

THE PHALKE TEXT

Title Card :

"Bombay Chronicle, Saturday, 13th May, 1913 'Raja Harischandra' advertisement."

"An instructive subject from Hindu mythology, sure to appeal to our Hindu patrons.

The programme continues throughout the week with four daily show. Double rates of admission."

"Mr. Phalke's Moving Pictures

A Newsletter from Bombay."

"To the Editor, Kesari.

Cinematograph shows have become so numerous in our city of Bombay these days, that people have almost given up visiting stage shows and the circus.

But most of the cinematographs were foreign and they had foreign images in them. But Mr. Phalke has changed all that in making his film.

"The images in his film are Indian, and are drawn from the Puranas, and are thus familiar to all. Mr. Phalke has made a complete film of 3,000 feet, in which he has shown the entire play, 'Harishchandra'. Such a play on film was presented by Mr. Phalke at the Olympia Theatre in Bombay on the 21st of April. He had invited the big people of Bombay to this showing. The show was admirable. All the movements and expressions of the characters on screen were so realistic that the spectators felt that those moving characters were also speaking. Some scenes from this 'Harishchandra' are heartrending. They have come out so well that Harischandra and Taramati of the screen bring tears to the eyes of the spectators. This would perhaps not happen if one saw them in the flesh and blood on the stage.

The scene of the forest, the fire, the river, the hangman's house, the hen pecking around - all these are unrivalled, and Mr. Phalke has displayed to the world his great skill in showing these on the screen. No amount, of praise for his skill would be adequate."

Title card :

"Bombay Chronicle, 17th May, 1913"

"A Special opportunity offered for ladies and children.

With the object that the poor class of people should have an opportunity to see this marvellous film, we will give an extra show when women and children will be admitted at half rates.

Last night of 'Raja Harischandra', Sunday, 18th May. 1913.

Look out for gaud change of programme fro Monday."

Note :

Firoze Rangoonwala. "Screen", 1964

"But 18th May did not prove to be the last night, and the 'grand change of programme' did not take place. On the contrary, 'Harischandra' contmued for one more week, and finally ended its run on the following Sunday. Frjom 26th May, the Coronation changed over to Itala's tragic drama, 'Father'."

Title card :

"Coronation Theatre advertisements" 'From 26th May, Itala's tragic drama. Father'."

The Kesari, Poona, 19th August, 1913.

"Swadeshi Moving Pictures."

"For the last two months, the shows of 'Swadeshi' moving pictures, made by Mr. Phalke, are being arranged in Bombay, and it is learned that people are liking them very much.

These moving pictures were brouglit to Poona last week, and the shows were arranged in the Baliwala Theatre in Bhavanipeth.

On this occasion, Mr. Phalke himself was present in Poona, and our representative went to meet him."

Notes :

Sir Bhalchandra, in his thankyou speech, asks the journalists to compliment Mr. Phalke on his great daring.

Mr. Donald, Judge of the Small Cause Court, Bombay, praises Mr. Phalke :

"Europeans have hardly any chance to see such instructive plays and films on Hindu mythology It is not possible to acquire this knowledge through books, as the Europeans do not know the Sanskrit language; Hence, the work of Mr. Phalke is valuable to the Europeans. Apart from this, the film itself is very well made."

Dr. Vimadlai :

"The film of the play 'Harishchandra' is especially instructive from the religious point of view."

The Kesari. Poena. 6th May. 1913 - A Newsletter.

"It is well known that Mr. Phalke has spent 25,000 - 30,000 rupees. Besides, Mr. Phalke had to do, single-handed, such jobs as the selection of natural scenery, and photographing it, as also to rehearse and direct the actors, and ensure that the interpretation of the character was right. In foreign countries, there are committees of persons who make proper suggestions after careful study of the subject. One can have greater pride in Mr. Phalke's achievement when one considers this aspect of specialisation in film-making in foreign countries. Any amount of praise is inadequate for his achievement.

We heartily wish that, by God's grace, Mr. Phalke's efforts and expenditure may be reciprocated properly by public appreciation.

Title Card

"Bombay Chronicle, 15 May, 1913 Raja Harischandra"

"Since the art of the cinematograph was first introduced to the public, there has been the first Indian film manufactured for the first time by M/s Phalke and company, the only first manufacturers of cinema films in India."

Phalke :

I used to see various cinematograph shows regularly, after a stroll on the beach. The art of cinematography is the next stage of the photographic art, and since I had been an artist photographer for the last fifteen years or so, I was particularly attracted towards these cinematograph shows, and I seriously began to think why this profession could not start in India as well. Gradually, I acquired all the possible literature on this subject, and read it through. I also asked for various catalogues of cine equipment, and I realised that this art could be introduced in India as well, with an investment of about twenty-five thousand rupees."

DIGRESSION 1 START

Saraswatibai, Mrs. Phalke :

"His association with Laxmi Art Printing Press came to an end. The hard, round the clock work he had put in over the three-colour process, the 'Suvarnamala' monthly, &c, without caring for proper food or sleep, seriously affected his system and his eyesight.

We had come to stay in Inlsmail buildign, at Chowpatty, and two of our children were still very small. We were in great difficulties. Medical treatment, and even fasts and ritual offerings on my part were of no avail in cuing his eyesigiit. Then Dr. Prabhakar came like an angel, and restored his eyesight after a year's treatment. But our economic state was even worse now.

The doctor had forbidden him to do reading, photography, &c. For some time, but his temperament would never allow him to sit at rest.

Ke kept writing letters, calling for catalogues, reading photography journals, &c.

He was very fond of dramas, and our Sunday afternoons were mostly spent in seeing Marathi or Gujarati plays, then being staged at Elphinstone Theatre by Belgaokar Sangeet Mandali, of which my brother, A karandikar, was a partner and lead player, since he was also an expert at music

It was all leisure-like activity, but it brought improvement in my husband's health.

Big people again began to visit our house, and there were talks of business. In Bombay, at that time, half-tone block work and three-colour work was done only by the Times of India, and Laxmi Art. He had learned this art from Germany. Many of our visitors were Gujarats." A Gujarati businessman: "Sister, do not worry that Laxmi Art has been lost. If Phalke Seth wishes, we can raise a Saraswati Art in one day."

Saraswatibai:

"Many of us tried to persuade him, but he was completely determined.

In this period, his daily walk on the beach with our son Babaraya (Bhalchandra) was a regular affair. Keeping four annas in his pocket, my husband would go for a walk, and return late in the evening.

One day, on their return, Babaraya clung to my hand, and said:

"Today, we saw a wonderful thing. All the pictures on the screen were moving. There were training tigers, elephants, and a fat man.'

'What did you show him?', I asked."

Phalke:

"Cinema"

Saraswatibai:

"What is cinema ?"

Phalke:

"Come with me, and see for yourself"

Saraswatibai:

"That night, he remained very restless. He would open books, and refer to them. Next day, we both went to see the 'cinema'.

We came to an illuminated tent on Sandliurst Road, where a band was playing. It was called the America-India Cinematograph. The first class tickets were priced at eight annas.

It was the Christmas of 1911. The hall was crowded with Europeans and Christians. The lights were switched off, and there appeared the picture of a cock moving on the screen (this was the trade-mark of the Pathe Company).

Then, a comic picture started, featuring an actor called Foolshead.

After every part of the film, the lights were switched on, and stage items of magic or physical feats, were performed.

The main picture that day was on the life of Jesus Christ

People were weeping on seeing the sufferings of Christ, and the Crucifixion.

The film was coloured in the Kinemacolor process.

After the show, I asked

'How did these pictures move?'

Then he took me near the projection room, and said :

"It was all done by that machine."

On the way back, he said :

"Now, you will automatically know everything, since we are going to take up this very business.

Like the life of Christ, we shall make pictures about Rama and Krishna"

I was not at all happy to hear that, and kept quiet.

The next morning he brought home some discarded pieces of film, and studied them with a magnifying glass. The following day, he bought a toy cinema from an English company, and also a reel of some film. And that night, by putting a candle in the machine, and making its light fall on the lens, he held his first cinema show on the walls of our house."

DIGRESSION1 END.

Kesari :

"But what did you do about the practical knowledge that is so essential for the true mastery of any art?"

Phalke :

"Since this knowledge could only be had abroad, I had necessary to go England.

While purchasing the equipment there, I acquired a great deal of first-hand knowledge. The equipment dealers demonstrate to clients how to operate the machines. There are many models of the same machine, and every manufacturer or dealer wants to demonstrate to his client that his model is better than the others. Thus, (hey never fail to show the operation of these machines, although this involves much time and labour."

Kesari:

"But, apart from equipment, there would be many other tilings which would be required for the production of a perfect film, and these would be more important. How did you get training in those things?"

Phalke :

" I was lucky in this matter, too. The manufacturing process is usually kept secret, but I happened to see all this, through the courtesy of a big film manufacturer near London."

Kesari:

"It is said that the owners of factories in foreign countries do not show them to foreigners. How fat- is it true?"

Phalke:

"The charge is generally correct. But I feel that if one is really an expert in any profession, and manages to handle matters skilfully, he can very well, see these factories. If you are really a knowledge person, you are admired everywhere, and this was my experience too.

I went to see the editor of "The Bioscope", an important film weekly, and sought his aaaadvice on equipment. He was really astonished when he came to know that I had acquired so much knowledge on this subject only through books.

It appeared to me that he developed even some regard for me when he realised mat 1 was a vegetarian, and a teetotaller, and even a non-smoker.

When he learned that I planned to make films myself, he said that I was indulging in a hazardous adventure. Apart from many other things, he thought that the very climate of India would be unsuitable for this craft.

But when I had explained to him how I had anticipated difficulties and also my plans for overcoming them, he was distinctly pleased.

Promptly, he telephoned the manager of the Hepworth cinema company, some thirty to thirty-five miles from London, and arranged for me to see the factory in detail.

The Hepworth factory is immense, perhaps involving a capital of about forty millions of rupees. All the eighteen workshops of the cinema are located in premises.

The manager of the factory came personally to the railway station to receive me. Not only did he show me the entire factory, but he also arranged for me a special rehearsal demonstrating the shooting on the sets."

Kesari :

"How big really is this moving picture industry?"

Phalke :

"There are moving picture manufacturing factories in America, France, Germany, and England, in descending order of numerical importance.

Edison cannot be considered as the pioneer of this art, though the origins of this knowledge can be traced to America. The Pathe Company of France deserves a special mention here. Most of the films coming to India are from this company.

There may be about 50,000 cinematograph machines showing films all over the world. In London alone, there are about 500 theatres showing films.

The specialisation of work is very nicely carried out in this industry.

Of course, there are very few companies undertaking the heavy responsibility of making motion pictures, because of the high costs involved.

But once the film is made, it is possible to have as many copies as desired, and since an exhibitor needs only a projector and a small electric generator, the film showing companies are numerous.

Kesari :

"What is the basic principle involved in moving pictures ?"

Phalke :

"The natural action of human beings, or other animate beings, is photographed with a specific speed, and when these are projected with the same speed, the impression of natural action is created.

However, it is possible to achieve special effects by reducing or increasing the speed of photographing, or projection.

For instance, the movement of a bullet being shot from a gun cannot be seen by the naked eye. But the quick photographic camera can record even the movements of a bullet in motion.

Now, supposing the photographs of a moving bullet are projected at a lower speed, all the movements of a bullet, like its penetrating a wall, can be shown, as naturally as the actions of a human being.

If you project the photograph of a slow moving object faster, the opposite effect can be achieved. But we can place a camera in front of a growing sprout for a specific period of time, and photograph continuous pictures. When these pictures are projected faster, we can create the illusion of the sprout growing right in front of our eyes."

Kesari: "What is the standard speed of taking photographs?"

Phalke:

"The lens of a camera is opened and closed sixteen times in a second. Thus, in every second, there are thirty-two movements in the camera.

The photographic base on which these pictures are recorded must move on continuously, with a specific speed. Thus, the cinematographic camera is a machine with numerous hidden wheels working in the dark, but it has a glass opening." Kesari:

"Generally, what are the dimensions of each picture?"

Phalke :

"It is one inch long, and three-quarters of an inch wide, about the size of a thumb. The film, 'Harischandra', is 3,700 feet long. That means it contains about 40,000 different pictures. When those pictures are shown, one by one, within an hour or so, the illusion of the story becomes convincing."

Kesari :

"Would you continue to make pictures in the future?"

Phalke :

"Yes.

In this business, too, specialization is necessary. There is no point in a writer starting a bookshop.

Also, it is not proper for me to take up the profession of showing films in theatres.

This job of making films is so vast, that even the whole of my life is insufficient for it. If I were to make 2-3 films per week, there are exhibition companies which will easily use these films.

Since, at present, I have only one film with me, its shows were arranged during the last weeks in Bombay, and Sural. Immediately after the shows in Poona, there will be shows at Colombo, Rangoon, and Calcutta, successively. The dates of these shows are already fixed."

Kesari :

"On what subjects would you specially like to make films?"

Phalke :

"On all subjects. But specially I will make films on selected portions of old Sanskrit plays, and new Marathi plays, on manners and customs in different regions of India, on genuine Indian humour, on holy places, and pilgrimages, on social functions, as well as on scientific and educational subjects. All of us - myself, my assistants, and my actors - are still novices in this art. Yet, judging from the quality of my first film, I hope to be able to make films of the standard of foreign films, and I am sure that people will like them.

Moving pictures are a means of entertainment, but, in addition, are an excellent means of spreading knowledge."

FIRST PERSON SINGULAR, IN FOUR PARTS

1917

Navyug, Bombay, 1st November, 1917.

Phalke:

"In 1910, I happened to see the film, 'The Life of Christ' at the America India Picture Palace, Bombay.

"I must have seen films on many occasions before this, with my family and friends, but that day, that Saturday in Christmas, marked the beginning of a revolutionary change in my life. That day also marked the foundation in India of an industry which occupies the fifth place in the myriads of big and small professions that exist.

I experienced a strange, indescribable feeling as I unconsciously clapped my hands at the sight of the noble incidents in Christ's life. While the life of Christ was rolling fast before my physical eyes, I was mentally visualizing the Gods, Shri Krishna, Shri Ramachandra, their Gokul and Ayodhya.

I was gripped by a strange spell. I bought another ticket, and saw the film again. This time I felt my imagination taking shape on the screen. Can this really happen? Will we, the sons of India, ever be able to see Indian images on the screen?

A whole night passed in this mental agony. For two consecutive months, I was never at ease unless I saw each and every film showing at every cinema house in Bombay. During this period, I was constantly preoccupied with the analysis of every film which I saw, and in considering whether I could make them here. There was no doubt whatsoever about the utility of the profession, and its importance as an industry. But how was one to realize all this ?

Fortunately, this did not appear to me as a problem at all, and I felt confident that, God willing, I would succeed. I also realised that I had acquired knowledge of the fundamental crafts, like drawing, painting, architecture, photography, theatre, and magic, which are necessary for film making. It was this preliminary training in these crafts which would make my film work successful, and acceptable. But how was I going to realize it all?

In spite of my enthusiasm, and confidence in my success, I knew very well that nobody would dare to give me the capital unless I had something tangible in hand to attract them. So I liquidated whatever possessions I had, and directed my efforts towards this end. Thus, I soared in the boundless skies without caring where I would land.

My friend thought I was mad, and one of them even planned to put me in the lunatic asylum : I kept on liquidating my little possessions. For about a year, I continued to collect price lists of equipment, books some other material and kept on trying experiment after experiment after experiment. I could hardly have slept more than three hours a day during these six months.

My eyesight was affected by want of sleep, constant viewing of films, mental strain, and incessant experimentation. The responsibility of maintaining the family, the contemptuous treatment I received from my relatives, and above all, the lurking fear of the possible failure of my plans - all these adversities resulted in complete blindness, as both my eyes were affected by corneal ulcer. Thanks to the timely treatment of Dr. Prabhakar, the visual world was restored to me again, and I resumed my usual activities with the help of three or four pairs of spectacles. Hope, indeed, works wonders !

"This was the period of the Swadeshi movement, and there was profuse talking and lecturing on the subject. For me, personally, it led to the resignation of my comfortable government job, and taking to an independent profession. I took this opportunity to explain my ideas about cinema to my friends, and to the leaders of the Swadeshi movement. Even people who were familiar with me for over fifteen years, considered my ideas impracticable. And thus I became a laughing-stock for them.

At last, one of my friends who had been associated with me for *ten* years and could vouch for my conduct, financial honesty, love for profession, and perseverance, was willing to consider me sympathetically. I explained to him my plans, and convinced him. This person was capable of arranging for about 25,000 rupees, if needed.

It is evident that his sum of money was negligible when compared to the capital of seven crore (1 crore = 10 millions) of rupees invested in Pathe and other American and European companies. One can imagine how insufficient the sum was for my studio. However, finding capital at all for my independent enterprise was itself an encouraging development in this country of commission agents, whose sole ambition was to display and sell foreign manufactured goods alone. Even to call for film equipment catalogues was considered ridiculous. Nobody understood the co-operative principle of working. All this spurred my enthusiasm.

However, I am sure that if I had tried to raise even a slightly higher capital, I would have been disappointed, and would have been forced to keep my idea to myself, forever.

I was quite confident that this sum of 25,000 rupees was sufficient for start, and for creating a public interest which would lead to a willing investment of a lakh or two of rupees. The experience of my subsequent experiments proved that my confidence was justified. I expected that the studio would grow on *the* income which I would get on three or four films. Later my friend would be willing to invest more, or alternatively, some other rich investor would come forward to take advantage of the already prospering business. In the last event, at least, my fellow Indians would rise to assist me to complete my work.

I am proud to say that I am never rash in my actions, and I did not think that *it* was wise to invest a big sum of money without going abroad to verify if there was any difference between my own ideas, and the actual practice of film-making. I required a very small amount to go abroad to purchase equipments which were needed to prove to my friend that I had mastered the art (of cinema) and this additional investment would not be risky. I was able to get that limited amount of money at an exorbitant rate of interest, and willingly signed an agreement that was very favourable to the moneylenders.

Thus, I laid the foundation stone of a gigantic profession with very scant capital, sufficient only for an enterprise like a tea shop, or a barber's shop, because I had an intense love for the job, and the confidence that I would establish this new profession, against all odds.

I left for England on 1st February, 1912. This was my second trip abroad, this made me more sure of my work, because my own ideas of film making, and the actual details of the process of film making tallied completely. I purchased some equipment, and was able to see a studio, with great difficulty. After ten or fifteen days, I was ready to return home, having observed the actual process of film making, and having done some film work with my own hands. Within a month or so of my return from abroad, I made some 100-200 foot films for the satisfaction of my friend.

These films were produced with the help of my wife and children only. However, I badly required further money for employing paid actors. A moneylender gave me the money against proper security, when he was convinced of my success after seeing those films on the screen.

I advertised, and brought together my disciples, and other employees. I trained them well, and brought 'Raja Harischandra' to the screen within only six months. I got amazing returns on just one print of this film. There was demand for a dozen prints. But I feared that the income on one film may be short-lived, like the Swadeshi movement, and thought it would not be proper to judge the income on a permanent basis.

With these thoughts, I made the second film, Mohini Bhasmasur. I suspended the work for three or four monsoon months, and shifted my studio from Bombay to Nasik on 3rd October, 1913. This place was convenient from many points of view. There, I made 'Mohini Bhasmasur' This also brought me fortune, like the first film, and encouraged me further.

I brought my third film, 'Savitri Satyavan', before the world. This film added to the success and income of the first two films.

I USED the incoming flow for equipping the studio. Moreover, I got more financial help from my friend, now that he was assured that a single print of my film could bring in so much income.

It was, indeed, remarkable that one print each of the three films brought in more money than the total debt I had incurred in setting up the studio.

By this time, my work had become famous even abroad. There was a demand for twenty copies of every film. People in India were prepared to take the sole agency for distribution, as 500 to 700 theatres wanted my films. So, I thought it advisable to invest an additional 25,000 - 30,000 rupees, and buy new electric-driven machines. So far, the work was being done with handdriven machines, which were ridiculously slow. I could also build a studio, and thus give a right lead to the film industry. I convinced my friend that the investment of this sum was sufficient to make this industry profitable, at least in India, with the help of people already trained.

So, I went abroad to purchase the new equipment, and took with me 'Mohini Bhasmasur', and 'Savitri Satyavan', &c, to ensure the future success of my trip abroad. This was my third business trip abroad.

Thus, I had managed to run the enterprise for over two years, and had trained people to such excellence in different branches of film making, that their work would have clients even abroad, in England and America.

These films, whose single copy could bring in incomes worthy of a millionaire, were produced in only eight months, with hand driven machines, without a proper studio, and with technicians who were so new and inexperienced that they were ignorant even of the spelling of the word 'cinema'. It was really surprising that the films made by such technicians were appreciated abroad by people who were highly skilled, and worked in well-equipped studios. What greater tribute could I expect for the employees of our studios than the following comments by experts in their film magazines.

'From the technical point of view, they are surprisingly excellent' But, alas! my third trip coincided with the beginning of the war. The results of this war were more distressing in India, this country of commission agents, than in England itself I was in London at the time. The street placards read, 'Business as Usual', while people in India got panicky, and ran all over the country, abandoning their houses and property. In England, when the war bulletin was being published every half, I was quietly buying machinery. Editors of newspapers like "the Bioscope" were writing about the skill of an Indian! Efforts were being made to arrange the trade-shows of my films, 'Mohini Bhasmasur, and 'Savitri Safyavan', and to give a place to Indian films in the London market.

Here, in India, people had gone to the extent of closing down my studio, and driving away my trained technicians ! My financier friend, like any other Indian, was panicky, and in my absence he not only stopped paying salaries, but also postponed the studio running expenses My men were somehow pulling on with debts till my arrival. The equipment I had purchased abroad were held up in England, in the absence of any confirmation from Bombay, and I had to return empty-handed. On my return, I implored my financier in all possible ways, and sent a confirmatory telegram for despatch of the equipment I had purchased abroad I need hardly say that my plans for building a studio remained unrealised. I requested my financier to continue the expenditure for one year. With great reluctance, he agreed to half these expenses, and that for a few days only, and loyal employees also agreed to . serve the studio on half the salary during the bitter war time.

In these circumstances, it was impossible for me to find any working capital. My financier told me categorically that he would not pay even half the expenses in the future, and thus I had to go literally from door to door of rich people for my working capital.

In short, all my hopes and enthusiasm received a severe blow while my financier was haunted by the imaginary phantom of war. Like my financier, every Indian was obsessed with this was panic. What would happen if materials ceased to come from abroad? What would happen if people gave up seeing films' as a result of depression in all trades? What would happen if I caught plague, and died suddenly? How would I ensure that the quality of films after me would be of the same standard?

Thus poured forth proper and improper queries of all sorts. Even in this critical period, some rich people were sympathetic to my hard work, and were willing to lend me money on the security of my studio. However, my financier was caught up in the cowardly and utterly selfish atmosphere prevailing in the country, and was not prepared to risk his investment in the studio. He would rather have the bird in hand than two in the bush, convert what there was in the studio into ready cash, rather than use it as a gamble for any uncertain incomes in the future.

It was not possible to get my working capital without security, nor was it desirable to dismiss my trained staff. For, without my working staff, I could never get the capital. Hence, there was no alternative but to incur daily expenses. Old films did not pay, and I was not able to make new ones.

Such was the insoluble nature of my problems. What could I do in the circumstances? The only way open for me was to leave my factory in the custody of my financier, and bid good-bye to my employees, and thus put an end to the increasing pressure of the compound interest. This would mean throttling the business with my own hands, my business for which I had such a tender affection, and leaving my factory in the hands of the auctioneers, and if some outstanding debts still remained, selling the utensils in *the* house, and leaving everything else to providence ! Towards the *end* of 1915, my financier refused to pay even a single pie towards the half salaries of my employees. Finally, he declared categorically that under no circumstances would he allow the investment in the studio to be used as security for further loans, irrespective of the consequences, whether the studio ran, or he lost all his investment.

The time was really so critical, that an undaunted soul like me could have been taken to the court, and the factory been locked up. Many industries could languish and die in the towns and villages of India without anybody noticing, but if my Indian film enterprise had died like this, it would have been a permanent disgrace for the Swadeshi movement in the eyes of the people in London. Was it due to the righteousness of my food, or my unflinching perseverance, or just plain good luck for India, a country which claimed fitness for Home Rule, that my employees, who were looked down upon as mere outcaste entertainers, girded up their loins, and offered to work without salary from January 1917. In these circumstances, I was not at all to be blamed if my factory was closed, and my financier ruined. In fact, T would have been perfectly justified in letting the equipment and shooting material be pawned away at this stage, when all my efforts proved futile, and when my financier, my partner, the moneylender, who was my partner in profits only, was not willing to put up with the slightest inconvenience. O India, your son, who is a Karmayogi, could be the butt of such adverse criticism as, 'Phalke deceived the financiers', 'Artists are such rogues', and 'It is always have' sympathy only for *the* rich. However, I had decided to establish in India. Fortunately, I was successful where so many others had failed. So, I decided to establish it on a permanent footing, to provide employment to hundreds of workmen, like me. I was determined to do my duty even at the cost of my life i.e to defend the industry even in the absence of any financial support, with the firm conviction that Indian people would get to see Indian images on the screen and people abroad would get a true picture of India. Calamities never come singly. When my pockets were empty, the selfish people left me. The very few loyal people I had, were affected by malaria. My chief photographer was twice on the verge of collapse, and my electrician died of cholera. The electric generator fell to pieces. My manager had some serious ailment, which required a surgical operation, and was sent to the J.J. Hospital, like an orphan. In this very condition, he was implicated by the police in a false case, thus, to my worries were added the lawyer's fees, postponed dates of court hearings, expenses on travel and evidence &c. Fortunately, my man was declared innocent, and the court, of its own accord, allowed him to institute counter-proceedings against the police. Will not the justice of God's court relieve me of my difficulties? Will He always be deaf to my prayers? Will I ever receive His mercy, like the elephant-lord Gajendra?

Even in these circumstances, I started directing the film, 'The Life of Shriyal'. No sooner had I started this work, then the actor playing Shriyal ran 103 degree temperature. He never told me about it, but continued to act for three or four scenes. This resulted in a long illness. The actress playing Changuna sprained her leg while descending the wooden steps of a set

Despite my determination, these calamities did affect my physical body, and I had an attack of migraine. I could not sleep at night due to worry, and overstrain. But I was fortunate, because even in these critical circumstances, one Divine spirit was protecting me. Her penance, which was more severe than mine, and her encouragement, are really responsible for my present prosperity. In those adverse circumstances, one night, when I was trying to rest my worried head on the pillow, my comforting angel whispered in my ear, 'Why are you so dejected? Will I not be able to play Changuna? You can even make inanimate matchsticks dance on the screen I am a human being, and you can teach me how to play Changuna. But, you should play Shriyal, and you must not publicise my name.' My eldest child was to act the role of Chilaya in the film, and that good lady was even prepared to draw sword at her own son, although it was before the camera i.e. in imagination only.

In fact, the success in the task I have undertaken is due to the Goddess of my household, who was even prepared to get her face painted for the sake of her husband, for his satisfaction, and to help him, as he was short of artistes. Moreover, she had offered her own ornaments on several critical occasions with the unwavering declaration, 'Let God give Thee long life, and I am satisfied with the mangalasutra only. I do not desire any other ornament'

There are also other reasons for my success. I have had many stimulants which strengthened my tired mind. These are not stimulants which, at the very first gulp, turn human beings into beasts, and lead them to the abyss of Hell. On the contrary, they give encouragement in bitter, miserable times of distress. I am getting doses of such pure stimulants as faithful employees who are even willing to risk their lives for me, and friends who have disinterested love for me, and a chaste wife from a noble family, and of the atmosphere of selfless work at the factory. It is not at all surprising that I am still an undaunted optimist. In order to acquire further capital, I had to prove the following points. I was confident that my fellow Indians would not be heartless enough to deny me the working capital, if confirmation of these points was forthcoming:

1. The necessary material for making films would come in regularly from abroad;
2. People would be willing to see films even in difficult times because this entertainment is simple, harmless, and cheap;
3. If new films are made in a short time, and more prints are made and exhibited, the income will gradually be more than the investment.
4. Even three or four studios like mine would be inadequate for producing films for about 500 theatres in India, covering the 300 million population;
5. It is definitely a bad business proposition to have only one exhibition print of a film;
6. The film trade is not limited to Indian markets only. Indian films have a very good demand abroad as well;
7. If I have the misfortune to die prematurely, my assistants are competent, and can run the studio themselves.
8. The reason my financier will not give security is undue caution during the war time, and not because the industry itself is not a paying proposition.

There was no other alternative but to make a film to prove all this. But, when it was difficult to get loans against gold security, at 11% interest, who would loan money to a penniless person like me? I was on the verge of despair. I tried all possible means to secure the capital. I approached all sorts of people, beginning with princely families, state authorities, noblemen, managers, merchants, even down to ordinary folk, like clerks. Everywhere, my lack of security was the first stumbling block; the second was the war time conditions. The first was in the hands of my moneylenders and the second in the hands of God.

I was quite confident that if I could have a production programme in hand, I would be able to raise new capital, even during the war. However, if I could get capital enough to make four or five films, I would soon be free from the clutches of the moneylender, and he would also be free from the worries about his investment. With firm belief, I published a scheme. It was a disgrace that on the publication of this scheme, which invited loans from one rupee upwards, with proper interest, I got only three supporters from Bombay and Poona, the two most vital cities of Maharashtra, like three diamond chips mixed in the shower of stones flung on me by people who were merely rendering lip-service to me. One of these three also wrote a long article in the 'Daily Sandesh' about my scheme, and appealed to the 15,000 heroes of the Home Rule to give me five rupees each. Phalke was not a stranger to these people, and his mission was already well-known to them. They were unable to give more, and were ashamed of giving less; but they had the democracy to justify their not giving anything at all. A very prominent leader of the 'Home Rule League' assured me, 'You should first become a member of the 'Home Rule League. Then, when we get 'Home Rule, there will be no problem at all of capital for you.' Meanwhile, the Paisa Fund had decided to help me. A town which collected about 150 rupees for the Paisa Fund at the time of the Dussehra festival, announced in the newspaper that it will contribute 1,000 rupees instead, if the sum was to be invested in enterprises like Phalke's Films. Two or three organisers of the Paisa Fund were very favourably inclined to me, and I do not know what prevented them from giving me the money about which they had already taken a decision. Or perhaps I could guess the reason, viz., four people working together can achieve results, but it takes ten people to indulge in mere talking, nothing is likely to emerge. But such is my insane obsession with my hopes and ideals for this profession, and such is the love for my country, that even though I have no hopes whatsoever of getting any capital, I keep on accumulating quarterly compound interest. The curious thing is that my employees are equally obsessed with the same ideals. However, the worthy people of the Swadeshi movement took no pity on us.

In such a fit of obsession, I circulated a hand-bill, an extract from which would read as follows : 'Make it a limited liability Company, or a syndicate, or run it in partnership, do anything you like, but do not let this industry die. If some wealthy people will give even a portion of the money they wish to utilise for charitable deeds, in memory of their relatives, I will also use the income from my institution for charitable deeds only, and offer all my efforts to God. All the profits from this studio may be used by fellow citizens for charitable institutions, like the Paisa Funds, public libraries, orphan homes, and the Seva Sadan. But this industry must be saved.

As for my personal requirements, they are unimsginably meagre. God will care for the education of my children! But, if this institution, which was founded in the expectation of support from my fellow citizens, is to perish due to their raise promises, and if, due to financial incompetence, this useful entertainment profession does not prosper, then let us admit, with regret that India is still unfit to claim Home Rule. What an inauspicious thought! These remarks come out of the depth of my being, but I prove false. That is all I have to say.' such, then is the nature of my worries. I have vowed, *in* writing, that they will come to Phalke's rescue only after he has been completely ruined. Such are the engravings of the worldly people on my heart At last, two or three people took pity on my efforts, and loaned me, disinterestedly, a good sum of money to make a film Some other friends added to this capital, and with this production in hand, I was able to arrange for the livelihood of my workers.

In short, after three years of trying in every possible way, I was able to keep up my resolve of making two long programmes, with very small capital, and with the assistance of a few workers. These are a new version of 'Raja Harischandra', and 'Lanka Dalian'. My making 'Lanka Dahan' in the war time, I have done 'Shanka Dahan' (Burning of Doubts) of the financial liability of my venture.

Cinema theatres are once again about Indian films. I am getting contracts for my old films, and for current end future productions. My films are being shown in big towns like Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras, and also in small towns. The correspondence with foreign countries, which was stopped for the last three years is being started afresh.

In short, now that all doubts have been cleared, this industry which involves transactions of lakhs of rupees, has reemerged before our countrymen. This tree which was drying up for lack of water, has found life again. I am perfectly confident that if fee occasion demands, my fellow Indians will have active sympathy tor me This will make this new art prosperous, and will enable not only India, but the entire world, to appreciate the skill of Indian film makers.

In my future articles, I propose to give some interesting information about dramatics, actors, and make-up T will also discuss some suggestions from cine goers I also intend to write, in due course, about useful subjects like cinema history, and the educational importance of cinema."