

ter that should have been distributed on the streets.

What chance have we to boost agents when a fellow lays down on the job and disgusts producing managers with agents in general?—NELSE.

WE'LL DO OUR PART IF AGENTS WILL DO THEIRS

Fresno, Cal., Dec. 10, 1921.

Friend Nelse—Can drop you a few items occasionally, if you care to have them, that may be of interest to the men ahead. It's hard to keep track of the attractions they are with and sometimes an agent is only a day ahead or behind of a fellow agent with whom he would like to get in touch for mutual benefit. Why can't you list the various attractions and the agents ahead of them so that we could keep in touch with each other? Enclosed find a few items relative to some of the agents whom I have met in this section of the country recently. Very truly yours,

KIP HUMES,

Agent, Harvey's Minstrels.

#### COMMENT

We have frequently called upon the agents who read this column to advise us what shows they are ahead of, and if not ahead of a show to let us have their mail address. If they fail to do so they have no one but themselves to blame for passing an opportunity of co-operating for mutual benefit.

We have numerous inquiries for the addresses of agents whom we know personally, but have no means of locating them. Then again we have calls for agents seeking engagements and we have placed numerous ones who stand ready and willing to do likewise for others.

Some of our readers will recall that we did suggest an agents' directory in The Billboard similar to the one that we are conducting for hotels, and it's only a matter of time until we will establish an agents' directory in The Billboard. But, before doing so, we must get more co-operation from agents in the way of communications relative to the fraternity in general. As one of the craft suggested in this column some time ago, if you are too modest to write of your own activities give your fellow agent the benefit of your ability as a writer and let us know what the other fellow is doing and it's a cinch that he will come along with something relative to what you are doing. That agents in general in and out of the game are reading this column has been made manifest by the numerous communications that have reached us since we published an "Oldtimer's" request. That that published request we have started something in letter writing, for hardly a day passes that we do not get a letter from someone conveying information of the doings of those mentioned. It's up to you, boys, to keep this column alive with the sayings and doings of agents, and we'll do our part if agents will do theirs.—NELSE.

#### KIP HUMES SAYS

The following agents and billers parked their bill trunks together in Sacramento, Cal., last week and what they did in advertising their shows will go a long way toward increasing the box office receipts: Claude (Kid) Long and Ginger Heath, ahead of the Marcus Show; Jimmy McNish, ahead of Corine Tiltow's "Chameleon Revue"; Charles Velvin Turner, technical director with the Marcus show, can give various reasons why car managers are grey headed. Thomas L. Godfrey, who has laid up almost as many routes as Johnnie Connors, is now contracting space for the Foster & Kleiser Company. Joe Kuehler is on his seventh flight ahead of "The Bird of Paradise." Johnnie Bessell is doing things for the Wilkes Stock Company. Roy Gilpin is with the Foster & Kleiser Company. When that bunch got together they again fought in verbal bombardment of each their individual ability to throw them four high in a gale of wind with freezeless paste and do thousand sheet routes and cap the climax with triple swings!

Charles "Kid" Koster communicates from Cleveland that he was forced to delay his publicity exploitation at Erie, Pa., due to illness, which has forced him into confinement in a Cleveland hospital. The "Kid" does not say what particular kind of illness he is suffering from nor what hospital he is in, but declared that on his release Mrs. Koster will chaperon him into the balmy climate of Florida for the balance of the winter.

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## CABLES FROM LONDON TOWN

Billboard Office, 18 Charing Cross Road, W. C. 2

DECEMBER 24

By "WESTCENT"

## TRIPLE ALLIANCE DOUBTFULLY REGARDED

News received here December 22 as to the triple alliance between Equity, the Actors' Association and the Australian Actors' Federation makes one pause as to whether all parties understand the weaknesses in the affiliation links and the possibility of being unable to enforce its powers in its own territory. The Variety Artists' Federation's policy has, with the exception of the American Artists' Federation, been against foreign affiliations, more so with organizations imbued with the germ of industrial unionism. The Variety Artists' Federation did hope to arrange some sort of an understanding with the Actors' Association, but long ago gave up this hope, as the latter had not developed sufficiently to be an equal or even a quarter partner.

### LONDON LIKES "BILLYBOY'S" CHRISTMAS NUMBER

The Christmas issue of The Billboard is the talk of London newspaper men, who marvel how it is done and send heartiest congratulations to all concerned.

### GILLESPIE PLANS INNOVATION

R. H. Gillespie's objective for 1922 is along American vaudeville plans of limiting routes to one season, with subsequent route dependent on satisfactory new material. Gillespie also foresees Moss Empires, going in for office acts similar to the U. B. O.

Many British vaudeartists think these changes conducive to their own personal prosperity. A system of booking ahead for four or five years, or even three years, blocks the progress of rising talent.

### NEW AGREEMENT PROBABLE BETWEEN M. U. AND T. M. A.

A new agreement as between the Musicians' Union and the Theatrical Managers' Association needs ratification by the latter organization, but if individuals in the Theatrical Managers' Association refuse or fail to carry out these terms the Musicians' Union will handle them severely. Levelheaded Theatrical Managers' Association members urge acceptance both in letter and spirit.

The situation with the Musicians' Union and the Society of West End Managers now is that matters shall remain in statu quo ante, no cuts or advances. Matters as regards the M. U. and E. P. A., representing the vaudeville section, are unsettled, but more peaceful, but the Musicians' Union is still piling up dollars for reserves.

### RECOVERING FROM OPERATION

Sir John Martin Harvey is just recovering from an operation for appendicitis, but Sir John Hare is critically ill.

### "JACK AND BEANSTALK" GREAT SUCCESS

Wylie Tate's "Jack and the Beanstalk" at the Hippodrome is a great success, with Jay Laurier beating George Robey in the honors list.

### DOLLY SISTERS SCORE IN "BABES IN WOOD"

C. B. Cochran's "Babes in the Wood," at the Oxford Theater, is the usual Cochran success, with the Dolly Sisters scoring heavily.

### "TRUTH ABOUT GLADYS" TOO TALKY

A. A. Milne's "The Truth About Gladys," produced at the Globe Theater December 20, is very talky-talky, with Norman McKinnell the outstanding figure. Dion Boucicault and Irene Vanbrugh are excellent, as usual.

### "THE THING THAT MATTERS" POOR

F. Britten Austin's "The Thing That Matters," produced by Robert Courtneidge at the Strand Theater December 22, is more like a film serial, but not half so coherent. Unfortunately a fine lot of performers are wasting their energies thereon, including Arthur Bouchier, Lady Tree, George Relph and Miss Kyle Bellew.

### VAUDEVILLE OPENINGS

Bush Brothers and Resista open at the Finsbury Park Empire on January 2, and Long Tack Sam at the Stratford Empire on December 26.

### FRENCH PLAYS TO FOLLOW LAUDER

C. B. Cochran will present Sir Harry Lauder at the Prince's Theater on Easter Monday for an engagement of six weeks. Then follows a season of French plays and players, after which comes Charles Gilpin, in "The Emperor Jones."

### SCOTT AND WHALEY IN REVUE

Scott and Whaley, colored, the most popular and highest priced double team here, are now in a new touring revue by Harry Vernon, called "Get Me, Steve."

### TO APPEAR WITH DORIS KEANE

Basil Rathbone, now on the Olympic, is to play for Doris Keane in "The Czarina."

### GENERAL FILM RENTING CO. HEAVY LOSER

The General Film Renting Company has had a disastrous career, losing over a million dollars, besides over \$722,000, which was purchase money in 1920.

### TO PROTEST ENTERTAINMENT TAX

Sir Oswald Stoll is organizing a mammoth meeting, to be held at the Coliseum, comprising all sections of the entertainment industry, with Lord Ashfield in the chair, to protest against the continuance of the entertainment tax.

### TO VOTE ON RAISING BAN ON GERMAN FILMS

The Cinema Exhibitors' Association has referred the question of raising the ban on German films to individual sections, and sectional votes will decide.

### L. C. C. IMPOSES NEW CONDITIONS UPON KINEMAS

New conditions were imposed upon the kinemas within the London County Council area by a resolution passed by the Council on December 20 on recommendation of the theaters committee. The resolution provides that no film shall be shown which is likely to be subversive of morality and that no film shall be shown unless it has been passed for "Universal" or "Public" exhibition by the British Board of Film Censors. Films granted the Public certificate are to be shown only to adults, or to young persons under the age of 16 who are accompanied by their parents or bona-fide guardians.

The step now taken by the L. C. C. endorses the opinion that rulings of the film trade's private board of censors should receive effective support from public bodies.

### SLUMBERING FIRES IN M. U.

The trouble at Portsmouth, now happily dead and buried, was the result of the hatred that Peter Davey, of the Theater Royal, King's Theater (Southsea) and the Prince's Theater there, has for organized labor. He entered into an agreement for the T. R. with the M. U. in April, 1920, and broke it in May this year by giving one month's notice of cancellation of the award and throwing out the musicians from the T. R. for nine weeks. An Arbitration Board discussing the question was against Davey. In the meantime the Musicians' Union, scenting managerial reduction, gave the three months' notice to all the Portsmouth managers to terminate their jobs on November 5 and asking for a rise on existing rates of \$2.50, their basic salary being \$16.25. The inherent trouble was the M. U. would not begin negotiations until Davey had paid up the nine weeks' arrears of salary. On November 4 Davey got the other managers together and told the fiddlers that unless they agreed to work for \$15 on the 21st he would close the theaters throughout the town. He wanted them to deal direct with him, but they solidly decided to negotiate only thru the union officials. Then came the deadlock on the 21st. As already cabled, the V. A. F., A. A. and the N. A. T. E. took a hand, fearing it was a managerial attempt to smash trade unionism. When Davey agreed to meet the M. U. officials the ground was then open for negotiation, the men offering to go back at old rates and the reference of the reduction to arbitration, but the managers wanted them on their own terms. The via media was mainly the work of the V. A. F. officials, and the award of only a 50-cent reduction is clearly a win for the men, as the probability was that the men would have accepted the \$1.25 cut in the first place if properly handled.

### GULLIVER USING THE AXE

The L. T. V. is using every contractual clause for the canceling of contracts. Breaches of the barring clause are fraught with terrible penalties, and Gulliver—or his subordinates—are distance and time studiers every week on their opposition. A curious thing happened recently. Harry Champion, London's own peculiar rapid-fire comedian, was asked by the Syndicate Tour

to play Euston Varieties (well within the mile of the Holborn) and the syndicate promised to obtain the necessary "permission" for this infringement from the L. T. V. Champion duly appeared at the Euston and two mornings after he received a letter of cancellation of his "barred" dates from the L. T. V. without even asking for an explanation. A 'phone message to the syndicate got matters straightened out and Champion breathed again. It was the syndicate's fault for the mistake. Yet what about this "working arrangement" with the Payne & Davis folk? That's all right when it helps the management, but NOT when it helps the artist.

### Didn't Pay the Entertainment Tax

It sounds curious when a first-class theater management is fined for such an offense, but the Yearsley de Groot Productions, Ltd., were recently fined about \$400 for this offense. Thruout the run of "The Gipsy Princess" at the Strand Theater they had omitted to pay to the government tax which they had received from the paying public. The defense was that the show was a tremendous financial failure, but that the money would be paid forthwith.

### Walter Melville Beats the A. T. M.

The Association of Touring Managers, as late as 1919, had a yearly fee of \$10.50, but it raised the fee in 1920 to \$26.25. Walter Melville, of the Melville Brothers of the Lyceum Theater, objected to the raise and a judge has held that he was right in refusing to pay, tho a general meeting of the A. T. M. had agreed to raise the fees. The point was that when Melville joined in 1917 there was no rule extant allowing for the possible alteration of this. Therefore Mr. Melville can still remain a member of the A. T. M. and only pay his \$10.50. This has caused some consternation in the A. T. M. ranks, as they were thinking of making the fees for 1922 \$50. What funny things are rules, which, as Harry Mountford used to say, were made "only to be broken."

### Gillespie Disappointed With Pro's Niggardliness

Young men are enthusiastic, and Gillespie is a young man as regards his knowledge of our people. He wrote every presumable "star" a personal letter asking for donations for the V. A. B. F. gala Hippodrome performance and the answer was in the negative, or at least silence, which is supposedly a polite negative. In some cases this was unavoidable, but in others it was thru some selfish motive. "Why should I send him anything. I am not in the Command Performance. My troubles about any donations." Yes, that was the biggest grouch some of the men and women had about it. No thought for the poor folk, all for themselves. But Gillespie, even had he been able to accommodate some of these disgruntled people in the Royal program, would have had to dispossess some of the others. Only twelve acts could have appeared, so the disapproval would have still been in evidence. The V. A. B. F. wants today for next year \$50,000, the running expenses and the sinking fund require nearly \$1,000 weekly and honestly, we do not know where it is coming from. Still, Harry Marlow, the V. A. B. F. organizer, is on the job and hopes to find it—somewhere. We don't envy him in his work. It's easier to get blood out of a stone.

### The Performing Animal Defense League Again

When, as recently cabled, the announcement was made that Frank Marcelle and Seal was to feature in the gala performance, it was admitted that the "selectors" had done something to wipe off the smutch on animal men left by the yellow and scandal-monger press. That the Buckingham Palace officials knew what they were choosing there can be no doubt, as they wrote two letters confirming this individual choice. But no crowing or exultation was made in the lay or trade press. The Performing Animals Defense League got busy, wrote letters and pulled wires in influential quarters; so much so that Buckingham Palace got the wind up and informed Tennent, of the Moss Empires, that the seal act could not appear. There's a pretty kettle o' fish. They were to save their face and let the matter be kept as quiet as possible. Accordingly, it was arranged that Marcelle's seal was to go "sick" on the Thursday evening before the show and that it would not finish the week out, but that Moss Empires would pay the salary in full. The news broke Marcelle up. Then rumor got busy on the Tuesday before the show and the papers came out with the stunt that the act had been "banned." The P. A. D. L. immediately made very great capital out of the matter and the papers were full of it, all over again. The truth is Buckingham Palace was not wise enough to remember the outcry against animal acts and the proceedings in the House of Commons, and were afraid to adhere to their selection. Of course the animal men are highly incensed at the capital made out of it, but had the artistes protested too loudly it was possible that the King might have been "sick" also and that would have finished everything.

Have you looked thru the Letter List in this issue. There may be a letter advertised for you.