

wagen—lest somebody's lipstick-wielding kid sister brand him with her telephone number.

For all the uproar, one sound rises above all the others. It is the clink of money. For David Cassidy, 22, who two years ago was noted only for being the son of Jack Cassidy, the actor, is the most remunerative cog in what someone high up in the Screen Gems hierarchy has indelicately described as "*The Partridge Family Money Machine.*"

David and, to a lesser degree, the other members of the cast shill for a TV show which is not just entertainment but a promotion gimmick for a seemingly endless line of products. Not that this is anything new. The first, and still the most successful, film merchandiser is the Disney studio, which, under the practiced eye of a sales wizard named Kay Kamen, first began to move Mickey Mouse watches, comic books and related products by the millions in the '30s. Presently Donald Duck joined the parade. By the time the coonskin-wearing Davy Crockett came into vogue in the '50s, Disney was grossing a whopping \$2,000,000 world-wide on merchandise alone. Challengers like Shirley Temple's doll and Hopalong Cassidy's cowboy suit were around for a while but faded quickly. "They were in too big a hurry to make money," says O. B. Johnston, one of Kamen's earliest associates and the inheritor of his mantle. "Besides, Mickey and Donald were world-wide. Today we do \$11,000,000."

In 1966 the arrival of *The Monkees* at Screen Gems added a new dimen-

sion by aiming at the spending power of teen-agers. As the Monkees gave way to Bobby Sherman, who in turn gave way to the Partridges, the money machine began to perk up again.

Today nothing the imagination can encompass is too far-fetched to merit a franchise. Partridge Family bubblegum put \$100,000 into Screen Gems' coffers before the arrangement was discontinued a few months ago. General Foods pays a potful to put the children's adorable faces on their cereal packages. If you lined up all the love kits, lunch kits, dolls, diaries, comic books, paperbacks, astrological charts, love beads, bumper stickers and 11-by-14 three-dimensional color photos (at \$3 each) they might stretch all the way to Madison Square Garden.

Garment makers turned a tidy profit with Partridge Family T-shirts and blouses. And at least one reputable, old-line manufacturer of children's dresses, Kate Greenaway, has recently introduced a Partridge "collection."

"Fashions from the collection," explained the initial release, "are frequently worn by Suzanne Crough and Susan Dey . . . and are directly identifiable with the show. Jeans, dresses and jumpers are printed with the bus which the family uses to travel."

Publishers of teenybopper magazines prosper, profiting not only from the increased sales of their magazines but from an avalanche of paper products peddled to eager kids. 16, the giant in the teenybopper magazine field (circ. 1,200,000) pays Screen Gems 5 per cent of the gross on its paper →