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ROGER MANVELL

FILM

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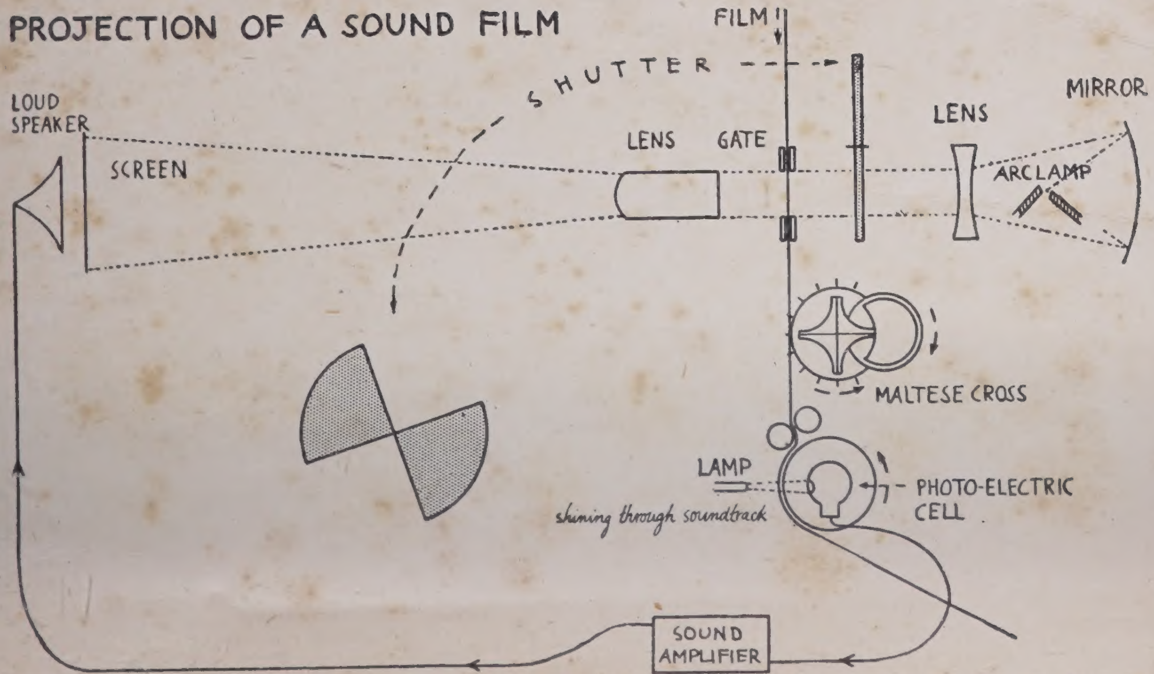
PROJECTION OF A SOUND FILM
FILM
SHUTTER
MIRROR
LOUD SPEAKER
LENS
LENS
GATE
SCREEN
ARC LAMP
MALTESE CROSS
LAMP
PHOTO-ELECTRIC CELL
shining through soundtrack
SOUND AMPLIFIER

A
B
Dec. 1946

FILM

by ROGER MANVELL

(A 126)

PELICAN BOOKS

FILM

by
ROGER MANVELL

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TO MY

FATHER AND MOTHER

(WHO TAUGHT ME TO GO TO THE PICTURES)

TO

JOHN GRIERSON

(WHO TAUGHT ME TO LOOK AT THEM)

TO MY

STUDENTS AND FRIENDS

(WHO TAUGHT ME TO DISCUSS THEM)

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GUIDE TO REVISED EDITION

This short book does not set out to be any of the following:

A history of the cinema.
A history of the careers of directors and actors.
A complete guide to montage.
A tour of the studios and an account of film-producing.
An introduction to film-making, scenario-writing, or how to make money out of pictures.

But none the less, if you are interested in any of these things you should read it because it attempts to deal with the following:

Why we go to the pictures and what we get for the money.
Why films are like they are.
Why they influence the way we live.
Why and how they get themselves censored.
Why the film can be called a new art form.
Why the film can be called a new industrial racket.
What they have done with the film in Russia and France.
Why America has cornered pictures.
Why Britain has arrived in world cinema.
Why Britain is the source of great documentary.
What the film has achieved in the past forty years.
Where do we and the film go from here?

The original edition of this book was planned in 1942, written in 1943, published in 1944. It is reissued now in 1946 with the following chief additions to the text:

A new Introductory Survey.
A revised chapter on Documentary.
A revised chapter on Documentary and Fiction.
A new chapter on the British Feature Film.
A new chapter on the Economic Aspect of the Film Industry.
A new chapter on the Cinema in France.
A new chapter on Film Industries Elsewhere.
A new and greatly enlarged List of Directors and some of their chief films.
A hundred new illustrations replacing half of the original stills.

In addition, many sections carry considerable revisions of the text in order to bring the book more up-to-date. It still does not pretend to be more than a survey of the affairs of cinema to promote discussion. Film scholarship, in the academic sense, barely yet exists, though Lewis Jacobs' work " The Rise of the American Film " has set a high critical standard. Film statistics and dates are often difficult to ascertain and contradictory when quoted in different sources. I am grateful to many people for indicating errors to fact which appeared in the first edition: I hope any further errors will be pointed out to me for subsequent revised editions. The most important and just criticism of the earlier edition was my neglect of the economic aspects of the film industry which play now an increasingly important part in the development of the cinema as a whole. I hope the figures published now and the problems discussed both in the new and the revised chapters will meet some of the points raised by reviewers.

The book in its revised form is to be published in America and translated for publication in several countries of Europe and South America. I hope its account of the British film, both documentary and feature, will do something to make our productions more widely known overseas.

ROGER MANVELL.

London, January, 1946.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

No excuse is made for the heavy quotation in this book: it is part of its purpose to let as large a number of film-makers and critics as possible raise their own dust. But the debt must gladly be acknowledged to all writers and publishers whose works have been most freely drawn on in the text.

The following publishers have generously granted permission for quotation to be made from books published by them:

Peter Davies Ltd. (*Footnotes to the Film,* edited by Charles Davy).

Faber & Faber Ltd. (*Documentary* by Paul Rotha, *Film* by R. Arnheim and *Film Music* by Kurt London).

George Newnes Ltd. (*Film Technique* by V. I. Pudovkin).

Jonathan Cape Ltd. (*Film till Now* by Paul Rotha and *Garbo and the Night Watchmen,* edited by Alistair Cooke).

Laurence & Wishart Ltd. (*U.S.S.R. speaks for Itself: Culture and Leisure*).

Allen & Unwin Ltd. (*History of the Film* by Bardèche and Brasillach).

Permission has also been given to quote from the following periodicals:

Documentary News Letter (Film Centre).

Sight and Sound (British Film Institute).

Kinematograph Weekly (Kinematograph Publications Ltd.).

This book also contains one hundred and ninety-two stills, about half of which are new in this revised edition. These are all acknowledged to their individual production units. But particular acknowledgment should be paid to Herbert Marshall of the Soviet Film Agency for his courtesy in lending many of the stills from the Russian films, to William Farr, of the Central Film Library, for help in collecting stills from war-time documentary, to H. H. Wollenberg and R. Friedmann for the loan of individual stills, to Norman Wilson of the Edinburgh Film Guild, and to Ernest Lindgren and Miss N. Traylen of the National Film Library for the loan of many stills from their fine collections.

It is impossible to write a book of this kind without incurring the debts of influence to other writers. This debt must be acknowledged to V. I. Pudovkin, Lewis Jacobs, Rudolf Arnheim, Paul Rotha and John Grierson in particular. There is also the debt of influence through discussion, and this I can only acknowledge generally to many friends in the film industry working both in the feature and documentary branches, and to many colleagues among the film critics. Only when writing a book on the film does one fully realise what a collective and what a contemporary movement film production is. That is why it is so full of life and so torn by controversy.

I am deeply grateful to Miss M. Goldin, formerly of the Information Department of the British Film Institute, for her constant assistance in the supply of film data and for help in the proof-reading of this book. I would also like to thank my wife for her help throughout the preparation of the text and illustrations.

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TRIBUTES IN PASSING

THE moving picture, although a growth of only a few years, is boundless in its scope and endless in its possibilities. . . . The task I'm trying to achieve is above all to make you see.—D. W. GRIFFITH.

What sort of films do the public wish to see? . . . Type does not matter. . . . Take any subject under the sun, treat it right, and the public will like it.—EXHIBITOR IN BRITISH TRADE JOURNAL.

The cinema, like the detective story, makes it possible to experience without danger all the excitement, passion and desirousness which must be repressed in a humanitarian ordering of life.—C. G. JUNG.

It is the more dangerous to muddle along in an industry in which the difference between showmanship and racketeering is often slight and may pass in the confusion unnoticed.—F. D. KLINGENDER AND STUART LEGG.

That was the ending I wanted for *Blackmail*, but I had to change it for commercial reasons.—ALFRED HITCHCOCK.

Cinema needs continued repression of controversy in order to stave off disaster.—LORD TYRRELL, CHAIRMAN OF THE BRITISH BOARD OF FILM CENSORS.

The cinema in the hands of the Soviet power represents a great and priceless force.—JOSEPH STALIN.

Between the natural event and its appearance upon the screen there is a marked difference. It is exactly this difference that makes the film an art.—V. I. PUDOVKIN.

Let the cinema attempt the dramatisation of the living scene and the living theme, springing from the living present instead of from the synthetic fabrication of the studio. . . . We believe that the cinema's capacity for getting around, for observing and selecting from life itself, can be exploited in a new and vital art form.—JOHN GRIERSON.

The film is the most vigorous art form today.—CONSTANT LAMBERT.

Slanted for the nabe market, it should hit the hinterland jackpot and do yeoman service elsewhere on the lower shelf. An exposé of arson methods, the story includes standard measure of romance, rugged rough-stuff and righteousness triumphant.—AMERICAN TRADE REVIEW.

Introduction
SURVEY FOR A STUDY

THIS year is the half-centenary of the cinema. In fifty years the mechanical contrivances of Marey, Reynaud, the Lumières, Friese-Greene, Paul and Edison have developed into cameras and projectors capable of entertaining the world, whose population is estimated to buy 235,000,000 seats a week. Mr. Cecil Hepworth, a pioneer of British cinema, spent £7:13:9 in 1905 making a neat seven-minute film called *Rescued by Rover* which was an outstanding success. Today Mr. Arthur Rank has spent over a million and a quarter pounds on a film version of Bernard Shaw's *Cæsar and Cleopatra*, and the normal cost of any major production in British, American or French studios is £100,000 to £150,000.

The statistics of cinema attendance and the balance-sheets of production and box-office receipts are a fascinating subject for discussion. No one believes that the work of Mr. Fred MacMurray is worth £104,700 a year, or that the technicolor musical we saw last week deserved to cost a million dollars. But the fact remains that the public demand in terms of expenditure on film-going justified both Mr. MacMurray's salary and the million-dollar investment in the picture.

A half-centenary is as good a time as any to take stock. It is all the more a suitable occasion since 1946 is the first year in recent times which is clear of world war issues, and several important film industries, especially the British, French and American, are taking stock of their position on their own account. They are determined that the cinema-habit which alone constitutes sound box-office should be maintained and extended. They have therefore to estimate public tastes and needs in entertainment during the age of atomic peace upon which we have now entered.

The cinema as an entertainment medium now outclasses any other in the scope of its provision. Cinema attendance in Britain is fifty times greater than is attendance at the professional

theatre.[1] The cinema offers certain unique features to its patrons which are of great significance socially and artistically. We can make a list of them something like this:

The cinema offers the services of its greatest artists and technicians to the remotest audience with a suitably equipped theatre or with a hall to accommodate a road-show.

The cinema offers a common level of performance to all audiences. All that is required is adequate equipment and efficient operation.

The cinema is capable of offering a wide range of entertainment facilities on the same premises, with change of programme as often as patronage demands.

The cinema is capable of offering entertainment on an international scale in the form of films from foreign sources which can be titled or given new sound tracks in the home tongue.

The cinema with its newsreels, documentaries and record films can open the narrow windows of a remote locality until they overlook all the countries of the world, with its peoples, its events and its discoveries.

This is no mean service for a few pounds or dollars a year. All the cinema asks is the widest possible patronage at prices which few people regard as excessive.

The problem for everybody lies in the scale of the undertaking. Civilisation is partly the story of unusual things becoming usual, or new experience becoming common experience. The service of the arts to humanity lies in the discovery and evaluation of human experience and emotion. In the simpler life of the past the arts served the community directly and were produced by the community. With the development of wealth and patronage the professional artist learned to serve the specialised needs of specialised people, and the work of great artists has often become the exclusive property of those who can afford to buy it or have the leisure to learn its appreciation.

[1] The best sources of statistics on Hollywood are to be found in Leo Calvin Rosten's *Hollywood* (Harcourt Brace, 1941): those on the British industry in the report *Tendencies to Monopoly in the British Film Industry* (Stationery Office, 1944). A wide range of facts will be available also in the forthcoming Arts Enquiry film survey to be published during 1946.

With the development of the complex material interests which take up the bulk of our attention to-day, the finer points and values of living are lost in the crash of mechanised transport, in looking after cars and radio sets, or in watching over our complicated possessions. Art has become the preoccupation of the few who have salvaged sufficient culture out of the academic machine of school-leaving examinations, matriculations and degrees to have any feeling left for anything, beyond casual amusement and sport, which does not offer a fee, a bonus or a spot of graft.

The cinema was invented out of the machine-world, and was at once the subject of patent-wars, and the money-struggling of the modern world. Only a few people in those early days after 1900 realised its possibilities, and set about their development. The greatest of these people was D. W. Griffith. He spent $110,000 on *Birth of a Nation* and $1,900,000 on *Intolerance*. But the money was necessary to provide the personnel and the raw materials out of which he made his cinematic vision come true for his world audiences.

The film industry shows the clash between economic and artistic issues in one of the most openly-contested struggles of the commercial world. The producers who finance films say:

> We cannot make films with the necessary standard of technical excellence in acting, setting and recording without spending ten times as much as it costs to produce a major stage production, and five hundred times as much as it costs to publish a well-produced book.
>
> We cannot retrieve our money and get in addition the necessary profit which we and our shareholders demand for our imperilled capital without the widest public support. We want a public of a 100 million people for our film. We have to make our film so that 100 million people will pay to see it. We take our public as it is, and give it what past box-office records have shown it was prepared to buy. We are not philanthropists: we are business men. We sell entertainment in the biggest market, that is all.
>
> In order to make films pay we make use of modern business methods. We monopolise the services of the stars whom our business acumen and our publicity methods have

turned into assets with a scarcity value. There is only one Bette Davis or James Mason. Their abilities as represented in our screen stories are unique. Our contracts with them are framed accordingly. It is the business of ambitious film stars to assist us to make themselves unique. The modern world is more interested in personalities than in stories, in clothes and luxury than in art. We make our films accordingly, and we give untold value for the money any individual member of the public pays for our type of entertainment.

If you want an " art " cinema, it is up to you to finance it yourself and build your own cinemas and your own public. But we shall take all legitimate business steps to prevent you building your cinemas near ours (and ours are everywhere) and to prevent you getting sufficient public from our cinemas into yours. In any case, we make " art " films ourselves, and we know just about how much our public is prepared to take in that line. We advise you to keep out, or if we think you are good enough we will contract you into our own studios to work for us: there you will learn the difficult process of keeping public taste on a dead level which can be successfully forecast and exploited.

On the other hand the directors, technicians and artistes who make the films for the producers say:

Most of us went into pictures originally because we were excited by the idea of having something to do with films. They are so much in the public eye. To be a success in films is to be a big success with big money, while it lasts.

Some of us went into pictures because films are the most important medium of our time. It is a twentieth-century art, an art almost everyone loves. Its possibilities have begun to be demonstrated by men like Griffith, Chaplin, Pudovkin, Eisenstein, Lubitsch, Lang, Renoir, Vigo, Rotha, Ford, Welles and Capra. We in Britain have at last established a fine and exciting new type of cinema during the War, and we have created what is perhaps the finest documentary tradition in the world. We have gone with excited anticipation at night to see the best American and French films after long days in the studios. We

reckon to talk more shop in our leisure time than any other artists and technicians. We know we are working in a medium where the latest film may contain the germs of some new technique, some new means to hold and move our audiences.

Some of us are embittered in our fight for recognition for our schemes and ideas. A large number of us have settled down to make good money better by turning out the routine job which always pays until it suddenly doesn't. But then there's always another routine job to take its place. Some of us are still waiting for a break. There is always the gamble that they will try out that new idea of ours, that new device in the next picture.

A few of us have reached a sufficient level of responsibility that new ideas are accepted from us with respect. Our films are watched for: we have a huge public, but we serve also the few among that public who recognise our capabilities and our sensitiveness to the art of the film. The power to express ourselves in film is peculiarly satisfying: it is of all the arts the widest in range. It can call the architect, the painter and the musician to its aid. It can remake the world in its own image. We are the poets of a new art, the poets who combine sight and sound into a new poetry which belongs to our time and to our society.

But there are other voices too: those of the distributors who rent the films, the exhibitors who show them, the critics who write about them and the public who pays to see them. Of these the smallest voice of all is the last, although in Britain there are little short of 20 million regular film-goers and in America little short of 60 million. They buy in Britain some 30 million seats each week, and in America some 100 million. But they seldom speak, and the box-office receipts remain their single recorded vote. This huge silent army pays and endures, for it cannot know if it will not like a film until after it has bought it, or discussed it with someone who has already paid to find out. To alter the circus routine of habitual film-going with an almost unvocal mass public is extremely difficult. For the cinema is now so much a part of social life itself that men, women and children will go with little thought about the chances of excep-

tional enjoyment. Films are like meals: occasionally you get a good one: but you must go on eating regularly just the same.

That is why mass-entertainment like mass-feeding is a modern industry. It is far easier and quicker to see a story visually than to read it. Public Library statistics show that only a fraction of the population uses reading as a subsidiary experience to living, though there is a large market for sensational pulp literature and for the cheaper Sunday press. But this represents glance-reading for those whom a too-curtailed education conducted along unfortunate lines has made culturally-under-privileged, and so too easily satisfied with rosy dreams of sex and crime compiled by hacks to literary formulæ. The film was born into a world already prepared to receive it in these terms, and it took the popular dream-market by a storm from which the film itself has never been able to recover. The miracle lies in the number of beautiful and brilliant films which have been made for sale in such an impossible market, made by men with sufficient faith to convince the financial powers they were worth a try-out. For now the elder generation of Hollywood showmen is passing, the film financiers and executive producers are becoming somewhat more aware of the social responsibilities of their medium, and the need to compete with each other for prestige as well as for money. Experiment within limits is therefore encouraged since out of experiments like *Citizen Kane* there may be long-term results of commercial usefulness. New thoughts and styles, provided they are not *too* new, keep the market alive and attractive.

This, however, is not the end of the story. By no means all films are produced from the commercial factory only interested in profit. After the first World War the German government subsidised the German film industry and founded a national school of cinema which was an important element in the development of the art. It is represented by the early work of Fritz Lang. In 1919 the Soviet film industry was nationalised, and the study and development of film technique subsidised. The results are represented by the work of all the great Soviet directors up to the present day. In Britain there has been over fifteen years of continuous work in documentary film, almost entirely independent of commercial production and exhibition.

In the smaller industries of countries like Sweden and Czecho-

slovakia and in occasional productions of Belgium, Holland and Switzerland new types of cinema have emerged, closely linked with the national life of the producers. Although made for commercial exhibition, these films are often so much part of national artistic expression that they escape the stigmata of the box-office. They link up with what I have called the prestige pictures of the commercial producers of Hollywood, and of those unusual producers and artists in America who are able to get by with films made in a highly individualised style which are also successful with the public. Chaplin, Lubitsch, Disney, Capra, Dieterle, Ford, the Marx Brothers, Sturges, Milestone, Wellman and Wilder belong to this category of successful men who are also artists of cinema.

Similarly in France. The peculiarly independent structure of the French film industry allows a freer rein there to experiment and individuality. In no other country with a commercialised cinema could Jean Vigo's *Zéro de Conduite* have been financed and produced. It was in France that a school of cinema developed in the fifteen years before the war which led the world for sensitiveness of characterisation and poetry of theme and treatment. It is represented by the work of Vigo, Carné, Clair, Pagnol, Duvivier, Jean Renoir, Benoit-Lévy and Feyder. It was France, too, that produced the early avant-garde movement, the most extreme of the experimental schools of film-makers apart from the work of the more advanced Russian directors. The sound film is too expensive a medium to encourage the lone worker of the type represented by Bartosch: the output of the avant-garde tended therefore to be for the most part during the silent period of cinema.

There is also the more recent British school of cinema inspired by the War and by the vision of pioneer producers and directors. These men had fought before 1939 for a British film industry of integrity in the face of the overwhelming competition of Hollywood, and the despicable productions of entrepreneurs made to meet the legal Quota obligations of British exhibitors. The British film industry before the War at the highest peak of its production only produced a fifth of the programme needs of British cinema, and a bare tenth of that fifth was worth playing. During the War British producers have been able to provide less than a sixth of British programme needs, but the product

of their studios has reached such a remarkable artistic standard in so many films that it is obvious there has been a renaissance in the cinema of Britain and that we have founded a national school which can take its place in film history. Similarly British documentary, after ten years of regular non-commercial production on a high level before the War, has since been developed under official sponsorship until it has become a recognised part of the public information and educational services. When the post-war economic problems of the industry are solved, and the production rate is expanded without loss of standards, British film should become a permanent artistic school in the development of world cinema.

It is this work, and what it stands for collectively as an indication of future developments as well as a record of achievement in the past, that has made the cinema exciting. It revealed a new international art, easy to export and import, to share and enjoy. Because of its basis of visual narrative its essential spirit is less easily lost on foreign screens than is that of translated drama on foreign stages. It is a medium capable of extremes of realism and of fantasy, and it has claimed its audiences in every developed country of the world. If its public is largely without self-expression because of its size, those film-critics who watch with excited anticipation for the sequence which will reveal the new artist, or consolidate the reputation of the old, try to represent the best in that public to the limit of their ability. Though the bulk of the hundreds of films they have to see each year leave them washed-up or wild, they watch the innumerable bad and mediocre films faithfully on the look-out for the occasional good one which will bring their sense of human and artistic values into play.

The last voice therefore belongs to the critics. It joins that of the artists and technicians. It says:

> We are on your side. If you make the film your way and not the box-office way, we will commend you. We want to make your way the box-office way too. Chaplin and Disney have done this, why not you? But if you sell out we shall condemn you, unless we ourselves have sold out first.
>
> We do not ask for a continuous stream of masterpieces. That is unnatural to the evolution of any art. We ask for

honest craftsmanship with honest entertainment values. We ask for honest stories which do not lie their way to a foregone conclusion. We want the musical, the detective story and the romance to be honest in their own right. We do not want all films to be highbrow, but we do want the rare artist when he emerges to be allowed to make the rare film his way.

We ask for theatres on a world scale where the rarer films will find their natural audiences, and in so doing their own box-office. We recognise that films are expensive even when economically made. We recognise but do not exaggerate the place of the box-office. But so long as the masterpiece has to please a public come only to see the successor to last-week's musical, it will not please them. It has been proved in cities like London that the specialised theatres have a large public. If there were enough specialised theatres organised internationally the masterpieces would pay for themselves. We know there is a sufficient public internationally to support them.

We ask you to raise the standards of the ordinary film-goer not as philanthropists but as artists. A public taste maintained on a dead level of consumption is the dead taste of a dead public. In the long-run it is a waning public, ready to turn to the next phenomenon of entertainment in an age of quick and phenomenal discoveries. We ask you, because like you we love the cinema, to keep it alive and new by developing, however gradually, the taste of your difficult and conservative public towards finer emotional discrimination and more spiritually exciting demands. The routine dope, the standard measure of romance, crime, sex and sadism, leads to ever slower public reaction. Entertainment, we feel, should reinvigorate and recreate its customers. We look for the pictures which serve such recreation.

Part One

THE FILM AS A NEW ART FORM

1. INTRODUCTION: THE PECULIARITIES OF THE FINE ARTS GENERALLY

EVERYONE has continual contact during his life with the variety of experience known as art. This experience ranges from the craft level found in the design and execution of the practical things of life—utility articles, furniture and clothes—to the more imaginative, because less tangible, level required for the enjoyment of music, painting, sculpture and literature. In the fine arts human creativeness is no longer concerned with producing an object which will be required for use anyhow, whether it be beautiful or not, but with providing a stimulus for the satisfaction of human emotion in its various levels of manifestation. The majority of human beings, since they are culturally under-privileged, are satisfied if their emotions are roused easily and volcanically by the more simple emotional reflexes—by dance music, by the easily identified references of cinema-organ sentimentalities, by the picture with a story or easily assimilated moral, and by the simple violent plots of the cheap magazine or commercial novel.

The culturally privileged demand a more complicated satisfaction. They require, because they are educated to assimilate it, the æsthetic aspect of the arts, the highly complex form behind the Shakespearean play and the Shakespearean verse, the beauty of composition in the Greek vase or statue, the carefully balanced æsthetic and psychological values of Renaissance portraiture, and the investigations into the associative values of language in T. S. Eliot and James Joyce.

The old and established arts, whether they be crafts or fine arts, have evolved in the course of time a tradition which governs their various forms and the legitimate and illegitimate use of their various mediums—words, paint and canvas, wood and stone, the variety of musical sounds. The long and elaborate history of these arts is the story of the young artists in revolt against the tradition established by their elders and predecessors,

from which rebellion further tradition is developed to add to that already practised.

The success of an artist depends largely on his facility in the medium he has chosen. This is partly native to him, partly acquired by practice and experiment. It also depends largely on whether he has sufficient valuable human experience in him which demands expression, and so forces him to undertake the labour of practice and experiment in his medium in order that he can convey this experience satisfactorily to his fellows. To use another language of criticism, he must be not only inspired but also in technique a master of his art.

Tradition, which has much to be said against it when it overwhelms the new vitality of a growing artist, has this advantage, that it gives dignity to the creator and guidance in his first attempts to pursue his art. So long as he is not subjugated by it, he may largely succeed through its example.

To the person who can discern the work of a good artist, a great part of the satisfaction is derived from "the sense of difficulty overcome." Enterprising human beings like to set themselves problems and achieve the solution with the minimum of time and effort: the less enterprising enjoy watching the others. This is as true of a crowd at a football match as of a professor enjoying a poem by Horace. The difference lies only in the quality of human skill and emotion involved.

All works of art, therefore, are successful because of, not in spite of, the limitations their form imposes on them. A painter must achieve vitality and depth through the colour and composition of his picture, which is none the less two-dimensional and static; the composer must communicate a sense of complex human experience, without the assistance of words or pictures, by the encompassed dynamic of sound; the poet must solve an enigma of experience within the sparse framework of a sonnet. A dramatist must achieve his purpose on the bare boards of a stage within the time an audience will pay to sit his drama out. The film director must achieve his aim by means of a succession of flat though mobile pictures photographed on celluloid and joined together in a long sequence. In all these arts the sense of triumph lies not merely in the humanity of the subject or the story, but also in the skill with which the artist moves freely within his self-imposed limits.

2. THE PECULIARITIES OF THE FILM IN PARTICULAR

The film reached its maturity in about the same time as it takes some human beings, that is, twenty years. The motion picture was a sideshow for fairs in 1900, but by 1920, despite the upheaval caused by the 1914 War, the habit of cinema-going had spread sufficiently for all cities and most small towns to have their continually growing number of cinemas. Some six years earlier D. W. Griffith had greatly added to the prestige of the film by making *Birth of a Nation* and *Intolerance.* These films can only be seen now sympathetically by an audience specially devoted to cinema. Their greatness would be overlooked by an unselected audience which would merely be embarrassed by the crudity of the emotions, situation and much, though not all, of the acting. Griffith's early films are like the plays of the period preceding Shakespeare: they revealed every so often the great artistic potentialities of a medium which before had been merely crude and primitive. The Babylonian episode and parts of the modern story in *Intolerance* belong to the classic repertoire of the student of film art.

Cinema, being mute, had to make its appeal visually. There was as yet no place for subtlety, for innuendo, for discussion before action. Emotions had to be obvious, and the situations in which the characters were involved had to be clear-cut and usually violent. The acting, based on mime and gesture, had to convey, by the exaggerated use of the face and body, the reaction of the characters to their situations. Small wonder, therefore, that educated people left the cinema to their maid-servants, as the country squire still does today.

Almost from the start, however, the cinema has meant good money for those who learnt how to exploit it. From the beginnings of its history to the present day, the initial cost of film making has been heavy. Outlay on plant as well as on executive, technical and acting staff runs high for a feature film, but none the less the returns are good, since once the film is completed these returns are locked up in a few thousand feet of negative. A film which is capable of an infinite number of reproductions in positive prints at low cost can then be shown by a comparatively small staff to a succession of large audiences wherever the commercial set-up on the exhibitors' side of the trade allows. The money pours back, and the most inflated

salaries in the whole of industry are received at the production end of the film trade, if only by a few people.

In its earlier days, therefore, the cinema was almost entirely in the hands of men whose sense of financial gain controlled their discussions at the conference table. Neglected by that section of society which could have brought other values to bear in the making of films, the earlier American cinema stormed the public leisure of two continents and aimed at the lower levels of quick emotional satisfaction by a succession of thousands of films dealing with violence, feud, murder, veiled adultery and virtue rewarded with a girl for prize. Exhibitions of wealth and vulgarity were to be had for less than a shilling, and substitutes for sexual indulgence could be obtained by an hour spent in watching the bathing belles and sirens of the silent screen.

This spread of easy satisfaction through the debased practice of the arts was equally true elsewhere—in literature and music, aided by the cheap press, gramophone and radio.

In spite of all this, the film, because it has a unique appeal to the quick-thinking technical mind of our industrialised twentieth-century society, absorbed into its factories men and women who became technicians, executives and actors, and who were not satisfied with the crass emotionalism of the normal film. These people, artists by inclination though not always aware of it, have come gradually to influence the standards of commercial production. They have gained sufficient prestige as directors and actors to influence the watchful financial powers. Intelligent experiment and a more finely balanced emotion have informed many films made in recent years. To encourage this there has been the precedent of the distinction won by the historical and ideological film in the U.S.S.R., the artistic success of the German silent cinema, and the more recent achievement of pre-war French and the British feature film during and since the War.

For the film, in spite of its origin in the studio-factory, is as capable as poetry and letters of achieving beauty and distinction; there is no aspect of human emotion which the sound film cannot present, and its qualities are equally well adapted to wit and humour. But unlike the novel which is written by one man or the picture which is painted in seclusion, the film is the

result of conferences and staff-work in which it might be thought that the sensitive artist would become lost among a welter of executives. But this is not so. The twentieth-century artist of the film—the director—is a man who combines sensitiveness with leadership, who can convey to his cameramen, his electricians, his scenic designers and builders, his costumiers and his property-men, the spirit of the film as a whole and the sequence on which they are working in particular. The film is a co-operative art, but, as in all creative work, a single mind with a single purpose must dominate the whole. The names on the credit titles are the names of those who have served under the leadership of the director to create the unified though composite achievement of the film.

Behind every large-scale film there lies, therefore, the financial conference, the staff-work for camera, lighting, sets, costumes, make-up and finally cutting, together with the discussions of producer, director, scenarist, cameraman, editor and actors. Collectively they stand or fall. Many good films have been vitiated because the best interests of the theme and story were not served, or because the director himself was indifferent to them. Many good films have been created because their best interests managed to survive the board-room and the director was loyal to his own artistic conscience.

3. ESSENTIALS OF FILM ART: FIRST PRINCIPLES

It is best to start with a description of the film from the purely mechanical standpoint. The sound film consists of a series of photographs printed on a celluloid strip 35 mm. wide, and photographed by the motion camera at twenty-four pictures a second. The film is similarly projected at twenty-four pictures a second by the film-projecting apparatus. The sound is supplied from a band running down the side of the pictorial series on the celluloid. This is called the sound-track, and registers the vibration of sound in terms of light.

The 35 mm. width of celluloid is known as the standard gauge, and is used by all cinemas. There are various substandard gauges, normally 16, 9·5 and 8 mm. Sound can be obtained on all the gauges, but the most popular and satisfactory substandard gauge for sound film is 16 mm.

Film is measured in reels, 1000 feet (35 mm. standard),

400 feet (16 mm. substandard) and 300 feet (9·5 mm. substandard). The playing time of a reel of any gauge is about ten minutes.

From the spectator's point of view the essential medium is a moving picture, still more often black and white than coloured, with accompanying reproduced sound. It is important that the picture is flat or two-dimensional. It is also important that it is viewed with the body of the theatre in darkness, so that, from a visual point of view, the spectator's attention is not distracted from the screen. A good many painters, whose work is exhibited among the distractions of a picture gallery, would give a great deal for so concentrated a setting. This brilliantly lit picture in an otherwise darkened hall exercises a distinct hypnosis upon the audience. Lovers may explore private interests, but their eyes at any rate are seldom distracted from the show.

It was previously stated that one of the principles of the successful practice of art is the artist's skill in exploiting the limitations of his medium as distinct from the three-dimensional, all-talking, all-smelling, all-tasting, all-feeling chaos which is the inartistic affair called the experience of life. It is wrong to try to make art too life-like: it becomes released from its limitations, and so loses its sense of form and proportion. No one expects a picture to be without a boundary or frame: but life itself has neither boundary nor frame. No one should want a good two-dimensional picture to be three-dimensional: we can get that effect far better by keeping our two eyes open together in contemplation of the same object. The best pictures, in common with the worst, have all had an enclosing edge to them; they have always been flat and two-dimensional. The artist therefore has to decide where to impose the edge of his picture (a difficult decision); he has to decide its size, and the scale of reduction or expansion from life-size of the people and objects he portrays. The sum-total of these, and certain other decisions affecting the lay-out and colour of the whole work, can be called the picture's composition.

So far the film, except that the picture is projected on to the screen instead of being directly applied to it, shares the artistic limitations of a painting. The film has a frame, in that it has always to fit into the rectangle of the screen: it is

two-dimensional, so that it cannot affect the spectator three-dimensionally like his view of the room in which he is sitting. Composition is all-important: everything photographed becomes a two-dimensional pattern.

Look at the room in which you are sitting with one eye closed. After a moment open the closed eye and the room will spring into three-dimensional perspective. What you were looking at with one eye closed was a flat two-dimensional picture little better than a photograph from the point of view of judging how to move about in it.

The first principles of film art are therefore those belonging to the two-dimensional picture within a boundary or frame. The duty of the film artist is to exploit these principles for artistic effect. Director and cameraman do this by choosing the most effective part of the scene to be photographed and excluding the less effective parts by banishing them outside the artificial boundary of the frame. Obvious examples are the close-up of a face where the rest of the body is excluded: only the face matters. In the normal close-up the background is put out of focus and becomes a blur: again only the face matters. Lights are carefully placed so that the contours of the face are brought out by the use of high-light and shadow: for this picture the face matters more than ever, so much more that an elaborate lighting system unknown in real life is carefully prepared for the photograph. If the face does not most effectively reveal the emotion of the person in the story, the hand or foot may. The close-up can then exclude the irrelevant face and concentrate on the significant hand or foot.

A good director tells his film story from the most telling series of selected viewpoints. The good art director assists him by building a set which, when photographed in two dimensions, will form a striking two-dimensional pattern in keeping with the atmosphere of the action in the foreground. The use of shadows, of simple, bold structural designs, of soft lights and shades—the girl dancing in the dusty, empty Regency house in *St. Martin's Lane,* the hard black and white of the palace in *The Private Life of Henry VIII,* or Hitchcock's dramatic use of pronounced backgrounds like the windmill in *Foreign Correspondent* and the Statue of Liberty in *Saboteur.* The remarkable sets and lighting in Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible* emphasise the

claustrophobic sense of terror pervading a place where so many factions seemed housed in one building with its Muscovite halls, rooms, corridors, steps and low stooping entrances. Even in films where the settings are the ordinary backgrounds of every-day existence (as in Billy Wilder's *The Lost Weekend* or William Wellman's *The Ox-bow Incident*) they can become, by compositional arrangement and the emphatic use of shadows designed by imaginative lighting, strangely significant and influential in the creation of atmosphere. So too can the sudden use of distorted perspective. The two-dimensional steeply sloping photographs looking up at a person or building from below can, when suddenly presented to an audience, give a powerful sense of shock which assists the sense of climax.

Not all directors exploit this visual power of the film in the way that the great directors of silent films in Germany and Russia used to do. Many, in their hurried search for realism, are content with the uninteresting, and fill the picture with irrelevant details which rival life itself. But the principle of good art always has been the principle of significant selection, and to clutter up a picture, already severely limited to the rectangle, with the transitory and unnecessary is like packing all the knick-knacks from the mantelpiece into a week-end case.

A study of still photographs exhibited in the better photographic exhibitions will reveal the importance of all aspects of composition in black-and-white photography. The art has reached a high level, and the technician places at the artist's disposal a variety of devices for improving on nature. It is the director's duty to know these devices and to develop their capabilities with appropriate imagination.

The film shares with the still picture the values of two-dimensional composition, but it progresses beyond it by making that composition mobile. The film moves: the design moves: the lighting varies as the objects and persons move. The girl coming down the huge staircase, the boat passing over the moonlit sea, the barge gliding through the mist, the wheat waving diversely against the black and white of a cloudy sky—all these things move within the frame of the picture. The composition is therefore mobile. And although the film is closer to real life than the still picture because it moves, it none the less shares the limitations of the still picture because the

movement takes place within the two-dimensional frame. The hand creeps *diagonally* across the frame to switch off the light, the girl falls *diagonally* across the framed-in patch of grass, the ship sails across the frame at a different *angle* from the path of the moonlight, the sun's rays fall across the wall at an *angle* to the table where the man bends into its light. All this movement inspires composition, but it is a mobile and progressive composition, often not complete until the movement in the shot is finished. The pleasure of watching a well-shot film can be greatly increased by sharing this delight in mobile composition with a director and cameraman who are capable of creating it.

Furthermore, the structure of the film leads to another stage in mobile composition. The film is made up of a succession of photographic shots, each of which though mobile in itself has an added compositional quality through its relations to the preceding and succeeding pictures. A sharp movement to the left may be harshly succeeded in the next shot by a sharp movement to the right. A slow diagonal movement may be followed by a beautifully timed expanding movement from the centre to the boundaries of the frame. Shots, aided by the devices of fading and mixing, may blend into one another with remarkable effect. For example, a series of shots dealing with movement down a river would lend itself to this. A succession of harsh movements might presage a quarrel, where an æsthetic clash in the composition combines with an emotional clash in the action. These examples are all crude: this technique is capable of increasingly subtle development in the hands of a good artist. It can be learnt only by practice: it can be enjoyed only by skilful and practised watching. The person most concerned with this type of composition is the film editor, who is responsible for the final assembly of the shots into the sequence which the audience sees, and who must be the person most aware of the timing of shots in their duration on the screen and in their general relation to each other.

EXAMPLES

1. TARGET FOR TONIGHT: British. (Crown Film Unit, 1942. Director, Harry Watt)

Two sections of this film showed a remarkable sense of the co-ordination of mobile composition, the values of darkness and

the gradations of black and white, and the relations of sound to mobile visual composition. The first is the sequence of the taking-off of the bombers, all shot, with natural sound, from different angles emphasising in turn the giant size of the planes against the dark qualities of the night sky. The crashing and roar of the engines were interspersed with fragments of formal speech, and the dark looming shots of the planes were cut in with the remarkable picture of the head of the squadron leader illuminated in his observation dome as he times his pilots out. The whole sequence of picture and sound accumulated into a climax of excitement and tension to match that of the action with which the film was concerned. The second example occurs later when F for Freddie flies through the graceful swelling clouds, shot after shot following the plane with its forward steady movement as the music swells and sweeps with the composition of the pictures.

2. The Long Voyage Home: American. (United Artists, 1940. Director, John Ford)

The opening of this film should rank high in American cinema. Dark shots emphasise the fragmentary gleam of the moonlight on the torsos of the seamen still confined to their ship as they listen with tense impatience to the sounds of the native women preparing to meet them. Here, cutting, photography and sound combine to impress the audience with the sensual need of the men and the warm anticipation of the women.

3. Example from Russian Cinema.

Pudovkin, one of the earliest creative imaginations in Russian cinema, writes the following passage in his book "Film Technique." This passage shows precisely how the artist is prepared to exploit every device of which his medium is capable to get the effect he needs. After watching a man scything wet grass in the sunlight, he describes how he would re-create this action in terms of cinema:

> "When the director shoots a scene, he changes the position of the camera, now approaching it to the actor, now taking it farther away from him, according to the subject of his concentration of the spectator's attention—either some general movement or else some particularity,

perhaps the features of an individual. This is the way he controls the spacial structure of the scene. Why should he not do precisely the same with the temporal? Why should not a given detail be momentarily emphasised by retarding it on the screen, and rendering it by this means particularly outstanding and unprecedently clear? Was not the rain beating on the stone of the window-sill, the grass falling to the ground, retarded, in relation to me, by my sharpened attention? Was it not thanks to this sharpened attention that I perceived ever so much more than I had ever seen before?

"I tried in my mind's eye to shoot and construct the mowing of the grass approximately as follows:

"1. A man stands bared to the waist. In his hands is a scythe. Pause. He swings the scythe. (The whole movement goes in normal speed, i.e. has been recorded at normal speed.)

"2. The sweep of the scythe continues. The man's back and shoulders. Slowly the muscles play and grow tense. (Recorded very fast with a 'slow-motion' apparatus, so that the movement on the screen comes out unusually slow.)

"3. The blade of the scythe slowly turning at the culmination of its sweep. A gleam of the sun flares up and dies out. (Shot in 'slow motion.')

"4. The blade flies downward. (Normal speed.)

"5. The whole figure of the man brings back the scythe over the grass at normal speed. A sweep—back. A sweep—back. A sweep. . . . And at the moment when the blade of the scythe touches the grass—

"6. —slowly (in 'slow motion') the cut grass sways, topples, bending and scattering glittering drops.

"7. Slowly the muscles of the back relax and the shoulders withdraw.

"8. Again the grass slowly topples, lies flat.

"9. The scythe-blade swiftly lifting from the earth.

"10. Similarly swift, the man sweeping with the scythe. He mows, he sweeps.

"11. At normal speed, a number of men mowing, sweeping their scythe in unison.

"12. Slowly raising his scythe a man moves off through the dusk.

"This is a very approximate sketch. After actual shooting, I edited it differently—more complexly, using shots taken at very various speeds. Within each separate set-up were new, more finely graduated speeds. When I saw the result upon the screen I realised the idea was sound. The new rhythm, independent of the real, deriving from the combination of shots at a variety of speeds, yielded a deepened, one might say remarkedly enriched, sense of the process portrayed upon the screen."

These examples, together with a few critical visits to the pictures, should be sufficient to prove that the film is essentially something to be seen. Sound, though an integral part of film art, is normally subsidiary in its hold over the attention of the spectator. This does not stop the film being used for purely auditory purposes, as in a picture poorly shot and dully put together, but with a sound track full of brilliant wisecracks. This is just using the medium of the film to put across the wisecracks. It is very efficient for this purpose, just as words are efficient to describe how somebody wishes to leave his property. But these same words can be used by poets and dramatists with a fuller knowledge of their artistic possibilities. In the same way the film can be used to its full potentialities only by men who have the imagination to do so. The average director is satisfied with average results. So is the average public. But the average public is pleasantly surprised when the more-than-average artist arrives and shows the possibilities of the medium in a new light. Shakespeare and Shaw did this for the average public of the theatre. Griffith, Pudovkin, Eisenstein, Chaplin, Disney, von Stroheim, Lubitsch, Pabst, Hitchcock, Capra, Ford, Welles and some others have done this for the average cinema public.

The film has its links with most of the major fine arts, but retains its own artistic individuality very strongly. Its alliance with the work of the painter and still photographer ends where its essential beauty, mobile composition, begins. Its alliance with the drama is very superficial, since the best drama is in the first place something to be heard, with sight as the subsidiary

function. Shakespeare and Shaw, the Greek tragedians and O'Neill, Aristophanes and Sean O'Casey are men of dramatic speech, and actors largely succeed or fail on the stage in so far as they are artists of the spoken word. They combine with this quality movement and gesture, qualities to be seen, but they are subsidiary.

The film comes closest in structure to the novel, from which, judging from some screen adaptations, it seems most divided. The novel has the quality of free narration, of directing the reader's attention wherever it is most necessary for the good of the story or the emotion, of ranging backwards or forwards in the time sequence of the plot, of stressing this and eliminating that. It parts company from the film, however, at the point where the emotions of a character are described, not shown objectively in terms of outward signs or action, and again in its discursiveness owing to the fact that a novel may be taken up and put down by the reader at any time, whereas the film, to succeed in its effect, must be seen continuously from beginning to end.

Perhaps it is with the ballet that the film can find a kindred technique. The ballet with a story implies its narrative by mime and gesture, to which the music acts in precisely the same subsidiary capacity as the sound track of the film. Whereas the favourite themes of the ballet are fantastic, those of the film are realistic. But too little has been done to show the ballet to a wider public through the sympathetic medium of the screen.

4. ESSENTIALS OF FILM ART: FURTHER PRINCIPLES—SHOT; SEQUENCE; EDITING

It is worth while repeating the elementary fact of cinema which few of its patrons, sitting a solid two hundred and thirty-five million a week, bother to realise, namely that twenty-four photographs on celluloid are flashed at them every second on the screen. In silent days only sixteen photographs a second were necessary.

In order to achieve a smooth transition from each single picture to the next slightly different picture, the screen is blacked-out for one forty-eighth of a second while it is replaced. That is, for one-half of the time an audience is seeing a film it is sitting in total darkness without knowing it. If we estimate the number of man-hours spent in the cinema each week as seven hundred

million, over three hundred million of them are spent seeing nothing. If the camera cannot lie, a projector can. The sound track, however, is continuous. This should act as a deterrent to readers who were contemplating asking for half their money back.

Cinemas use banks of projectors—that is, projectors and spares for breakdown lined up in series. Each projector in use projects two reels of film (about twenty minutes' showing time) and is then replaced by its twin. The change-over from one machine to the next is carefully synchronised so that the audience is seldom aware of the transition. The momentary appearance of a black circle on the top right-hand corner of the picture acts as a cue for the operator on the new machine to effect the change-over.

The formula for making a film is therefore as follows:

Take twenty-four pictures a second for as long as you want the image to last on the screen. Call the pictures "frames," and one complete image on the screen a "shot." We have already seen that the combination of shots which make up a complete film is divided by the natural development of the story into sequences or stages in the narrative.

Shots can last a long or short time on the screen, as required to convey their contents to the audience. They may be mere flashes, or they may last, though they seldom do, two or three minutes. Visual variety is one of the main technical features of film-making, and a five-minute conversation between two people in one place, unbroken on the sound track, will probably be most athletic on the part of the camera. The art of shifting camera position is to be varied without being restless. A restless camera distracts from the conversation: a varied camera builds the conversation from a few reproduced words to significant, pointed drama.

Just as sentences are punctuated by the , ; : —() and ., and reading speed consequently controlled in relation to the sense-divisions of the word-group, so a film is punctuated by various devices:

1. By direct cut. One shot immediately succeeds the next. Impression: speed. If well done, clean, efficient con-continuity. If badly done, slight to serious visual shock, and sense of restlessness and jerky continuity.

2. By fade-in and fade-out. The gradual emergence of a shot from a black frame, and its opposite. The direct cut is a kind of comma; the fade-out, if quick a semi-colon, if long a full stop. Any film will produce a variety of fades used for a number of types of punctuation.
3. By dissolve. The gradual change from one scene to another by superimposition of the images, the end of the first shot being carefully timed in relation to the emergence of the next. This can be used merely as a technical trick instead of direct cut or dissolve, or with great artistic effect. Its virtue lies in its power of suggestion, the soft almost imperceptible link it can imply between the two shots momentarily married on the screen.
4. By wipe. The effect of a wipe has been described as if an invisible roller were passed over the screen horizontally or vertically, wiping out one picture and revealing the next. It is used most in newsreels and quota quickies. It implies pep. It takes a sensitive viewer a moment to recover from the shock to his illusion of the depth and pattern of the shot. It is violent, inartistic and uneconomic compared with the direct cut. Whilst the roller rolls, neither shot is of any value to the audience. It has no psychological value parallel to the dissolve.
5. By continuity title. Words cease on the sound track and either silence or music ensues. Words appear as titling on the screen, as in the old silent days. This effect is excellent for paragraphing an episodic film, or for journalistic headings, as in *The March of Time.* Its value is emphasis. Salient points of introduction or fact can be imparted in this specialised manner: it is more pointed than emphasis in the spoken commentary because it is different and because it is visual. Its abuse is over-use. It is excellently handled in *The March of Time* series and in the better-edited newsreels.
6. By other camera devices, not involving a cut, dissolve or fade. The technical elaboration of the modern studio encourages a director to stop at nothing for effect. Instead of a simple cut from outside to inside a building, the camera offers him legs and wings. It can appear to

climb steps and steal like a ghost in and out of public buildings and private flats. It can run up a skyscraper and slide in through a window to intercept the last few sentences of the gangster's plot. It can behave with or without sympathy when trying to see life steadily and see it whole on behalf of intoxication. It can swing through the air with the greatest of ease. It can pass away from a lady as she starts to undress, and swing back when she is robed again, so that the Board and the Hays Office shall be spared a morality conference. It can tilt down the slender calves as the underclothes fall and climb up thousand-dollar legs to meet the on-coming nightdress.

All these devices save cutting and take their place in the field of film punctuation. Their value is obvious: they assist in smoothness of continuity and variety of effect. They can be used for their true purpose, to put the story across pointedly and economically, or they can be used to show themselves off at the film's expense—technics for technique's sake. Audiences enjoy the fun at first, but in the end they have a date with the story, not the camera.

We are now gradually reaching a point from which we can appreciate the position of the scenario writer getting down to his script. He is given a story and has to prepare a treatment. The treatment must conform to the basic principles and limitations of the art of the film. It must use what the film has to offer in the way of technique to make the subject effective through the medium of the screen. Broadly speaking, sight must come first and sound second. They cannot, of course, be treated separately in a sound film, but the predominant sense enjoyed is sight, and to starve it for the sake of beautiful or even witty dialogue, or for a breezy-up-to-minute-hundred-per-cent.-wisecracking commentary, is eventually to sell out as far as the future of cinema is concerned. Cinema-goers prefer a Hitchcock or a Capra to a quota quickie however packed with badly handled thrills. It is rare for a first-class film to fail to get its audiences. Occasionally a great film may pull ahead too far from the grasp of mass audience comprehension or acceptance, such as *The Grapes of Wrath, Citizen Kane* and *The Ox-bow Incident*. But even these advanced films held large

audiences taken in the aggregate, although requiring for their appreciation rather more resilience of imagination than the average public queueing up after work has been able to acquire.

The scenarist, using various methods peculiar to himself as an artist, sets out to group the action into shots and sequences. He translates story into pictures with sound. He is a good artist in so far as he does this brilliantly and with full regard for the capacities of camera and microphone: a competent artist in so far as he does this faithfully but without more than ordinary skill; a mediocre artist in so far as he cares little for the story in film terms but earns his living to the best of his mediocre imagination; and a bad artist in so far as he is careless of his medium and conscienceless over his duty to his story. He may be helped or hindered by good or indifferent producers, directors, cameramen and actors. A large number of the best brains in the world are in the daily service of the screen. It is because of this that it is rare to see a badly handled film these days in a good-class cinema: what one sees more commonly is a pedestrian story competently handled. The significance of this from the cultural and social point of view will be discussed later in the book.

Both the competent and the brilliant artist are aware first of all of the mobility of the camera. They realise that the advantages they have over the dramatist are that the camera as a recording instrument can be placed successively in the ideal positions to see the action, and the microphone in the ideal positions to hear it. The difference between competence and brilliance lies in the degree of imaginative interpretation and reconstruction of the action into terms of cinema which the artist can bring to bear.

The competent worker watches continuity, clean camera-work, efficient subjection of the story into sequence-groups and economic timing of all movement and acting to make sure no essential element clarifying the story is missed out. He will tolerate no obscurity in his shots, no poor acting by star or super, no unnecessary pictures. His work is finally cut with precision, and if the running time is ninety-three minutes, the story could not have been told more efficiently in the manner intended in less than ninety. There is little room for criticism of his work technically; producer, distributor, exhibitor and

audience are alike well-off in pleasure or in pocket. This competent treatment is the staple of good box-office.

The brilliant artist, on the other hand, is prepared to take risks which he may or may not sell to his public, or for that matter to his producer. His films are often too long (like the Russian epics), too intense or obscure (like *L'Atalante*), too episodic (like *The Grapes of Wrath*), or too technically preoccupied (like *Citizen Kane*). They may overbalance by allowing too much predominance to dialogue at the expense of the camera (like *La Femme du Boulanger* or the work of the Marx brothers), or too little (like the later work of Charlie Chaplin). They may put too great a stress on sheer beauty of camera-work (like Flaherty's *Man of Aran* and Hollering's *Hortobagy*). They may develop any number of faults for the critics, brought up on competence, to pick out for wisecracks to the neglect of the salient virtues of a picture worth a hundred competent marvels. They may be fortunate, like Hitchcock and Lang, because their stories in any case appeal to all comers, who may not be able to appreciate the skill and beauty with which these stories are presented. Or they may be fortunate, like Eisenstein and Pudovkin and the other great Russian directors, in having State support and large far-reaching audiences ready to appreciate a political cinema. Or they may merely have to take a risk like Disney in *Fantasia,* Welles in *Citizen Kane,* Ford in *The Grapes of Wrath,* Chaplin in *Modern Times,* Powell in *The Edge of the World,* Capra in *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town,* Santell in *Winterset,* Wilder in *The Lost Weekend,* Flaherty in *Nanook* and Vigo in *L'Atalante* or *Zéro de Conduite.* Films like these are of variable value in recent cinema history, but all are significant and many of permanent distinction in the period to which they belong. The average film of today has grown, as always, out of the more-than-average film of yesterday, and the production boss and the public who look to scoff remain to pay.

Some technical points are worth watching at the cinema with the query in one's mind: Is the treatment of the action just competent or is it occasionally or continuously brilliant?

1. The Shot

The use of variable set-up for the camera. Taking a given object mounted on a glass floor and a camera with a variety of lenses including microphotographic and telephoto, there seem

to be few limitations placed upon the cameraman as to the set-up which can be adopted to photograph the outside of the object. If the object is too small to be seen easily, then the microphotographic lens will magnify it (as in *The Secrets of Nature*). The only limitation appears to be lighting, which again is under the control of the cameraman, or the unwillingness of the object to be photographed on a glass stand, such as an untamed lion in an African jungle. In practice, leaving the glass floor to the director of revue with legs to look for, the camera can work indoors from floor to ceiling, or outdoors from ground to stratosphere. To be original, pointed and economic with such variety of opportunity is far more difficult than finding a needle in a haystack. To find the most apt out of the many adequate camera-angles is the act of genius over competence.

The film is, after all, a collection of camera-angles consciously selected and purposely limited within the frame. Each shot has to be labelled telephoto shot, distance shot, long shot, medium shot, close-up, microscopic shot, with all their various intermediates. If the camera moves it must either tilt, which means move upwards and downwards; pan, which means move sideways; fly on a crane, or track on a wheeled base. It may even sway on a pendulum as in Vertov's *Three Songs of Lenin*, though one hastens to add that this should be for exceptional effect only.

Out of all these possibilities the right shot must be chosen. The competent director will be satisfied with clean well-lit shots taken at near eye-level from distance shot to close-up, varied sometimes by a shot taken from above or low on the ground (pity the poor locomotive). The undershot, however, was used with culminating effect in *Winterset*, when Trock's confederate arrives as from death itself after being filled with lead and thrown into the river.

The brilliant director will take more chances and usually be right. René Clair shot a wedding-group kissing each other from six feet over their bared bald heads and ducking feathered hats in *The Italian Straw Hat*. Some director or other, probably a Russian in the earlier post-war silent days, realised the psychological value of the distortion achieved by photographing dominant capitalist figures and military bullies from two yards

in front of their feet, tilting up. Fritz Lang in *M* saw the psychological value of shooting the chase of his demented victim from a roof-top looking down where four streets meet in the lamplight, with the lonely figure rushing hysterically from side to side as the pursuit closes in. A wonderful long tracking shot slowly passes down the line of St. Joan's clerical inquisitors with white habits and cruel, repressed, other-worldly expressions as the camera relentlessly leaves one for the other and then the next in *La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc*. The line of military jack-boots steps down with brutal grace and trained precision on to the step along which the eye of the camera is looking from foot-level: the spectator is prone before the White Guards, like the dead bodies that sprawl over the Odessa steps in *The Battleship Potemkin*. In *Un Carnet de Bal*, one of the few French films widely shown in the provinces of Britain on a commercial scale, the sequences dealing with the epileptic doctor were shot aslant with macabre effect, culminating in a dissolve from the man struggling in a paroxysm as he shoots his wife, to a picture of the crashing, clanking cranes which work interminably outside the tenement consulting-room.

The invention of these things, the initial conception which realises they are the right thing to do before they have been done, is the work of a fertile visual imagination. Two are from sound, three from silent films. The visual experiment of the mature silent film is of the greatest value to the later sound film.

Lighting.—Lighting is all-important to the shot. It is rare to see a flat white light in any modern film. Lit from various angles, actor, furniture, property and set can be induced to make the shot pictorially impressive. The sense of pattern can be developed by the sharpness of high-light and shadow, or the sense of mystery deepened by the use of misty half-light produced by the device known as soft focus or an image slightly blurred. This, one may feel in retrospect, particularly suits close-ups of beautiful women and scenes in docks or railway stations at night. Even squalor can be made beautiful if shot in half-light. The German silent cinema specialised in the beauty of slums, backwaters and fairgrounds.

Close-up.—Finally, in sizing up his shot in his mind's eye, the scenarist or the director, or both in conference, must decide on the correct and sparing use of the close-up. In all films a small

proportion of shots must be in close-up and even big close-up. The use must be sparing, because the emphasis in point of size is overwhelming, and few actors and actresses survive the close-up with distinction. Details of facial expression can easily be seen in the medium or half-length shot, and there should be a genuine reason for the appearance of a close-up in the shooting script. In some films it is flogged mercilessly whilst large face speaks to large face in an unrelenting succession of unnecessary intimacies. Used in early primitives without much thought, it was popularised by Griffith. The untrained audiences at first cried out for the actor's legs. No harm would be done now if they called out sometimes for the actress's.

Close-up, with its supreme power of emphasis, can be used to enforce the full attention of the audience upon facial acting at a crucial moment in the story (remember among others the remarkably expressive faces of Laughton, Dietrich, Garbo, Bette Davis, Agnes Moorehead, Louise Rainer, Celia Johnson, Fonda, Edward G. Robinson, Cherkassov, Gabin, Baur, Raimu, Michel Simon, Jean-Louis Barrault and Arletty), or direct attention to detail necessary to the development of the story—in melodrama, the hand feeling the automatic in a pocket; in drama, the hand on the door knob; in comedy, the hand finding the dime on the pavement; in tragedy, the hand falling still in death. The close-up is part of the mobility of the camera now expected by a generation of trained cinema-goers, but they complain when they get too much of it. For facial acting, only highly developed artistes can survive this terrific magnification with more than momentary success. The case of the close-up in documentary, where the non-professional actor is used, is rather different, as we shall see. So also is the obvious importance of close-up in the instructional film, where processes are being explained and emphasised.

Other Devices.—Before proceeding from shot to sequence, certain devices can be used to bring added value to the narrative presentation. First is distortion. Soft focus is a form of this, but the distortion can be much more violent and serve a definite artistic purpose. It is deliberately used, for instance, in *In which we Serve* to link the sequences of the men machine-gunned in the water with the scenes depicting their past individual experiences. The shot of the raft and the men distorts like an

image reflected in disturbed water and then dissolves into the new sequence at home. The slanting shots in *Un Carnet de Bal* are distortions within the frame. So are many shots in *Citizen Kane,* which will be discussed later. Second is slow motion. The shot in Pudovkin's *Deserter* of the suicide who jumps into a river is taken in semi-slow-motion, and so the man appears to be sucked down into the water which splashes round him in a great fan of enclosing waves. The values of quick-motion for farcical effects are obvious. All these devices are psychologically justified if used with judgment and artistry.

What is Left Out.—We have seen earlier that the film must exploit its own limitations for artistic effect, and that one of these limitations is that comparatively small area which the camera-lens can cover compared with the wide-angled lens of the human eye. The artist can make use of this limitation with excellent effect. It is obvious in every film that dialogue is often carried on without the camera shooting the speaker. The effect of what is said is seen in the faces of the hearers. The person responsible for the filmic treatment of narrative or documentary has to work out how time may be saved and the treatment tightened by letting the sound track do one job while the visual track does another. Whilst Mr. Barrett of Wimpole Street prays to his God, Flush, fresh from earthly preoccupations, passes his master's dining-room door with a shrug of contempt and slides upstairs to his mistress. A good deal can be learned from this in less than thirty seconds. Bette Davis in *The Letter* begins the film by standing on the steps of her Malayan residence and shooting her revolver off-screen. The body of the man she shoots, irrelevant at this stage when everything that matters is herself, is never even seen. In the old German film *Vaudeville,* which made Emil Janning's reputation as an actor in America, the scene where the two men struggle on the floor with a knife is shot at a level above the fight, with only a drab hotel bedroom to look at while you wait in a state of tension for the face of the man who is to be left alive to rise up into the frame. In the French film *Remous* the sensual wife of the civil engineer rendered impotent by a car accident during their honeymoon preens herself whilst she is inspecting a large dam built under her husband's direction. Eventually we are allowed to see why: a virile workman is admiring her in smiling silence.

From then on the theme of the film is set without word and almost without action.

This last example leads us naturally to consideration of the sequence, since no shot in a film can be considered by its single self as complete: it requires to be seen in conjunction with what went before and what succeeds

2. THE SEQUENCE.

The sequence is the paragraph of the film. It may consist of a few shots naturally linked together and lasting only a minute, or it may plan out an almost indefinite length of time as in *The Petrified Forest*, when the scene remains the same and the characters are hardly regrouped for a considerable period. A short sequence was given in detail above from Pudovkin's book on film technique. Consideration of the sequence at once gives rise to the consideration of editing, or, as it used to be called in earlier and more æsthetic days, "montage."

Editing is the art of putting the film together shot by shot from the celluloid strips themselves. Documentary directors often do their own editing and attach as much importance to this process as they do to the actual shooting. Russian directors frequently adopted the same attitude, and so did Flaherty in *Man of Aran* and in previous films shot on lone locations. The common practice, however, is to employ a highly paid technician to edit the film carefully from the shooting script. The director, whether he takes part in the actual process of editing or not, cannot fail to take an interest in it. The effect he has aimed at on the studio floor can be ruined by careless or unsympathetic editing. The skill required to edit a competent film with a clean shooting script and a routine sense of efficient timing and slick continuity is obviously less than is required to assemble films like *L'Atalante* and *The Grapes of Wrath* from their component shots. A film playing an hour and a half may contain as many as three, four or five hundred separate pictures. The editor has to choose the beginning and end of each of these, as well as reject the material which never actually reaches the screen. Many directors do not shoot economically, but shoot to waste with many versions of the same scene, one of which has to be chosen and the rest junked. The editor's task is a formidable one, helped though he may be by his director and his assistants.

But it should not be forgotten that in America most directors are not permitted either to prepare or edit their films on their own initiative. They are required to shoot them point by point on the floor of the studio. The producer, not the director, is the arbiter of what should or should not be done with what the director creates from the camera. The director himself rarely begins or ends the creative treatment of the film he is supposed to complete.

The problem as to whether or not he should edit his own films is best left to the opinions of two eminent directors, one Russian and one English:

> " Editing is the language of the film director. Just as in living speech, so, one may say, in editing: there is a word—the piece of exposed film, the image; a phrase—the combination of these pieces. Only by his editing methods can one judge a director's individuality." (PUDOVKIN, " Film Technique," p. 72.)
>
> " With the help of my wife, who does the technical continuity, I plan out a script very carefully, hoping to follow it exactly, all the way through, when shooting starts. In fact, this working on the script is the real making of the film for me. When I've done it, the film is finished already in my mind. Usually, too, I don't find it necessary to do more than supervise the editing myself. I know it is said sometimes that a director ought to edit his own pictures if he wants to control their final form, for it is in the editing, according to this view, that a film is really brought into being. But if the scenario is planned out in detail, and followed closely during production, editing should be easy. All that has to be done is to cut away irrelevancies and see that the finished film is an accurate rendering of the scenario." (HITCHCOCK, in Davy's " Footnotes to the Film," p. 5.)

The editing of the earliest primitives was merely a matter of expediency, not artistry. The first men to sense the power in their hands were Griffith and Charlie Chaplin. To Griffith is due the elementary principle of slow and quick cutting: the development of tempo and rhythm. Slow cutting induces a gentle mood: quick cutting induces excitement and tension. Griffith, who brought the close-up into artistic prominence,

also shot the ice-flow sequence in *Way down East* and the last-minute reprieve in *Intolerance*. These required the build-up of tension in the audience by alternating between shots of the approaching rescue and the plight of the victim. Chaplin developed economy: shorts like *Easy Street* and *The Cure* were masterpieces in the cutting away of inessentials without sacrifice of comic detail.

In the German cinema of the early twenties (*Caligari, The Golem, Siegfried, Warning Shadows, Metropolis, Faust, Vaudeville*) this elementary principle was carried forward but scarcely developed. Its undeniable atmospheric power was due to acting, setting and lighting. The German technicians, with great feeling for their macabre and sombre subjects in the depression after the war, studied the use of shadows and produced a series of masterpieces for showing to their equally depressed audiences who visited the unheated cinemas in a mood of fatalism. The big U.F.A. producing company received Government subsidy to produce films on German themes in the early twenties, though little that they made could be said to be very uplifting to depressed spirits. If an artist should reflect the mood of his times, rather than act as a leader to something better, then the makers of these films were artists as well as technicians. With incredible ingenuity, in the year following the Armistice and in conditions of hardship and poverty, Wiene gathered together his little group of actors and theatrical scene designers and made *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, the reconstruction of a madman's fiction woven round his fellow inmates at an asylum. Out of a little lath and canvas, and by the use of ingenious lighting which is never elaborate, he produced a series of beautiful sets and moving images in the expressionist manner. The film has been called decadent and primitive, but it can still be received today in absorbed silence by a discerning audience. Shots remain in the memory—the lovely shadows across the frame as Caligari opens the sleep-walker's upstanding coffin on the trestle stage in the fairground; the hanging draperies round the sleeping girl, and the tall oncoming figure of the sleep-walker, played with an early feeling for cinematic detail by Conrad Veidt; the same black figure with arm upstretched against the wall creeping through the fantastic courtyard to stab the sleeping girl; the flight up the sharp angles of the roof-tops and across the

weird foreshortened bridge when the pursuit draws close.

This film was the most advanced piece of art the cinema had yet seen except for Griffith's epics and Chaplin's one-reelers in a very different manner. It founded no school and led nowhere, for expressionism does not suit the film, which is an art based on the realistic approach to the material of life. Its contribution was solely that of lighting, the subtle development of visual atmosphere, and the beginning of a conception of screen-acting in the work of Werner Krauss and Conrad Veidt. There is much still to be learnt from it by the competent director, since it was the product of real feeling and devotion to a new and relatively untried medium and was an undoubted success within its own limits. It was shown widely in this country in the early twenties, and was revived by many film societies in the early thirties.

But neither *Caligari* nor the succeeding tradition of U.F.A. discovered much of the value of editing as such. These films progress with a steady slowness, the atmosphere depending on each shot or the genius of occasional actors like Veidt, Krauss and Jannings. There is elementary cutting in the manner of Griffith as Siegfried approaches the watching dragon through the tall trees and sloping shadows of the great forest, or in the hectic dance scene in *Metropolis,* and great feeling for tempo in the last reel of *Vaudeville.* For the German film pondered and dwelt where the American cut and ran, whilst the Russian became a symphony of movement and design. It was the Russian film which took the mature æsthetic lead during the silent days of cinema.

The Russian cinema industry was nationalised in 1919. In the same year the Moscow State School of Cinematography was founded. In the earliest twenties experiment in camera-angles was carried out by Vertov (his theory being that the camera has an eye which can go anywhere), and in cutting by Kuleshov who, from the Russian point of view, brought editing to a prominence undreamed of by Griffith, though derived from him, with acknowledgments, by Pudovkin. Here at last was a country which put the film first and the box-office afterwards, and encouraged its brilliant directors to experiment at the State expense whether they made mistakes or not. In return it expected the Russian revolution in all its phases, past, present and

future, to be their guiding theme, and asked for masterpieces to be produced at reasonable intervals to educate both the literate townsman and the illiterate peasant in the new economy and the new ideology. Russian cinema obtained, as a result, the greatest series of films of the silent period, and world cinema obtained its first æsthetic, Montage.

Montage is a French word which cannot be translated without losing some of the meaning. It means what Pudovkin so lucidly explains in his book " Film Technique," a collection of papers on the subject ably translated by Ivor Montagu and published here in 1929. This book, together with Arnheim's " Film," which attempts a German synthesis of film æsthetic mainly based on the silent period, was the first constructive attempt to establish a conscious, written explanation of cinema technique and æsthetic criticism. It was followed in the early sound period by the writings of the British school of documentary directors led by John Grierson, which, because an unenlightened Government failed to see the need to reply to Russian film propaganda except by banning the public exhibition of Soviet films in this country, was too often left to write of the films its young directors wanted to make instead of being able to translate their theory into celluloid. It is small wonder, therefore, that Russian technique was sometimes admired to distraction and made ill-timed appearance in films where a simpler treatment was required.

The books of Pudovkin (there is another on " Film Acting ") and of Arnheim should be read by everyone who is prepared to take the cinema seriously as an art. Pudovkin's book is full of a progressive and captivating enthusiasm: he is discovering as he writes. Arnheim's book, more august, more comprehensive, more philosophic, more German, remains the most complete æsthetic between two covers that film criticism has yet produced, though Raymond Spottiswoode's academic " Grammar of the Film " should not be overlooked.

PUDOVKIN

Pudovkin explains that to the director-editor separate shots are like separate words: their meaning is built up by their context.

> " I claim that every object, taken from a given viewpoint and shown on the screen to spectators, is a dead

object, even though it has moved before the camera. The proper movement of an object before the camera is yet no movement on the screen, it is no more than raw material for the future building-up, by editing, of the movement that is conveyed by the assemblage of the various strips of film. Only if the object be placed together among a number of separate objects, only if it be presented as part of a synthesis of different separate visual images, is it endowed with filmic life." (PUDOVKIN, " Film Technique," pp. xiv, xv.)

Before setting out to make his film, the director-scenarist must consider his work in three stages. First, the theme, that is the general subject of the film (the October Revolution, the conquering of peasant opposition to mechanised farming, the adventures of the battleship " Potemkin "). Second comes the action and its treatment (the story which is the bare outline that will at once contain an illustration of the theme and form the staple entertainment value of the film). Third comes the cinematographic planning of the action (the preparation of the story for the camera in the form of a shooting script in which the values of individual shot and constructive editing are balanced in accordance with the visual genius of the director).

Pudovkin[1] speaks of the selection of proper plastic material. This is not a dead theoretical phrase, but a vital part in the invention and building process of his film. The selection of what is to be photographed and what excluded, how the material is to be placed in front of the camera, even the shape and movement of an actor's face and limbs, and the relation of them to the pattern of the set, the properties and the desired angles of light-shadow; this is the process of using the proper plastic

[1] Career: V. I. Pudovkin, born 1893. Educated at Moscow: studied chemistry at the University; volunteered 1914; German prisoner; during captivity studied languages and drew pictures; after the Revolution met Kuleshov and studied cinema technique with him; also worked as an actor. Outstanding films include—silent: *The Mechanism of the Brain*, 1925 (for Pavlov); *Mother*, 1926; *End of St. Petersburg*, 1927; *The Heir to Genghiz Khan* (*Storm over Asia*), 1929; sound: *Deserter*, 1933; *General Suvorov*, 1941. Lecturer in the State Academy of Motion Pictures. Two books translated into English by Ivor Montagu: " Film Technique " (Gollancz, 1929; Newnes, 1933), and " Film Acting " (Newnes, 1935).

material. Everything in the picture is significant in the early Russian masterpieces.

The development of a sense of tension is derived by Pudovkin from Griffith, whom he acknowledges to be his master.

> " During work on the treatment the scenarist must always consider the varying degree of tension in the action. This tension must, after all, be reflected in the spectator, forcing him to follow the given part of the picture with more or less excitement. This excitement does not depend on the dramatic situation alone, it can be created or strengthened by purely extraneous methods. The gradual winding-up of the dynamic elements of the action, the introduction of scenes built from rapid, energetic work of the characters, the introduction of crowd scenes, all these govern increases of excitement in the spectator, and one must learn so to construct the scenario that the spectator is gradually engrossed by the developing action, receiving the most effective impulse only at the end. The vast majority of scenarios suffer from clumsy building up of tension." (PUDOVKIN, " Film Technique," p. 18.)

He summarises the work of the director-scenarist in these terms:

> " Hence an important rule for the scenarist: in working out each incident he must carefully consider and select each visual image; he must remember that for each concept, each idea, there may be tens and hundreds of possible means of plastic expression, and that it is his task to select from amongst them the clearest and most vivid. Special attention, however, must be paid to the special part played in pictures by objects. Relationships between human beings are, for the most part, illuminated by conversations, by words; no one carries on conversation with objects, and that is why work with them, being expressed by visual action, is of special interest to the film technician. Try to imagine to yourself anger, joy, confusion, sorrow, and so forth expressed, not in words and the gestures accompanying them, but in action connected with objects, and you will see how images saturated with plastic expression come into your mind. Work on plastic material is of the highest importance for the scenarist. In the process of it he learns

to imagine to himself what he has written as it will appear upon the screen, and the knowledge thus acquired is essential for correct and fruitful work.

"One must try to express one's concepts in clear and vivid visual images. Suppose it be a matter of the characterisation of some person of the action—this person must be placed in such conditions as will make him appear, by means of some action or movement, in the desired light. Suppose it be a matter of the representation of some event—those scenes must be assembled that most vividly emphasise visually the essence of the event represented." (PUDOVKIN, "Film Technique," pp. 30, 31.)

The art of editing, or montage, develops out of the results of this creative labour. The scenarist edits on paper; the film is conceived, organised, shot: the rushes are in the director-editor's hand, and probably round his neck. Out of all this celluloid divided in hundreds of separate strips, and guided only by his shooting script and his filmic sense, he must commence the final process of montage.

Pudovkin divides editing for the silent screen into:

(1) The simplest form: the art of the attentive observer. The camera moves around and over the action so that by the process of long, medium and close-up shots the story is told action by action from the best of all possible viewpoints. The viewpoints are then linked together into the sequence.

(2) The more complex form of cutting parallel action. This is the form of cutting developed by Griffith when dealing "with simultaneity of actions in several different places." The editor cuts from one to the other action, building his tempo to suit the excitement or degree of tension. Pudovkin points out the psychological nature of this treatment:

"There is a law in psychology that lays it down that if an emotion gives birth to a certain movement, by imitation of this movement the corresponding emotion can be called forth. If the scenarist can effect in even rhythm the transference of interest of the intent spectator, if he can so construct the elements of increasing interest that the question, 'What is happening at the other place?' arises and at the same moment the spectator is transferred whither he wishes to go, then the editing thus created can really excite the

spectator. One must learn to understand that editing is in actual fact a compulsory and deliberate guidance of the thoughts and associations of the spectator. If the editing be merely an uncontrolled combination of the various pieces, the spectator will understand (apprehend) nothing from it; but if it be co-ordinated according to a definitely selected course of events or conceptual line, either agitated or calm, it will either excite or soothe the spectator." (PUDOVKIN, "Film Technique," p. 45.)

(3) *Relational Cutting.*—Various devices can be used to heighten the effect required:

(*a*) *Contrast.*—Shots of starvation cut in with shots of gluttony.

(*b*) *Parallelism.*—This is a development of contrast. Pudovkin's illustration uses the situation of a condemned worker under the old regime and a drunken, callous factory-owner. The condemned man is to be executed at 5 a.m. Scenes of preparation in the prison are timed, not by the prison clock, but by the wrist-watch of the capitalist as he lolls in untidy drunken sleep.

(*c*) *Symbolism.*—In Pudovkin's film *Mother* the procession of the strikers advancing to meet the White cavalry is symbolised by cutting-in shots of a huge ice-flow breaking itself against the parapet of a bridge. The movements are carefully related in speed.

(*d*) *The Simultaneous.*—Cutting with increasing tempo from the growing plight of the victim to the dash of the rescuer. Used by Griffith.

(*e*) *Leit-motif* (reiteration of theme).—The repetition of the same shot in a film to emphasise a theme.

Pudovkin takes a strong view of the dictatorship of the director. He alone is the key-man in the production; his assistants contribute only according to his will. His actors, though requiring to have plasticity of expression, act only under his guidance. He is the final arbiter of the disposition of his strips of celluloid, which, free in his own space-sense and his own time-sense, he links into a final pattern of movement by which he controls the mood of his audience.

"Between the natural event and its appearance upon the screen there is a marked difference. It is exactly this

difference that makes the film an art. Guided by the director, the camera assumes the task of removing every superfluity and directing the attention of the spectator in such a way that he shall see only that which is significant and characteristic." (PUDOVKIN, "Film Technique," p. 58.)

"When we wish to apprehend anything, we always begin with the general outlines, and then, by intensifying our examination to the highest degree, enrich the apprehension by an ever-increasing number of details. The particular, the detail, will always be a synonym of intensification. It is upon this that the strength of the film depends, that its characteristic speciality is the possibility of giving a clear, especially vivid representation of detail. The power of filmic representation lies in the fact that, by means of the camera, it continually strives to penetrate as deeply as possible, to the mid-point of every image. The camera, as it were, forces itself, ever striving, into profoundest deeps of life; it strives thither to penetrate, whither the average spectator never reaches as he glances casually around him. The camera goes deeper; anything it can see it approaches, and thereafter eternalises upon the celluloid." (PUDOVKIN, "Film Technique," pp. 62, 63.)

"The work of the director is characterised by thinking in filmic pictures; by imagining events in that form in which, composed of pieces joined together in a certain sequence, they will appear upon the screen; by considering real incidents only as material from which to select separate characteristic elements; and by building a new filmic reality out of them. Even when he has to do with real objects in real surroundings he thinks only of their appearances upon the screen. He never considers a real object in the sense of its actual, proper nature, but considers in it only those properties that can be carried over on to celluloid. The film director looks only conditionally upon his material, and this conditionality is extraordinarily specific; it arises from a whole series of properties peculiar only to the film." (PUDOVKIN, "Film Technique," pp. 69, 70.)

EISENSTEIN

The greatest names of the Russian silent film are Kuleshov, Vertov, Dovzhenko, Alexandrov, Ermler, Protasanov,

Trauberg, Turin, Pudovkin, Eisenstein,[1] Alexander Room and Mikhail Romm. Sequences linger in the visual memory from the work of some of these directors, especially Eisenstein and Pudovkin. It is impossible to forget the handling of the lock-out and the strikers' march in *Mother,* the tractor and milk-separator sequences in *General Line,* and above all the Odessa-steps sequence in *Potemkin,* which is the classic sequence of silent cinema and possibly the most influential six minutes in cinema history. It illustrates the theory of montage in Pudovkin's book, and was the model from which Grierson and the British documentary directors received their first education in cinema technique. It is made up as follows:

Theme. The Russian Revolution of 1905.

Story and Treatment of Action.

The sailors of the " Potemkin " have mutinied and killed their tyrannical officers. They put in to the port of Odessa, which, though held by the White Guards, is full of sympathetic working-class and bourgeois people, who, after sending gifts of food in little sailing ships, throng the huge flight of stone steps leading down to the water's edge to wave to the distant battleship.

Plastic Material.

Major: the steps, the crowd, the White Guards. Detailed: (persons), the cripple, the elegant lady with the parasol, the children, the mother with the dead child, the nurse, the elderly bourgeois lady; (objects), the parasol, the jackboots and rifles of the soldiery, their shadows on the steps, the perambulator, the smashed spectacles on the sabred face of the elderly lady.

[1] S. M. Eisenstein, born 1898. Engineer, architect and artist. In the Red Army 1918. Worked for the theatre and on crowd pageants during early twenties. Interest in epic and crowd work took him into the cinema 1924. Chief films with the distinguished cameraman Eduard Tissé are: silent, *The Battleship Potemkin,* 1925; *October* (*Ten Days that Shook the World*), 1928; *The Old and the New* (*The General Line*), 1929; sound, *Thunder over Mexico,* 1932 (with Alexandrov, but commercial American editing and sound track of Mexican folk songs); *Alexander Nevski* (with Vassiliev), 1938; *Ivan the Terrible,* 1944. Writing chiefly to be found in the form of articles and interviews in "Close-up," "Film Art," etc., and his one work, " The Film Sense " (Faber, London, 1943).

Types of Shot.

Whole range from distant to close-up.

Location and Cast.

The steps themselves; the people themselves; a contingent of the Red Army in the uniform of the Whites.

Editing or Montage.

General shots introduce the audience to the crowd on the steps facing out into the harbour unconscious of the threat to their lives behind them at the top of the long wide flight of stone stairs. Individuals involved in the subsequent attack are introduced in shots of smiling sympathy for the mutinous sailors. Then, with the title "Suddenly," the sequence itself opens:

(*a*) A series of impressionist shots, some long, some of only a fraction of a second's duration, launches the attack. A girl is killed in close-up, her hair falling forward over her gaping mouth; a legless cripple heaves himself to safety: the parasol of the bourgeois lady falls forward into the camera itself. The steps as a background appear at different angles as shot follows shot. Distance shots alternate with varieties of close-up. One shot shows the fleeing crowd from over the back of the line of soldiers now advancing steadily down the steps, pausing every so often to aim and fire.

(*b*) An impressionist scene of three shots of a fraction of a second each shows the body of a man tipping to fill the frame, then falling head and arms forward, then with knees caving. Finally a shot lasting two and a half seconds shows him splayed over the steps.

(*c*) Longer shots alternate between the running crowd and the soldiers. Close-ups of various types (worker and bourgeois) in attitudes of fear. A bald man clutches his head. Then the first important element is introduced:

(*d*) The woman and child. She is running down the steps with the crowd. The soldiers fire on the crowd; the child falls. He screams. The mother realises her child has fallen: cut with shots of blood on child's head with people still rushing over him. A foot crushes his hand: he is kicked by running feet. The mother's face is stricken with horror. She returns to the body of her child: she is

alone, the crowd below, the soldiers above. She picks up the child, and turns to face the camera and the on-coming line of soldiers (off-frame). Cut to

(*e*) Bourgeois group, harangued by the elderly lady in the black dress. "Go, beseech them," she says (title). But they are too frightened. Cut back to

(*f*) Shadows of the line of soldiers on the steps. The mother is seen once more, side shot over the steps: she is advancing, the dead child in her arms, to challenge the soldiers. The soldiers are shot from various angles, from above, from the front behind the climbing figure of the woman. Once more she moves into the frame (right) whilst the shadows of the soldiers appear (left) culminating in the uplifted sword of the officer. With rifles just visible they shoot her down: several shots build up to the climax of a close-up. The soldiers descend over the bodies of the mother and child. Cut back to

(*g*) The fleeing crowds. (The action throughout is prolonged and reduplicated for tragic emphasis. In actuality it would have taken two or three minutes to clear the steps and shoot down the people. It plays, however, some six minutes on the screen.) The crowd is cut-off at the base of the steps by mounted soldiers. The second important element appears:

(*h*) The nurse and perambulator. Several shots show the nurse protecting the perambulator with her own body. The jackboots of the soldiers move down with almost mincing care, step by step. They fire. The nurse's mouth opens in pain. She clutches the buckle on her belt, and leans back against the perambulator. Cut from her hands slowly covered with the blood from her wounded stomach, to the wheels of the perambulator which her falling body gradually pushes down the steps; the action is prolonged for emphasis by cutting and recutting. Meanwhile the soldiers descend, keeping their neat line, firing precisely. The nurse's body is still launching the perambulator on its careering journey down the steps. Gradually shot by shot it is pushed away. Shot from overhead, from angles sideways, the perambulator goes down the steps, watched by the horrified elderly lady, until finally it topples over, throwing

the child out. The climax approaches in a succession of shots mostly of variable duration from one to three seconds. All the elements: the crowd, the soldiers, the dead nurse, the perambulator, the bourgeois group are built together with rapid cutting. The final element arrives.

(*i*) The elderly lady faces a soldier. In close-up he slashes at her with a sword. In close-up her face, with horrid astonishment, is covered with blood behind her shattered spectacles. The sequence is over.

Owing to its difficult economic position, and the enormous number of silent projectors which still cannot be replaced by sound equipment, Russia was slow to take to the sound film. As we shall see later, when the structure of the Soviet Film Industry is considered, in 1937 Richard Ford ("Sight and Sound," Spring, 1937) tells us there were only three thousand sound cinemas for a population of one hundred and sixty million as against some thirty-six thousand silent projectors mostly on the farms. In any case, the early thirties saw something of a crisis between the older and the younger directors. Eisenstein had absented himself to Mexico. Pudovkin experimented in sound in *Deserter* (1933). The younger directors disliked the æstheticism of their seniors' work: they preferred straight realism and a news-reel technique. Symphonies and montage were dead and too much after the fashion of bourgeois art, suitable for history rather than for films dealing with the Five Year Plans, but the new spirit was exemplified with a pæan of triumph in *Chapayev* (Vassiliev Brothers). This film seemed and was notable for developing, with sound, the personality of a character. It had star-value without a star. Its continuity was satisfying and strong, without the poetic and rhetorical delays incident upon the symphonic tradition of montage. It was bright and fresh and clean and realistic. It threw aside the æstheticism of the silent days and solved the problem of how to make a good story about a great Soviet hero in a realistic but not pedestrian manner.

Many films that arrive from Russia today seem pedestrian to those who responded to the great days when Russia stood out as a pioneer of filmcraft. Now, with the excellence of American and French film and the growing importance of the British cinema, Russia takes its place alongside rather than

ahead of the great film-producing countries. Films like *The Red Flier* and *In the Rear of the Enemy* are typical of what Russian audiences normally get, whilst *The Road to Life* (N. Ekk, 1931), *Deserter* (V. I. Pudovkin, 1933), *Peasants* (F. Ermler, 1934), *Storm* (V. Petrov, 1934), *The Three Songs of Lenin* (Dziga-Vertov, 1934), *Chapayev* (G. and S. Vassiliev, 1935), *We from Kronstadt* (E. Dzigan, 1936), *The Last Night* (Raizman, 1937), *The Baltic Deputy* (A. Zharki, 1937), *The Childhood of Maxim Gorki* (M. Donskoi, 1938), *Alexander Nevski* (S. M. Eisenstein, 1938), *Lenin in October* (M. Romm, 1938), *Son of Mongolia* (I. Trauberg, 1938), *Peter the Great* (V. Petrov, 1939), *Shors* (A. Dovzhenko, 1939), *Lermontov* (A. Gendelstein, 1944), *General Suvorov* (V. I. Pudovkin, 1941), *Kutusov* (M. Yegorov, 1943), *The Rainbow* (M. Donskoi, 1944), *Ivan the Terrible* (S. M. Eisenstein, 1944), represent some of the finest achievement of Soviet studios at their best during the sound period.

Arnheim

Arnheim's book on the film appeared just after the change-over to sound was assured, and he was able, therefore, to consider the problems of sound more carefully than Pudovkin, who was in the process of working out *Deserter*. His book emphasises, as we have seen above, the importance of the limitations within which the film has to work, and its consequent artistic advantages. With great elaboration, which is characteristic of the whole book, he works out afresh the principles of montage in a long analytical scheme. He then deals with the principles of the selection of fit material for the screen, the problems of film acting, the mass-produced film and kindred subjects. He finally reaches the problem of the sound film itself.

5. ESSENTIALS OF FILM ART: SOUND

When sound first arrived in the late twenties it was usually amplified from gramophone recordings synchronised with the projector. Later the sound track was added to the visual track, and the manifold problems of synchronisation were solved.

The second reaction of the trade, which hung back conservatively at first, was to jump at this new phenomenon. The house with sound in a provincial town had the pick of the box office irrespective of the quality of the picture shown. As long as it

talked and sang, as long as doors banged and telephones rang, the public was happy and the trade scrambled in its wake, because a happy public pays easily with its critical faculties softened.

The discerning film critic, who had watched the gradual maturing of the silent film in America, Russia and Germany, felt at first lost in a welter of showmanship. Paul Rotha, writing at the turn of the decade a book which is full of discernment for what had been achieved so carefully in the silent days, says:

> "Now the addition of sound and dialogue to the visual image on the screen will tend to emphasise its isolated significance by reason of the fact that, as the sound and dialogue take longer to apprehend than the visual image, the duration of time that the shot is held on the screen will be determined by the sound and dialogue instead of by the assembling. Dialogue, by very reason of its realism, represents real time and not the filmic time of the visual image. Obviously this is in direct opposition once more to all the dominant factors that have been proved to achieve emotional effect by visual images." PAUL ROTHA, "The Film till Now," p. 307.)

This was precisely true of the type of film at first produced. With the camera trained steadily on the singing fool, the music went on and cutting could be and was forgotten. Whole plays were transferred to the screen, with the camera following the dialogue around the set like a lap-dog terrified of being left alone. It was a depressing return to adolescence and cheap effect. The equipment was expensive, and by God it must be used, and used it was until the directors and the public wearied of it, and decided that, after all, you went to see and not merely to hear a film.

Arnheim and Pudovkin, having time to breathe, set about the problems of this new technical gift. It had, after all, certain obvious advantages. The break-up of the illusion caused by the titles flashed on the screen for as long as it took the slowest reader to spell them out could now be forgotten. The film could speak for itself. It could also score and reproduce its own music. Regardless of its employees, the industry threw thousands of cinema musicians on the streets and recorded its own music

when and how it was needed. The old devices, so interesting and so unknown to the public, through which the conductor of the cinema orchestra could keep his music linked to the visuals on the screen above him, were now no longer necessary. The old music libraries, with tunes or movements to match all moods, passed from the hands of the cinema conductor to his more highly paid colleague in the studio.

Arnheim's solution was a perceptive one:

> " Sound film—at any rate real sound film—is not a verbal masterpiece supplemented by pictures, but a homogeneous creation of word and picture which cannot be split up into parts that have any meaning separately. (This is the reason why so little is to be expected of dramatists and novelists for sound films.) Even the picture part is meaningless alone. Moreover, in general, speech in sound film will be much more effective if used as a part of nature instead of as an art form. Film speech will have to be more lifelike in the same degree as the film picture is more like nature than the stage picture." (ARNHEIM, " Film," p. 213.)

He also recognised that natural sounds were of equal importance with speech when the process of artistic selection could be brought to bear:

> " For this form of acoustic art there would seem to be inexhaustible material—sighs and the sirens of factories, the ripple of water and revolver shots, the songs of birds and snores—and also the spoken word, as one sound among many." (ARNHEIM, " Film," p. 216.)

His recognition of the more transitory nature of sound compared with light is as profound as it is important to the full understanding of the relation sound should play to sight in the well-made film.

> " Light waves and sound waves tell us about the conditions of things in the world in which we live—what these things 'are' and what at the moment they are 'doing.' In this manner we arrive without actual contact at a knowledge of these things across space, and actually at a much better and more thorough knowledge than is possible by the direct process of touch. That is what is called sight and hearing.

"Only few of the objects in our surroundings are in the habit of giving off sounds uninterruptedly. Some do it occasionally, most not at all. The sea murmurs unceasingly, a dog barks occasionally, a table never makes a sound. With the help of light, on the other hand, we can, as long as the object exists at all, get information about it. Hence light gives a more complete and therefore more accurate picture of the universe than sound. Light gives us the 'being' of things, while sound generally only gives us incidental 'doing.'" (ARNHEIM, "Film," p. 217.)

The subjects of sound may be roughly classified into speech, natural sounds and music. The director can choose at any given moment in his script which he is going to use, and which will most forcibly and inevitably be the right artistic combination with the visual image. Just as we have seen that a director selects his image with an eye to obtaining the most telling visual effect on his audience, so he must select his sound. Raymond Spottiswoode in his "Grammar of the Film" gives a careful classification of the alternatives that lie before a director preparing his shooting script for camera and microphone: examples will help to clarify these alternatives.

Scene: A murderer is about to kill a sleeping man with a knife. He creeps up behind his victim, and pauses a moment to balance himself for the act of stabbing.

Alternatives for Sound:

(*a*) Non-selective. (i) Every noise is included: soft tread of feet, heavy breathing of sleeper and any other extraneous noise coming from next door, or traffic from the street outside.

(ii) Only extraneous sound used. Complete quiet as far as the visible action itself is concerned. Only the sound of the traffic outside reproduced without conscious selection.

(*b*) Selective. (iii) Selected sounds originating from the scene only: breathing of sleeper; soft tread of feet.

(iv) Selected sounds from outside the visible action itself. Cry of man murdered, though all we see in the frame is the swift flash of the falling knife.

Artificial though these classifications may seem, they offer alternatives along the lines of which a director must decide what

is right for inclusion and what is wrong. Only by examples of what appears to be right selection can one judge the complexity of the new opportunities offered to the director sensible of the powers of sound.

EXAMPLES

1. THE ROAD TO LIFE: (Mezhrabpomfilm, 1931.
Russian. Director, Nikolai Ekk)

One of the earliest of Russian sound films, it contained many experiments. Under inspired leadership, a band of vagabond street boys learn Russian citizenship. They build a railway from their Collective to the city. The halt at the end of the journey is gaily decked to receive the first train when the railway is opened. The boys' leader, however, is killed on the lonely track by a reactionary. The body is placed on the cowcatcher of the engine, and the lyrical emotion built up on the completion of the track and the maiden voyage of the train is hushed in the waiting crowd by the sight of the body as the engine draws slowly in. The sound matches this collective emotion by giving only the long dying sighs as the steam escapes slowly from the train when it draws to a standstill. Symbolism and natural sound are matched.

2. KAMERADSCHAFT: (Nerofilm, 1931.
German. Director, G. W. Pabst)

A remarkable use of distorted sound occurs after the pitfall. The distracted grandfather runs through section after section of the empty shafts calling his buried son's name. The voice is distorted in the echoes—Georges, Georges—the last syllable drawn out into an echo of helpless despair.

3. SCARFACE: (United Artists, 1932.
American. Director, Howard Hawks, with Paul Muni)

Scarface is a film of murder and callous terror, the first great gangster picture. Early in the film the initial murder happens in a deserted bar. The visuals alternate between the silent victim in a telephone kiosk and the shadow on a white wall of a man in a felt hat. The sound of the shot is preceded by the quiet whistling of a popular tune. After the shot there is silence. The shadow moves away and the whistling resumes.

4. DESERTER: (Mezhrabpomfilm, 1931-33.
Russian. Director, Pudovkin)

Pudovkin put all his theoretical knowledge into the making of this film. In the opening sequence where the visuals are grey with fog, he used a rhythm of ships' sirens at varying distances: in the shipbuilding sequences he cut his natural sounds along with his images.

> "For the symphony of siren calls with which *Deserter* opens I had six steamers playing in a space of a mile and a half in the Port of Leningrad. They sounded their calls to a prescribed plan and we worked at night in order that we should have quiet." (PUDOVKIN, "Film Technique," p. 173.)

> "Perhaps a purer example of establishing rhythm in sound film occurs in another part of *Deserter*—the docks section. Here again I used natural sounds, heavy hammers, pneumatic drills working at different levels, the smaller noise of fixing a rivet, voices of sirens and the crashing crescendo of a falling chain. All these sounds I shot on the dock-side, and I composed them on the editing table, using various lengths, they served to me as notes of music. As finale of the docks scene I made a half-symbolic growth of the ship in images at an accelerated pace, while the sound in a complicated syncopation mounts to an ever greater and grandiose climax. Here I had a real musical task, and was obliged to 'feel' the length of each strip in the same spirit as a musician 'feels' the accent necessary for each note." (PUDOVKIN, "Film Technique," pp. 172-3.)

5. STRANGE INTERLUDE: (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1932.
American. Director, Robert Z. Leonard)

This film was based on Eugene O'Neill's play, the technical feature of which was that the characters spoke their thoughts in full soliloquy whilst taking their part in conversation. The film was a better medium than the stage for this device, since close-up and unmoving lips gave the spoken thoughts reality.

6. NIGHTMAIL: (G.P.O., 1935.
British. Director, Basil Wright, with Harry Watt)

Special verse by W. H. Auden was used here to run with the

train through the Scots dawn to Perth. The verse reduplicated the rhythm of the train, and the speaker's voice took over from the wheels.

7. PETER THE GREAT: Russian. (Lenfilm, Moscow, 1939. Director, Petrov)

In this film of the Westernisation of the backward Russians by Peter the Great, the beautifully recorded church bells, symbol of the old way of life, act as a recurrent theme throughout, until a climax is reached in the hurling down of the bells with a resounding crash when they are required for gun metal. Bells are also used by Eisenstein to build up the oppressive atmosphere of *Ivan the Terrible.*

8. CITIZEN KANE: American. (Mercury Productions, 1941. Director, Orson Welles)

This film is remarkable for its use of sound in many sequences. Echo is used until the voices are filled out into an unnatural hollowness, particularly when the husband and wife draw more and more apart in the vast cavernous rooms of Xanadu. The sinister echo emphasises the poverty of the servant's story as he conducts the last visitor over the desolate palace.

9, MICKEY'S MOVING DAY and many SILLY SYMPHONIES: American. (Walt Disney, 1930).

10. LISTEN TO BRITAIN: British. (Crown, 1942. Director, Humphrey Jennings)

These films are put together because they make great use of natural sound—Disney's for comic effect, *Listen to Britain* to build up a sound-visual commentary on Britain at war by day and night. All have superbly complicated sound-tracks constructed largely on a symphony of music and natural sounds.

11. BRIEF ENCOUNTER: British. (Cineguild, 1945. Noel Coward and David Lean)

Trains are used as part of the montage of many films. In *Brief Encounter* at the little station of Milford Junction they are used with such imaginative skill as poetic imagery that this film could become an example of how to develop a visual cliche into an inspired symbol. The express trains, which never stop, the slow local trains which always shunt usefully in at fixed

times, gradually become accepted symbols, the first of the passion which is unattainable by the two lovers because they are already married, the second of the humdrum responsibilities which are only too easily accessible because they are tied to them through marriage itself. In the final train image when Celia Johnson, as the married woman who has just parted for the last time from her lover, rushes out to throw herself beneath the familiar express train, the rush of sound and the staccato flashing of the window lights on her agonised face become a terrifying reminder that she is too old to accept this final surrender to the headlong and insane journey of passionate romance. She does not commit suicide. (Compare the brilliant use of trains in Renoir's *La Bête Humaine*.)

Some of these examples show the result of careful thought as to which particular sounds (or silent periods) will be most effective dramatically to prolong the tension and spell-bind the audience. Others show the development of natural sounds into artificial patterns, or the use of distortions (like echoing sound) to develop the atmosphere inherent in the particular situation. The possibilities of the dramatic use of sound are endless: they depend on the director's integrity of imagination, his common sense and his artistic courage in experiment.

Arnheim has said rightly that the dialogue of sound film must be realistic. It is necessary to distinguish between the efficient, hundred-per-cent talkie and the real sound film. The film, like the drama, consists of its ninety-five-per-cent lowlights and its five-per-cent highlights. We do not banish Marlowe, Shakespeare, Congreve, Sheridan, Wilde and Shaw from our theatres merely because they knew how to write plays better than the four or five hundred dramatists whose names occur in the indices of Professor Allardyce Nicoll's histories of drama. Moreover, some people, possibly highbrow, would maintain that these particular dramatists are popular in their own right and are of great importance to the development of the theatre. When the one-hundred-per-cent-smash-hit-box-office-money-spinners have been enjoyed by us all they are forgotten and replaced by kindred superlative mixtures as before. The ones that remain in memory are those which occasionally gave up talking in order to become films, or, because of some peculiarity in their contents (like the films of the Marx brothers), stand out from

the rubbish-heap of subject-matter which the more carrion of scenarists pick over. The Marx brothers, in any case, often knew what a film was, and said it in pictures as well as in wisecracks.

This is the reason why Shakespeare's and Shaw's plays, undiluted and unaltered, cannot become more than hundred-per-cent talkies. Admittedly you can *see* the people *talking* more clearly, but it is a doubtful advantage since the lines were written to be projected orally over a distance, and the broad eloquent phrasing of great drama is lost in the overpowering visual presence of the actor. Many situations in a Shakespeare play, on the other hand, would make excellent cinema (Lear driven out on to the heath by Fritz Lang, the riots in Rome by Eisenstein, the murder of Duncan by Hitchcock), but Shakespeare's words would be cut to nothing and his rhythms lost among visual silences or natural sounds. Shaw, at first a martinet against cutting his lines for film purposes, gave way so that *Pygmalion* and *Major Barbara* became partly enjoyable as sound films and partly as hundred-per-cent talkie Shaw. Olivier's *Henry V*, a beautiful rendering of the play from the theatrical point of view, achieves a certain cinematic quality in the prose scenes where Shakespeare's speech is at its most intimate, idiomatic and realistic, such as Mistress Quickly's story of the death of Falstaff and Henry's scene with the soldiers the night before Agincourt. Agincourt itself is excellent cinema following the classic example of medieval battle in Eisenstein's *Alexander Nevski,* as Eisenstein's own battle scene in *Ivan the Terrible* is reminiscent of the Babylonian onslaughts of *Intolerance.* In *Cæsar and Cleopatra,* however, Shaw and Pascal have held far too rigidly to the essentially theatrical text of a very theatrical play, and no amount of De Mille-like crowd scenes or amazing sets filmed in Technicolor could save this most expensive of British films from being entirely uncinematic. It became a highly-coloured film record of theatrical eloquence spoken by a distinguished and excellent cast, but not a film. It is rumoured that if he had his time over again Shaw would have written for films, not for the theatre. He began life as a music and an art critic: he has a mobile plastic sense and has turned theatre technique upside down. But as a critic his eloquence sold his ideas to a public unused to hard truth, and his theatrical

experiments were all made in favour of words and yet more words. Would Shaw have had the reticence necessary for the screen?

American idiom is clipped and pert, insolent and free, quickened with imagery and spoken at speed. Good American talkies, and they are many, register fast, but they shoot a percentage of their dialogue round, not into, the ears of the very un-American British, who think they speak the same language properly through their mouths. But reticence is known in American films (the opening of *The Long Voyage Home* and *The Grapes of Wrath*, sequences in *Fury* and *Scarface* when the visuals are left to sink in on their own), and directors are obviously doing their damnedest to get that camera around even whilst the actor does the talking. Comedy particularly—and the American rhythm of life and rhythm of tongue lend themselves to comedy both foolish and satiric—is often an affair of slick words, but the skill of the American editor in cutting and continuity frequently puts a kick into the dialogue by means of scissors and acetate. Comedy is also a matter of situation, usually sexual (*Her Cardboard Lover, My Two Husbands, Tom, Dick and Harry* and a host more excellent stories), and sexual situations are frequently as much something to spy upon as listen to. Good cinema takes advantage of this, and the film is still a box-office draw with a bigger kick through being a sure-fire film kick.

Alexander Korda, who put British film on the critical American market—still critical—with *The Private Life of Henry VIII*, subsequently allowed the scenario of this film to be published. This was in many ways a good film, repaying study. It was a model of scripting in the economy and wit of its dialogue, whatever may be said of its history, which is beside the point anyway, since it is doubtful if Henry even deserved to have the truth said about him. An example from this scenario should illustrate the point of keeping the dialogue smart and in its place:

" Fade-in."

Int. Royal Bedchamber—Morning.

Scene 1—Medium Shot.

Camera shooting towards the bed-hangings, with embroidered corners ' H ' and ' A ' above the bed. Trucking back till the camera shows the bed.

Scene 2—Medium Shot.

Camera shooting towards the door of the bedchamber. The door opens and the Old Nurse peeps cautiously into the room. She enters and beckons to unseen people outside the door. Half a dozen ladies-in-waiting enter. They look round the room with great interest.

Scene 3—Full Shot.

The young ladies approach the bed, the Old Nurse leading them. It is a very exciting adventure for the young ladies. When they get near to the bed, the Old Nurse turns her head and indicates the bed, as if to say: 'Here it is!'

Scene 4—Medium Shot.

Old Nurse with a very spirited young lady. She follows the Old Nurse into the immediate proximity of the bed. The Old Nurse smiles at her encouragingly. She is all excitement, but speaks at last:

1ST LADY: So that's the King's bed.

NURSE: Yes, my dear (slips her hand down the bed), and he has not long left it—feel!

The girl feels the warm sheets. Her eyes are creating a picture—there is a tiny pause before she speaks. Other girls now come into the picture, feeling more at ease.

1ST LADY: I wonder what he looks like—in bed.

2ND LADY: (a rival beauty) You'll never know!

1ST LADY: (annoyed) Well, there's no need to be spiteful, is there, Mistress Nurse?

NURSE: (consolingly) No, my dear; and you've as good a chance as another when the King's in one of his merry moods.

The girls laugh.

1ST LADY: (covered with real or mock confusion) Oh! I never meant—I never thought——

2ND LADY: Didn't you, darling?

The second lady looks as though she were going to slap the other girl's face, but the Old Nurse bustles between them to the bed and catches hold of the coverlet.

NURSE: Now, Ladies! You're not here to quarrel, but to get busy with your needles.

(Business.) Look—all these 'A's' must come out, and 'J's' go in. Hurry, Ladies, hurry!

Scene 5—Full Shot.

The young ladies go to work now with all their instincts unfettered. They are gathering up the linen, taking down the hangings. Suppressed laughter accompanies their whispers.

Scene 6—Medium Shot.

Two young ladies who have not spoken yet, holding the embroidered 'H' and 'A' in their hands.

Scene 7—Detail Shot.

The embroidered 'H' and 'A' in the young ladies' hands.

Scene 8—Medium Shot.

Back to the young ladies who examine the two letters closely.

3RD LADY: Anne Boleyn dies this morning. Jane Seymour takes her place tonight! What luck!

4TH LADY: For which of them?

("The Private Life of Henry VIII," Biro and Wimperis, pp. 1-4.)

Good scripted dialogue remains one of the essentials of good filmcraft. Scenarists like Robert Riskin who works with Frank Capra, Dudley Nichols who has worked among others with John Ford and has been responsible for many excellent scripts such as *The Informer*, Preston Sturges who is a script-writer turned director, Jacques Prévert who has worked for ten years with Marcel Carné, all show that there is such a thing as film-style in dialogue writing. British script-writing as far as dialogue goes is not its strongest point. There is a point where simplicity and directness of speech become a form of poetry: this is seen in the dialogue of films like *The Ox-bow Incident, The Grapes of Wrath, The Lost Weekend* and *The Southerner*. This strength and simplicity is to be found in some British films: *Millions like Us, Waterloo Road, The Rake's Progress* (the work of Frank Launder and Sidney Gilliat) exemplify it. The dialogue of Noel Coward and David Lean's *Brief Encounter* has no waste words. Too many otherwise good British films still prattle when they should be swift and precise, or else they produce the effect of theatricalism by over-writing the words until they do not speak naturally. The war films on the whole have been the best scripted, and this is especially true of the feature-scale type of documentary film for which the directors of the Crown Film

Unit have made themselves famous (*Target for Tonight, Coastal Command, Close Quarters* and *Western Approaches*). American dialogue at its worst has a horrible banality and gold-digging insincerity which no amount of gags or slickness or blonde bombshells can redeem from shame: it is worse than the priggish Mayfair debutante banter which so many of the best homes of Britain try to copy from novel, stage and screen. If it were not already called small-talk, it could be called tea-tattle.

Next comes the examination of the importance of film music.

Many of us will remember the girl (out of the piano endlessly playing) in the half-empty silent cinema during the afternoons of the twenties, and the films accompanied by full and sometimes augmented orchestras for the packed houses at night. With characteristic Italian musical ingenuity Giuseppi Becce compiled a music library called the Kinothek which he began in 1919 and developed until thousands of pieces were classified under headings of mood and playing time. The conductor could therefore build up a mosaic or pot-pourri of musical fragments to fit the varying tempos and moods of the film, taking his cue either mechanically from a visual rhythmonome synchronised with the picture or from his own skilled sense of what was going on above him on the screen. Silent pictures left on the stocks with the coming of sound had similar pot-pourris added to them either on records or on the sound track, and so were saved from junking before release.

This type of musical jugglery presupposed that all the music did was to underline the action with a parallel musical throb and rhythm. The silent screen, except for its high-spots, always did seem to lack sound, and the noise of the projectors in any case required drowning along with the coughs and cat-calls of the untrained cinema audience. In a few rare instances a special score was prepared of original music to accompany the film, such as Meisel's music for Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* when it was shown in Berlin. But musical acrobatics were the rule, with the artiste following the spot-light instead of the spotlight tracking the artiste.

The line of advance was obviously to weld the score into an artistic whole with the picture, rather than to use it as a running commentary underneath it. This meant time, money and imagination. The Russians had the time, the Americans the

money, and the French the imagination. In this country Arthur Bliss added point to the visuals of Wells' and Menzies' *Things to Come*, and the music was subsequently arranged as a suite. This music at any rate had the virtue of being composed by a distinguished musician to impregnate the visual passages in a film for which it was specially intended. It was not a hotch-potch of Chopin and Sousa alternately lumping the throat and swelling the breast of a happily victimised audience. Maurice Jaubert (distinguished for his work with René Clair in *Le Dernier Milliardaire* and *Le Quatorze Juillet*) writes of film music:

> " We do not go to the cinema to hear music. We require it to deepen and prolong in us the screen's visual impressions. Its task is not to explain these impressions, but to add to them an overtone specifically different—or else film music must be content to remain perpetually redundant. Its task is not to be expressive by adding its sentiments to those of the characters or of the director, but to be decorative by uniting its own rhythmical pattern with the visual pattern woven for us on the screen.
>
> " That is why I believe it to be essential for film music to evolve a style of its own." (" Footnotes to the Film," p. 111.)

Kurt London, in his admirable book on " Film Music," writes as follows:

> " The musical accompaniment in a film which is a play with little dialogue appears for long stretches at a time to play the part played by illustration in silent films. But here we have the essential distinction between musical accompaniment in silent and in sound-films: in the latter, there are never more than relatively short lengths of film running ' silent ' and having no other sound than the music, whereas the whole of a silent film must inevitably be illustrated. Sound-films need no illustration, but their music has to be the psychological advancement of the action. While, therefore, we may characterise silent-film operetta as a near approach to dumb show, the music accompanying the scenes which are without dialogue in a sound-film is neither illustrative nor mimetic. It is an altogether new mixture of musical elements. It has to connect dialogue sections

without friction; it has to establish associations of ideas and carry on developments of thought; and, over and above all this, it has to intensify the incidence of climax and prepare for further dramatic action." ("Film Music," p. 135.)

Again, examples prove the theory:

A. Films using theme songs dramatically:

1. CARNET DE BAL: (Paris Export Film Co., 1937.
French. Director, Julien Duvivier)

The waltz is the musical theme of the film. It haunts the day-dream of the young widow until it builds into a grand symphony of illusion with lovely waltzing images in a pattern of luxury. It distorts into regret and lonely thinness as disillusion sets in, and grows cynically dissonant in the episode where the mature woman revisits her former lover, now a criminal doctor crazy with epilepsy, in a quayside tenement.

2. REMOUS: (H. O. Films, 1934.
French. Director, Edmond T. Greville)

The theme love-song, sung at the cabaret with wonderful French eroticism by Lyne Clevers, permeates this fundamentally erotic film. It is played frequently on the gramophone and is used for background and incidental purposes until it becomes a leit-motif creeping into the situations in which the characters find themselves involved. (See later comment on the incidental music at the close of the film.)

3. L'ATALANTE: (Gaumont, France, 1933.
French. Director, Jean Vigo; Music, Maurice Jaubert)

Jean Vigo died in 1935. He was perhaps the most original and promising of the greater French directors. The story is the simplest possible—the young skipper of a barge on the Seine brings his bride to live on the boat: she is cramped and ambitious for city life even in the docks and slums of Paris where eventually the barge arrives. A momentary quarrel and she is gone. The separated couple yearn for each other (and at its climax the treatment becomes surrealist). They are eventually brought together again by the grotesque half-mad ship's mate,

brilliantly played by Michel Simon. As for the realism of the film, the documentary producer, John Grierson, said he could have found his way about this barge blind drunk on a wet night; and the surrealists claim part of the film as psychologically theirs. Jaubert's music, basically a theme song, appears as leit-motif throughout the film, and distorts into dominance as the separated lovers dream of each other as though they were searching eternally in a vast sea, swimming under water.

B. Films using music incidentally:

1. THINGS TO COME: (London Films, 1935. British. Director, William Cameron Menzies)

Arthur Bliss composed music for this film which was later arranged as a suite and recorded by Decca. The music was used for bridging the episodes, and underlining some of the more spectacular actions (such as the sequences dealing with the declaration of war, mobilisation and the subsequent pestilence and devastation of the civilised world). The music is impressionist and closely linked with the atmosphere created by the images.

2. MY TWO HUSBANDS: (Columbia, 1940. American. Director, Wesley Ruggles)

This is the type of comedy in which the Americans are at their best. It is chosen as typical of many. It is good throughout, and uses music for comic emphasis when the quarrel between husband and wife is at its height, and he boldly stalks along to a marching tune to settle the matter on the spot, only to be thrown out defeated with the tune distorted.

3. REMOUS: (H. O. Films, 1934. French. Director, Edmond T. Greville)

The final suicide of the paralytic husband in the face of his wife's sacrifice of her lover to devote herself to him, is anticipated in the heavily charged atmosphere of the final sequences. This anticipation is confirmed by the ominous staccato throb of the strings which starts almost imperceptibly and leads up to the climax of the shot itself, which is heard while the camera dwells on the emotion of the wife in another room from that in

which the suicide is happening. The terrific sense of tension is undoubtedly impregnated by the subconscious effect of this special score, which might well escape conscious notice in the strength of the visual action.

4. DESERTER: (Mezhrabpomfilm, 1931-33. Russian. Director, Pudovkin; Music, Shaporin)

Music is used ironically in this film when a policeman on point-duty appears to direct the large cars filled with somnolent capitalists to the tune of a waltz. At the climax of the action Pudovkin counterpoints by playing triumphant music throughout whilst the strikers suffer temporal defeat, the music emphasising the spiritual triumph of the action which is visually unapparent.

> "The course of the image twists and curves, as the emotion within the action rises and falls. Now, if we use music as an accompaniment to this image we should open with a quiet melody, appropriate to the soberly guided traffic; at the appearance of the demonstration the music would alter to a march; another change would come at the police preparations, menacing the workers—here the music would assume a threatening character; and when the clash came between workers and police—a tragic moment for the demonstrators—the music would follow this visual mood, descending ever further into themes of despair. Only at the resurrection of the flag could the music turn hopeful. A development of this type would give only the superficial aspect of the scene, the undertones of meaning would be ignored; accordingly I suggested to the composer (Shaporin) the creation of a music the dominating emotional theme of which should throughout be courage and the certainty of ultimate victory. From beginning to end the music must develop in a gradual growth of power. . . . What rôle does the music play here? Just as the image is an objective perception of events, so the music expresses the subjective appreciation of this objectivity. The sound reminds the audience that with every defeat the fighting spirit only receives new impetus to the struggle for final victory in the future." (PUDOVKIN, "Film Technique," pp. 163-4, 164-5.)

5. CITIZEN KANE: (Mercury Productions, 1941.
American. Director, Orson Welles)

The music in the opening sequence as the camera glides up the ironwork of the Kane palace builds the atmosphere as macabre and terrifying. It continues to build with the images up to the climax of the sequence as the crystal rolls from the dead man's hand and crashes splintering on the floor with the last word "rosebud" declared from Kane's dying lips. It is interesting that a similar use of music building terror and tension is used behind Orson Welles' commentary to an American documentary on tank production for the Mediterranean and Russian fronts.

Many distinguished composers have recognised the importance of music in the film, and have realised the distinction between the score which merely supplements the visual action with an accompaniment on the "programme-music" level, and the composition of music which informs the spirit of the film with a genuinely creative addition to its artistic effect. The work of Prokofiev for Eisenstein's films *Alexander Nevski* and *Ivan the Terrible* is a fine example of such creative co-operation. In the sequence when the Teutonic Knights remove their sinister emblematic helmets and order the massacre of their victims in the captured Russian town, Prokofiev's music becomes the formalised expression of pain and terror. In *Ivan the Terrible* at the ceremony of coronation a resonant bass voice rises into a great anthem taken up by the choir: this unaccompanied voice has a curious effect of largeness and distance and echo even though the singer is seen in close-up.

The British films of recent years have been finely served by our composers such as William Walton (*Target for Tonight, Henry V*), William Alwyn (*Desert Victory, The Way Ahead, Great Day*), Benjamin Britten (*Coalface, Night Mail*), Vaughan Williams (*Malta G.C.*) and Alan Rawsthorne (*Burma Victory*). The music has been magnificently recorded, and we owe a great debt to Muir Mathieson who has conducted the London Symphony Orchestra for these original scores and also for the older classical music which is so often used now in British films. The intelligent use of both original and classical music has played

a notable part in the renaissance of British films which is described more fully in a later chapter.

6. ESSENTIALS OF FILM ART: ACTING

Film acting is fortunately a controversial subject. The first point of controversy has already been put by Pudovkin in a previous quotation dealing with the dictatorship of the director-editor. The actor is so much plastic material in the hands of the only man who knows how the film is to emerge from the studio to the projection room. On the other hand, how does this match up with the legend of Garbo and Dietrich? So much has to be disentangled from the blurb of publicity and the personal silence of most stars and directors.

The second point of controversy arises in the problem of whether the star is acting in the film, or whether the film is merely a vehicle for a star's peculiar and limited talent. The third issue turns on the colossal salaries earned by people without special acting talent but with an ability to look well and dress well in all situations.

The simplest issue is the last. Its social importance will be discussed later. Its importance to the present argument is merely to state once and for all its truth. A proportion of stars, but only a proportion, are good-lookers with or without clothes, and normal men and women will pay to go and see them because it is pleasant to see as much as you can of good-looking women and handsome men. There should be no controversy here on the matter of acting. These people are asked to parade through certain situations before making their bow and collecting their contract money, and they are sold by their publicity allocation as actors and actresses instead of highly paid exponents of beauty and clothes-wear. Their work is not relevant to any study of screen acting, but their existence is of great importance to a study of the social effect of the screen.

The first issue cannot be resolved in words. The relationship between director and actor in the film is far more complex than between producer and actor on the stage. It is always pointed out, quite rightly, that the stage actor has a run for his money that the film actor has not. His work is progressive. He begins at the beginning and ends at the end. His sense of acting climax is never thwarted. Unless he is hopelessly sunk in his

own part at the expense of his colleagues, he has almost as good a sense of the development of the play as a whole as his producer in front. The film actor has only this sense of continuity in theory, since he can never act his part through from beginning to end except in imagination, or over the conference table (if he is allowed there, as he may well never be). The director is the admitted co-ordinator of the actors' work, with the continuity girl killing the details. Shot topside up and sideways round, the actor is hurled from moment to moment in an order dictated by floorspace and technical considerations. After having died, he proceeds to live; after marriage, he starts in to earn his engagement, because the floor-space occupied by the church is required for another show. High-lit and howled at he is the victim of James Dunne combined with all the surrealists, and it is small wonder that he earns enough in a year to keep him a life-time and usually retires early in life to the order and calm of the divorce courts.

Pudovkin calls him plastic material, and it sounds true. But where are the signs of all this turmoil in the faces of Gabin, Fonda, Raimu, in the eyes of Bette Davis? How did Fonda ever get into pictures? Why do intelligent and sane stage actors like Donat stay in them when there is reasonably good money in the theatre?

The answer is compromise, skill and patience. The cinema is a hard industry seeking hard cash. Where money changes hands orders are given, and dismissal awaits around the corner. But as against this, actors capable of imaginative survival of the racket are rare and hard to come by, and without them there would be no money to change in financiers' hands. So compromise ensues, and the stars themselves gain the power and influence to answer back to capital on their own account. They may also make friends with their directors.

The screen, like the stage, cannot let the technicians banish the temperament. But the stars must control their tempers to co-operate with the technicians. The true answer to the problem is that where there is co-operation and understanding between star, director and technicians there is greater likelihood of artistic achievement.

The secret of screen acting is the secret of the imaginative use of realism and of the quality of detail which accompanies

the magnification of the screen. The Americans, the French and the Russians have understood this best in the build-up of a hard core of acting tradition.[1] It requires imagination and great self-discipline of body and face to enact subjective feeling in terms of minute objective changes of expression and attitude. Yet this is what the real artists of cinema acting can do. They observe and reproduce the small things. The stage actor, working through space, observes and reproduces the larger movements. For people who like definitions to remember, it might be said that the stage actor, for the most part, acts in the major key, whilst the film actor, for the most part, plays in the minor. Both may effectively reverse the process to obtain certain given effects, but the main part of their work must be conceived in these ways.

To understand this one must watch for the details of acting technique. You will see them in the eyes and hips of Bette Davis, the face of Jouvet (whose body is nearly always stiff and still), and apparent expressionlessness of Raimu, whose body is part of his eloquence, the walk of Fonda and the poetic realism of his hesitant voice, the smile of Spencer Tracy, the differing sensuous qualities of face in Garbo and Dietrich (watch the lighting which accentuates this), the commonplace ease of Gabin. You will see these details in the sensitive, intense expression of Jean-Louis Barrault in *Les Enfants du Paradis,* in the signs of neurotic passion which are the strength of Agnes Moorehead's performance in *The Magnificent Ambersons.* You will see them in the curious eccentricities of facial expression and bodily movement with which Michel Simon presents his characters. And you will see them in the use of her eyes as Celia Johnson reveals the intensity of feeling of the heroine of *Brief Encounter,* a part very different in kind from her

[1] We in Britain have trained a new school of film actors and actresses during the War who are beginning to take their place alongside the older line of stars, men like John Mills, Michael Redgrave, Robert Newton, Roger Livesey, Eric Portman, John Clements, Bernard Miles, Mervyn Johns, Richard Attenborough, and women like Phyllis Calvert, Celia Johnson, Rosamund John, Ann Todd, Googie Withers, Lilli Palmer, Sheila Sim, whilst David Niven, Vivien Leigh, Lawrence Olivier, Ralph Richardson, Flora Robson, Robert Donat and Rex Harrison developed earlier established reputations. Stewart Granger, James Mason and Margaret Lockwood have also become well-known stars in box-office films.

magnificently reticent study of a housewife in *This Happy Breed*. It is difficult to tell where acting stops and the plastic properties of face and body begin. The great stars all have plastic faces, full of vitality however controlled, and with great photogenic qualities. Just so far the director is the master. Just so far the actor. The two main issues are complementary, after all.

There is one further point which requires its place in the argument. Men of the great acting quality of Laughton and Howard are often accused of being themselves at the expense of their parts. It must be recognised that, despite make-up and lighting, the range that a film-actor can cover is relatively less than that of the stage actor, where broader lines of make-up and bodily transformation can be assumed. A man is often chosen for his first lead because he has the right face and physique for the part: Laughton made his film name as Henry VIII: Alexander Knox as Wilson. Laughton passed through a series of parts for all of which his physique and remarkable face were of great plastic value. He has great versatility within his own range—Henry VIII, Rembrandt, Bligh, Ginger Ted, Ruggles, all different and yet the same photogenic Laughton mannerisms in all. The late Leslie Howard varied still less, but his audiences loved his quiet, superior, confident, kindly charm.

But there are a few actors and actresses whose work raises the issue as to what constitutes great acting anywhere, on stage or screen. It seems to be the power to bring convincin gobjective life in voice, face and body to any character with which their imagination can come to grips. The true appreciation of their work begins at the point where one is able to distinguish it from that of the merely brilliant or competent stars who have given themselves up to the experience of playing themselves over and over again. This repetition is the commercial attribute of stardom. But it does not constitute great acting after the manner of the few who remain artists whatever part they play.

7. THE FILM: REALISM AND FANTASY

> " But as soon as speech came in the cinema changed its character. It became, it is, and it remains realistic." (MAURICE JAUBERT.)
>
> " The creative treatment of actuality." (GRIERSON.)

And so on. Everyone has said it sometime. And yet the

film retains Disney, the Marx brothers, René Clair, Boris Karloff and many sights which ought not to be realistic even if they look it.

T. E. Hulme in his book "Speculations" has written that there is an eternal antagonism in all the arts between realism and formalism—the urge to make the arts look like life (realism) and the urge to make the arts look like art (formalism). Yet both of these different artistic attitudes are born of a like attitude to the chaos of experiences which is life itself. The realist looks at experience steadily and records it with a view to analysis in the process (later Greek sculpture, Leonardo da Vinci, much of Shakespeare, Goya, Balzac, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Joyce, Proust, the French, Russian and American film tradition). The formalist rejects actuality as such except in so far as he can create a permanent form of beauty from it which he may eternalise in the still processes of art and literature (early Greek, Etruscan and early medieval sculpture, much of Shakespeare, much negro art, much Eastern art, much great music, the German silent cinema, the sets of art directors of many otherwise realistic films,[1] the symphonic element in Pudovkin and Eisenstein).

Hulme goes on to say that certain periods in civilisation prefer the one attitude to art, some the other. This is by main tendency only: civilisation cannot be bounded by the nutshell of a generality, and there is always a fellow in an attic or a dungeon doing the other thing to prove the historian wrong. Shakespeare did both with perfect ease: he was old-fashioned medievalist and Renaissance modernist at once and so gets the best of both worlds and pleases everybody prepared to be pleased at all.

Our present cycle of civilisation is realistic by tendency, but with a strong leaning to formalism to keep the realists awake. There is no date to give for the start of this cycle except to say it began before Shakespeare's time. The realist's urge (to see life steadily, to see it whole, to analyse society and the functions of mankind) began once more with the Renaissance. Against

[1] For instance, in a fine, tough, ultra-realistic racketeering film, *The Glass Key*, the art director allows a beautiful symphony of shadows on the wall when the faithful friend visits his political boss in a back room at the attorney's office where he is held on suspicion of murder.

reactions spiced with romanticism, peppered with idealism, intoxicated by mysticism or stiffened by dogma, the divine curiosity has stood boldly for liberty of speech and enquiry from the voice of Milton to the voice of Shaw.

From the point of view of the subjects and treatment expected of films by the modern audience, the love of realism is undoubtedly the fundamental taste. However spiced by the impossible, the audience expects the film it pays to see to bear a resemblance to the life it lives, or to be like its conception of the life it thinks the other fellow lives. The film of escape must always be the film of credible escape, and audiences look askance and a little lost when faced with films like the abstract sections of *Fantasia,* because these, however beautiful, belong to a world which rarely impinges on the breadwinner and his family.

The industrial revolution stole the last remnants of beauty out of formalised living. Life, never very clean, grew dirtier, and even the rich and leisured had to become aware of the dangers of another sort of revolution. The study of social welfare by the leisured class grew proportionately, and some positive achievements were contributed by the acts of social amelioration made in the Parliaments of the nineteenth century. Dickens wrote his novels just in time for the middle class to read them with a realistic eye.

The film took up the social theme early in its life. Barely twelve years after its start it was making *Birth of a Nation* and *Intolerance.* Both were three hours long. The first dealt with the racial problem in South American history. The second showed the spirit of Intolerance as an evil destroying the great achievements of mankind. Serious-minded people visited the pictures for the first time. This was something to be reckoned with.

Although the cinema has not wholly shirked its responsibility in showing the broader movements of history to the world, it prefers on the whole the more obvious attractions of a story and a personality. It produced in silent days the great French picture *La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc* as a serious contribution to history, but it is more likely to build up its historical personalities round those of the stars who play them. It is more fun to see Fonda as Abe Lincoln and Laughton as King Henry than to see a

scholar's dummy. With history as entertainment, a long line of titles could be produced with the stars shining bright in historical circles.

For realism means real people, honest, four-square, lovable, hateful, unambiguous people. Personality, character, individuality, unusual careers, go-getting, living, loving and dying, these are the staple interests of a realistic age. Along with it comes an interest in occupations, jobs, social backgrounds. Films not about high society are usually about people with a provincial occupational background, gangsters, actresses, barmen, dancers, shop-keepers, policemen, taxi-drivers, engine-drivers, soldiers, sailors, airmen, schoolmarms, nurses, doctors, miners, bankers, racketeers, businessmen, detectives, inventors, musicians and writers. Though the story may not much concern their occupations, none the less it is good to know the girl marries a man with a job. However foolish, melodramatic, dull or thrilling the action may be, realism is the order of the day from an audience's point of view.

This is not to deny that the film as a technical medium is suited to the fantastic. The most convincing dragon seen by human eye was probably the elaborate model in the German film *Siegfried* which lost its illusion only when its belly ripped like canvas against the warrior's sword. A film ghost is a guaranteed ghost since it is photographically a true one. The film can make all things credible, including traffic running backwards and cars running up walls. Harold Lloyd's film *Safety Last* was a success, not because everyone did not realise it was all a trick, but because it was so difficult not to believe in its truth, after all.

The film has been a playground for fantasy from the start when Méliès of France went star-gazing on the moon. Ever since then ghosts and day-dreams, visions of pasteboard heavens and plaster hells have counteracted the steady stream of realism pouring out of the studios. On the whole it is a poverty-stricken mysticism—the sort of thing you cannot take a child to see because it is too like goblins in the dark. Mixed with a spurious religious content came films like *Dante's Inferno, The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, Earthbound,* and in more recent times the sort of thing that spoilt *The Great Mr. Handel.* With that dash of puerility which seems to lurk in the most sophisticated film executive, you may at any time find yourself

affronted with the primitive visions of religious mania dictated between telegrams into a dictaphone.

But the film remains the expert medium for fantasy—because it is so realistic. Seeing is believing even in *The Invisible Man.* The truer regions of fantasy lie not in the easy technique of superimposed images, but in the fantastic approach to life found in the films of Clair, the Marx brothers and Walt Disney.

The peculiar genius of Clair flourished only in his native France.

Hollywood occasionally produces the genuine fantasy in films like the delightful *Wizard of Oz* or the hilarious *Hellzapoppin.* One has always to distinguish between the high jinks or general tomfoolery and those genuine bursts of fantasy which may be found in many otherwise ordinary pictures, such as some of the dance numbers in *Cover Girl.* Some American comedies, especially those of Garson Kanin, Capra and Preston Sturges all the time verge on fantasy though their observation of life is essentially realistic. They exaggerate the absurdities of human behaviour and convention until we realise what a fantastic civilisation we have created to live in.

The peculiar gift of Chaplin to the cinema was two-fold, the supreme art of pantomime where he is approached only by the Marx brothers, and a humane vision which, like that of Griffith, derives from the nineteenth century. Apart from the moments of pantomime, which are always superbly conceived and timed, it is peculiar that one can more easily play one of his old two-reelers to a modern audience than one of Chaplin's greater films of feature length made after 1921. The old two and three reelers contained not only wonderful acrobatic and pantomimic shots made with superb economy and projected at great speed (*The Rink, The Cure* and the fights in *Easy Street*), but also imaginatively invented comic business (*The Pawn-Shop, Shoulder Arms*). As Chaplin matured his sense of comic fantasy retreated before the emotionalism of the little man who is downtrodden and rejected most of the time, an essentially old-fashioned conception of the sentimental tramp. This may lead to superb moments in the longer films from a dramatic point of view; for example, the moments of pathos in *The Gold Rush, The Kid* or *The Circus.* But although this need in Chaplin to express his sympathy with the sentimental character he evolved

must be admired on humanitarian grounds, in the end it is the insolent, fantastic character of the clown in the commedia del arte tradition which is at the root of Chaplin's art. This character will never die or grow old-fashioned. The resource, the ingenuity, the by-play with vice and virtue, the visual innuendoes of Chaplin survive the old-fashioned sentimentalities found alongside in *Modern Times* and *The Great Dictator*. These resources are the products of a superb cinematic imagination.

René Clair began his film life at the age of twenty-five in 1923. He mingled his interest in absurdity and the fantastic (*Entr'acte* and *Paris qui dort*) with an interest in that early French experimental school called the avant-garde, which played around with the camera and the scissors. It was perhaps peculiarly French that the logic of the *reductio ad absurdum* of camera work should be developed in France while the same studies in Russia were directed to the ends of propaganda. The advantages of the avant-garde movement were the advantages of freedom to do what you liked as you looked for material to put through the gate of the camera. The disadvantages were that the movement was experimental without direction, and on the whole had little to say. Being experimental you had to stop that way, and when you were short of ideas you made your material interesting by shooting upside down or at an angle at which no one could recognise what you were after.[1]

It is easy to criticise the avant-garde now, just as it is easy for middle-age with cash to criticise the antics of youth without it. It produced many fine directors for the sound period, and was to the same immeasurable degree responsible, no doubt, for the fine spirit of independence which was the glory of the best French cinema until Fascism blacked it out from the screen, and jack-booted so much of its genius to territories where it could be free but no longer French.

Clair, nurtured in this different spirit of cinema, produced his first distinguished film on French life in *The Italian Straw Hat* where he pillories the bourgeois eighteen-nineties with merciless

[1] The true workers in French experimental cinema will appreciate that this is not a criticism of their endeavour to use the medium outside the normal margins of contemporary technique, but rather of the merely playboy approach to the camera which too many avant-garde films, made both in France and elsewhere, tend to show during the past twenty years.

glee under the pretence of filming a farce by Labiche. *Sous les Toits de Paris* was one of the earliest of sound films, released in 1930, and shown rather later in England. With a memorable theme song, the first line of which was the title of the film (how memorable and emotionally apt these French theme songs are: I can still hum the tunes from *Sous les Toits, L'Atalante* and *Remous* after all these years), *Sous les Toits* was realism transfigured into a world made by the imagination of René Clair, a bolt from the solid earth of the tenements back to the blue of joy and tears and laughter. There was horror in an atmosphere of a different kind in the fight with knives in the misty light of the railway embankment: an early experimental use of sound. There was gay fantasy in *Le Million* with its background of the exaggerated passions of the opera-stages, a glorious setting for true-love, and the magnificent chase for the coat which ends up as a football match on the stage and in the wings of the theatre. (Did the Marx brothers see this before making *A Night at the Opera*?) Then follows the grimmer fantasy of *A Nous la Liberté* with the workers' lovely pasteboard paradise into which they escape from the ballet of the factory belt. This fantasy of mass production culminates in the collapse of social formality as the crowd breaks up to scramble for banknotes and dances hilariously through the factory in great streams of movement to a climax of music and montage. Clair has the heart of Chaplin and the social destructiveness of the Marx brothers combined. (Did Chaplin see *A Nous la Liberté* before making *Modern Times*?) *Le Quatorze Juillet*, a beautiful and restrained film, cannot be regarded as fantasy like its predecessors, and his last film before leaving France, *Le Dernier Milliardaire*, is more in the tradition of theatrical burlesque. After that a decline in grace if not in prestige set in with the unsuitable *The Ghost goes West*, shot in England, and his subsequent work in America. A French critic writing after *Le Dernier Milliardaire* says:

> " If the future brings him back to imaginary worlds and music, bittersweet romance, ballets of lovemaking and anxious lovers we shall forgive him. It would be foolish to try to put limits on what he may do.
>
> " He was the only film man in France whose work displayed both purpose and progress. There is no other such

> group of films as these, apart from the work of Chaplin, Eisenstein and Pabst. His delicately shaded style with its thin but strong line suggests far more than it actually shows. Clair is one of the very rare directors of whom it can be said that their films gain by being seen twice and cannot be understood until that second time, like certain music and poetry." (BARDECHE, "History of the Film," p. 334.)

After his more recent work, the unique earlier films must be reseen to be believed. And they should be reseen.

Into a world of pomp and circumstance, the Marx brothers burst like a wind of relief. They represent all the things one was brought up not to do, but wanted to do. They take the place to pieces with steady glee. They dress like nothing on earth except that their clothes are recognisable in bits and pieces. Groucho wears a painted moustache which no one in the film dreams of querying; he moves with the assured insolence of a ballet dancer who cannot stop dancing off-stage. Every gesture is an act of impertinence; he makes love like a panther, and all women are his prey. He is the great charlatan who when he goes takes the door with him. He would take the kick off a horse.

Harpo is mad until you see he is sane. A harp softens him into a smile and a sense of the people around him. He is a musician who goes mad in his off-time. His wisecracks are gestures. Master of impulse, dressed like the Mad Hatter, he chases a girl before he can see her: he knows his type at psychic speed. Destructive, happy, unfailing and unflinching, he removes the piano from the wires and plays sweet music to please himself. And then he smiles at children and negroes and simple people who can be happy as he is happy with a harp.

Chico is the nearest sanity. He stands in the middle between Harpo and Groucho and leads them on. He can play the piano and knows it. He has a mischievous finger on the keys which nobody trained but himself. If he had not existed in the Marx family, it would have been necessary to invent him. He keeps the peace and gives Groucho his lead into wisecracks. He looks like a man selling ice-cream at the Opera, at the races, anywhere except the place where ice-cream should be sold.

Straight from music-hall to film, the Marx brothers do not

care a dime about the camera. They treat it like Margaret Dumont, though they know they cannot do without it. Groucho cracks the audience through it. They fill the frame with struggling bodies in a ship's cabin. They stick it in front of them while they wisecrack to each other or at their victims.

Their wisecracks are in the quickest American tradition, and leave the gangsters slow. After a time they let romance in through the back door in order to give the audience a rest. Even Marx brothers sleep and eat. But the romance leaves something to be desired.

Disney provides a folklore for the modern world. We are still a primitive people, but our fears and hopes follow a different line from the remaining races on the globe whom we call primitive to distinguish them from ourselves. Our fears are the rent-collector and landlord, the job that is too complicated, machinery that goes wrong and clothes that are too tight, and the absence of money. Our hopes are the pretty girl and the cottage, a faithful dog, friendship, good food and good pay. Our metaphysics are the principle of evil which goes from the instinct to bully via Hitler to the big bad wolf himself, and to his partisans the looming spider and the fabulous witch. The average man in this world of good and evil is Mickey Mouse who knows a thing or two once he has been bitten. The lesser sins of sloth and boastfulness are in a dog and a duck. The wise expert on life, remote, watchful, helpful if you handle him right, is a crow or an owl or a cricket. The whole thing is common sense, common decency and a weather-eye on the world at large.

Into this simple philosophy of things, Disney brings a wealth of technical virtuosity and rhythmic dexterity. His timing is unique. So is his sense of sound, which is used for every conceivable comic effect. Because of the relative flatness of his earlier images he was the first director to use colour with effect. His film factory is shown with all its elaboration in *The Reluctant Dragon* and described in detail in Professor Feild's excellent book on Disney. It is amazing that Disney's simple philosophy, which is everyman's philosophy, has survived this astonishing mass production, with its graded artists and technical elaboration. Perhaps it is symptomatic of a better world to come in a machine age.

Disney's later films like *Saludos Amigos* and *The Three Caballeros* (evident results of America's good neighbour policy to the southern half of the Continent) have tended to lose their humanity in a technical virtuosity which is little removed from ostentatious pyrotechnics and vulgarity. The beauty of *Dumbo* and *Bambi,* the grotesque invention of *Pinocchio,* the remarkable experimentation in the abstract sequences of *Fantasia* some of which derive directly from Oscar Fischinger's earlier work in relating mobile patterns to music, these qualities for the most part are absent from the later work. But this may be a passing phase of technical development which his future films will overcome.

Disney's films are not made for children. The people who objected that the witch in *Snow White* was unsuitable were probably frightened themselves. Fright and terror exist in this world, whether under gangsters' lights or fascists' whips. These things are terrible, and there are corresponding experiences in Disney's folklore. In an early Disney a huge black spider crawls with beastly lust over a little dwarfed town. The Soviet war posters represented Hitler this way.

Many of Disney's one-reelers, and much of *Fantasia,* are just technical *tour de force,* but Disney knows when to stop and let humanity in. He knows that a man likes to take his watch to bits to see how it works, but he also knows that the same man would rather have his watch going when he sets out to meet his girl. Audiences love the huge swirling movements, the lovely coloured distortions, the fantastic reductions of the animal body to absurdity, the plops and bangs and whangings of anthropomorphised machinery. They love the rhythmic give and take between sound and image. It is all great fun with a technical medium which seems to put no stop to the acrobatics of sight and sound. But Disney's greatest achievement still remains his creation of a people's folklore, not untainted with sentimentality, but full of laughter and energy and defeat of the devil. The wheels of the imagination run backwards to a standstill when the news comes on the screen after the Disney.

The movie camera lends itself to puppets and moving cut-outs. Most audiences have seen Georg Pal's puppets, if only when they advertised Philips' Radio or Ovaltine. They are no more than pleasant and amusing. With an altogether more

delicate technique Lotte Reiniger cut out her paper figures and added depth to their antics by filming their backgrounds through shelves of glass. Disney also uses different levels of background to get his mysterious qualities of perspective in such films as *Fantasia,* using a special multiplane camera. Lotte Reiniger made films of baroque silhouette; the figures bob and dance in attractive patterns.

A single film stands out as a work of art in the medium of the serious drawn film: this is *L'Idée,* by Berthold Bartosch with music by Honegger, a film banned in this country because of its passionate communism and devastating attack on capital and clericalism. It plays about half an hour, and is a moving experience which can be seen and reseen both for its action and its magnificent draughtsmanship.

L'IDEE: (Scenario, Direction, Photography, Berthold Bartosch.
France, 1930-34. Based on Woodcuts by Frans Masereel.
Music by Arthur Honegger.)

Theme: The rich and powerful fear the aspect of truth. They buy the Church and Courts of Justice to enslave truth and rob it of its uncompromising nakedness. Even the poor reject truth in the blindness of their slavery, though the cause of truth is theirs.

Treatment: Truth is represented as a nude woman, the Idea which comes to every creative artist. The film begins with flowing revolving nebulæ from which is born the naked luminous figure of the woman. A worker receives her in diminished form, and carries her in an envelope as a message to the capitalist figures, who fall away shocked even at her diminutive nakedness. They clothe her. She is judged by an Ecclesiastical Court, who examine her only to clothe her again. She passes through the city in search of her interpreter, crossing over the old Pont-Neuf-like bridge of tradition and wealth to the iron bridge symbolic of industrialism. She meets the worker once more. Against an industrialised background of smoke and furnace she addresses the workers through her interpreter. He is arrested, and tried with only the Figure as his protector and guide. He is executed. The workers carry him with long jerky movements in a rough coffin to his grave, where he is interred with only the luminous Figure of Truth to watch over him.

A professor attempts to measure her, but she bursts the bonds his theory would impose upon her. Then she finds her medium in the workers' Press. A capitalist wonders how to enslave her: he hopes to buy the Church. He squeezes coins from the dwarf workers in his grasp: but explosions and harsh music result. The march of soldiers counter-flows against the march of workers. Over the soldiers moves the symbol of money: Truth moves over the advancing workers. They clash. The workers die to harsh high music. Like Venus Aphrodite, Truth rises from the blood and slain flesh of the people, and the march of the soldiers counter-flows with the funeral march of the coffined dead. The symbol of the Church debased by money fades before the fiery outline of Truth itself, which merges back once more into the flowing revolving nebulæ of ultimate being.

All these pictures are off the main stream of realistic cinema. About seven hundred feature-length films were released in this country each year between 1935 and the war. Of these not half a dozen could be classified as fantasy in the proper sense of that term. Though most films are films of escape, they are not presented as fantasies, and other problems arise as to their effect on their audiences. These problems will occupy us in the second part of this book.

8. DOCUMENTARY

The medium of the film, like the medium of writing, is so wide in its possibilities of expression that it cannot be classified except very loosely. A relative division into three categories might be made as follows:

(1) The use of motion photography for record purposes.
(2) The use of motion photography for "the creative treatment of actuality."
(3) The use of motion photography for the creation of film fiction.

The term Documentary is often used for all types of film which come within the first two categories, ranging from the newsreel proper to documentary proper in the form of *Western Approaches* or *The World of Plenty*. In between these extremes lie first the simple *Record Films* of scientific experiments (Dr. Doyen's films of surgical operations made as early as 1910 and

Dr. R. G. Canti's on the cultivation of living tissues made from 1924 onwards), or films like Herbert Ponting's *With Scott in the Antarctic* (1910-13), and the many films up to the present day which do little more than show a process from the ideal point of view for the spectator (for example, the lung operation sequence in the British Council's *Surgery in Chest Disease*). Then there are *Instructional Films* which aim at explaining a process so that the audience may learn it for themselves: the training films for the Services and for Civil Defence during the War are examples. They are quite distinct from *Educational Films* made for class-room instruction and demonstration: these are often silent so that the teacher and class can discuss the significance of the moving picture whilst it moves: the concern of the educational film is to provide the teacher with a further aid to demonstration in those subjects where movement in a pictorial form is useful: geography, biology, science, civics, and so on. There is also the *Propaganda Film:* good examples are some of the British Ministry of Information's health films made during the War, *Defeat Tuberculosis, Defeat Diphtheria* and *Blood Transfusion,* or the Russian film *Justice is Coming* which very skilfully develops the cine-record of the trial in Kharkov and shots of German atrocities in Russia into a great appeal that justice be done to Fascist brutality which was then slowly being defeated in Europe. The Nazis themselves developed the editing of record films into weapons of war in their propaganda campaign against Europe: they made a film of the defeat of Poland before the might of the Luftwaffe called *Baptism of Fire:* this was exhibited to the officials and where possible the public of the then neutral surrounding countries as a terrible warning against incurring the wrath of Germany. Propaganda can be political, but it can also be an attempt to promote action in any group of people from whom action is needed in matters of health, housing, food, personal safety or service to the community. Where the picture does not lead to immediate personal action, it becomes the *Information Film* of which so many were made in Britain by the documentary movement before and during the War.

All these types of film, except possibly the newsreel itself which dates back to the earliest films known in 1895 and 1896, have been included in the term Documentary, which was

adapted by John Grierson from the French word *documentaire* used to describe the travel pictures which were popular in French cinema. It seemed to Grierson writing in the late twenties a good word to use of Flaherty's films, which, apart from a very few other factual films, were the first notable pictures of this class to be made. Some other important films of this type had been

Herbert Ponting: With Scott in the Antarctic. Great Britain, 1913.

J. B. MacDowell and Geoffrey Malin: The Battle of the Somme. Great Britain, 1916; and other War films.

H. Bruce Woolfe and Percy Smith: The Secrets of Nature Series. Great Britain, 1919 onwards.

Dr. R. G. Canti's films on the cultivation of Living Tissue. Great Britain, 1924 onwards.

Schoedsack and Cooper: Grass. U.S.A., 1925.

Leon Poirier: Eve Africaine. France, 1925.

Marc Allegret and André Gide: Voyage au Congo. France, 1925.

Cavalcanti: Rien que les Heures. France, 1926.

W. Ruttmann: Berlin. Germany, 1927.

The newsreel itself started with the first films of Lumière in 1895. After many reels had been shot of particular events (such as Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 and her funeral in 1901) the regular issue of weekly newsreels was started by Charles Pathe in 1910. These films were of commercial origin and newsreels remain so to this day. The five newsreels of Britain now are

Universal News.

Gaumont-British News.

Both these are made by companies under the control of the Rank organisation.

Pathe News.

Made by Associated British and Warner Brothers, a joint British and American company with French affiliations.

British Movietone News.

Made by Twentieth Century Fox (American).

British Paramount News.

Made by Paramount Pictures (American).

The newsreels before the War were mostly dull records of dull

events; their fascination lay in their actuality and the speed with which the event in the newspaper was produced again in front of the spectator who now had a grand-stand view of the Great for the first time in his life. It was scarcely until the recent War that newsreels were more than strips glued together in chronological order, united only by the vividness of the commentary. Military reviews, society weddings and horse-racing were the staple items, with a dash of Royalty. During the War, partly by the fine efforts of their staff cameramen and the liberal provision of Service material, the newsreels became eloquent visual records of notable war events. No one present will forget the scenes on the cinema-screen as Europe was gradually liberated, and the emotion felt by British audiences. Now that peace has made the social problems of the world of the greatest importance the newsreels have slipped back into the easy channel of the race-meeting, the football-match and any other event which avoids controversial issues but which has popular surface appeal.

The Westerns from the earliest days shot more or less real cowboys in the bright American sun, but only for reasons of fiction. It was Robert Flaherty, a sort of film explorer, who took the camera to real life for real life's sake. The Revillon Frères Fur Company of New York sponsored his *Nanook of the North*. This was in 1922. Paul Rotha writes of this film:

> " *Nanook* differed from previous and many later natural-material pictures in the simplicity of its statement of the primitive existence led by the Eskimos, put on the screen with excellent photography (before the days of panchromatic emulsion) and with an imaginative understanding behind the use of the camera. It brought alive the fundamental issue of life in the sub-Arctic—the struggle for food—with such imaginatively chosen shots and with such a sincere feeling for the community interests of these people that it suggested far greater powers of observation than the plain description offered by other naturalistic photographers. Not merely did it reveal the daily struggle for life maintained by the Eskimo people, but it demonstrated that the progress of civilisation depends upon man's growing ability to make Nature serve a purpose and by his own skill to bind natural resources to his own ends. The screen has

probably no more simply treated, yet brilliantly instructive sequence than that in which Nanook builds his igloo. In short, it established an entirely new approach to the living scene, forming the basis for a method of working which Flaherty has since developed." (PAUL ROTHA, "Documentary Film," pp. 81-2.)

And John Grierson writes:

> "*Nanook* was the simple story of an Eskimo family and its fight for food, but in its approach to the whole question of film making was something entirely novel at the time it was made. It was a record of everyday life so selective in its detail and sequence, so intimate in its 'shots,' and so appreciative of the nuances of common feeling, that it was a drama in many ways more telling than anything that had come out of the manufactured sets of Hollywood." (JOHN GRIERSON, "Cinema Quarterly," No. 1, pp. 13-14.)

Flaherty must be judged great within his own limitations. He was not interested in the struggle for existence around him: he went away to look for it under adventurous primitive conditions or in the South Seas. This was not to be the main documentary tradition. Though Grierson was himself at first more of a romantic than he cared to admit after a degree in philosophy and research in social science, he looked for his material nearer home.

Nanook was a commercial success. From then on till *Man of Aran* Flaherty suffered for his fame. Sent to the South Seas by the trade, he came back with *Moana* after two years' hard work studying and shooting his material. The film is a study of the ceremonial ritual of pain, the tattoo, inflicted to prove native manhood. The trade released it, writes Rotha, "as the love-life of a South Sea siren, prologued by stripped chorus girls and jangling guitars." After a number of further troubles Flaherty made *Tabu* in the South Seas with Murnau; but was dissatisfied enough to come to Europe after it was finished. He has since made *Man of Aran* for Gaumont-British and *Elephant Boy* for London Films.

The importance of Flaherty to documentary proper is that he was the first film-maker to carry out Grierson's precept, "the creative treatment of actuality." The difference between a newsreel and *Nanook* is that the newsreel is a record of reality,

whereas *Nanook* is an interpretation. Flaherty lived with his subjects before he photographed them. He worked with them, studying their ways of life and thought. He watched the struggle with Nature, the fulfilment of tradition, the skill of the craftsman, the rhythm of simple age-long movements. Then he shot what he had seen, unrolling vast quantities of negative in the process, like Eisenstein in Mexico. Then he cut and built his film, using only a fraction of what he had shot so that his observation and its interpretation should be of the best. He was a craftsman studying craftsmen: a romantic recording the great theme of mankind and Nature.

Grierson, however, was concerned with the people around him. He was a young man who had taken a degree in Philosophy at Glasgow University after spending most of the 1914 war on auxiliary patrol and minesweeping in the Navy. He returned to England in 1928 after studying Public Relations for three years in America on a Rockefeller Research Fellowship in Social Science. He joined the staff of the Empire Marketing Board, whose Secretary was Stephen Tallents (now Sir Stephen Tallents) who was himself one of the most brilliant students of the practice of public relations of the period. Grierson made his first film *Drifters* (1929) very much under the influence of Russian technique with its montage of superimposed shots of, for example, the ship's engines turning over and the swing of the stoker's shovel. *Drifters* demonstrated an important principle: it showed the life of one section of the community (the herring fishers) to the rest. It did not merely record that life as an " interest " short might have done: it set out to recreate the whole pattern of work on the drifters, and the significance of the fishermen's service to the community and their dealings with it when they came to selling their fish after landing the catch.

Grierson worked for the Empire Marketing Board until its dissolution in 1933. He then followed Tallents to the G.P.O. where the famous Unit was founded which developed later into the Crown Film Unit of the Ministry of Information. The Board, however, made many notable films with Grierson as producer. Some of these were

The Country comes to Town (Basil Wright, 1931-2).
O'er Hill and Dale (Basil Wright, 1932).

Windmill in Barbados (Basil Wright, 1933).
Cargo from Jamaica (Basil Wright, 1933).
Industrial Britain (Grierson and Flaherty, 1933).
Granton Trawler (Edgar Anstey, 1934).
Aero-Engine (Arthur Elton, 1934).

Parallel to the work of the Government Units, though perhaps it would be fairer to say developing from that work, was the enlightened sponsorship of film production by industries such as Gas and Oil. The whole idea of public relations as exemplified by film production spread until Imperial Airways, the Travel Association, the Films of Scotland Committee, the Ceylon Tea Propaganda Board, and some British Government Departments were all sponsoring films. Among these were:

Contact (Paul Rotha, 1932).
Song of Ceylon (Basil Wright, 1935).
Housing Problems (Arthur Elton and Edgar Anstey, 1935).
Workers and Jobs (Arthur Elton, 1935).
Enough to Eat (Edgar Anstey, 1936).
From Cover to Cover (Alexander Shaw, 1936).
The Smoke Menace (John Taylor, 1937).
Today we Live (Ruby I. Grierson, 1937).
Children at School (Basil Wright, 1937).
Spanish ABC (Thorold Dickinson, 1938).
The Londoners (John Taylor, 1938).
Dawn of Iran (John Taylor, 1938).
The Face of Scotland (Basil Wright, 1938).
Four Faces (Alexander Shaw, 1938).
Wealth of a Nation (Donald Alexander, 1938).

Gaumont-British Instructional (founded 1933: previously British Instructional Films) made important contributions under the enlightened leadership of Bruce Woolfe, Percy Smith and Mary Field, notably in the *Secrets of Life* series. They specialised in educational films, but also produced many documentaries such as:

The Mine (J. B. Holmes, 1935).
Citizen of the Future (Donald Taylor, 1935).
The Face of Britain (Paul Rotha, 1935).
Shipyard (Paul Rotha, 1935).
Medieval Village (J. B. Holmes, 1936).
The Gap (Donald Carter, 1937).

This was England (Mary Field, 1938).
They made the Land (Mary Field, 1938).

The G.P.O. Film Unit (later Crown Film Unit 1940) with Grierson as Supervising Producer until 1937, and thereafter J. B. Holmes and Cavalcanti until 1940, Ian Dalrymple 1941-43 and Basil Wright in 1945, produced films notable for their experimental quality to which Cavalcanti contributed much after his arrival in Britain as guest producer for the G.P.O. Film Unit. Before the War they made such films as:

6.30 Collection (Edgar Anstey, 1934).
Under the City (Arthur Elton and Alexander Shaw, 1934).
Weather Forecast (Evelyn Spice, 1934).
Airmail (Arthur Elton and Alexander Shaw, 1935).
B.B.C.—The Voice of Britain (Stuart Legg, 1935).
Night Mail (Watt, Wright, Cavalcanti, 1936).
Job in a Million (Evelyn Spice, 1937).
We Live in Two Worlds (Cavalcanti, 1937).
North Sea (Harry Watt, 1938).

Other independent and private Units were founded to deal with the increasing demand for documentary film productions: Strand (founded by Donald Taylor and Ralph Keene in 1936) and Realist (founded by Basil Wright in 1937). These were in addition to Gaumont-British Instructional and the Shell Film Unit, which were sponsored Units. Edgar Anstey took charge initially of the Shell Film Unit (1934), which was later supervised for the Asiatic Petroleum Company by Film Centre, itself founded in 1937 as a consultative organisation on the production and distribution of documentary.

From this considerable body of activity a new profession grew up in the film world, and nearly three hundred films were made which were the expression of a new school of film-making. The names of the leading documentary producers and directors became well known, John Grierson, Cavalcanti, Paul Rotha, Basil Wright, Arthur Elton, Edgar Anstey, Ralph Keene, Harry Watt, Stuart Legg and many others. The types of film they made within the field of documentary varied considerably: there was the lyrical beauty of *Song of Ceylon*, the dynamic impressionism of *Shipyard*, the realistic social awareness and directness of approach of *Housing Problems*, the analytic presentation of social problems of *Enough to Eat*, the careful

descriptive quality of 6.30 *Collection*, the panoramic survey of *Face of Britain* and the scientific breakdown of the subjects explained in the Shell Film Unit's pictures. The men and the subjects created the approach and the style. Within the G.P.O. Unit " experiment " was the watchword, and this ranged from the colour abstracts of Len Lye and the sound tracks of Cavalcanti, Auden and Britten, to the comic fantasy of *Pett and Pott.*

Drifters stands out not merely as Grierson's personal film, but as the first example of the British school of documentary. He made *Drifters*, as Rotha puts it, " on a shoestring . . . ; it humbly brought to the screen the labour of the North Sea herring catch from such an approach that the ordinary person was made to realise, probably for the first time, that a herring on his plate was no mere accepted thing but the result of other men's physical toil and possibly courage. It ' brought alive ' (an E.M.B. phrase) not just the routine of the catch but the whole drama of emotional values that underlay the task, interpreting in its stride the unconscious beauty of physical labour in the face of work done for a livelihood. Moreover, there were brought to the conception all the poetic qualities of ships, sea and weather. In other words, Grierson took a simple theme (there for the taking), took actually existing material (there for the shooting), and built a dramatised film by interpreting the relationships of his theme and material in the sphere of daily existence.

" Leaving style and technique apart, *Drifters* laid the foundation for documentary in this country. Maybe it lacked a full expression of social purpose. Powers of production limited that. But it was inspired by a greater aim than mere description or superficial observation. It was inspired by a sincere understanding of the labour of man and the poetry of the sea. Beyond that, it served, and served well, a purpose beyond itself."

Certain documentaries from *Drifters* to *Land of Promise* have always stood out for their æsthetic and technical brilliance. Among those made pre-war films like *Song of Ceylon, Contact, Shipyard, Night Mail* and *Coalface* were outstanding.

SONG OF CEYLON: British. (Production, John Grierson for Ceylon Tea Propaganda Board, 1934-35. Director, Basil Wright. Assistant, John Taylor. Music, Walter Leigh)

"*Song of Ceylon,* made by the G.P.O. Film Unit and directed by Basil Wright, is introduced as a second feature into the Curzon programme with little notice from the ecstatic connoisseurs of classic tragedy, although it is an example to all directors of perfect construction and the perfect application of montage. 'Perfection' is not a word one cares to use, but from the opening sequence of the Ceylon forest, the great revolving fans of palm which fill the screen, this film moves with the air of absolute certainty in its object and assurance in its method.

"It is divided into four parts. In the first, The Buddha, we watch a long file of pilgrims climb the mountain side to the huge stone effigies of the god. Here, as a priest strikes a bell, Mr. Wright uses one of the loveliest visual metaphors I have ever seen on any screen. The sounding of the bell startles a small bird from its branch, and the camera follows the bird's flight and the notes of the bell across the island, down from the mountain side, over forest and plain and sea, the vibration of the tiny wings, the fading sound.

"The second part, The Virgin Island, is transitional, leading us away from the religious theme by way of the ordinary routine of living to industry. In The Voices of Commerce the commentary, which has been ingeniously drawn from a seventeenth-century traveller's account of the island, gives place to scraps of business talk. As the natives follow the old ways of farming, climbing the palm trees with a fibre loop, guiding their elephants' foreheads against the trees they have to fell, voices dictate bills of lading, close deals over the telephone, announce through loud speakers the latest market prices. The last reel, The Apparel of a God, returns by way of the gaudy images on the mountain, to a solitary peasant laying his offering at Buddha's feet, and closes again with the huge revolving leaves, so that all we have seen of devotion and dance and the bird's flight and the gentle communal life of harvest

> seems something sealed away from us between the fans of foliage. We are left outside with the bills of lading and the loud speakers." (Quotation of a review by Graham Greene—ALISTAIR COOKE'S "Garbo and the Night Watchmen," pp. 210-11.)

This film received the first prize at the Brussels International Film Festival in 1935. Throughout the film the director-cameraman (Basil Wright did his own photography) worked in close co-operation with the composer, the late Walter Leigh, who directed its recording. The native music was by a troupe of Cingalese dancers and drummers who were brought over from Ceylon for the work of post-synchronisation, and were owned, feudal fashion, by one of the Kandyan chiefs.

Its elaboration, its marriage of sight and sound in such a way as to produce in a sensitive audience perspectives of meaning not ostensibly present in either image or sound track alone, its length, its occasional under-exposed photography, did not always lead to a sympathetic reception. In other words, it suffered from the courageous overlay of genius. But it was possibly the greatest British-produced film in any category up to 1935, and for sustained beauty probably unequalled anywhere outside Russia.

In a different manner Paul Rotha was making significant documentary. In *Contact* he had superb material: in *Shipyard* he made his material superb. The launching of the ship brings you back to montage, and leaves the later British Council film *Steel Goes to Sea* standing still in the projector. These films had poetry, and if the eloquence of their visuals occasionally became rhetorical, one has to remember that documentary was still in its adolescence with the world its oyster. And the world is incredibly beautiful after a film studio, and filtered photography makes it more beautiful still. Man against the black-blue sky, factories against the rolling clouds, the countryside of Britain. God, what a chance; and they took it.

Night Mail and *Coalface* were the last great films of the industrial romanticism. Grierson described *Night Mail* to me as a kick in the belly. He was a philosopher and preferred *Coalface*. The public, and there was a public by now, preferred, however, to take the kick. What Wright had done for East and West in

eylon, Watt, with Wright to help him, did on a lesser scale
r the G.P.O. and the railway. This film even got shown in
e cinemas. So did many documentaries, but this was shown
dely. It stood to the public as *Drifters* did to the documentary
rectors themselves. They saw the light, where hitherto had
en some darkness.

Both these films, and *Coalface* slightly preceded *Night Mail*
1936, were experiments in sound. (The word 'experiment'
ted like magic in the mid-thirties. You were just nowhere if
e film you had just made or the film you were planning was
t an experiment in something.) *Night Mail* was direct and
ear with a gift of a subject. Its night photography was good
omething of an experiment), its build-up to the delivery of the
ostal bags in the trap-net tense with drama, its wonderful dawn
ots a final confirmation that trains moving at a distance are
finitely part of the beauty of the countryside. But its sound,
vised and recorded under the supervision of Cavalcanti, was
nsidered its main feature. Trains make a comforting range
noises, and have their own rhythms, from the crescendo of
uffers in shunting to the hypnotic rhythms of wheels on metals
speed. The casual remarks of sorters and railwaymen were
ed as natural sound. The poet W. H. Auden (experimenter
word-rhythm) contributed a letter-poem which ta-ta-ta-taad
time with wheels in the dawn rotating to Perth.

"*Past cotton grass and moorland boulder,*
Shovelling white steam over her shoulder,
Snorting noisily as she passes
Silent miles of windswept grasses,
Birds turn their heads as she approaches,
Stare from the bushes at her blankfaced coaches.
Sheepdogs cannot turn her course,
They slumber on with paws across.
In the farm she passes no one wakes
But a jug in the bedroom gently shakes."

he whole thing was excitement and romance, with glimpses
f men working in the sorting cars, shunting boxes and stations
n the way.

Coalface (directed by Cavalcanti) was an oratorio of mining,
nd oratorios are not popular with film-goers. The visuals
ere good, but not exceptional. What mattered was the sound,

which with Grierson as producer was recorded under the supervision of Cavalcanti by William Coldstream, Stuart Legg and Benjamin Britten. The usual method of speaking commentary to a background of music was avoided; both commentary and music were composed together. The effect was to incorporate commentary more clearly in the body of the film. To this foreground of sound were added a recitative chorus of male voices and a choir of male and female voices. The recitative chorus was used to fill out, by suggestion, the direct statement of the commentary. The choir was used to create atmosphere. This poem, sung by the female voices on the return of the miners to the surface, was written for the film by W. H. Auden:

> "*O lurcher-loving collier black as night,*
> *Follow your love across the smokeless hill,*
> *Your lamp is out and all your cages still.*
> *Course for her heart and do not miss*
> *And Kate fly not so fast,*
> *For Sunday soon is past,*
> *And Monday comes when none may kiss.*
> *Be marble to his soot and to his black be white.*"

An important branch of pre-war documentary was the group of films sponsored by the British Commercial Gas Association which became the most liberal of commercial producers in the range of social problems that were discussed in its films such as *Housing Problems, Children at School, The Smoke Menace* and *Enough to Eat* (the latter sponsored by the London Gas Light and Coke Company). *Housing Problems* took the camera and microphone to Stepney and recorded the slum-dwellers views on the slums: spot interviews, unrehearsed and unscripted are the feature of the first part of the film, supplemented by remarkably revealing shots of slum property for comfortably-housed citizens to contemplate on the screen. *Children at School* made no bones about the bad schools of Britain: it showed teachers doing their job in the most appalling of conditions. Both films made a pointed contrast between what had been and what could be done to better the bad conditions they exposed. *The Smoke Menace* showed what was happening to our cities under the pall of smoke cloud thrown up by the chimneys. *Enough to Eat* analysed the diet of the nation and revealed the lack of public knowledge on elementary points of

food values and the malnutrition due to mis-spending or being unable to spend on food: it is the prelude to Rotha's later film *The World of Plenty*, and like it made liberal use of animated diagrams and interviews with expert and public alike. These films did not aim at being beautiful: experiment lay in the direction of treatment of new subjects for the screen and the technique with which their importance could be emphasised to the audience. For this reason they were of greater long-term importance than the more beautiful and impressionistic films made alongside them which had their own, though different, place in the full range of British documentary achievement.

Earlier Documentary Theory.—The documentary directors were and are always ready to talk and write about their films. Their job has made them mix with everybody on equal terms, intellectuals, workers and business executives. It is a relief to find people in films who are not so terrified of discussion they can only say " Huh " when asked a question and sign on another publicity pimp.

The forum of discussion was first " Cinema Quarterly " (edited in Edinburgh by Forsyth Hardy and Norman Wilson, 1932-35), second " World Film News " which became " See," and now " Documentary News Letter." The chief writers among them are Paul Rotha (who will not, I hope, be annoyed by being called a distinguished film historian as well as an important director and producer), John Grierson, and latterly Basil Wright and Edgar Anstey. Their writings include some of the best journalism of the thirties and early forties. Their work made them at once alive to what was going on in the world and keen to analyse it in film terms. This was good training for journalism. Because they made films they only wrote when they wanted and because they had something to say to a critical and knowledgeable minority.

Grierson announced his initial principles in 1932 in " Cinema Quarterly " (Winter 1932):

> " First principles. (1) We believe that the cinema's capacity for getting around, for observing and selecting from life itself, can be exploited in a new and vital art form. The studio films largely ignore this possibility of opening up the screen on the real world. They photograph acted stories

against artificial backgrounds. Documentary would photograph the living scene and the living story. (2) We believe that the original (or native) actor, and the original (or native) scene, are better guides to a screen interpretation of the modern world. They give cinema a greater fund of material. They give it power over a million and one movements, and power over a million and one images. They give it power of interpretation over more complex and astonishing happenings in the real world than the studio mind can conjure up or the studio mechanician recreate. (3) We believe that the materials and the stories thus taken from the raw can be finer (more real in the philosophic sense) than the acted article. Spontaneous gesture has a special value on the screen. Cinema has a sensational capacity for enhancing the movement which tradition has formed or time worn smooth. Its arbitrary rectangle specially reveals movement; it gives it maximum pattern in space and time. Add to this that documentary can achieve an intimacy of knowledge and effect impossible to the shimsham mechanics of the studio, and the lily-fingered interpretations of the metropolitan actor" (p. 69).

Whilst admiring the symphonics of Ruttman in *Berlin* and the romantic feeling for traditional craftsmanship and custom in Flaherty, he feels that for himself his documentary sense needs a stronger approach within the limits of industrialised civilisation. He speaks of the beliefs of his colleagues which he shared and largely inspired:

"They believe that beauty will come in good time to inhabit the statement which is honest and lucid and deeply felt and which fulfils the best ends of citizenship. They are sensible enough to conceive of art as the by-product (the over-tone) of a job of work done. The opposite attempt to capture the by-product first (the self-conscious pursuit of beauty, the pursuit of art for art's sake to the exclusion of jobs of work and other pedestrian beginnings), was always a reflection of selfish wealth, selfish leisure and æsthetic decadence." ("Cinema Quarterly," Spring 1933, p. 137.)

Two years later he underlines the analytical tendencies of these young directors:

"Many of us, brought up in the post-impressionist revolt, have made structure our god. 'Observe and analyse,' 'Know and build,' 'Out of research poetry comes,' were the slogans we set before us. They suited the academic and the radical in our minds. They brought us more readily to the new material of our times.

"I have watched with some closeness the working of these influences in the films of Wright, Elton and Legg. All are painstakingly and rather proudly academic. When they shoot a factory, say, they learn how to ask the right questions. Elton, for example, knows more than a little about railways and mechanics; Wright has mastered the history of every subject he has touched; and I will swear that Legg knows more about the organisation of the B.B.C. than any outsider decently should.

"The only point at which art is concerned with information is the point at which 'the flame shoots up and the light kindles and it enters into the soul and feeds itself there.' Flash-point there must be. Information indeed can be a dangerous business if the kindling process is not there. Most professors are a dreary warning of what happens when the informationist fails to become a poet." ("Cinema Quarterly," Summer 1935, p. 195.)

Paul Rotha pursued a different line from Grierson. In those earlier days up to 1935 it might be fair to say that Grierson's directors were more interested in the artistic treatment of industry than in the social problems involved, whereas Rotha was becoming interested in propaganda. He writes in 1935 in "Documentary Film":

"In brief there exists to-day, on the one hand, an urgent need for the stimulation of wide interest among the public in matters of national and international significance, and, on the other, a gradual ripening of social consciousness among a small but increasing minority. There is no question, however, that if the future development of civilisation is to proceed with any prospect of security and social progress, a great deal must be done to spread knowledge about the simple workings of government and the essential facts of our economic and social ways and means" (pp. 38-9).

He was becoming interested in the social system underlying

the working of the processes Grierson was presenting with such artistic vigour. He resented the way the capitalist film industry banned essential social subjects, and represented life falsely in the studio at a period (and how right he was!) when a true representation was most necessary. For it must not be forgotten that documentary was beginning when Hitler knuckle-dusted his way into the Chancellery of Germany.

The film must teach while there is time to learn: it must line up with the propaganda of healthy social progress:

> " Now it is very obvious that, by reason of virtues inherent in its form, cinema is one of the most powerful channels of expression for persuasion and public illumination. Its peculiar suitabilities as an instrument of propaganda are almost too patent to specify. In brief, it possesses:
>
> " (1) An introduction to the public shared only by the radio, with a resultant power of mass suggestion.
>
> " (2) Simple powers of explanation and capacities for making statements which, if presented with a craftsmanship that takes full advantage of artistic values, are capable of persuasive qualities without equal, and
>
> " (3) Virtues of mechanised repeated performance to a million persons, not once but countless times a day, tomorrow and, if the quality is good enough, ten years hence " (p. 49).

The artist, instead of being sunk in the expression of his own selfish æstheticism, can, through the film, come out into the sun where life lies around him. False individualism must end:

> " In this way the practice of the arts has become a matter of personal activity, detached from all social life, admirably suiting the cultural ideals set up by boureois æstheticism, The artist has become a man apart from other men, a human being with privileges denied the common mob, expressing and satisfying the whims of a small cultivated portion of society. Painting has become a tough symbolism and all-in wrestling with the subconscious mind unintelligible to the majority. Poetry has become a private experience far removed from most reasonable understanding. A great deal of literature is concerned purely with the personal struggles and experience of unimportant

individuals, seeking satisfaction in an imaginary world devoid of human relationships on a significant scale. And where cinema has pretended to be an art in itself, with no other ends than its æsthetic virtues, it has slobbered and expired in a sepulchre of symbolism or, still worse, mysticism " (p. 61).

The film must follow Russia into the field of social problems:

" The big films of cinema, few as they are, have all served a special purpose and have not come into being primarily as the result of mere artistic endeavour or the desire to make profit. They are significant because of the sincerity of their creators in the part they were intended to play in social and political enlightenment. *Kameradschaft* and *Potemkin* are the two favourite examples. They were both propagandist.

" Without this aim of special service, I cannot see that cinema has any real significance beyond that of providing a temporary emotional refuge for the community, making profit or loss for its moneyed speculators and preserving a record for future historical reference which will give a partly erroneous picture of our age " (p. 65).

This new cinema must cease to be the tool of entertainment, even of a highbrow minority in Film Societies. It must serve the people as a teacher:

" Real and creative thought must be about real things. Let cinema explore outside the limits of what we are told constitutes entertainment. Let cinema attempt the dramatisation of the living scene and the living theme, springing from the living present instead of from the synthetic fabrication of the studio. Let cinema attempt film interpretations of modern problems and events, of things as they really are today, and by so doing perform a definite function. Let cinema recognise the existence of real men and women, real things and real issues, and by so doing offer to State, Industry, Commerce, to public and private organisations of all kinds, a method of communication and propaganda to project not just personal opinions but arguments for a world of common interests " (pp. 66-7).

This vigorous appeal had its effect, but only because it was

an expression of what was already in the minds of the documentarians themselves.

With the titles already listed among the chief documentaries of the period no one can grumble that Rotha's admonitions were not carried out. Credit should go to the G.P.O. for its wide interpretation of its public relations, in spite of which Grierson resigned in 1937 and went on an Empire tour which ended with a Government appointment in Canada as Film Commissioner in 1939. Credit should go to the public spirit of the British Commercial Gas Association and the oil industry for sponsoring important films on social problems and technical processes. Len Lye alone developed film for film's sake in colour with his remarkable experiments, ostensibly to help post-office propaganda but really to please himself. The tolerance of the G.P.O. must have been remarkable, but he gave great pleasure to those whom he did not send home ophthalmic.

Documentary in Wartime.—Then came the War. The G.P.O. Unit stepped in quickly and with quiet effect in *The First Days.* After a hesitant start and the beautiful G.P.O. film *Squadron* 992, the newly formed Ministry of Information decided to adopt documentary for the duration. By the end of 1940 it had started its dual distribution policy of persuading the exhibitors to show a five-minute film (which grew to seven or eight minutes) in their programmes, and more boldly by placing an initial fifty mobile film vans on the roads of Britain with full-length programmes of documentary to be shown freely to audiences in town or village. This solved the distribution problem for documentary, which, what with one thing and another, had been the big heartache for the past ten years.

But for odd moments of relaxation, the Trade had hitherto told documentary where to put itself. Classed at the worst as highbrow and educational, at the best as "travelogue" or "interest," during which an audience could change its seats and buy its chocolate, documentary got little headway as a whole in commercial programmes. The growing number of News Theatres found it useful, but these did not exist widely outside London and a few provincial houses, where its titles were buried under raucous publicity for bad imitations of Disney. The Film Societies showed the films religiously, but the biggest distribution

was on the whole non-theatrical, as it was called. Non-theatrical means normally substandard and private showing on 16 mm. projectors owned by private persons or organisations, clubs, schools, institutes and colleges. As the film supply grew, the number of types of good talkie 16 mm. projectors placed on the non-theatrical market increased. A demand sprang up, necessarily largely from schools, but by no means entirely so. Film Libraries for documentary grew to promote and meet the demand. As an outcome of the Report of the Commission on Educational and Cultural Films, financed chiefly by the Carnegie Trustees (1929-32), the British Film Institute was set up in 1933 to foster the use of the film for educational purposes, and to preserve the cultural heritage (such as it is) of commercial film in the vaults of the National Film Library. Organisations like E.M.B., G.P.O., Shell-Mex and the British Commercial Gas Association had their own lending libraries from which films could be borrowed for the price of the postage stamp to be stuck on the returning parcel.

By this means a large, and measurable, non-theatrical audience was being fostered, and children were being taught to distinguish films from orange peel.

The Ministry of Information took over the G.P.O. and Empire Film Library, set up its own Regional distribution executive and played to five million people from factory to remotest countryside in the first year of its Film Division's existence. So successful was this plan, that within two and a half years it had trebled its initial operating staff and hit the twenty million mark of people who see a programme of documentary or substandard film in a year. It revolutionised the documentary output, having commissioned, acquired and stuck together out of library material some six hundred films during the War. It suffered heavily from lack of enough good directors to respond to its needs, but in spite of so prodigious an output the standards have fallen very seldom below the mediocre and in many instances have risen above pre-war power.

Here at last was a great experiment in civic education through the film, and the hard work of documentary became recognised by its promotion into a major information service throughout the country. Nearly 1,500 shows a week of programmes lasting thirty to ninety minutes played before

audiences of factory workers or villagers, Civil Defence personnel or school-children, social workers or doctors, specialists or general public made documentary known as never before, and, when it was well made, liked as education seldom is in this country. It demonstrated that the innate popularity of a visual presentation of subject-matter could overcome British sales-resistance to education. People learned not merely about the War but about the rest of the world and themselves by merely going to the pictures. The films were discussed long afterwards by audiences that had a regular social life of their own, like Women's Institutes. The Units themselves, turning out as many films as they could against the demands of the Ministry's Films Division, the hazards of air bombardment, labour and raw-material shortage, learned how to serve their new large public.

The G.P.O. Unit was taken over by the Ministry of Information and given the title of Crown Film Unit. It has specialised in larger-scale documentary, following up its pre-war high-spot *North Sea* with *Men of the Lightship* and *Merchant Seamen.* Then it hit the Trade skywise with *Target for Tonight.* Exhibitors paid this film the supreme compliment of criticising the distribution agreement between the Ministry and the Exhibitors' Association. Here at last was a documentary they and the public asked to see because it had the star value of being about the R.A.F. It illustrated processes (in this case how a raid over German territory was actually carried out) and at the same time showed us people. It did not forget montage or the cine-eye when the bombers take off or F for Freddie sails the clouds to Walton's lovely music ("Freihausen, here we come"). It did not forget silence when we strain with the Wing-Commander to hear F for Freddie's returning hum. It did not forget to dramatise the personalities of its human material who speak and act like real people in the middle of a real job with the R.A.F.'s flair for understatement.

Crown followed up with feature-length films like *Coastal Command, Fires were Started, Close Quarters* and *Western Approaches* (in colour). All these films were widely shown in the cinemas and were of the dramatised type with Servicemen playing themselves under the superb direction of the

Crown tradition, with no self-consciousness, no pose. All these films were in their way masterpieces. They did not, of course, deal with social problems like the documentary of the pre-war period. They dealt with the typical life and typical duties of the Services concerned, and they illustrated their stories by the selection of men who by personality and photogenic quality epitomised the personnel who were fighting the War.

The smaller films were made largely for non-theatrical showing, though they were sometimes used in the cinemas. They more nearly carried forward the type of documentary of which Grierson and Rotha had written. These films were made to help the community get through the War, know something about it, and be as useful as possible. The analysis of production which follows errs on the conservative side in numbers of films made up to the end of the War.

Agricultural Subjects (instructional and documentary)	40 films.
War Record films, Air Force, Army and Navy	60 films.
Civil Defence (instructional and information)	25 films.
Education and Citizenship	50 films.
Food, Diet and Cookery	25 films.
Health, Hygiene and Medicine (technical and general)	40 films.
Labour and Industry	50 films.
Private Allotment Work (instructional films)	15 films.
Salvage (propaganda)	10 films.

Most of these films did not exceed one or two reels. They used little dialogue. A commentator helped the audience to grasp the significance of the film, sometimes through the flowing strains of unnecessary music. The sound track had to be easy to hear for the films would be shown on hard-worn 16 mm. projectors in halls with bad acoustics or in factory canteens where the clatter of dishes would rival voices or sound effects. Crown contributed some important films to these short subjects, such as *Health in War, Britain at Bay* (September 1940, after the fall of France), *Britain can take it* (with Quentin Reynolds, the American journalist, as commentator), *The Heart of Britain* (on the fighting spirit of Britain during the bombing) and *The Eighty Days* (the story of the

V1 raids). The bulk of the Crown Film Unit's work was concerned with Britain in action. Occasionally, however, Humphrey Jennings made an experiment in film æsthetics, like *Listen to Britain, Lilli Marlene* or even the unusual picture *The Silent Village* made in a Welsh mining village in memory of the massacre of the Czech Lidice. *Listen to Britain* (1941) revealed the life and spirit of Britain at war in terms of the sounds made by transport and industry, by men singing in a troop train or entertainers singing in a factory canteen, by Myra Hess playing in the National Gallery: it was a film of great beauty. *Lili Marlene* (1944) told the story, with the famous German song as theme, of the capture of the tune in North Africa. In *The Silent Village* (1943) the miners and their wives speak their native Welsh to match the Czech language, and act with simplicity and restraint as they reconstruct the story which might have been their own.

The other outstanding Unit was that under the supervision of Paul Rotha. His great film *The World of Plenty* (1943) dealt with problems of food production and distribution before, during and after the War. It was a film of argument with many voices on the sound track, from the expert to the man who doubts everything the commentator says. It was the most advanced documentary yet produced in the true tradition of the film of social problems: it is equalled only by Rotha's film on housing in Britain, *Land of Promise* (1945). The Unit made other notable films, *Our School* (directed by Donald Alexander, 1941, a study of an experimental school in Devon to which London school-children were evacuated), *Power for the Highlands* (directed by Jack Chambers, 1943, on the hydro-electrification of the Scottish Highlands), and *Children of the City* (directed by Budge Cooper, 1944, a study of the treatment of juvenile delinquency). Rotha has developed in ten years into one of the boldest and yet most analytical of producers in Britain today. His imagination is cinematic and he has not given up the old ideal of experiment in the service of film technique. His films are discussion pictures: they must therefore promote discussion in the audience. This *The World of Plenty* and *Land of Promise* are well calculated to do.

Of the other Units (Shell, Strand, Merton Park, Spectator,

Realist, Verity, Greenpark and many more) none did so well as those who filmed the towns and countryside of Britain (*Winter, Spring* and *Summer on the Farm, Crown of the Year, The Crofters, Cornish Valley, West Riding,* etc.) and her industries (*Transfer of Skill, Airscrew* or *Steel* in colour for the British Council). Some of the films on health have been outstanding (*Defeat Diphtheria, Defeat Tuberculosis, Blood Transfusion, Scabies, Surgery in Chest Disease, Malaria*). Nor should the many fine films made for civilian showing by the Service film units be omitted (*The Siege of Tobruk, Wavell's* 30,000, *Street Fighting, Naples is a Battlefield, A Date with a Tank,* etc.). To these should be added especially the film on which Len Lye worked, *Kill or be Killed,* for its remarkable sound track: it was produced by Realist. Like the Crown Film Unit's work, some of the Service films have been of feature-length for use in the cinemas: *Desert Victory, Tunisian Victory, Burma Victory* and above all *The True Glory* (the latter edited by Garson Kanin of Hollywood and Carol Reed of Britain) all were assembled with imagination and rose from the level of mere record into the creative presentation of these great campaigns so that their human significance could be appreciated. The sound track of *The True Glory* was remarkable: the voices of men of many accents from America, Britain and the Allied countries gave personal comments on their experiences in the campaign that illuminated the impressive but impersonal shots on the screen.

Documentary in wartime was a great achievement in public service, an achievement in production and exhibition, a success in the public estimation. The figures for the period 1943-44 show that the mobile units gave over 64,000 shows to over 11 million people. In addition audiences assessed at over 7 million saw programmes of documentary and kindred films at special shows given in cinemas or on privately-owned projectors. The Ministry's films were also constantly shown as features or supporting pictures in the public cinemas, whose weekly audience is now almost 30 million.

Meanwhile the exact organisation of post-war documentary production and distribution is under debate at the time of writing. That the public information service of films will be maintained can hardly be doubted. It is clearly linked with

education. It offers a parallel service to press and radio. Britain gave a lead to the world in its development: that lead must be maintained by further experiment and use now that the public as a whole has been trained to accept the film for information as well as entertainment.

Documentary Theory in Wartime.—" Documentary News Letter," product of the documentary consultants Film Centre, has been reiterating impatiently the need for stronger and better documentary propaganda than, in its opinion, the Ministry of Information has seen fit to allow. The main line of attack is stated bluntly in these two paragraphs from the leading article for March 1942:

> " Our propaganda has not failed merely for mechanical reasons. It has failed because it is bankrupt of ideas and bankrupt of policy.
>
> " It will continue to fail just as long as our propagandists continue to shut their eyes to the fact that we are living in the middle of a world revolution, and that therefore revolutionary tactics are not merely expedient but also absolutely vital." (Column 1.)

The Government reply was to stick pretty rigidly to war issues and leave the controversial future to evolve its own policy. It could hardly do anything else with so many colours sticking pins in each other on the political map. But that does not prove the D.N.L. policy to be wrong from documentary's point of view. Grierson, now Director of Canada's Film Board, contributes an occasional trenchant article, and Wright made an interesting criticism of Cavalcanti's film survey of documentary *Film and Reality*, in the course of which he writes as follows:

> " When the war began documentary was no longer in its experimental stage. Realist traditions had by then been firmly established, and the results of the experiments of the previous ten years had been crystallised into several different styles. Nevertheless that static stage, which in any movement is the prelude to complete necrosis, had in no sense been reached. On the contrary, in the years immediately preceding World War II the realist movement was beginning to concern itself firstly with larger and

broader treatments of subject-matter, and secondly with an increased use of dramatic incident and dialogue (cf. *The Londoners* and *North Sea,* to give but two examples)." (" Documentary News Letter," March 1942, p. 41.)

The war, he goes on, has placed limitations on the docu-nentary workers and a discipline not altogether harmful. But e urges them to go beyond the demands of official sponsors, ince it is their job, as pioneers, to blaze the trail of future ocial policy.

" I believe absolutely that the revolutionary technique is now the only technique. Whether you like it or not, we are undergoing a world social revolution here and now, and it is a revolution which must continue after the war, and continue with increasing strength. For that is the only thing the people of Britain are fighting for.

" It is today the job of documentary to integrate the immediate war-effort with the facts and implications of radical social and economic changes which are part and parcel of it.

" Only from this standpoint can we get into our films the dynamic impulse which will strengthen their propaganda value to this nation and its allies.

" The realist tradition is rich in the abilities for the job. The whole trend of the 'thirties was towards this dynamic concept (we said we were trying to make Peace as exciting as War), and the films which were made tended more and more to sacrifice purely æsthetic considerations to the need for pungent comment and the imaginative presentation of facts and problems.

" Today the intensification of effort which is so urgently needed depends on an equal intensification of morale-propaganda; and if we don't pull our punches any longer we have a vital contribution to make.

" I believe that the future of the realist film (if one can spare a moment to look ahead in such parochial terms) lies in the attitude and action which I have outlined. Our films must be the shock troops of propaganda. It is no longer policy to compromise with timidity—either among ourselves or in others. The documentary movement is part of a continuous process and a continuous progress

towards a new deal in life for the peoples of the world. And the only slogan worth having today is 'Speed it up!'" (" Documentary News Letter," March 1942, p. 42.)

In a later letter he praises Grierson in a tribute which should not be omitted from this book. He writes:

" I am sure that I am expressing the feelings of documentary workers as a whole. I must point out that Grierson has always been and still is a remarkable technician, a magnificent teacher, and in short, a great producer. . . . Grierson is not merely the founder of the documentary movement. Since its inception it has been his own understanding of film technique, his encouragement of experimentation and . . . his uncanny grasp and knowledge of æsthetics as regards art in general and film art in particular, which have been the driving force and inspiration of the progress of documentary.

" These qualities . . . I have put first, but I must now add Grierson's political grasp and foresight, his incredible energy and organisational drive, and, above all, his unswerving loyalty not merely to the idea of documentary but also to all those working with him." (" Documentary News Letter," April 1942, p. 58.)

This is a statement which cannot be ignored, and which is important coming from a man who is himself a distinguished artist.

Grierson takes the long-term view in a striking statement on propaganda in " Documentary News Letter " for May 1941. A year later his views on " The Documentary Idea, 1942 " appear in the issue for June of that year.

The following are extracts which will do good if they lead the reader to the original, which is one of the great statements about the future produced by the war. It gives the documentary directors the lead they are accustomed to expect from the founder of their movement:

" The penalty of realism is that it is about reality and has to bother for ever not about being 'beautiful' but about being right."

" What confuses the history is that we had always the good sense to use the æsthetes. We did so because we like them and because we needed them. It was,

paradoxically, with the first-rate æsthetic help of people like Flaherty and Cavalcanti that we mastered the techniques necessary for our quite unæsthetic purpose. That purpose was plain and was written about often enough. Rotha spent a lot of time on it. We were concerned not with the category of 'purposiveness without purpose' but with that other category beyond, which used to be called teleological. We were reformers open and avowed: concerned —to use the old jargon—with 'bringing alive the new materials of citizenship,' 'crystallising sentiments' and creating those 'new loyalties from which a progressive civic will might derive.' Take that away and I'd be hard put to it to say what I have been working for these past fifteen years. What, of course, made documentary successful as a movement was that in a decade of spiritual weariness it reached out, almost alone among the media, toward the future. Obviously it was the public purpose within it which commanded government and other backing, the progressive social intention within it which secured the regard of the newspapers and people of goodwill everywhere, and the sense of a public cause to be served which kept its own people together. These facts should have made it clear that the documentary idea was not basically a film idea at all, and the film treatment it inspired only an incidental aspect of it. The medium happened to be the most convenient and most exciting available to us. The idea itself, on the other hand, was a new idea for public education: its underlying concept that the world was in a phase of drastic change affecting every manner of thought and practice, and the public comprehension of the nature of that change vital. There it is, exploratory, experimental and stumbling, in the films themselves: from the dramatisation of the workman and his daily drag to the dramatisation of modern organisation and the new corporate elements in society and to the dramatisation of social problems: each a step in the attempt to understand the stubborn raw material of our modern citizenship and wake the heart and the will to their mastery. Where we stopped short was that, with equal deliberation, we refused to specify what political agency should carry out that will or

associate ourselves with any one of them. Our job specifically was to wake the heart and the will: it was for the political parties to make before the people their own case for leadership. I would not restate these principles merely out of historical interest. The important point is that they have not changed at all and they are not going to change, nor be changed. The materials of citizenship today are different and the perspectives wider and more difficult; but we have, as ever, the duty of exploring them and of waking the heart and will in regard to them. (Documentary is at once a critique of propaganda and a practice of it.) That duty is what documentary is about. It is, moreover, documentary's primary service to the State to be persisted in, whatever deviation may be urged upon it, or whatever confusion of thought, or easiness of mind, success may bring."

"No war aims, I am told, becomes 'no policy' for documentary. Yet those who insist on 'no policy' are correctly reflecting a phase which dares not go right and dares not go left and has no easy solution to offer except first winning the war. It would be wise to see the 'no policy' business for what it is, a present political necessity for governments which, for many reasons—some schizophrenic, some more realistically involving allies—may not speak their minds; and explore what can be done none the less and in spite of it."

"Once consider that England is only important as it is related to other nations, and its problems and developments only important as they are recognised as part of wider problems and developments, and many subjects will reach out into healthier and more exciting perspectives of description than are presently being utilised."

"A lot has to be done and done quickly if the public mind is to be tuned in time to what, amid these swift-moving changes of public organisation, is required of it. It is not the technical perfection of the film that matters, nor even the vanity of its maker, but what happens to that public mind. Never before has there been such a call for the creation of new loyalties or bringing people to new kinds of sticking points. Times press and so must

production; and with it must go a harder and more direct style."

"In its basic meaning, culture is surely the giving of law to what is without it. That hard but truer way of culture will not go by default if we search out the design in the seeming chaos of present events and, out of today's experiments in total effort, create the co-operative and more profoundly 'democratic' ways of the future. The verbs are active. To go back once again to Tallents' Mill quotation, the pattern of the artist in this relationship will indicate the living principle of action."

"So the long windy openings are out, and so are the carthartic finishes in which a good brave tearful self-congratulatory and useless time has been had by all. The box-office—pander to what is lazy, weak, reactionary, vicarious, sentimental and essentially defeatist in all of us —will, of course, instinctively howl for them. It will want to make 'relaxation,' if you please, even out of war. But don't, for God's sake, give it. Deep down the people want to be fired to tougher ways of thought and feeling and to have their present braveries extended to the very roots of their social existence. In that habit they will win more than a war."

Documentary Elsewhere.—The story of documentary outside this country and Russia is the story of isolated titles. In France documentary was linked with avant-garde and produced Cavalcanti who made *Rien que les heures,* a film built on a structural pattern which traced the occupations of given individuals against the background of a day in Paris, and preceded the famous *Berlin* of Ruttmann, which was symphonic in treatment and influenced by Russian montage. Cavalcanti joined Grierson in Britain in 1934. Holland produced Joris Ivens who, after making some interesting Dutch documentaries, went to Russia to direct *Komsomol,* a film on the Russian League of Youth. Ivens later did notable work in Spain in *Spanish Earth* with Ernest Hemingway. In Spain, too, the remarkable film *Land without Bread* was made by the Frenchman Bunuel in 1932. It was a devastating study of the Hurdanos who, living only a comparatively few miles from

Burgos, existed and may still exist in a state of backwardness and misery behind a thin veneer of semi-civilisation. The camera dwelt at unrelenting length on disease and mental deficiency. Germany produced a long line of travelogues, often well made, to attract the visitor and his money to the land of Adolf Hitler.

The documentary mind in America showed itself in the distinguished work of Pare Lorentz, who made *The Plow that broke the Plains* in 1936 for the Resettlement Administration of the Roosevelt government. The film precedes *The Grapes of Wrath* in dealing with the Dustbowl. Rhetorical-poetic in presentation, it has undoubted power. The commentary was also a feature in *The River*, released in 1938 and made by Lorentz for the Farm Security Administration. It is an important film, the most important single documentary America has so far produced.

THE RIVER: American. (1938. Produced for the Farm Security Administration, United States Department of Agriculture. Director, Pare Lorentz.)

Theme.—A hundred years of the history of the Mississippi, its spoliation by successive pioneers in cotton, timber and cornlands, the ruination of land and population by poverty and flood. The New Deal under the Roosevelt Administration starts new work to conserve and develop the devastated areas.

Technique.—Sound: musical background of Mississippi folktune themes, a commentary skilfully ranging from the poetic (with emphatic use of lovely place-names like the rivers Kaskashkea and Monongahela) to the factual. General atmosphere and presentation has been called impressionist: the atmosphere of the Mississippi region is considered more important than an exact statement of statistics. The sense of greed and ruthless exploitation, which is the major theme of the film, is powerfully expressed; impressionism wins over statistics in the emotional reaction set up in the audience: this must stop: this must never happen again. It is good propaganda for the New Deal since, when the audience is most revolted by this exhibition of greed and human suffering, the solution follows simply in the plans to dam the waters in the Tennessee valley and rehabilitate both land and peoples.

In 1935 America produced the first issue of *March of Time*, as part of the Luce enterprises. It runs to this day, though from the point of view of the enterprises it has never been a money-spinner. Its fame and influence far outdo its profits; its style has had its effect upon the Canadian *Canada Carries On* and *World in Action* series; it has been successfully parodied by Welles in *Citizen Kane* and by Tommy Handley in *Itma*.

Released once a month, it has covered a world front with its cameramen. Some of its issues included three items, some only one. Its range and journalistic flair can be seen from some of the subjects it has recorded or reconstructed, and it has often been courageous and outspoken in its criticism of dictatorship and fascism, when people who should have known better were praising Hitler's architecture and Mussolini's trains. Here are some of its subjects, the earlier dates significant.

1936. Japanese Imperial Policy in Manchuria.
Geneva (Italy; Mediterranean; Abyssinia).
The French Peasants and the Government.

1937. The Far East and Chang Kai-shek.
Bootlegging.
British Black Areas.
U.S.A. Child Labour.
The Dust Bowl.

1938. Inside Nazi Germany.
Nazi Conquest of Austria.
Czechoslovakia.

1939. The Refugees.
Mediterranean, Background for War.
Japan, Master of the Orient.
Britain, Peace and Propaganda.

1941. America Speaks her Mind.
China Fights Back.
Men of Norway.
Peace—by Adolf Hitler.

Its technique does not depend on lively camera-work so much

as on the high-powered sure-hit commentary and the rhetorical speed of its cutting. English audiences found the non-stop crescendo of the *March of Time* voice difficult to absorb. Statistics and social comment were alike delivered with a rich harsh impersonality impervious to English susceptibilities for the sweet and facetious. But it was respected and sought out.

Other interesting documentaries made before the War include the work of Jean Epstein, Jean Lods and Robert Alexandre in France, where Painlevé is now the leader of the factual film movement. Painlevé's beautiful films of marine life are famous and were widely shown by British film societies. In Belgium Henri Storck made *Les Maisons de la Misère* in 1938 on slums and rehousing. From America, Paul Strand went to Mexico to make *The Wave* (1935) on the life of the fishermen of the Gulf of Vera Cruz and their commercial exploitation. Ralph Steiner and Willard van Dyke made *The City* in 1939, an interesting and amusing film on city life and the needs of replanning for the development of social amenities. Van Dyke also made *Children must Learn* (1941) and the remarkable documentary with musical recitative and song *Valley Town,* for which Marc Blitzstein was composer: it is a tragic study of a Pennsylvanian steel community hit by economic depression. The War stimulated documentary production in America, and many films like *Tanks* (with Orson Welles), *Henry Browne, Farmer, The Town* (Madison, Indiana), *Cowboy* and *T.V.A.* show the beginnings of a movement in the States which may lead to a permanent documentary tradition with a style of its own. The great film *The Forgotten Village* (a documentary feature) is discussed later. Mention should also be made of America's war-record films (*The Fighting Lady, Report from the Aleutians, Memphis Belle,* etc.) and the distinguished Pacific campaign action pictures, many in colour and taken in the heat of battle on 16 mm. Frank Capra produced a brilliant series of films edited from newsreel and other material called *Why we Fight.* They were intended originally to explain the War to the American serviceman. They were played also in British cinemas and their technical brilliance made them famous (*Divide and Conquer, The Nazis Strike, The Battle of Britain, The Battle of Russia,* etc.). Russia also sent her war-record pictures to the cinemas of her Allies: these included *Defeat of*

the Germans near Moscow, One Day of War, Story of Stalingrad, The Partisans, The Drive to the West and *Justice is Coming.* Among the films of the War none was more exciting than the French resistance film *Le Journal de la Resistence:* other clandestinely-made films will be important for the permanent history of the War when once they become more widely known.

In Canada John Grierson became executive head of the Government's National Film Board as Film Commissioner in 1939. Here he was joined by Ivens, Stuart Legg and Raymond Spottiswoode. In 1944 the annual output of films was about 250 and the Board had 120 mobile cinema vans on the road, a scheme started in 1942 on the British model. It produced two series of films inspired by *The March of Time, Canada Carries on* (playing monthly in 800 Canadian theatres) and *World in Action* (playing monthly in 6,000 cinemas in America and Britain). Legg was in charge of the latter series. Most important are the citizens' forums which have grown out of discussion following the mobile unit programmes, and the Trades Union Circuit which uses a " discussion-trailer " to start the audience talking after film shows covering 40,000 trade unionists a month. In the non-theatrical programmes the serious films are interspersed by lighter items and sing-songs. The animated films made by Norman McLaren like *Chants Populaires* (containing also sequences from the French avant-garde animator Alexieff of *Night on the Bare Mountain*) and his coloured propaganda shorts, are especially attractive among these lighter films.

The documentary film is now established in many countries, notably Britain, Canada, America and Russia. It is the most practical and useful way in which smaller countries can enter production and make an individual contribution to world cinema. The film is an international medium, and where features films are often impossinble to produce, documentary, state-aided or privately-sponsored, can introduce a country to an established world audience. Documentary looks ahead to an inspiring and an assured future.

9. SOCIAL REALISM IN THE FICTION FILM: HOLLYWOOD

In the novel it has become quite a commonplace to bring realism to the pitch that fiction merges into fact; instance

Ralph Bates' "Lean Men," the works of Barbusse and Malraux, the autobiographical quality of Proust and the panoramas of Sholokhov. Who is to say where these books cease to be novels in any traditional sense of the term and become a projection of actuality fitted with personnel and dialogue? It is better to forget theory and call such work—peculiarly twentieth century though Thomas Deloney wrote in this manner in Elizabeth's time—the documentary novel. Its peculiar property is that the writer re-creates in the literary form the phases of life and the personalities of people he has experienced and met. It is unlikely a satisfactory documentary novel will be produced except by a man who has lived under the conditions he describes either as partner or, like Flaherty, as intrusive observer.

The film presents the same dovetail. Where does fiction begin in the dialogue and acting of *North Sea, Men of the Lightship, Merchant Seamen* and *Target for Tonight*? Where does documentary begin in *The Foreman went to France* (with Cavalcanti as associate producer), *The Grapes of Wrath*, and, farther back, *The Covered Wagon*, D. W. Griffith's three-hour epics and Pudovkin's stories of the Revolution? The documentaries tell a story, or at least a continuous action: they excite sympathy for personalities who are none the less dramatised although played by themselves. The features tell a story with the more elaborate help of action, but the story is as much concerned with actuality, the stuff of documentary, as documentary itself. Once more, it may be better to forget theory and call the latter group documentary features, and the former documentary drama. The success and importance of both groups spell permanence and development. But neither will oust the more traditional documentary or fiction films from their established approaches.

Two films of the documentary drama class, *Western Approaches* and *The Forgotten Village*, will be taken as examples:

WESTERN APPROACHES: (Crown Film Unit.
British, 1944. Directed by Pat Jackson.
Photographed in Technicolor
by Jack Cardiff.)

Theme.—The strength and character of the British merchant seaman.

Story.—A number of shipwrecked merchant seamen in desperate need after days afloat on the Atlantic realise as the rescue ship " Leander " approaches that they are being used as a decoy by a submerged German U-boat. They warn her in time, but not soon enough to avoid her being struck by one torpedo. The master of the " Leander " tricks the U-boat into surfacing and then sinks her.

Treatment.—Endless time was spent perfecting this picture, the greater part of which was shot in an actual lifeboat out in the Atlantic, and not in a studio. The merchant seamen were, of course, real servicemen, and were so skilfully handled by director and cameraman that their experiences and their words never seem reconstructed before the camera. The illusion is that of complete actuality, due possibly to the fact that no man remains long enough on the screen in any one shot to give away his lack of acting technique. Only rarely do we see change of emotion in a continuous shot, for it is here that the amateur begins to baulk. There is, however, one such extraordinarily expressive shot, when the look-out in the life-boat first sights the " Leander." His weary face sinks against the mast, and he counts with his fingers before looking again: this is a fine combination of direction and acting. The colour, as in many British coloured films, is most intelligently used, emphasising the dark greens and grey-blues of the all-surrounding Atlantic.

THE FORGOTTEN VILLAGE: American, 1944. (Directed and Produced by Herbert Kline in association with John Steinbeck. Music by Hans Eisler.)

Theme.—The struggle in the life of the little Mexican village community of Santiago between traditional ignorance and superstition and the new ways of science.

Story.—A young peasant Juan Diego and the village schoolmaster endeavour to save their village from colitis due to a poisoned well. The villagers under the influence of Trini, the Wise Woman, place every obstacle in the way of the visiting medical unit fetched to the village from Mexico City by Juan. Driven out by his father, Juan goes back with the unit to study medicine. " I must be a doctor and help save the lives of my people," he says.

Treatment and Technique.—" The working method was very simple, and yet required great patience. A very elastic story was written. Then the crew moved into the village, made friends, talked and listened. The story was simple: too many children die—why is that and what is done about it, both by the villagers and by the government? The story actually was a question. What we found was dramatic—the clash of a medicine and magic that was old when the Aztecs invaded the plateau with a modern medicine that is as young as a living man. To tell this story we had only to have people re-enact what had happened to them. Our ' curandera ' was a real ' wise woman,' one who had practised herbology and magic in the village; our teacher was a real teacher in the government school; our doctors real doctors; our mother a real mother who had lost a number of children. If they moved through scenes with sureness and authority it was because they had been through them many times before when no cameras were there. Such a method required, above all else, patience, tact and genuine liking for the people. . . . Such were the methods employed in making *The Forgotten Village*. A curious and true and dramatic film has been the result." (John Steinbeck.)

The memory of this film is rich. The visual story is enhanced by the quiet unobtrusive narrative (not commentary) spoken by Burgess Meredith, and by Hans Eisler's fine music. The photography is bright with the harsh sunlight and the contrasting shadows of black foregrounds of cacti and village walls. In the narrow home with its gaunt and bleeding crucifix the mother works and waits in her pregnancy. The men and older children work in the hot fields. When the small children grow sick from the infected well Juan, shy but purposeful, picks his way to Mexico City to appeal to a doctor to come to the village. The film is full of beautiful and expressive close-ups: the mother who smiles with her shawled head tilted, the friendly simplicity of the father, joyful at the birth of more children, as he wipes the sweat and the flies from his face. When his son dies an unforgettable shot turns from the villagers dancing before the funeral to the still face of the mother, resigned in fatalistic sadness. In the final moments of the delivery of her child the mother is suspended in the attitude of crucifixion with her husband supporting her heaving body and whispering

ncouragement in her ear. Behind them hangs the gaunt rucifix, its symbolic presence in curious contrast to that of the Vise Woman performing her rites of primitive midwifery.

In the style of *Western Approaches* the British Government rown Film Unit working for the Ministry of Information has nade a fine series of short and full-length feature films. The hief of these have been:

Merchant Seamen (Director Jack Holmes, 1941).
Target for Tonight (Director Harry Watt, 1941).
Ferry Pilot (Director Pat Jackson, 1941).
Coastal Command (Director Jack Holmes, 1942).
Close Quarters (Director Jack Lee, 1943).
The Fires were Started (Director Humphrey Jennings, 1943).

ll these have expanded the original more generalised documentary approach by stressing the characters of the individuals n the story, and by using dialogue and script treatment after he manner of feature film narrative, employing commentary nly for bridging purposes. The results have been remarkable, nd have created a new field for documentary. These films ave proved very popular with the public, who found in them ne elements of characterisation and story already familiar from nost of their cinema entertainment. Documentaries like these re, however, very expensive to make and depend therefore on eimbursement through box-office receipts like commercial eature films. This may tend to limit their production now he War is over.

A good deal of discussion has been raised about the use of he professional or non-professional actor in films which deal ntimately with actuality. No one quarrels with the use of the rofessional in films where the occupational interest is not a efinite part of the film's presentation: you need not put a alesman in a studio hat-store. But point comes into the rgument in the case of *The Harvest Shall Come*, a British ocumentary of great merit where both agricultural skill and nterest in the chief character's dramatised personality share the oreground of the film. John Slater, whose considerable acting uality is beginning to be recognised after a career of small arts, manages to dupe the townsman (" What! Was he really

an actor? "), but does not always satisfy the over-critical eyes of the farmers and farm-workers for whom the film was partially intended.

On the other hand, the Crown Film Unit knows how to reduce its merchant seamen and R.A.F. personnel to the dead level of inconsequent realism until the mystified audiences exclaim " What! Weren't they really actors after all? " and hero-worship the R.A.F. and the merchant seamen all the more. How can the imperturbable sang-froid, the careless self-confidence, the cross-your-fingers-and-have-a-beer-old-man spirit survive the Crown Film Unit with its lights and cameras and microphones? The answer lies in the careful choice of the men to be used, the comparatively little they have to say at any one time, and the British sang-froid, which probably is as much I-am-bored-with-the-whole-bloody-business-anyway as a self-controlled piece of acting before camera and microphone. And there is Pudovkin and his Mongols, which is a good story:

> " For example, in the film *The Heir to Jenghiz Khan*, I wanted to have a crowd of Mongols looking with rapture on a precious fox-fur. I engaged a Chinese conjurer and photographed the faces of the Mongols watching him. When I joined this piece to a piece of the shot of fur held in the hands of the seller I got the result required." (PUDOVKIN, " Film Technique," p. 142.)

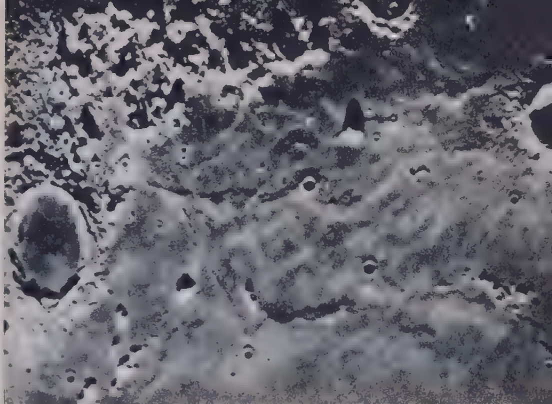
It would be pleasant to think that Harry Watt used this technique with the R.A.F.

Russia soon learned, however, to break good resolutions and have some actors who knew their job around the set. For as soon as it comes to acting which requires emotion continuously and carefully developed, the theory of the actor as plastic material in the hands of the director breaks down. The theory of sticking together the same faces with the same expression but with a different cutting tempo and calling the result a cine-study of hunger or sorrow or mother-love, ends where the emotion begins to develop, where the face itself has to move with feeling and mean it.

Documentary has got some remarkable acting results out of amateurs doing their jobs according to plan. It has been sensible enough not to ask them to do more. If a woman has just been through an air-raid she will probably look like it, but

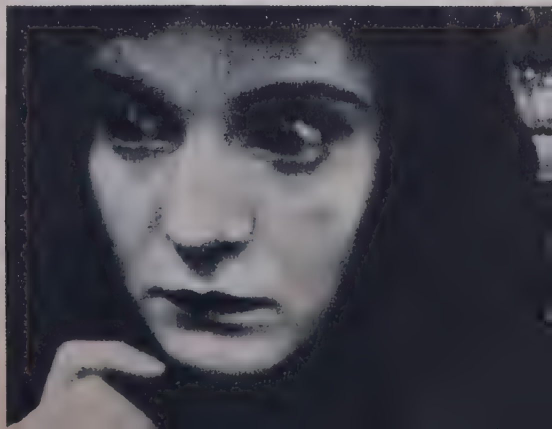
I. THE FILM CAMERA: THE VARIETY OF THE CINEMA EYE

(a) RANGE OF MOTION PICTURE CAMERA

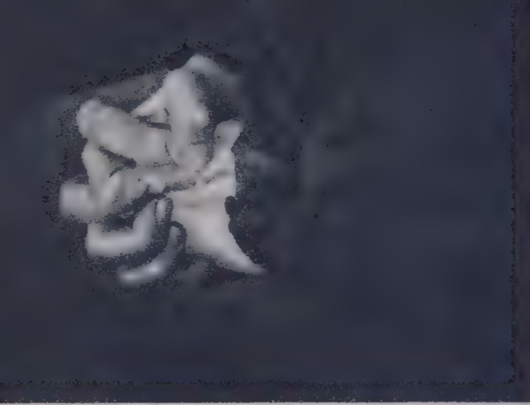


1 Boundless Universe (*UFA*)

2 Stagecoach (*Ford: United Artists*, 1939)

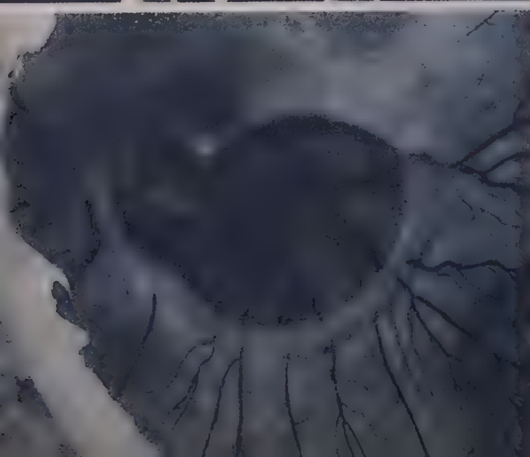


3–4 Close-ups by Griffith in Intolerance, 1916



4
Intolerance

5
Libellen
(*UFA*)



6
Embryo in Egg of Runner Duck, showing head and eye
(Secrets of Life, *G.B.I.*)

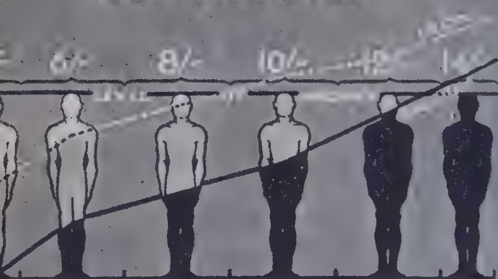
ii)
SUPER-
IMPOSITION
AND CAMERA
ANGLE

7
Today We
Live
(R. I. Grierson
and Ralph
Bond: Strand,
1937)

8
Peter the
Great
(*Petrov:
Lenfilm*, 1939)

9
Things to
Come
(*Menzies:
London Films*.
1935)

(iii)
Animated Diagrams



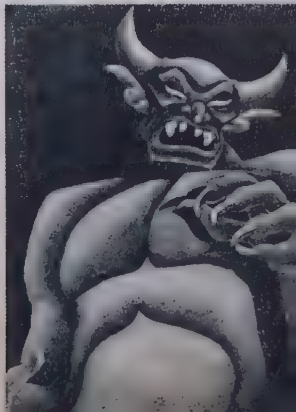
10
Enough to Eat : The Nutrition Film
(*Anstey: Gas Industry*, 1936)

11
Coal
(*G.B.I.*, 1940)

12
The World of Plenty
(*Rotha Productions*, 1943)

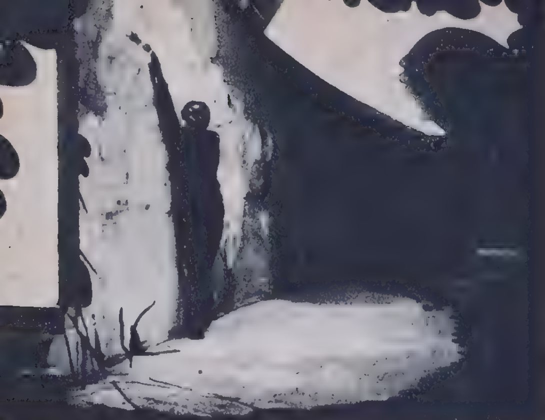
(iv)
SERIOUS USE OF DRAWN AND ANIMATED FILM

13–14
L'Idée
(*Berthold Bartosch*, 1934)



15
Fantasia (*Walt Disney*, 1941)

(v)
THE USE OF THE FANTASTIC SET IN FILM



16
The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari
(*Wiene*, 1919)

17
The Fall of the House of Usher
(*Jean Epstein*, 1927)

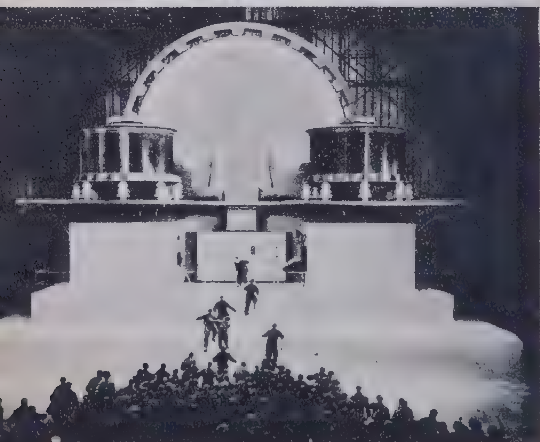
18
A Matter of Life and Death
(*Michael Powell: Archers Productions*, 1945)

19
Siegfried
(*Fritz Lang: UFA*, 1923)

20
The Student of Prague
(*Henrik Galeen*, 1926)

21
The Love of Jeanne Ney
(*G. W. Pabst: UFA*, 1927)

22
Waxworks
(*Paul Leni: Viking*, 1924)



23
Metropolis
(*Fritz Lang: UFA*, 1926)

24
Pandora's Box
(*G. W. Pabst: Nerofilm*, 1928)

25
Vaudeville
(*Dupont: UFA*, 1925)

26
Secrets of the Soul
(*G. W. Pabst: UFA*, 1926)

27
Cinderella
(*Ludwig Berger*, 1923)

28
The Last Laugh
(*F. W. Murnau: UFA*, 1925)

29
The Blue Angel
(*von Sternberg: UFA*, 1930)

30
The Threepenny Opera
(*G. W. Pabst: Nerofilm*, 1931)

31
M.
(*Fritz Lang: Nerofilm,* 1932)

32
Westfront 1918
(*Pabst: Nerofilm,* 1930)

33
Kamerad-schaft
(*Pabst: Nerofilm,* 1932)

III. THE ODESSA STEPS SEQUENCE FROM *THE BATTLESHIP POTEMKIN* (*Eisenstein: Soviet Russia*. 1925)

34–36

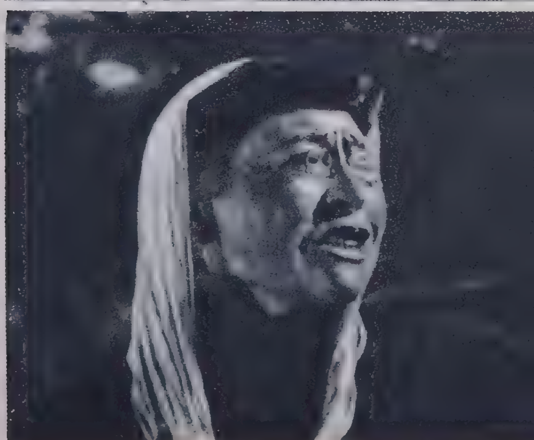
The Odessa Steps Sequence (continued)

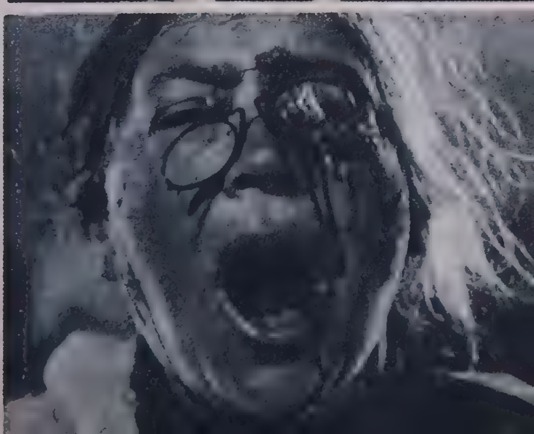
37–39

The Odessa Steps Sequence (continued)

40–42

The Odessa Steps Sequence (continued)





43 45

46
The End of St. Petersburg
(*V. I. Pudovkin: Mezhrabpom-Russ*, 1927)

47
October
(*S. M. Eisenstein: Sovkino*, 1928)

48
Earth
(*A. Dovzhenko: Vufku*, 1930)

49
Turksib
(*V. Turin: Vostokfilm*, 1928)

50
The General Line
(*Eisenstein and Alexandrov: Sovkino*, 1929)

51
The Ghost that Never Returns
(*M. Romm: Sovkino*, 1929)

52
The Three Songs of Lenin
(*Dziga-Vertov: Mezhrabpom-film*, 1934)

53
Deserter
(*V. I. Pudovkin: Mezhrabpom-film*, 1934)

54
Chapayev
G. & S. Vassiliev: Lenfilm, 1935)

55
The Childhood of Maxim Gorki
(*Mark Donskoi*, 1938)

56
Shors
(*Dovzhenko*, 1939)

57
Lenin in October
(*M. Romm: Mosfilm*, 1938)

58
Storm
(*V. Petrov: Mezhrabpom-film*, 1934)

59
Professor Mamlock
(*Minkin and Rappoport: Lenfilm*, 1939)

60
The Rainbow
(*Donskoi and Perelstein: Kiev Studios*, 1944)

61
The Jazz Comedy
(*G. Alexandrov: Sovkino,* 1935)

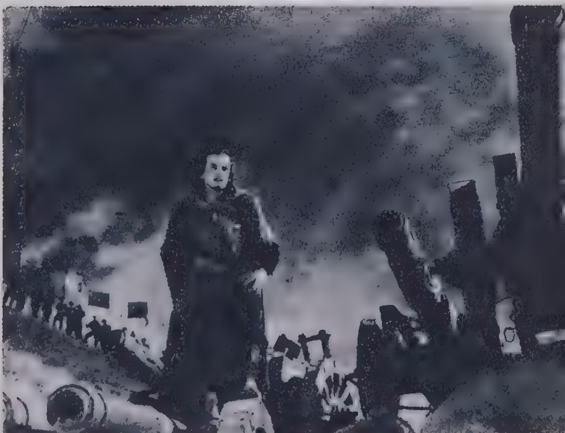
62
The Magic Seed
(*Eisenstein, Artistic Supervisor,* 1941)

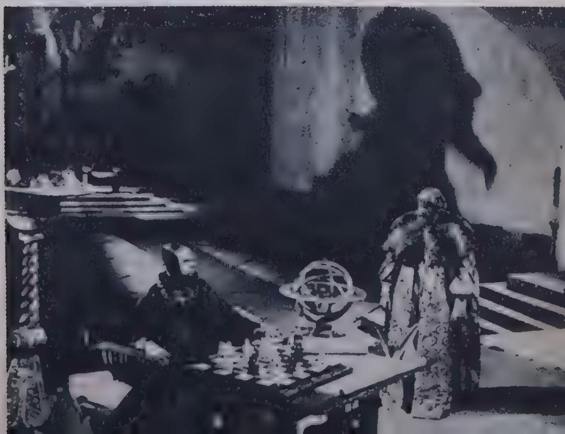
63
Land of Toys
(*Obratsov,* 1940)

64
Alexander Nevsky
(*Eisenstein: Mosfilm*, 1938)

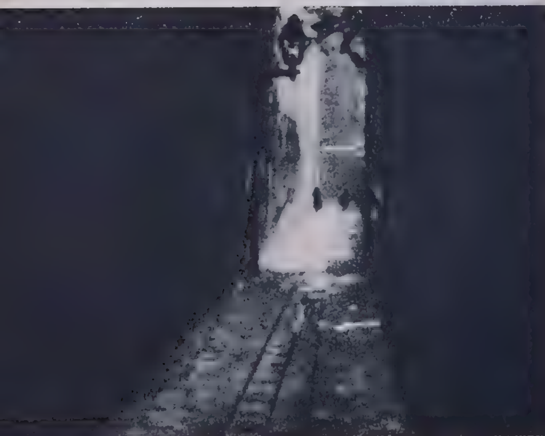
65–66
Peter the Great
(*Petrov: Lenfilm*, 1939)

67–69
Ivan the Terrible
(*S. M. Eisenstein: Alma-Ata Studios,* 1944)





70
The Passion of Joan of Arc
(*Karl Dreyer*, 1928)

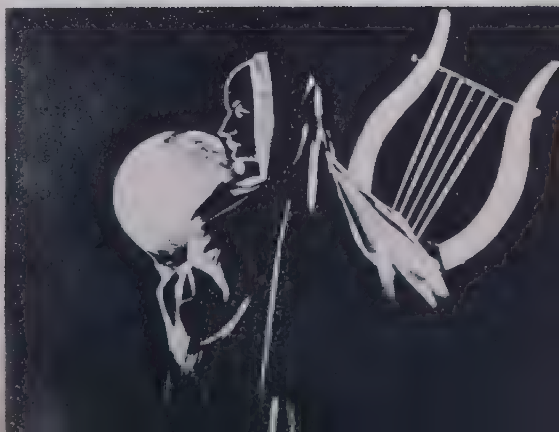


71
Rien que les Heures
(*Cavalcanti*, 1926)

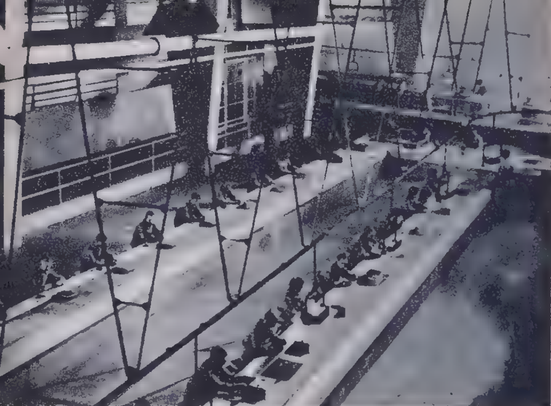
72
Thérèse Raquin
(*Jacques Feyder*, 1927)

73
The Seashell and the Clergyman
(*Germaine Dulac*, 1927)

74
Le Chien Andalou
(*Luis Bunuel*, 1928)

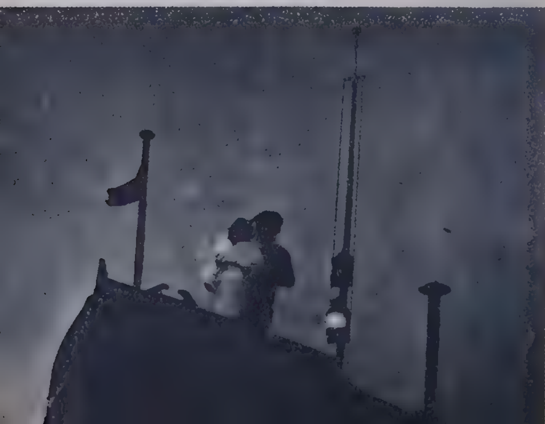


75
Le Sang d'un Poète
(*Jean Cocteau*, 1931)



76
A Nous la Liberté
(*Clair: Tobis*, 1931)

77
Zéro de Conduite
(*Vigo: Franco Film Aubert*, 1933)



78
L'Atalante
(*Vigo: Franco Film Aubert*, 1934)

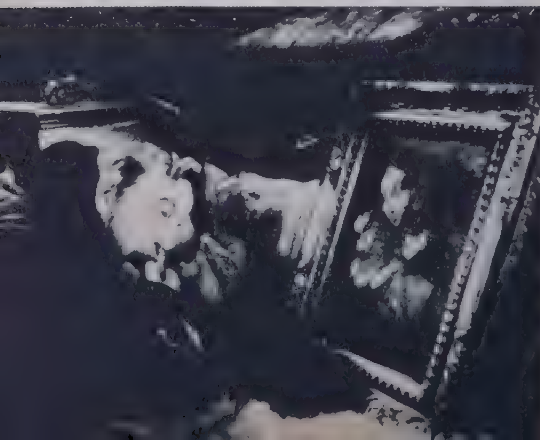
79
Un Carnet de Bal
(*Duvivier: Paris Export*, 1937)

80
La Belle Equipe
(*Duvivier: Cine Arys Production*, 1938)

81
La Kermesse Héroïque
(*Feyder: Films Sonores Tobis*, 1935)

82
La Grande Illusion
(*Renoir: Réalisation d'Art Cinématographique*, 1938)

83
La Marseillaise
(*Jean Renoir*, 1937)



84
The Golem
(*Julien Duvivier: Produced in Czechoslovakia*, 1937)

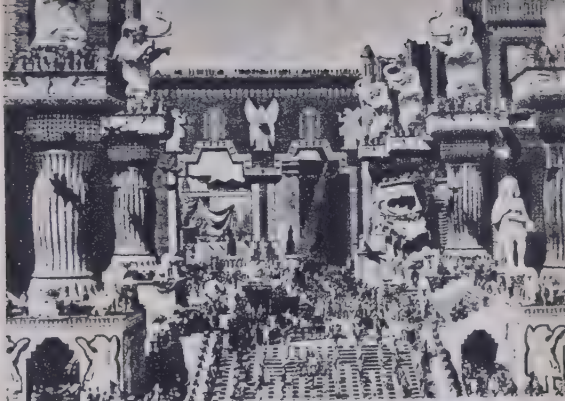
85
La Mort du Cygne
(*Jean Benoit-Lévy and Marie Epstein*, 1937)

86
Quai des Brumes
(*Carné: Films Victoria*, 1937)

87
Le Jour se Lève
(*Marcel Carné*, 1939)

88
Les Visiteurs
du Soir
(*Marcel Carné* 1942)

89–90
Les Enfants
du Paradis
(*Marcel Carné*,
1944)



91
Intolerance
(*D. W. Griffith*, 1916)

92
The Gold Rush
(*Charlie Chaplin*, 1925)

93
Modern Times
(*Charlie Chaplin: United Artists*, 1936)

94
The Marriage
Circle
(*Ernst Lubitsch,* 1924)

95
Greed
(*Erich von Stroheim,* 1923)

96
The Wedding
March
(*Erich von Stroheim,* 1927)

97
The Crowd
(*King Vidor*, 1928)

98
Hallelujah
(*King Vidor*, 1929)

99
The Front Page
(*Lewis Milestone*, 1931)

100
Winterset
(*Alfred Santell: R.K.O. Radio*, 1936)

101
The
Plainsman
(*Cecil B. de Mille: Paramount*, 1937)

102
Union
Pacific
(*Cecil B. de Mille: Paramount*, 1939)

103
Fury
(*Lang.
M.G.M.*, 1936

104
You Only
Live Once
(*Lang: United
Artists*, 1937)

105
The Long
Voyage
Home
(*Ford: United
Artists*, 1941)

106
The Grapes of Wrath
(*Ford: 20th Century-Fox*, 1940)

107
Emile Zola
(*William Dieterle: Warners*, 1937)

108
Dr. Erhlich's Magic Bullet
(*William Dieterle: Warners*, 1940)

109
Skeleton Dance
(*Walt Disney*, 1929)

110
Top Hat
(*Mark Sandrich: R.K.O. Radio*, 1935)

111
Room Service
(*Marx Brothers: R.K.O. Radio*, 1938)

112
It Happened One Night
(*Capra: Columbia*, 1934)

113
Mr. Deeds Goes to Town
(*Capra: Columbia*, 1936)

114
You Can't Take It With You
(*Capra: Columbia* 1938)

115
The Good
Earth
(*Franklin:*
M.G.M., 1937)

116
Dead End
(*Wyler:*
United
Artists, 1937)

117
Citizen Kane
(*Welles:*
R.K.O. Radio.
1941)

118
The Magnificent
Ambersons
(*Welles: R.K.O. Radio*, 1942)

119
Christmas in July
(*Preston Sturges: Paramount*, 1941)

120
Hail the Conquering Hero
(*Preston Sturges: Paramount*, 1945)

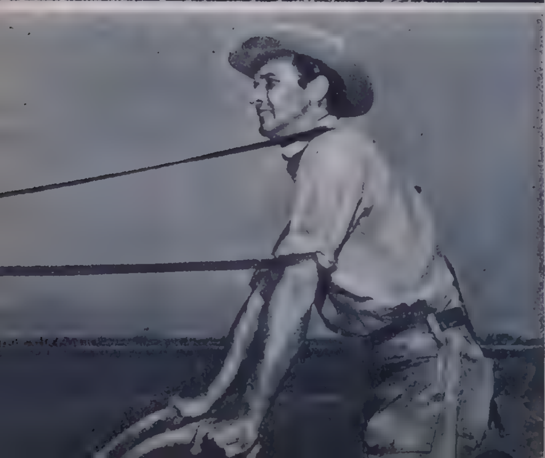
121
The Little Foxes
(*William Wyler: R.K.O. Radio.* 1941)

122
The Ox-bow Incident
(*William Wellman: 20th Century-Fox*, 1943)

123
The Lost Weekend
(*Billy Wilder: Paramount*, 1945)

124
Wilson
(*Henry King: 20th Century-Fox*, 1945)

125
The Story of G.I. Joe
(*William Wellman: United Artists*, 1945)



126
The Southerner
(*Jean Renoir: United Artists*, 1945)

127
Nanook of the North
(*Flaherty: Reveillon Frères*, 1922)

128
Moana
(*Robert Flaherty*, 1926)

129
The Plow that Broke the Plains
(*Lorentz: Resettlement Administration, U.S. Govt.*, 1936)

130
The River
(*Lorentz: Resettlement Administration, U.S. Govt.*, 1938)

131
Spanish Earth
(*Ivens: Contemp. Historians Inc., N.Y.*, 1937)

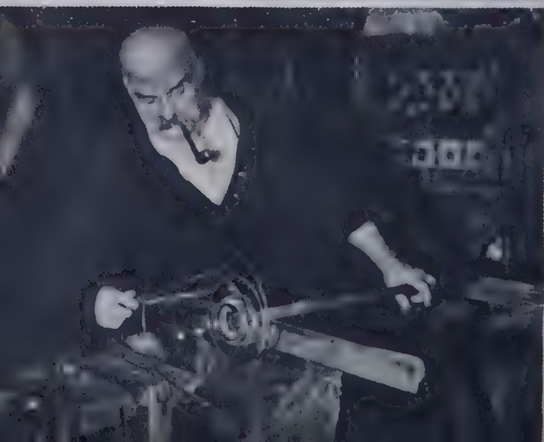
132
Philippines
(The March of Time, 6th Year, Issue 2)

133
The Fighting Lady
(*U.S.N.:
20th Century-Fox*, 1945)

134–135
The
Forgotten
Village
(*Herbert
Kline:
Grand
National*
1944)

136
Drifters
(*Grierson: E.M.B.*, 1929)

137
Head of a Water Flea
(*J. V. Durden: G.B.I., Secrets of Life*)



138
Industrial Britain
(*Flaherty and Grierson: G.P.O. Film Unit*, 1933)

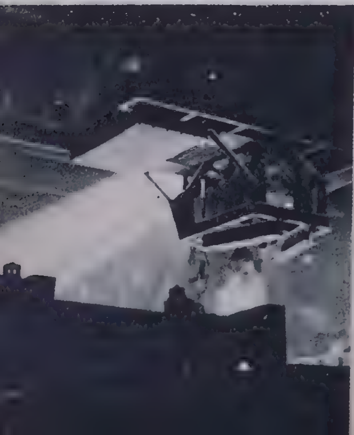
139
Song of Ceylon
(*Wright: Ceylon Tea Board*, 1935)

140
Man of Aran
(*Flaherty: Gaumont-British*, 1934)

141
Nightmail
(*Wright and Watt: G.P.O. Film Unit*, 1935)

154
Our Country
(*Eldridge & Taylor: Strand*, 1945)

155
The Harvest Shall Come
(*Anderson: Realist*, 1942)

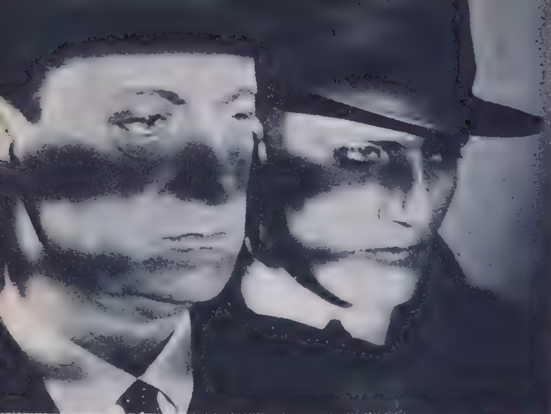


156
Steel
(*Ronald Riley: Technique Films*, 1945)

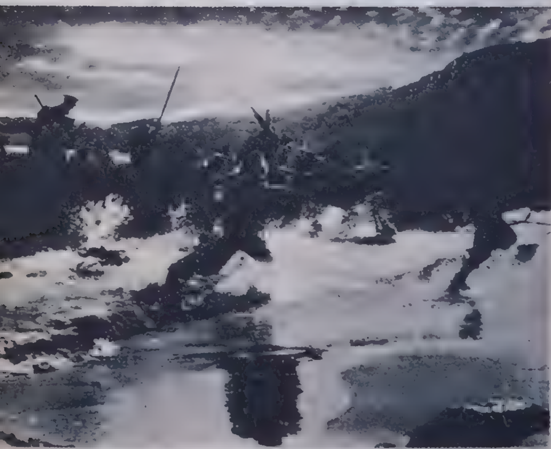
157
Spring on the Farm
(*Ralph Keene: Green Park Productions,* 1942)

158
The Crofters
(*Ralph Keene: Green Park,* 1944)

159
West Riding
(*Ken Annakin: Green Park,* 1945)



160
Blackmail
(*Alfred Hitchcock:* B.I.P., 1929)



161
Tell England
(*Anthony Asquith:* B.I.P., 1930)

162
The Man who Knew too Much
(*Alfred Hitchcock:* G.B., 1934)

163
Things to Come
(*W. C. Menzies: London Films*, 1935)

164
Rembrandt
(*Korda: London Films*, 1936)

165
Pygmalion
(*Asquith, Howard and Pascal*, 1938)

166
The Edge of the World
(*Michael Powell: Rock Studios*, 1937)

167
The Stars Look Down
(*Carol Reed: Grafton Films*, 1939)

168
The Proud Valley
(*Pen Tennyson: Ealing*, 1940)

169
Gaslight
(*Thorold Dickinson: British National*, 1940)

170
Thunder Rock
(*John and Roy Boulting: Charter Films*, 1942)

171
The Common Touch
(*John Baxter: British National*, 1941)

172
49th Parallel
(*Powell: Ortus Films*, 1941)

173
The Foreman Went to France
(*Frend: Ealing*, 1942)

174
Next of Kin
(*Dickinson: Ealing*, 1942)

175
One of Our Aircraft is Missing
(*Powell: British National*, 1942)

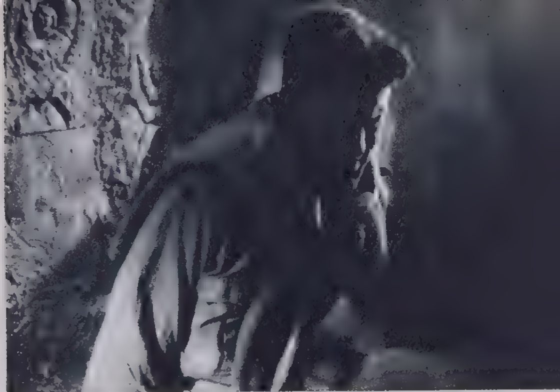
176
In Which We Serve
(*Coward and Lean: British Lion*, 1942)

177
We Dive at Dawn
(*Anthony Asquith: Gainsborough*, 1943)

178
San Demetrio, London
(*Charles Frend: Ealing,* 1943)

179
The Gentle Sex
(*Leslie Howard: Two Cities,* 1943)

180
Millions Like Us
(*Launder and Gilliat: Gainsborough,* 1943)



181
Nine Men
(*Harry Watt: Ealing*, 1943)

182
The Life and Death of Col. Blimp
(*Powell and Pressburger: Archers*, 1943)

183
Fanny by Gaslight
(*Anthony Asquith: Gainsborough*, 1944)

184
The Way Ahead
(*Carol Reed: Two Cities, 1944*)

185
Waterloo Road
(*Sidney Gilliat: Gainsborough*, 1945)

186
The Way to the Stars
(*Anthony Asquith: Two Cities*, 1945)

187
Henry V
(*Laurence Olivier: Two Cities*, 1944)

188
Johnny Frenchman
(*Charles Frend: Ealing*, 1945)

189
Dead of Night
(*Cavalcanti and Others: Ealing*, 1945)

190
I Know Wher
I'm Going
(*Powell and Pressburger: Archers*, 1945)

191
Brief Encoun-
ter
(*Coward and Lean: Cineguild*, 1945)

192
Cæsar and
Cleopatra
(*Gabriel Pascal*, 1945)

that is not acting. But if you want her to reconstruct the raid, to go through the processes instead of merely the results of emotion, then the imaginative forbearance and technical control of the actress will be required unless both the director and his film are to grow grey. For the larger canvases of *The Grapes of Wrath* where personal situations are the means by which the theme itself is developed, only the actors and actresses will see the film through the box-office. And quite right, too, or what's the good of paying professionals the salaries we do?

Hollywood has produced thousands of feature films since Griffith made *Birth of a Nation* and the far greater *Intolerance*. Very few qualify to stand beside *Intolerance* with its courageous treatment of social evils shown in the story set in modern times. Although this story is told with a nineteenth-century dash of sentiment and melodrama characteristic of Griffith, its theme is rooted in the social problems of unemployment, poverty and crime. It does not baulk at the issues involved, and its direct descendant is *The Grapes of Wrath*. In both the full form of fiction is used: actors impersonate fictitious characters. But the experiences upon which the films are based derive from actuality, from the observation of conditions existing in American society. The film, like the novel, is a medium well adapted to show these conditions vividly as the environment in which the fictitious characters move. *The Grapes of Wrath* becomes therefore a documentary feature film concerned with the true reflection of human beings and of society rather than with telling a story for casual entertainment.

THE GRAPES OF WRATH: American. (Twentieth Century Fox, 1939. Director, John Ford)

Theme.—The Dust Bowl; the emigration to the Californian fruit-fields: man's inhumanity to man; the exploitation of poverty; and the crushing of the attempt of labour to unionise.

Story.—The Joad family pass through the valley of despair in a broken-down Ford: their adventures from Dust Bowl to California; young Tom Joad sees his future as a Union organiser.

Treatment and Technique.—The most courageous social film Hollywood has ever produced, even though it is a somewhat emasculated version of Steinbeck's great novel. Fonda, Jane

Darwell and John Carradine contribute very moving performances. The early sequences are Russian in feeling with their sense of the roads and the earth, the long nostalgia of Tom Joad's return home from a jail-break in another State and the meeting with Casy, a preacher by the wayside crazy with anti-religion. The homestead, the return, the mother's emotion, the grandfather's madness, the sister-in-law's pregnancy and her husband's empty ambition and final desertion. The land bought up: the eviction: the tractor crushing the shack: the earlier wonderfully lit shots whilst Mrs. Joad burns her letters and her memories with the fire flashing over her face stricken with emotion. The journey: its rigours: its difficulties: the death of the grandmother: the deserts: the labour camps: the sense of social security and social duty in the Government camp contrasted with the pity and terror of life in the commercial labour camp with its starvation and exploitation: the children frightened by a lavatory which flushes in the well-run Government camp: Joad's manslaughter of a police deputy on the journey and fear of arrest after escape: the wages racket and undercutting through excess of labour: the fruit-fields electrically barred and wired: the racketeers' police: the union meeting in the dark by the stream: the raid on the meeting and the death of Casy, preacher-turned-labour-organiser. Joad's last great scene with his mother whose maternal sense would hold him back from the future she is proud to feel he will adopt. His mission of succour to the exploited and of organisation to conquer conscienceless privilege.

Other films in the history of American cinema have reflected similar social problems. James Cruze's *Covered Wagon*, although over-concerned with a purely melodramatic story, contains some fine actuality material of the life of the early pioneers and because of this maintains a reputation which overshadows his earlier film *Beggar-on-Horseback* (1923). This satirised the nouveaux riches and employed an expressionist technique rare in American cinema. King Vidor also made a series of important films seriously concerned with social issues during the silent period. *The Big Parade* (1925), a film of the War, was the outstanding success of its year, but in *The Crowd* (1928) he depicted with far greater depth and truth the

problems of unemployment and of the individual struggling against submersion into the crowd. Needless to say, Vidor had to make two pot-boilers to retrieve the ground lost by the unpopularity of this remarkable film, the technique of which was as advanced as the theme. With the coming of sound Vidor made *Hallelujah* with an all-Negro cast which was less important socially than it was technically. Then he personally financed his second important picture *Our Daily Bread* (1934), which again was concerned with unemployment and tried to show that it could be solved by a return to the land. His next important picture he made in England, based on Cronin's novel *The Citadel.* This concerned the struggle of a young doctor in his efforts to deal with occupational disease in the teeth of the opposition of the industry which causes it and even of the men who suffer from it.

Most of the important American social films were made after the coming of sound, though the implications of a virulent social criticism in the early work of Lubitsch, von Stroheim and the later work of Charlie Chaplin should not be forgotten. In 1930 Lewis Milestone filmed *All Quiet on the Western Front.* 1931 was the year of Milestone's *The Front Page,* Mervyn Le Roy's *Little Cæsar,* Roland Brown's *Quick Millions* and William Wellman's *The Public Enemy.* In 1932 appeared *I am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang* (Le Roy) and *Cabin in the Cotton* (Michael Curtiz); in 1933 Capra's effective career began with *Lady for a Day,* William Wyler's with *Counsellor-at-Law* and William Dieterle consolidated his with *Fog over 'Frisco.* Roland Brown followed *Quick Millions* with another study of the gangster in *Blood Money:* Gregory la Cava produced his fantasy of dictatorship *Gabriel over the White House.* 1933 was an important year in American cinema.

Other films followed such as John Ford's *Informer* (1935), Michael Curtiz's *Black Fury* (1935) and *Angels with Dirty Faces* (1939), Fritz Lang's *Fury* (1936) and *You only live once* (1937), Mervyn Le Roy's *They Won't Forget* (1937), William Wyler's *Dead End* (1937) and William Wellman's *Nothing Sacred* (1937). Although Sidney Franklin's *The Good Earth* (1937) was a story set in China, it achieved a universality in the social issues involved. William Dieterle's important series of biographical films began in 1936: his films on Pasteur, Zola,

Juarez, Ehrlich and Reuter were made between 1936 and 1941. In 1938 he directed *Blockade*, the only serious film made by Hollywood on the Spanish war: it was sufficient for the powerful Catholic organisation called the Legion of Decency to attempt to get it banned and to exert boycott pressures against the exhibition of the film, presumably on behalf of Franco. In 1936 Capra's famous indictment of capitalist society *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* proved him to be an important and original mind in cinema, as well as the wit of *It Happened one Night*, made two years earlier.

The War years brought other films of social importance, Ford's *The Grapes of Wrath*, Michael Curtiz's *Mission to Moscow* (1943), Dieterle's important fantasy *All that Money can Buy* (1941) based on Stephen Vincent Benet's novel "The Devil and Daniel Webster," William Wellman's devastating film of lawless lynching *The Ox-bow Incident*, which was released in Britain as *Strange Incident* and refused exhibition by the major circuits, and his fine film of the American infantryman *The Story of G.I. Joe*, Orson Welles' satirical portrait of the American tycoon *Citizen Kane* and Billy Wilder's study of dipsomania in *The Lost Weekend*.. The vastly expensive film *Wilson*, although apparently guilty of considerable inaccuracy[1] and over-idealisation of Wilson, was a remarkable picture of American political life. Preston Sturges's films, especially *Sullivan's Travels* (1942) and *Hail the Conquering Hero* (1945), contain considerable social satire and great originality in presentation. Jean Renoir, one of the most distinguished of French directors, released *The Southerner* in 1945, and made in it a companion picture to *The Grapes of Wrath*, as well as one of the finest films to come from an American studio.

A record such as this from America alone is sufficient to

[1] See the leading article in "The News Chronicle" of Thursday, January 4th, 1945, which records a discussion between the film critic Richard Winnington and the American E. P. Montgomery, the newspaper's Diplomatic Correspondent. Montgomery claims that many important facts have been left out of the film, so giving it a false emphasis in order to build up the idealistic character of Wilson. It omits the very important fact that Wilson threatened to make a separate peace with Germany if the Allies would not accept the policy of his Fourteen Points. The Allied leaders themselves are also under-played in the film as "tricky little political dummies."

prove the outstanding importance of the film as a medium for the serious presentation of social problems. The danger is always that because social problems lead to personal conflicts, these conflicts will take possession of the film at the expense of the social problems themselves. But in films like *The Southerner, Mr. Deeds goes to Town* and *The Informer*, all very different in their approach to life, personal issues are never divorced from issues of state. It is impossible in the Dieterle biographies to forget the vital service of the individual to the community, mostly in the teeth of the community's opposition. These films atone in some measure for the thousands of pictures made as " pure entertainment " but which carry social implications which are only too often anti-social.

10. THE BRITISH FEATURE FILM 1940-1945

Everyone recognises now that there has been an extraordinary renaissance in British feature-film production since about 1940. The story of British cinema, apart from documentary, has been a tragic one of opportunities squandered and pioneers unrecognised. In the earliest days of cinema, artists of the calibre of Cecil Hepworth, R. W. Paul, George Pearson and Will Barker were making films which pointed out the true technique of filmcraft before Griffith shook the world with his two masterpieces. Britain was in the forefront of the film-producing world and British films were shown everywhere. With the Industry crippled by the first World War and by the rapid ascendancy of the Hollywood product at a time when we were prohibited from developing at a similar rate, Britain did not, like France, Germany and the Soviet Union, create a national cinema during the twenties. Production continued, but at no pace to match the demand of cinema-goers. In 1927 the Government introduced the famous Quota Act to protect the industry. Exhibitors had to show a gradually increasing proportion of British-made pictures, which by 1939 had become 20 per cent. The rest of the product shown was of American origin. This legal obligation unfortunately encouraged entrepreneur producers to finance films which were worthless and ill-made, and as often as not played as second-features to the American product. All that mattered to these producers was to make quick money. The dozen or so good films made each

year in British studios by producers of repute[1] were insufficient to stem public reaction against almost all films bearing British credits, of which an average of 100 to 150 were made each year before the War with a peak production of 225 in 1937.

When War was declared in 1939 it did not seem likely that an industry for the most part so mismanaged and so riddled with unemployment could survive. But the Quota obligation was maintained, and survived the War years on the basis of about 15 per cent. of the total films shown.

The Studios were faced with immediate difficulties. The call-up left them with a bare third of their personnel. The Government requisitioned studio-space for storage. In 1939 there were 65 sound stages at the disposal of 22 studios. In 1942 there were only 30 sound stages in use by 9 studios. The raw materials for costumes and sets went into short supply. Film stock became rationed more and more severely. Production figures sank from 222 feature films in 1936 and 116 in 1938 to 56 in 1940 and 60 in 1942.

But a new spirit entered the studios. It was the new spirit of Britain challenged at last to undertake a war which she had been uncomfortably avoiding for too long. By the winter of 1940 British audiences were not so satisfied as formerly with the trivial product which formed the major import from Hollywood. Rest, relaxation and escape from worry were necessary, but shallow emotionalism was not enough. The first British war films were astonishingly successful, though the time they took to make pushed their release dates on into 1941-42. In other themes than those deriving from the War production standards were also rising; Carol Reed's *The Stars look Down* (made before but released during the War) and Pen Tennyson's *The Proud Valley* both dealt with mining conditions

[1] Interesting films made in Britain during the ten years before the War include *Cottage on Dartmoor* (1928); *Blackmail* (1929); *Tell England* (1930); *The Private Life of Henry VIII* (1933); *Man of Aran* (1934); *Things to Come* and *The Ghost goes West* (1935); *Rembrandt, Secret Agent, Men of Yesterday, The Song of Freedom* and *The Robber Symphony* (1936); *The Edge of the World, Victoria the Great, The Great Barrier, Young and Innocent* and *Fire over England* (1937); *Pygmalion, The Lady Vanishes, South Riding, Bank Holiday, The Citadel* and *Vessel of Wrath* (1938); *French without Tears, Jamaica Inn, Goodbye Mr. Chips, Poison Pen, On the Night of the Fire* and *The Stars look Down* (1939).

without avoiding the major social issues of this unhappy industry. Roy Boulting directed *Pastor Hall* adapted from Ernst Toller's play based on Pastor Niemoeller's arrest and confinement in a concentration camp. Thorold Dickinson directed the melodrama *Gaslight* in such a way that the artistry of the production made it a serious contribution to the new development of British cinema.

These were the films of 1940, together with *Convoy*, Ealing Studios' first war film directed by Pen Tennyson. Their characteristic was an understanding of emotional values and a faithfulness to the environment in which the story was set. The use of the word ' realistic ' to describe the new British cinema is not enough. There is always a poetic quality about the emotional treatment in these films. Accuracy in the presentation of events and situations is not enough: there must also be understanding and humanity. Though like the Americans we rarely achieve the subtlety of characterisation found in the best French cinema, we have achieved in a large number of films this humanity and truthfulness to the requirements of situation. These qualities are now characteristic of the work of our best directors, and place it in the forefront of progressive cinema today.

Practically all the names of the prominent producers and directors were new or almost new. A few like the late Leslie Howard, Michael Balcon, Anthony Asquith and Cavalcanti had been producing or directing notable work for some years before the War. But most of the directors of today date their maturity as film-makers from the war years: Michael Powell, Carol Reed, David Lean, Roy and John Boulting, Thorold Dickinson, Charles Frend, Frank Launder, Sidney Gilliat, Harry Watt, John Baxter and Basil Dearden. These are some of their names, and every one is a passionate believer in films, an artist of the cinema. Each year new names are added from studios prepared to experiment with new directors. Recently, for example, we have seen the work of Charles Crichton and Robert Hamer, discoveries of Michael Balcon at Ealing Studios, and Compton Bennett's film for Sydney Box Productions. Some of them, such as Michael Powell of Archers' Films, work as independents. Some have established themselves in pairs to produce films after their own taste: Roy and John

Boulting (Charter Films), Frank Launder and Sidney Gilliat (Individual Films). Most, though not all, work within the economic framework of the Rank organisation.

This new vitality, this new individuality are of essential importance to British cinema, and they are a direct product of the War years. They are in reaction to the streamlined showmanship of Hollywood. The work of these directors is greatly influenced by pre-war and wartime documentary. It is bound to the national life of Britain, to our people, our cities and our rich and varied countryside. It has produced a new generation of actors and actresses unspoiled by star values and as interested in their art as the directors themselves. It is to the credit of Arthur Rank that he has partially realised the future of British films lies with such artists because they alone, with those that eventually join them, can produce the unique film out of our race and time. It is also to the credit of the Service Departments, who continuously gave facilities to producers and released essential technical and acting personnel to make the films.

Their wartime record is inspiring. Here are some of their films:

1. *Films on War themes from* 1941 *to* 1945:
   49th Parallel (Michael Powell for Ortus Films, 1941).
   In which we Serve (Noel Coward and David Lean for Two Cities, 1942).
   One of our Aircraft is Missing (Michael Powell for British National, 1942).
   The First of the Few (Leslie Howard for British Aviation Pictures, 1942).
   The Foreman went to France (Charles Frend for Ealing Studios, 1942).
   Next of Kin (Thorold Dickinson for Ealing Studios, 1942).
   The Gentle Sex (Leslie Howard for Two Cities and Concanen, 1943).
   The Lamp still Burns (Maurice Elvey for Two Cities, 1943).
   San Demetrio London (Charles Frend for Ealing Studios, 1943).
   Nine Men (Harry Watt for Ealing Studios, 1943).
   We Dive at Dawn (Anthony Asquith for Gainsborough Studios, 1943).

Millions like Us (Frank Launder and Sidney Gilliat for Gainsborough Studios, 1943).

The Way Ahead (Carol Reed for Two Cities, 1944).

The Way to the Stars (Anthony Asquith for Two Cities, 1945).

Journey Together (John Boulting for the R.A.F., 1945).

2. *Films not directly concerned with the War from* 1941 *to* 1945.

Kipps (Carol Reed for Twentieth Century Fox British, 1941).

The Prime Minister (Thorold Dickinson for Warners British, 1941).

Love on the Dole (John Baxter for British National, 1941).

The Common Touch (John Baxter for British National, 1941).

Thunder Rock (Roy Boulting for Charter Films, 1942).

Life and Death of Colonel Blimp (Michael Powell for Archers Films, 1943).

Thursday's Child (Rodney Ackland for A.B.P.C., 1943).

Fanny by Gaslight (Anthony Asquith for Gainsborough, 1944).

This Happy Breed (Noel Coward and David Lean for Two Cities, 1944).

Waterloo Road (Sidney Gilliat for Gainsborough, 1945).

Johnny Frenchman (Charles Frend for Ealing Studios, 1945).

Dead of Night (Cavalcanti, Charles Crichton, Basil Dearden and Robert Hamer for Ealing, 1945).

Brief Encounter (Noel Coward and David Lean for Cineguild, 1945).

The Rake's Progress (Frank Launder and Sidney Gilliat for Individual Pictures, 1945).

Other films of importance have been made during this period but they mostly do not belong to this young and vigorous tradition.

Although the war film is out of fashion now, it should be recognised as the starting-point for the expression of this new art. Most of the less responsible producers left off making films. The War itself, with its tense situations and emotional complexities, offered a unique cinematic opportunity to the

more imaginative British producers, an opportunity which Hollywood through the accident of remoteness from the War and a late start could not realise in her own films until the example had been well established. A sound reputation for British pictures with British audiences was established and is now generally accepted by exhibitors and public alike.

The problem of British stars was more complicated. For the most part they had to be created and achieve a quick maturity based more on emotional and artistic sincerity than on a thorough understanding of technique. Some, like the late Leslie Howard, Laurence Olivier, Robert Donat, Flora Robson and David Niven, had a considerable reputation before the War. But for the others it is their work during the War period that has made the reputations they now have. It is essential that we retain their services as well as add new names to the acting strength. The expansion of the British market overseas will help considerably to keep them from going to Hollywood in the pre-war manner, often never to return. Many will probably stay in our studios because they recognise a progressive spirit there which it would be difficult to find anywhere else.

The faults of British pictures are easy to find. Many are over-written, and lack the terse economy of the better American films. Words are wasted on inessentials and the action is held up. The treatment is often too polite. Acting technique is too frequently influenced by the needs of the stage, so that emotions realised by small-part players are too precise and emphatic for the enlargement and detail of cinema. There is an adolescent air about British films which is rapidly being outgrown. It is on occasion triumphantly left behind when, as in films like *The Way to the Stars* and *Brief Encounter* the emotional treatment is as mature as that in *La Grande Illusion* or *Les Enfants du Paradis*, which for characterisation and feeling are at the top of French cinema. This emotional maturity is the peculiar gift of the films of the Old World: it is common to the best of French, Russian, the old German and the new British cinema. Hollywood has produced many remarkable films and occasional masterpieces: the story technique is superb in pictures like *All that Money can Buy*, *Double Indemnity*, *The Lost Weekend*, or *The Ox-bow Incident*

(*Strange Incident*). But the emotional atmosphere is nearly always " dressed " with a certain showmanship. It makes immensely effective cinema, but it seldom lives in the knowledge of the close and personal heart. It turns too easily to sentimentality, to sexual or social heroics. The maturity of American cinema is a technical one: it is immensely at ease with itself because of its huge and assured market, its top-line stars, its effective small-part players, its ace directors and its efficient and opulent studios. But it lacks the emotional purgation caused by struggle and stricture.

The artistic future of British cinema is assured. A large number of small studios are producing a widely varied product. Expansion is essential, and a wider market at home and overseas. The problems are economic, for without expanding distribution production will be forced to wither. And the economic problems are far from solved.

What matters is that British pictures should retain their national integrity. We alone can make films as closely related to our life as French pictures are to French life and Russian pictures to Russian life. We must not allow our nearly common language to lead us to repeat the disastrous pre-War policy of trying to copy Hollywood without the temperament or the resources to do so. We must not allow such economic bargains to take place as will reduce our studios, or even part of our studios, to the status of a Hollywood annexe. We must respect our own integrity and the unique ability of our own directors and actors. To stage a post-war sell-out under the guise of some reciprocal deal which in the end gave Hollywood the whip-hand in our production policy, would be a national and cultural disaster in so important an entertainment medium as the cinema has now become for the British people.

INTERVAL

AN OPEN QUESTIONNAIRE AND MANIFESTO FROM THE AUTHOR AND READER TO THE CINEMA-GOING PUBLIC

INTELLIGENCE TEST: GROUP ONE

How many films do you see every year?

How many have you seen in your life?

How old were you when you first went regularly to the cinema?

How many more films do you intend to see?

Do you go to the cinema every week, every month, every year?

Do you go to the cinema once, twice, three times or more a week?

Do you select the films you want to see each week?

Do you go regularly to see films with certain stars only?

Do you go only to see certain types of films: musicals, thrillers, romantic dramas?

Do you go because your friends recommend you to go to certain films they have liked?

Do you take your films as they happen to come to your favourite cinema?

Do you go to the cinema without even knowing what is on?

Do you read any film criticism in the press or listen to it on the radio?

Do you read film news or film gossip in the papers or the film magazines?

Do you recognise the difference between reading a genuine critical appreciation and just publicity blurb?

Why do you go to the cinema? Do you prefer it to reading, dancing, watching sport, gambling, drinking, staying at home or making love?

Do you remember the films you see? Do you remember them by their titles, their stars, or the emotional effect they have on you? By their music, their thrilling moments, their sets or their costumes? Do you remember them for their striking pictorial or visual way of telling their story: by close-ups, curious shots from long distance, high up, low down, by the speed or slowness of the way the shots follow each other, by

the excitement of watching the way the film is told by pictures and sound?

INTELLIGENCE TEST: GROUP TWO

How many pictures have you thought worth seeing twice?

Would you go a long way at personal inconvenience to see a film again, or to see a film you missed on its first release?

Have you ever noted down the title of a film as one to go and see in the future?

Have you ever made a mental note in a cinema about any shots or parts of the film which have impressed you?

Have you ever made a written note in the darkness of the cinema or on return home about the shots or parts of the film which have impressed you?

Have you ever hated a film so much you would have liked to complain about it to the cinema manager? If so, did you do it?

Have you ever wanted to see a film that never came to any cinema within reach?

Have you ever seen a foreign film other than American?

Have you ever written or phoned a cinema manager asking him if he is going to show a certain film? If so, what was the nationality of the film?

How often are you prepared to see titled films in a foreign language?

But perhaps all this is too much like work anyway. The cinema is a place to slip into with a girl-friend, in which to have a good time and be damned to the world outside. And one film is as good as another, provided it has a kick to it of some sort.

Provided it has—that is the beginning of selection, of criticism, in the end of better films and keener enjoyment. Which is better than paying like a mug to keep the producers lazy.

So look through the lists of titles and directors on pages 224-239. They are not complete. They are the records of some good cinema, but not of all good cinema. Can you add to them? How many of these films have added to your pleasure in the past?

By your selection and declared choice of what you pay to see your pleasure can be increased in the future.

Part Two

THE INFLUENCE OF THE FILM ON PRESENT-DAY SOCIETY

1. THE PLACE OF ART IN THE EXPERIENCE OF LIVING

The civilisation of man might be measured by the manner in which he sets about planning and interpreting the flow of sense experiences which constitutes physical life. This planning and interpretation follow the bent of his philosophy—his common sense, or his temperamental make-up—combined with the habits of mind he has acquired from the society in which he lives, and the channels along which custom permits his instinctive energies to flow. Office routine is at once an act of temperament combined with social business convention. The act of creation and of participation in the arts is also an act of temperament combined with social convention.

Most people participate in the arts in herds. They form part of an audience at theatre or cinema: they share the same emotion provided by the artistic stimulus. Where they do not congregate for their art, they buy it on the group system and hang it in reproduction on their walls or stand it in their living-rooms. Sometimes if their temperament bends that way they leave the major groups for the minor and hang pictures on their walls which the major group, whose temperament would break if it bent too far, calls highbrow. This pleases the minor group and confirms them in the superiority of their group choice. But it remains a group choice all the same.

Art in its widest aspect is a part of the instinct to order and interpret life, to isolate into some form of permanent and reliable experience the abominable flux of the universe. This aspect of civilisation the so-called primitive man shares with his so-called civilised brother, who is often only a dressed-up savage with the appurtenances of physical comfort and none of the true savage's dexterity and strength. That is why white men are always a little ashamed before the vigour of the native, and assume a superior air when talking in white ducks about

their burden. Genuinely civilised whites give the coloured races their due, and share their experience in bringing order to the mysterious chaos of living. Variety is useful for the toughest job in the world.

People who never use the word ' art ' in their vocabulary take part in it for a variety of reasons which might be listed as follows:

It is recreative: you feel better for seeing a good film or play. Your enjoyment revitalises the spirit, and the flesh is renewed.

It is communal: you feel better for sharing a civilising experience with your fellow creatures. The gregarious urge is fulfilled, and not with those chill people with whom you work so unnaturally all day.

It is æsthetically satisfying: there has been a sense of order in it—a beginning, middle and an end. Whether the end is tragic or comic matters little provided it is æsthetically right. This is another aspect of enjoyment and civilised recreation.

Art must satisfy these principles to be popular: it must be communal, it must be complete and ordered, it must be a recreation. And most often it is quite unselfconsciously all these things without being thought " art " at all.

Art with the capital A begins when the minority set out to philosophise over their recreation, and when the creator becomes selfconscious about his work. Comparisons creep in and different levels of enjoyment assert their varying merits. People with the leisure to develop their temperaments and foster their susceptibilities begin to demand, not different satisfactions, but more complex forms of satisfactions than will be assimilable by the majority. Trouble begins when the more complex satisfaction looks down on the simpler satisfaction and asserts that its form of enjoyment is vulgar and insensitive and no art at all; whilst the simpler satisfaction looks down rather than up at the complex satisfaction with a raspberry and a what's-art-anyway attitude.

The difference is purely in degrees of satisfaction, and, in a major artist's creation like Shakespeare's or Disney's it manages somehow to satisfy the whole range of demand.

In the long view, therefore, no good will be served by quarrels

between highbrow and lowbrow, with the medium-brow keeping a foot in both camps by thinking Shakespeare and musical comedy just wizard. No good will be served by being rude to Hollywood because its productions have box-office pull. It is far better to try to understand why Hollywood has box-office pull, and whether its productions are really recreative, communal and æsthetically satisfying, box-office pull or no.

Art, whether unselfconsciously popular like ballads, folk-dancing, ballroom dancing, community singing, or developed to a degree which recreates the more highly civilised human beings in their more highly civilised moments, must fulfil its fundamental laws. Whether its philosophy be contemporary common sense or in line with the most advanced thought of the time, if the quality of recreation is not present the audience departs glum and thwarted. It is when I sense this glumness in a cinema audience that I am far more inclined to criticise the film than if the audience leaves in a mood of gaiety or quiet elation. For good art at all levels is a stimulant which does not demand lime juice in the morning: only more good art.

The manner, or technique, of art is as important as the matter. A comparatively little matter, provided it is grounded on contemporary common sense, will see a well-made film through. The recreative instinct is fulfilled provided the technique does not seem to be wasted on worthless people. It is good to see Astaire and Rogers enjoy themselves dancing because they are nice people and can dance supremely well. The fact that they are nice people is, as it were, sufficient justification for the attention paid to them in the first place, and then their dancing comes as a glorious technical surprise which is an æsthetic joy to watch in a crowded house enjoying the dancing too. The highbrows relax and have their fun, though the next night they will get a more developed, because more complex, elation at a smaller theatre reviving *The Grapes of Wrath*. They will leave the theatre invigorated by the beauty of it all, by the complex satisfaction that in a world which is a chaos of cruelties and muddle, the human spirit can and does rise with energy and tolerance to prepare an order with less cruelty and less muddle and less defeat of human goodness. And this is recreation indeed.

2. WHAT THE AUDIENCE GETS

It is an obvious fact that the average audience does not enjoy the average film to the extent of such recreation. Why, therefore, they go so assiduously will be examined later. It is sufficient for the moment to examine the material provided. In a normal year just before the war England and America released in this country some seven hundred feature-length films. All of these films were made by large staffs, and a deal of money was invested in each picture. Some are classed at the outset as main features: others, with less money assigned and mostly without top-line stars, are condemned at the outset to be second (or inferior) 'supporting' pictures. This usually gives them an inferiority complex for a start.

A hunt is always starting around to get hundreds of stories to sell. These stories may come about in a variety of ways. One of the boys may just think one up for himself—it is then called an original screen story. Or maybe a famous play or novel will prove the groundwork for a film, and the conference gets to work to make a treatment and choose a star. Or maybe the stars are on contract anyhow with overhead salaries flowing out unless vehicles are found to exploit their talents for the period the contracts run. Or maybe the stars themselves find the script and choose the supporting players. Sometimes a famous author is contracted to go into conference with the scenario boys or wait unsummoned in the bungalows and script-offices of Hollywood so that his name can appear as collaborator on the credits when the film is finished. Or maybe all this is libel.

The ways of Hollywood are paved with good intentions. The executives have an honest regard for the millions who pay to see their works. So by their works shall you know them.

But wait a moment for the story of Luce, the American publisher and promoter of *March of Time*, who thought he ought to learn more about pictures, and so joined the Board of Directors of Paramount. From a thumbnail biography in "The New Yorker" we learn that:

> "For a time, Luce was on Board of Directors of Paramount Pictures. Hoped to learn something of cinema, heard nothing discussed but banking, resigned sadly." ("New Yorker," Nov. 28, 1936.)

Why is it we always get back to money? Why is it that the best continuous cinematic tradition has been made where the background money counted for least in the directors' minds—in German silent cinema, in French independent productions, in Russian state cinema, in British documentary? Why is it that if Hollywood has produced tens of thousands of feature films it would be difficult to pick out 500 memorable titles in any category of first-class entertainment?

The answer lies in production policy. It is absurd to say that with all the elaboration of the production executive Hollywood does not watch its public. On the other hand, the weekly numbers are so huge (the equivalent of 60-70 per cent. of the population in America and Great Britain) that the public is extremely difficult to watch. None the less, fluctuations do occur in cinema attendance, not in the aggregate for the week, but as between the various 'attractions' at the various houses. The golden rule has, therefore, become the box-office rule: what will they pay to see in sufficient quantity?

Now for reasons which we will consider later, rather than see nothing at all, many people are content to see anything, a factor of importance, and point number one against the box-office rule. For reasons of a similar kind, the cinema with the most comfort or luxury to offer will act as a draw: people will pay to sit in it whatever it may show: point number two. Point number three is that a film will sell on its star, and judgment be warped by the degree of attraction a sellable personality and appearance can exercise on the public.

Production policy, however, has to satisfy the Board of Directors. For the Board the profit motive is the only motive which counts. Prestige may occasionally outweigh expediency, and some seemingly worthwhile production (Shakespeare for instance) be given a try-out. Art with a capital A has its due, and sometimes the box-office endorses the choice. Often it does not when the choice was ill-made. But the Board is interested in investments primarily, and, for the social themes of its films, in the status quo. It will seldom promote controversial discussion.

Production policy is normally conservative and inelastic. Trouble seems to be taken in only a minority of films to make them audience-worthy and recreative. Anything passes for

entertainment, and exhibitor and audience alike cry out for progress. But production policy, rigid to the last, forbids progress in the name of box-office.

To sell the films, elaborate publicity blurbs are prepared for the trade itself, and for the public in the picture magazines and screen trailers. Bombarded by adjectives and flashes of stars in laughter and panic, the audience is sold bad films and good with equal bombast. High-spot hooey sells every film on the same level of hysteria to a stolid house. An atmosphere of romantic scandal is allowed to surround the lives of the glamour-stars, until the Hays Office runs a purity campaign, when the quietude of their luxurious domestic lives is surrounded with lilies.

Small wonder, therefore, that the films are usually hectic rather than recreative, that entertainment is often thought of in terms of the interests of the production boys and girls themselves, with the lid put on by the Hays Office. Entertainment is, therefore, largely made up of:

(*a*) Handsome men getting their girls (without or with sophistication).

(*b*) Handsome girls getting their men (with or without sophistication).

(*c*) Handsome clothes and handsome surroundings (luxury).

(*d*) Absence of clothes from women, and to a lesser degree from men (sex).

(*e*) Ambiguous situations involving sex issues.

(*f*) Excitement deriving from crime (gangsters) and cruelty (sadism).

(*g*) Excitement deriving from the detection of crime.

(*h*) Excitement deriving from extreme physical danger.

(*i*) Excitement deriving from crude supernaturalism.

(*j*) Belly-laughs deriving from domestic incompatibilities.

(*k*) Belly-laughs deriving from naughty children.

(*l*) Belly-laughs deriving from ham silliness (knock-about comedy).

(*m*) Belly-laughs deriving from the flouting of authority (sergeants, policemen, magistrates, mothers-in-law).

(*n*) Sentimentality deriving from patriotism and private duty (service versus love).

(*o*) Sentimentality deriving from children and babies and animals.
(*p*) Sentimentality deriving from mother-love and betrayed faithfulness.
(*q*) Curiosity about foreign people with fake customs and accents (Chinatown, natives, etc.).
(*r*) Curiosity about strange ways and strange glamorous institutions (Foreign Legion, Convents, etc.).
(*s*) Curiosity about fake science and art (personalities, not ideas).
(*t*) Awe at religious beings and fake-mysticism (Lamas preferred to parsons).
(*u*) Awe at the divinity of the love of beautiful women (well lit).
(*v*) Awe at anything other-worldly and glamorously unspoken but oh so true.

I submit that without finishing the alphabet this covers the bulk of Hollywood's endeavour. I do not say that the results are not often entertaining. What I submit is that the greater bulk of all this leaves you nowise different from when you went in, except perhaps a bit glummer the morning after. It is stimulant without recreation: entertainment without relish. And it is made by people who hold down good money for making it, and would often gladly make better if only they dared. And when occasionally they do, they are so surprised at their success, that they copy and recopy themselves way back into the old gags and attitudes and thank God for experiment and daring. And if they take a sally at Art with a capital A and make hay of it, then they sink back secure in their box-office winners, because they knew it would be no good anyway before they started. And they are bitterly hurt if you call it a racket, and if you talk Russia and France they think you a sap.

A letter written by Frank Capra to the "New York Times" (April 2nd, 1939) and quoted by Margaret Thorp in "America at the Movies" reveals the stranglehold the promoter-producer set-up has over the creative freedom of the director. Capra writes as President of the Directors' Guild, which was formed in 1936 to combat the middleman who controls the director's activities, as producer or associate producer. Capra says:

"There are only half a dozen directors in Hollywood

who are allowed to shoot as they please and who have any supervision over their editing.

"We all agree with you when you say that motion pictures are the director's medium. That is exactly what it is, or should be. We have tried for three years to establish a Directors' Guild, and the only demands we have made on the producers as a Guild were to have two weeks' preparation for 'A' pictures, one week preparation time for 'B' pictures, and to have supervision of just the first rough cut of the picture.

"You would think that in any medium that was the director's medium the director would naturally be conceded these two very minor points. We have only asked that the director be allowed to read the script he is going to do and to assemble the film in its first rough form for presentation to the head of the studio. It has taken three years of constant battling to achieve any part of this.

"We are now in the process of closing a deal between director and producer which allows us the minimum of preparation time but still does not give us the right to assemble our pictures in rough form, but merely to assemble our sequences as the picture goes along. This is to be done in our own time, meaning, of course, nights and Sundays, and no say whatever in the final process of editing.

"I would say that eighty per cent. of the directors today shoot scenes exactly as they are told to shoot them without any changes whatsoever, and that ninety per cent. of them have no voice in the story or in the editing. Truly a sad situation for a medium that is supposed to be the director's medium.

"All of us realise that situation and some of us are trying to do something about it by insisting upon producer-director set-ups, but we don't get any too much encouragement along this line. Our only hope is that the success of these producer-director set-ups will give others the guts to insist upon doing likewise." (Quoted in "America at the Movies," pp. 146-7.)

The fact that only directors of the calibre of Capra and Ford are allowed producer status led Capra to initiate a strike-threat

by the Guild in February 1939. This obtained for the lesser directors some short leeway of preparation time with pay, before shooting, but it has not yet given them the right to handle their material from start to finish, from story-conception to cutting-bench. The British industry maintains the producer system, but our directors have far greater freedom of creative treatment.

And then when you think you'll give it all up, a good film comes along, a really good film, right in the teeth of the opposition. And it wasn't made by an independent scratching around for finance. It was made by the big shots themselves—for profit. And it has everything in it which makes recreation—wit, charm, tolerance, gaiety, sensitive understanding of the smaller human details, love and tenderness and human affection, kindliness and gracious living. How did it happen? A producer, a director, a scenarist, a star? It does not matter: one's confidence is restored: and one endures once more the crashing of trumpets and braying of shawms until the next miracle breaks.

3. "IT'S THE LARST VORD IN PITCHERS"

Publicity for the Exhibitors' Trade itself knows no limits. "It's the last vord in pitchers," said a film salesman to me at a Trade Preview. I have been looking for that famous "larst vord" ever since in the elaborate spreads of the Trade Press, of whose formulas these are typical examples:

> "It's fun and frolic, it's music and romance in a frozen paradise—but it's got sizzling pay-box temperature!" (*Iceland*.)
>
> "A story as lovable as *Mr. Deeds goes to Town*, as great as only a Capra, a Cooper, a Barbara Stanwyck can make it! While thousands sweep across the screen, drama reaches new heights and Capra achieves his finest production with a direct hit straight to the hearts of the world's leaderless legions of 'Little Men.'" (*Meet John Doe*.)
>
> "It's a scorcher! It's a sizzler! It's punch-packed with Melody! Comedy! Romance!" (*The Gay City*.)
>
> "Paramount's up-to-the-minute Blitz romance—whirling from our bombed London to gay Lisbon!" (*One Night in Lisbon*.)

"A boy with a sock—a girl with a heart—a picture with a punch!" (*Knockout.*)

"The first picture to lay bare a woman's mind!" (*Shining Victory.*)

"Where men asked no questions—women revealed no pasts—no mercy expected!" (*A Man's World.*)

"What every woman knows—and no man can understand!" (*Unfinished Business.*)

This type of salesmanship actually adds to the fun of life for the most part, and a whole social philosophy can be constructed out of its implications. The tragedy begins when films of first-class importance are sold in the same language, encouraging people to expect the same formulæ of romance and crime and disappointing them when the comfortable cliches they love are disregarded by a director who ruthlessly portrays life as it was (*The Ox-bow Incident*) or as it is (*The Southerner, Brief Encounter* and *Citizen Kane*) or as it can be for some people (*The Lost Weekend*). The publicity blurb for *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* was advertised in America as "A Lusty Lifetime of Love and Adventure in Lavish Technicolour" and "The Lusty Lifetime of a Gentleman who was sometimes *Quite a Rogue!*"; for *The Lost Weekend* the blurb ran in America "What Powerful, Desperate Passion Lured Him from the Arms of Two Lovely Women in that Lost Weekend" and in Britain "From the best seller that was talked about in *whispers.*"

The central London audience with whom I saw this last remarkable tragic study of a dipsomaniac, in which Ray Milland gives the performance of his screen career under Billy Wilder's brilliant direction, thought the film was bound to be funny from the moment they saw the first bottle of whisky. The cliche treatment of alcohol on the screen is normally comic. It was not until the stage of delirium tremens was reached that they settled down to take the film as a sort of drama, and Billy Wilder conquered an audience educated to think any picture with Ray Milland and a bottle of whisky bound to be this week's funny story.

On the other hand the reviews, as distinct from the publicity in the Trade journals, are usually extremely accurate and alert to screen as well as box-office values. I would particularly

like to apply this to the reviews in the British exhibitors' journal " Kinematograph Weekly " which are often more responsible than those that appear in many national newspapers. The reviews of the class B or secondary pictures in American trade journals employ their own devastating vocabulary. Here is one from the American " Independent," which writes with a deadly accuracy of *Arson Squad* as

> " A nifty little secondary, this—with plenty of action, peppy pace and pert performances. Slanted for the nabe market, it should hit the hinterland jackpot and do yeoman service elsewhere on the lower shelf.
>
> " An exposé of arson methods, the story includes standard measure of romance, rugged rough-stuff and righteousness triumphant.
>
> " Lew Landers' direction is competent.
>
> " SLICK SMALL-BUDGET STUFF."

" The larst vord in pitchers." I should ask when.

4. THE WAR OF THE CRITICS

Against all this ballyhoo the major critics have maintained the war of standards. In their own particular way and style they have fought since silent days for good films, and have sat through thousands of press shows in search of the better things of cinema.

> " Just often enough to keep a man from giving up religion, some small miracle will come along. A lot of us sourpuss commentators who are reputed to look on pictures through the jaundiced eye of intellect, and to pan everything on the principle of preserving superiority, are really soft soulers with an anxious love for cinema; we go along protesting that the tripe doesn't really count, and keeping alive that little flame of faith in the possibility of the movie as the art with the largest common denominator. And every once in a while a film quietly made, no drums of *Anthony Adverse,* no bugles of *Romeo and Juliet,* slips through the mill, and we see the thing and experience a slight sense of strangeness, and after a while we remember, rather than realise, that we've seen a picture that demonstrates that our own theories are quite possible, quite possible." (" Garbo and the Night-Watchmen," p. 119.)

This ray of hope comes from Meyer Levin, an American critic anthologised in Alistair Cooke's brilliant collection of Anglo-American film criticism, " Garbo and the Night-Watchmen." Through the hail of publicity and the shower of star glory—(" The furore which has accompanied the producing, promoting and exhibiting of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* could, if properly harnessed, have prevented the Ethiopian war," says Robert Forsythe, batting for America)—they have steadily publicised what they thought good and castigated, pulverised, debunked and derided what they thought evil or merely absurd. Sometimes they feel that judgment falters before the perpetual hypnosis of mediocrity. Writing in 1929 Mr. Robert Herring says:

> " Not a single one of these films is as good as it ought to be, yet there is something to be said for all of them. They are, in fact, distressing examples of the tendency of the whole cinema, which is evolving an alloy that it is still a little hard to reject entirely. In those old days which we are now hearing so much about, films were so bad that one could reject them, whilst seeing through to what they hinted at. Then came a few one could accept. There is now none among the average releases that one can either refuse or welcome. That is why, among other reasons, talkies are welcome. They set us back again to the days of out-and-out vulgarity and stupidity, sometimes avoiding both, and one still has hope that the next phase of efficient mediocrity may be leapt. But the general run of films shows them to be all so competent and so hopelessly un-worth-while, and that is a sign of loss of youth." (" Garbo and the Night-Watchmen," pp. 29-30.)

A steadily increasing number of film critics with a responsible attitude to their work has been writing now for some time. The national press of Britain, in spite of the drastic curtailment of its space, has increased its column allocation to film reviews since the War period. The critics have not hesitated as a body to resist all pressure to curtail their freedom of speech, whilst treating with a gay generosity many films which were little better than routine. They have supported every British film which has come from the new school of direction with a progressive style and treatment. They have supported the

distinguished films which Hollywood has made over the past twenty-five years. The result of all this writing, this campaign for good films and more good films, is that a steady body of public opinion is gathering itself together which reads informed criticism before it selects its cinema. But its growing numbers are still small against the vast collective queues that stand in the rain to buy three hours of warmth, comfort and star-solace for lives spent in factories and counting-houses or shopping in dismal little streets.[1]

5. WHAT THE PUBLIC WANTS: SYMPOSIUM FROM ALL SIDES

This is open for everybody's opinion, yours, mine and the psychologist round the corner talking to a man who's been in " pitchers " since 1908. Miss Elizabeth Bowen in Charles Davy's excellent " Footnotes to the Film " provides a realistic answer.

> " I go to the cinema for any number of different reasons —these I ought to sort out and range in order of their importance. At random, here are a few of them: I go to be distracted (or ' taken out of myself '); I go when I don't want to think; I go when I do want to think and need stimulus: I go to see pretty people; I go when I want to see life ginned up, charged with unlikely energy; I go to laugh: I go to be harrowed; I go when a day has been such a mess of detail that I am glad to see even the most arbitrary, the most preposterous, pattern emerge; I go because I like bright light, abrupt shadow, speed; I go to see America, France, Russia; I go because I like wisecracks and slick behaviour; I go because the screen is an oblong opening into the world of fantasy for me; I go because I like story, with its suspense; I go because I like sitting in a packed crowd in the dark, among hundreds riveted on the same thing; I go to have my most general feelings played on. These reasons, put down roughly, seem to fall under five headings: wish to escape,

[1] In a census of opinion published as a result of an investigation carried out by " Kinematograph Weekly " (December 20th, 1945), in answer to the question, " Do newspaper critics influence your choice of films," 14 per cent. admitted being influenced by the critics and 76 per cent. read the critics' columns for information, though they preferred to form their own judgment.

> lassitude, sense of lack in my nature or my surroundings, loneliness (however passing) and natural frivolity." ("Footnotes to the Film," p. 205.)

Miss Bowen has had the courage to put herself in with the lowest common multiple.

Mr. Sidney Bernstein, from the enlightened exhibitors' side, tried the experiment of measuring public reception by questionnaire methods. He distinguishes in an article for "Footnotes to the Film" between the gaga and the film-fan. The gaga's

> ". . . approach to the film is one of identification. For him the hero is the answer to his own day-dreams and the picture a world which causes the realities around him to dissolve for a while. The films are his release from the frustrations of a dull day." ("Footnotes to the Film," p. 225.)

The film-fan class, a small proportion of the audience, is increasing in number.

> "His critical faculty is developing, he can distinguish between good and bad photography and knows something of the technique of film-making. Sometimes he can even differentiate between the good and bad acting of his favourite stars. He is acquiring some degree of articulateness in the correspondence columns of his fan magazines and is eager for pertinent information." ("Footnotes to the Film," p. 224.)

The gaga audience brings to the cinema an urgent bodily as well as psychological need which cannot be overlooked.

> "As a social institution, the local cinema represents to a section of the population the peak of glamour. Warmth and colour are to be had there; there are pleasurable distractions; there are comfort, richness, variety. The cinema is so often the poor man's sole contact with luxury, the only place where he is made to feel a sense of self-importance. With his ninepence in his hand he is able to command something approximating to the attention and service which is part of the pattern of the rich man's everyday life. The West End picture-goer and the film critic should bear in mind that his own appreciation of the cinema is not typical or general. Not only the film programme, but the

deep carpets, the bright lights, the attention 'fit for a king,' are the weekly delights of the majority of picture-goers." (" Footnotes to the Film," p. 230.)

The film-fan, on the other hand, picks and chooses with a growing sense of what he likes and dislikes. He works on the whole from stars, and sometimes directors, out to themes and stories. His taste in themes varies according to locality in some instances. Films which delight large audiences in the large central cinemas of London and the big provincial cities are often completely beyond the range and taste of audiences in industrial areas on whom the social subtleties of Bette Davis or Greer Garson are lost. They prefer tough action and belly-laughs.

Mr. Bernstein points out an important fact about the box-office measurement of success.

> " The fact that there is no general outcry against the standard of entertainment which is offered at the cinema is not a sure indication that the majority of films are up to the level of public taste. A more accurate deduction can be drawn from the fact that, of the five hundred films issued in any one year, only six or so are record-breakers at the box-office, whilst another twelve, perhaps, produce excellent receipts and another twenty good receipts." (" Footnotes to the Film," p. 223.)

From the critic's angle, Mr. Meyer Levin makes an important statement on what seems now to be an acknowledged part of cinema psychology—screen hypnosis.

> " I rarely walk out on a picture, and never want to walk out on a simple programme picture. It is only the more pretentious cinema efforts, the ones that try to be something besides just another movie, that may stimulate me to walking out. Such pictures attain a kind of individuality, and if it happens to be the kind of individuality that rubs me the wrong way, the spell is broken and I want to walk out. But even in the most obnoxious picture, I can feel the basic, physical hypnosis of the medium. I want to sit and let the thing roll on and on, but there is the conflicting desire to get up and out of the room invaded by the personality of some actor, or by some idea I dislike.
>
> " Now, I know I'm not alone in feeling this hypnotic,

habit-forming need for the movie. Sociologists, through the activity of social service workers, have in the past few years secured a fairly wide acceptance of the idea that the motion picture is a necessity, rather than a luxury, to the population. It is no longer a shock when a relief client confesses that a quarter out of the minimum-standard-food-budget allowance for the week is devoted to the purchase of movie tickets.

" We are all familiar with the escape-mechanism theory as an explanation for this strange need. Perhaps it is the complete and the proper explanation. An escape once a week into the other-world of the films, and the heart is able to go on. I think there is something more involved than simple escape; I think the need for congregation is there, the need to feel one's self in a room with other folks, sharing a common experience; and also a kind of religious experience in confronting the unnatural together with other folks. Something primitive, like what makes a bunch of savages gather together and watch a witch-doctor.

" Too, there is the factor which those who have recently looked at Veblen will call conspicuous consumption. The need to show one's self spending money for something that is not as obviously necessary as food. This is a secondary factor, for it cannot be operative in the screening room, to which we are admitted free; so below this spending factor must be some really elemental, sensory effect of the moving picture.

" Maybe it is simple hypnotism. The hypnotist holds an object before the eye—some shining object, that flickers, reflecting light. The willing subject keeps his eye fixed in this single focus. And the hypnotist drones out something simple, something familiar. There is no element of surprise. The subject knows exactly what is coming next. The hypnotist is going to repeat the same phrase, over and over—go to sleep, sleep, sleep—or he is going to repeat it in established, progressive variation, as in counting. He is not going to skip any numbers.

" And presently, the subject is in a trance state, freed of responsibility, freed of himself, happily guided by an

outside force. He is often disappointed when the spell is broken.

" Maybe that is why people want to sit in the theatre and see two pictures instead of one. Periodically, this craze for dual programmes returns to plague the theatre exhibitors. And as the dual-craze progresses, more and more pictures are made in the secondary category, fill-time pictures which exemplify the trance factor most perfectly. Pictures like *The Luckiest Girl in the World,* or *Adventure in Manhattan,* or *Without Orders,* or *The Isle of Fury,* or—what's that little picture I saw yesterday? They roll along, and you would be really shocked if they should roll out of the routine. It would be like a pulp story turning Faulkner." (" Garbo and the Night-Watchmen," pp. 124-6.)

Hypnosis breeds an uncritical tolerance, provided the girl and the seat are comfortable.

" The point I am making is one I have made often before: to wit, that familiarity with motion pictures breeds tolerance. Coming upon them after a long absence, one is likely to blink the eye and be amazed that such nonsense can be accepted peaceably by human beings. After a period of regular attendance, the spectator begins to make the comparisons which are fatal to his intellectual integrity. He begins to convince himself that while the particular movie before him is awful, it is not worse than something seen last week." (" Garbo and the Night-Watchmen," pp. 196-7.)

In other words, the public has no formalised list of the things it wants, and to a lesser degree, is fairly tolerant in the circumstances of being shown what it does not want. Mr. Graham Greene unconsciously takes up Mr. Bernstein's point about the fallibility of box-office measurement in a criticism of the private emotionalism of Bing Crosby.

" Bing Crosby mournfully croons. That is the common idea of popular entertainment, a mild self-pity, something soothing, something gently amusing. The film executive still thinks in terms of the ' popular ' play and the ' popular ' novel, of a limited middle-class audience, of the tired business man and the feminine reader. The public which

rattles down from the North to Wembley with curious hats and favours, tipsy in charabancs, doesn't, apparently, ask to be soothed: it asks to be excited. It was for these that the Elizabethan stage provided action which could arouse as communal a response as bear-baiting. For a popular response is not the sum of private excitements, but mass feeling, mass excitement, the Wembley roar, and it is the weakness of the Goldwyn Girls that they are as private an enjoyment as the Art Photos a business man may turn over in the secrecy of his study; the weakness of Bing Crosby's sentiment, the romantic nostalgia of 'Empty saddles in the old corral,' that it is by its nature a private emotion." ("Garbo and the Night-Watchmen," pp. 222-3.)

What the public really wants is excitement.

"'People want to be taken out of themselves,' the film executive retorts under the mistaken impression that the critic is demanding a kind of Zola-esque realism—as if Webster's plays were realistic. Of course he is right. People are taken out of themselves at Wembley. But I very much doubt if Bing Crosby does so much. 'They don't want to be depressed,' but an excited audience is never depressed: if you excite your audience first, you can put over what you will of horror, suffering, truth. But there is one question to which there is no answer. How dare we excite an audience, a producer may well ask, when Lord Tyrrell, the President of the Board of Censors, forbids us to show any controversial subject on the screen?" ("Garbo and the Night-Watchmen," p. 224.)

On excitement, in the form of Boris Karloff, Mr. Don Herold as the last succinct word.

"Nature must have placed within each of us a certain definite appetite for the horrible, otherwise there wouldn't be tabloid newspapers, and there wouldn't be such crowds around sick horses, and there wouldn't be so many terror movies.

"I can't quite figure why we should pay real money at a box-office to have somebody scare us half out of skins and wits or to put us on the verge of a nervous breakdown. Goodness sakes alive, I don't have to hire anybody to

drag me to the verge of a nervous breakdown; I live there: but I suppose some people live miles back from one all the time and have an actual hunger for the jitters.

"An immense number of scream and screech pictures seem to have been batting around, this past month, and I guess I had better hand in a theme about them. I hope I get an 'A.'

"Personally, I would never (if I weren't a hired movie sitter) (this work is not at all unlike sitting as a decoy in a Coney Island bus at so much per hour) place two bits on a box-office window-sill to see one of these chillers. Yet millions of my fellow men pay dough to get in to see these spoovies. Lon Chaney was always surefire at the box-office, and Bela Lugosi and Boris Karloff are Clark Gable to a lot of people. (Clark Gable is usually Boris Karloff to me.) My own idea of fun is to see Fred Astaire or Charles Butterworth or W. C. Fields or even Stan Laurel, but maybe I'm just a scaredy-cat.

"I suppose that the satisfaction lots of people get in watching hair-raising movies is in seeing something going on in the world that is worse than their home life." ("Garbo and the Night-Watchmen," pp. 68-9.)

Women still form the majority of the cinema's patrons—there are more genuinely tired working women and housewives than weary business men at the pictures. Women are interested in other women, clothes, houses and men. Cecilia Ager watches pictures from the first two angles and writes with acid in the ink. Here she is on Joan Crawford and screen clothes and manners:

"Now she quietly looks any actor, no matter how English, straight in the eye, confident of the mastered casualness of her own pronunciation. Nobody's coiffure is more cleanly swept-off-the-brow, more intent upon character and therefore disdainful of artificial coquetry, than hers: nobody's wardrobe more starkly simple—but only on the surface, mind. That calm and repose she's now achieved, that feeling of firm ground beneath her feet, must not be mistaken for just pure simplicity. Far from it. It wells from knowledge—from knowledge, at last, gained the hard way. No more do 'beans'—for 'beens'—jut out from

her speech naked and terrified; no more do unresolved trimmings distract from the compact and self-contained silhouette of her clothes. Still self-conscious but with a new self-assurance that shows her self-consciousness is only an expression of her awarenes of her duty of high-class-example-setter to her public—instead of the mark of self-doubt it used to be—now Miss Crawford goes about doing right things, wearing right things, with deafening poise. Now her quality asserts itself from the inside out, instead of insisting on itself with externals; and the whole show is much more convincing, besides being a lot easier on everybody and cosier to watch." (" Garbo and the Night-Watchmen," pp. 301-3.)

A picture can set a hair-style or build a new costume-line. The market watches the cinema, and the cinema has been known to watch the market. *Things to Come* started a new craze in beach-wear ahead of its time—the penalty of forecast in dress design. Though the dresses and make-up and coiffeurs leave the girls pondering and their mothers muttering what will they leave off or put on next, there is no doubt that the fashion-demands shape themselves to the sweep of this star's hipline and the uplift of that star's bust.

And so there we are back where we started from; the audience is receptive, but, apart from the film-fans, generally uncritical and averse to using much intelligence from its own side of the screen. It expects to be excited, thrilled, amused and emotionally lit-up. If in the process of fulfilling these needs a director slips in an idea, it will not matter if the situation keeps up the tension. If the ideas are strong or continuous, as in *Citizen Kane* or *The Grapes of Wrath*, then the suburban or provincial audience begins to cast around for something to laugh at. So this makes the directors wary. King Vidor says about *The Wedding Night*:

" Artistry does not consist of making a film that only a limited group of people can understand. Rather, we must seek a great common denominator, a means of telling a story that is understandable to all classes of audiences—the poor, rich, old, young, European and American. One must hold to human emotions to achieve this goal, because emotions are universal and can be understood by every

human being. . . . Emotions can be portrayed by a gesture, a facial expression, a step or two, a lifted eyebrow. The complexity of sophisticated people makes such simple expressions impossible. To explain their situations, one must go into long dialogue, movement must stop, each point of the story must be told by the characters in detail. Speed, movement, and reality vanish. In the picture I have just completed, *The Wedding Night,* I have followed the same formula." (" Garbo and the Night-Watchmen," pp. 102-3.)

Hitchcock says generally:

" I must say that in recent years I have come to make much less use of obvious camera devices. I have become more commercially-minded; afraid that anything at all subtle may be missed. I have learnt from experience how easily small touches are overlooked.

" In a film you keep your whole action flowing; you can have comedy and drama running together and weave them in and out. Audiences are much readier now than they used to be for sudden changes of mood; and this means more freedom for a director. The art of directing for the commercial market is to know just how far you can go. In many ways I am freer now to do what I want to do than I was a few years ago. I hope in time to have more freedom still—if audiences will give it to me." (" Footnotes to the Film," pp. 10 and 15.)

We had better wind the forum up with a quotation from one of the trade papers, " Kinematograph Weekly." This epitomises the Exhibitor's angle on the subject.

" When people stop to think they realise that the power of the screen is directly dependent upon the fact that about 25 million patrons every week pay for admission to our kinemas because they want to be amused. They are satisfied or they would cease to attend. . . .

" But what is the real desire of the kinema patron? If anybody takes the trouble to inquire he will find it is to get away from the whole nasty business for a couple of hours—to live in another world and build up resistance to the wearying anxieties of the day by enjoying a spell of make-believe.

"Call it 'escapism'—why not? What else is there in any form of mental relief from hard conditions outside? And so long as the world can get this relief, however temporary, so long is the kinema doing a good service. When it is necessary to inflame the public passions or fears, let us find some other medium than the kinema." ("Kinematograph Weekly," Thurs., Sept. 4th, 1941, Editorial, p. 4.)

6. THE EFFECT OF THE CINEMA ON ADULT AND JUVENILE

Attendance statistics of the cinema in this country and America outclass any other available national attendance. In America it is calculated that over 80 million seats are sold in the cinemas weekly. In this country, with a substantial war increase, some 25 to 30 million seats a week are sold. In assessing these estimates one must allow for the small age-groups at either end of the scale—infancy and old age—which cannot be effective potential audience, and for the fact that many people attend the cinema more than once a week. Perhaps 50 per cent. of the available population of both countries are regular cinema-goers.

The weekly statistics of juvenile attendance in this country are about 4½ millions; in America 11 millions. Many children go to the cinema two or even three times a week. In a normal school survey very few go once a month or never at all.

Many cinemas in this country, notably the Odeon circuit, have experimented with children's matinées, usually on Saturday mornings. Here the staple make-up of the programme is the cartoon, the serial, the interest picture and the more-or-less suitable feature originally made for adults, though recently a number of special short films for children have been produced by the Rank organisation.

The Board of Censors, working along its own lines, awards films in this country three types of certificate, a U, an A and an H. Any child can see a Universal certificated film; any child can see an Adult certificated picture when accompanied by a *bona-fide* parent or guardian (the way the children pick up their *bona fides* on the cinema doorstep is notorious); no child under sixteen is allowed to see an H film.

On the whole, this classification from the child's angle is a

sound one. Investigations by the Trade, social workers and psychologists alike go to prove that the dangers to children are on the whole slight except from the point of view of the typical H film. The cinema is the medium for excitement and children live on excitement, which is the main reason why they go to the pictures. Even their attitude to humour is largely based on excitement. The sexual element does not really enter the normal child's line of country until the approach of adolescence. Then the partially clothed woman stirs repressed interests in the awakening male, and the adolescent girl gets a pash for a film-star and a precocious taste for make-up and cinematic clothes.

Most of the sex situations and innuendoes of dialogue pass the child by as so much waste time. "The Film in National Life" quotes a Methodist minister: "I know that many good-well-meaning people—and associations as well—believe that the influence of the films is a bad one . . . ; even the sex film may do no harm, for the simple reason that a child does not understand half what is being said. Passionate kisses simply give them the giggles. What I do object to is coarseness—not the Rabelaisian coarseness, which does not seem to be particularly harmful—but the crude, sneaking coarseness which the children recognise at once."

Disney's *Snow White* was given an A certificate by the Board, which caused much controversy in the press and much certificate revision by local authorities. Disney, of course, has never set out to be a film-maker for children. It is the children who have adopted Disney, despite the horrific element, symbolic of evil, which is an essential part of the Disney folklore. In *Snow White* an A certificate was given as a warning to child and parent that an horrific element was to be expected: an H certificate would have kept the children away from what everybody persisted in thinking was a children's film.

The element of horror has the worst effect on children as far as the content of the screen is concerned. Children, who in moments of personal fantasy can be astonishingly brutal to other children and animals, do not like violence when it is directed at themselves. The horrific element in screen fiction is frequently so presented as to give the audience as great a shock as the victim in the drama. Richard Ford describes

frightened children in the cinema: " ... there is usually a tense hush when children are frightened during a film, and they hold their breath, with small restrained squeaks, while they grip the edges or arm of the seat. The noise of healthy screaming during a chase scene is entirely different." But this type of fear is rare, and in a questionnaire to 142 managers responsible for the Odeon children's matinées, 83 per cent. stated that the children were never frightened by incidents in cartoons, and 61 per cent. that the children were never frightend by incidents in serials. The lists of the rather obvious things (spiders, horrific animal close-ups, grotesque faces, King Kong and clutching hands, extreme danger to screen favourites) provided by the minority of managers are probably justified in consideration of the more sensitive child, whether boy or girl.[1]

The dangers to the adult (and especially the impressionable not-yet-worldly-wise adolescent) are far greater, though always to be seen in the light of the fundamental common sense of the people as a whole, who know the difference between a picture and real life, and, indeed, are rather affronted when in films like *The Lost Weekend* they are asked to look at actuality on a night off.

The psychology of advertising and propaganda includes the principle of repetition. If the cinema assumes in the majority of its products certain attitudes to character, customs, manners and institutions, these attitudes which in an individual picture

[1] At the request of the American Motion Picture Research Council the Payne Fund Committee of Educational Research initiated a series of twelve studies on the general subject of "Motion Pictures and Youth." These were summarised in a short volume of that title by W. W. Charters published by the Macmillan Company, New York, 1933. Henry James Forman published "Our Movie Made Children" in the same year, basing his argument on the Payne studies. Many striking facts are revealed connected, for instance, with the effect of exciting films on children's sleep: motility in bed for boys was increased by 26 per cent. after a night at the pictures. Young children are three times and adolescents twice as excitable as adults in the cinema. Sex films (in 1930 72 per cent. of the films released dealt with crime, sex and love) affected adolescents most. Fifty per cent. of high-school children investigated admitted ideas of sex-love came from the pictures. Films affect delinquent children more than non-delinquent. And so on. The investigations covered the period 1929-33, and so are really out-of-date, though many of the findings remain significant.

may be regarded as fictional and unreal may after a protracted period of cinema-going become absorbed as correct for decisions and behaviour in real life. Though I do not suggest that a girl when choosing her husband deliberately looks for something like Spencer Tracy or Stuart Granger, I do suggest that the qualities of manhood accepted by her in the continuous contemplations of her ideal will colour her reactions to the men she has to meet in the real world. Certain patterns of behaviour in the attitude of men to women and women to men will seem acceptable to her, and she will be less adaptable to the exigencies of real male behaviour when she has to deal with it. Here the world of her own fantasy (coloured so real on the screen) will affect her behaviour for good or evil.

Similarly in the matter of her own behaviour and appearance. Few women can afford to dress like a film-star even if it were possible to do so in the broad light of day. But the personal appearance of many girls can be, and is, considerably modified by what they come to regard as their style, and whether this style is a direct copy from a film appearance or an amalgamation of film appearances, it is obvious that the cinema is the most consistent educational force in personal appearance and bearing offered to a woman today.

The position for men is similar. Young men, normally self-conscious with women, look around for attitudes and phrases with which to impress them. The cinema is a ready source of patterns of behaviour. With faltering taste, young men dress themselves and go out to kill. The cinema, as their favourite resort, guides them in the appropriate approaches to their women, and colours the tone of their cinematic phrasing.

None of this may be for the bad, provided one factor is observed, namely that the fantasies built up from consistent film-going do not unfit an adolescent for normal living, especially on the emotional plane. It is obvious that the cinema has done immense good. It is a communal activity. Its cheapness does not lead to the impoverishment of people who go continuously. In a world as yet unfitted for creative leisure, it provides a steady fill-up for otherwise empty hours. It must in the long run prevent much anti-social behaviour in drunkenness and individualised vice.

Where some of the harm lies is in the propaganda element,

which is insidious rather than obvious in the content of motion pictures financed by some of the hardest big-business combines in the world. It is obvious that the 'no controversy' ban by the British censors is matched by a 'no controversy' ban from the promoters themselves. In the broader issues of right and wrong, the cinema is on the side of the angels—gangsters are evil, detectives are good. But certain themes are implicit in most pictures (American and British alike, but more vividly in American) and might be listed as follows:

(*a*) Wealth in the abstract is a good thing.
(*b*) Luxury, especially associated with women, is normal.
(*c*) The full-time pursuit of women by unoccupied business men and rich young rulers is normal.
(*d*) The desks of high-power executives are always clear.
(*e*) Fathers spoil their daughters with money-gifts.
(*f*) Men are the source of money for women.
(*g*) The desirability of the night-club-with-cabaret life.
(*h*) A sock in the jaw is an honest man's answer.
(*i*) Men should appraise women by externals, with close-ups of essentials.
(*j*) Women should be judged satisfactory on the basis of desirability.
(*k*) Sex is probably the most important sensation in life.
(*l*) Women can be come-hither till you don't know where.
(*m*) Women may appraise men by externals and invite intimate attention at speed.
(*n*) Things of the spirit are either funny, eccentric, charlatan, or ever so wonderful. (Art is usually debunked as artiness, religion as mania, mysticism as a yearn in soft focus.)
(*o*) Reformers are either harmless saints or agitators. (No controversy, please—Promoter and Censor.)
(*p*) Brainless patriotism is preferable to national self-criticism.
(*q*) To be foreign is to be under suspicion. To be Eastern is to be horrific.
(*r*) Life is a lark if you have the facilities. Boy gets girl is the end of life's difficulties, divorce is as easy as knife, and riches are the reward of virtue.

A cynic will say that this is a picture of actuality anyhow,

and since the screen is realistic, it is merely reproducing real life. But the answer lies in attitudes and emphases, in suggestions and comparisons, in the absence from the screen of a due sense of proportion in all these things. I do not think a working girl should take her standards from a socialite, since she cannot carry them out in practice—all she will be able to do is to copy the socialite's sexual attitudes without the money to pay for them.

The absence of any social sense from so many films is compensated for by personal, that is individual, glamour and charm. To be charming is enough, together, perhaps, with the exposure of some flagrant vice in the villain of the story. The emphasis on the personal satisfactions (for screen love is normally selfish love since the prizes are so desirable) induces a wrong political emphasis in a period when the world will survive only by collaboration between communities and nations.

To sum up, cinema at its worst reflects an impoverished hedonism, an appalling absence of cultural background or international understanding, and a dangerous escapism from the social problems which only an alert public opinion can lead to a satisfactory stage of solution. These problems are often misrepresented, sentimentalised, or treated, as in the gangster films, as a medium for a little vicarious sadism on our own behalf in passing. Gangsterism is only Fascism writ small, and little can be done to clear the larger evil while the smaller remains a favourite form of public excitement in the armchairs of the cinemas. The vicious circle of the box-office prevents the healthy development of documentary fiction, which the public would take in its stride if well directed; and where the box-office would open its chromium doors to fictionalised discussion, the censors step in with grandmotherly fervour to stop the children thinking for themselves.

Yet despite all this, the miracle happens, and certain problems of social importance have been worthily treated in successful box-office films.

7. CENSORSHIP. NO CONTROVERSY, PLEASE: NO FIRES

The famous signature of T. P. O'Connor on a smudgy censor's certificate always preluded the feature film from the year 1912. His passing did not, however, alleviate the censorship

situation, which has, during the course of the years, developed into an anomalous position. Its history is complicated, and bound up with the Fire Regulations in the eyes of the Local Authority through which the cinemas obtain their licences like public houses. The stages in the history are these:

1. In 1912 The British Board of Film Censors was set up *by the trade itself,* and was financed by it, in order that the trade should gain respectability in the eyes of the community. Mr. T. P. O'Connor proved an enterprising President, and vastly developed the powers of the Board in the teeth of legal opposition.

2. In 1921 the Middlesex County Council inserted *a clause in its cinema licences* that no films could be shown without the Board's certificate. This is universally accepted by Local Authorities, who can, however, over-rule the Board's category certificate, and who also retain the power, which they very rarely use, to license the showing of a film without a certificate. Most Local Authorities never question the Board's certificate. For the sake of their licences, neither do the exhibitors.

3. By the Cinematograph Act of 1909 no cinema without a licence issued by the Local Authority can exhibit inflammable films to a public or private audience. Thus a censorship regulation is linked with a fire regulation.

4. In 1922 the Home Office approved the following conditions, namely that the Local Authority could alter the Board's A certificate to a local U certificate, could grant permission for the exhibition of films uncertificated by the Board, and could restrict the entrance of children under sixteen to A films. The Home Office recommended all Local Authorities to carry out these so-called model conditions.

5. In 1924 the High Courts, questioned on the legality of the conditions, decided they could be enforced.

The position rests that most Local Authorities accept the Board's censorship rulings implicitly, and impose them on the exhibitors within their area of jurisdiction through the granting of cinema-opening licences based on a fire-clause. Public-spirited Local Authorities can, at the request of an alert public or exhibitor (such as a Film Society), grant permission for the showing of an uncertificated feature.

But the law of the box-office means in effect that no film will

be made in Britain or America which will not pass the Censorship regulations and so automatically be barred from all but a tiny minority of cinemas.

Films made on the Continent under easier censorship conditions can be shown in this country only after being mutilated to suit the Board's regulations, or, if unsubmitted, by the tolerance and progressive outlook of the Local Authority. The Local Authority usually acts through its Watch Committee if ever requested to permit the exhibition of such a film. The answer usually goes without saying.

The Censorship staff's preoccupations when watching its hundreds of films a year can be briefly summarised under the following general prohibitions:

1. *Religious.*—The materialised figure of Christ (you remember the trouble over *Green Pastures*). The irreverent treatment of religious practices and rites. The irreverent treatment of the Bible and biblical allusion (*L'Idée* banned).

2. *Political.*—Anything calculated to wound foreign susceptibility (*Inside Nazi Germany* banned). Anything calculated to foment social unrest and discontent. (The universal release of Russian films in Britain has come only since Russia's entry into the war.)

3. *Social.*—Nudity (except negroid), swearing (beyond certain limits: the Hays Office is more particular than the Board: controversy over language in *Henry V* and *In Which we Serve*), indecent orgy, contempt of State and King's uniform, lascivious behaviour (difficulties here!), lascivious dress, gross drunkenness, child-birth and its pains, venereal disease, sexual relations between white and coloured people (half-castes passed), incitements to crime, exhibitions of drug habits, prolonged scenes of brutality, hangings and executions, cruelty to children and animals, antagonistic scenes between Capital and Labour, seduction without restraint, marriage nights without restraint, illegal operations, prostitution, incest, realistic epilepsy.

There can be little doubt that the Board takes a wide view of what might be classed as the sexual headings above. Normally the humorous treatment of sex is more easily allowed than the serious, the romantic ' glamorous ' sex than the purely sensuous. Nevertheless, it is amazing what is allowed, and how near the intention of the regulations some scenes can be allowed

to go. Also, with special fuss, and with alert Local Authorities putting in a ban of their own, clinical films on childbirth and venereal disease have been shown in this country.

Where the Censor's ban is most stringent is on the political issues. Film Societies have on the whole been allowed to show themselves Russian films during the thirties when these were normally without certificate. Certain Local Authorities, notably the broadminded L.C.C., have permitted their public exhibition. But these films were made on foreign money, and one or two prints only sent to this country. The Censor's attitude to matters of political controversy normally prohibits the making of films on sociological problems, both here and in America, until they have reached that stage of solution when their portrayal can no longer appear to 'foment' public opinion.

Even for films under feature length the Censor's certificate must still be obtained. Only the newsreel is exempt. Controversial issues can, however, be more easily introduced into the short than into the expensive and prominent feature film. *The March of Time* has not always succeeded in gaining its certificate in this country, but it has with reasonable consistency taken up subjects which troubled the world's politics, as the list on page 121 shows.

Most countries have their censorship, but it largely takes a political rather than a moral umbrage. In France a more frank approach to sex is permitted, but the sight of a political issue raises a storm at once. French films, therefore, are normally either passionate or lighthearted. René Clair's *A Nous la Liberté* caused trouble despite its final dance between Capital and Labour. Malraux's *Espoir* was banned before the War. Clouzot's *Le Corbeau* is banned now.

The story of American censorship is different from that of Great Britain. I am indebted to Margaret Thorp's " America at the Movies " for the facts. State censorship began in 1911. The industry set up its own self-sifter in 1922: this was the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America. Will H. Hays, campaign-manager to President Harding, Postmaster-General to Harding's Cabinet, was appointed president with a salary of a hundred thousand dollars a year. When he retired

in 1945 he was succeeded by Eric Johnston at a reported salary of $150,000, with $50,000 expense allowance.

The Hays Office is a bureau of reference for the industry: it will advise on pictures before they are made. In 1930 one of Hays' departments produced a "Code to govern the making of Talking, Synchronised and Silent Motion Pictures," a survey of social and sexual immoralities which must not appear on the screen.[1] Since this sort of thing is the same the whole world over, there is not much to choose between the American and British codes. All scripts are submitted to the Hays Office before they are shot, and all finished films must get a Code seal before general release. The seal makes no reference to release for children as distinct from adults.

The Hays Office also acts as liaison between trade and public. It is a goodwill agency. It seeks out what is honourable in the American public's intentions towards the cinema, and encourages what is best and cleanest. America is a land of clubs and societies. Among these are some six thousand Better Film Councils, the solid expression of we-want-good-films from the more on-coming of America's hundred-million-a-week moviegoers. These Councils organise support of what they are led to believe are the better films produced in America.

Finally there is the National Legion of Decency, organised by the Catholic Church which is twenty million strong in the States. The Legion indexes all films in lists issued weekly. It classes films as A (Section I, unobjectionable for all; Section II, unobjectionable for adults), B (objectionable in parts), and C (condemned). Films likely to get a C grade on moral or political grounds are not made in America. *Things to Come* received a B; *La Kermesse Héroïque* a C. Walter Wanger's *Blockade*, because it appeared to attack Franco's side in the Spanish war, was not classified at all, and arrangements were made to boycott it.

Addressing the Trade in 1936, T. P. O'Connor's successor, Lord Tyrrell, expressed his pleasure that so far he had not licensed any film dealing with "current, burning political questions," and that he was prepared to put "some check" on

[1] The Code is published in the "Film Facts" brochure of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America. See "Film Facts, 1942," p. 55.

those subjects which showed a sign of the "thin end of the wedge." "Cinema needs continued repression of controversy in order to stave off disaster," he said. Russian films, films like *L'Idée,* and issues of *The March of Time* like "Inside Nazi Germany" received no certificate. The only solution here was for the showing to be given by the private group and the minority cinema, the work of which demands a section of its own.

The common-sense solution to the censorship problem is difficult to reach. To take the two extreme cases of divergent viewpoint, it is intolerable that intelligent people should be deprived of the right to see films on the most important sociological issues of the time, or films which deal with matters of sex or religion with critical integrity. On the other hand, films which deal with such subjects in a manner which can be tolerated for the intelligent and worldly-wise may well be harmful if exhibited to the uncritically receptive adolescent or oversensitive child. It is intolerable that all films for public exhibition should be measured by the standards of the culturally under-privileged, for by such standards, if applied to great literature, a large measure of the world's masterpieces would have to be bowdlerised or abandoned. The burning of the books would cover much Greek and Latin literature, the contes of the Middle Ages, some stories of Chaucer and plays of Shakespeare, the dialogue of Congreve and Wycherley, the coarse gaiety of the novels of the eighteenth century, the essential strength of Balzac, Flaubert, Zola, Proust, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Lawrence, Huxley, Joyce, dos Passos, Steinbeck and many modern novelists in America, France, Britain, Russia and elsewhere. Much of this literature which troubles the unbalanced adolescent is strength to the culture of the adult mind, which can bring a wider background of comparisons and moral standards to bear in the reading of these contributions to human self-discovery.

So far in this battle of divergences, the culturally under-privileged have received the protection of the Censor, which is a protection by half-measures only since so much of the material passed is harmful by standards other than those the Censor is called upon to watch.

The culturally privileged have had to found private societies

to see unlicensed films either behind the closed doors of admittance by membership only or by means of the projection of the films on 16 mm. substandard stock which escapes the fire-prevention order and so the opening-licence which in turn operates the Censor's ban. Substandard, however, is not the best medium for seeing the more complicated type of film technique, and the only adequate solution to date has been the private society in the larger communities making use of standard-size sound machines either in the cinemas when not open to the public or in private buildings equipped for sound film projection.

Either you must have a censorship, or not. There can be no half-way measure. Since it seems unlikely that there will be any time in the immediate future without censorship, the most sensible thing to do is to accept its existence as temporarily inevitable, and mitigate as far as possible its evil effects. The solution which most obviously presents itself is the issue of a further certificate—the ' S ' certificate—which should be given to any film not granted any of the other certificates and which is not a piece of mere pornography as such. The viewing of S films could be restricted to S audiences, namely Film Societies and other private bodies of the specialised type. The fact that a film carried an S certificate would mean that the Local Authorities would not, as now, regard it as uncertificated and therefore ' banned ' in the worst sense, but rather would class it with Shakespeare as something remote and possibly of cultural advantage to someone. It would be automatic that films bearing an S certificate would be allowed without question to Film Societies, and with very little question to those few minority cinemas specialising in film repertory and foreign films.

The S certificate is the way out of the worst effects of censorship as now practised, and the way in for the film with minority appeal. No damage would be done to public morals, and the phrase " banned by the Censor " would be confined to those products of a poverty-stricken mentality which are usually classed as commercial pornography.

8. THE ECONOMIC ASPECT OF THE FILM INDUSTRY

The production, distribution and exhibition branches of the world's film industries are on a considerable scale. Statistics are available from various sources, but are often contradictory and often of pre-war origin as far as the smaller industries are concerned. It is, however, possible to build up a fair picture of the workings of this complicated machine for the production and marketing of visual entertainment.

The world audience for cinema has been estimated at 335,000,000 seats sold each week. The figure is very possibly conservative when we bear in mind that during the War British seat-buying reached nearly 30 million a week, and American some 100 million. In Britain we are closely bound to the Hollywood wheel, and during the War we saw some 85 per cent. American pictures to 15 per cent. British. Before the War we were seeing approximately 20 per cent. British productions to 80 per cent. American. A tiny fraction only of our screen space in London is given to French and Russian productions: in the provinces their exhibition is limited to one or two pioneer repertory cinemas only and to Film Societies. These carry no weight in the big business of film marketing. Our British productions are now seeking an overseas market through the agency of the Rank organisation. Hitherto British productions, like those of all other countries except America, have been largely limited for their exhibition to the cinemas of their own land.

Film production is, however, a world-wide activity. Here are the figures for the period 1937-1938 as quoted in the U.S. Department of Commerce " Review of Foreign Film Markets."

Japan	575	Argentina	50
America	545	Italy	47
India	200	Czechoslovakia	41
Britain	162	China	33
Germany	137	Sweden	30
France	122	Hungary	26
Philippines	67	Poland	25
Mexico	60	Finland	20
Hong Kong	53	Egypt	16
Russia	51		

Apart from Russia, which still allows only limited entry to the

foreign product, few of the above countries were producing enough films to meet their exhibition needs. Once a country becomes cinema-conscious its demand for continuous change of programme outpaces the production capacity of all but the most prolific industries. These have been limited so far to Japan, India, and America. Of these America has for long been the only recognised exporter of films on a world-scale dating from before the first World War, when Britain was forced to retire from competition.

America normally produces over 500 feature films a year,[1] though the number gradually dropped to some 350 towards the end of the War. She has a large number of cinemas to supply in her own territory, and an export market representing a third of her total receipts. Britain alone owed her in 1945 some £22 million in film rentals. The following figures, by no means complete, show the percentage of Hollywood feature films exhibited before the War in representative countries overseas: the figures are those given by the Department of Commerce and The Motion Picture Almanac.

	No. of Cinemas wired for Sound.	Percentage of American films exhibited.
America	17,700	—
Russia	8,000	Few only
Germany and Austria	6,450	18
Britain	4,750	80
Italy	3,800	75
France	3,750	60
Japan with Manchukuo and Occupied China	2,097	30
Sweden	1,907	50-60
Australia	1,483	80
Brazil	1,456	85
Argentina	1,446	70
Mexico	1,410	80

[1] The figures given in "Film Facts, 1942," published by The Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, including films made for American companies overseas, run: 1935, 564 (61 foreign); 1936, 621 (55 foreign); 1937, 608 (41 foreign); 1938, 545 (54 foreign); 1939, 584 (57 foreign); 1940, 523 (44 foreign); 1941, 568 (22 foreign). American audience figures are given as an estimated 85,000,000 attendances a week. The peak year for cinema-going was 1930, with an estimated weekly attendance of 110,000,000.

	No. of Cinemas wired for Sound.	Percentage of American films exhibited.
Czechoslovakia	1,245	43
India	1,025	46
Belgium	950	50-80
Rumania	354	70
South Africa	300	70
Finland	285	58
Greece	170	70

N.B.—The proportion of British films shown is reported to have been 5 per cent. in Canada, 20 per cent. in Australia and 13 per cent. in India. The Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America in " Film Facts, 1942 " give the number of cinemas in America as 19,055 of which 2,104 are closed. The figure 17,700 is used in the British Board of Trade's Monopoly Report, published 1944.

These figures show the dominating position of Hollywood which can afford enormous sums in financing its films, and has created a taste for lavish expenditure on costumes, sets and stars among audiences in countries which, like Britain, can ill afford to spend so much on window-dressing the home product. Any industry seeking to build up a world market for its pictures is faced with two initial disadvantages. The first is that world taste has for years been moulded to the Hollywood pattern. The second is the impossibility of being able to invest as much money in the larger type of production as Hollywood without an initial period of subsidising. These are the two problems the Rank organisation in Britain is trying to solve.

The organisation of Hollywood[1] is important, since its standards have become the popular measure of what is good or bad in pictures. First some figures, all pre-war:

In 1939 Hollywood spent $187 million making films, and supplied 65 per cent. of the films used throughout the world.

Hollywood employed pre-war a maximum of 33,683 persons a month in making films.

Of the 251 films made by six major studios 19 (7·6 per cent.)

[1] The facts which follow are derived for the most part from Leo Calvin Rosten's important book " Hollywood." Harcourt Brace, 1941.

cost over a million dollars, 60 (23·9 per cent.) cost from half-a-million to a million dollars, 40 (15·9 per cent.) cost from a quarter to half-a-million dollars and 132 (52·6 per cent.) cost under a quarter-million dollars. Normally those costing under half-a-million dollars rank as secondary features only.

Hollywood paid its élite of some 250 persons $75,000 a year or more. (In 1945 Deanna Durbin was reported to be earning £84,000 a year, Fred MacMurray £104,700 a year and Louis B. Mayer £227,000). Normal earnings pre-war for sound engineers were $3,000 a year and for carpenters $1,000. In 1936 there were 20,000 extras wanting work: in 1940 6,500 only. In 1940 only 3·1 per cent. of those employed averaged $150 a month. Only 630 earned as much as $1,000—3,000 in the year.

In 1938 34 directors earned between $100,000 and $300,000, but the average for all directors was $16,500. 30·6 per cent. earned less than $10,000.

In 1938 over 54 actors received $100,000 or over.

In 1939 half of Hollywood's 1,753 registered actors (not extras, who are classed separately) earned $4,700 or less. The median in 1938 was $5,000 and in 1937 $6,000.

In 1938 of 159 producers, 33 per cent. earned over $75,000.
of 235 directors, 20 per cent. earned over $75,000.
of 1,250 actors (*not* extras), 6·4 per cent. earned over $75,000.
of 800 writers, only 17 individuals earned over $75,000.

The structure of the studio-organisation is as follows:

I. The Big Five:

1. Paramount.
2. Twentieth-Century Fox.
3. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (Loew's Inc.).
4. Warners.
5. R.K.O. (Radio-Keith-Orpheum).

II. The Little Three:

6. Universal.
7. Columbia.
8. United Artists.

III. THE INDEPENDENTS:

9. Selznick.
10. Roach.
11. Wanger.
12. Republic.
13. Monogram and
14. A number of other independents.

Of these in 1939: 1 to 4 took 95 per cent. of the net profits of the year, 1 to 3 85 per cent. and 2 and 3 together 71·6 per cent. These statistics exclude the unpublished figures of United Artists.

The structure within the Studios themselves approximates to the following:

1. The Executive Head. Deals with the financial level only.
2. The Executive-Producer. Supervises 40 to 60 features a year, plus shorts (e.g. Jack Warner of Warners, Louis B. Mayer of M.G.M. or Darryl F. Zanuck of Twentieth Century Fox).
3. Producers-in-Charge of "A" Pictures. Supervise 20 to 30 films costing half-a-million dollars each, or more. Receive their budget from above.
4. Producers-in-Charge of "B" Pictures. Supervise films costing under half-a-million dollars each.
5. Producers or Associate Producers. Supervise 1 to 6 pictures a year.
6. The Directors.

The exceptions to this system are

(*a*) The Independent Producers such as Chaplin, Goldwyn, Selznick, Wanger, Roach, etc., whose work is distributed through United Artists.

(*b*) The Producer-Directors who work with full production authority. There are about 30 of these, including Capra, Ford, Lubitsch, Gregory la Cava, Milestone, Ruggles, and producer-directors heading their own corporations, such as Cecil B. DeMille and Frank Lloyd.

To see that the world knows all about the work of Hollywood 400 newspapermen were assigned to Hollywood pre-war, and over 15 style-reporting agencies in Los Angeles worked as style-scouts for the world's department stores. Apart from the regular newspapers and journals, eight fan magazines are

published with an average circulation of from a quarter to half-a-million.

There is obviously no film-producing organisation in the world which begins to rival Hollywood in influence and quantity of showmanlike output. The numerous films of Japan and India are suitable for the most part only for limited regional exhibition. Industries producing films of high quality like France and Britain obviously want to export their productions and so increase both their prestige and their profits. They are faced with the firmly-established distribution-exhibition tie-ups of the Hollywood agents based overseas.

The position in France is explained in the next chapter. That in Britain must occupy us now. First a few basic figures: [1]

There are about 4,750 cinemas in Britain selling between 25 and 30 million seats a week.

The bulk of the programmes shown consist of two feature films. During the War 15 per cent. only of the films shown have been British in origin. The proportion has never been higher than 20 per cent.

Of the 4,750 cinemas, some 2,000 are key cinemas which have control of the new product for first-run exhibition and the highest box-office takings. Of these 2,000, about 1,100 are controlled by the three big circuits in the following approximate proportions:

Odeon, 315; Gaumont-British, 304; Associated British Cinemas, 442.

The circuit houses represent about a third of the total seating capacity of the country. The importance of the circuit system in Britain can be assessed from the fact that *no first-class British feature film can at present be produced and regain its expenditure without circuit booking.* This means that production policy is directly dependent upon exhibition policy: it is no use making films which will not be in line with the requirements of the circuits.

In 1941 both the Odeon and Gaumont-British circuits were acquired by the Rank organisation, which has also acquired before and during the War some 50 per cent. of the studio space of the country. A great deal of

[1] Derived mostly from the Monopoly Report, published by the Board of Trade. Stationery Office, August 1944.

British production is therefore tied directly to the Rank organisation which finances and distributes it (Two Cities, Gainsborough, Ealing Studios, Gabriel Pascal Productions, Archers Productions, Cineguild, etc.). The company owning the Associated British Cinemas circuit, the Associated British Picture Corporation, is financially linked with Warner Brothers, and owns a further 20 per cent. of British studio space, the greater part of which is therefore under the direct control of the same organisations as the three circuits.

This is very different from the case of France, where exhibition is almost entirely independent of production, or even of America, where only about one-fifth of the cinemas (representing about a quarter of the seating capacity) are directly owned by the producers. The position in Britain has reached the stage where many people in and out of the film industry fear the effects of the monopolistic control of film production so effectively tied to exhibition. On the other hand we have seen that many producers are for the present allowed a degree of freedom in the expression of their various styles of film-making within the production-distribution set-up of the Rank organisation.

The overseas market for British films will be exploited by Eagle-Lion and United World Pictures, the new Rank distribution agencies.[1] Deals have already taken place in America between Rank and Universal, United Artists, R.K.O. and Twentieth-Century Fox for the distribution there of British films. However much the output of British films may increase in the next few years, Britain will remain inevitably in a subsidiary position as far as America is concerned. We shall need her products vastly more than she can ever need ours. Once more it is necessary to realise that no good can come of adapting British pictures so that their intrinsic quality is modified to please potential audiences overseas. It is also extremely doubtful if good can come of over-financing super-productions like *Cæsar and Cleopatra* when the home market can only produce about £300,000 in receipts. It is surely better to produce primarily for the home market and that of the English-speaking

[1] British films earned just over £1,000,000 overseas in 1945. Recent annual expenditure in Britain on American films was about £25,000,000.

sections of the British Commonwealth, and to finance films accordingly. If they are good enough for us with our highly critical standards, as appreciation of film technique goes in the world, they should also be good enough to spread our reputation as film producers in other countries, including America.

First-grade films in Britain now cost £100,000 to £250,000 to produce. These figures are about the same as those in America for all but her super-productions. These costs we can just meet in our own market, though our salary scales are markedly lower than those of Hollywood. With increased efficiency of studio organisation and more economic scripting we can reduce substantially the amount of time spent on production, which often extends now to about a year and in exceptional cases lasts longer. In America films are put through the studios at much greater speed, though allowance must be made in Britain for weather variability which holds up production in the very pictures that tend to represent our studios at their best, those involving large-scale location work in the beautiful countryside of the British Isles. Every day saved in the studios means a cut in costs, and it is here that British films must in future learn to economise. There is every indication that this will happen, since new studios cannot be built extensively during the present long-term housing shortage, and the existing space must be used as economically as possible in order to increase the annual output of British films.

Whether the Rank organisation will succeed in its ambition to place British films on the world's markets remains to be seen. It is not without its critics, though many of the films produced by its subsidiaries have met with the highest praise from the greatest enemies of the organisation's monopoly. Many people feel it is not right for so important a part of British artistic expression to rest on the decisions of one man, however liberal he may be in his attitude to the artists who work for him. Many people feel that the State should intervene to protect some studio space for the independent director who wants to make a picture without first getting the approval of an outside financial supervisor. If the Government seeks to solve this problem as it is recommended to do in the Monopoly Report, it will at the same time have to face up to the other allied problem. The

independent once he has made his film cannot recoup his expenditure or reach an adequate public to establish his reputation without circuit booking in either Odeon, Gaumont-British or A.B.C. theatres. And this is the harder of the two problems to solve.[1]

9. THE CINEMA IN FRANCE[2]

The importance of French film production in the development of world cinema was apparent before the war. The work of her great directors such as Jean Benoit-Lévy, Jean Renoir, Marcel Carné, René Clair, Julien Duvivier, Marcel l'Herbier, the late Jean Vigo, Jacques Feyder, Marcel Pagnol, André Malraux and Jean Grémillon became the most consistently sensitive and poetic realisation the history of the film had known. The artistry of her actors and actresses, such as Raimu, Louis Jouvet, Jean-Louis Barrault, Michel Simon, the late Harry Baur, Pierre Blanchar, Pierre Brasseur, Jean Gabin, Arletty, Michel Morgan, Françoise Rosay, combines humanity with realism, and made France famous for what came to be known in America as her "characterisation." The structure of the French film industry is therefore a matter of importance to all students of the cinema, especially in relation to the problems which France is now facing economically and æsthetically in the period of her recovery and reconstruction.

This structure is very unlike that of the British industry, with its cinema circuits and close financial tie-up between production, distribution and exhibition. The ownership of the cinemas of France is almost entirely independent of the producers, and there are no circuits. There are 3,750 cinemas in France but only about 1,500 of these are of first importance; many only open spasmodically during the week. Some 300 of the more

[1] An agreement announced in March 1946 between the President of the Board of Trade and the controllers of the three circuits assures distribution for the independently produced British feature film, provided certain conditions as regards quality are fulfilled.

[2] I am most grateful to my friends at La Cinémathèque Française and to M. Georges Sadoul, the distinguished film critic, for the information from which I have been able to write this account of French cinema. If, however, there are any mistakes or misinterpretations of facts, the fault is mine.

important cinemas are in the area of Paris alone, and there are large stretches of France with very few cinemas, such as Brittany, the Juras and the centre of France. There are, however, some 2,500 substandard mobile cinema-vans covering these and other areas with road-shows. Programmes in the cinemas are changed normally each week, but in Paris and important provincial towns such as Marseilles, Lyons, and Nice longer runs for important films are usual. Double-feature programmes are illegal in order to encourage as far as possible the development of documentary and short film production in which Painlevé is the outstanding figure. During the Occupation French films were shown alternately with German pictures, the exhibition of which was compulsory. French film production was, however, encouraged by the Germans, because they held investments in it.

The French have long been jealous of their national cinema and have tried to protect it from the encroachments of Hollywood upon French screen-time. Before the War France had been making some 120 feature films a year, and provided some 40 per cent. of her programme needs. The rest was largely met by American importations. After the Liberation the French producers greatly resented the attempts of Hollywood to involve itself in French distribution and production: there are, for instance, financial links between Pathe and R.K.O. France does not want to import more than about 40 American films a year, and these of her own selection. The State Censorship of the Direction du Cinéma (a branch of the French Ministry of Information) watches over the quality as well as the content of all imported pictures.[1] The French export market (mainly to Belgium, Switzerland, North Africa and Syria, but also on a lesser scale to Italy, Spain and Argentina) accounts for some 15 per cent. of her whole turn-over.

The French studios are situated in Paris (Rue Francourt and Butte Chaumont), near Paris (Joinville and Billancourt) and at Nice. These studios made some 200 feature films during the Occupation, encouraged by Vichy and the Germans, who had

[1] The Censorship is concerned also with political issues. An interesting case is the banning of *Le Corbeau* (director, H. G. Clouzot). Although this film was conceived before the German Occupation, its devastating study of French provincial life was regarded by the Germans as useful propaganda.

invested money in French feature films. There was little active collaboration with the Germans by film directors and artistes: the results of the Occupation can be seen rather in the type of subjects filmed; escapist pictures, sentimentalities and historical romances, or detective stories kept production going with no reference to immediate political or social issues. Only a spiritual *malaise* seems to be at the root of such important films as Marcel Carné made from Jacques Prévert's scripts (*Les Visiteurs du Soir* and *Les Enfants du Paradis*), a development of that *malaise* which was evident in much of the best French cinema before the War, a poetic feeling for emotional frustration, anticipating sorrow and desiring purgation. It has much in common with Tchekov's sensitive adjustment to the *malaise* of the society in which he lived, and to the self-immolation of Dostoevsky's characters.

Economically speaking, the cost of production has risen steeply. The simple productions which used to cost £13,000 to £30,000 before the War now cost £60,000 to £120,000, bringing the cost into line with contemporary British production. The State taxation on the film industry is fantastically high, possibly because France has few industries to tax, and films are the second of her national trades. There has been a rise in the price of seats in cinemas, as in Britain, but without a rise in wages to match it. Cinema attendance amounts to only some 304 million seats sold a year, as against the British figure of some 1,300 million. Yet taxation in France (December 1945) absorbs some 60 per cent. of the total receipts of all branches of the industry. This tax must be drastically reduced if French cinema is to survive its battle with Hollywood.

Distribution remains the key to the French film industry. The variety of independent producers receive their returns from the distributors. The exhibitors obtain the product from them. The whole work of the industry is, however, watched by the Comité d'Organisation de l'Industrie du Cinéma (C.O.I.C.), the State body set up under the Ministry of Information. Unlike Britain, production remains independent of America for both raw stock and equipment. France is desperately short of both, and of good studio space. It is part of her reconstruction plans to develop the industry as soon as the crippling incidence of taxation can be reduced to more reasonable proportions.

At present she is producing about 50 features a year. Some of these are financed by the distributors themselves, but they are mostly financed from independent sources. In this way pictures of the highest quality can be made by artists of faith who are able to obtain the necessary financial support. Experimental production by men such as the late Jean Vigo becomes possible, especially when the actual expense of the films can be kept small.

Before the War the French studios employed some 50,000 workers. There are two State training schools for apprentices to various branches of work in the cinema. The first is the Ecole de Cinéma in Paris giving two years' training to cameramen and still photographers, with courses on montage and editing. The senior academy is the Institut de Hautes Etudes Cinématographiques with a four-year course for directors, set designers and sound engineers. Cameramen who have passed through the Ecole can have a shorter more advanced training at the Institut. This basis of training is important since it must obviously result in the beautiful finish to so much French camerawork. In Britain there is no adequate training for the complicated work of the studios: graduation is by trial and error as men and women climb from junior to senior grades of job in the actual process of making films.

France has made bad films, and many of them. But she is also the source of some of the most beautiful works of cinematic art of our time. The most compelling element in her great films is their *sensibilité*, that quality which reveals with sensitive tenderness and profound feeling the values of goodness and beauty in human beings. French acting matches the mastery of the dialogue in such films as the fatalistic works of Carné and Jacques Prévert (*Quai des Brumes* and *Le Jour se Lève* with Gabin and *Les Enfants du Paradis* with Jean-Louis Barrault, Pierre Brasseur and Arletty), or the realism touched with poetry of Renoir's *La Grande Illusion* (Gabin and von Stroheim) or Duvivier's *La Belle Equipe*.

These, with other actors and actresses, have made of French cinema a glass in which many people have come to recognise the poetry of the humanistic approach to life. Many films in which the mastery of their restrained performances appeared were decadent with a helpless fatalism, but that does not vitiate

their greatness. They captured the spirit of their pre-war epoch, and few films, like Malraux's *Espoir*, escaped that spirit with poetry of another sort which belongs to our new epoch if we are indeed to make it new.

The present problems of French cinema are not therefore merely economic. The creative problem of combining the *sensibilité* of the past with a more purposeful reintegration of the spirit has now to be solved. There is the beginning of a spirit of a new time and place in France today. It must create its own expression in the life of a country with such an impeccable tradition of artistic feeling in its cultural history.

10. THE CINEMA IN THE U.S.S.R.

The Russian cinema is organised on a plan unlike that of any other film-producing country.[1] The industry as a whole is planned for State education first and entertainment second. Entertainment is by no means neglected, but the primary conception behind the whole plan is adult education in the broad principles of the Revolution, its history, its processes, its personalities and its planning. The whole of the film production is in the hands of the State throughout the Union of Soviet Republics. The cinema is, therefore, primarily a cultural and educational recreation supported by the State. The accounts given in 1934 by Helen Schoeni ("Cinema Quarterly"), in 1937 by Richard Ford ("Sight and Sound"), in 1940 by Ivor Montagu ("Documentary News Letter") and in 1941 by Eisenstein ("Culture and Leisure" volume of the "U.S.S.R. Speaks for Itself" series) give a complete picture of the progress of this unique cultural experiment.

Before Russian films are criticised for their matter and technique by the sophisticated audiences of British and American

[1] The chief sources for this section are articles in the following publications: "Sight and Sound," No. 21 (1937), "Cinema Quarterly" (Summer 1934), "Documentary News Letter" (I, 9, Sept. 1940), "U.S.S.R. Speaks for Itself," Vol. IV, Culture and Leisure, 1941 (article by Eisenstein). The Conference of 1934 between the older and younger directors is covered by Marie Seton in "Cinema Quarterly," Nos. 11 and 12 (1935) and by the publication "Soviet Cinema" (1935) Herbert Marshall's pamphlet "Soviet Cinema" (Russia Today Society, 1945) gives many useful and more up-to-date facts.

cinemas, the facts given by Richard Ford and Ivor Montagu should be understood.

By 1937 there were 3,000 sound cinemas and 36,000 silent projectors to cover a population of 160 millions. In Moscow, with a population of over 3½ million, there were only between 50 and 60 public sound cinemas, with an average weekly attendance of 350,000. The seating capacity of these cinemas was small, averaging 700. The seats were wooden tip-ups, the floors bare, the lighting sparse, projection and sound poor. The programmes were organised on a single feature basis, without supporting films, except occasional newsreels. A cinema would give eight to twelve showings a day. Ford describes an audience in a typical cinema in January 1937. It is important for us, with a different conception and tradition of cinema-going, to understand the distinctions between a Russian and a British audience. We are now seeing and shall see an increasing number of Russian films. It is important to understand the audience for which they are primarily made.

> " Imagine a worker going to the cinema. He has heard that the new film, showing in all the big cinemas, is worth seeing, and he decides he can afford five roubles for himself and his wife. He does not know the names of any film stars (they scarcely exist in the U.S.S.R.), but a friend says there is plenty of excitement in this film. He does not like sophistication, but wants a strong story full of action, with the triumph of right over wrong, and the heroine, if possible, helping to shoot the wrongdoers.
>
> " At the box-office he stands in a queue. He sees the time of the performance—twenty-five minutes to wait—buys the tickets (numbered for a specific row and seat) and walks into the foyer, well-lit and furnished with seats and benches. At the far end a jazz band is playing on a platform, with a woman singer in a long silk dress. He stares at them, nods his head to the rhythm, and goes to the food counter to buy a cake for his wife. The previous show ends. Still wearing his cap, he rushes into the cinema, elbowing his way to find his seat number, in a hurry in case the lights go down. Then the doors are shut, the lights are out, and he fixes his eyes on the white screen. There is no smoking or eating in the cinema. At the end

of the film the lights go up, he is told to hurry along, and he goes out by a different door from the entrance. Prevented from seeing the jazz band again, he goes into the street to queue in the cold for his tramcar home.

"The average Moscow audience is similar to a child audience in England. It wants excitement and action. The faster the pursuit, the more the shouts of encouragement. Dirty deeds and wanton cruelty evoke groans of horror. Stirring acts of national patriotism with the appearance of the Red Flag, and a singing marching song, get plenty of cheers. Long-drawn love scenes give rise to imitated kisses amongst the audience. Only the heroic aspect of sex is tolerated.

"Going to the cinema is regarded more as a cultural experience than an evening's entertainment. The audience stares at the screen as if attending an important lecture. Its attention seldom wanders. There is, in fact, far less conversation during films than during plays in theatres. There is very little laughter except at clowning; dialogue seldom provokes laughter; but any joke at the expense of priests is always well received." ("Sight and Sound," No. 21, p. 11.)

None the less, the industry is placed on a sound footing for development, and has its place in the new Five-Year Plan. Again, because of its distinction from British and American commercialism, Ford's summary of the structure of the industry is of extreme importance.

"The following brief summary of the structure of the industry may help to emphasise the importance placed upon this great propaganda industry.

"(*a*) The Film Industry is controlled by the Committee on Arts, one of the highest State authorities.

"(*b*) Studios: There are film production studios in each of the separate Republics. The Moscow Studio—the largest and most active—contains four main groups for the production of full-length features, for children's films, for newsreels, and for cartoons respectively. In Moscow there are also two units, called factories, for producing technical and educational films. In 1936 the Moscow Studios released 15 full-length sound films, compared with

4 in 1935 and 4 in 1934. About 3,000 people are employed in production in Moscow.

"(*c*) Apparatus: Five factories.

"(*d*) Institutes: In Moscow and Leningrad there are Academic Institutes for the study of scientific and technical problems connected with the industry.

"(*e*) Schools: In Moscow there is one technical school for training specialists for the industry.

"(*f*) Chemical Trusts: Six chemical factories for making and distributing film stock.

"(*g*) Copy Factories: Eight factories for making copies of completed films.

"(*h*) Building Trust: This organisation is responsible for building and planning new cinemas. Its activities are limited by the vast amount of new buildings urgently needed for housing, factories, and offices. In Moscow, for example, the Trust has plans for a large new cinema in the main square, to seat 3,000 to 4,000 people; for there is at present only one large cinema in the centre of Moscow. But the difficulties of construction, and the slowness due to adverse winter weather, are shown in the fact that completion is not scheduled until 1940.

"(*i*) 'Russian Hollywood': A film production town is being planned in the Crimea. It is intended to concentrate there all the most expensive imported apparatus and to make the town a focal point for the widely scattered national studios. The equipment and personnel for 'dubbing' foreign films will also be concentrated there." ("Sight and Sound," No. 21, p. 9.)

Writing in 1940, Ivor Montagu gives more favourable figures for the equipment position.

"The Third Five-Year Plan involves the disappearance of all silent screens and the increase of sound projection units more than six times, from 9,000 in 1937 to 60,000 in 1940 (exclusive of those in schools and other places not open to the general public). The network in the countryside will increase 1,108 per cent.: 50,000 standard and 40,000 substandard sound projectors, with 35,000 electrical generating apparatus for portable work, will be produced during the Third Five-Year Plan, or to express it another

way, accommodation for spectators (calculated on a basis of annual occupation of seats)—which rose as follows: 1928, 310 million; 1936, 710 million; 1939, 950 million—will increase to 2,700 million (45 per cent. instead of as now 30 per cent. in the countryside) by 1942." ("Documentary News Letter," I, 9, p. 11.)

Eisenstein himself describes the expansion of film enthusiasm to the borders of the outermost Republics.

"The motion picture has become a prime cultural necessity to the Soviet citizen. The best films are distributed in thousands of copies and shown everywhere, not only in the big modern theatres in the cities and the cinemas in the countryside, but in clubs, the apartments of our Stakhanovites and other people of note. They are shown to collective farmers far out in the fields, to army and navy men and passengers on ships at sea.

"Then there are the itinerant cinemas employing a great army of operators equipped with portable projectors. They show films in the most remote corners of the country, the Siberian forests, the Alpine meadows of the Caucasus, the villages of Turkmenia and Tajikztan and the auls (native villages) of Kazakhstan.

"To the far northern districts new pictures are delivered by air. The operators there take them on their itineraries by dog or reindeer team. In Yakutia, for instance, one operator recently made an interesting tour by dog-team. In a few months he covered about fifteen hundred miles and demonstrated his films in all the wintering camps on his route. But this, of course, is an exception.

"Itinerant cinemas are generally installed in motor vehicles of the latest make. Among them are a fair number of the new outfits which show films out of doors in broad daylight. Considerable attention was paid to the question of motion pictures as an important department of cultural development during the discussion of the new Five-Year Plan at the recent eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party. Provisions were made for a sixfold increase in the number of sound picture installations by the end of the Third Five-Year Plan." ("Culture and Leisure," pp. 38-9.)

In the same way, the multi-lingual production of films was expanding before the war.

> " The Five-Year Plans created a substantial technical base for the industry. The Soviet Union now produces its own film in large quantities. Several large plants have been built for the equipment of moving picture theatres and studios.
>
> " Fine studios have been built in Moscow, Kiev, Minsk, Tbilissi, Leningrad and elsewhere. The Soviet newsreel service has branches in all the main cities.
>
> " Under Soviet rule the non-Russian republics, too, have developed film industries for the first time. The picture-goers of the Ukraine, Georgia, Byelorussia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenia, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan see films with the dialogue in their own languages. These films are made by their own nationals." (" Culture and Leisure," p. 41.)

The principle of distribution is described by Richard Ford as follows:

> " Before a completed film is shown to the public it is first shown to a select Commission whose work it is to see that it does not transgress in any way the written Constitution of the U.S.S.R., and secondly, does not offend against public morality. It is also shown privately at the Kremlin to high officials of the Government, who can demand alterations. Finally, it is shown privately at the Film Club where all film workers can see it, and criticise it from a technical point of view.
>
> " The film then passes to the Distribution Trusts, of which there is one for each of the Republic Areas that form the U.S.S.R., who control distribution and exhibition. When a Trust has viewed the film, it orders from the Copy Factory the number of copies which it considers sufficient for the cinemas under its control. In Moscow, for instance, the Trust usually gives a first order of 120 to 240 copies.
>
> " Every cinema, excepting five special cinemas in Moscow, is directly controlled by its Distribution Trust. Each cinema has a house manager appointed by the Trust. The Trust decides all details for each cinema: what film to exhibit, when to take it off, times of showing, prices of admis-

sion, and so on. In Moscow the five largest cinemas, including the Children's Cinema, are responsible directly to the Committee on Arts, which controls the film industry. They appear to have some similarity to first run or pre-release cinemas; and from their box-office receipts some estimate can be formed of the popularity of films." (" Sight and Sound," No. 21, p. 9.)

The scale of payment of artists is given by Helen Schoeni writing in 1934. The wage of an average unskilled workman was 250-300 roubles monthly. From this figure the salaries of film-workers can be gauged. The salary range of directors is 1,200 roubles (Eisenstein, for instance) to 400 roubles monthly. The normal price for a script is on a fee basis ranging from 1,000 to 10,000 roubles. Directors also get 1 per cent. of box-office takings; the author receives 1½ per cent.

Stars like Bataloff are paid on a monthly basis covering the period of a single contract: they may gain as much as 30,000 roubles for a single film (films take six months to a year to make). The full-time supporting players get from 300 to 600 roubles a month. Paid extras get 15 roubles a day. Large crowds are seldom paid at all: they contribute their services freely for the good of the State art.

Recruits to the industry are trained at the special institutes set up for the purpose.

> " Producers, operators, scenario writers and studio artists are trained at the State Institute of Cinematography in Moscow. This Institute has specially equipped laboratories, demonstration halls, studios and a collection of practically all the films that have appeared on the screen anywhere. The influx of students is so great that a new extension is being made, equipped with the most up-to-date motion picture technique.[1]
>
> " The doors of the Institute of Cinematography are wide open to talented youth. As in all colleges in the Soviet Union the Institute's training is free of charge and the students receive a regular allowance from the State. After graduating from this Institute they go to the studios where,

[1] An account of the course conducted at the Moscow Institute is given in Herbert Marshall's " Soviet Cinema."

after a trial period, they are given work to do on their own responsibility.

"Motion picture technicians are trained at another institute in Leningrad. A third institute, in Moscow, conducts research on the problems of stereoscopic films and the improvement of cameras, projectors and film."[1] ("Culture and Leisure," pp. 42-3.)

The result of this completely different perspective cannot easily be imagined by an audience trained in the British and American commercial cinema. The perspective is more nearly that of documentary turned feature, with the entertainment film as such developed as a side-line and welcomed in its due place. The conception of the film is idealised into a major cultural medium. "Cinema is the most important of all arts for us," said Lenin. "The cinema in the hands of the Soviet power represents a great force," says Stalin. And the directors echo this promise: "the great international art of cinematography," wrote Pudovkin, and Eisenstein states ten years later: "We say that the screen is of all arts the most popular in the Soviet Union."[2]

[1] Technical experiment is one of the most important aspects of the Soviet cinema. Semyon Ivanov has spent years perfecting three-dimensional cine-photography and projection. Dual two-dimensional images of the same subject shot from slightly variant angles are projected on to a specially constructed screen which combines these images with a three-dimensional effect. It is anticipated, according to Herbert Marshall, that this remarkable solution to the old problem of the third dimension in cinematography will result in the establishment of a circuit of three-dimensional-screen cinemas in the near future.

[2] Soviet statistics of cinema are difficult to obtain and impossible to verify. The following are, however, official figures published in 1940, with additions from the Soviet press early in 1944:

Production of feature films with sound: 1931, 5; 1932, 16; 1933, 20; 1934, 27; 1935, 21; 1936, 49; 1937, 45; 1938, 41; 1939, 52. Total, 276. In 1944 it was planned to make 30 feature films. In 1939 almost as many full-length silent films were in use as sound films (24,000 copies sound film as against 22,000 copies silent).

The number of projectors, both silent and sound (it must be remembered larger cinemas use more than one projector) 1929, 14,500; 1933, 29,000; 1939, 30,000. In 1939 18,400 of these projectors were available for use in villages. The number of admissions to film shows increased from 110 million in 1936 to 1,200 million

11. FILM INDUSTRIES ELSEWHERE

The position of the various other film industries in Europe is for the most part still obscure and difficult. Germany had developed her film resources under the leadership of Goebbels, and German productions were shown throughout the Nazi Empire. Now it is doubtful if she will be permitted to produce more than a few films for her own home market. Most of the studios lie in the Russian zone and by the terms of the Potsdam agreement Russia may well remove a considerable quantity of studio equipment from Germany. American manufacturers of similar equipment are rejoicing at the removal of a powerful competitor from the international market.

Such small film-producing industries of Europe as Sweden and Czechoslovakia are both working. Sweden has maintained a continuous output during the war. Czecho-Slovakia nationalised her film industry towards the end of 1945. Its administration will now be undertaken by the Czech Ministry of Information. All profits will be turned back into the industry for its development. The nationalisation decree covers production, distribution and exhibition. According to a report in the "Motion Picture Herald" (October 27, 1945) Russia is to provide 60 per cent. of imported films, and British films are also to be extensively shown. The pre-war production capacity of Czech studios was about 40 feature films a year. A considerable amount of Russian production is occupying these studios in 1946.

in 1940. The latter figure is approximately that of Great Britain. In 1939 one million performances were given especially for children and 31 films, including cartoons, were made for children only.

Herbert Marshall in his "Russia Today" pamphlet, pp. 27-28, gives further variant statistics, notably increasing the number of Russian feature length sound films to 110-130 annually pre-war, and giving different cinema-attendance statistics, namely: 1935, 625 million seats occupied, and in 1939, 950 million.

During the War the film studios in Central Asia (at Kazakhstan, Usbekestan, Tadjikstan and Turkmenia) assumed a greater importance as evacuation centres for directors, actors, cameramen and artists from the studios of Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev and Odessa. The Alma-Ata Studios of Kazakhstan, for instance, became responsible for Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible*. *Adventures in Bokhara*, shown in London during 1945, was filmed at the Turkmenian film studio in Ashkahabad. (See "Sight and Sound," July, 1944, pp. 35, 36).

It is not clear how Italy will emerge from her present obscurity as a film-producing country. She played second-fiddle to Germany during the War in this as in other matters, but her pre-war production capacity was about 50 features a year. Now she is playing 80 per cent. American pictures in her large market of over 4,000 cinemas. " The important thing about the Italian market is that we can bring in as many pictures as we want," said Emanuel Silverstone, United Artists special foreign sales representative after a European tour lasting seven months (reported in the " Motion Picture Herald," November 24, 1945.)

Europe has become a battleground of quotas and percentages, of politics versus trade infiltrations. " I'll take my chances on Hollywood's future in Europe against the foreign-made films. The mere fact that these countries have and want quotas show they're afraid of our product," said Mr. Silverstone. American pictures hold about 75 per cent. of the playing time of Switzerland's 350 theatres. In Denmark, however, imported films are not allowed to take more than 30 per cent. of the box-office takings in rentals. " American companies are not going to sell in this situation," says Mr. Silverstone. Yet in 1939-40 America supplied 155 of the 252 feature films shown in Denmark. Danish home production from 1938-1945 has been responsible for 90 features. In Holland 10 per cent. of the theatres have been destroyed, but America is doing her best to get her product back on to Dutch screens. American pictures are thriving in Belgium.

After the liberation the offices of the Ministry of Information in Europe acted as the channels for the distribution of the more important British feature films of the war period. Exhibition covered small countries like Greece[1] and Albania as well as

[1] The following interesting comment on film reception in Greece is taken from an article by S. B. Carter published in " Sight and Sound," July 1945. " After the defeat of Greece, cinemas were flooded with German and Italian films. In general he (a Greek producer) said the Greeks liked the Germans more than the Italians, but with their films it was the opposite. The German films were technically unimpressive—except Leni Riefenstahl's film of the Olympiad—and loaded with propaganda *ad nauseam*. In the Italian films you could at least hope for a straight story without any politics. Italian studios were fond of historical drama on a colossal scale, if possible in technicolour. If Italian production was good, Hungarian was better. There seemed to be, he said, a natural affinity between the Hungarians and the Greeks, and the

Hungary, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Rumania. In Denmark, Norway and Holland British films have had great success. Meanwhile the Rank organisation is said to have given up its attempt to acquire cinemas in European territories owing to difficulties with the Governments concerned. It is, however, concluding various deals with foreign distribution agencies for the exhibition of British films in those countries where it is not possible to establish direct agencies for Eagle-Lion.

Leaving Europe for the Middle East, there is a flourishing film industry in Egypt producing about 60 feature films in Arabic each year with a distribution range from Turkey to Abyssinia and North Africa. This industry has arisen in the teeth of American opposition, because the product of Hollywood dominates the screens of the Middle East, titled in French and with Arabic and Greek or Hebrew titles projected simultaneously on side-screens. It is only natural that films showing Arabic actors speaking Arabic in Middle-Eastern settings are popular, and that £30,000 to £50,000 can be spent on each feature film in a country where labour costs are very low.

India offers a huge potential market for her own films. She is reported to have 1,400 cinemas showing home-produced pictures only, and 230 theatres showing 80 per cent. American films, with the rest British. Before the War Indian studios produced about 225 features a year. This is now reduced by War conditions to about 160. The population of India is about 390 million, and the only way in which this vast audience can be reached is by substandard mobile units which it is hoped in the future to increase to about 10,000. These will be used for documentary film programmes to help the educational development of the peasants. Indian feature films are very long, but

highest praise to give a film was to say that it might have been Hungarian. Czech films were dull and stodgy. The new Russian films were interesting, different from anything to which the Greeks were used, but he doubted if they would ever have a widespread popular appeal. American films, with their accomplished technique and infectious vitality, were liked. British films, in general, were not: the tempo was wrong for a Greek audience. French films, of course, had always been popular. Shown throughout the occupation period, they had exerted a more continuous influence on Greek production than any other type of film. Most of the technical terms in use are French, and the influence of the theatre, so marked a feature of French films, also holds most Greek directors in its grip.

their popularity is immense: Bombay, Madras, Bangalore, Mysore and Calcutta are all important film production centres.

Before the War the Japanese film industry was heavily publicised. Its position now is necessarily uncertain with its exhibition range severely cut. When Japan held Manchukuo and parts of China she claims in her Cinema Year Book of 1938 that she had 2,097 cinemas under her control. In 1937 she imported 230 American films; about a third of these she exhibited. Most films shown she made herself, though even as late as 1937 she produced as many as 159 silent films as against 365 talkies and 50 synchronised pictures. In 1934 the proportion was 61 talkies to 298 silent features and 40 synchronised. Japan was very proud of her progress. Certainly the countries of the Far and Near East between them produced nearly twice as many feature films as America, though the quality of most of them would not allow comparison with the less prolific studios of Europe.

Lastly Central and South America have developed two important film industries, in Mexico and Argentina.[1] Mexico in particular is anxious to become the leading supplier of foreign-language films to America. Both industries before the War were producing about 50 features a year each and Mexico has even introduced its own Censorship Code modelled on that of Will Hays so that its product will be suitable for showing in America. The Code also aims at eliminating the pornographic films made by American independent producers for smuggling over the border into Mexico. The rationing of raw stock (supplied by America) has halved the production of Argentina (24 features in 1944). Hollywood, steering a difficult course between the "good neighbour" policy and the desire for economic advantage, is dubbing some of its best pictures in Spanish (such as *Double Indemnity*) as an attempt to enter into the Spanish-language film market, since she is not welcomed as a producer in the South American countries themselves.

Film production and exhibition are now a world consideration. Hollywood stands out from among the many industries as most concerned to establish and maintain a monopoly in the

[1] See Ramon del Castillo's articles in "Sight and Sound," October 1944 and October 1945, and the accounts given in the U.S. Department of Commerce's "Review of Foreign Film Markets."

world's cinemas. Other countries, notably Britain, want to share in this world market. Against these tendencies countries like France are anxious to protect their industries from infiltration by American capital or from curtailment of their own production by admitting too great a number of foreign imports. It may well take some time for the various national industries to settle finally how far native production can supply the programme needs of exhibitors and audiences. Currency difficulties and devaluation make the planning of film production hazardous. Raw stock and other materials and equipment are still scarce. But the need for expression in film remains, and in all countries that have learned the delights of cinema-going the demand for films is increasing.

12. THE INSTRUCTIONAL FILM

The documentary film could be described as the higher journalism of the screen. Its purpose is broadly to help the world understand the world. It is creative in so far as it analyses and interprets society from the viewpoint of an individual or a school of thought. It is, therefore, broadly educational. It is also popular, but its aim is more closely allied to propaganda than to simple instruction.

The instructional or teaching film, whether designed for child or adult, is an entirely different class of cinema. It is shown where groups of people assemble, willingly or unwillingly, to be told how to do something, how something works, or what something is like. The film becomes a moving visual textbook.

All over the civilised world hundreds of thousands of teachers are left alone with groups of children, adolescents or adults, and are paid to instruct them. In hundreds of centres of research into the technique of instruction, thousands of more specialised teachers are studying the best methods of study. In a few key places the limited number of teachers of genius do what they can to lead the general tenor of the theory of education along progressive lines. Only in recent times could the broader mass of the people gain any direct access to the enlightened few. They had to depend on books and reports, and on the specialised interpretation of educational theory by the research specialists.

Now we have radio and film. A vivid direct access to important teachers is provided, cheaply and easily by radio,

more elaborately by the film. Schoolchildren during the daytime can hear the voices of the country's specialists: they can discuss with their own teachers the results of these talks. All this can be done for the price of a wireless set.

The film presents certain technical difficulties which in this country have not yet been adequately overcome. It is no use making instructional films if there is no consistent coverage of schools by projectors. It is no use buying projectors if there is no consistent policy of instructional film production. The former Board of Education had given no adequate lead in the matter of equipping all senior and secondary schools with sound projectors, and had merely given good advice to Local Authorities. We have the absurd position that large cities buy two or three sound projectors for general use by all their schools (probably 150 to 200 buildings), and train groups of teachers over the week-end as hesitant and unskilful projectionists.

The reason for inaction was reaction. Reaction among the teachers themselves to a new medium, the teachers who once thought their livelihood threatened by broadcasting, and were too indifferent and too lazy to adapt their repetitive annual curricula to include new material. Reaction among Local Education Authorities watching the extra penny-fraction on the rates. Reaction in the Board of Education itself in not taking a firm financial stand and equipping all major schools with sound projectors.

For the cinema is pre-eminently suitable for instruction if money, time, thought and skill are given to the preparation of first-class films. It starts with the assured attention which the hypnosis of the bright moving picture in the dark room exercises on the child. It has the closest approach to actuality of any medium of reproduction as yet devised. It can, by its processes of slow and quick motion, its use of telephoto and microphotographic lenses and its innumerable technical advantages, reveal the processes of life with vivid accuracy. It can guide attention and concentrate interest. It can reproduce history in terms which can be understood by the child. It can visit foreign lands, and explore peoples and remote places. It can explain mechanical, mathematical and industrial processes. It can summarise vocations for the adolescent choice. There is nothing in the material world which seems barred to it. Its

limitations are apparent only in the realm of philosophy or dogma: here it can teach only by career, or concrete example. But by the time such subjects are of value to the human being, books are recognised as the proper medium for learning them.

For some time now various schemes for the production of educational and instructional films have been proposed. It should be recognised that the production of such highly specialised films is work for skilled technicians. Too many of the bad instructional films of the past have been the result of hasty assumptions by people with little or no educational knowledge: it was thought necessary merely to throw together so many feet of library shots from old commercial travel and nature films to promote a series of geographical or biological "interest" shorts to sell or rent to the schools. No scheme can work adequately unless the following points at least are involved:

(1) Production should be in the hands of specialised film-makers who are prepared to study and experiment in educational film technique.

(2) Planning of films should be carried out not with a view to wide sales or private profit, but as a definite part of the nation's educational curricula. Many important advanced films (or for that matter the right sort of simple ones) can only be made under subsidy.

(3) Both planning and production should be intimately linked with the users' needs. The teacher knows little of the technique of film production. The technician knows little of curricula and class-room practice. Only by sympathetic collaboration between the two groups of specialists can the films be adequately made. The film producer should be as interested in the practical use of his finished product in the classroom as the teacher himself and should, as part of his researches, attend schools where his films are showing.

(4) The scheme must involve the provision of projectors on a generous scale in the schools and colleges. It must involve the establishment of Regional Film Libraries, possibly assembled by the Local Authorities themselves either singly (in certain cases) or in groups so that prints of films required by teachers can be easily and systematically booked. The medium of the instructional film in

the past has gained a bad reputation with potential users as much through the trouble it takes to get films at all, as through the badness of them when eventually they arrive. Films should become, like textbooks, apparatus to the hand of the teacher as and when he wants them, and of a guaranteed quality which ensures they are not an insult to his class.

(5) The scheme should involve the pooling of international resources, so that instructional films made abroad can be interchanged with those made in Britain to the mutual benefit of all film-making countries. International exchange of opinion will be of the greatest value in the development of new techniques.

For any scheme to operate which involves all these considerations State subsidy and promotion seem essential. The films should be made by the units which have already begun to study the technique of the instructional film. But only the State is in the position to originate a comprehensive scheme which, once it is launched, will become part of the normal educational provision of the community.

The only planned use of the film for instructional purposes on a wide scale is in the Services. This, of course, is financed from public money. The Army, Navy and Air Force have elaborate film training, at any rate in theory. The films exist, and in some measure the widespread need for projecting equipment has been met.

The use of films in colleges and universities is only spasmodic. The scarcity of good material, except on the scientific side, is still a deterrent from the wider recognition of the use of cinema in adult education. In the hands of a good teacher of the social sciences, the documentary film itself is an important promoter of interest and discussion, apart from its artistic and propaganda values.

No good teacher need fear the competition of the film. The good teacher is the chairman of his group's discussion. The film can promote that discussion. When prolonged explanation is necessary the teacher does not fear the competition of the textbook or the wireless talk. Well made and well projected, the film can give his class the stimulus to learn about life and society and to discuss all problems with him.

The bad teacher has everything to fear: the exposure of his ignorance, the absence of his humanity. If the film can help to rid the schools of his influence, education and society will have advanced a stage nearer world civilisation.

13. THE MINORITY THEATRE

In the course of discussion the minority theatre has frequently been mentioned. The minority theatre begins with the private group exhibiting films on a substandard projector and ends with the small specialised commercial cinema playing repertory (revivals of notable films) or short runs of films of minority appeal, such as documentary and foreign cinema appeared to be before the war. When the issue of an S certificate was discussed in connection with Censorship, it was this type of theatre which was in mind for the exhibition of S films.

All over Britain small groups have been formed for the exhibition of films which could not be found in the programmes of the commercial theatres. These groups may meet in large rooms, halls, institutes, colleges or public buildings of all types, or even, if membership and opportunities allow, in cinemas out of the hours of commercial showing time. Societies with specialised interests have developed, such as the Scientific Film Society and its branches, and the Religious Film Societies. Groups meet to view and discuss the uses of educational films. The Workers' Film Association specialises in the distribution of films on labour and co-operative problems. Organisations like the Central Council for Health Education issue lists of recommended films in their line of interest. In addition there are the educational and documentary libraries, loaning films freely, like the Central Film Library (E.M.B., G.P.O. and M.O.I. libraries combined), British Commercial Gas Association Film Department and Petroleum Films Bureau. There are large commercial libraries which distribute documentary, instructional and feature films for hire on substandard (Gaumont British Instructional, Wallace Heaton Ltd., for example). There is finally the important historical library attached to the National Film Library, with films available on loan.

Most important feature films and many (especially foreign) documentaries are not available on 16 mm. For their exhibition standard apparatus is required, and with the use of inflammable

film the licensing and certificate regulations come once more into force. The London Film Society gave the lead to the country as a whole by starting regular exhibitions to its members in 1925 at the New Gallery cinema on Sundays. After exhausting the Continental films available in this country, it was forced to act as an importer and eventually as a distributor when other Film Societies, following this enterprising lead, developed in the provinces. The palmy period for the provincial Film Societies was in the early thirties. The provinces discovered life afresh in British documentary and Continental feature. Russan films, ten years old, were as new wine. By the time the great silent films were exhausted, the greater sound films were arriving to take their place.

The Trade, cautious at first, eventually launched out and a number of Continental sound films were shown (Clair's particularly) in the provinces. But small specialist theatres (open to the public, not closed, like the Film Societies, to a membership) grew up, such as the Academy or Studio One in London, and the Cosmo in Glasgow. These theatres are of the greatest importance in the development of public taste. The gradual spread of interest in the art can come only if the public can have available the best films from studios all over the world. This can be done only by the specialised theatre of small seating capacity and comparatively light overhead expenses. The Nazi system of the remission of entertainment tax for such cinemas would be a Government gesture in a democracy. An alternative in towns unable to support a full-time specialised theatre would be the regular exhibition in ordinary cinemas of notable films on Sundays. The remission of tax would encourage cinemas to make bookings of such films, possibly once a month. This would be a near equivalent to a public Film Society.

For art, if it is to found a permanent tradition, must always be integrated from the needs and well-being of the people as a whole. A minority art is a closed art. The evil in the Film Society is the precious self-perfection of the consciously superior member. It is too easy an escape from the responsibilities of education to lust after remote expression and recondite technique.

The Minority Cinema is the pioneer cinema. Every educated community should possess one so that the opportunity to see important films of limited box-office value shall be open to all.

14. WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? SUMMARY FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

This brief survey of the salient position of the cinema in present-day affairs is necessarily incomplete. It has not shown anything of the work of the film in the smaller countries, in Sweden and Czechoslovakia for instance, or Mexico and Argentina. The Far-Eastern cinema of India, China and Japan presents problems untouched here. The developments of the Western-made film for the African native and of experiments in visual education for primitive peoples have been omitted.

An attempt has been made to show what seems good and what bad in the contemporary film as a whole. Its capabilities as an art have been reviewed. Its effect on the enormous audiences it brings together has been discussed. That it is a medium of consequence no responsible person can now deny. The more urgent intention of this book has been to prove that it has a major part to play in the shaping of the post-war world and in the creation of a popular international culture.

The power of the film cannot be left in the hands of irresponsible people. The purposeless squandering of film resources for the gain of a few people is the curse of film production today. The same sense of responsibility should mark the production of films as informs the publication of books by the major publishing houses. The name of the production company and the name of the director should be as prominent in all publicity as the author and publisher of a book. The public is learning to anticipate the quality of a film by the reputation of the producer and director who made it.

There is no easy way from here, and no quick way. The commercial cinema is showing, slowly but definitely, an increasing sense of social responsibility. Directors and producers are being selected and publicised for the quality of their work: exhibitors are learning that to show a serious film is not always to show a serious loss. The younger public, gradually joining the adult world with better instruction from their schools, need not be regarded any longer as a potential cross-section of low life. Political and social thought, however primitive and unguided, is developing. Our life now is a continuous public event, offering opportunities for documentary, newsreel and feature film alike to take their place in a growing world. The

puerilities of censorship must be ironed away by public demand for public opinion. We must show the agents of reaction who fear the blue sky that the new young world can take the sun in its eyes without the old world's eye-shade.

It is the duty of the producer to give the lead, of the director to use the means, of the exhibitor to give the chance, and of the public to support the progressive film. It is the duty of the critic to help discriminate within the vast sources of film supply.

Where do we go from here?

Do we go back to pre-war dope and depression, or do we go forward to recreation and actuality, to a vigorous international art in a vigorous international community?

The choice is yours and theirs and mine.

Additional

WHY NOT START A FILM SOCIETY?

THERE is no reason why not.

The first decision to make is the scale upon which the proceedings are to be run. You can either start a Film Society on 16 mm. substandard (which is cheap) or by gathering a membership of sufficient dimensions to be able to hire a cinema on a Sunday afternoon. Or you may be lucky enough to live in a town where some college or institution has a 35 mm. installation.

The second decision is one of objective. Is the society to cater for a limited interest (for example scientific or religious), or for the widest possible interest, taking all types of film for its province? Once these decisions have been taken a small executive committee should be formed to initiate the necessary publicity for membership. The executive committee should not be so large that it can never meet, or so small that it is not representative of a variety of educational and social interests. It should contain a representative of each of the chief social bodies, like the teaching profession and the trade unions, which can help through their own organisations to build up a reliable membership. The committee should contain an accountant, or someone with training in figures, to act as treasurer, a person of organisational experience to act as secretary, and at least one person with knowledge of films and projection. If the society is to meet in a cinema, the manager of the cinema selected should be on the committee; his help, if sympathetic, can be invaluable. The chairman should be of sufficient personality to stop discussions on montage.

Taking a substandard society first, it should be assumed that a good programme, with a feature film, cannot be assembled for under about six pounds. A person or organisation should be found (in a college, institute or school in the first place) in possession of a 16 mm. sound projector (and a sound projectionist). A certain sum should be allowed off the revenue to put aside for projector spares and for servicing of the

machine. Allowance should also be made for the printing or duplicating of tickets and other publicity, and for the use of a hall.

It is best to sign on one hundred and fifty members before launching out too far. Sound films are expensive to hire though many documentaries can be obtained free. It is worth while to spare no pains to make your first shows successful in programme, presentation and audience. Good audiences attract better. Substandard shows for a shilling or one-and-six a performance will attract a wide audience if the programmes are good and well put over, and the building where they are shown is easily accessible by public transport.

Do not forget there is no legal hold over a substandard film show. No licence is necessary; but it is always as well to use a hall licensed for dances and meetings, with good seating and marked exits at the rear. The hall should be good acoustically (get advice if you are not sure). The screen should be mounted as high as possible so that the picture is clear above the heads of all the audience when seated. Stewards with torches are essential.

Clear yourself finally with the Inland Revenue. A Film Society is an educational organisation: you can, and should, claim exemption from Entertainments Tax on this head. This applies also to shows organised for a membership in a cinema. Good documentary films rank, quite rightly, as educational: they should be included in every programme if you are to be fully justified in claiming exemption.

Second, the Public Cinema Film Society. It is essential for the Executive, when it has its objective defined, to meet the Trade with a view to finding a sympathetic manager. Choose a cinema, if possible, of small capacity yet centrally placed, such as a news theatre. If you are to hold your membership, the situation of the cinema is in the end of greater importance than its capacity. The Society can easily be confined to the balcony of a large cinema. Choose a house which does not open too early on Sunday evenings. Sunday afternoon is the best time to open. The manager will explain the complexities of the extension of the Sunday-opening licence.

This licence may cause you and the manager a battle with the Licensing Bench. It is well to find out the mood of the

Bench on the subject, and if necessary the mood of the Watch Committee. A friendly town councillor is of great assistance here: so is a broad-minded pillar of the Church. You must be prepared, along with the manager, to fight for your Sunday-opening rights before the Licensing Bench. Whatever their attitude, remember they are the servants of the State, not its masters.[1]

Film Selection

The Society should next pay twenty-five shillings a year through one of its members and join the British Film Institute. The service, advice, publications and Film Library of the Institute are of greatest service to any type of Film Society. Its monthly bulletin is a complete record of film releases of all kinds, with reviews and synopses. Its catalogues are fascinating for the wealth of old and new film material available. You should also subscribe to " Documentary News Letter "; its specialised news on documentary and its reviews and articles contain material not to be found in the Institute's publications. It is published by Film Centre, 34 Soho Square, W.1.

The catalogues of the following film libraries should be obtained:

Library.	*Subjects.*
British Commercial Gas Association, 1, Grosvenor Place, London, S.W.1	Documentary
British Instructional Films, 111, Wardour Street, London, W.1	Features, Shorts and Documentary
Central Film Library, Imperial Institute, London, S.W.7. (Incorporating G.P.O. and Empire Film Libraries with Ministry of Information Films.)	Documentary
Gaumont British Equipments, Gebescope Library, Tower House, Woodchester, near Stroud, Glos.	Features and Instructionals

[1] See the British Film Institute's pamphlet on running Film Societies. Price 6d. on application, plus postage.

Library.	*Subjects.*
National Film Library of the British Film Institute, 4, Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1	Documentary and Fiction
City Sale and Exchange, 2, Poultry, Cheapside, E.C.2	Features and Shorts on 9·5 mm.
Petroleum Films Bureau, 46, St. James' Place, London, W.1	Documentary
Religious Film Library, Jasper Road, Norwood, S.E.19	Religious
Wallace Heaton Limited, 127, New Bond Street, London, W.1	Features and Shorts
Workers' Film Association Ltd., Transport House, Smith Square, London, S.W.1	Features and Documentary

For the renting of films on 35 mm. stock it is necessary to find out the distributors (as distinct from the film libraries for 16 mm.). The British Film Institute is prepared to tell its members who the distributor is for any given film, including some of the older Continental films. Arrangements for renting the films and for their despatch can be made by the cinema manager on the Society's behalf. If he is unable to do this, act on his advice. The British Film Institute will assist its members in the booking of films. There will be transit charges on the 35 mm. films.

It is best to form a film selection sub-committee of three or so well-assorted members of the main executive committee. The search for available films should be vested in them, and they should make up specimen programmes with estimated charges for consideration by the executive committee, or by the members as a whole.

Finally, keep your members together by an inclusive charge for, say, a six-month season based on your estimated overheads, with a good margin. The film world is not an easy world to handle, and mistakes can and do happen. There will be heartaches and headaches, and a reserve local programme should be

kept in readiness should film despatch at any time let you down. A reserve substandard projector is also a comfort.

A well-organised Film Society is one of the greatest pleasures obtainable, and a definite addition to the social life of any community; from it can branch out all types of cultural activity, discussion groups, W.E.A. classes on the film, even film-making groups working on substandard documentary during the summer when it is not advisable to run large-scale film performances. The Society can acquire a library, or work in conjunction with the local town library, ensuring that all new film titles are added to the shelves. A large Film Society can run branches on substandard for specialised interests—such as health, education, science, religion and travel. A small group, carefully organised, can be developed into a large and flourishing society filling a cinema at two successive performances.

BOOK LIST

N.B.—Books marked * are indispensable.

1. Film History

A Million and One Nights. Terry Ramsaye. Simon and Schuster, 1926. A discursive but fascinating history of silent cinema written from the American point of view.

*Le Cinema Sovietique. Léon Moussinac. N.R.F., Paris. 1928. An excellent account of the early period of Soviet cinema, based on personal investigation.

*The Film Till Now. Paul Rotha. Cape, 1930. A fine and very detailed account of the achievement of the silent cinema. Good technical and æsthetic criticism.

Celluloid. Paul Rotha. Longmans, Green and Co., 1931. A sequel to the above, entering upon the sound film.

A History of the Movies. B. B. Hampton. English edition, Noel Douglas, 1932. History primarily of American Cinema. Well illustrated. Recommended.

*Documentary Film. Paul Rotha. Faber and Faber, 1936. An important historical record of documentary, with an evaluation of its achievement. Revised edition, 1939.

Movies for the Millions. Gilbert Seldes. Batsford, 1937. A very readable account of the chief trends of the cinema from an historical angle, with the chief emphasis on American film.

*History of the Film. Bardèche and Brasillach. Translated and edited by Iris Barry. Allen and Unwin, 1938. An interesting and important history from the French point of view.

The Film Answers Back. E. W. and M. M. Robson. Bodley Head, 1939. A spirited defence of the American film for its healthy sociological content as contrasted with the decadence of European cinema.

*Histoire de L'Art Cinematographique. Carl Vincent. Editions du Trident, Bruxelles, 1939. A detailed history of the film from the beginnings to about 1937. Recommended.

*The Rise of the American Film. Lewis Jacobs. Harcourt

Brace and Co., New York, 1939. This is undoubtedly one of the few very good books on the film, and the best individual history of film published, though it is naturally limited to the achievement of America, with occasional references only to European cinema. It is both lively and authoritative. It takes the various periods of the development of American film, deals first with the economic issues of the industry, next with the work of important directors who developed the art of the film, and closes with a survey of the period from the point of view of the social content of the films both good and bad.

*GEORGES MÉLIÈS, 1861-1938. Maurice Bessy and Lo Duca. Prisma, 1945. A lavishly illustrated study of the early French director of theatrical fantasies in film. Contains many examples of Méliès' own treatments and scripts.

*IMAGES DU CINEMA FRANÇAIS. Nicole Vedrès. Les Editions du Chêne, Paris, 1945. A survey of the development of French cinema largely by means of stills grouped under types of film, such as Burlesque, Comedy, Horror films, "La Condition Humaine," etc. A beautifully produced and important book.

PRESENTING SCOTLAND: A FILM SURVEY. Norman Wilson. The Edinburgh Film Guild, 1945. A short but excellent survey of the history of the documentary presentation of Scotland, with proposals for the founding of a documentary school in Scotland itself.

*THE INDEX SERIES OF THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE.

*"An Index to the Films of Charlie Chaplin." Theodore Huff, 1945.

*" An Index to the Creative Work of David Wark Griffith." Seymour Stern, 1945.

1. Part One: The Birth of an Art, 1908-1915.
2. The Birth of a Nation.

To be followed by others.

These monographs on and indexes of the works of distinguished directors, with historical and critical data, are important as contributions to the supply of definitive information about leading directors.

THE BRITISH FILM YEARBOOK, 1946. Peter Noble, British Yearbooks, 1946. A useful gazetteer of recent British films

and the personnel of the Industry. Contains also a brief history of the development of British cinema which is a sketch only, there being no adequate history of our industry published as yet. Well illustrated.

THE ART OF THE FILM. Roger Manvell. The Arts Council of Great Britain, 1945. A miniature history of the art of the film in Europe and America, together with an index of several hundreds films with dates and credits, for the Arts Council exhibition "European Film Art, 1920-45" assembled by Roger Manvell. The catalogue is illustrated by film stills.

*L'INVENTION DU CINEMA, 1832-1897. Volume One of Histoire Generale du Cinema. Georges Sadoul. Editions Denoël, Paris, 1946. The most authoritative history of the development of technical experiment and apparatus which led to the invention of the film camera, projector and celluloid stock. Highly recommended.

TWENTY YEARS OF BRITISH FILM. H. Forsyth Hardy, Ernest Lindgren and Roger Manvell. Falcon Press, 1946. To be published in the autumn, this survey of the development of British feature and documentary film will contain a hundred stills.

2. THE ART OF THE FILM

*FILM TECHNIQUE. V. I. Pudovkin. Translated by Ivor Montagu. Gollancz, 1929. New edition, Newnes, 1933. An essential book. The sections added in the Newnes edition carry forward into sound.

CINEMA. C. A. Lejeune. Maclehose, 1931. A collection of excellent reviews, dealing with many distinguished directors and actors.

SCRUTINY OF CINEMA. William Hunter. Wishart, 1932. Using certain outstanding films as the key to his review of cinema, the author assesses its general achievement up to 1932.

*FILM. Rudolf Arnheim. Faber, 1933. The most complete æsthetic of cinema yet written. Not easy reading on the whole.

FILM CRAFT. Adrian Brunel. Newnes, 1933. The studio and scenario in working dress. A collection of many

interesting comments from different participants in the collective film job.

THE PRIVATE LIFE OF HENRY VIII. Lajos Biro and Arthur Wimperis. Edited by Ernest Betts. Methuen, 1934. A complete scenario, nicely cleaned up for the press. But useful and illuminating, as well as entertaining.

*A GRAMMAR OF THE FILM. Raymond Spottiswoode. Faber, 1935. Rather academic in approach, but one of the few competent books on the technique of the film.

FILM ACTING. V. I. Pudovkin. Translated by Ivor Montagu. Newnes, 1935. A later book than " Film Technique," it contains Pudovkin's detailed comments on the work of the Russian actor.

FILM MUSIC. Kurt London. Faber, 1936. Designed rather for the musician than the layman, but of considerable general interest.

FILM AND THEATRE. Allardyce Nicoll. Harrap, 1936. A fairly elementary textbook of cinema technique by a distinguished historian of the drama.

*MOVIE PARADE. Compiled by Paul Rotha. Studio, 1936. A fine collection of stills giving a pictorial history of cinema in its various branches. Of the greatest fascination and interest.

THE CINEMA AS A GRAPHIC ART. Vladimir Nilsen. Newnes, 1936. A Russian cameraman's textbook on the æsthetics of his art.

*GARBO AND THE NIGHT-WATCHMEN. Alistaire Cooke. Cape, 1937. Cooke calls this a bedside book. Its bedside manner is limited to keeping the reader awake. Satiric, amusing, caustic comments by American and British critics of distinction and wit.

DESIGNING FOR MOVING PICTURES. Edward Carrick. Studio, 1941. An excellent book on the design and structure of film sets and properties.

*THE FILM SENSE. S. M. Eisenstein. Faber, 1943. Of great importance, but difficult and sometimes perverse to read.

*TWENTY BEST FILM PLAYS and BEST FILM PLAYS, 1943-44. Gassner and Nichols. Crown, N.Y. These two volumes are the beginning of a regular series of annual collections of film scripts edited for the reading public. These first

volumes contain such important film scripts as *It Happened one Night, Rebecca, The Grapes of Wrath, Little Cæsar, Fury, The Life of Emile Zola, Juarez, The Good Earth, All that Money can Buy, Stagecoach, The Miracle of Morgan's Creek, The Ox-bow Incident* and *Hail the Conquering Hero.* Both contain very important introductions on script-writing by Dudley Nichols.

*THE ART OF WALT DISNEY. Professor R. D. Feild. Collins, 1944. An important and detailed, as well as beautifully illustrated volume, the result of a year's academic research in collaboration with the Disney studios themselves. Gives a complete history of the development of Disney's technique of animation, and the organisation of the Studios.

INVITATION TO THE FILM. Liam O'Laoghaire. Tralee, The Kerryman Ltd., 1945. Shows the position of the film in Ireland, with proposals for the development of an Irish industry for the production of features and documentary. An excellent survey of the whole field of the cinema. Well illustrated.

FILM APPRECIATION AND VISUAL EDUCATION. The British Film Institute, 1944. An important collection of papers on all branches of the art and technique of the film with contributions from Thorold Dickinson (Directing), Sidney Cole (Editing), Ken Cameron (Sound), Edward Carrick (Art Direction), W. J. Speakman (Audience Reaction), and several papers on the film in education.

GRIERSON ON DOCUMENTARY. Edited with an Introduction by H. Forsyth Hardy. Collins, 1946. A selection of John Grierson's writing on the cinema, 1930-1945, to be published shortly. Illustrated.

3. THE FILM AND SOCIETY

THE NEW SPIRIT IN THE CINEMA. Huntly Carter. Shaylor, 1930. A rather pretentious book on sociological lines. But full of useful information.

*THE FILM IN NATIONAL LIFE. A. C. Cameron. Allen and Unwin, 1932. " Being the Report of an Enquiry conducted by the Commission on Educational and Cultural Films into the Service which the Cinematograph may render to Education and Social Progress."

MOTION PICTURES AND YOUTH. W. W. Charters. The Macmillan Company, 1933. A summary of the conclusions of the Payne Fund Studies of the effect of motion pictures upon children and youth. Based on evidence collected as early as 1929-33 it still contains valuable data.

THE CENSOR, THE DRAMA AND THE FILM, 1900-1934. Dorothy Knowles. Allen and Unwin, 1934. A history of the effect of censorship on the drama, with an additional section on the cinema.

*THE ARTS TODAY. Edited by Geoffrey Grigson. Bodley Head, 1935. Contains an important article, mainly from the social angle, by John Grierson.

SOVIET CINEMA. Voks, Moscow, 1936. A Russian-produced piece of triumphant publicity resulting from the release of *Chapayev* and the birth of the new Soviet Cinema.

THE AFRICAN AND THE CINEMA. L. A. Notcutt and G. C. Latham. Edinburgh House Press, 1937. A remarkable study of the special technique required in the production and projection of films for primitive peoples.

*MONEY BEHIND THE SCREEN. F. D. Klingender and Stuart Legg. Lawrence and Wishart, 1937. The financial structure of the British Film Industry, with a less detailed summary of the American industry. Important revelation of vested interests.

*CHILDREN IN THE CINEMA. Richard Ford. Allen and Unwin, 1939. An important study of the place of the cinema in child life.

*AMERICA AT THE MOVIES. Margaret Thorp. Yale University Press, 1939. An important book difficult to obtain in this country. Eighty-five million a week go to the American Movies. Margaret Thorp examines what they want, what they get, and how the industry organises them to want what they get. She covers the reasons for star-glamour, the fashion parade of stunts, the organisation of the promoter-producer-director-exhibitor-public cycle, the work of the Hays Office and the power of the Legion of Decency. She shows how luxury trades use the movies to stimulate sales, and she closes down on the American public's favourable reaction to films with a more realistic angle on contemporary social problems.

U.S.S.R. SPEAKS FOR ITSELF. Vol. IV, Culture and Leisure. Lawrence and Wishart, 1941. The short article by Eisenstein on the Russian Cinema should be read for its account of the structure of the Soviet industry.

*HOLLYWOOD. Leo Calvin Rosten. Harcourt Brace, 1941. The result of a three-year investigation conducted by a team of social investigators. An astonishing collection of data about the organisation, finance and personnel of Hollywood. Indispensable, but this enormous collection of facts is of varying importance and requires skilled interpretation. This interpretation is only partly undertaken by the book, which otherwise certainly starts something.

*TENDENCIES TO MONOPOLY IN THE CINEMATOGRAPH FILM INDUSTRY. Stationery Office for the Board of Trade, 1944. A mine of information concerning the ramifications of the British film industry, especially in relation to the extension of power by the Rank organisation and the relationship of the British to the American film industry. Indispensable.

VISUAL EDUCATION AND THE NEW TEACHER. G. Patrick Meredith. Visual Education Centre, Exeter, 1946. This book assumes the importance of the film and other visual aids to the modern teacher, and discusses their use and the organisation of a Central Educational Council to administer their production and development.

THE FIRST SPRING OF PEACE. Contact Publications, 1946. Contains a long, comprehensive article on Arthur Rank's activities in the films by Connery Chappell, joint editor of "Kinematograph Weekly." Other informative articles on Rank have appeared in "Life" (October 8, 1945) and "Fortune" (October 1945).

4. MISCELLANEOUS

MERTON OF THE MOVIES. Harry Leon Wilson. Cape, 1936. A satiric though realistic book about the earlier days of silent Hollywood. Great fun. Originally published in America in 1922.

VOYAGE TO PURILIA. Elmer Rice. Gollancz, 1930. An amusing and satiric novel set in the wonderland of the silent movie story convention.

STARDUST IN HOLLYWOOD. Jan and Cora Gordon. Harrap, 1930. An amusing, witty and revealing autobiography of six months spent working (or something) in Hollywood. Highly recommended.

FOR FILMGOERS ONLY. Edited by R. S. Lambert. Faber, 1934. A collection of essays on various aspects of cinema, written with the cultural and educational angle in mind. Quick reading.

SECRETS OF NATURE. Mary Field and Percy Smith. Faber, 1934. A book of great interest on the making of nature films. Microphotography at its finest: many illustrations.

THE MOVIES ON TRIAL. W. J. Perlman. Macmillan, New York, 1936. A symposium of American opinion on the film. Chiefly sociological.

*FOOTNOTES TO THE FILM. Edited by Charles Davy. Lovat Dickson Ltd., 1937. The best of the anthologies of 'aspects.' Highly recommended, though a few of the articles are below the average standard.

WE MAKE THE MOVIES. Edited by Nancy Naumberg. Faber and Faber, 1938. A survey of the chief stages of film-making, with articles by Jessy Lasky, Sidney Howard, Bette Davis, Paul Muni, and Walt Disney. Recommended.

THE CINEMA TODAY. D. A. Spencer and H. D. Waley. Oxford University Press, 1939. A first-class and most readable book on the technical side of photography, recording and projecting of films.

*PROMISED LAND. Cedric Belfrage. Gollancz, 1939. A study of the development of property in Hollywood; a documentary story delivered from the political left; a terrible indictment of unhindered speculation and exploitation in site and building values in a new community.

CINE-BIOLOGY. J. V. Durden, Mary Field and Percy Smith. Penguin, 1941. A development of the subject of "Secrets of Nature" for Pelican Books.

5. PERIODICALS

KINEMATOGRAPH WEEKLY. One shilling weekly. An excellent illustrated record of trade feeling from the exhibitors' angle. Contains all the news about new films, with reviews, publicity, etc.

*DOCUMENTARY NEWS LETTER. To be obtained by private subscription only. Should be taken by everybody interested in the welfare of cinema, its cultural value, its use for propaganda. Chief interest, the documentary film. Application for copies should be made to Film Centre, 34, Soho Square, London, W.1.

MOTION PICTURE HERALD. Quigley Publications, New York. Weekly. The most important American exhibitors' journal. Full of news from the American angle.

L'ECRAN FRANÇAIS. Paris. Weekly. An independent journal on the cinema in France.

TRAVELLING. Brussels. Fortnightly. An independent journal on the cinema as seen in Belgium. Reviews of all films shown, including American.

PENGUIN FILM REVIEW. An occasional illustrated volume on all aspects of international cinema, edited by R. K. Neilson Baxter, H. H. Wollenberg and Roger Manvell.

THE PUBLICATIONS OF THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE, 4, Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1. Full membership is 42/- per annum. Membership, in addition to giving the subscriber the benefits of the Institute's expert advice, also extends to the borrowing of films from the National Film Library at privilege rates. The subscription also covers the regular and occasional publications of the Institute. The regular publications can be subscribed to separately, and are as follows:

*SIGHT AND SOUND. Quarterly; annual subscription 10s. Now in pre-war form, a well-produced magazine on all aspects of the film, with special emphasis on its use for educational purposes.

*THE FILM BULLETIN. Published monthly; annual subscription 15s. Indispensable for record purposes. A title by title review of all films released, both feature and short.

Additional

*THE FACTUAL FILM. O.U.P., 1946. One of a series of reports prepared for the Arts Enquiry by a group of anonymous experts and sponsored by the Dartington Hall Trustees in association with the Nuffield College Reconstruction Survey. Covers the development of documentary in Britain, and contains recommendations concerning the economic reorganisation of the British film industry.

THE NATIONAL FILM LIBRARY

By Ernest Lindgren

(Curator of the Library)

There are few things more ephemeral than a commercial film. At one moment, it seems to be showing everywhere, and the next moment it has disappeared for good and lives only in the memory of those who have seen it. Occasionally under pressure of circumstances films may be commercially re-issued, but this is not a practice which the film industry follows enthusiastically. Yet from time to time films appear which one would afterwards like to see again and which would bear re-showing. To see D. W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* or Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* is still an exciting experience. Moreover, cinematograph film itself is a medium not only for the reproduction of the appearance and sound of the living, moving world around us, but also for its perpetuation. It is a new form of historic document, far exceeding in fidelity and completeness of impression all previous forms.

It is such considerations as these which lie behind the national film archive movement. During the last ten years particularly, national film libraries have sprung up in many countries. In New York there is the Museum of Modern Art Film Library; in Paris there is the Cinémathèque Française. In London we have the National Film Library of the British Film Institute; and there are similar libraries in Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Italy, Sweden and Switzerland. All these libraries have similar objects: to preserve cinematograph films either as examples of film art or historic documents, or both; to make such films available to interested students in their own countries; and to facilitate the exchange of such films, and information concerning them, between one country and another. It is perhaps the second of these objects which will be of the greatest general interest.

Many who have followed Dr. Manvell through this survey will be impressed with the power of the cinema as a social force and with the need to improve the quality of film production;

but they will equally be impressed by the highly complex and powerful organisation of the cinema industry, and may well wonder whether there is anything ordinary people can do within the realm of practical politics to achieve this end.

The only effective solution is a long-term one: to educate film audiences. The man who pays his shilling at the box-office is the one who can order any tune he wants from the apparently all-powerful pipers of the film industry—if only there are enough of him. People, and especially young people, must be shown that intelligent and informed criticism can increase their delight in film-going; it can make the films they see, not so much the short-lived opiate of the escapist, as works to be selected, enjoyed, discussed, remembered and in some cases to be seen again.

The ripples stirred by the pioneer work of the film societies have spread in ever-widening circles until now even teachers and administrators of education, whose attitude in the past has generally been one of academic aloofness, are beginning to show a lively interest. The claims of film appreciation as a new subject, at least in the fields of continued and adult education, are beginning to be heard. The British Film Institute is anxious to encourage film appreciation; it is the function of the National Film Library to provide material for its study.

Primarily, the purpose of the Library is to preserve films and film records of historical value. Because celluloid film and its thin coating of photographic emulsion are, on any long-term view, extremely fragile, the originals in the Library cannot be projected on to the screen; for this purpose copies have to be made. This means that by an unfortunate necessity much of the Library's collection is momentarily submerged, held in trust for the future.[1]

A number of films, however, selected for their value as illustration material for appreciation courses in schools and for historical programmes for film societies, have already been copied, and 16 mm. and 35 mm. prints can be obtained through the Library's Loan Section at moderate hiring fees. In some cases composite films have been specially edited from selected excerpts. "A Catalogue of the Loan Section," with brief

[1] Except for the individual student who can look at films on a movieola.

historical and technical notes, can be obtained from the Film Institute. The Library has also published a pamphlet, "Film Appreciation for Discussion Groups and Schools," which suggests various ways in which the subject may be approached, and includes a list of recommended books. Beyond this we welcome the enquiries of those who want assistance on any particular problem. The Loan Section, in short, is that part of the National Film Library 'open to the public': and we are anxious to do all we can to ensure that they enjoy the most fruitful use of it. The pamphlets referred to above can be obtained for 7½*d.* each, including postage, on application to the British Film Institute, 4, Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1.

Many films mentioned in this book can be obtained on 16 mm. stock. The chief titles include *Nanook of the North* (Flaherty), *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (Wiene), *The Last Laugh* (Murnau), *Berlin* (Ruttman), *The Battleship Potemkin* (Eisenstein), *Mother* (Pudovkin), *General Line* (Eisenstein), *The Ghost that Never Returns* (Romm), *Turksib* (Turin), *The Italian Straw Hat* (Clair), *The Blue Angel* (von Sternberg), *Kameradschaft* (Pabst), *Song of Ceylon* (Wright), *The Plow that Broke the Plains* and *The River* (Lorentz), *Housing Problems* (Elton). The composite film covering the history of realist cinema, *Film and Reality,* made by Cavalcanti for the National Film Library, is strongly recommended, since it includes sequences from many of the pre-war films mentioned in the section on Documentary.

THE ART OF THE FILM

This List, compiled early in 1946, represents some of the best work in the general development of the film, but not all. Space precludes it from being comprehensive, and it is almost entirely confined to the work of American, British, French, German and Soviet Russian directors. It should be noted that only a *selection* of films is given for most directors: the List does not aim at being complete, but representative only.

ALEXANDER, DONALD
Our School, 1941
Life begins Again, 1943

ALEXANDROV, G. V.
Jazz Comedy, 1935
The Circus, 1936
Volga-Volga, 1938
The Bright Path, 1941

ALLEGRET, MARC
Lac aux Dames, 1935
Sans Famille, 1936
Orage, 1937
Entrée des Artistes, 1938

ANDERSON, MAX
The Harvest shall Come, 1942

ANNAKIN, KEN
We of the West Riding, 1946

ANSTEY, EDGAR
Granton Trawler, 1934
Housing Problems, 1935 (with Arthur Elton)
Enough to Eat, 1936

ASQUITH, ANTHONY
Shooting Stars, 1928
Underground, 1928
Cottage on Dartmoor, 1928
Tell England, 1930
Dance Pretty Lady, 1932
Pygmalion, 1938 (with Leslie Howard and Gabriel Pascal)
French without Tears, 1939
Freedom Radio, 1941
Quiet Wedding, 1941
Cottage to Let, 1941
Uncensored, 1942
We Dive at Dawn, 1943
Demi-Paradise, 1943
Fanny by Gaslight, 1944
The Way to the Stars, 1945

BACON, LLOYD
Sunday Dinner for a Soldier, 1945

BARONCELLI, JACQUES DE
La Duchesse de Langeais, 1942

BARTOSCH, BERTHOLD
L'Idée, 1934
La Journée d'Andée, 1936

BAXTER, JOHN
Love on the Dole, 1941
The Common Touch, 1941
Let the People Sing, 1942
Shipbuilders, 1943

BAXTER, NEILSON
New Acres, 1941
Naval Instructional Films, 1941-45

BELL, GEOFFREY
The Londoners, 1938
Transfer of Power, 1939
Control Room, 1943
Personnel Selection in the British Army Series

BENOIT-LEVY, JEAN (with Marie Epstein)
La Maternelle, 1933
La Mort du Cygne, 1937

BENNETT, COMPTON
The Seventh Veil, 1945
The Years Between, 1946

BERGER, LUDWIG
Cinderella, 1923
Waltz Dream, 1926

BORZAGE, FRANK
The Mortal Storm, 1940
The Vanishing Virginian, 1942

BOULTING, JOHN AND ROY
Pastor Hall, 1940
Thunder Rock, 1942
Journey Together, 1945 (John Boulting)
Burma Victory, 1945 (Roy Boulting)

BROWN, CLARENCE
The Human Comedy, 1943

BROWN, ROLAND
Quick Millions, 1931
Blood Money, 1933

BUNUEL, LUIS
Un Chien Andalou, 1928
L'Age d'Or, 1930
Land without Bread, 1932

CAPRA, FRANK
American Madness, 1932
Lady for a Day, 1933
It Happened one Night, 1934
Mr. Deeds Goes to Town, 1936
Lost Horizon, 1937
You Can't Take it with You, 1938
Mr. Smith Goes to Washington, 1939
Meet John Doe, 1941
Why we Fight Series (Service Films), 1943
Arsenic and Old Lace, 1944

CARNE, MARCEL
Jenny, 1935
Drôle de Drame, 1937
Le Quai des Brumes, 1937
Hotel du Nord, 1938
Le Jour se Lève, 1939
Les Visiteurs du Soir, 1942
Les Enfants du Paradis, 1944

CAVALCANTI, ALBERTO
Rien que les Heures, 1926
En Rade, 1927
Pett and Pott, 1934
Coalface, 1935 (with Grierson)
We Live in Two Worlds, 1937
Film and Reality, 1942
Went the Day Well, 1942
Greek Testament, 1943
Champagne Charlie, 1944
Dead of Night, 1945 (in part)

CENTRAL NEWSREEL STUDIOS (Moscow)
Leningrad Fights, 1942
Defeat of the Germans near Moscow, 1942
One Day of War, 1943
Story of Sebastopol, 1943
Story of Stalingrad, 1943
69th Parallel, 1943
The Partisans, 1944
Drive to the West, 1944
Justice is Coming, 1944 (Kharkov Trial)

CHAMBERS, JACK
Night Shift, 1942
Power for the Highlands, 1943

CHAPLIN, CHARLES
Keystone Films, 1914
Tillie's Punctured Romance, 1914
Essanay Films, 1915
The Champion, 1915

The Tramp, 1915
Carmen, 1916
Mutual Films, 1916-17
Fireman, Vagabond, The Count, The Pawnshop, 1916
Easy Street, The Cure, The Immigrant, 1917
First National Films, 1918-22
A Dog's Life, 1918
Shoulder Arms, 1918
Sunnyside, 1919
A Day's Pleasure, 1919
The Kid, 1921
The Pilgrim, 1923
United Artists Films, 1923
A Woman of Paris, 1923
The Gold Rush, 1925
The Circus, 1928
City Lights, 1931
Modern Times, 1936
The Great Dictator, 1940

CHENAL, PIERRE
Crime et Châtiment, 1935
L'Homme de Nulle Part, 1937

CLAIR, RENE
Paris qui dort, 1923
Entr'acte, 1924
The Italian Straw Hat, 1927
Les Deux Timides, 1928
Sous les Toits de Paris, 1929
A Nous la Liberté, 1931
Le Million, 1931
Le Quatorze Juillet, 1932
Le Dernier Milliardaire, 1934
The Ghost goes West, 1935
I married a Witch, 1943
It Happened Tomorrow, 1944

CLOUZOT, H. G.
Le Corbeau, 1939

COCTEAU, JEAN
Le Sang d'un Poète, 1931

COHL, EMILE
Drame chez les Fantômes, 1908

COLOMBIER, PIERRE
Ces Messieurs de la Santé, 1934
Charlemagne, 1934
Le Roi s'ámuse, 1938

COOPER, BUDGE
Children of the City, 1944

COWARD, NOEL
(See David Lean)

CRICHTON, CHARLES
For those in Peril, 1943
Painted Boats, 1945

CRUZE, JAMES
The Covered Wagon, 1923
The Beggar on Horseback, 1925

CUKOR, GEORGE
Romeo and Juliet, 1936
Camille, 1937
The Women, 1939
A Woman's Face, 1941

CURTIZ, MICHAEL
Cabin in the Cotton, 1932
Black Fury, 1935
Four Daughters, 1938
Angels with Dirty Faces, 1939
Mission to Moscow, 1943

CZINNER, PAUL
Catherine the Great, 1934

DAQUIN, LOUIS
Nous, les Gosses, 1941

DEARDEN, BASIL
The Bells go Down, 1943
The Halfway House, 1944
They came to a City, 1944
The Captive Heart, 1946

DELANNOY, JEAN
L'Eternel Retour, 1943

DELLUC, LOUIS
Fièvre, 1921

DEMILLE, CECIL B.
Male and Female, 1919
The Ten Commandments, 1923
The Volga Boatman, 1927
King of Kings, 1927
Sign of the Cross, 1932
The Plainsman, 1937
Union Pacific, 1939

DICKINSON, THOROLD
Spanish ABC, 1938
Gaslight, 1940
The Prime Minister, 1941
Next of Kin, 1942
Men of Two Worlds, 1946

DIETERLE, WILHELM
The Last Flight, 1932
Fog over 'Frisco, 1933
The Story of Louis Pasteur, 1936
The Life of Emile Zola, 1937
Blockade, 1938
Juarez, 1939
Dr. Ehrlich's Magic Bullet, 1940
This Man Reuter, 1941
All that Money can Buy, 1941

DISNEY, WALT
Alice in Cartoonland, 1923
Steamboat Willie, 1928
Skeleton Dance, 1929
Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, 1938
Pinocchio, 1940
Reluctant Dragon, 1941
Fantasia, 1941
Bambi, 1942
Dumbo, 1942
Victory Through Airpower, 1943
Saludos Amigos, 1944
The Three Caballeros, 1945

DONSKOI, MARK
(With R. Perelstein)
The Childhood of Maxim Gorki, 1938
Out of the World, 1939
My Universities, 1940
The Rainbow, 1944

DOVZHENKO, A.
Zvenigora, 1928
Arsenal, 1929
Earth, 1930
Ivan, 1933
Aerograd, 1936
Shors, 1939
The Battle for the Ukraine, 1944

DREYER, KARL
(Commenced direction Denmark. Worked in Sweden, Germany and France)
La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc, 1928
The Adventure of David Gray, 1931
The Day of Wrath, 1943

DULAC, GERMAINE
The Seashell and the Clergyman, 1927
Le Diable dans la Ville, 1924

DUPONT, E. A.
Vaudeville, 1925 (Supervision Erich Pommer)
Piccadilly, 1928

DUVIVIER, JULIEN
Poil de Carotte, 1932
La Bandera, 1935
Un Carnet de Bal, 1937
Pépê le Moko
The Golem, 1937
La Belle Equipe, 1938
Le Fin du Jour, 1939
Untel Père et Fils, 1940
Tales of Manhattan, 1942
Flesh and Fantasy, 1944

DZIGA-VERTOV
Kino-Eye Group, 1921
The Eleventh Year, 1928

The Man with the Movie Camera, 1928
Enthusiasm, 1931
The Three Songs of Lenin, 1934

DZIGAN, E.
We from Kronstad, 1936 (with Vishnevsky)

EISENSTEIN, S. M.
Strike, 1924
The Battleship Potemkin, 1925
October (Ten Days that Shook the World), 1928
The General Line (The Old and the New), 1929
(Work in America and Mexico, 1929–32)
Alexander Nevski, 1938
The Magic Seed, 1941 (Supervisor)
Ivan the Terrible, 1944

EKK, NIKOLAI
The Road to Life, 1931

ELTON, ARTHUR
Up-Stream, 1931
The Voice of the World, 1932
Aero-Engine, 1934
Housing Problems, 1935 (with Edgar Anstey)
Workers and Jobs, 1935
Airmail, 1935 (with Alex Shaw)
Under the City, 1934 (with Alex Shaw)

ELVEY, MAURICE
(Commenced direction,1913)
Salute John Citizen, 1942
The Lamp still Burns, 1943
Strawberry Roan, 1945

EPSTEIN, JEAN
Cœur Fidèle, 1923
Fall of the House of Usher, 1928
Mor Vran, 1931

ERMLER, F.
The Fragment of an Empire, 1929
Counterplan, 1932
Peasants, 1934

FANCK, ARNOLD
White Hell of Pitz Palu, 1929

FEHER, FRIEDRICH
The Robber Symphony, 1936

FEYDER, JACQUES
Thérèse Raquin, 1927
Les Nouveaux Messieurs, 1928
Le Grand Jeu, 1933
La Kermesse Héroïque, 1935
Knight without Armour, 1937
Une Femme Disparaît, 1941

FIELD, MARY
(Associated with G.B. Instructional since 1927)
They Made the Land, 1938

FISCHINGER, OSCAR
Lichtertantz, 1932

FLAHERTY, ROBERT
Nanook of the North, 1922
Moana, 1926
Tabu, 1931
Industrial Britain, 1933 (with John Grierson)
Man of Aran, 1934
Elephant Boy, 1936

FLEMING, VICTOR
The Virginian, 1929
Blonde Bombshell, 1933
Wizard of Oz, 1940

FORD, JOHN
The Iron Horse, 1924
The Informer, 1935
The Plough and the Stars, 1937
Stagecoach, 1939

Young Mr. Lincoln, 1939
Grapes of Wrath, 1940
The Long Voyage Home, 1941
How Green was my Valley, 1942

FORDE, WALTER
Rome Express, 1933
For Ever England, 1935
The Four Just Men, 1939
Atlantic Ferry, 1941
Flying Fortress, 1942

FORST, WILLY
Maskerade, 1934
Burgtheater, 1937

FRANKLIN, SIDNEY
The Good Earth, 1937

FREND, CHARLES
The Big Blockade, 1942
The Foreman went to France, 1942
San Demetrio, London, 1943
Return of the Vikings, 1944
Johnny Frenchman, 1945

GALEEN, HENRIK
The Golem, 1920 (with Paul Wegener)
The Student of Prague, 1925

GANCE, ABEL
J'accuse, 1919
La Roue, 1920–22
Napoleon, 1925

GILLIAT, SYDNEY
(See also Frank Launder)
Waterloo Road, 1945
The Rake's Progress, 1945

GENDELSTEIN, A.
Lermontov, 1944

GERASIMOV
The New Teacher, 1939

GREMILLON, JEAN
L'Etrange Monsieur Victor, 1937
Remorques, 1939
Lumière d'Eté, 1942
Le Ciel est à vous, 1943

GRIERSON, JOHN
Drifters, 1929
(Producer, G.P.O. Unit, 1933–37
Canadian Film Commissioner, 1939–45)

GRIERSON, MARION
So this is London, 1934
For all Eternity, 1934
Edinburgh, 1935

GRIERSON, R. I.
Today we Live, 1937 (with Ralph Bond)

GRIFFITH, D. W.
Edgar Allan Poe, 1909
Judith of Bethulia, 1913
Birth of a Nation, 1915
Intolerance, 1916
Hearts of the World, 1917
Broken Blossoms, 1919
Way down East, 1920
Orphans of the Storm, 1921
Isn't Life Wonderful, 1924

GRUNE, KARL
The Street, 1923
At the Edge of the World, 1926
Jealousy, 1926
Waterloo, 1928

GUITRY, SACHA
Bonne Chance, 1936
Roman d'un Tricheur, 1936
Les Perles de la Couronne, 1937
Remontons les Champs Elysées, 1938
Ils étaient neuf célibataires, 1939

HAWKS, H.
Scarface, 1932
Sergeant York, 1941

HEISLER, STUART
The Glass Key, 1942

HEPWORTH, CECIL
(Joined industry, 1896)
Rescued by Rover, 1905
Coming thru' the Rye, 1924

HITCHCOCK, ALFRED
The Lodger, 1926
Blackmail, 1929
The Man who knew too Much, 1934
Secret Agent, 1936
Sabotage, 1936
Young and Innocent, 1937
The Lady Vanishes, 1938
Jamaica Inn, 1939
Rebecca, 1940
Lifeboat, 1944

HOCHBAUM, WERNER
Die Ewige Maske, 1935

HOLLERING, GEORGE MICHAEL
Hortobagy, 1936

HOLMES, J. B.
The Cathode Ray Oscillograph, 1934
The Mine, 1936
Merchant Seamen, 1941
Coastal Command, 1942

HOWARD, LESLIE
Pygmalion, 1938 (with Anthony Asquith and Gabriel Pascal)
Pimpernel Smith, 1941
The First of the Few, 1942
The Gentle Sex, 1943
The Lamp still Burns, 1944

HUSTON, JOHN
The Maltese Falcon, 1942

INCE, THOMAS H.
Typhoon, 1914

INGRAM, REX
Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, 1921
Mare Nostrum, 1926

IVENS, JORIS
Rain, 1928
Philips Radio, 1930
New Earth, 1931
Komsomol, 1932
Spanish Earth, 1937

JACKSON, PAT
Health in War, 1940
Ferry Pilot, 1941
Western Approaches, 1944

JAQUE, CHRISTIAN
Les Disparus de Saint Agil, 1938
L'Assassinat du Père Noël, 1942
La Symphonie Fantastique, 1942

JENNINGS, HUMPHREY
Heart of Britain, 1941
Listen to Britain, 1941
The Silent Village, 1943
The Fires were Started, 1943
Diary for Timothy, 1946
A Defeated People, 1946

KANIN, GARSON
A Man to Remember, 1938
Bachelor Mother, 1939
The Great Man Votes, 1940
They knew what they Wanted, 1940
Tom, Dick and Harry, 1941
The True Glory, 1945 (with Carol Reed)

KEENE, RALPH
New Britain, 1940
Spring on the Farm, 1942
Crown of the Year, 1943
The Crofters, 1944
Cyprus is an Island, 1946

KEIGHLEY, WILLIAM
Green Pastures, 1936
Man who came to Dinner, 1942

KING, HENRY
Tol'able David, 1921
In Old Chicago, 1938
Wilson, 1944

KIRSANOFF, DIMITRI
Menilmontant, 1924
Brunes d'Automne, 1928

KLINE, HERBERT
The Forgotten Village, 1944

KNOWLES, BERNARD
A Place of One's Own, 1944

KORDA, ALEXANDER
The Private Life of Henry VIII, 1933
Rembrandt, 1936
Lady Hamilton, 1941
Perfect Strangers, 1945

KORDA, ZOLTAN
The Four Feathers, 1939

KULESHOV, LEV
Red Front, 1920
Adventures of Mr. West in the Land of the Bolsheviks, 1924
The Death Ray, 1924
Expiation, 1926
The Great Consoler, 1935

LA CAVA, GREGORY
Gabriel over the White House, 1933
Private Worlds, 1935
My Man Godfrey, 1936
Stage Door, 1938

LAMPRECHT, GERHARD
Emil and the Detectives, 1931

LANG, FRITZ
Destiny, 1921
Dr. Mabuse, 1922
Death of Siegfried, 1923
Kriemhild's Revenge
Metropolis, 1926
The Spy, 1928
The Woman in the Moon, 1929
M., 1932
The Last Will of Dr. Mabuse, 1933
Fury, 1936
You only Live Once, 1937
You and Me, 1938
Hangmen also Die, 1943
The Woman in the Window, 1945
Scarlet Street, 1946

LAUNDER, FRANK
(with Sydney Gilliat)
Millions Like Us, 1943
The Rake's Progress, 1945

LEAN, DAVID
In which we Serve, 1942
(with Noel Coward)
This Happy Breed, 1944
Blithe Spirit, 1945
Brief Encounter, 1945

LEE, JACK
Close Quarters, 1943

LEGG, STUART
Telephone Workers, 1933
The Coming of the Dial, 1933
B.B.C., the Voice of Britain, 1935
Wealth of a Nation, 1938
(with Donald Alexander)

LEGOSHIN, VLADIMIR
The Lone White Sail, 1938

LENI, PAUL
Waxworks, 1924

LEROY, MERVYN
Little Cæsar, 1931
I am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang, 1932
They Won't Forget, 1937

LEWIN, ALBERT
The Moon and Sixpence, 1943
The Picture of Dorian Grey, 1945

L'HERBIER, MARCEL
La Carnaval des Vérités, 1920
Feu Mathias Pascal, 1925
Le Bonheur, 1935

La Nuit Fantastique, 1942
La Vie de Bohême, 1943

LORENTZ, PARE
The Plow that Broke the Plains, 1936
The River, 1938
The Fight for Life, 1940

LUBITSCH, ERNST
(Commenced direction about 1915)
Dubarry, 1918
The Flame, 1920
Sumurun, 1920
Passion, 1920
(Arrived America, 1922)
Forbidden Paradise, 1924
The Marriage Circle, 1924
Lady Windermere's Fan, 1925
The Student Prince, 1927
The Patriot, 1928
The Love Parade, 1930
One Hour with You, 1932
Trouble in Paradise, 1932
The Merry Widow, 1934
Bluebeard's Eighth Wife, 1938
Ninotchka, 1940
That Uncertain Feeling, 1941
To Be or Not to Be, 1942
Heaven can Wait, 1943

LYE, LEN
Colour Box (Dufay), 1935
Rainbow Dance, 1936
Trade Tattoo, 1937
Newspaper Train, 1942
Kill or be Killed, 1943

MACDONALD, D.
Men of the Lightship, 1940

MACHATY, GUSTAV
Erotikon, 1927
From Saturday to Sunday, 1931
Ekstase, 1933

MALRAUX, ANDRE
Espoir, 1939

MAMOULIAN, REUBEN
Applause, 1930
City Streets, 1931
Love me Tonight, 1932
Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, 1933
Gay Desperado, 1936

MANDER, KAY
Highland Doctor, 1943
New Builders, 1944
Homes for the People, 1945

MARCH OF TIME
1935 onwards . . .

MARX BROTHERS
Animal Crackers, 1932
Horse Feathers, 1933
Duck Soup, 1933
Night at the Opera, 1936
A Day at the Races, 1937
Room Service, 1938
At the Circus, 1939
The Marx Brothers go West, 1941
The Big Store, 1941

MÉLIÈS, GEORGES
Voyage dans la Lune, 1902
Le Voyage à travers l'impossible, 1906

MENZIES, W. C.
Things to Come, 1935

METZNER, ERNO
Uberfall, 1929

MILESTONE, LEWIS
The Racket, 1928
All Quiet on the Western Front, 1930
Front Page, 1931
The General Died at Dawn, 1936
Of Mice and Men, 1940

MINKIN, ADOLPH
(with Rappoport)
Professor Mamlock, 1939

MINNELLI, VINCENTE
Under the Clock, 1945
MOLANDER, GUSTAV
The Word, 1943
The Emperor of Portugal, 1943
MOTTERSHAW, FRANK
The Life of Charles Peace, 1903
MURNAU, F. W.
Dracula (Nosferatu), 1922
Tartuffe, 1925
The Last Laugh, 1925
Faust, 1926
Sunrise, 1927
Tabu (with Flaherty for Paramount), 1929
NIETER, HANS
The World War and After, 1934
Blood Transfusion, 1942
Defeat Tuberculosis, 1943
OBRATSOV, S.
The Land of Toys, 1940
ODETS, CLIFFORD
None but the Lonely Heart, 1945
OLIVIER, LAURENCE
Henry V, 1944
OTSEP, F.
The Living Corpse, 1928
PABST, G. W.
The Threepenny Opera, 1921
The Joyless Street, 1925
Secrets of the Soul, 1926
The Love of Jeanne Ney, 1927
Pandora's Box, 1928
Diary of a Lost Girl, 1929
Westfront (1918), 1930
Kameradschaft, 1932
Don Quixote, 1933
PAGNOL, MARCEL
Joffroy, 1933
Merlusse, 1936
La Femme du Boulanger, 1938
PAINLEVE, JEAN
L'Hippocampe, 1934
Voyage dans le Ciel, 1939
Le Vampire, 1940
PAL, GEORG
On Parade, 1936
Sky Pirates, 1938
Big Broadcast, 1938
Love on the Range, 1939
PASCAL, GABRIEL
Pygmalion, 1938 (with Leslie Howard and Anthony Asquith)
Major Barbara, 1941
Cæsar and Cleopatra, 1945
PETROV, VLADIMIR
Storm, 1934
Peter the Great, 1939
Kutuzov, 1944
PICK, LUPU
Shattered, 1921
New Year's Eve, 1924
The Wild Duck, 1926
Napoleon at St. Helena, 1929
POMMER, ERICH
Vaudeville, 1925 (with E. A. Dupont)
Nina Petrovna, 1929
Vessel of Wrath, 1938
PONTING, HERBERT
With Scott in the Antarctic, 1913
POTTER, H. C.
Hellzapoppin, 1942
POWELL, MICHAEL
The Edge of the World, 1937
Contraband, 1940
49th Parallel, 1941
One of our Aircraft is Missing, 1942
The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp, 1943

The Volunteer, 1943
A Canterbury Tale, 1944
I know where I'm going, 1945
A Matter of Life and Death, 1946

PORTER, EDWIN S.
The Great Train Robbery, 1903

PREOBRASHENSKAIA, OLGA
Peasant Women of Riazan, 1927

PROTAZANOV, JACOB
Adventures in Bokhara, 1943

PTUSKO
The New Gulliver, 1934

PUDOVKIN, V. I.
Mechanics of the Brain, 1925
The Chess Player, 1926
Mother, 1926
The End of St. Petersburg, 1927
Storm over Asia, 1928
A Simple Case, 1930
Deserter, 1933
General Suvorov, 1941 (with M. Doller)

PUIRYEV, IVAN
The Rich Bride, 1938
Russian Guerrillas, 1942

REED, CAROL
Laburnum Grove, 1936
Bank Holiday, 1938
The Stars look Down, 1939
Gestapo, 1940
Kipps, 1941
The Young Mr. Pitt, 1942
The Way Ahead, 1944
The True Glory, 1945 (with Garson Kanin)

REINIGER, LOTTE
The Adventures of Prince Achmed, 1926
The Adventures of Dr. Doolittle, 1930
Harlequin, 1931
Carmen, 1933
Papageno, 1935
Galathea, 1935

RENOIR, JEAN
Nana, 1925
La Chienne, 1931
La Nuit du Carrefour, 1932
Boudu sauvé des eaux, 1933
Toni, 1935
Les Bas Fonds, 1936
La Marseillaise, 1937
La Vie est à Nous, 1937
La Bête Humaine, 1938
La Grande Illusion, 1938
La Règle du Jeu, 1939
This Land is Mine, 1943
The Southerner, 1945

RIEFENSTAHL, LENI
The Blue Light, 1933
The Olympic Games, 1938

RILEY, RONALD
Steel, 1945

ROBISON, ARTHUR
(Commenced direction about 1917)
Warning Shadows, 1922
Manon Lescaut, 1926
The Student of Prague, 1936

ROOM, ALEXANDER
Bed and Sofa, 1927

ROMM, MIKHAIL
The Ghost that Never Returns, 1929
The Thirteen
Lenin in October, 1938 (with D. Vassiliev)
Lenin in 1918, 1939
Girl No. 217, 1944

ROTHA, PAUL
Contact, 1933
Rising Tide, 1934
Shipyard, 1935

The Face of Britain, 1935
The Fourth Estate, 1939
Roads across Britain, 1939
World of Plenty, 1943
Land of Promise, 1945

ROSMER, MILTON
The Great Barrier, 1937

ROU, ALEXANDER
The Magic Fish, 1938
The Little Humpbacked Horse, 1941

RUGGLES, WESLEY
Cimarron, 1930

RUTTEN, GERALD
Dood Water, 1934

RUTTMANN, WALTHER
Berlin, 1927
Dusseldorf, 1937

SAGAN, LEONTINE
Mädchen in Uniform, 1931

SANTELL, ALFRED
Winterset, 1936
Jack London, 1944
The Hairy Ape, 1944

SAVILLE, VICTOR
I was a Spy, 1933
South Riding, 1938
Goodbye, Mr. Chips, 1939

SEASTROM, VICTOR
The Exiles, 1922
He who gets slapped, 1924
The Wind, 1928

SENNETT, MACK
(Started own production, 1912)

SERVICE FILM UNITS
Siege of Tobruk, 1942
Malta G.C., 1942
Desert Victory, 1943
Date with a Tank, 1944
Naples is a Battlefield, 1944
Tunisian Victory, 1944
The True Glory, 1945
Burma Victory, 1945

SHAW, ALEX
Under the City, 1934 (with Arthur Elton)
Airmail, 1935 (with Arthur Elton)
The Future is in the Air, 1937
Penicillin (with Kay Mander, 1945)
Five Faces, 1938

SHUMLIN, HERMAN
Watch on the Rhine, 1943

STEINER, RALPH
(with Willard van Dyke)
The City, 1939

STILLER, MAURITZ
Arne's Treasure, 1919
The Atonement of Gosta Berling, 1924

STRAND, PAUL
Pescados, 1935

STURGES, PRESTON
Down went McGinty, 1940
The Lady Eve, 1941
Christmas in July, 1941
Palm Beach Story, 1942
Sullivan's Travels, 1942
The Miracle of Morgan's Creek, 1943
Hail the Conquering Hero, 1945

TAYLOR, DONALD
Lancashire at Work and Play, 1934
Citizens of the Future, 1935
Our Country, 1945 (with John Eldridge)

TAYLOR, JOHN
The Smoke Menace, 1937
Dawn of Iran, 1938

TENNYSON, PEN
The Proud Valley, 1940
Convoy, 1940

THARP, GRAHAME
Airscrew, 1940
War in the Pacific, 1943

Trauberg, Ilya
Son of Mongolia, 1938
Trauberg, L.
(with G. Kozintsev)
The Cloak, 1926
New Babylon, 1929
Trivas, Victor
War is Hell, 1931
Turin, V.
Turksib, 1928
Ucicky, Gustav
The Flute Concert of Sans Souci, 1931
Morgenrot, 1932
Das Mädchen Johanna, 1935
Van Dyke, W. S.
The Thin Man, 1934
Vassiliev, Georgi and Sergei
Chapayev, 1935
Vidor, King
The Big Parade, 1925
The Crowd, 1928
Hallelujah, 1929
Street Scene, 1931
Our Daily Bread, 1934
Stella Dallas, 1937
The Citadel, 1938
North-West Passage, 1940
Viertel, Berthold
Rhodes of Africa, 1936
Vigo, Jean
Zéro de Conduite, 1933
L'Atalante, 1934
Von Cserepy
Fridericus Rex, 1923
Von Sternberg, Josef
Salvation Hunters, 1925
Underworld, 1927
Docks of New York, 1928
The Last Command, 1928
The Blue Angel, 1930 (made in Germany)
Scarlet Empress, 1934
Crime and Punishment, 1935
Von Stroheim, Erich
Foolish Wives, 1921
Greed, 1923
The Merry Widow, 1925
The Wedding March, 1927
Paprika, 1935
Between two Women, 1937
Watt, Harry
Six-Thirty Collection, 1934
Night Mail, 1935 (with Basil Wright)
North Sea, 1938
Britain can take it, 1940
Squadron 992, 1940
Target for Tonight, 1941
Nine Men, 1943
Fiddlers Three, 1944
The Overlanders, 1946
Wavrin, Marquis de
Pays du Scalp, 1934
Wegener, Paul
The Golem (with Henrik Galeen), 1920
Welles, Orson
Citizen Kane, 1941
The Magnificent Ambersons, 1942
Wellman, W.
The Public Enemy, 1931
A Star is Born, 1937
Nothing Sacred, 1937
The Ox-bow Incident, 1943
The Story of G.I. Joe, 1945
Whelan, Tim
Farewell Again, 1937
Wiene, Robert
(Commenced direction about 1916)
Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, 1919
Raskolnikov, 1923
Hands of Orlac, 1924
Wilcox, Herbert
Nell Gwyn, 1934
Victoria the Great, 1937

Sixty Glorious Years, 1938
They Flew Alone, 1942
I Live in Grosvenor Square, 1945

WILDER, BILLY
Double Indemnity, 1944
The Lost Weekend, 1945

WOOD, SAM
Our Town, 1940
King's Row, 1943
For whom the Bell Tolls, 1944

WOOLFE, H. BRUCE
(Founded British Instructional, 1919)
Zeebrugge, 1921

WRIGHT, BASIL
O'er Hill and Dale, 1932
Windmill in Barbadoes, 1933
Cargo from Jamaica, 1933
Song of Ceylon, 1935
Night Mail, 1935 (with Harry Watt)
Children at School, 1937

WYLER, WILLIAM
Counsellor-at-Law, 1933
Dodsworth, 1936
These Three, 1936
Dead End, 1937
Jezebel, 1938
Wuthering Heights, 1939
The Westerner, 1940
The Letter, 1941
The Little Foxes, 1941

YEGOROV, M.
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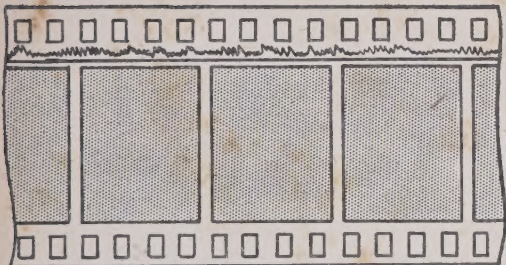

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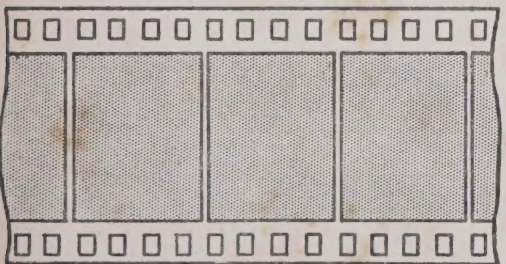

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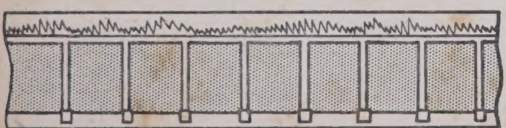

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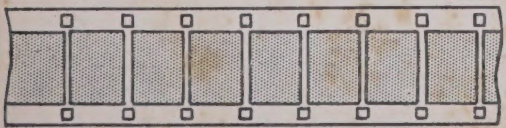

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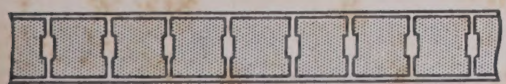

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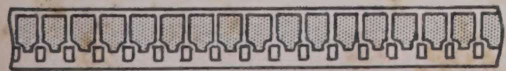

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Howard Coster

THE AUTHOR

BORN 1909. Graduate and Doctor of London University. At present Research Officer of the British Film Institute in London, he is a member of the London Critics' Circle, and is regular correspondent for a number of journals, and Film Critic to the Overseas Press Department of the British Council. He has lectured widely on the film, and has recently carried out lecture tours in Egypt, Palestine, Germany and France. He has also prepared an exhibition on *The Art of the Film in Europe* for the Arts Council of Great Britain, and is working on a further exhibition of *British Film* for use overseas by the British Council. A member of the Editorial Board of the forthcoming *Penguin Film Review*, he has two further books on cinema in preparation. Interest in film began at the age of five with film serials and slapstick, and was matured when he became a student of John Grierson, the documentary producer, some twenty years later. Worked for five years with the British Ministry of Information in the development of road-shows of official films in various parts of Britain.

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