

Illustrated by  
Russell Patterson

# Making A

Don't miss this—the first of a  
which our hero starts out to

*A year ago Tom Mix started writing; first for VARIETY, then for PHOTOPLAY, then for LIFE; and now he is a regular contributor to all three. He doesn't write for publicity. He doesn't need that. He writes for money. He doesn't need that either. But many magazines are now bidding for his manuscripts.*

*In our agreement for six stories we provided that he must write a minimum of so many words for so much money. Extra words didn't add to his check. We also made him promise to throw away his dictionary so he would not lose his natural style. When he sent in this first article, he wired:*

*"You thought you were smart when you made me get rid of my dictionary. I swapped it for an arithmetic and you didn't get one extra word."*

THE EDITOR.

**E**ARLY in life I decided that no gent could be properly bankrolled without a million dollars. Then I started after it.

Next to the herdin' of a million dollars, which I'll admit I'm now a doin', inducin' the aforesaid million to group 'emselfes together is about the toughest job I know of.

How come I decided on a million as the proper amount for a well-to-do citizen to have on hand, came in a peculiar way. The fact is I had never heard of a million dollars until I was told an old, red-skirted gypsy had confided to a ranchwoman that one day her baby would be the owner of a million dollars—this important information bein' purchased for two-bits. My mother believed it and that's why I had to go out an' get it. As a boy about twelve, to give me some idea what a million meant an' in a language I could understand, my father pictured how big a ranch it would take to feed a million horses or cattle.

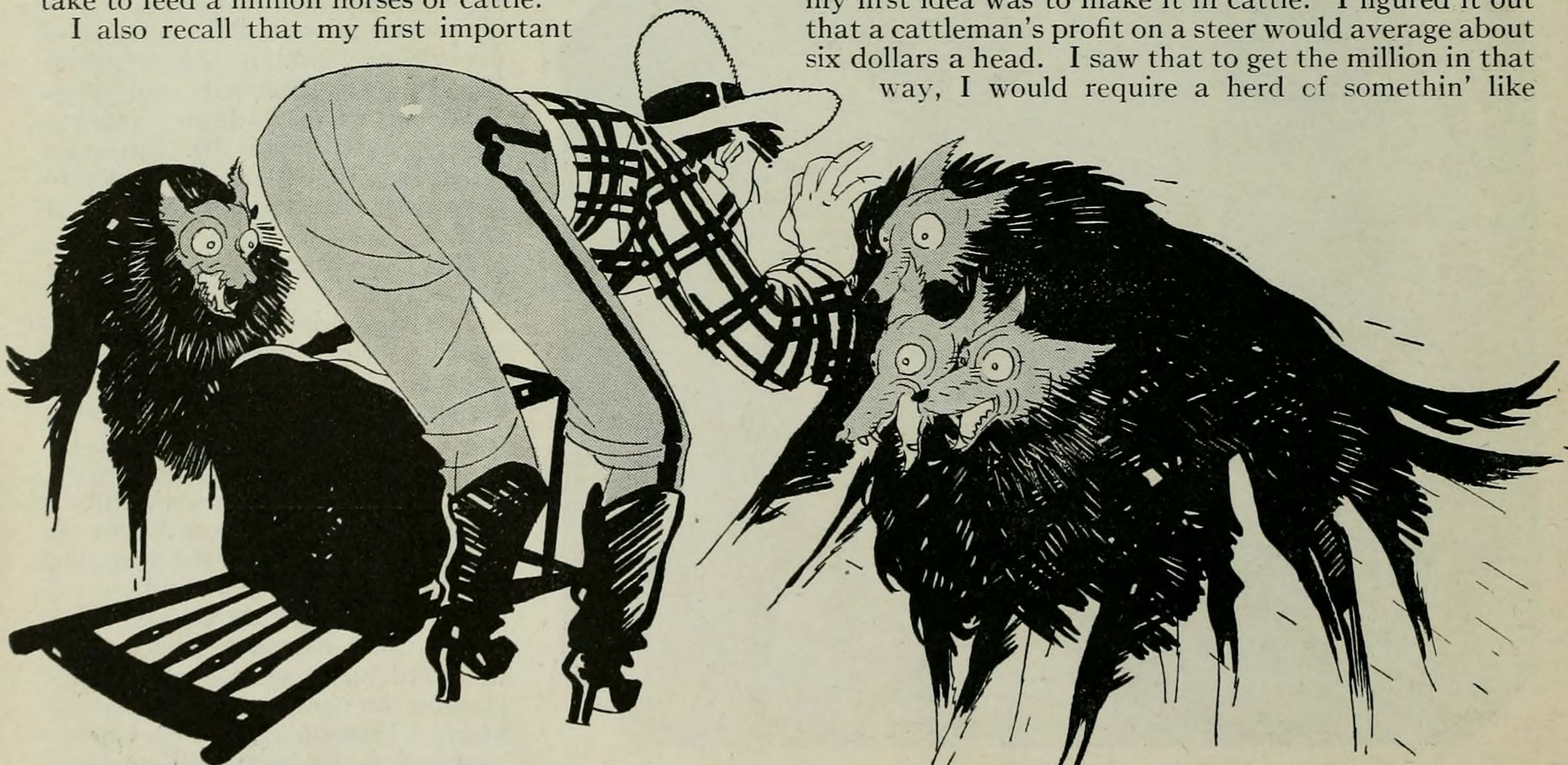
I also recall that my first important

decision on the million matter was that once I got the million, I didn't propose to let anybody mind it for me an' that I'd always carry it around in my pocket, thereby havin' it handy in case I had to leave on one of those quick, unexpected overnight jumps toward the Mexican border that citizens often made in the early days of Texas. As I remember now, I never figured on gettin' more'n the first million.

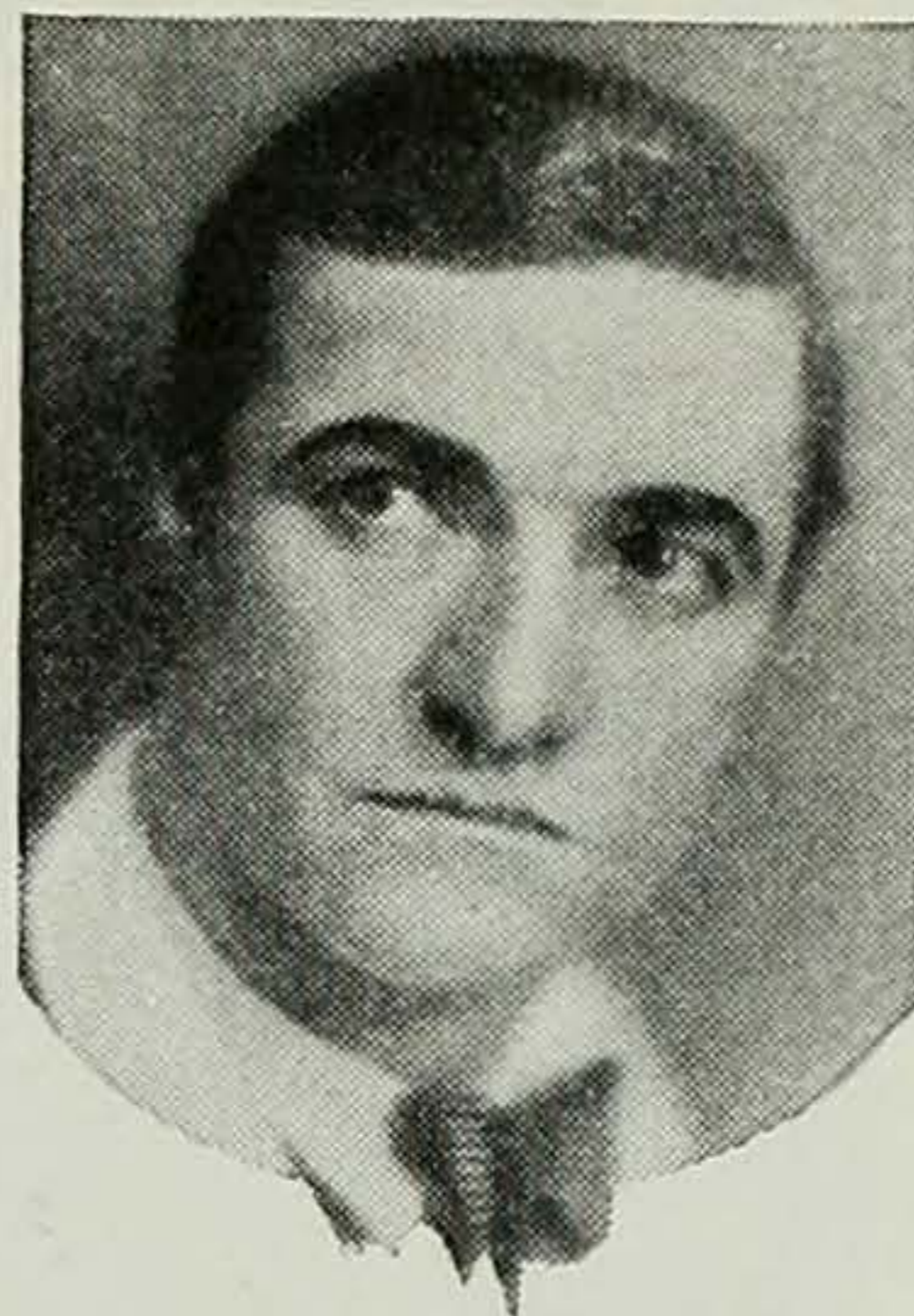
The first person I ever confided this deep set million dollar resolution to was my mother an' I slipped it to her as a secret just before I rode away from home to take my first job of cowpunchin' for wages, then a lad of perhaps twelve. I didn't tell my father, as I expected to be back with the million in a few months an' give the old gentleman a surprise.

**A**LTHOUGH that was many years ago, later in life, I had the pleasure of tellin' that same little mother that the gypsy's prophecy had come true—I had the million. In passin', I'd like to add that my father and mother are still alive an' happy after fifty years of married life. No, they don't live in Hollywood. Any man or woman out here in Hollywood, who would confess to livin' together for half a century an' still be on speakin' terms, would be throwed into jail as insane and disloyal to the town's best an' finest examples.

As I grew up, I did a lot of figurin' as to the best way to round up that million. Livin' in an open country, my first idea was to make it in cattle. I figured it out that a cattleman's profit on a steer would average about six dollars a head. I saw that to get the million in that way, I would require a herd of somethin' like



# Million



By  
Tom Mix

series of six true stories in  
rope and hog-tie a fortune

168,666 $\frac{2}{3}$  head of full grown cattle with two yearlin's added—the latter representin' the two thirds. I didn't know anybody in all Texas or the Indian Territory—now Oklahoma—who had 60,000 head, let alone more than twice that number, nor did I see how, at that time, I could feed an' range that much stock if I really had 'em. So it came about, the cattle idea was abandoned.

Over in Pecos country, where I was then a workin' out in a line camp, I met "Good Eye" Williams, a cowhand. It seems a billiard cue in the hands of a quicker man had deprived him of the sight of one eye, although "Good Eye" used to describe it as a triflin' incident that occurred durin' a terrific hand-to-hand encounter with cattle rustlers, whereas in truth an' fact the trouble started over who put the fifteen ball in the corner pocket without callin' the sht.

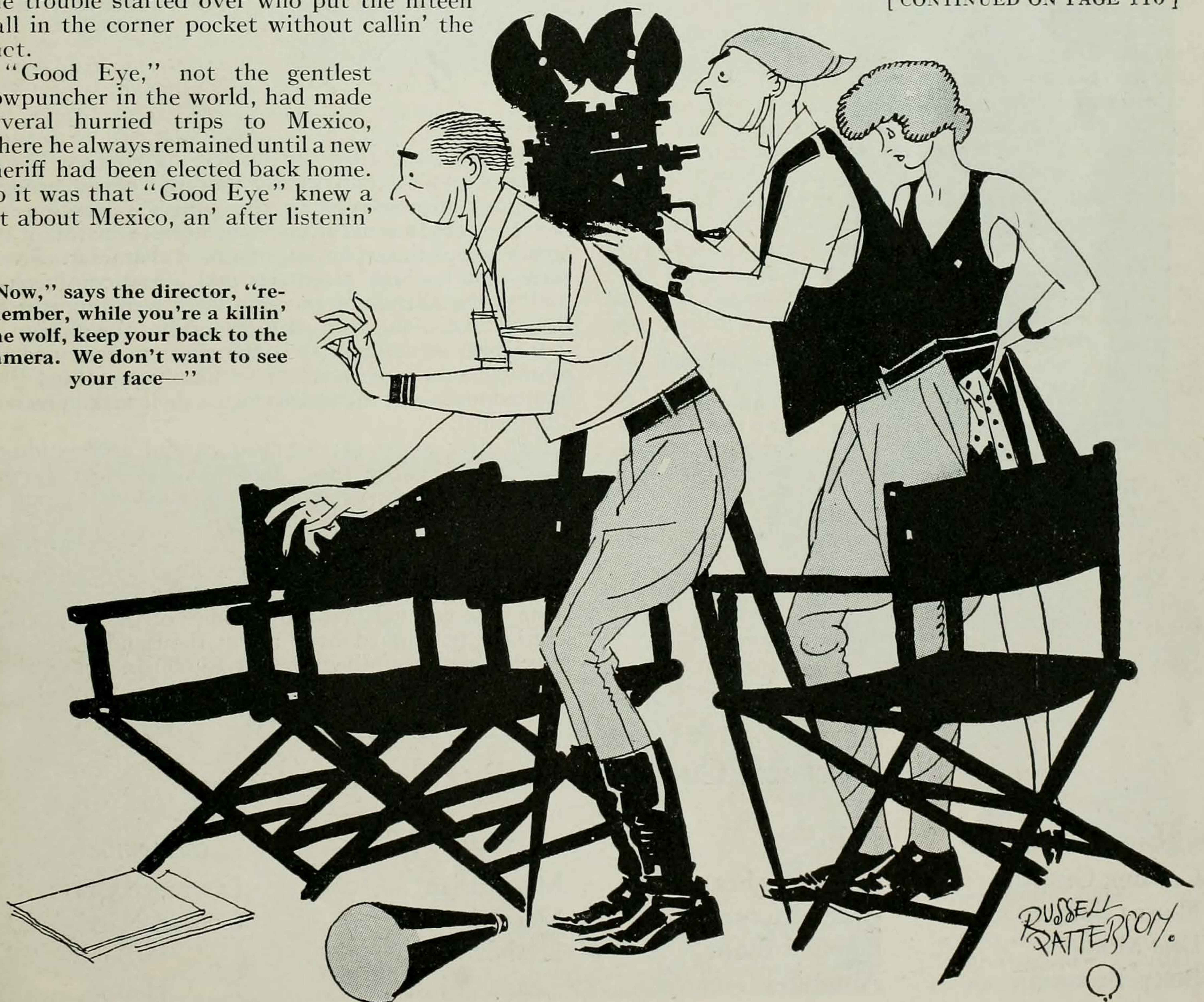
"Good Eye," not the gentlest cowpuncher in the world, had made several hurried trips to Mexico, where he always remained until a new sheriff had been elected back home. So it was that "Good Eye" knew a lot about Mexico, an' after listenin'

"Now," says the director, "remember, while you're a killin' the wolf, keep your back to the camera. We don't want to see your face—"

to him I decided that if I was a goin' to get that million, I had to get together fifteen or twenty kindred spirits an' ride down an' take Mexico, stuff a million in my pocket an' go on my way, leavin' "Good Eye" an' the boys what was left. At the time "Good Eye" an' me planned our revolution, I figured that if the rest of the inhabitants were like the border peons I knew, "Good Eye" an' me, with our gang, could take the country easily. An' I'm not so certain to this day, that I wasn't right.

One of the singular things in that connection is that many years thereafter, the first \$500 in gold that I had ever seen, was paid to me in Juarez, Mexico, by Francisco Madero, for services rendered when he was leadin' a revolt against General Porfirio Diaz, then president of the republic. But I'll tell of that later.

Back in the line camp, "Good  
[ CONTINUED ON PAGE 110 ]



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be acting on the screen. Oh, no, I could never do my own producing. I hold producers in proper respect. But perhaps I shall be back on the stage. I should like to be living in Southern Italy, and maybe own a yacht by then, for trips to the Orient and the tropics—and only working say, twenty weeks in the year instead of fifty-two.

"I should like a fine library—oh, not necessarily rare first editions. I should like to have a son. . . . (Ronald's wife lives in England.)

"I hope my best virtue will be charity, and that I shall only indulge the more gentlemanly and discreet vices. Yes, I do like a game of poker. . ." he admits deprecatingly, "a mild gamble, and, and . . ."

Ronald's pet sport at present is tennis, which he is so proficient in that he gives some of California's champions a first class fight.

**R**ICHARD DIX, Paramount's star, says he will be a motion picture director ten years hence. "Only the surface of motion picture potentialities has been scratched," said Richard. "I would like to do my part in advancing them further as a universal international force for good, for international peace and understanding, new methods in education, and with far greater entertainment qualities.

"I am an actor now," says Dix, "but no star in the industry has succeeded in maintaining his or her popularity up to the age I shall be in ten years from now. I want to retire while I am at the top, not wait till it is whispered I am slipping. But I don't want to leave the industry.


My desire to direct grows upon me and I feel sure there will be a place for me.

"I also expect to be married and be the father of four children, two boys and two girls," laughs Richard. "I shall be living in Southern California if I have my way, in a nice roomy Spanish type house on a ranch where I can breed blooded horses. I should like a trip to Europe and the East at least once a year."

Although Dolores del Rio is too young to include in this story—only twenty-two now, after two brilliant years in pictures, she has her future all marked out. Dolores is burning to be a stage actress. She is deliberately, earnestly intending to attack the stage as her supreme ambition. Ten years hence Dolores expects to be among the Ruth Chattertons, Lenore Ulrics, Florence Reeds and Helen Menckens. Some of them desert the stage for pictures to make money. Dolores is making money in pictures with intent to desert them for the stage.

**M**AE MURRAY, now returning to the stage after ten years in pictures, is buoyant and youthful as ever. Mae comfortably wipes the next ten years away like a mere tomorrow. After a spell of stage appearances and enchantment with her dancing, Mae intends returning to the screen in her own productions. Mae also gave me to understand that she was very happy with her husband. "He was the love I was waiting for all my life," she said. "And we were married in the Roman Catholic Church because they do not countenance divorce—and so my former marriages did not exist for them."

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## Making a Million

[ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 39 ]

Eye" an' me spent the long nights a plannin'. Everything pointed to sad days ahead for Mexico, until an old cattleman I knew came a visitin' our camp. As he had been down in Mexico, I asked him what part of the country would be the quickest and easiest to make a million dollars in. "A million," he said, "why son, there ain't half that much money in all Mexico. There ain't a million dollars anywhere, except in two places—Washington an' Texas." So that was that.

**I** LOST my last bit of respect for "Good Eye" when he proposed that him and me get the million by goin' out to Australia an' raisin' sheep. I told him I didn't mind bein' a bandit as we had planned, or even a first class pirate or a good bankrobber for a few days in order to get the million, but I made it plain to old "Good Eye" with much Texas word-trimmin's, that I was a cattleman an' hadn't sunk as yet to the low down of bein' a shepherd.

The only way to get to Washington, where the other million was, I figured was for me to hold office, an' I knew there wasn't much chance for a twenty-six year old cowhand to go office seekin'.

So it was that I drifted around, always with the million in mind, doin' a little

ranchin' here, a little cowpunchin' there an' sheriffin' quite a bit now an' then.

One day I found my way into Southern Colorado an' was a livin' near Canon City. Remember, I was livin' near Canon City and not in it, as that's a town where a lot of the citizens are plumb permanent, stayin' there by the year on the state's invite. A little somethin' of no great importance except to three or four of us happened about that time, which made it necessary for me to go south, an' until I reached the state line, do most of my ridin' at night. As an eagle would fly, it was about 450 miles to El Paso, an' that was where I was headin' for. I made a few quick, night horse trades as I went along, but I usually left a better horse than the one I rode away. In about four weeks I got to El Paso, and friends.

**A** BOUT this time across the Rio Grande, Madero was a fightin' the Mexican Federal forces and he organized an outfit of half a dozen Americans willin' to take a long chance. I was among the first picked an' strung along with the insurrectos. We Americans captured a few machine guns in the battle an' takin' of Juarez an' for this service, Madero in person, paid each of us Americans \$500 in gold. When I felt how much the \$500 in gold weighed,

I abandoned my original idea of luggin' my million around with me. But I'd made a good start—all I needed now was the trifle of \$999,950.

Madero wanted me to go into Mexico with him, promisin' that when he became president—which he did—that I could have a big government job, such as chief of police or chief of the supreme court, or somethin' like that. I told him I wasn't a lawyer an' couldn't be a supreme court judge, but he said the Mexican Supreme Court would never meet anyway so that wouldn't make any difference. I decided that Juarez was as far below the border as I wanted to troupe. I didn't mind, I explained, shiftin' state lines now an' then as occasion demanded, but I didn't like to get very far away from that big sign a readin' "U. S. Border."

**A**BOUT this time, several white jacketed friends of mine—not barbers or waiters—told me there was a man 'round El Paso a lookin' for me. I replied that if the visitin' brother was from Canon City, or anywhere in Colorado, me an' him had nothin' in common but an argument. One day—entirely by accident—I run into this inquirin' gent. He said he had been hired to look for me—that the Selig Polyscope Company of Chicago, stood ready to pay me good money to come there an' help 'em make a movin' picture. How much was there in it? I wanted to know.

"There's millions in the movin' picture business *if* you go at it right," the man told me.

That word million decided me. There was millions in sight an' I only wanted one of 'em. Personal, I didn't care who got the rest as long as I got my one, so to Chicago him an' me went.

Now this wasn't exactly my first tie-up with the movin' pictures. A company came down to a little ranch of mine in Oklahoma an' used my place an' stock to make a film showin' the life an' uses of a steer. It was one of the early educational pictures. Me an' my cowboys appeared in it, an' it was this same concern that wanted me to go back to Chicago.

Once there, a feller out at the studio asked me if I could kill a wolf with my bare hands? "I dunno about that," I told him, "I might if I got the first hold, but who wants to kill a wolf with his hands? I'm willin' to shoot 'em one at a time or by the carload, but I'm not hankerin' to wrestle with 'em. What's in it for me?"

"Big money," the gent proceeded, "you see, it's thisaway. In the story we are about to make, a man has been licked in Wall Street by the human wolves, an' bein' broke, his wife quits him, an'—"

"**W**HAT did you expect her to do?" I put in, but the man paid no attention to what I said an' went on.

"This busted Wall Street gent," he says, "after a losin' of his bankroll slips away into Colorado, an' finds himself a little hideaway spot in the mountain. One day he meets up with a bunch of timber wolves an' takes refuge in an old deserted shack, where the wolves corner him. The Wall Street gent, still husky, puts up a battle with his bare hands, strangles the biggest wolf an' the rest of

the pack goes sneakin' away. Then, says this man to himself, I've met the real man eatin' wolf an' licked him. I'm a goin' back to Wall Street and whip the human wolves that put me on the run. Thereupon, so the man told me, this feller goes back, puts the Injun sign on the Wall Street wolves, recovers his bankroll an' lives happy ever after.

Bein' much interested by this time, I inquires if the wolf whippin' gent got his wife back?

"Hell, no," says the studio man, "this story is a goin' to have a real, happy endin'—she don't get back."

"Now," he rambled on, "we got a fine young man to play the Wall Street gent, except the killin' of the wolf with his bare hands. That's where you come in as a double for the leadin' man." Then he told me they had the wolves, fresh from Montana, out in a pen. I took a look at 'em an' they was sure wolves all right. Four were about the average size, one a little runt an' one old boy, bigger'n the rest by twenty pounds. I decided that it was the little feller that was goin' to be out of luck. So far as I was concerned, the big one had nothin' to worry about. The picture man said there would be big pay an' a lot more for me in the future.

Now, says I to myself, here is where I get my million dollar start. To get a million, you first got to be where a million is, an' now I'm right in that town, so I told the studio feller he could turn his wolves loose an' me an' them would have it out.

**I** WAS introduced to the leadin' gent of the picture. If I had taken a good look at this bird an' his hair, this story would never have been written, an' mebbe I'd never got the million. They built the shack in one of the studio stages, and I helped 'em rig somethin' like a shute up to a window, an' the wolves was to come in on me thataway.

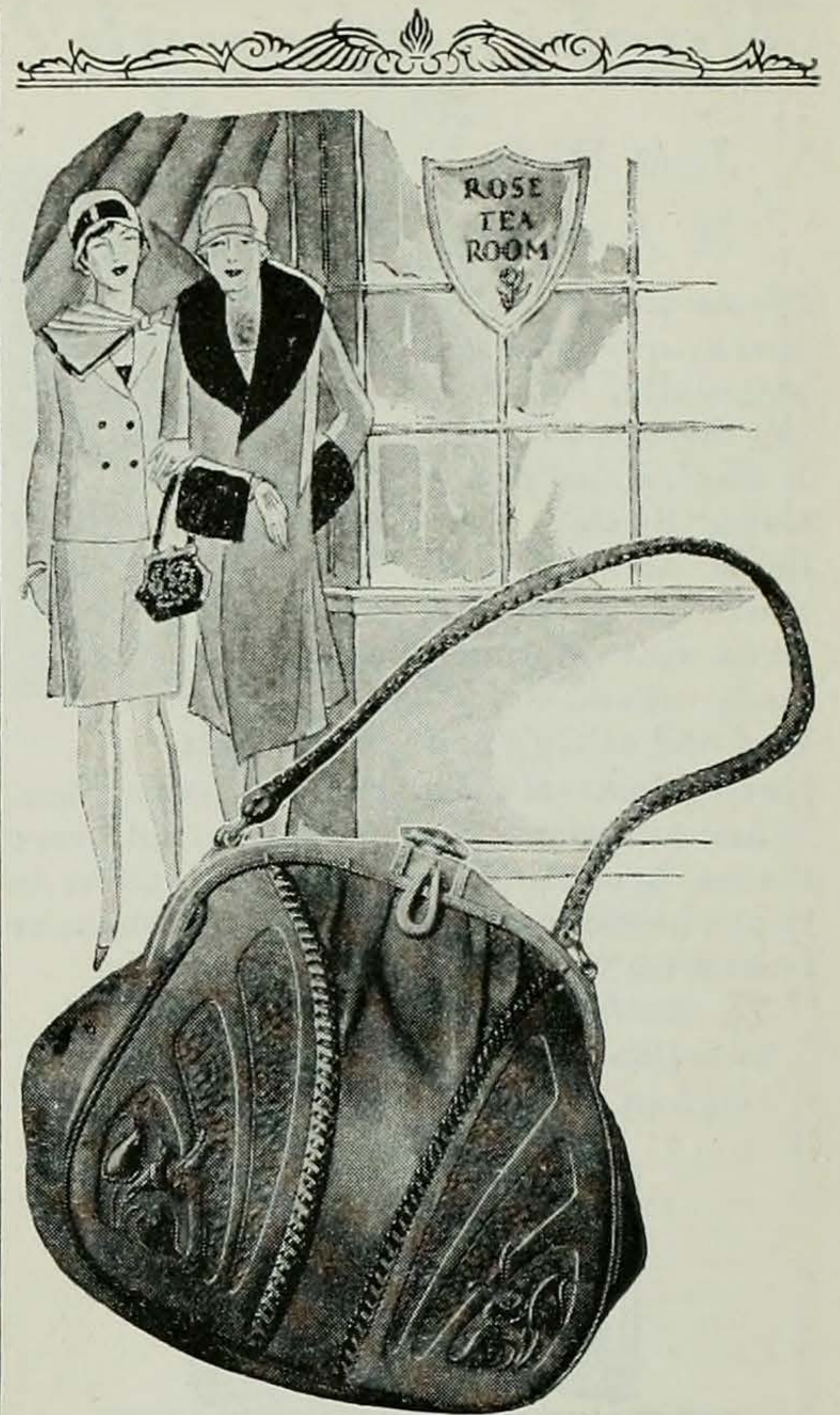
Before day light, I sneaked over to the wolf pen an' slipped in about ten pounds of raw meat for each wolf an' made it my business to see that the biggest one got the heaviest hunk. I had to put on the hero's clothes. A dapper little feller said he was there to curl my hair. Now I've been in a few tight places where I thought my hair was curlin' but to have a bird do it with a pair of pincers was like a wet saddle blanket to me. Anytime, I told him, that I had to get my hair curled to fight a coupl'a wolves, it was time for me to get back to the west where I belonged, exceptin' of course, the state of Colorado.

The director explained that as the leadin' gent had curly hair, I'd have to get mine fixed that way. Havin' a little Injun in me, I was never very strong on the curly hair stuff, an' what I suffered with that bird a twistin' my hair around with a pair of tongs, no one will ever know. At last they got me fixed.

I was afraid to take a peep in a lookin' glass for fear I'd take a punch at some one, havin' both the director an' the curly haired leadin' gent in mind.

"**N**OW," says the director, "remember while you're a killin' the wolf, keep your back to the camera. We don't want to see your face—keep your back to the camera."

Everything was set. I got up near the

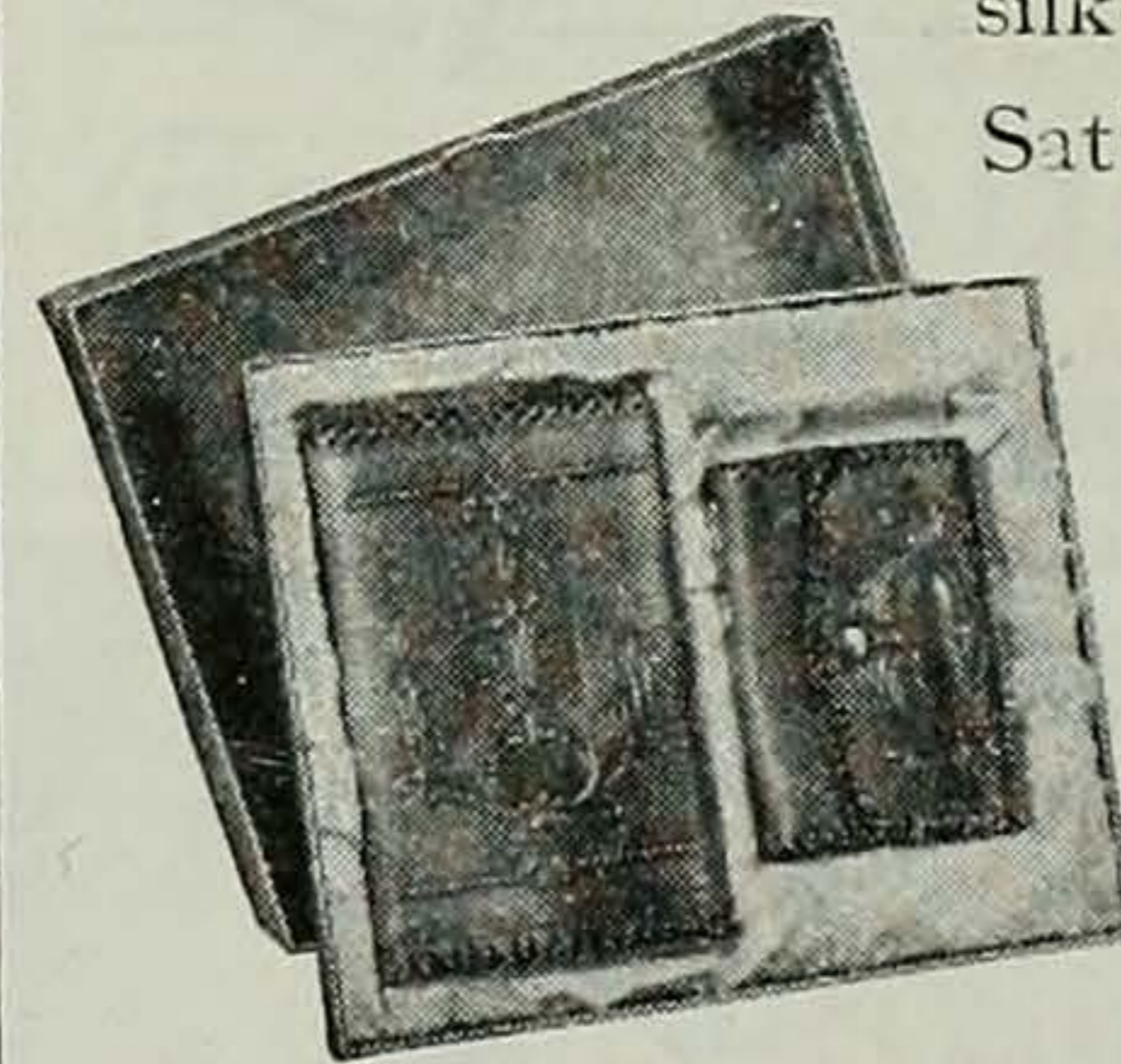


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shack window an' waited. I'd slipped the feller handlin' the wolves a coupl'a bucks to shoot the little one in first—the one I was a aimin' to grab. Mebbe he did—I don't know—he says he did. The wolves came through the shute so fast I missed the first two an' grabbed the third. I don't need to tell nobody it was the big boy an' he started doin' every thing I had planned for a wolf not to do. Notwithstandin' all the raw meat I'd slipped him, this wolf didn't like me. I sure was mad an' wished then that I had that meat back.

He commenced by bitin' me in the left arm an' then on the leg. Me an' the wolf got started as I missed his neck an' nailed him by the hind feet an' tried to shift him around so he couldn't bite until I could grab him by the throat.

JUST as we got to wrasslin' good, the director yelled, "Keep your back to the camera—keep your back to the camera! I told you about that."

"You sure told me," I hollered back, "but you didn't tell the wolf. You're wastin' words on me. Any time you don't like the way I'm a doin' this wolf killin' there's nothin' to prevent any of you birds from steppin' in an' doin' it right."

That wolf sure was ornery. I held on to his hind legs an' was a swingin' him around, tryin' to hit his head on some of the tables and chairs, but they were all movie "break-aways" an' crumbled when the wolf hit 'em.

The director kept on a yellin' for me to keep my back to the camera, but what he had to say about that time meant nothin' in my young life.

The rest of the wolves in the meantime was doin' hurdlin' acts over me an' their brother, not knowin' just who to bite. They just naturally had to bite somethin' so they got to bitin' each other an' now an' then takin' a nip out of yours truly.

AT last I got a fresh hold on the old boy from Montana an' brought him to the floor with a crash that straightened him out for keeps, an' there he lay. We shooed the rest of the pack in the iron barred box, an' about the only thing I could have returned to the leadin' gent in the way of clothes was the curly hair an' even some of that had got to be natural.

Then I went out to find a doctor.

After I left, the leadin' man came out from behind the iron screen that was protectin' the rest an' fixin' himself in a fine dramatic pose an' facin' the camera, picked up the wolf by the throat an' was about to shake him good and proper for the closeup, when the wolf came to and took a chunk out of his left leg. It seems he only got stunned when I interrupted his intake an' output. The leadin' gent

dropped the wolf an' there was a mad race for the door. He managed to get out an' they yelled for me to come back. I shot the wolf with a six shooter, which is the way it should have been done in the first place.

In the afternoon while I was waitin' for my money, a big bird comes in an' asks if my name is Mix. I admitted the truth, addin' that the stranger had had his trip for nothin' as I was aimin' to go back to Colorado in the mornin' an' surrender myself. "I don't know nothin' about that," says he, "I'm an officer from the Bergh Society here, an' I got a warrant for you. You're charged with killin' a wolf in a cruel an' inhuman manner an' without a permit an' besides, givin' the wolf no chance to defend himself, thereby takin' a cruel an' unnatural advantage of him."

THE arrestin' gent wasn't so bad, as he took me to a doctor friend on the way to jail, who sewed in a few stitches an' fixed me up.

After I got locked in, I tried to get in touch with the bird who told me there was millions in the movin' pictures, but he was out.

About dusk a young man came in an' handed me \$100, which he said was my pay for killin' the wolf. He didn't know nothin' about gettin' me a lawyer or supplyin' bail.

Next mornin' they took me before a judge. He looked me over an' said, "Oh, I see, another gang war on the east side. They must have been usin' a machine gun on you." Then he listened to the humane officer's side of the event. The judge said the wolf killin' was about the cruelest thing he had ever heard of an' it was time these movin' picture folks was made an example of an' he was intendin' to start on me.

"HOW much did you get for performin' this wanton act of cruelty?" says he.

I told him \$100. "That," he announces, "is just what your fine is a goin' to be—\$100."

I paid it.

I went back to the jail to thank the head jailer for some kindnesses, stoppin' in to see the doctor who fixed me up. I paid him \$20 out of my Madero gold, a leavin' me a bankroll of \$480. The old jailer asked how I came out.

I told him what I got for killin' the wolf, what the fine was an' what I had paid the doctor.

"Young feller," says he, "what are you in this movie game for?"

"For," says I, "to make a million."

"Well," he says as I'm a leavin'.

"I must say you've got a hell of a fine start."

(To Be Continued)

## NEXT MONTH

Tom has a narrow escape from owning twenty rich oil wells, gets buncoed out of \$5,000 for arresting a bank robber, gets another picture offer and has a nightmare.