

When buying features from a Programme manufacturer the theatre manager must contract for the entire output for a period of time. He must show all the pictures made by that manufacturer during that period. Many times picture fans have asked me why MR. SO-AND-SO, of this or that theatre would show a very wonderful picture on the first days of the week and a very weak picture the last half when the admission prices were the same. This manager is playing Programme Pictures and must take the pictures that are furnished to him for those dates. He may be able to tell you two weeks in advance what is the title and who is the star of the picture he will play on July 15-16 and 17th but he can not assure you that it is a good picture for he has not seen it himself. The average theatre manager, especially the small town manager, has to buy his pictures blind, the same as you do when you walk up to the box-office and by your ticket of admission to his show. The only thing you have to guide you is the past reputation of his theatre. He buys his Programme Pictures in the same manner; on the past reputation of the company making them, the box office and entertaining value of their stars and players.

State Right Pictures are usually brought into a territory several weeks before they are shown and a screening is arranged to which the theatre managers in that territory are invited, just as wholesale buyers attended the production opening in New York. The individual or Exchange buying a State Right feature do so on their own judgment that the feature will sell in that territory and will prove a money maker for the theatres playing it.

The reader might conclude that the wise manager would be better off if he booked all State Right Pictures, in this way picking his show. But unfortunately there are not enough State Right Pictures to keep a theatre open six days a week and the State Right Producers make some very poor pictures too. Among the most important State Right pictures that have been shown in Canada are "Quo Vadis," "The Last Days of Pompeii," "The Birth of a Nation," "Neptune's Daughter," "Intolerance," "The Whip," "Civilization," "The Barrier," and "The Eyes of the World."

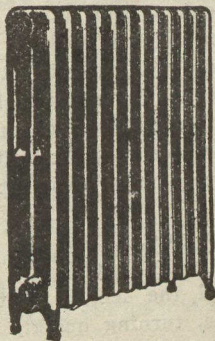
There have been several instances where a company has bought a picture made by a Programme producer which when finished was not considered strong enough to meet the demands of the theatres he was furnishing. The State Right man being as clever as you and I would re-title the picture, give it a new name which would give the theatre manager an idea that it would be a wonderful box office attraction and foist this camouflage failure on the public. This practice became quite common and was even indulged in by some of the Programme Producers who would issue it under the attractive classification of Special Production. As a rule the theatre that shows Programme Pictures gives the most consistently good entertainment as the Programme Manufacturer has a reputation to maintain, and as he is making one or more pictures each week he will soon lose his customers if he does not keep the quality up.

Of course there are cheaply produced pictures.

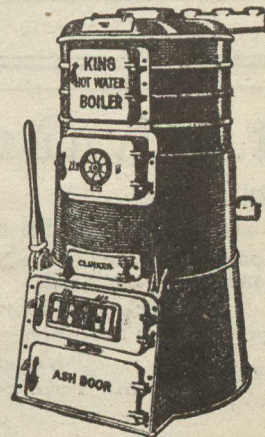
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