

WARFARE IN MOVIES NOT AS WE WAGE IT

Villain Badly Fooled When
He Hurls Ostrich-Egg
Grenade

TANK BREAKS SPEED LAWS

Caterpillars Fail to Turn, But
That Isn't Enough to Stop
Armored Terror

*Special Correspondence of THE STARS
AND STRIPES*

LONDON, May 9.—Those American-made war-dramas must be giving the folks back home a swell idea of what The War isn't like. They go big over here, proving the Englishman's contention that he, too, has a sense of humor.

Up at that picture place in Tottenham Court-road where there's always a Chaplin film of venerable age and flickery action, they trotted out a five-reeler today called "On to Berlin."

William Fox is accused of producing "On to Berlin."

The villain twirls his mustache and the hero, as usual, wears his flannel shirt carelessly open clear down to his belt buckle in regular hero fashion, so you can see him inflate his chest till it sticks out like he'd swallowed a basketball.

An audience with a bunch of war-wise-guys in it can tolerate the old dramatic flubdub on the ground that the theatrical business is entitled to its own little tricks. But it was when William Fox put the super-athlete, super-daredevil and super-soldier through his military paces that the soldiers in the place began to wonder whether Fox was trying to kid them or meant this as an on-the-level film.

How Not to Do It

For Paul Mordaunt's first stunt Mr. Fox had him throw some hand-grenades. First of all, the villain, a captain, tried it. He couldn't boost his egg more than ten yards. And no wonder, because the action of the piece compelled him to throw like a girl.

Paul, however, steps up and grabs a hand-grenade—

"Oh, gawd!" groaned a Chicago Canadian. "Look at that grenade, will you? Size of an ostrich egg."

The Maple-leafer offered a free tip to American producers for their guidance in future war films. The grenade is about the size and shape of a pear and you never throw it but hurl it, because you will snap your elbow to splinters if you try to throw them, especially Paul's size the way Paul did it.

WARFARE IN MOVIES

Well, next there was a tank. This was certainly the Slivvers of the whole tank circus. Both ends were "front." The funny design wouldn't have caused too much mirth—it was when the tank began to charge that the boys from Festubert and Messines howled for the author.

One turn of the crank and — zip! That old tank raced right out of the picture, going like a Fifth Avenue bus. And the caterpillars were stock-still, not turning a single tread.

Well, let's see, what else?

Hard to Recognize Tommies

Oh, yes; the Russian general got his share of laughs when he crashed into the scene wearing an American officers' barracks cap and a cosmopolitan kind of coat. The British Tommies in the crowd failed at first to recognize their brother Tommies of the film, the latter being camouflaged under the wrong kind of a trench hat. These helmets were recognizable as being French, or at least more like the French iron millinery.

Once or twice some American ambulancers raced on to a nice smooth battlefield with a great big Stars and Stripes and Tricolor flying at the stern of each car. Out of special consideration for Paul's rank as star of the piece, one car made a special trip for him, leaving lots of other wounded lying about the ground, although there was room in the car for at least four more. And anyway, if they had waited a minute, Paul could have walked in because, as it developed later, all he had was a headache—or maybe it was a hang-over.

Just Like Old Times

There were Boches wearing spiked helmets in this day when the enemy troops have been wearing their distinctive style of steel helmets for a couple of years. Soldiers were shown in action without their gas masks at the alert position. No, by, golly, they didn't have any masks at all.

A German prince is shown leading his men into a regular dog-fight of a street battle and presumably shouting "Hoch!" or "Bock!"

The Crown Prince will feel flattered if he sees this part because they do say he never takes chances nearer the line than division H. Q.

Paul is the fair-haired boy to fool them all. He manages to go right through our own lines (this is the West Front, too) and through the German ranks, going at least 75 miles an hour on a lathery horse without ever seeing a German except the Prince, who is abducting the pretty nurse in an automobile. Paul shins up a tree in broad day, climbs into the window of the Prince's bedroom and shoots him.

It seems that the sentries they usually have around a Prince's place are all out in back of the studio shooting craps when this part of the film is made. Anyway, they let Paul get by without the slightest challenge.

So they'll probably be courtmartialed and executed.

And it will serve them right, too, because it would be a shame to let everybody connected with "On to Berlin" get off without punishment.