

## REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON EXCHANGE PRACTICE\*

*Summary.*—A brief account of the activities of the Committee during the past six months. Among the subjects discussed are the following: reel bands, splicing, processing and waxing, condition of reels in theaters and exchanges, cleaning films, instructional material to accompany films, and film cases.

Meetings of the Committee have been held regularly each month, and although at this time the Committee does not have a considerable number of concrete facts to report, nevertheless these meetings have proved of considerable value in enabling the exchange heads of various companies to discuss their problems with each other, to arrive at workable and satisfactory solutions of these problems, and to pave the way for solving other existing difficulties in exchange operations.

While the question of administration does not properly fall within the purview of the Society's functions and interests, nevertheless these regular meetings provided the further advantage of enabling the representatives to discuss their administrative problems with one another, and so contributed somewhat to improving the efficiency, uniformity, and operation of the exchange service. These subjects are not matters of record in the minutes of the meetings, but it should be emphasized that they represent an important contribution to the welfare of the industry.

Among the subjects discussed at the various meetings were the following:

*Reel Bands.*—A collection of reel bands used by the various companies was made, which showed that no important differences existed among them, although it was the opinion of the Committee that uniformity in the nature of the instructions placed upon the reel bands would be desirable.

*Splicing.*—Considerable study was given to the problem of getting the operators in the exchanges to splice film properly, even when they are supplied with proper splicing equipment.

A study of splicing machines and methods is in progress, and will

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be reported upon later. The question of whether it is advisable or not to use bicarbonate of soda or other solvent to make the splices or merely a simple scraping operation to remove grease and dirt completely and thus allow a homogeneous weld to be made, was given considerable attention. The question also arose as to the proper direction in which to make splices, and it was agreed that the trailing film (with respect to rotation of the sprocket) should be spliced on top of the leading film. Less trouble seems to occur when the patches are made in this manner rather than in the opposite manner, and accordingly this procedure has been adopted in all the exchanges represented on the Committee.

*Processing and Waxing.*—Although for a long time consideration has been given to the subject of processing and waxing film, the Committee is not prepared at the present time to report upon the subject. Some companies use one system and some another, and apparently each system has its advantages and disadvantages depending upon the point of view and the application. The Committee hopes to report further on the subject at a later date.

*Condition of Reels in Theaters and Exchanges.*—Objections have come to the Exchange Practice Committee from the Projection Practice Committee and others to the effect that the condition of reels received in theaters from exchanges is often very bad. In some instances the flanges are bent badly, and in other instances the reel has been so roughly handled as to rip the center hub out of place, thus making it impossible to run the reel in the projection machine. Samples of mutilated reels were exhibited at one of the meetings and considerable attention was given to questions that had been raised regarding the thickness of the metal and the ribbing and beading, which determine the stiffness; to burs, which arise in stamping, and which are likely to cut the operator's hands; the size of the finger holes which it has been claimed are sometimes too small to permit removing the reels easily from the projector magazines; and other less serious questions which are receiving the attention of the Committee.

The manner in which film reels and cases are handled in exchanges and by carriers is extremely important, and the Committee is endeavoring to change the point of view of the industry that the rough handling that is now regarded as ordinary "wear and tear" should not be regarded as ordinary.

*Cleaning Films.*—The questions before the Committee with regard to film cleaning are as follows:

- (1) Does current film require cleaning?
- (2) If so, by whom and where?
- (3) By what type of machine?

With regard to 1, the question was mainly an economic one, as to whether the expense and labor would be justified by improvements in condition of the film and its length of life. The commercial life of film varies; it is generally shorter than it used to be, and seldom is longer than a year, which makes the need of lengthening its life further somewhat doubtful. On the other hand, the Projection Practice Committee has indicated that even in the case of new film, in use by highly trained personnel, oil and dirt will get upon the film and within a week will be seen in the image upon the screen. In the interest of better screen-images, it would appear that cleaning is necessary, aside from the question of the life of the film.

*Instructional Material.*—Investigations are being made to determine what degree of uniformity exists with regard to labels, instructional material, *etc.*, sent to theaters with the reels from the exchanges. As this work has not been completed, it will be reported upon at a future date.

*Film Cases.*—Many criticisms have come to the Committee concerning the manner in which film cases are handled in exchanges and theaters and by carriers, and an attempt is being made to induce the carriers in particular to exercise greater care in handling the containers. Various suggestions have been made also for facilitating the handling of heavy film cases in exchange vaults, the suggestion being that the upper racks be reserved for single-reel pictures so that the heavier loads will not have to be lifted very high. The distribution of the cases in the vaults could be so graded as always to place the heavier loads at the bottom.

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