

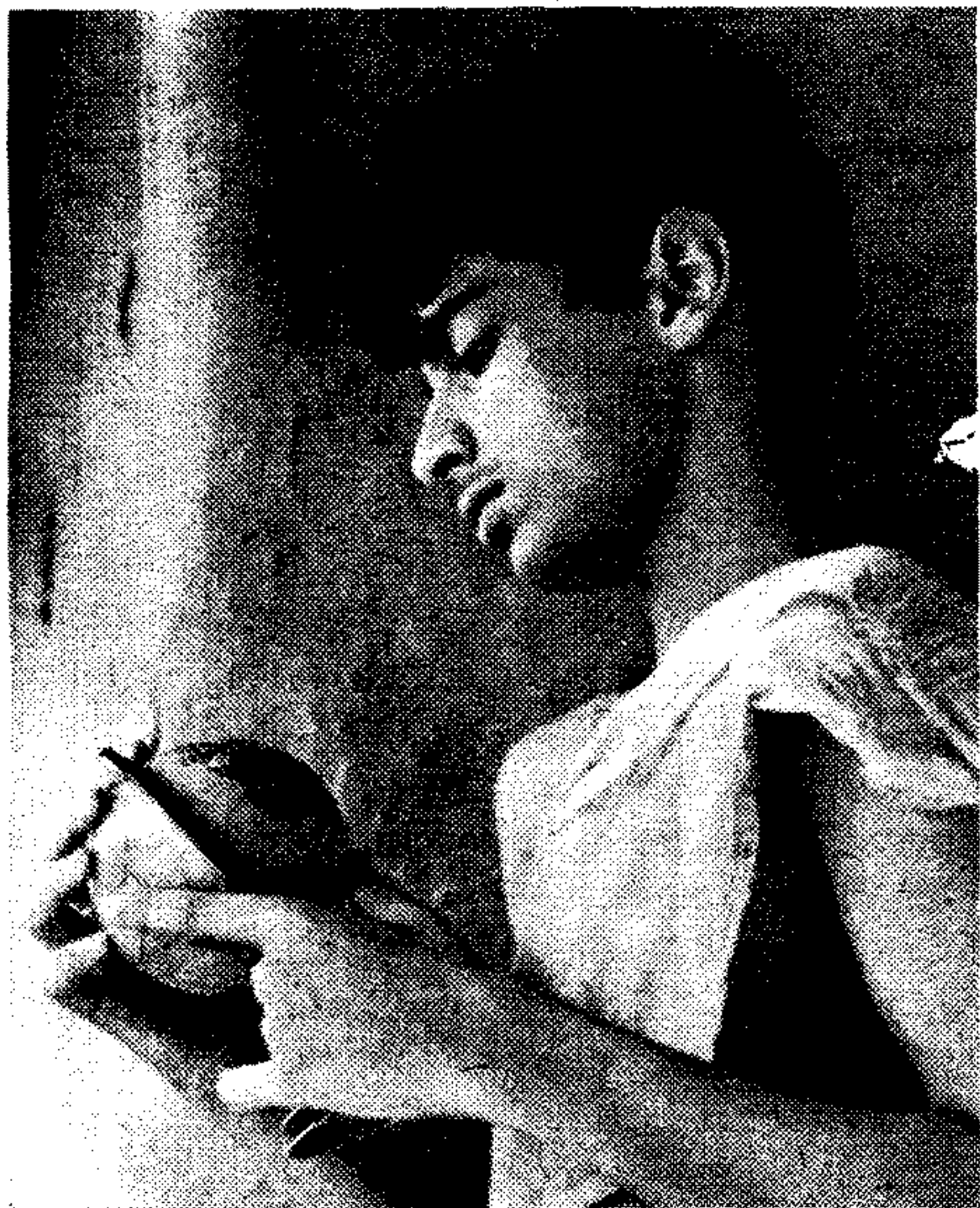
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**Aparajito** (Edward Harrison) is Part Two of a trilogy, made in India by an amateur moviemaker (now turned professional) named Satyajit Ray, that promises to be one of the cinema's outstanding masterpieces. The trilogy is based on one of modern India's most popular novels, *Pather Panchali*, by Bibhuti Bannerji. Part One, *Pather Panchali* (TIME, Oct. 20), told a story of village life in northern India; of how a family tree was felled by the wind of the world; and of how the survivors, in anguish and confusion, broke with the medieval past and set out upon the weary and sorrowful journey to modern times. *Aparajito* ("The Story of Apu") describes their dreadful, beautiful encounter with the future.

The story begins in Benares, where the family has taken quarters in a poor but respectable part of the city. The father, a priest and a scholar, puts in a long day as a religious teacher on the banks of the holy Ganges. The mother struggles to make a home in a strange new world, to observe the country decencies and obey the laws of caste. But how can she keep her son Apu, now ten, from running wild in the swarming streets?

The father dies. The mother goes to work as a cook for a wealthy family. Not a bad life for her, but what about the boy? He spends his spare time cadging pennies by picking lice out of the rich man's hair. But then the rich man takes mother and son to his country estate, and for a while they are both very happy. Apu plays in the fields and studies to be a priest like his father—a matter that involves more folklore than book learning. Yet one day Apu comes home with a faraway look in his eyes. "Mother,"



APU OF "APARAJITO"  
The family tree was felled.

he announces, "I want to go to school."

Mother sends him, at no little sacrifice, and he proves a spectacular student. Several years later he wins a scholarship to the university in Calcutta. He rushes home in tremendous excitement. "Mother, can I go?" And here begins the long, slow, exquisite resolution of the drama: the

story of how the mother dies in order that Apu may live as he was meant to live. The mother gives and gives, the son takes and takes. The only thanks she gets are sulks, or at best indifference. Her heart bleeds, but she is wise enough to understand that in hurting his mother he is only trying to end his dependence on her; that the pain he inflicts on her is a measure of the fear he feels that he may fail to become a man. At every point the relationship between mother and growing boy is exactly understood and poignantly expressed. Because of her great love and understanding, she does not tell her son that she is ill and that if she gives him money to go to college, she cannot afford to cure herself. She is strong enough to let him go; he is strong enough to leave. Death cuts the cord.

*Aparajito* will probably be weighed in the balance with *Pather Panchali* and found slightly wanting. But such a comparison misses the point: as the second movement in a composition, *Aparajito* is meant to express the consequences of the first movement, *Pather Panchali*, and to prepare the mood of the third movement, *Apu Jagat* ("The World of Apu"), which will probably be released in the U.S. in late 1959. In a pictorial sense the film lacks something of the noble simplicity of *Pather Panchali*, but if its images are more sophisticated, they are no less brilliant and effective. What is perhaps most striking to the Western observer is the profoundly Asiatic quality of the movie-maker's genius. He suffers passionately with his characters, and yet all the while remains curiously calm and almost indifferent, as though he understood that life must ultimately find its meaning and its peace in something larger than life.







## In Indian Drama

This Indian boy is one of the cast of "Aparajito," Satyajit Ray's celebrated and prize-winning film of modern India, opening tonight at the Clay. It is part of a trilogy, which traces the life of a boy from his infancy, through his youth to maturity.

The third part of the trilogy, "The World of Apu," will be shown at the International Film Festival next month at the Metro.