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THE SHOWING OF 16mm FILMS

(continued from previous page)

theatre executives themselves. Most of the people who patronise specialised screenings of the kind under discussion are casual, not regular, picturegoers, and therefore have little effect on the "audience pool"-if it exists. And if it does exist, the only way to increase it is to turn the casuals into regulars by making them more interested in films and giving them the picture-going habit.

In any case, the daily newspapers might just as logically object, say, to the fact that the Broadcasting Service publishes The Listener, on the ground that it is unfair competition!

TO make out any sort of case at all, the film trade will have to prove that its takings over the whole country have, in fact, shown a marked falling-off as a result of these 16mm. screenings. very much doubt if it can do so, for the latest available attendance figures from the Abstract of Statistics reveal that patronage in our theatres in 1943-44 was up by 21 per cent over the figures for 1940-41! Certainly those peak figures reflect to some extent the presence in our midst of the movie-going Marine and attendances at theatres in Army camps; but as against this many of our own men have been overseas and some at least of their wives and sweethearts have been staying at home at night. On the whole, then, it does not look as if the "competitive" aspect of the trade's case

against the 16mm, film can carry much weight.

THERE are a good many other points which I have no space to deal with now. Some of them will doubtless be ventilated at the coming conference. It is to be hoped that it will be open to the press and that members of the public will also be permitted to attend and listen, even if they cannot speak. For it seems to me that this is very much a matter of public interest. All kinds of special interests have apparently been invited to be represented, but so far as one can see from the letter calling the conference no provision has been made for the most important voice of all to be heard-the voice of the consumer; that is, the ordinary interested picture-

Yet I don't think he need worry unduly about the result of this conference. The 16mm, film is here to stay; its influence and popularity will continue to increase, and in the long run the whole cinema industry stands to benefit. Indeed I would suggest that, far from curtailing the screening of 16mm, film, the next move should be for the public to demand some form of community action whereby even greater facilities are made available for this type of show, perhaps by the provision of special theatres in each large centre for the purpose. If the trade will screen these pictures which it has hitherto cold-shouldered, well and good; there is no need for outside action. If it won't it cannot logically object if somebody else does.

Advice on Health (No. 241)

HOME-GROWN SUGAR

(Written for "The Listener" by DR. MURIEL BELL, Nutritionist to the Department of Health)

which can be preserved without sugar. Those that are highly acid. blackcurrants and gooselike berries, can be preserved simply by the usual heat process, without the addition of sugar. There are ways and means of reducing the acidity of these highly acid fruits when they are about to be served. The method of choice is to add precipitated calcium carbonate which (unlike sodium salts) does not leave any nasty taste, nor dissolve when it is in excess. A teaspoonful per pint will mean a considerable reduction in the amount of sugar needed to sweeten the fruit. The same can be done in cooking rhubarband the calcium carbonate has the advantage that by precipitating the oxalic acid in the rhubarb it causes oxalate to be excreted without its ever having been absorbed.

A number of country people with the garden space to spare have been growing sugar beet for the purpose of using an extract made from them to sweeten fruits, or to use in chutneys. One eighth of the weight of sugar beet roots harvested in the late autumn consists of sugar, and this quantity is increased somewhat if the roots are lifted and left

on the ground for a week before use. The extract is made as follows:

Take 4lb. of the sugar best roots. Soak in 1/2 gallon of water, scrub and

HERE are some types of fruit thinly peel. Have ready one gallon of boiling water. Slice the roots thinly; a marmalade shredder can be used. Put the sliced root immediately into the boiling water. Boil for 40 minutes in a covered aluminium pan.

> Strain: Return the hot residue to the pan; add 1/2 gallon of water and boil for a further 40 minutes. Cool, and squeeze through muslin. Mix the two lots of liquor. Boil down to a syrupy consistency (about 1 pint) and bottle in sterile bottles. Some housewives boil it still further and make a spread which tastes like veast-extract.

> It has been stated that when the syrup has been used for preserving or for sweetening fruit, it is impossible to tell that it was sweetened by home-grown sugar. Those with more sensitive palates will probably detect an earthy taste. The extract can be used for preparing chutneys also.

> The fuel question has to be considered - the long boiling certainly runs away with the fuel. It would therefore be economical to arrange to do it when the stove is going for some other pur-

> The season for preserving is some months off yet, but those gardeners who wish to grow sugar beet should plan their gardens now in readiness.