

This Week's Special Article

Order-In-Council Causes Disorder In N.Z. Film Circles

LAST month an Order-in-Council was gazetted which is causing a great deal of dissension and heart-burning in the ranks of the New Zealand film industry. This document amends the Cinematograph Films (Issue of Exhibitors' Licences) Regulations, 1937.

On the one hand, it is alleged in film exchange circles—that is, among the men who represent the film studios—that this Order-in-Council, by giving arbitrary power to the Licensing Authority regarding the grading of theatres and films, imposes such severe restrictions on their freedom of marketing films that the supply of screen entertainment in this country may suffer as a result. They complain also that the amendment was brought down without any warning being given them.

On the other hand, the film exhibitors contend that the amendment is necessary to give effect to the general licensing laws set up by the previous Government, and that its purpose is to prevent un-economic competition for film supplies, which in the long run must be detrimental to the public's interests.

Because this aspect of the public's supply of screen entertainment enters into it, the dispute is of general interest. There is, however, another even more sensational aspect which has come to my notice

THIS article by GORDON MIRAMS reveals a conflict that has arisen in the New Zealand film industry through the passing of a recent Order-in-Council. Neither the "Record" nor the writer is concerned with the inner politics of the film industry; but an explanation of the present trouble from both sides is given here, without comment, because the question of the public's screen entertainment is involved—and that is a matter of general interest.

from an authoritative source. It is said that what is really behind the theatre licensing regulations is an attempt to remove any possible danger of the New Zealand film industry falling under the control of foreign interests.

The affair is so complicated and full of possible developments that any comment at this stage would be both undesirable and difficult.

So all I shall do is present the case as it was given me by men in both sides of the business.

One man on the Film Exchanges' side expressed the opinion that it was doubtful if the exchanges would sell their films for next year under the conditions brought about by this Order-in-Council. "We can leave our film in America, and no Government in New Zealand can make us import it to this country," he said.

He also suggested that an amalgamation of film exchanges might conceivably result. If the various companies operating theatres could group together—as they had done recently—to form at least a partial monopoly for themselves, there could be no objection to the film renters doing the same thing.

In effect, say the film exchange men, the Licensing officer is now given power to put a tag on the license for every theatre, defining it as either a theatre in which first-run films are to be shown, or a theatre for return seasons.

(Continued on page 41.)

In the Wake of the Week's Broadcasts

Radio to a listener-critic sometimes becomes as tedious as film to a film critic. You sigh sometimes for the pleasantly blank hours when you used to be able to put your feet on the mantelpiece and go

WHEN RADIO MAKES ONE'S WORLD. gently to sleep before the fire without interference from a singer, a speaker or announcer. Sometimes, however, it gives you the perfect pleasure. You listen to it happy in the knowledge that there is nothing else you would rather be doing in the world at that moment. It did this for me last week-end. It gave me, on the same evenings, Kipnis and the Tests. What more could anyone desire?

In Edwin Lewis's short play, "Sea Silence," produced by Mrs. E. T. Moller in the 4YA studios recently, two men were left alone on a derelict ship, drifting in mid-ocean. The suggestion

ALL GOOD BUT THE EFFECTS. of madness overtaking these two men on their helpless craft, a craft full of strange noises and ghostly tappings, was amazingly well done, and if the players were not just a little carried away by their roles then I'm a Dutchman! There were only four speaking parts—all male—and each was convincingly portrayed. The play might have scored highest honours had the sound effects been better. But the splashes when the

madmen jumped into the sea sounded like the dropping of pins on a feather mattress, and the creaking of oars in rowlocks reminded me of a mouse in quest of cheese.

"Scherzo," the "Record's" music critic, will have written on the Kipnis recital. There is no need to write more about this glorious bass voice. One or two small points struck me, however, as worth mentioning. Why it is that Kipnis was not better known by Press and public before he came to New Zealand? Everyone now talks of his brilliance after his concert, but why did so few speak of it before?

POINTS ABOUT THE KIPNIS RECITAL.