

SHADOWING A SLEUTH

Holmes Stalks the City by Television— Football Pictures Are Clear

SHERLOCK HOLMES sleuthed around the television cameras at Radio City during the past week and stalked out across the ultra-short wave lengths in the most ambitious experiment in television showmanship so far attempted in the air over New York.

The shadow reincarnation of Conan Doyle's master detective, presented through permission of Lady Doyle, widow of the sleuth's creator, served to introduce the first full-length dramatic presentation of the Radio City television showmen. In six performances for members of the American Radio Relay League the ingenious welding of film with studio production offered an interesting glimpse into the future of a new form of dramatic art.

While the televised version of "The Three Garridebs," as such, offers no serious challenge to the contemporary stage or screen, considering television's present state of development, the demonstration revealed how a skillful television producer may make use of the best of two mediums, how viewers may witness the realism of flesh-and-blood acting allied with the more spectacular scenic effects achieved by the screen.

The Camera's Limitations

The Holmes play opened with a film of the London skyline, and then shifted to the "live" studio where Louis Hector, as Sherlock Holmes, was seen looking out of his Baker Street window. The major portion of the Doyle tale was confined to two studio sets, one representing the detective's apartment and the second the home of John Garrideb, London ornithologist.

The action shifted between these two scenes, although a film was used, and with considerable success, to tie up the two points. This film showed Holmes and Dr. Watson riding in a hansom cab through the streets of London to the home of Garrideb in search of a new clue. Their dismissal of the cab, their entrance into the building and their inspection of the name-plate on Garrideb's door, all tended to link the action.

At times, due to the limitations of lighting, distortion or some other cause, the figures and objects in the room became somewhat vague and shadowy, but by and large the pictures were well-defined, the action smooth and it was always possible to recognize objects such as microscopes and museum pieces littered about the quarters occupied by Holmes and the eccentric Garrideb.

Actors Were Convincing

Once or twice the restricted space available for the diminutive-looking actors enforced certain penalties upon the drama, as, for instance, when Holmes and Watson hid behind a bookcase to spy upon the surreptitious entrance of the culprit, bound upon retrieving a counterfeiting press in a secret subterranean passage. It was only possible to move the tele-camera from the villain in one corner of the room to the other side, where Holmes and the doctor were hid.

The camera's range was not sufficient to show simultaneously the detective as he observed Evans's manipulation of the

passage-way concealed in a bookcase, a treatment which would have heightened the scene's dramatic effect.

The acting was in capable hands. Louis Hector, in traditional cape, peaked cap and double-breasted suit, played Holmes in the approved manner and at all times gave the impression that a man-hunt was in progress. His determined manner throughout gave convincing evidence of the ultimate outcome—that the detective would surely "get his man." His demeanor was in marked contrast to the mild-mannered Dr. Watson, enacted by William Podmore. Both these actors have had considerable training in broadcast drama and proved equally at home before the television camera.

Football on a Newsreel

In addition to the pièce de résistance, several other acts were presented, rounding out a well-balanced variety show. The tele-cameras were focused briefly upon Lucille and Lanny, who sing, and Sylvia Bruce, who "swings it." These were actual studio presentations and compared favorably with scenes from a film tabloid revue.

But by far the best results of the evening were presented in the televised newsreels, which showed with remarkable clarity scenes in such recent football engagements as Yale-Harvard and Fordham-St. Mary's. The fine definition of these scenes, photographed on rain-soaked and sleet-covered gridirons, could not help but give rise to the thought that the day may not be far distant when football fans will be able to enjoy watching their alma mater in a driving downpour from the comfort of a steam-heated apartment. These scenes and the pictures showing the heckler at the Armistice Day ceremonies as King George paid homage to the war dead were so sharply defined and smooth-running that they challenged comparison with those sweeping across the screen of any ordinary movie theatre. Despite the size of the 7 by 10-inch screen, spectators found it surprisingly easy to follow the action of the detective mystery, the ball across the gridiron and the runs of the collegians.

TELEVISION ANNOUNCERS MUST PASS NEW TESTS

TELEVISION announcing is a new art that is luring more and more prospective candidates to Radio City and other centers of development. American radio program producers confess, however, they do not know the qualifications for the new job except that good looks and a voice personality are essentials.

From London, where more practical use has been made of television, comes this report on the qualifications of a tele-announcer at the British Broadcasting Corporation:

"Television announcing entails a good deal more than standing by a camera and a microphone with an

lighting engineer, the cameraman and the make-up department.

"Remember that before you see the announcer he or she has been in position for at least three or four minutes before the green light glows or the cameraman waves his hand.

"Remember that in nine cases out of ten no script is used. Remember that there have been occasions when difficulties have arisen at the last minute, and a complicated amendment to an announcement has been telephoned from the control room only a few seconds before the go-ahead signal."

WATERBURY POLICE RADIO CONTACTS SIXTEEN PATROLS

A NEW police radio system is in operation at Waterbury, Conn., on 2,466 kilocycles under the call letters WMPW.

Sixteen patrol cars are equipped with receivers, and three are provided with transmitters affording two-way communication with headquarters. The "voice" at headquarters is rated at 50 watts, the normal range of which is estimated at twenty-five miles.