

# Philippines Film Industry Steps Forward



The airplane enters into the making of Manila talkies

Showmen Tait & Harris bid fair at present to become the pioneers in the Philippines in putting Tagalog talkies over in a really big way. The reason seems obvious. To their bent for showmanship they have added an investment in lot and equipment of P80,000 and must add more to the tune of thousands for the sound-proof studios necessary to make talkies successfully during the rainy season. These studios are under construction. Meantime, Malayan Movies under José Nepumoceno, continues making pictures; they have recently made three in collaboration with Tait & Harris for the sound effects.

Behind another budding company, Mayon Pictures, is Roman Caro of the Caro Electric Company.

The Tait & Harris lot is on calle Inverness, Santa Ana. Four successful talkies have been

made there, under such drawbacks as the recording of the crowing of roosters during the filming of a storm at sea. It is such drawbacks that soundproof studios eliminate. The trade name chosen for their talkie business is Philippine Films, Inc.

It is quite definitely proved that Tagalog talkies will be popular, if well done, far beyond Manila and the surrounding provinces where Tagalog is the popular language. Apparently Tagalog is acceptable in all provinces south of Manila, even Zamboanga. A Tagalog talkie made in Manila recently crossed more on its first showing in Iloilo than in its first showing in Manila, yet Iloilo is a Bisayan city where Spanish is still much in vogue. The merit of the camera work has much to do with the popularity of locally made pictures. Tait & Harris have tried to omit nothing, in founding their talking pictures venture, to make the photography, sound and synchronization first rate.

Sound and picture are simultaneously filmed, on different films. Then, when the cutting is done, on a third film sound and picture come out together. It is claimed the technique is the latest and best. Saving the owners and the experts from Hollywood, everyone on the lot is Philippine born. So there is a slogan: *Philippine Films Made by Filipinos*. Cameraman John Silver finds Manila actors adaptable to work before the camera; they are not camera-conscious, their natural histrionic ability is tractable.

Director Fernando Toledo, native of Valencia, experienced at Hollywood, works agreeably with the castes and finds among the actors a willingness to learn and be taught. Harry Blanchard is the tsar of sound. Hugh Gwynne dominates the developing and cutting department. George "Doc" Harris takes general charge.

With two companies in the field and another in prospect, making talkies will mean additional employment in Manila. The themes of Philip-

pine talkies are of course very simple. Generally they ring the changes on the old, old story of rural innocence betrayed by the city's dash and brilliance; the cruelty of life in town, its sweetness in the kind and unspoiled country. They keep to the field of melodrama, and play upon the domestic emotions. The emotional appeal can't be too broad. An early picture made by Nepumoceno was advertised: *A Very Sad Story! Don't Miss It!* Tragically goes over well. Comedy relief is of the broadest. Names indicate the type: *Ang Mutia ng Pamilihan*, *The Pearl of the Market*; *Dr. Kuba* (a striving after Lon Chaney effects); *Ang Monghita*, *The Little Nun*; *Pañal na Ginto*, *The Golden Dagger*; and Tait & Harris's next release, *Mga Utala*, *The Orphans*.

*The Orphans* is a shipwreck theme. The cabin set is oscillated on rockers to simulate a tossing by waves. Wind comes from a squirrel-cage wheel turned under stretched canvas, thunder from a suspended sheet of iron, all very realistic. It takes hours to prepare a set, moments only for the use of it. Modern inventions come into the pictures, airplanes and landings by parachute, swanky motor cars, opulent home scenes.



A sailor counsels a shipwrecked lad in the talkie *Mga Utala* being made in Manila

## Islands' Oldest Life Insurance Company Celebrates



Annual Banquet of the Insular Life Assurance Company

TTT Photo

On June 26 the Singson Encarnación club of the Insular Life Assurance Company, oldest of the local life insurance companies, banqueted the company's directors at the Manila hotel. Vice President Charles S. Salmon of the chamber

of commerce is the general agent of the company. Left to right in the picture: Isaac Barza, Dr. Ignacio Ortigas, R. U. Sanchez, José McMicking, D. B. Ambrosio, Secretary of Agriculture V. Singson Encarnación, E. W. Schedler, Vicente

Arias, Dr. E. Roa, José Araneta, G. Abella, Leopoldo Melian, Abdon Lorente, José McMicking, jr., C. S. Salmon, Francisco Ortigas, Romulo H. David, and F. J. Santos.