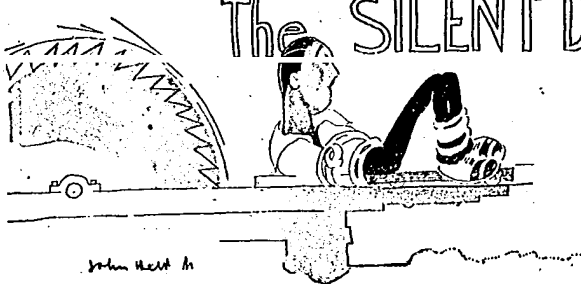


The SILENT DRAMA



Our Own Scenario School

IT is estimated that, for every one individual who is engaged in the actual work of creating motion pictures, there are 68,972,423 eager souls who are trying to write scenarios.

Of this large number, about 95 per cent. are either graduates, undergraduates or prospective students of some mail-order university of photodramatic technique. All the people who used to subscribe to courses in book-keeping, bank directing or chipping, filing and woodcutting at correspondence schools are now taking up scenario writing in a serious way. Postmen are kept busy handing out midyear examination papers and diplomas.

In view of the fact that some of these potential photoplaywrights are readers of LIFE, it seems stingy of us to withhold the valuable data which we gleaned after long association with the "film game," as it is jokingly called.

We therefore beg leave to announce the formation of LIFE'S SCENARIO SCHOOL, an organization which is devoted exclusively to the Finer and Better Things on the silver screen.

We shall start with a consideration of movie characters, or "types," which form the basis of all instruction in this field of education. If you have a good working knowledge of "types," as they are used on the screen, your plots will comfortably take care of themselves.

To begin with:

A. Heroes

TYPE 1.—The Royal Northwest Mounted Policeman (Canadian). Tall, stalwart, tender but dogged.

Must know how to salute with palm facing the camera. His sense of duty should be both rigid and flexible. He is kind to widows and orphans, but hell on smugglers. He has always been spending eighteen years in the effort to "GET HIS MAN," but eventually learns that his quarry is in reality the heroine's (a) Father, (b) Brother, (c) Son. On receipt of this information, the Hero promptly resigns from the force.

TYPE 2.—The Molested Boy. Suitable for short male stars. Must be a good cringer. Throughout Reels 1 to 5 (incl.) he is beaten and stepped on, but then he turns about and knocks his oppressors for a row of three-room bungalows. To point his weakness in early stages of film, use sub-title (uttered tauntingly by villain), "I'VE SEEN COWARDS IN MY TIME, BUT I'VE NEVER YET SEEN THE MAN THAT WOULDN'T FIGHT FOR HIS WOMAN." Villain should ultimately be compelled to swallow those words.

TYPE 3.—The Swashbuckler. Limited to costume dramas. To be played by a star who belongs to the Los Angeles Athletic Club, and takes daily workouts with instructors in Boxing, Vaulting, Fencing and Old-Fashioned Courtship. Should be handy with a rapier, and absolutely above reproach. Must know how to swagger.

TYPE 4.—The Rising Young District Attorney. Wears a business suit with pinch back. Must be prepared to denounce both the painted artificiality of this jazz-mad age, and the hollow hypocrisy of a man-

made religion. Always wins his case in the face of overwhelming odds, and then conducts a successful campaign for the Governorship on the reform ticket. Like the *Northwest Mounted Policeman*, he finds that his sweetheart belongs to the opposite political party.

TYPE 5.—The Strong, Silent Man. Big-chested and big-hearted. He may be a diamond in the rough, but he's true blue. Must possess a deep reverence for pure American womanhood. He kills his enemies with his two hands. His pinto horse is his best pal. He may not have the book-larnin' of them city folks, but he's managed to pick up a heap o' teachin' from God out in the Great, Clean Hills. For all his seeming simplicity, he can outwit the most sophisticated college graduate that ever bought a foulard scarf at Brooks Brothers.

Prospectus

THIS is about enough for the first lesson.

From time to time, we shall go on with the instruction, considering the other characters, The Villains, The Heroines, The Comedians, The Old Fathers, The Old Mothers, The Wandering Boys and The Kiddies. From these, it will be an easy step to plot construction.

The object of our little school is simple: We want our readers to win all the scenario contests in the newspapers, and thereby make enough money to renew their subscriptions to LIFE.

R. E. S.

(Recent Developments will be found on page 30)

