The clanging alarm of the China Incident is not merely the symbol of a new political order in the Far East, it is concurrently the clarion call of a social and cultural renascence of sweeping significance, glorifying the traditions of a classic past, imbuing them with fresh vigor for an equally epic future. The three partner nations in the new hegemony have begun an earnest process of self criticism, reviewing all the cultural aspects of their past, and making a sincere endeavor to adjust them to the lodestar of the future.

Thus it is not an altogether unhealthy sign that some people are criticising the lack of artistic quality in Japanese inspired motion pictures, considering the vital role that movies play in modern life. Some denounce the ban on foreign pictures as ego centric and tyrannical, others still chase the day dream of Hollywood.

These, however, are neither the only nor the fundamental problems of the motion picture industry of Japan; rather are they the inevitable outcome of the propagation of the industry as a capitalistic enterprise, and are common to moviedom of the entire world.

Rather is the important thing the genesis of a real interest in fundamental policies of the Japanese cinema, Sino-Japanese co operation in manufacture and distribution, supply of native pictures to overseas markets, and the crystallizing of such policies in the enactment of a Motion Picture Law, a matter for hearty rejoicing.

The conception of such a federal statute means that the cultural mission of the movie, rather than a commercial enterprise, as a national asset to be shared and propagated by the masses is now fully realized. It is a period of experiment and of foundation, with a dully serious aspect.

A review of the current situation of the cinema in Manchuria may serve as an interesting and useful contribution at this time.

1. History: Movies in Manchuria Before the Incident

The first moving pictures filmed in Manchuria were scenes of battles of the Russo-
Japanese war, made by Russians and Americans, including such scenes as the victory parade of the Russian army after the capitulation of Port Arthur, and the activities of the Russian army, which remain a permanent record in celluloid of undoubted historic value.

The first projection of moving pictures in Manchuria took place in Dairen in February, 1906, the 39th year of Meiji. The performance was given by the Musical and Cinematographic party of the Okayama Orphan Asylum. The performance included a showing of "The Naval Battle" and scenes from the Asylum. The aim of the exhibition was Port Arthur", "Funeral Service of President Mackinley", to raise funds for the Orphanage. Encouraged by the success of its first efforts, the party returned next year, and extended its tour as far as Changchun.

In May, 40th year of Meiji (1907), the Y.M.C.A. as an added attraction to its musical concert, showed a few reels at Dairen, including the "Butterfly Dance", and the innovation was popularly received. During the next year a Russian from Harbin showed his pictures at the Sen-Sho-Kan, joining a performance of geisha girls, and completely eclipsed their popularity. Later a French cinema party known as "The Brais" held a public performance at the Oyama-kan Variety Show.

The next year (1908) another performance was given by a foreign cinema party at the Kabukiza theatre. This party took the auspicious sounding title of "The Grand Cinema Party of New Type Motion Pictures Produced by the Pathé Phono-Cine Machine Company." It presented the Butterfly Dance as an added attraction, and both were acclaimed by a Dairen audience.

In the 43rd year of Meiji (1910) the South Manchuria Railway Co. designed a park, providing for a movie hall, known as the "Denki Yuen" and "Denki kan" respectively. This was the first, and is still the oldest, motion picture theatre in Manchuria.

In January, 2nd year of Taisho (1913) another theatre known as the "Naniwakan" was erected, followed in July of the same year by the Koto-Engei-kan. Some time later the more modern houses such as the Takara-kan and Teikoku-kan were opened. Meanwhile permanent theatres were opened in other principal cities such as Mukden and Changchun.

Movie hall sponsored by Manchus began to appear from about the twelfth or thirteenth year of the Chinese National regime (1923-4), first at Mukden and Harbin. It will thus be seen that the industry took root at Dairen, and grew along the railway lines.

One of the earliest types of picture to catch popular fancy in Japan was the "Jigoma", or familiar detective story, but because of its unfavorable influence it was finally banned by the Metropolitan Police Board in Tokyo. In September, second year of Taisho (1913), long after the Japanese ban had been effected, a film of this type under the title of "The Master Detective" passed the censors of the Dairen Police Station and was shown in the Naniwakan, produced by the Eclare Company of France. It stormed the fancy and ran to full houses for several nights until the Manchu Nichi-Nichi Shimbun brought the attention of the authorities to the matter.

Japanese movie production was still in a state of infancy, and most of the films were
imported from abroad, principally France and Italy, American pictures were still very few.

The first "big" picture to be exhibited in Manchuria was "Quo Vadis?". It was imported by the Y.M.C.A. and was shown at the Kabuki-za theatre in October, 3 Taisho (1914). It proved to be the turning point in cultural reception. Until this time the cinema had been a new and unfledged art, generally scorned by the intellectual classes. But "Quo Vadis" had the stamp of greatness and made a tremendous impression.

The following year, in April, the Y.M.C.A. followed up this success with "Les Miserables" by the M. Pathe Co. at the Kabuki-za. A little later Ibsen's "Ghosts" was projected in Dairen, and the permanent popularity of movies was secured.

"Les Miserables" was shown in a preview at the Yamato Hotel, Dairen, with the accompaniment of the hotel orchestra. The admission fee was ten yen. The experiment caught the fancy of the better class residents, and gave the cinema a sort of social status. These Yamato Hotel previews came to be an institution until the Kyowa-haikan (Concordia Hall) was constructed.

Before leaving the early era of the cinema in Manchuria one must pause to pay tribute to the contribution, as traced hereinbefore, of such organizations as the Y.M.C.A., the Manchuria Motion Picture Assn, the South Manchuria Railway Co., and an organization known as the Manchuria Movie Lovers' Association, and others.

In the non-commercial field the principal benefactor has been the South Manchuria Railway Co. It early formed its own travelling circuit, and gave exhibitions to many primary schools and in communities bordering the railway. It also promoted the popularity of the cinema through such means as "movie days" for the school children. But these activities were so scattered that their effect was not very great.

Turning to the field of production, we have already seen that the first films made in Manchuria were shot during the Russo-Japanese war. This, however, was merely an incident, and it was twenty years before the crank was next turned. When it came, however, the re-introduction was on stable lines.

About the 13th year of Taisho (1924) the Photographic Party of the S.M.R. began to "shoot" scenes in motion. In this party Mr. Kenkichi Narita was working under Mr. Shin Yoshida as cameraman. The first "big" picture was taken by Mr. Narita in company with Mr. Usuki Tenki, a prominent figure in Manchuria politics, in 1 Showa (1926). Many spectacular scenes, such as a hunting expedition with a Mongolian prince, and a flock of thousands of cranes, were recorded.

In May of the same year Miss Nobuko Satsuki and Mr. Yoshinobu Takahashi came to Manchuria. At this time Miss Satsuki's popularity as a "vamp" actress was somewhat on the wane. As a sort of "elopement episode" she organized, with her fiance, Mr. Takahashi,
a Manchurian tour, with a small theatrical company. The enterprise, however, failed to attract, and she was soon in financial straits.

Mr. Yoshida came to her rescue and persuaded the S.M.R. to embark upon a propaganda picture starring Nobuko and Takahashi. The title was "The Woman Wandering About the Continent." The S.M.R., it is said, spent some 12,000 yen on this picture, but the story was insipid and the performance poor, and so absolute was the failure of the film that it was scrapped without being published. Holding himself responsible, Mr. Yoshida tendered his resignation.

His successor, Mr. Mitsuzo Akutagawa, devoted himself to production in a most conscientious manner, and succeeded in making several pictures of high quality, among them "The Grand Military Review of Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang," the "Franco-Japanese Athletic Meet", "Prince Chichibu's Visit to Manchoukuo", "the Granary" and "Autumn in the Highlands."

After the outbreak of the Manchurian Incident, additional masterpieces, such as "The Holy Crusade in Manchuria and Mongolia", "Across the Non River", "Jehol, the Mysterious Land" and "The Prairie of Barga" were produced under Mr. Akutagawa's supervision.

Special mention must be made of "The Cry of The Race", produced in the third year of Showa (1928). This was a picture produced by the Shochiku Cinema company for the S.M.R., dedicated to Manchuria publicity, and through it the S.M.R. hoped to atone for the disappointment of "The Woman Wandering About the Continent." Mr. Akutagawa lent his cooperation. The scenario was by Mr. Huang Tzu-ming, and Masao Inoue, Yukichi Iwata and Yukiko Tsukuba were starred under direction of Mr. Hotei Nomura. The setting was laid in Dairen and Tashihchiao. The picture gained great popularity.

Of productions of other enterprises one of the most noteworthy is "Fallen Blossoms in North Manchuria." Its theme was the activities of Japanese secret agents in Harbin during the Russo-Japanese war. It failed to have much success. Later, during the Manchuria Incident, "Asia Cries" was produced, starring Mr. Yoshie Fujiwara. Its production was financed by Mr. Kajiro Tsukamoto, a music master, and had the support of the military authorities and the S.M.R. It proved to be a great success and was extensively distributed in Japan.

Mr. Akutagawa who directed the Photographic Party of the S.M.R., strove assiduously to raise the standard of motion pictures in Manchuria, culturally and artistically, and eventually succeeded in creating a more or less independent status for the Party, which became known as "The Motion Picture Producing Plant" of the S.M.R. His untiring efforts for ten years as the pioneer of Manchuria filmdom saw the elevation of the industry and won for Manchu films a proud place in Japan moviedom, and moreover played an important part not only in the advancement of the cinema in Manchuria, but also in educational and cultural contributions.

The main object of the S.M.R., however was to give publicity to its activities and to Manchuria in general, and its productions were designed for projection in Japan and other
countries rather than for the entertainment of local audiences. Thus the real aspects of commercialism were not present, a policy, of course, not without its virtues.

If memory serves, "sound" pictures first made their appearance in the second year of Showa (1927). The films in question depicted native dances, with musical accompaniment. In one film, indeed, a few words of greeting were spoken by a Japanese official, but so poor was the technique that the words were scarcely audible.

The following year another talking picture, a film version of "Suwho Otoshi", a dramatic effort by Koshiro, famous Japanese actor, was screened at the Kyowakaikan but proved a complete failure.

As this time foreign talkies began to appear in Japan, and the "talkie" stormed public fancy throughout the world. But Dairen, after its experiences, was dubious.

However, in the third year of Showa (1928) the Fox Movietone Party visited Dairen and gave a performance of production, an entirely different thing than what Dairen had "talkies" with a portable outfit at the Kyowa-kaikan. This was the first real advent of sound in Manchuria, and created a sensation through the clearness and quality of the re-previously greeted as "sound." As everywhere, the course the cinema was set.

The Fox party, through the courtesy of the S.M.R., took many reels in Manchuria. Later, however, when the party presented some of the films to the S.M.R. the local folk were somewhat surprised to find only commonplace scenes in Dairen and a reproduction of the address of Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang in English.

By the fifth year of Showa (1930) the supremacy of talkies was established, and silent pictures began to disappear from the market. The Kyowakaikan decided to install sound equipment.

At this time, however, there were very few "talkies" even in Japan, and there was no sound and established basis of the merits of the various products. There were equally enthusiastic opinions for the Western, R.C.A., Kiang Tobis and other makes. The prudent manager of the Kyowakaikan, Mr. Hiroshi Noto, sought out Mr. Nobuo Yamoaka, then a section chief of the S.M.R. and asked him to assist in making a selection.

With characteristic thoroughness Mr. Yamaoka, enlisting the services of Mr. Hitoshi Furuno, a young university graduate who specialized in radio acoustics, after comparing the above machines with the Japanese-made Nipton, decided in favor of the Western.

Again with shrewd judgment the Kyowakaikan, anticipating fluctuations in foreign exchange owing to the second embargo on the export of gold from Japan, hastily concluded a contract for a machine at a price of 14,000 yen, and profited, in exchange, it is said, by four or five thousand yen.
In March of the following year the installation of the new machine was completed. It was perhaps the irony of fate that the first projection should be "City Lights", starring Charlie Chaplin, who is renowned for his disfavor of the talkie. The showing was a "scoop" for Mr. Tomoo Koizumi, proprietor of the Tokiwaza theatre, for "City Light", owing to its price, had not yet been brought to Japan, though attempts had been made.

Simultaneously with the conversion of the Kyowakaikan to sound, the Eirakukan, then under reconstruction, also decided to go over to sound, and made the Western its choice. It was arranged to pay in monthly instalments, and owing to the drastic rise in exchange rates the theatre was obliged to abandon the machine in less than a year.

Shortly after the Nikkatsukan and the Chuokan installed the western and Klang Tobis machines respectively, but the latter replaced the Klang Tobis by an R.C.A. after a few years. The Tokiwaza was content with a Nipton for a long time, but recently went over to R.C.A.

Thus almost all the leading cinemas in Dairen have installed modern sound equipment of the approved type. In Hsinking and Mukden also, most of the equipment is standard R.C.A. or Western, and to-day, as far as equipment is concerned, Manchuria is not a whit behind Japan. The starting point was undoubtedly the installation by the Kyowakaikan of the original Western, but that machine has since become obsolete and is now valued only as a historic relic.

II. Production: Development of the Film Industry Along Cultural Lines After the Formation of Manchoukuo

The establishment of the new state of Manchoukuo brought a marked stimulus to film production, in line with national policy and the renaissance in culture. Many new films were produced.

The Autonomy Guidance Commission celebrated and immortalized the establishment of the Empire with the filming of "The State Founding." "The 1918 Incident", a record-making production of twelve reels was remarkably truthful in its portrayal, being filmed in Peitaying, birthplace of the Incident, and performed by those who had actually taken part in the clash. Several other pictures, showing the adventures of anti-bandit expeditions, were also made under the auspices of the Kwantung army.

The surge of interest in the new state led to unusual activity, with the S.M.H., Japanese producers, and even foreign companies feeding the appetite of the outside world for information on the new name in the news.

The cultural mission of the cinema, and its place in the establishment of order and promotion of education also came to be appreciated, and Government organs, such as the Information Bureau of the General Affairs Board, Departments of Defence, People's Welfare and Industry, and the Concordia Association began to produce moving pictures as part of their social and cultural programs.
In addition, the Photographic Party of the S.M.R. and certain Japanese concerns were also active in production for publicity purposes.

There was as yet, however, no national policy as to production, distribution or exhibition, Chinese films containing anti-Japanese sentiment continued to be shown, with disturbing results, and even more sinister, the hand of the Comintern was stealthily playing upon public consciousness and taking advantage of the laxness of supervision to spread its subversive doctrines, either in Chinese or Soviet inspired productions, superimposed with English or Chinese explanations. Then there was the sensational and debasing effect of the poorer grade of American pictures.

Of course certain immediate measures were taken where possible by the State, but they were generally confined to such passive expedients as censorship, and no positive measures had yet been devised for a steady supply of safe and healthy pictures for the masses of the new nation.

In time, however, the realization of this mission grew, and was greatly stimulated by the current vogue of recourse to the movies for educational purposes. The "All Japan Conference for Research into Questions Regarding the Promotion of Education by Means of Motion Pictures", held under the sponsorship of the Osaka Mainichi in May, the second year of Tatung (1933) provided a great stimulus to the realization of the place of moving pictures in national education, and as a sequel the Manchuria Motion Picture Research Society was formed.

The formation of this national society gave rise to various points, such as customs duty on educational films, and setting up of a Cultural Bureau, but there was no concrete manifestation of these efforts. Moreover, though several producing companies laid ambitious plans, for one reason or another these failed to materialize, and there was no adequate vehicle for the expression of all this fine sentiment.

III. Manchoukuo Moving Picture Industry To-day

Ever since the birth of the new state the need for a definite national policy regarding moving pictures had been advocated, and some efforts had been made towards its materialization. The Manchuria Motion Picture Law, promulgated by Imperial Ordinance in July, fourth year of Kangte, was the outcome of this movement. In October of the same year (1937) the Motion Picture Law and the De-tailed Regulations for enforcement of the Motion Picture Law were also effected, and by the enactment of these three laws the national policy of Manchoukuo regarding motion picture was definitely established, with the Manchuria Motion Picture Company as its executive organ.

On November 1 of the same year the latter Company took over control of distribution of pictures to all cinemas in the country, and at the same time proceeded with the task of completing its production facilities.
In this connection it must be noted that one of the principal factors in the speedy materialization of distribution control was the abolition of Japanese extraterritoriality in Manchuria, whereby all cultural organs of the South Manchuria Railway Company were transferred to the Manchoukuo Government. As a consequence, it became urgently necessary to effect a general unification and supervision of cultural activities. The Manchuria Motion Picture Production and Distribution Co. has already made a brilliant beginning and is pushing forward towards the fulfillment of its mission on the lines of a fixed national policy.

Let us now make a brief survey of the general trends of motion pictures in Manchuria, as at the end of May, 1939:

**A. NUMBER OF CINEMAS**

(Includes Permanent and Temporary Houses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Japanese</th>
<th>Manchu</th>
<th>Foreign</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kwantung Territory</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mukden</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hsinking Special Municipality</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harbin Special Municipality</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lungkiang</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirin</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutankiang</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antung</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chientao</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinchow</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heiho</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinkiang</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunghua</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehol</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hsingan</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**B. MOVING PICTURE CIRCUITS, BUSINESS BASIS**

Besides the permanent houses there are certain cinema circuits operated by private enterprise, compared with Pre-Incident days, the figure has increased by 40 houses.

The cinema circuits, in combination with the permanent theatres, represent the extent of private enterprise in the moving picture projection field in Manchoukuo. Performances in
these circuits are given on more or less regular schedules, and the service is gradually being extended to include an ever increasing number of smaller settlements where there are no permanent cinemas.

C. NON-COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES

In addition to the regular commercial channels, there is a considerable activity along the lines of educational and cultural service, in which field the S.M.R. is most active.

a. Comfort Train

This train is operated by the Welfare Section of the General Directorate of Railways at Mukden, making tours each spring and autumn for the edification and entertainment of employees and communities in general tributary to the railways.

The train consists of ten passenger cars and three freight cars, accommodating artists and motion picture technicians, equipped with various provisions as well as a full complement of medical and surgical supplies. It visits small towns in succession along a fixed schedule, extending over 150 days. The semi-annual visit of the comfort Train is a red-letter day in the calendar of these hinterland towns.

b. Travelling Circuit

A regular service is conducted by the Mukden, Mutankiang, Kirin, Chin-hsien, Harbin and Tsitsihar Railway Bureaus in the districts under their direction. The exhibitions run from thirty to forty days, twice each year, sometimes three times.

In addition to the S.M.R., certain other organizations of quasi-official status also engage in special moving picture services, some for the benefit of their employees, some for the general public. The Concordia Association, the Department of Defence, the Information Bureau of the General Affairs Board and the Kwantung Army are making excellent use of moving pictures, and frequently give public projections. During the last half of 1938 the Concordia Association held 179 exhibitions, attended by 18,113 spectators.

As has been inevitable in assuming so varied and vital an undertaking, the Manchuria Motion Picture Corporation has been confronted with several problems in the exercise of its supervision and control of motion pictures in Manchuria, but it is a tribute to its fairness and ability that in every instance the difficulty has been adjusted amicably, and in accordance with the spirit in which the Corporation was established.

Having definitely found its feet, the Corporation is now embarked on a practical plan for the promotion of the industry, both as regards production and distribution.
Prior to the establishment of the Manchuria Motion Picture Corporation, the distribution of films in Manchuria was conducted by the Japan Moving Picture Producing Company.

GROWTH OF MANCHU CINEMAS

The following table shows the growth of the Cinema business stimulated by the establishment of control by the Manchuria Motion Picture Corporation:

### NUMBER OF CINEMAS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BEFORE</th>
<th>AFTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manchuria (including Kwantung Leased Territory)</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North China</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central China</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above it is seen that 17 movie halls were established in less than half a year of the advent of the Manchuria Motion Picture Production and Distribution Co., an increase of 33 per cent. The increase is largely due to efforts to expand markets, but it is also a sound tribute to the national policies of the Corporation.

The increase in movie halls in North and Central China is accounted for by the growing demand for Japanese pictures in consideration of the rapid increase in the Japan population since the outbreak of the China Incident. The showing of Japanese films is a notable factor in the stabilization of new China and the propagation of Japan sentiment.

OWNERSHIP OF CINEMAS

The following table shows ownership of motion picture halls in Manchoukuo (Including Kwantung Leased Territory) before and after the establishment of the Manchuria Motion Picture Corporation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MANCHOUKUO</th>
<th>NORTH CHINA</th>
<th>CENTRAL CHINA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BEFORE</td>
<td>AFTER</td>
<td>BEFORE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shochiku Co.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nikkatsu Co.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toho Co.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shinko Co.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daito Co.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The grand total shows 70 Japanese controlled houses before the advent of the Manchuria Motion Picture Production & Distribution Co. and 161 after.

The above figures refer to regularly established houses and do not include halls or theatres where pictures are occasionally shown.

From the above it is seen that in line with the increase in permanent moving picture theatres, the number of Japanese producing companies with which they are affiliated has also increased. This results from the fact that formerly the practice was followed of allowing one movie hall to monopolize the right both of release and re-exhibit of pictures produced by its affiliated Japanese producing company. The Manchuria Motion Picture Production and Distribution Co. abolished this arrangement and permitted the theatres to exhibit the pictures of more than one producer, restricting rights of re-exhibit to certain designated movie halls.

In the past it was common practice to feature short runs, changing pictures frequently. The resultant shortage of Japanese films was met by importing foreign productions, but this source is now virtually closed. This is one of the reasons why the Manchuria Motion Picture Production and Distribution Co. has abolished the monopoly of movie halls on re-exhibit of Japanese productions.

The work of the Manchuria Motion Company has effected a notable improvement in the standard of moving pictures in this country, and has purged the cinemas of many of their less attractive features, besides making a positive contribution to the up-building of national culture.

The elimination of wasteful and purposeless competition for rights of release of new Japanese productions is one of its best works. There is, of course, the occasional complaint of a selfish movie hall proprietor who claims that his freedom of initiative has been trampled upon, and that some of the spice has been taken out of movie programs. Plausible though these complaints appear at first sight, they are shallow in their real significance, and have been more than compensated for by the benefits of a sane and definite national policy.

It is unnecessary, because of its obvious merits, to claim for the Manchuria Motion Picture Production and Distribution Co. absolute perfection and satisfaction. It is enough to note that a solid foundation has been laid on unselfish, national lines, with clear-cut, commendable ideals, and on this basis it can build a brilliant success in the yet untrodden domain of motion picture control.

There is little doubt in the mind of any conscientious student of the moving picture industry that its basic decisions have been sound, such, for instance, as the smooth distribution of Japanese films to Manchuria moving picture halls, the expansion of the market for its productions to Formosa and new China.
In short, the work of the Manchuria Motion Picture Corporation is not merely a matter of business efficiency, but a concise and commendable contribution to the cultural growth of the nation.