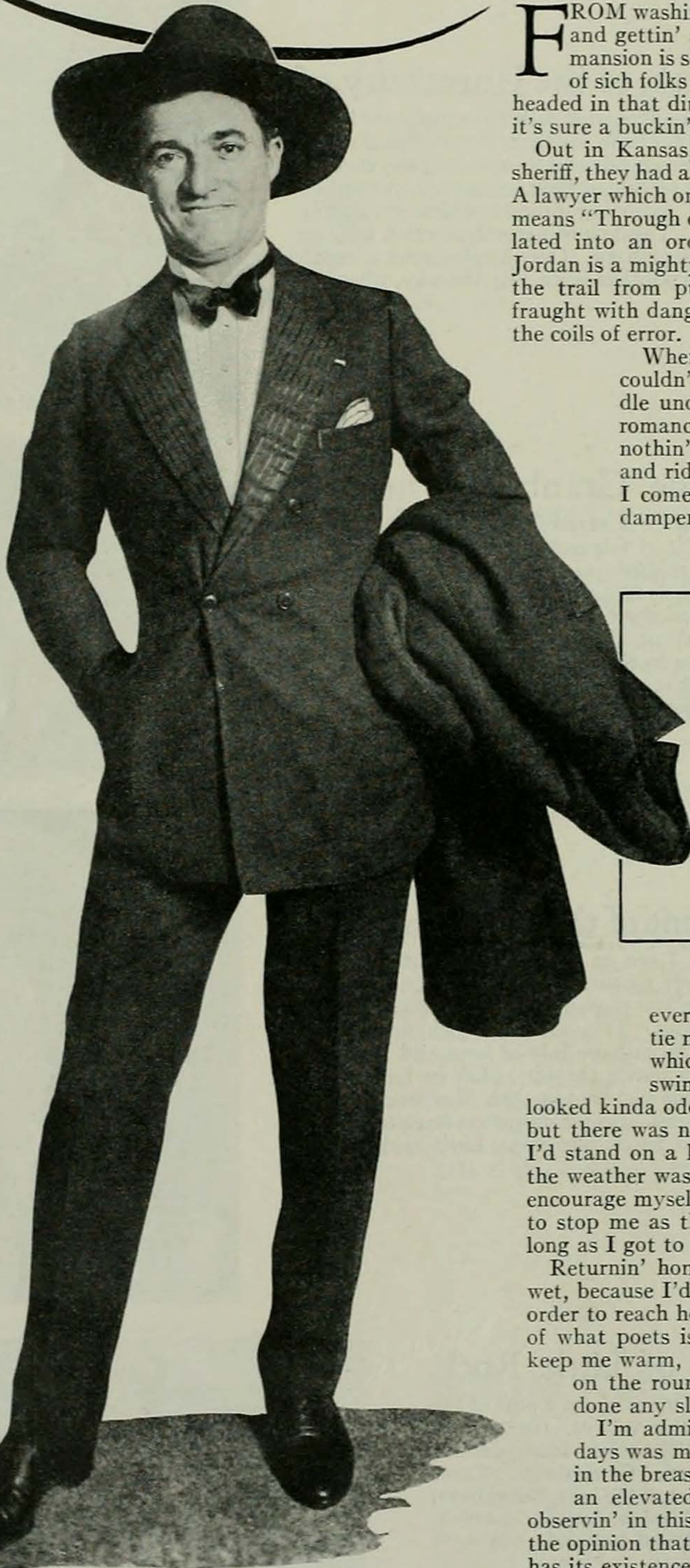


# Romance and a Hard



FROM washin' and ironin' your one and only dress up shirt and gettin' a thrill out of it, to livin' in a many-roomed mansion is several sleepin' cars jumps, and for the benefit of sich folks as have never tried it, but have got ambitions headed in that direction, I should like to rise and remark that it's sure a buckin' horse journey.

Out in Kansas, where I once served a couple of years as sheriff, they had a state motto like this, "Ad Aspera per Asper." A lawyer which once visited in my jail explains to me how that means "Through difficulties to the Stars," in English, or, translated into an ordinary white man's mode of conversation, Jordan is a mighty tough river to cross. Any gent that thinks the trail from punchin' cattle to starrin' in pictures ain't fraught with dangers too numerous to mention is strugglin' in the coils of error.

When I was a young feller punchin' cows and couldn't lay claim to a thing but the horse and saddle under me, I was a king. An' I was as full of romance as a young mockin' bird. I thought just nothin' of doin' up my one and only Sunday shirt, and ridin' twenty miles if necessary to a dance. If I come to a couple of rivers to swim, that didn't dampen my ardor for them festivities none what-

Tom Mix is going to be rec an actor one of these days. double for him on his horse first of a series to appear in will realize that he thinks

ever. I'd undress on the bank of said streams, tie my clothes in a bundle, fasten them to a pole which I held high above my head while I was swimmin' my horse across. I expect I must a looked kinda odd, cavortin' about thus in nature's rainment, but there was nobody around to see, and on the other side I'd stand on a horse blanket and get dressed up again. If the weather was around zero I'd have to sing pretty loud to encourage myself, but it would have taken as many icebergs to stop me as they've got in Alaska. Nothin' mattered so long as I got to the dance.

Returnin' home I wasn't so plumb careful about gettin' wet, because I'd usually have to bust the river wide open in order to reach home before sun-up. But I usually had a few of what poets is pleased to refer to as tender memories to keep me warm, and they'd keep me awake, too, while I was on the round-up or ridin' herd all day without havin' done any sleepin' at all.

I'm admittin' frank and free that romance in those days was mighty hard on horseflesh, but it sure throve in the breast of man. From what I have observed from an elevated point of view—havin' done most of my observin' in this world from a horse's back—I have formed the opinion that much of the real and finest kind of romance has its existence under a flannel shirt.

You can put down a bet and raise the limit that there ain't much romance left in this materialistic age. Neither does romance bud and blossom extensive under a hard-boiled shirt—unless the shirt happens to be borrowed.

There was once a mighty thrill in a dinner jacket—we used

"There was once a mighty thrill in a dinner jacket. But when you own two or three, and pay for 'em with a check your secretary has made out, romance and thrill has departed for more fertile fields"



# Boiled Shirt By Tom Mix

to call 'em Tuxedos—if you had to save up your nickels and dimes to get it. But when you own two or three and pay for 'em with a check your secretary has made out, romance and thrill has departed generally for more fertile fields. They become just another suit of clothes.

Why, say, even the pride we used to get out of wearin' a new suit of clothes has departed like a maverick in the spring. An' that's on account of materialism. We live in a material age, accordin' to some of these high-foreheaded and philosophical gents who inhabit colleges and suchlike places, and expressed in easy-to-understand ranch English that just means we're too hard-boiled nowadays to get half the fun out of livin'.

With the picture business the way it is nowadays, a man has to work so hard to keep on top of the heap he don't have much time to enjoy bein' there.

Real, sure-enough, grade A romance exists out in the hills and out on the prairies where it's got breathin' room. It don't seem to have the chance of a stray yearlin' in a crowded city. Natural romance sneaks up on you unexpected. When you start out huntin' it, it's as snakey as a broncho.

Many a man hollers because he can't find a bed of roses in life, when it's an ace in the hole bet he never planted a single rose.

Romance is the natural expression of youth. Recklessness

ognized as a writer as well as  
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or his typewriter. This is the  
PHOTOPLAY. Read it and you  
and writes as well as he acts

and romance are the joys of youth, just like cautiousness is the penalty of age, but if you're smart and cinch your attention down to it, you can hang on to a lot of your early romance.

Now there's practically no romance to speak of in a dinner served by a foreman in a swell hotel with a bunch of fox-footed waiters fillin' your glass—of water—every time you take a sip, and leanin' over to serve the fish just in the middle of your best yarn. But there's plenty of romance in eatin' lunch under a nice, shady tree with a pretty girl. An' there are still some trees in spite of the best efforts of the city authorities in Los Angeles, where they think trees are a nuisance. And I know one pretty girl who'd rather have lunch with me than any other fellow even if she has et most of her meals across from me for ten years.

There's got to be a little "sneak" to make romance any good. I once viewed a play called "Romeo and Juliet." This Romeo guy sneaked up on a porch and made love to the girl. All the women around me just about went crazy over that scene and said it was so "delicately beautiful" [CONTINUED ON PAGE 114]



"When I was a young feller punchin' cows and couldn't lay claim to a thing but the horse and saddle under me, I was a king. An' I was full of romance. I thought nothin' of doin' up my one and only Sunday shirt, and ridin' twenty miles to a dance"





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mountains, take a few tests, be refused the part and sent home.

"The night I decided to go into the movies, I was going to a party with a boy friend. He was to call for me at my sister's house, across the street. I forgot all about it and the boy is still mad at me."

Helen Mundy went to the mountains for her free vacation and she stayed there over five months. Her tests were taken, submitted to New York and accepted. The company worked all summer in the hills; an ideal life of fishing, riding and swimming. The scenes were filmed without make-up and without lights.

When the finished picture was sent to New York, Jesse Lasky wired for Helen Mundy to report immediately at the studio to sign a contract. Miss Mundy came and the contract was presented to her, figuratively at least, on a silver platter.

As Miss Mundy is only sixteen years old, it was necessary to get her mother's signature on the document. So back to Knoxville she went.

"Of course," I commented, when Helen reached this part of her story, "you were very proud, returning in triumph to the home town."

But, quite unexpectedly, Miss Mundy's eyes filled with tears—sudden, hot tears.

"I had been going with a boy—the only boy I ever really cared anything about. When I went back to Knoxville, we had a date for every night in the week. On Saturday night

he was killed. His roadster turned over and crushed him to death.

"The next morning the papers had the story of his death and the story of my signing the contract—on the same page."

Success is like that; it usually demands swift and unexpected payment for its gifts.

As for New York, Miss Mundy likes it not at all. So she lives in Jackson Heights where one may keep a cat and see a few green, growing things. For in the midst of all her wonderful luck, Miss Mundy is experiencing the pangs of homesickness and loneliness. A black cat brought up from Knoxville, is her mascot and friend. On account of the kitten, Miss Mundy was refused permanent residence in three large New York hotels.

At the studio, Miss Mundy has found Richard Dix, Florence Vidor and Ricardo Cortez the most sympathetic and friendly. As for her own hopes for the future, she knows quite definitely what she wants.

"I want," Miss Mundy says, "to be a character actress. It is no use trying to pretend that I am beautiful. I am not and I couldn't hope to compete with the pretty girls. Anyway, the 'pretty, pretty' parts are tiresome and the public gets tired of the actresses who play them all the time.

So I want to play character parts, small ones at first, of course."

And with this sane philosophy, plus a black cat, plus a five-year contract, Miss Mundy's future ought to be a safe gamble.

## Romance and a Hard-Boiled Shirt

[ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 43 ]

and a lot more stuff like that, but I knew what really thrilled them was the sneakin' up. If Romeo Montague had called on Miss Capulet—those were the program names and I'm not guaranteeing 'em—in the regular way with his cutout wide open nobody would have paid any attention to him and the show would have been a flop.

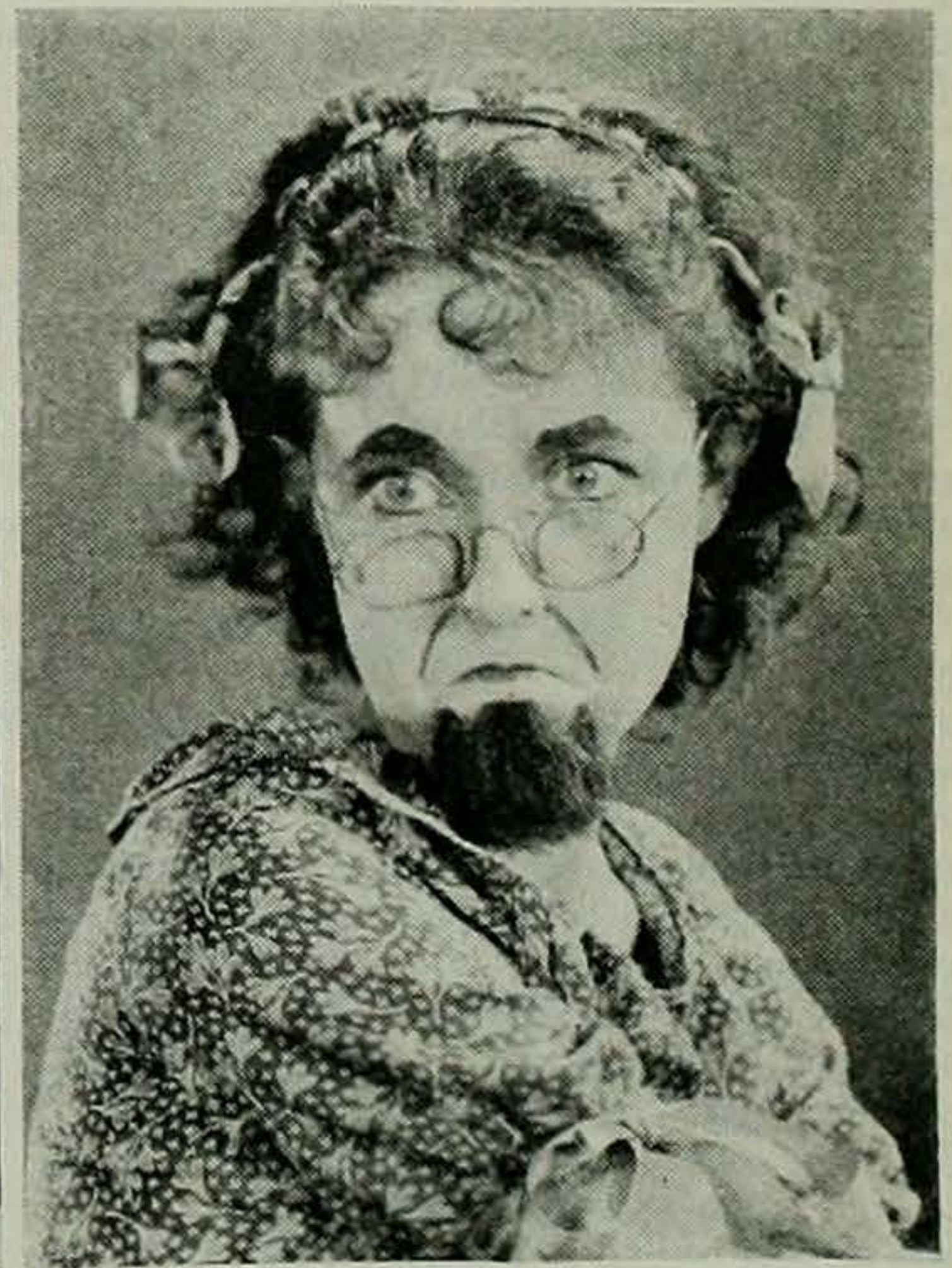
When I was a right young feller workin' on a ranch, romance always appealed to me a heap. I once read a piece of poetry in a book about a young western feller named Lochinvar that I thought was the best of the brand. It seems this young feller lived somewhere down on the border and liked a girl whose father

wasn't hankerin' none after him as a member of his family. So young Lock just rode up to the house one day and grabbed her off without waitin' for no permission. I used to picture him ridin' up past the corral, jumpin' the picket fence around the ranch house, callin' the girl out on the porch, settin' her up behind him and goin' down that trail so fast that her father couldn't catch him noway. I always strung along with that young feller because I was sort o' bent that way myself and beside the book said he come out of the west, same as me, and I was grateful he made a good getaway.

For years this young Lochinvar feller was my idea of a real romantic gent. I don't mind



A home-made Topsy. Otherwise Betty Bronson in a scene, with Henry Walthall, from "Everybody's Acting"



Betty simply refuses to look pretty. Here's another one of her trick get-ups in Marshall Neilan's comedy



addin', confidential-like, that I used to picture myself doin' the same thing with a certain young woman who lived on an Oklahoma ranch 'bout half an hour from where I was workin'. But nothin' serious come of it because I found out her father wasn't the objectin' kind and would have staked almost anybody to a getaway horse if he'd take the girl along and promise to feed her.

But my trip to England sure robbed me of my Lochinvar illusion. They took me to see a famous paintin' by a feller named Ben West which showed Lock ridin' off with his girl. In the first place I didn't like his ridin' clothes and if what I saw was a fair picture of the horse he rode, he couldn't have got away from a good burro. The poem allowed as how "in all the wide border his steed was the best" and if that was true it was a rotten horse country.

If I had been ridin' my horse Tony with the girl, and the old man chasin' me had been settin' on the horse Lock had in that picture, he'd have arrived about in time for the first christenin'.

At Christmas time down on the ranch, we boys got more kick out of givin' our gal a celluloid hand lookin' glass in a velvet case, that they held us up four-fifty for, than any rich man ever got out of presentin' his better half with a fifty thousand dollar string of pearls. I know, for I'm one of the birds has played both ends of the string and is willin' to admit it.

The first present I ever give Mrs. Mix cost less than twenty dollars—how much less I hope she'll never know. What Mrs. Mix's last present cost only me an' the bank clerk and the jeweler will ever find out. But she liked it and that made it cheap at any price. But she still keeps the little manicure set with the mother of pearl handles in the red plush box on her dressing table along side of the French enameled gold toilet outfit I grabbed off for her in Paris. Say, one of them little knives you use to fix your finger nails with in that French set costs twenty times as much as the whole manicure set. But between you and me, I get more kick when I notice that when Mrs. Mix is packing her jewelry to put it in the safe deposit box while we're away she always puts in the red plush box with the manicure set in it first, than out of anything I know. The day she puts her diamond dog collar in first I'll know romance is dead.

WHEN I first come to Los Angeles and worked in pictures as a cowboy for five dollars a day, I used to buy my clothes on Main Street. Right here I want to admit I always had a weakness for nice clothes. An' I reckon the Indian in me come out pretty strong when it came to selectin' color schemes. As a cowboy, I remember I always had the reddest shirt and the greenest and yellowest handkerchief on the ranch. Down in Ponca, Oklahoma, a man named Isidore Einstein operated the New York Dry Goods and Clothing Emporium, and he used to say he'd never get stuck with a suit of clothes because it was too loud as long as Tom Mix was around. He sure said the truth. What's more, I was always ready to try to lick any guy that didn't agree with my taste in such sartorial matters. Well, a little maturity has toned me down some, but I got

to admit I've still got a hankerin' after plaid suits.

I used to go window shoppin' on Main street in Los Angeles before I finally bought me a suit. Savin' money for me was considerable effort. I know a lot of boys that sported white jackets and aprons that weren't barbers. Anyway, after resistin' temptation to spend my money on other pleasures, and after pickin' me out the right raiment, I'd take it home and try it on in front of a two-foot square mirror, and then I'd canter out in the firm belief that Solomon and I was rivals and I had him licked.

Now I get my clothes made in London and New York and by gosh there's no use denyin' it, I don't get half the thrill out of them.

I want to tell you about the first time I arrayed myself in what was then known as a full dress suit. I had rented it from Wolf and Bean. I was takin' a young female out to the Oriental cafe on Main street, which was supposed to carry class to spare.

The only taxis Los Angeles could sport in them days were Ford sedans. I rented me one as near the gal's house as I could find it, hopin' by that diplomatic procedure to cut down the bill because I wasn't holdin' none too strong, and pretty soon me and the gal rolled up in state.

Since then I've been driven up to some of the most exclusive eatin' joints on this continent and Europe and in cars that'd stack up even with the taxi and the cafe thrown in, but they never succeeded in givin' me no such thrill. Say, even the girl—and you know when women are mixed up in anything it never comes out accordin' to Hoyle—though she's been around a lot since, still says that supper at the Oriental cafe was the great event of her life.

Anyway, she went in there free and unattached, but when she come out I sure had my brand on her for fair and we got married not very long afterwards.

NOW Mrs. Mix plays bridge and we've a butler, but there's a certain night in the year when we leave our string of cars feedin' in their stalls and rent us a Ford Sedan. We always drive down Main street and look at the buildin' that used to house the Oriental cafe. It's the least expensive evening we spend in the whole year, but it's the one we enjoy the most.

That's what I am aimin' at when I mentions previous about keepin' romance. You can't buy romance. But if you use a little ingenuity and don't get too hard-boiled, you can keep it sproutin' quite a while, as I've proved.

Personally, I got the idea that most folks consider it a heap wrong and indecent to admit to enthusiasms and enjoyments. They regard a poker-face as the proper expression with which to face life, and I'm not arguin' that they're wrong.

But for myself, I'm for romance and a lot of excitement and I hope I won't quit gettin' a kick out of anythin' and everythin' until I'm through kickin' altogether. I'd rather be all dead than half dead myself.

It's harder to find romance in a hard-boiled shirt than a flannel one, I tells you that straight and honest, but it can be done—if you get a little cooperation.



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## Can a Genius Be a Husband?

[ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31 ]

films, the great comedian whose art alone has won certain great critics to include the motion picture among the arts at all.

I don't know exactly what is back of the present split between Charlie and his girl-wife, but I am convinced that whatever the particular trouble is, the real trouble lies in those tremendous difficulties that always beset the marriage of genius.

Which brings us face to face in the flesh with some of the most interesting psychological questions in the world.

Should a genius marry?

What is it like to be the wife of a genius?

More specifically in this case, what has it been like to be the wife of the greatest comedian in the world?

As far as I know, Lita Gray Chaplin has

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