

THEATERS HARD HIT

New Chicago Law Will Close Nearly All of Them.

MUST MAKE GREAT CHANGES

Council Will Not Allow Them to Re-open Unless Bond of \$25,000 Is Deposited Guaranteeing Compliance With the Ordinance.

CHICAGO, Jan. 19.—The City Council tonight took action that will, in all probability, result in the closing of nearly all of the theaters in Chicago for the remainder of the present theatrical season. Last night the Council passed an ordinance setting forth what must be done by the theaters of this city before they will be allowed to remain in continuous operation.

It convened tonight, to consider the passage of an enabling act that would allow the theaters to operate for the remainder of this season without being compelled to fulfill all the requirements of the ordinance, as some of the conditions are of a nature that will require the practical reconstruction of a number of the playhouses. After a long debate, the Council decided on the following essentials which the theaters must meet before they will be allowed to reopen their doors:

A steel curtain, an automatic sprinkler system; a bond of \$25,000 guaranteeing the performance, by August 1, 1934, of all the requirements of the ordinance; the widening of doors and exits, all of the improvements to be performed under such conditions, terms and restrictions as shall be imposed by the Mayor of the city, the Commissioner of Buildings and a subcommittee of three to be appointed by the Mayor.

The most important matters settled in the adopted ordinance are:

In nonfireproof buildings the lowest bank of seats cannot be higher than the street level. In fireproof theaters seats cannot be more than 12 feet above this level. No gallery seats can have a rise of more than 18 inches between rows of seats. Cross aisles must be provided for every 15 rows of seats on the ground floor and every nine rows in balconies or galleries. These cross aisles must run directly to exits. In the rear of all banks of seats on all floors must be cross aisles leading directly to fire escapes of emergency exits.

Other amendments, some to cure verbal mistakes, others to change the ordinance in smaller particulars, were adopted, but the temper of the Council was to make the measure more stringent, and those which passed were all in that direction.

The managers of theaters declared tonight that it would be impossible for them to meet the terms of the enabling act in sufficient time to do business during the remainder of this season, and several of them declared they had no intention of trying to reopen their doors. The managers of one theater declared he thought he could be in shape by February 1, but was not sure of it. He felt certain, however, that he would be able to reopen the doors of his playhouse long before the close of the theatrical season.

The passage of the ordinance last night put two of the downtown theaters out of business, as their construction is such that they will be unable to comply with the law without tearing down the buildings in which they are located and erecting entirely new structures. All of the other houses will be able to meet the demands of the law, but it will be at great expense for several of them.

BAD HOUR FOR CITY OFFICIAL

Chicago Coroner's Jury Has No Mercy on Building Commissioner.

CHICAGO, Jan. 19.—Chief of Police O'Neill was witness at the Coroner's inquest today. Asked about issuance of licenses for the opening of new theaters, he said the law requires that a license be obtained before the enterprise was started, but he declared it was not under the jurisdiction of his department to see that the licenses were so procured.

Building Commissioner Williams was also recalled at his own request. He told of a conference with the Mayor and heads of departments, in which he was told to cut down expenses as much as possible in connection with the enterprise.

While Mr. Williams was on the stand the Coroner's jury cited section after section of the building ordinance to show that responsibility and the lack of fire-fighting apparatus on the stage and for other defects in the safety appliances of the theater rested on the building department. Mr. Williams, however, persistently construed the ordinance as placing responsibility for the fire-fighting equipment on the Fire Department. Mr. Williams admitted that the theater ran nearly a month without securing necessary licenses, but he declared that the building department, although he had been informed on the opening night by Inspector McLaughlin that the theater was going to open, Witness did not inquire if it was all right to do so. When asked why he did not look into the condition of the theater, Mr. Williams answered:

"Simply because I can't do 25 men's work."

For an hour during Commissioner Williams' examination, the City Building Department was under fire of scathing inquiry. For the first time during the investigation, the language "guilty knowledge" went into the records, and those who followed the proceedings were impressed with the full extent of the responsibility for the holocaust which the jurors seem to place upon that branch of the city government.

The examination of the Building Commissioner was so long that Assistant Corporation Counsel Rothem interfered in behalf of Mr. Williams. A clash with the Coroner resulted. The witness was not permitted to testify as to his conversation with cold sweat gleaming on his forehead left the stand after an hour as any witness has experienced at the hands of the jury and the Coroner.

PLAN TO ESCAPE DAMAGE SUITS

Managers Will Try to Hide Identity of Theater Owners.

CHICAGO, Jan. 19.—The Tribune today says:

In anticipation of a flood of death claims and personal injury suits that may aggregate \$500,000, the financial interests behind the Iroquois Theater Company have commenced a fight to prevent the Coroner's jury from disclosing their identity. Harry J. Powers and Will J. Davis, "resident managers" of the company, will probably be heard, and their appearance on the witness stand will bring a final determination of the rights of the Coroner. Under instructions from Attorney W. J. Hyne, the managers will refuse to answer questions touching on the financial backing of the playhouse.

"All witnesses will be required to an-

swer such questions as may tend to help the jury in fixing the criminal responsibility for these deaths," said Coroner Truesdale. "If such questions also tend to lay foundations for civil actions that cannot be helped."

MUCH WEALTH IN DEBRIS.

Theater Refuse Is Yielding an Average of \$100 Per Day.

CHICAGO, Jan. 19.—The municipal placers in the debris removed from the Iroquois Theater, is panning out better than at first expected. Up to the present, an average of over \$100 a day has been extracted from the refuse. As far as possible, all articles found are returned to owners, but all loose money, which it is impossible to identify, will be applied to the police pension fund. Eight more churches and a number of halls were closed today by order of City Building Commissioner Williams for violation of the city ordinances.

STOLE DIAMOND FROM DEADMAN

Young Printer Took Ring From Body While It Was in Wagon.

CHICAGO, Jan. 19.—The police tonight arrested Frank Uhler, a printer, 19 years old, on a charge of robbing the dead after the fire in the Iroquois Theater. Uhler attempted to dispose of a diamond ring valued at \$500, and when taken into custody confessed he had stolen it from the hand of a dead man which was hanging over the edge of a wagon when the load of corpses was backed up in front of the morgue.

MANY LIVES IN JEOPARDY.

Two Hundred People Have a Very Narrow Escape at Fire.

CHICAGO, Jan. 19.—A dispatch to the Tribune from Marion, Ind., says: Two hundred persons narrowly escaped burning to death last night in a fire which destroyed the five-story Colonial apartment building. There were no fire escapes on the structure, and the fire started under the stairs. A number of the women had fainted and were overcome by smoke when the firemen reached them.

The elevator operator deserted his post, but Albert McCarthy, a porter, rushed into the building and operated the lift. He succeeded in carrying 20 persons to the ground floor before being driven out. The fire originated in the basement, near the elevator shafting, from a live wire, and an explosion of gasoline in storage caused the flames to spread rapidly.

New York Yiddish Theater Burns.

NEW YORK, Jan. 19.—The People's Theater, on the Bowery, and two adjoining buildings were damaged to the extent of \$12,000 today by a fire which started in the stage loft of the theater building. The theater is given over to Yiddish plays. A number of actors and stage hands were at rehearsal in the theater when the fire started, but all escaped unharmed.

NO CHANCE FOR SENATOR.

Maryland Legislature Ballots for Successor to McComas.

ANNAPOLIS, Md., Jan. 19.—Balloting for United States Senator to succeed Senator Louis E. McComas, began in the Legislature today, the Senate and House voting separately.

The vote in the Senate was: John Walter Smith (Dem.) 5
Isidor Rayner (Dem.) 4
Bernard Carter (Dem.) 2
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CUBAN CONGRESS IS CLOSED.

President Palma Sends in a Message Directing the Action.

HAVANA, Jan. 19.—President Palma ordered Congress to adjourn this afternoon, after the receipt of the order. The presidential message said briefly that the House had not arrived at an agreement to the date of closing the session, he directed adjournment under the authority of the constitution. No objection was made in either House to this manner of closing the session. Prior to adjournment, the Senate passed the Senate bill providing for the payment of interest on the revolutionary bonds and declaring the intention of paying the principal.

MADRID HAD THE POPE DEAD.

Pontiff, on Hearing News, Is Inclined to Be Superstitious.

ROME, Jan. 19.—The rumor of the death of the pope, which was circulated in Madrid, having come to the ears of the pontiff, his holiness exclaimed to a friend: "What! Already? I was left in peace for five years after his election, while with me these rumors have begun at the end of only a few months. It may be a good thing to look at this from a superstitious standpoint, but I am quite the other way and think it may even prolong my life."

Ask for Release of Man in Bulge.

DENVER, Jan. 19.—Judge Moses Hallett, of the United States District Court, today heard arguments in the application of Sherman Parker, now in the military bullpen at Cripple Creek, for a writ of habeas corpus. The state denied the jurisdiction of the Federal Court, but Judge Hallett ruled otherwise, and after argument the case was under advisement, indicating that a decision may be expected tomorrow.

New Commander for Militia.

DENVER, Jan. 19.—Major Thomas E. McCallister was today placed in command of the state troops in the Cripple Creek detachment, to succeed Colonel Edward Verdecberg, who is recalled at his own request.

Gane-Connors Fight Stopped.

MOUNT CLEMENS, Mich., Jan. 19.—After two fast rounds here tonight the handicap match between Joe Gane and Clarence Connors was stopped. Gane knocked Connors down three times in the second round.

Rebels Capture Officer to Sultan.

TANGIER, Morocco, Jan. 19.—An unconfirmed report is current that General Sir Harry MacLean, Colonel in command of the British garrison of the Sultan of Morocco, has been captured by rebels near Fez.

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London Tenders Chamberlain a Great Ovation.

HE SPEAKS ON PROTECTION

Ex-Secretary Finds Guild Hall Packed to Suffocation, and the Audience in Sympathy With Him—Free-Traders Are Equally Active.

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The meeting passed a resolution, which was offered by Lord George Hamilton and seconded by Winston Churchill, M. P., declaring against a general protective system.

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Germany Will Take Vigorous Action Against African Tribesmen.

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Dr. Steubel, Director of the Colonial

Department of the Foreign Office, in the Reichstag today made full exposure of the Hereros rising. He said the rising of the Hereros was a mission station near Windhoek, which was also occupied by natives, was attempted from Karibib, and forces had just been sent to protect the station. The Hereros had been placed in a defensive position. One German post in the northern portion of the Hereros territory was also besieged.

The Hereros had secured tropical uniforms from a shop at Johann Albrechtshof, which they had plundered.

Dr. Steubel added that he regarded the situation as being extremely grave. The Hereros had been placed in a defensive position. One German post in the northern portion of the Hereros territory was also besieged.

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