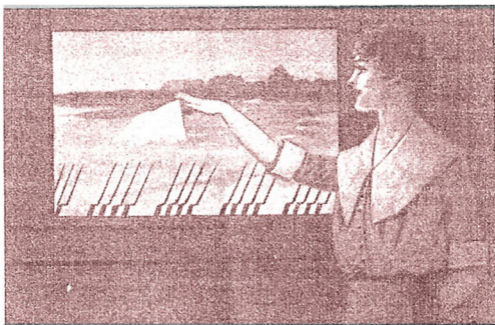


FAKE WAR-MOVIES

WAR-PICTURES are even more popular in Great Britain than here in America, and the English people are now reported to be reveling in vivid war-dramas which are faked on the hillside and the rolling downs of the south coast. A contributor to *Popular Science Monthly and the World's Advance* (New York, November) tells us that clever mechanical devices, the unstinted use of electricity, spring bayonets, gun-powder-bladders, and underground explosives are used in the production of these war-pictures, which are so realistic that they seem to bear the earmarks of the French and Belgian trench and the Polish battle-field. We read:

"Agricultural laborers, farmers' sons, and village youths, dressed in the uniforms of the British and German armies, are drilled in their new duties and initiated into the mysteries of

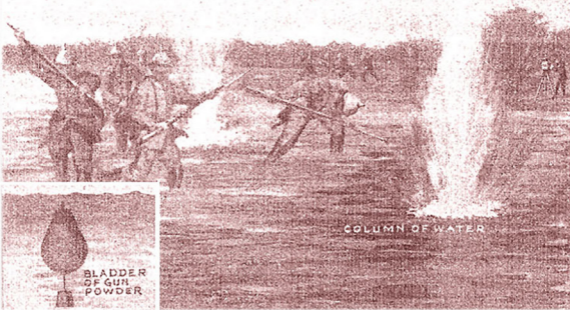


OFF TO THE WAR.

The "passing regiment" is manipulated by an assistant behind the scenes, while the heroine waves a touching farewell.

disappearing bayonets, exploding fake shells, trench-warfare, and make-believe 'gassing.' Stroll along a quiet, country foot-path bordering some rolling grassland sloping to the sea and you may come upon a horde of yelling men whose spiked helmets and wicked-looking bayonets glint in the sunshine as they charge toward you. If you take cover nimbly and watch, you will see they are rushing a trench filled with khaki-clad British soldiers. You shudder involuntarily as you see those glinting bayonets sinking into human flesh three or four inches, but you find later that the points are protected with little felt buttons and that they are attached to the barrel end of the rifle by a spring that allows them to retract several inches upon striking a solid substance.

"As the soldiers ford a stream in their mad charge, columns of water splash high into the air. After awhile you realize that these columns are caused by dropping shells from concealed artillery. You wonder how it is that all these country 'supers' are not maimed or even killed until you find out that the water-columns are caused by electrically exploded bladders filled with they are rushing a trench filled with khaki-clad British soldiers. You shudder involuntarily as you see those glinting bayonets sinking into human flesh three or four inches, but you find later that the points are protected with little felt buttons and that they are attached to the barrel end of the rifle by a spring that allows them to retract several inches upon striking a solid substance.



Illustrations by courtesy of "Popular Science Monthly and World's Advance," New York.

UNDER HEAVY FIRE.

This stirring picture of Germans crossing a stream in the face of enemy shells is managed with the aid of powder-filled bladders exploded under water.

"As the soldiers ford a stream in their mad charge, columns of water splash high into the air. After awhile you realize that these columns are caused by dropping shells from concealed artillery. You wonder how it is that all these country 'supers' are not maimed or even killed until you find out that the water-columns are caused by electrically exploded bladders filled with gunpowder and hidden beneath the surface of the stream. As the charging 'Germans' reach the opposite bank and make straight for the 'British' machine guns, terrible explosions occur. They are the shells still 'dropping' from the British artillery. The explosions are electrically controlled by a stage-director or producer, and are caused by burying small cans of gunpowder here and there under the ground to be rushed. At the proper moment the fake mines are exploded by throwing a switch or pressing a button, thus sending clods of earth, a cloud of smoke, and a dummy figure or two into the air. All the vivid effects of a big shell bursting on the ground are thus obtained.

"To give to the moving-picture patron an idea of the vast numbers of troops now in France, the producers used an ingenious leather-band machine, which, in conjunction with a broad window built into the scenery-wall, is all that is necessary. The spectators in the theater see women at the window waving out to the departing troops. The tops of rifles with bayonets fixt move past the window and bob up and down in a never-ending stream. Beneath the window, concealed from the spectators, an operator turns a leather band passing over two fly-wheels about twelve feet apart. Attached to the top of the band are rows of bayonets. As the handle is turned the bayonets move along with the realism of a marching regiment, rifles on shoulders, fastened, as they are, to the leather band, which can be moved at any speed.

"In 'close-up' pictures of big explosions, such as bridges, forts, and the like, it is not politic for the movie men to get too close; a chance projectile may come their way. To overcome this difficulty the camera is set up in some adjacent spot and focused upon the scene of the explosion. From a safe distance the operator controls his camera by electrical wires, the result being as satisfactory as if he had been on the brink of the scene himself.

"So excellent are the pictures of modern 'warfare' thus obtained by producers in rural Britain that the motion-picture-theater patrons can not realize that motion-picture men are not allowed near the firing-line in the theaters of war and that the restrictions imposed on the producers prevent them from obtaining the real thing in France."