

It is a custom among music-directors to have either a special "music room" in their own home or to rent a room or a small hall where they can compose and conduct rehearsals undisturbed. MADAN MOHAN has gone one step further — he has rented a complete little flat!

This flat, which he calls his "office", is just a minute's walk from his well-furnished residence on Pedder Road. The flat consists of a large drawing-room containing a few chairs and a huge "gadda" complete with "gau-takiyas", and a "bedroom" which is used solely for the discussion of business. In fact, so well-defined is Madan's sense of locale-selection that whenever the producers and directors of his films finish discussing music and want to discuss finance, they all shift *en masse* to the bedroom.

I have visited Madan's office often — primarily because I happen to be a great fan of his, and secondarily because I have handled the publicity of a few of his pictures. Last week he called me over to discuss with the producers the plans for Black and White Movies' "Sharabi" which is at last ready for release after six years of waiting. The delay in "Sharabi" was mainly caused by Madhubala's illness which has robbed the screen of one of its most delightful stars.

I have seen a trial of "Sharabi" almost two years ago and will soon be seeing it again in its finished form. The film contains at least three songs (written by Rajendra Krishan) which promise to be hits: "Kabhi na kabhi, Kahin na kahin, Koyi na koyi to aayega", "Sawan ke mahine men, Ek aag si seene men Lagti hai to pee layta hoon" and "Mujhe le chalo".

Incidentally, what intrigues me every time I visit the office of this

"prince of romantic melodies" is the variety of pictures and photographs that he has hung there on the walls. Most of them are colourful sheets from old calendars which one has to study closely



Madan Mohan

to understand what they are. For instance, one of them has a highly modernistic background with an old looking object in the fore — it might be a coffee percolator or maybe an ash tray! But three photographs are really outstanding and are Madan's proud possessions: One of them shows Madan with Pandit Nehru and the other with Mrs. Indira Gandhi. The third is a photograph of Madan "in action" eight years ago. (By "action" I do not mean his army days but conducting a song for a stage function). Madan in that photograph looks exceptionally slim — which is merely a comparative statement, since he cannot be called plump even today. He is merely tough, and full of vitality and vigour that forms a startling contrast to the fact that he has composed some of the most delicately beautiful tunes that music lovers have ever heard. ●

I dined with poet PUNDIT BHARAT VYAS as his residence on Juhu Road last week. It was a pleasant evening rendered yet more pleasant by his scintillating poetry and his Rajasthani food.

Bharatji, in a way, is the exact

opposite of Madan Mohan. With his slim and tall figure and his long hair, he looks very much a poet. But it is when he speaks or recites a poem that one realises that he is a man of powerful ideas and powerful expression. His greatest inspiration has been Josh Malihabadi who is possibly the most scintillating poet alive to-day. "That is what poetry should be like," says Bharatji referring to Josh, "— alive and expressive; verile and full-blooded. A poet's words are his weapon and ought to be continuously sharpened on the stone of new trends and new thoughts. A poet should be a prophet, an experimentalist and an epicure — all rolled into one."

"But there is one thing more that every poet ought to be," he adds with a smile, "Every poet should be able to earn a living for himself! This is particularly true of poets connected with the Indian film industry. Greatness here is fleeting and one must, when one is able, put by enough to suffice for rainy days."

I asked him how he had planned for his future, and he told me about the house that he has built. It is quite huge and contains a number of flats which he has rented out so that he would be able to live comfortably whatever happens to his currently enviable position in the film world.

And then Bharatji recited his famous poem, "Dhanday ki kuchh baat karo, kuchh paise jodo!" It is not only "paise" that Bharatji has gathered — he has also collected a large number of colourful friends and colourful memories.

*Ameen Sayani*