

Two views of the Venetian theatre, Milwaukee, Wis. This is the first atmospheric type theatre in the state. It was designed by Peacock & Frank, Milwaukee architects and is operated by the Milwaukee Theatre Circuit.

# Elaborate New Venetian Theatre

Wisconsin's First Atmospheric Theatre Is Opened in Milwaukee

Peacock & Frank, *Architects*

WISCONSIN'S first real atmospheric picture palace, the Venetian, the Milwaukee Theatre Circuit's newest neighborhood house, which was formally opened to Milwaukee theatregoers on Friday, March 18, is said to be one of the most modern and beautiful motion picture houses in the Northwest.

The theatre, which was erected at a cost of more than \$500,000, is located at the corner of Thirty-seventh and Center streets, in the heart of one of Milwaukee's most thickly populated residential districts. The building has a frontage of 96 feet on Center street, and 120 feet on Thirty-seventh street. The architectural scheme of the theatre is carried out in Italian Renaissance style. The exterior is done in buff terra cotta with the center portion, directly above the entrance, in red face brick, the two-tone effect making the building one of the most impressive structures in the city. The center portion of red face brick

is flanked on either side by three rope moldings of highly ornamented terra cotta.

\* \* \*

The theatre entrance, over which is suspended a huge canopy designed to offer adequate protection during inclement weather, is located in the center of the building, and is approximately 25 feet in width. Two small stores occupy the space on each side of the entrance. Surmounting the canopy is a large electric sign, which can be seen for blocks east and west along Center street. The theatre, including the main auditorium, balcony and mezzanine, will accommodate 1,500. Comfortable seats of the most modern type have been installed by the Wisconsin Chair Co., Port Washington, Wis.

The interior of the building bespeaks the beauty of an Italian garden, bathed in moonlight and beautiful with flowers, shrubs and trees. The azure blue of a Venetian sky at dusk is represented in the arched

ceiling, and a special cloud machine, one of the few in the Northwest, creates a soft cloud effect, while behind this screen of vapory light twinkling stars are created by still another device. Surrounding the garden are walls, gateways and palaces aglow with the soft light of many lanterns hidden throughout the auditorium. Along the walls are hung heavy blue and wine colored drapes, that add an atmosphere of courtly splendor. The walls are done in heavy panels, etched in gold.

\* \* \*

To achieve the atmospheric effect, an intricate electrical system has been installed in the theatre. This consists of more than a thousand small reflectors operated on a series of dimmers. The auditorium itself is lighted by huge flood lights, concealed in coves to give indirect reflection, and thus create a true night effect. The entire auditorium illumination is controlled from a special switchboard, and is entirely sepa-

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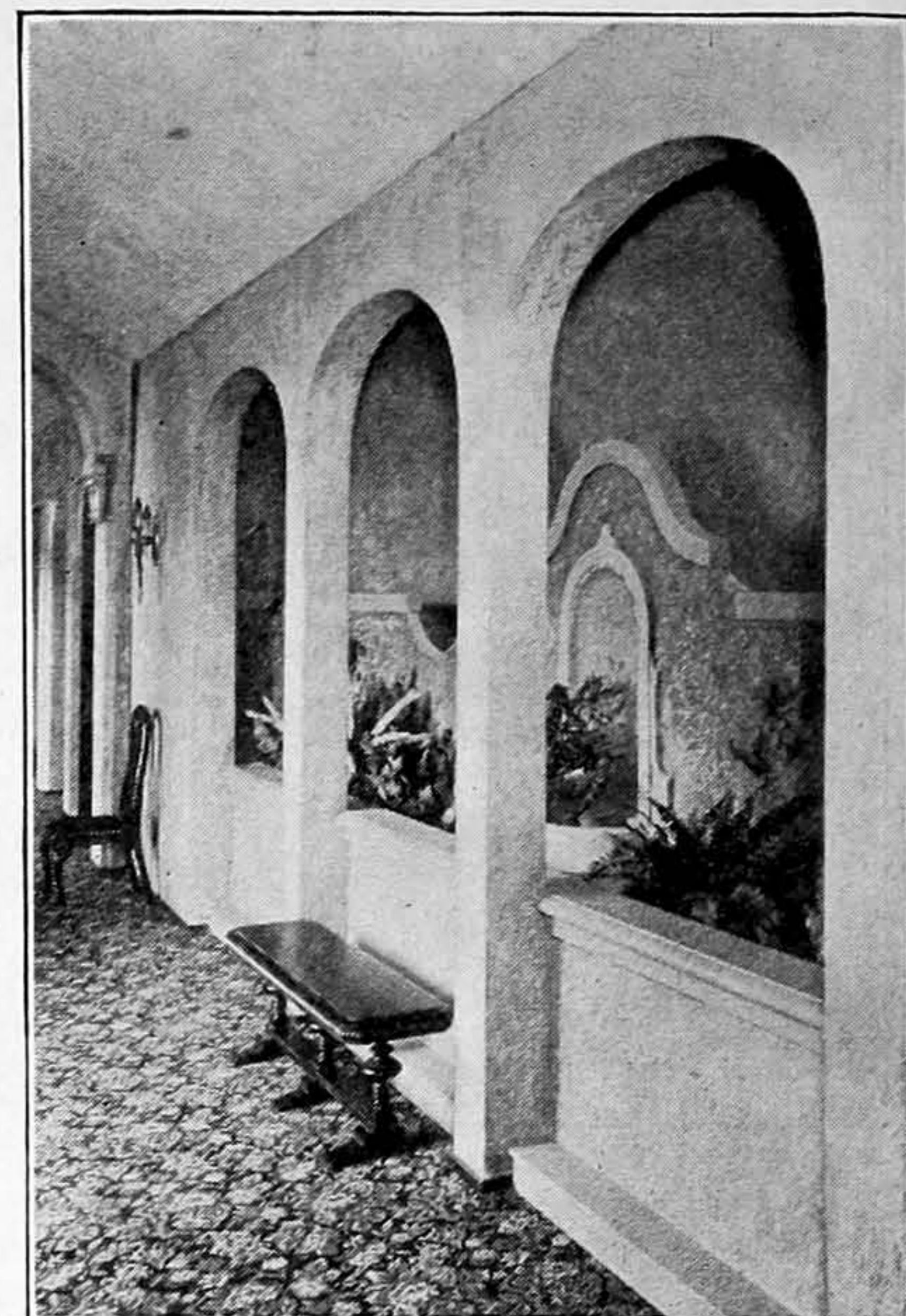
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A view of the upper promenade of the new Venetian theatre, Milwaukee, Wis.

rated from the intricate system of stage lighting. The most modern heat control system, which distributes fresh, warmed air evenly to all portions of the building, has been installed in the new Venetian.

The mezzanine of the theatre is reached by two large stairways located on either side of the spacious lobby. Here are found two commodious lounges joined by a beautiful promenade. Opening off the lounges are large smoking and retiring rooms for ladies and gentlemen. These rooms are furnished with Italian pieces, and the walls hung with brilliant brocades and velvets.

The Venetian boasts one of the finest projection rooms in the state, Motiograph De Luxe projectors and other equipment having been installed by Roy Langford, head of the Wisconsin Theatre Supply Company.

The stage setting is unique, inasmuch as it is one of two or three installations in this country of a new fabric especially designed for theatrical use. It consists of hand-blocked velvets of brilliant colors, bordered with bands of rhinestones. The dominating color is burnt orange flashed with jade green. The main close-in curtain is of black velvet embossed with gold and set with brilliants. A large Wurlitzer organ, the chambers of which are located on opposite sides of the auditorium, represent the fronts of palaces, the sound coming through handsome bronze gates, which are set in the second-story arches.

The stage section of the theatre is complete in every detail and has a large unit of dressing rooms and private rooms for organists and musicians. Elaborate counter weight systems provide easy handling of large scenery, the whole of which is safeguarded by an asbestos curtain and a modern sprinkler system.

Peacock & Frank, a Milwaukee architectural firm, designed and planned the building for the Milwaukee Theatre Circuit, the Wisconsin division of the Universal chain.

### A CORRECTION

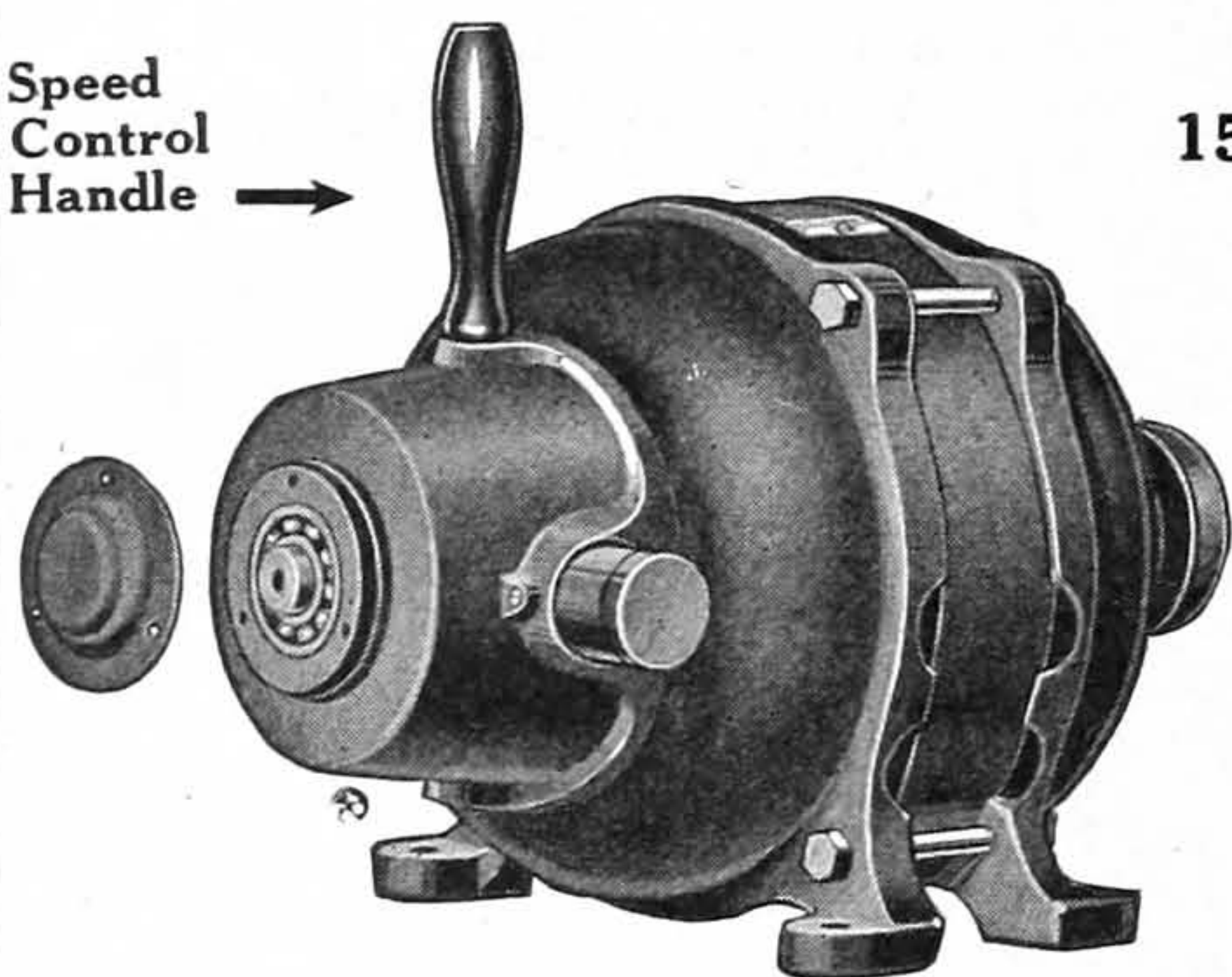
In the March 19 issue of "Better Theatres," among the listings of various manufacturers who installed equipment in the Roxy theatre, an error was made in the address of the Royal Projection Screen Company, Inc. The address of this firm should have been given as 910 Manhattan Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y.

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