

Firstly, I wish to say that, being here merely in the capacity of an observer, I beg you to bear in mind that the remarks which I am about to make, during the course of this exposé, are entirely unofficial and represent only my own personal observations.

I will, however, endeavour to give you as objective an account as I can of the present state of affairs in Ireland.

The principle national collection is in the care of the National Library of Ireland, which is itself a section of the Department of Education. At present it consists largely of actuality material, extending from 1897 until the present year. These films have, up until now, been acquired through donations and the National Library has been greatly helped by the generosity of Messrs. Pathé.

The collection has only been in existence for a comparatively short time, a little over a year, and a catalogue is in the course of preparation.

Priority is being given to the duplication of the early actuality material.

The collection will ultimately consist of both actualities and art films, but the first task must be to assemble a collection, as complete as possible, of the films that have been made in the country.



## II

Since the beginnings of cinema.

Here we in Ireland are in a rather difficult position, in as much as the amount of national film production by Irish units has been extremely small, this being the case as well for actualities as for feature films. Most of the films in Ireland having been made by units from other countries it almost invariably happens that neither records nor copies of the films themselves remain in Ireland. This circumstance obliges us to make our reconstruction of Irish cinematography from diverse sources, thus we find ourselves naturally and inevitably towards international enquiry and relations.

This is particularly so in the case of the earlier material, I mean of the period 1896-1915, almost no Irish material of this period has survived in Ireland. On the other hand we have a number of interesting films from other countries from this time, notably England and France. This leads us to hope that exchange arrangements may be effected which will be of mutual benefit.



My principle task, at the moment, is to gather as much information as I can regarding the survival of Irish material, particularly actuality material, in the cinémathèques of other countries. I hope, therefore, that I can call upon the assistance of the delegates and observers here present to aid me in this undertaking.

Another most urgent concern is the immediate necessity of securing the safety of the early material by a programme of duplication, some of this is nitrate-base film 55 years old and though in exceptionally good condition it must be duped at once.

Besides the collection of the National Library there are a number of private collections in Éire, in particular the collection of the Irish Film Society which has a number of early actualities and several interesting features including the American film made in 1913 in the ruins of Chepstow Castle, "Ivanhoe".



This collection is being passed to the National Library.

Several other private collections throughout the country contain many interesting and important actualities, mostly concerned with the Easter week rising of 1916, and a very few early Irish ~~feature~~ feature films.

A catalogue integrating the details of the collections is being made and the National Library is interested in the eventual incorporation of these collections into ~~the National Library~~ ~~Collection~~ ~~Library~~ its archive.

When these primary tasks have been successfully completed, the section relating to the art films of other countries can be developed.

On account of the circumstances which I have outlined, I have <sup>exceptionally helpful</sup> found this opportunity afforded me, through the hospitality of F.I.A.F., to meet the representatives of so many archives, and I am very hopeful that the account which I will be enabled to bring back with me to Ireland will give every encouragement to those in charge of the National Collection there to make a request for <sup>membership</sup> of F.I.A.F.