

colour, would have been many times better to watch and listen to than much of the present contents of this film.

All the same, when it comes to composing, M. Aumont doesn't do so badly. As Rimsky-Korsakov he displays an industry little short of prodigious. Arriving for a brief shore-leave at a Moroccan port (he's a midshipman on a Czarist training-ship), he puts the finishing touches to *Song of India* and *Hymn to the Sun*; that night, under the influence of Miss Yvonne de Carlo's dancing in a low dive, he casually scribbles the *Scheherazade* music on the back of a few prints torn from the walls; the next morning he sets to work on his *Capriccio Espagnole* and finishes it in time for it to be rehearsed by Miss Carlo and performed with full orchestra and ballet at a party that night; the following day he tosses off a mere trifle and proceeds to play it on the fiddle, whereupon Miss de Carlo, with extraordinary prescience, remarks that it sounds just like the flight of a bumblebee.

In between these bouts of creative activity, the musical sailor-boy still finds time and energy to fight a duel with whips, to make love to Miss de Carlo, smuggle her aboard the ship disguised, inadequately, as a boy, and run foul of his captain. He is last seen conducting the Imperial Orchestra and Ballet in St. Petersburg, with Miss de Carlo as *premiere danseuse*, in what passes for a performance of *Scheherazade*.

Since the film claims merely to have been "inspired by the music of Rimsky-Korsakov," none of these absurdities need be taken too seriously. Fortunately, nobody connected with the production appears to have done so, least of all Brian Donlevy as the captain, a chain-smoking disciplinarian with a queer sense of humour, and Eve Arden as Miss de Carlo's scatty mother. They exhibit most conspicuously the light-hearted approach to the subject-matter, amounting almost to parody or burlesque, which saves the film from being regrettable nonsense and makes it simply nonsense.

Book Review

For Young Filmgoers

GOING TO THE CINEMA. By Andrew Buchanan. Phoenix House Ltd., London.

THIS book is intended primarily for young people, as an aid to better understanding and enjoyment of the cinema. It deals fairly comprehensively and readably with the various departments of film production and their relations to one another; with different types of features; with documentaries, cartoons, and newsreels; and with such related topics as film criticism, the star system, and children's cinema clubs. In the circumstances, the book may be excused for being rather juvenile in its approach, and its general purpose of developing the critical faculties of young picturegoers can be heartily applauded. But there is a difference between being juvenile and being puerile, and puerile is what the author comes close to being when he makes such a statement as this: "Sometimes a film appeals to no one. It may be badly acted, and have totally unconvincing situations. Well, you can be sure it was not produced by any of the great film companies either here (in Great Britain) or in America, for they make certain that their productions reach the highest possible standards of entertainment. Absolute rubbish is usually made by small producers who are concerned with footage and not with quality."

Perhaps the fact that Mr. Buchanan is himself a film-producer makes him more tolerant concerning some aspects of his subject than he ought to be.

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