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Holiday Business

"One man's meat is another man's poison," says the proverb. The old adage is as applicable to the cinema business as to any other calling. The height of the holiday season sees the migration of inland residents to the holiday resorts, so that whilst city and town cinemas may suffer to some extent by the migration of residents, theatres in such places as Blackpool and Southport are reaping the advantages coincident with full houses. There never was a summer—save the mark—when holiday-makers were more dependent upon the cinemas for entertainment amidst dry and comfortable surroundings.

A New Patron Saint

The fact that the weather is such an important factor in regard to cinema prosperity, leads me to incline to the belief that those who selected St. Vitus as the patron saint of our industry were sadly in error. Our greatest benefactor is undoubtedly Jupiter Pluvius, albeit that the Clerk of the Weather runs him a good second, and one or two waggish exhibitors have suggested to me that Jupiter Pluvius should be substituted, at any rate as the mascot of the picture theatre. One showman told me the other day, in quite serious vein, that if the raindrops still continue falling he shall issue a decidedly temperance poster, billing his hall as the driest place in a neighbourhood where the oases abound in considerable profusion.

Managerial Calmness

What can be accomplished by a manager and staff that preserve absolute equanimity when danger threatens was exemplified the other day when a small fire broke out at the Gaiety Cinema. At the time there was an audience numbering some 1,500 in the building, but they were kept in ignorance of what had happened. The music started playing and patrons were requested to leave. They filed out as orderly as if they had witnessed the completion of the programme. Another demonstration that where everyone keeps his head, the danger of panic is not worth consideration. The damage done by the conflagration was extremely small.

With the Renters

There was a large audience at the Manchester Cinema Exchange on Tuesday last, when Famous-Lasky Trade screened "Find the Woman," featuring Alma Rubens. The picture made a decided appeal to Lancashire viewers, both on account of its story and the excellence of its photography, and the number of bookings received was quite in accordance with the patronage always accorded to this firm's offerings.

Fox Films have every reason to be satisfied with the reception accorded to "A Fool There Was," which formed the subject of their Trade screening at the Scala, Liverpool, on Tuesday of last week. A good report had reached the city prior to its exhibition, and it was the general impression of viewers that the picture deserved all that had been said about it.

As might have been expected, "The Man from Blankneys," when projected at the Scala Cinema on Wednesday morning, scored an immediate success, which was repeated in the afternoon when it was repeated in their own private theatre. The play is a favourite one amongst Manchester audiences, but its popularity will be far exceeded as a photoplay, thanks to the acumen of the producer and the fact that not a single point that is likely to score has been overlooked.

C.P.M.A. Meeting

A general meeting of the Cinema Proprietors and Managers Association was held at the Cinema Exchange, Manchester, when Mr. A. WILKINSON (the President) presided over a good attendance of members.

The SECRETARY reported that since the last meeting, held two weeks previous, six new members had been enrolled.

The PRESIDENT submitted his report with regard to the suggestion made at the last meeting that the Association endeavour to join with the P.P.M.A. and the local branch of the C.E.A. in an effort to get an agreement with the Musicians Union and the Operators Union. There was a very lengthy discussion on this point, the feeling of the meeting being that the Association should negotiate alone. The position with regard to the Musicians Union was then considered, and a resolution was proposed instructing the Secretary to communicate with the Manchester Branch secretary of the Musicians Union with a view to a reduction in the musicians' salary in the area covered by this branch by their union.

An amendment was proposed that the Association do not recognise the Musicians Union, but on being put to the meeting was lost, and the resolution was adopted.

The position of the operators was then considered, but as a ten per cent. reduction had been agreed to in the area it was felt that the members of the Association should make their own arrangements with their operators.

P.R.S. Activity

The SECRETARY reported that the Performing Right Society had issued a writ against one of the members for alleged infringement of their copyright in certain musical compositions. After the case had been fully gone into, the Secretary was empowered to instruct the Association's solicitor to take up the case on behalf of the member. It was reported that two other members had been threatened with proceedings by the P.R.S., and the Secretary was instructed, in the event of writs being issued in these cases, to at once instruct the Association's solicitor to take the cases up.

Combating the Tax

The position with regard to the Entertainments Tax was also considered, and the members of the P.P.M.A. were unanimously of the opinion that every effort should be made to combine the Provincial interests so that when the time came to take action the entertainment industry, so far as the Provinces are concerned, would be unanimous in their demands.

The Lord Mayor's appeal for the hospitals in the Manchester area was also considered, and it was decided not to permit collections at any of the entertainment houses, but to suggest to the Lord Mayor's Committee the giving of Sunday shows, there being a very strong feeling that if a Hospital Sunday in the entertainment houses was organised the effort would prove a great success.

The PRESIDENT, in thanking Mr. John Harrison for his report, expressed the opinion that every member of the Association would be pleased to co-operate with the P.P.M.A. with regard to the Entertainments Tax, and he sincerely hoped that the members of the C.E.A. in that area would also see their way to join with them. He felt that at the Convention to be held at Blackpool the first week in October the Trade would have a good opportunity of getting together on this important question. He hoped by that time they would be able to consolidate their forces and agree on a plan of campaign.