz*), Nawab (*Ziddi*), Shikhar (*Chhota Bhai*), Dattu and Parasuram (*Apna Desh*).

Outstanding Photography: Farecon Irani (*Andaz*), Fali Mistri (*Mela*), Kamal Ghosh (*Chandralekha*).

Outstanding recording: Robin Chatterji (*Mela*), Kaushik (*Andaz*).

Outstanding stories: *Chhota Bhai*, *Swayam Siddha*, and *Ziddi*.

Outstanding dialogues: Balpat (*Swayam Siddha*), Aam Bard Puri (*Pugree*).

Outstanding popular lyrics: Rajinder Krishna (*Chup Chup Khule Ho*, *Zorur Kai Baat Hai*), Muzoon Sultana (*Meri Ladli Ri Bani Hai*).

Outstanding Music: Harshad-Bhaat Ram (*Bari Bahen*), Shad (*Mela* and *Dard* and a

A PROVOCATIVE NEW FEATURE

G U F T A G U

(THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS COLUMN DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE OPINION OF THE EDITORS)

By GUPCHUP

THERE has been a considerable amount of head and chin wagging since we last appeared over the sudden ripening of a romance in the film world which I was one of the few persons surprised to discover had been growing like an abscess over a period of two years at least. Romances are not rare in Screenland where people live in an atmosphere of titillated emotions which can be described as highly erotic. This being a decent journal, with no taste for paddling in gutters, we leave these romances, of which there is at least one a minute, severely alone on the principle that they concern nobody but the parties themselves, being a private matter best left alone. In the particular instance, which is the subject of my remarks right now, that principle applies no less than in others, and normally we should hold that the attachment, fascination, infatuation, call it what you like, is strictly the concern of nobody but the pair involved, and of interest to us and to our readers only as information concerning two extremely popular stars who have been together on the screen long enough to have become the favourite romantic team of filmgoers throughout the land.

Circumstances alter cases, runs the saying. They do in this particular case, sufficiently to invest the whole business with a particularly sordid air which cannot but disgust all right thinking persons. A deceived husband is no object of sympathy, and names of pity, occasionally of

contempt. An errant wife who deliberately pursues over months a course of deception calculated to mislead a fond adoring husband, and even the circles in which she moves with him, deserves and receives nothing but contempt and condemnation. Any lover who can be an acquiescent party in such a situation, and even connive at its continuance, is beneath contempt. Even so, the romance or liaison, to give it its proper name, remains a private matter into which the press and public have no business to pry.

We should have left it strictly alone, but for the fact that in many quarters, which should know much better, attempts are being made to invest the liaison with a particularly evil communal aspect, thus making worse what is bad enough in all conscience. Against such mischief-mongering all sensible persons must protest. In the normal course of nature, human beings will fall in love, marry and mate. It just happens to be an old human habit, and even film stars are subject to it, some even addicted to it. Love is peculiar in



D. Segal and Vera Maretskaya make a pitceous yet beautiful pair of lovers in "Nai Taleeni," the astonishingly brilliant Hindustani (subbed) version of a Russian picture telling the thrilling story of the last days of Tsardom and the first mad fury of the Revolution which brought Erudition to the great Russian Nation. Beautifully made, acted and produced, and "Indianised" with exquisite art and understanding, "Nai Taleeni" is at once an example and a warning to Indian producers, and to the Indian industry generally.

another respect, which is well expressed in the familiar proverb—Love is Blind. The meaning of that ancient saw is that there is no knowing where love will strike or whom. King and beggar, prince and peasant, the children of sworn enemies, enemies themselves, and white and black and brown, all in their time have leaped impossible gulfs of difference in the second that it takes for love to be born in human hearts. They have done it since time began. They will do it till time ends.

No barrier of race, religion, colour, caste and creed can ban or make impossible this fundamental and most primeval of man's instincts. Hindus and Muslims, Christians and pagans, Jews and infidels, even Nazis and Jews who are as the opposite poles, have loved and married, and while prejudices have roared protest, such alliances derived no special obloquy from the differences of creed, the recognition being general that love is not to be commanded or prohibited, but like the wind of Heaven it "bloweth wheresoever it listeth".

In this ancient land of ours, Hindu-Muslim romance is a few centuries old—older even than Baz Bahadur and his Brahmin maid. Here, before our eyes we have had examples of such attachments, but nobody has seen dark communal conspiracy in any of them as far as I remember. There were, for instance, the case of Geeta Nizami and Director Veda, the romance of Sohrab Modi and Beauty Queen Mehtab, the love of Shyam and Muntaz Qureshi, of Director Shorey and Glamour Girl Meena, of Devika and her Russian connoisseur of Beauty in all its forms. Nobody that I know ever thought of these alliances in any communal light. There was no reason whatever for anybody to think so any more than there is for anybody to think it in connection with the ruling cessation of the Bombay film world today. Heaven knows

there is trouble enough and strife in the air without people stirring up more.

Ran into Dalsukh Pancholi, former boss and founder of Lahore's famous Pancholi Art Pictures, the studio which hit the headlines and the jackpot with that delightful musical money spinner, "Khazanchi", which put at least one Bombay concern chronically rooted in the red back into the black and better side of its bank's ledger.

Dalsukh was rushing in, and I was rushing out of that great rococo pile in Ridge Road formerly known as "Il Palazzo", now Bombay's Automobile Club. He lived there, I gathered, and followed him up for a spot of *baat-chit*. The last time I had seen him was waving good-bye out of the window of a brand new car he was driving off from Bombay to Lahore at a helluva an hour of the earlier morning. We had spent the previous evening and most of the night at the very last party thrown by the very last German Consul at Bombay, the brilliant and dashing Count von Donhoff and his beautiful Countess at their palatial residence in Pedder Road. That was a party to end all parties even in those lavish pre-war days. The

guests ran into thousands, champagne flowed like water, waiters in battalions carried trays laden with food for gods—Caviare, real Strasburg foie gras, Scottish Salmon, and other fabulous delicacies the very look of which we have forgotten—and the glittering atmosphere of an embassy reception crackled in an air filled with polyglot conversation, the soft music of Strauss waltzes played on twinkling lawns, the flash of running fountains, the brave bold brilliance of levee dress, service uniforms and gorgeous women's gowns.

In the midst of it all, I was shattered to discover my friend Dalsukh, alight from dalliance with the Old Window, bawling to a startled waiter to "Bring the bill, boy!" The request astonished the fellow not a little. It *dam* near made me swallow my back teeth. Luckily nobody around was sober enough to note the strange request, and I toted Dalsukh off for another whiff of the Widow's fragrance in a remoter lawn. That was a long time ago. I didn't see Dalsukh again till I ran into him in the A. A. Club foyer. He looked the same, only greyer. Upstairs I found he has a wife, very charming, and a delightful son, very small and very tough.



Group taken at the midnight Mahurat (to commemorate the Birth of Freedom) on August 15, at Bombay Talkies' Studio in Malad, of Motwane Film Division's maiden full-length feature, which will record the thrilling story of India's long struggle for independence. Mrs. Lhavati Munshi performed the Mahurat, which was attended a distinguished gathering.

I gathered that Pancholi, who had made his pile in Lahore lost it all in the Partition nightmare and is now, like Talwar, Shorey and a few million others, faced with the task of building up again from the bottom. He had thought originally of making Delhi the venue of his new start, but finding it impossible, for reasons I don't know, plumped for Bombay for reasons I don't have to guess. He had no difficulty finding the requisite support, having old and quite excellent connections here, and has just launched on his first picture here, the first Pancholi production to be made in Bombay, "Meena Bazaar," the mahurat of which was held at Central Studios a week or two ago. With intentions of holding in one, he is lavishing everything he can muster on the film, for which he has assembled an all star cast headed by seven "Jubilee" favourites: Nargis, Shyam, Om Prakash, Gope, Kanchayalal, Sapru, and that smouldering bundle of charms, Kuldeep Kaur.

Welcomed warmly back home after their holiday in Europe and U. K. by Filmistan executives and numerous friends who made the run out to the aerodrome to meet them on landing from last Monday's Air-India International liner, Rai Bahadur Chuni Lall, founder and Managing Director of Filmistan Limited, and Mrs. Chuni Lall looked pictures of health and good spirits as they stepped off the ganaway and walked into the Customs shed for the inevitable baggage inspection.

Although he was on a holiday, which he had long needed and earned with extremely hard work over practically two decades of incessant struggle and triumph over depressing odds, Mr. Chuni Lall took time off in London not only to look around the industry, but even to canvass prospects of expanding his own concerns and the industry's market and field, and to

spread the message of the Indian screen a little further than he found it.

Remembering a question which is being perpetually asked of him here—I have asked it myself more than once—he told the Indian Journalists' Association in London, which held a reception in his honour, an interesting story.

"I'm often asked," he said, "why we don't send our pictures for exhibition abroad? The other day I made up my mind to exploit the British market for a beginning. I expect everybody realises that if they are to exploit foreign markets, Indian pictures will have to be different and specially made. Bearing the fact in mind and having fully considered the problem and its difficulties I decided to seek the co-operation of Sir Arthur J. Rank."

"Would you join me in producing an Indian picture for exhibition in Britain?" I asked him. His answer was prompt. "Certainly not," said Sir Arthur. "The reasons are obvious," he added. "Are you prepared to take the risk of pro-



Two great screen personalities meet after the Mahurat of Fazli Brothers' new production "Khubsurat." Picture shows Actor-Producer Yakub exchanging greetings with Director S. F. Husnain.

ducing a picture that can be acceptable to the British market?"

"My reply to Sir Arthur's question was that I would willingly spend two million rupees on the risk. But Sir Arthur thought it would require an expenditure of at least five million, if the film is to succeed."

"Indian films," Rai Bahadur thought, "could have a good market abroad, but much greater attention will have to be paid than is done at present to the subject matter of pictures, their treatment, language, direction and acting. I would gladly take any risk if I could get a man of the standing and calibre of Rank to go fifty-fifty with me. But you see how it is!"

Mr. Chuni Lall completely scouted the idea, propagated by many, that the technical standard of Indian pictures is below that of films from England and Hollywood. "In fact," he actually declared, "it is not so. If a comparison were made of the cream of Indian films with the best American pictures—and India gets the best American

films anyway—it would be found that the standard of Indian pictures is very high indeed."

One important point made by Rai Bahadur concerned the financing of films which he described as a "chancey" business. That, of course, is not the fault of producers and those connected with the actual work of production, but that of the unsympathetic attitude of the administration, which makes no effort whatever to assist the industry or encourage it, contenting itself with merely keeping a supervisory eye upon its activities and levying imposts upon those activities in every manner and degree possible. In Britain, on the other hand, he pointed out there was the Government-sponsored Film Finance Corporation, and in the U. S. A. banks readily advanced money for the making of motion pictures. In India, the makers of films had to depend upon private finance, and procured even that with difficulty and on conditions which not only strained enthusiasm to breaking point but not infrequently were positively degrading.

The Bombay film world is very considerably the poorer for the death last week of R. Sharma, veteran producer whose connection with the Indian motion picture industry goes back more than fifteen years. At forty-two, Mr. Sharma died a comparatively young man, and his passing is the more to be regretted in that he was not only one of the industry's most experienced personalities, but a man of great kindness of heart, and that rarest of human types, a man who knew the meaning of friendship which understands, gives and never demands.

Born in an obscure village of the Ambala District in East Punjab, he was educated in Patiala whither his parents migrated, and eventually joined the State service. But his ambitious spirit could not

rest content in such an atmosphere, and he resigned with the object of entering the field of film production to which he had long made up his mind.

In 1934 he founded Shakti Movietone in Bombay with the encouragement and active patronage of the Maharana of Jhalawar. In the ensuing three years he turned out four pictures, including "Azadi." In 1937 he moved over to Calcutta and founded the famous Film Corporation of India. He now embarked upon the biggest phase of his career, for the Film Corporation turned out to be one of the most important motion picture studios of India. One of its early hits was the celebrated film, "Chitralekha." A later and even more famous production of his, produced under his own banner, was "Bhakta Kabir," which was acclaimed throughout the country as a great promoter of communal harmony and even awarded a special prize of Rs. 5,000 by the Punjab Government on that account, besides being exempted by all other Provincial Governments from entertainment taxation.

I gather that he has made an even better picture than "Bhakta Kabir" in "Bhai Chara," which those who have seen it hold to be the best film ever made on the subject of communal harmony and unity in this country. Unfortunately, the picture, owing to the financial difficulties in which Mr. Sharma fell after making it, has never been released. Definitely, "Bhai Chara" is a film deserving the full support of Government in an even greater degree than did "Bhakta Kabir."

Among his last productions were "Tapasya" and "Warris Shah." The last was almost finished when Mr. Sharma fell victim to the disease which had long afflicted him, breathing his last on August 11. "Warris Shah" is based on the life of the great writer of the Punjab epic "Heer Ranjha," which is one of the most beautiful and impressive love poems in any language in the world. The remains of Mr. Sharma were taken to the Holy City of Nasik, and the last rites were performed on the banks of the Godavari as directed by him.



The brilliant Court Scene with Dewan Sharat as the Judge, in Shantaram's eloquent expose of corruption in national life, "Anand Desh," one of the major hits of 1949.

Outstanding events since our last appearance were the "Golden Jubilee" of "Grahasti" and the "Silver Jubilee" of "Chandralekha" (50th and 25th consecutive weeks of their respective runs, celebrated in each instance with more than the eclat usually associated with these "happy events."

The "Chandralekha" occasion, which preceded the other by a few days, was attended by a distinguished gathering of the elite of Bombay City, leading personalities of the local motion picture industry, critics and journalists, and the Mayor of Bombay, who presided. It was an assembly worthy of a super duper movie which cost more and earned more than any other half dozen films together in the industry's entire record from the beginning of movies in India. "Chandralekha," which is reported to have cost in the neighbourhood of twenty lakhs of rupees, is believed on the best authority to have grossed on both its Tamil and its Hindi versions as near as two hundred lakhs as makes no matter—which knocks every Indian record so far fairly cock-eyed.

Critics have varied in their estimate of this amazing hit, some competent and experienced judges holding to be a masterpiece of technique and entertainment conforming to the highest Hollywood standards of such productions, and others no less experienced decriing it as a hotch-potch of spectacle and melodrama with little to it beyond eye appeal. The proof of the pudding is in the eating, nevertheless, and there is no doubting whatever that in this picture Mr. S. S. Vasan cooked a very pretty dish for himself, which like the Magic Sack of Fortunatus in the fable, looks like keeping on producing the paise for a long time to come. And even by that cinema yardstick, the box office, which is the only gauge producers know as a sure about, "Chandralekha" is really the goods and even the

ber's knees and the cat's pajamas.

Paying a knowledgeable tribute to the picture and all concerned in its production, Mayor Patil, who has just returned from an intensive survey of the motion picture field (among a host of others) abroad, said he was "deeply impressed" by the highly entertaining value of "Chandralekha," congratulated Mr. S. S. Vasan on the success of his effort in making it, and expressed the hope that his future attempts would "delight international audiences" as much as this one had delighted national ones. He was glad, he added, to hear that the picture had been selected for exhibition at the forthcoming International Festival of Films in Europe.

In the course of a highly interesting address, Mr. Patil further told the gathering that the Government of India had been giving its very serious attention to the motion picture industry and the urgent need of improvement in its standards, a matter on which most people connected with the industry as well as outside it, he pointed out, appear to be agreed. Referring to the "phenomenal progress"



The "Silver Jubilee" of Gemini's Cross-pati hit, "Chandralekha," was celebrated with great eclat at the Royal Opera House last month. Bombay's Mayor, Mr. S. K. Patil, who presided, paid glowing tribute to the picture and all concerned in its production. Among the distinguished guests were Mr. Dabrabhai Patel and Mrs. Patel.

"GRAHASTI" GOLDEN JUBILEE GLIMPSSES.



Mr. B. D. Bharucha (left) presided at the Golden Jubilee celebration of "Grahasti" at the Lunington last month.



achieved by the film industry in U. S. A. and the wide field it enjoyed "practically throughout the world," Mr. Patil said that it was to be regretted that although "ours is the second largest film output in the world, we remain content with catering exclusively to the local market. We should endeavour to improve our studios to the level where they can produce pictures which will earn laurels in the international market."

Proceeding, Mr. Patel observed that the problem of "filling in the leisure time of a large population in any country is the administration's chief headache." Mechanisation produces leisure, and even in America he heard public men express anxiety over the problems that arise from this important fact. "If a man is forced to be idle in his free hours, with nothing useful or interesting to do," remarked Mr. Patil, "he is a potential danger to society."

"In India," said Mr. Patil, "this problem should agitate deeply the minds of our administrators, who must consider whether it is not the duty of the State to see to it that the leisure time of every man



Veteran Actress Lalita Pawar (above) topped the filmgoers' roll for the best feminine star performance, and Yakub (right) for the best male role in "Grahasti."



Sajeshana Chatterjee (top center) was very happy to have the second best award in filmgoers' poll. Mr. Muzumdar (top center) next to Yakub. Each awarded a Gold Medal.



and woman is utilised in a manner helpful to the State, the individual concerned and Society. What is America's problem today will definitely be India's tomorrow."

"When I realise," said Mr. Patil, "that the film industry can not only entertain but also instruct, I appreciate at once the obligation of Government to seek the aid of the industry in a well thought out plan to turn the idle hours of our vast population fruitfully to the well-being of the nation. It is only proper, therefore, that the Government of India should set up suitable machinery to examine all the aspects of the motion picture industry." Given the necessary co-operation, understanding and endeavour on both sides, he was sure that success and progress would be achieved in the degree and direction that was desired.

After Mr. Chari, Publicity Officer of Gemini Studios, had welcomed everybody on behalf of Mr. S. S. Vasan, and apologised for Mr. Vasan's absence, he pointed out that the main purpose of the gathering was to thank the public, which by its appreciation and support had made the run of the film possible. He then asked Mr. S. K. Patil to give away four elegant silver trophies to the exhibitors of "Chandralekha" at Bombay, Belgaum, Nagpur and Sholapur, on the conclusion of which ceremony, and after another speech or two, the function ended amid cheers.

"Grabasti," which in its category, purpose and appeal is unquestionably of a grade far superior to that of "Chandralekha," being a drama of domestic and social life with serious application to both in their ordinary expression, and therefore affecting directly the vast majority of our "teeming millions," celebrated its Golden Jubilee on July 31. Its superiority lies rather in the content and meaning of its message than in any of the tech-

nical qualities, in respect of all of which "Chandralekha" has the shining advantage. Despite a certain crudity of technique and presentation, however, the moral and dramatic merit of "Grabasti" place it high among the best films of this or any other year and the average level of life which it portrays invests it with a universality of appeal in a population like ours that has been the chief ingredient in its phenomenal success and its still continuing popularity more than a year after its release.

The Golden Jubilee celebration took place on the date mentioned above at the theatre where it is running, the Lamington. Its unique feature was the distribution of awards to actors and actresses chosen from the cast by a poll among the audience conducted over several weeks, a method which is much more in keeping with the principle and purpose of such awards than those adopted at similar conferments in the recent past.

It was cleverly done. At a special show of "Grabasti" held some weeks previously in aid of the Gujerat Famine Relief Fund under the presidency of the Premier of Bombay, Mr. B. G. Kher, voting papers were distributed among the audience carrying photographs of the four principal male and the four leading women actors in the cast of the picture, together with a request that each film-goer should mark his or her choices for the two best performances in each.

Mr. S. M. Yusuf, who directed the picture, explained to the audience on that day, and again at the Golden Jubilee show, that it was only proper that the public, which was the final arbiter, through the medium of the box-office, of a picture's success or failure, should have the right of awarding by its vote the palm, or as in this case the medal, for the best performance. The voting papers continued to be distributed daily

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"SHABNAM"

Spells Box Office!

Mukerjee Obsessed By "Chandralekha" Success.

FILMISTAN and box-office have become almost synonymous in film parlance. For the principal object of making films, so far as Filmistan is concerned, is not to produce a work of art but to create box-office hits by utilizing what is known as the Mukerjee formula.

This formula, which originated in "Bandhan" and paid good dividends until "Actress", has been re-orientated in "Shabnam"; and the cause for this re-orientation is, of course, the phenomenal record-breaking hit from the South! Gemini's "Chandralekha"! As a result we find in Filmistan's "Shabnam" a curious mixture of the Mukerjee-cum-"Chandralekha" formula! And however inartistic and jarring that mixture may appear, it seems to be having the desired result viz. box-office success.

The picture begins with Dilip Kumar rushing to an Army camp on the border of Burma asking for help. The story he tells the Camp Commander is the story of the picture. It begins in real Mukerjee style. We have Mubarak and Kamini, the latter disguised as his son, among the refugees on the trail to India. They meet Dilip who has an ample supply of food while both Mubarak and Kamini are starving.

The first boy-meets-girl situation is smart. And the sequences which follow between Kamini and Dilip are both hilarious and entertaining providing some delightful fun. The highlight of these

for several weeks, and each bore the signature and address of the voter together with the respective choices. At the end of every show the papers were collected and deposited in a sealed box, which was opened at the Golden Jubilee show in the presence of the Special Celebration Committee consisting of Messrs. D. Bharucha (President), M. B. Billimoria of the well-known distribution firm, J. B. H. Wadia, President of the Indian Motion Picture Society, Gajanan Jagirdar, Producer-director, and Jamnadas, Distributor of "Grabasti." The votes were counted in their presence and the result of this unique film-goers' ballot proved to be as follows:

Best male Actors: Yakub (79 votes), and Mirza Musharraf (32)

Best Women Stars: Lalita Pawar (51 votes) and Sulochana Chatterji (44).

They were each awarded a Gold Medal specially struck for the Golden Jubilee of the film and suitably inscribed.

The other members of the cast and individuals connected with the production of the picture were awarded special gold rings to commemorate, as Mr. Yusuf pointed out, a notable achievement in the success of which all had shared alike as members of one team.

Mr. Yusuf paid a glowing tribute in his Jubilee address to Mr. Prabhulal Dave, the author of the story of "Grabasti," Messrs. Wahid Qureshi, Hazrat Lucknowi and Shakil Badayuni, who between them were responsible for the dialogue, screen-play and lyrics, to all the technicians, stars and actors who had helped to make the picture, and to the public which had attested the picture with the final seal of its approval and support.

The happy function concluded with several glowing tributes in the same vein, and in particular to Mr. Yusuf who crowned with "Grabasti" a career of uniform and often brilliant success.



Puro, who puts over one of her finest roles in Filmistan's hit "Shabnam", now packing the Roxy, is responsible for some of the loveliest dancing in that picture.

not new; it has already been exploited by Shantaram in "Admi". Yet, it is so delightfully written, and so brilliantly rendered, with such verve and delicious drollerie that it is sheer delight to watch her. Similarly, the idea of the heroine in boy's guise is not at all new; yet it has been thoroughly exploited to create a lot of excellent, innocent fun. The revelation of her real identity and the romantic fun of the friendship between Dilip and Kamini, followed by yet another entertaining song number, keeps up the audience interest at a high pitch.

Then comes a dull patch. The hero leaves in search of a carriage.



Discovery of the Year Geetabali in a tender scene in C.R. Productions' "Nishana", directed by the famous Wajahat Mirza.

And with him goes the pep and zest of the story itself. Here it seems as if one story has ended and another story in which a mysterious Prince, a villain out of a fairy tale, and a gipsy dancer play important roles. The hero instead of doing his job becomes a gipsy dancer himself. The heroine, instead of waiting for the hero, meets the Prince and agrees to stay with him as a royal guest. And from here onwards the Mukerjee formula gives way to "Chandralekha". In fact, that is the only justification for the dances, the Prince and his eighteenth century schemes to win the hand of Kamini and clear the

path to achievement of that desire by getting rid of her lover through different designs. Once he almost succeeds in his purpose by getting the lover (as he believes) as well as the father of the girl killed. But then the heroine herself loses her memory, and the villain is forced to hatch a new scheme to win her love.

Of course, according to the rule of the scenario, the hero is saved and naturally by the gipsy dancer who loves him and who is even prepared to die for him, which eventually she does at the opportune moment in the climax. The heroine gets back her memory in a couple of instalments, provided again by two song-and-dance numbers which help to remind her of her past. And the lover, who ultimately succeeds in securing the help of the Indian Army, goes after the villain who runs off with the heroine through a secret passage. In the final chase the hero on horse-back pursues at break-neck speed the villain who is fleeing in a stage-coach in the manner of a Hollywood Western thriller. The coach falls down near a cliff. Daggers, fists and a pistol are exploited in the last duel between the hero and the villain with the latter falling appropriately in a ditch of swamp water and drowning so that Kamini and Dilip can live happily ever after.

If this brief enumeration of the screenplay of "Shabnam" appears confused and illogical, the fault lies not with the reviewer but with the picture itself, which is noteworthy for its most incredible and implausible situations, the like of which are seen only in cheap thrillers and fantasies of the Hollywood or Indian screen. And, in fact, if one were to enumerate the faults and shortcomings in this film from the standpoint of art

and realism there would be no end to them. It would be proper to say that "Shabnam" has no pretence to art, and no semblance of realism in it.

Entertaining? In a way, it does entertain. Crowded with dances, songs and all kinds of gags and melodrama, the picture does provide some fun. Personally, this reviewer found the first three or four reels of the picture very amusing, and the latter part a rather dull copy of "Chandralekha". Had Mukerjee stuck to his own formula perhaps he would succeed in making "Shabnam" truly great entertainment. As it is, it seems to be just satisfying as entertainment. Even among the song-and-dance numbers, the first three numbers of Kamini are the best. Both Paro and Chhoboo fail to improve in the long-drawn-out, elaborate but crude dance routines. The very idea of depicting Paro's legs in dances seems preposterous. And whatever other critics may say, I could appreciate neither the dance nor the acting of Paro.

I wish, like the heroine of "Chandralekha", Kamini had been given more opportunity to sing, dance and entertain throughout the film. As it is, throughout the second half she is made to sit and cry and bore herself as well as the audience.

Dilip is good in the beginning, but why try to make another Ashok Kumar of "Shikari" out of him! That effort was unsuccessful. Jeevan acted in the old style, and poor Mubarak dies too early to leave any impression on the audience. Sachin Dev Burman's music is good, but there is not one song in the picture which will be



Geetabali in Mukh Raj Dasi's new Nishana production, "Nishana", scheduled for early release at Bombay.

sung in the streets.

Bibhutl Mitra's direction is competent, and he seems to have followed the Mukerjee style with success. His taking of the chasing and fighting scenes is, however, amateurish; and his presentation of dances rather crude. With better discretion the dance numbers could have been excellent. He has received just adequate support from

his technicians who are competent without being brilliant. Incidentally, we must warn Mukerjee of not thinking in terms of "Chandralekha" unless he can give the production values of that standard to his picture.

All said, "Shabnam" is the Mukerjee formula plus "Chandralekha" minus the latter's spectacular production.



SADA BAHAR PRODUCTIONS

PRESENT

★
SUDHA RAO

ANAND TIWARI

QAMAR

SHANTA KUNWAR

BE DARD

With

ABOUBAKAR • SACHAN GOSH JALWRITER

B. GOPAL • AMINABAI AND H. MAJNOO

Produced by: Directed by:

BADAR B.N. CHOWHAN

Story & Dialogue: Songs by:

ISMAT JAWID B.A. HONS BADAR & JAWID

Contact

Music:

RAMPARSHAD

SADA BAHAR PRODUCTIONS FILM CENTER, 68, TARDEO RD. BOMBAY 7.

"DADA" is Enterprising And Entertaining

MOTION pictures, like fashions, move in cycles, and once again the Indian films seem to be repeating the cycle of the thirties when action thrillers were popular, as is evident from the popularity of Stunt King Bhagwan on the one hand and the craze for "Chandralekha" and its imitations like "Shabnam". But even more than these pictures Omar Khayyam's "Dada" recalls to mind the pictures of the thirties like "Jagirdar" and "Capt. Kirtikumar" produced by Sagar.

Indeed, those who have seen old Sagar films will find familiar black coats and long tails and the mystery atmosphere in "Dada", made by people who are themselves products of "Sagar" in the old style, with of course new trappings and devices to embellish its entertainment value. But what makes "Dada" really interesting as a motion picture is the enterprising spirit which is evident in the conception of the story and its technical presentation by Director Harish.

Though in the common slang prevalent in Bombay "Dada" is the term applied to an arch-criminal, the "Dada" shown in the picture is a very good man. He is illiterate and uncouth, he always talks with his fist and seldom utilizes his brain. Yet, he does not steal, and if he uses violence and disguises, it is for the good of others. In other words he is friend of the poor and needy, and an enemy of oppression and crooks—an Indian Robin Hood!

"Dada" is the story of such a man. It begins on the day when

his mother left her husband and took him as a child to a friend of hers and died. Why did she leave her husband, and why her friend never restored her son to his father are some of the awkward questions which in an Indian scenario should never be asked. If you take this for granted, it becomes easier to follow the story, and to enjoy it as well.

Now this Dada gets tough with

a crook, saves one of his gambling victims, and also the girl who dances for him in "Carnival". The same crook again crosses his path when he becomes interested in the girl his foster brother loves, and not only succeeds in ruining his marriage prospects by procuring a ready-made bride and child for him, but gets him framed in a murder case as the murderer. The same crook gets our Dada, also



Prem Adib is impressive as Ram in this scene from his mythological "Ram Vivah".

behind the bars. And for a moment it seems as if Evil has triumphed over Virtue!

Then Dada escapes from prison, his sweetheart secures damning evidence against the crook with the use of a dictaphone in the form of a record, and after a thrilling chase of that record, which provides two to three thousand feet of pure cinema, the climax ends in the triumph of Virtue in the end.

In the beginning Dada's antics are funny, though the story moves rather leisurely. In the second half, it assumes the style of a crime thriller, which is maintained with remarkable pace and action almost until the end. As a result, the beginning is dull and routine; but the second half is quite exciting and entertaining. The screenplay is on the whole rather loose, and has not been able to exploit some of the original ideas in the story fully.

That is unfortunately the drawback of the direction too. Thus,

for instance, the idea of the dream-dance indicating Begum Para's love for Sheikh Mukhtar is brilliant. But the execution of the dance itself leaves much to be desired. Yet it must be said to the credit of Harish that those chase scenes of record are very smartly taken; in fact, they are better than even similar scenes in "Shabnam". It is only in these scenes that the direction is not crude, though even in the crudeness, there is a conscientious effort to give unusual angles and dynamic shots. With more experience, Harish is bound to develop into a first-rate craftsman. The enterprising spirit of his taking, evident in many scenes, is most conspicuous in the smart taking of Cuckoo's dance in a fairy-boat.

Music is also served in plenty. But personally I did not care much for any song. The tunes are stale and the singing itself rather poor. Among the artists, Shaikh Mukhtar and Mukri give the most lovable performances. Munawar



Looks like Masood, handsome hero of "Grahasti," the year's "Golden Jubilee" hit, is a donee at the hands of hatchet-wielding firebrand Nigar in this scene from Aina Pictures' "Dil Ki Batti."



Pocket Venus Kamini Kaushal in a scene from Jagat Pictures' "Shair," in which she shares stellar honours with Soraiya, Queen of the Indian Screen.

and Shyam have very minor roles, and even they leave no impression. Begum Para looks captivating but just refuses to act. Murad and Ansari look like despicable villains. But the former shouts too much and is too theatrical. Maya Bannerji seems to have lost all fire and flame.

The production is enterprising, and so in the photography, by Jagirdar. All said, "Dada" is good entertainment of the "B" class.

"Kaneez"

Appeases Muslim Orthodoxy

Munawar Sultana's Sincere Portrayal

EVER since motion pictures began to talk in India, one of the commonest and perhaps most popular themes of our so-called social pictures has been the glorification of the orthodox wife. Right from the first social talking picture, "Daulat Ka Nasha", the Indian screen has been presenting the orthodox woman who worships her husband like a god, who is always prepared to suffer and weep silently if her husband goes astray and even if he beats her, who upholds the good old Sita tradition, who in short behaves like a mute slave clinging to the orthodox notions of duty and loyalty and *izzat*. Hundreds of screen stories have been written in her glorification; and as quite a few of them have been successful, producers continue to make more and more pictures on this age-old theme. The latest example is Caravan Pictures' "Kaneez".

"Kaneez" is the Muslim version of the ideal Hindu wife; and but for costume and language there is hardly any difference between this Muslim ideal and the Hindu ideal. As a matter of fact, the resemblance between the two is so striking that if only the characters had Hindu names and obsecrated *Bhagwan* instead of *Khuda*, the story could pass for a Hindu social. That is hardly surprising, since whatever our communalist fanatics may say, the social problems and pattern of life among both Hindus and Muslims is essentially the same.

"Kaneez" has a familiar story, about a Muslim girl who was be-

trothed in childhood by her mother to the manager's son. The manager, played a dirty game, got his boss into a mental hospital, and became rich himself. Years passed. The girl and her mother lived in Bombay in poverty, while the manager rolled in wealth in Delhi, and his son Akhtar squandered as much of his father's money as he could. Now, by chance, Akhtar comes to Bombay and lives as Sabira's neighbour. Sabira is the girl. They fall in love, in the fashion of "Shikayat" and are eventually married. Sabira's mother dies. The story now takes a dramatic turn.

Akhtar wants his wife Sabira to be modern and move about with him in Society. Sabira refuses to do so. The clash of outlook, which is natural, ruins their marriage. But Akhtar falls a prey to the temptation of society butterfly Miss Darling, and walks out on his wife, who quietly goes to her father-in-law's house and lives there as a maidservant. Akhtar returns home with Darling and both of them try to fool his father and ultimately they send him to a mental asylum where he meets his former boss. Darling now tries to fool Akhtar and is caught. Akhtar repents and Sabira triumphs.

This stereotyped and rather stale story is told with more than average competence, and is considerably enlivened by Nazim Lucknawi's crisp dialogue, Urmilla's lively characterisation, and Ghulam Haider's tuneful music. As a result, the picture is assured

of a good run all over India and Pakistan.

For a beginner, the direction by Krishna Kumar M. A. is surprisingly good. And as the picture has been produced at Bombay Talkies, technically it is better than average. Shyam, who has been given rather poor roles so far, has a better role this time, and he does it well, though his characterisation is rather confused. Kuldip as Darling makes a convincing vamp; though it passes one's comprehension how the Censors' Board, which includes four educated women, allowed such defamation of modern society. Or do they also subscribe to the orthodox ideal? Munawar Sultana is always at her best in a tragic part; in the absence of Shamim and Suvarn-lata, she is the only star in India today suited to play such serious roles with distinction. Urmilla stages a real come-back in the lively role of Hamida-appa.

As has been said above, the music is tuneful and the chorus song *Duniyamen Amiron-ko Aaram Nahi Milti* is a hit. It is a treat to hear Zrenat's voice once again. Yet this is not the type of music one expects from a Maestro like Ghulam Haider. The wording is also not happy. With better songs, as in "Shama", this picture would have been a jubilee hit. As it is, it will just do good business.

In the end, may one request Krishna Kumar and Alta Allah, not to pander to orthodoxy just for box-office reasons in future, and to make progressive picture

ROUND and ABOUT THE STUDIOS

BACKGROUND TO THE ADDS

AINA PICTURES: A film which promises to be a gold-mine to exhibitors and distributors is Aina Pictures' "Dil ki Basti." Directed by Wahid Qureshi, under the talented guidance of S. N. Yusuf, (whose "Grahasti" recently celebrated its "Golden Jubilee" in Bombay). It features Nigar Sultana, Masood, Anwar, Tiwari and Lalita Pawar, all "Jubilee" stars. "Dil ki Basti" now awaits early release in Bombay and all over India.

SADIQ PRODUCTIONS: Their first picture, "Sabak," will go on the sets in the first week of September 1949. Featuring Munawar Sultana, Jagirdar, Wasti and Om Prakash, this picture, under the talented direction of one of our most progressive directors, M. Sadiq, should turn out a memorable hit. A. R. Qureshi, well-known for his popular tunes, is providing the music.

FAZLI BROTHERS LTD: Making a bold departure from the hackneyed run of plot and story with which we are only too familiar on the screen to-day, veteran Producer-Director, S. F. Husnain, claims to have broken new ground in his "Duniya," shortly to be released throughout India. He has done it before, and he should do

Lovely newcomer Vijayalakshmi clearly has all that it takes from head to foot to get where she wants to go on the Indian screen. You'll be meeting her in Prakash's "Shahi ki Raat," directed by Yaswanth Potlkar.

it again. Coming from a director with not a single flop in all his record "Duniya" has raised considerable expectations.

Top-notches lead its handpicked cast in Suraiya, Yakub, Karan Dewan, Nigar and Janki Dass. The music is by C. Ramchandra.

As busy as he has ever been in all his life Mr. Husain is already working on his next production, "Khubsurat," starring Suraiya, Yakub and Janki Dass. The musical score here again will be the work of C. Ramchandra.

MOONLIGHT PICTURES: This famous distributing concern is now forging ahead with the production of its main picture, "Paheli Mulaqat," featuring Nigar Sultana, Rehana and Gope. Go-getter Anant Thakur, who gave us such "Jubilee" hits as "Pugree" and "Paras" is leaving no stone unturned to make "Paheli Mulaqat" a great success. The famous melody-makers Husnail and Bhagatram, are responsible for its music.

The talented magnate behind this concern is young Shyam Sunder Jatindra Nath, who has had excellent experience in the field of motion picture production.

TALWAR PRODUCTIONS: Producer-Director R. C. Talwar has gone a long way with the shooting of his first picture under his own banner in Bombay, "Khitlari" starring two of India's topmost artistes, Suraiya and Ashok Kumar. Hansraj Bahel, the famous maestro is in charge of the music. From all indications, "Khitlari" should be a superb entertainer.

VARUNA FILMS LTD: The five-wires behind this concern are those two talented personalities, G. N. Thakur and D. N. Kapur, whose interests hitherto have lain in other fields of the industry.

They are making their debut as producers with "Roomal," an enchanting film, starring Nargis, Jairaj, Rehman, Indupal and Jeevan. Ram Chander Thakur, whose name spells box-office, is directing the picture.

ALL INDIA PICTURES: A formidable array of top-line screen personalities has been mustered for All India Pictures' colossal super, "Paras." Kamini Kaushal, Sulochana Chatterji, and Shashikala are co-starred with veterans Rehman, Gope and K. N. Singh. The picture is nearing completion at the Kardar Studios under the experienced aegis of P. N. Arora. Jubilee-hit maker Anant Thakur, who gave us "Pugree," is directing and the ever popular Ghulam Mohamed is in charge of the music.

HALDIA-NANDA PRODUCTIONS: Their "Singaar" definitely wears the "his" hall-mark. Produced by R. B. Haldia and directed by that genial wizard of the magaphone, J. K. Nanda, it stars such top-notchers as Suraiya, Jairaj and Madhubala.

With such a galaxy of talent this dynamic film has all the ingredients of a scintillating roadshow, including several songs specially composed by Khurshid Anwar, the only music director who is different in filmdom to-day.

With "Singaar" in the can, the stage is being set for Haldia-Nanda's next picture "Mehfil."

MADHUBAN MOVIE MAKERS: The Indian film world is definitely richer by the addition of Mr. Prashad, the talented young producer, whose first picture "Suraj Mukhi," is now nearing completion at Bombay. Starring such famous personalities as Rehana, Shyam and Durga Khote and directed by the celebrated K. Amarnath, "Suraj Mukhi" has all that it takes to be a win. Those who have seen the rushes opine it's going to be an outstanding movie. The musical score was the work of that famous team, Husnail and Bhagatram.

PREM ADIB PICTURES: Prem Adib, who dazzled the movie world by recreating Rama on the screen every time he played that role, has now gone one better by producing and directing his own "Ram Vivah."

It stars the same old team, with Prem Adib as Rama, Shobhana Samarth as Sita, and Uma Kant as Lakshman, all of whom were responsible for such glorious hits as "Ram Rajya" and "Bharat Milap." Artist Rama Desai has provided the lavish settings for this film.

Gorgeous Munawar Sultana looks more beautiful than ever in Prakash's "Sawan Badho," and is reported to have bettered all her best hitherto in that picture, which should be on the screen in Bombay almost any time now.



KALAKAR CHITRA: "Preet ka Geet, produced by that enterprising film magnate, Omkarnath Parshant, which is nearing completion at the Central Studios, will start, if studio reports mean anything, a new vogue in screen comedies, partly on account of the dynamic story from the pen of the great Hindi writer and poet, the famous Hari Krishna Premi, and partly because of the novel filmic presentation by Director Girish Trivedi.

It depicts artistically the dramatic tale of a woman's sacrifice for the sake of the man she loved. Sulochana Chatterji, Prem Adib, Cuckoo and Sashikala are some of our popular idols, starred in this film.

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PRAKASH PICTURES: It appears that the emblem of Prakash Pictures will be covered with new glory with the release of its three new pictures, namely, "Rakhi," "Sawan Bhadho" and "Shadi ki Raat." Vijay Bhatt, the veteran film magnate, who was solely responsible for completing these three social classics, under the direction of Shanti Kumar Dave, Ravin Dave and S. Patkar, is now busy with his next production, directed by himself.

"**RAKHI**" features Kamini Kaushal, Karan Dewan, Gope and Ullhas. "Sawan Bhado" which has already had a successful run in Delhi and other North Indian stations, has a cast headed by Muna-



Karan Divan and Kuldeep Kaur make an attractive couple in Prakash's Shanti Kumar directed vehicle, "Rakhi."

war Sultana, Ramsingh, Indra, Om Prakash and Janki Dass.

The third picture, "Shadi ki Raat," is in the editing room getting the final touches. It is a roaring comedy, starring Geeta Bali, Rehman, Aroon, Vijay Laxmi and Janki Dass.

*** * * * ***
SUNNY ART PRODUCTIONS: Sunny as director and Naushad as the music director have already established their names as hit-makers. After taking a flying start with "Natak" and following it with "Meena," they have now rolled up their sleeves for what they declare

is going to be the screen's biggest roadshow ever, namely "Babul."

*** * * * ***
SUPER TEAM FEDERAL: In the wake of "Meri Kabani," comes yet another titanic film from these distinguished producers. Titled "Pyar ki Manzil," it is a musical extravaganza with a host of eye-filling dances. Keki Mistri, the veteran Cameraman-Director, is busy at Central Studios, giving the finishing touches to this entertainment par excellence. Sharaf Af the live-wire behind this concern, has already sold some of its territories at an enviable price, depend-



Snapshots taken by "Sound's" roving cameraman at the Mahurat, early last month, of Dalakh Pancholi's first Bombay production, "Meena Bazar." Recognise anybody?



Madhubala and Balam handle the romance in the Wajahat Mirza directed C. R. Productions' forthcoming attraction "Nishana."

ing mostly on its lulling tunes.

*** * * * ***
ASPI PRODUCTIONS: Madhubala, Yakub and Kaniyalal, head the staggering cast of Aspi Productions' first independent picture, "Sipahiya," now awaiting release. Aspi, the well-known veteran, whose name spells box-office, wielded the megaphone.

The musical score of this film is in the capable hands of C. Ramchandra. It is a foregone conclusion that "Sipahiya" will create a stir when released.



Snapshots taken at the well-attended cocktail party thrown last month by Director Sadiq to congratulate popular star Shyam and his lovely bride Mumtaz Qureshi on their marriage.

Bharat Bhushan, Yashodra Katju, Bhudo Advani, Shekhar, and the great Yakub. Mr. Devindra Goel, the young and gifted director is behind this venture. That his future is bright, is evident from the fact that most of the home territories have already been sold at enviable prices. It is learnt that Madan Mohan of Filmistan Ltd. has composed some quite delightful music for it.

*** * * * ***
SHOREY PICTURES: The moving spirit behind this famed company of hit-makers, is the celebrated director, Koop K. Shorey. Lovely and glamorous queen, Meena, popular hero Motilal, are co-starred. The highlights of this picture are the wonderful scenes Mr. Shorey recently took in Kashmir, when he went there to entertain the Jawans....

*** * * * ***
FILMLAND LTD: Filmland Limited's maiden offering, "The Last Message," is having a simultaneous release in three theatres at Delhi. The picture has been acclaimed by the cream of society, leaders and the press as the "best motion picture produced in India."

*** * * * ***
MEHBOOB PRODUCTIONS: Mehboob, the stormy petrel of the Indian screen, whose "Andaz" is breaking all-time records at Bombay and Calcutta, is back with yet another gripping drama, so far untitled. Mehboob fans at Delhi are awaiting keenly the release of "Andaz" in their favourite theatres.

FILMISTAN LTD : S. Mukerjee, the maker of directors, who is the live-wire behind the great concern, is now busy with various productions at Filmistan Ltd., which is brimming with activity through the twenty-four hours. His "Shabnam" is breaking box-office records wherever it has been released. This is the umpteenth picture produced by S. Mukerjee, which may celebrate the usual jubilees.

Rai Bahadur Chuni Lall, incidentally, arrived last week with his wife after a well earned rest in Europe and a visit to U. K. where he visited the leading studios there.

KHANJAR PRODUCTIONS Munshi Khanjar, the well-known artiste and writer, has now plunged into the production field, thus adding yet another experienced hand to our filmdom. He has named his maiden attempt "Chhupe Rustam." It stars and is directed by himself.

A. M. Bhanji Productions: "Ret Mahal" is the name of the maiden

picture of A. M. Bhanji Productions, starring Khurshid Jr., Altaf, Nihal, Dossani etc. With the musical score in the capable hands of Shyam Babu Pathak, it is no wonder that some of its territorial rights have already been sold at a fabulous price.

KISHORE KALA MANDIR : Mr. Nanabhai K. Singh has floated a new concern named Kishore Kala Mandir. They will start production in September this year. The paper work is already being done. Fans will eagerly await the brisk activities of this new venture, and wish them all success in their undertaking.

ROOPAM CHITRA'S mythological picture, "Nar Narayan" is more than half complete in its shooting. The picture, one gathers, promises to be a very inspiring one, replete with trick photography and everything that makes such pictures. The picture features Sahu Modak, Sucha Rao and David.

Produced and directed by Raja



Kamini Kaushal and Dev Anand revive old memories as the romantic in M. & T. Films' "Namoona."

Yagnik. All those names are familiar to movie goers. Watch and await their rare achievement.

MEHTA PICTURES : Their latest release, Mehboob's brilliant Bombay hit "Andaz", has created quite a stir in the whole of Calcutta. Released simultaneously at the Orient, Calcutta's stream-lined air-conditioned luxury theatre and the Majestic, another of the city's popular cinemas, "Andaz" is going well-enough to indicate high morality among our box office records.

Mr. S. B. Mehta, the youngest of our distributors, deserves congratulations on his able showmanship.

MADHUKAR PICTURES : Madhukar Pictures' "Bazar" has proved a box-office hit all over India, have booked one floor at Mohan Studios exclusively and chalked out a plan for three pictures.

Director Amarnath who was ill has been successfully operated for kidney trouble and will be again able to devote all his time to the work of production.

C. R. PRODUCTIONS : Director Vajahat Mirza has made considerable progress with the shooting of C. R. Productions' "Nishana" at M & T Studios. The picture boasts of a super-star-cast headed by Ashok Kumar, Madhubala, Geeta Bali, Yakub, Kanhaiyalal and Nawab. Nakshab, who is the producer of the film, has written the lyrics and Khurshid Anwar is giving the music.

NIGARISTAN : Producer Mulraj Bhakri has completed Nigaristan's maiden film "Bansaria" starring Geeta Bali and is directed by Ram Narayan Dave.

The rights of the picture have been sold off at already good price and now Mr. Bhakri is working on the script of his next production entitled "Chori Chori".

STUDIO NEWS FROM CALCUTTA

FROM "SOUND" SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

SOLAR FILMS' "Iran ki ek Raat" and "Do Baten," both in Hindi, are responsible for a rare scramble among distributors, who are bidding heavily for them.

"Iran ki ek Raat" is P. C. Barua's first mythological costume picture, and studio report is that he has excelled himself in it. The glittering cast is headed by Jamuna, Chandravati and Narang.

"Do Baten" is a comedy, and here again studio talk indicates a hit. This picture is directed by H. S. Rawail and stars Romola, Maya Bannerji and Sunder.

BHARAT ART PRODUCTIONS : With a cast headed by such famous stars as Jamuna, Geetashree, Mirza Musharraf, Biman Bannerjee and Bipin Gupta, and the sly direction of Kalyan Gupta, Bharat Art Productions' maiden picture "Mala" is expected to prove a real box-office smash.

"Mala" is now ready for release, and C. P. Singh Dev, who was in charge of production, is doing his utmost to secure its early release at a grand all India premiere.

FILM TRUST OF INDIA : Their "August 1942" is now complete, and should carry the message of the most important date in all our two thousand year old history through the length and breadth of our great country, making it ring with stirring echoes of the challenge which was voiced in Gandhiji's memorable behest to the nation: "Karange yah Marengel!"

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of our Beloved Bapu piercing through the veil of Death to remind us of his teaching and of our obligation to live up to it.

Sri Hemin Gupta by making this picture has done the nation and the country a great service.

The distinguished cast is led by some of Bengal's most brilliant and popular artistes, Manju Day, Suruchi Sengupta, Lila Ghosh, Amita Sarkar, Bikash Roy, Pradip Batabyal, known as the Romeo of the Bengal screen, Syamal Datta, Bankim Ghosh, Sambla Mitter and Kali Sarkar.

C. K. Mehta and Manu Ladia, who handled the camera and sound respectively, are assuredly among

India's best. Biren Nag was responsible for the settings.

KAMIA CHITRA LTD : This new film production unit was started by Kamia Kotnis a year ago in Poona. They produced their first mythological picture "Ahilya" at Prabhat Studios, Poona.

Produced by Kamia Kotnis on a lavish scale, it is directed by Vasant Painter from a screenplay by Bal Govind Shrivastav. The cast includes, Kamia Kotnis, Sapru, Ullhas, Leela Pande, Balakram, Cuckoo, Saroj Borkar and Shashi Kapur. Navinder Shama has written the lyrics and G. Bhatkar of "Sohag Raat" has given the music.



Geetabali strikes a rare note of innocence in this charming scene with a lamb in C. R. Productions' "Nishana".

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