

# THE SCREEN

## Johnny Weissmuller, Crack Swimmer Makes His Film Debut as a Wild Man of the Jungle.

TARZAN, THE APE MAN, an adaptation of Edgar Rice Burroughs's story; directed by W. S. Van Dyke; produced by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. At the Capitol.

Harry Holt ..... Neil Hamilton  
Jane Parker ..... Maureen O'Sullivan  
James Parker ..... C. Aubrey Smith  
Mrs. Cutten ..... Doris Lloyd  
Beamish ..... Forrester Harvey  
Riano ..... Ivory Williams  
Tarzan ..... John Weissmuller

By MORDAUNT HALL.

Youngsters home from school yesterday found the Capitol a lively place, with all sorts of thrills in the picture "Tarzan, the Ape Man," and Johnny Weissmuller as the hero; a so-called ape man; lions and leopards as villains, apes for comedy relief, and elephants that aroused one's sympathy and admiration.

It is a cleverly photographed film and, although some adults may doubt that Mr. Weissmuller kills two lions and a leopard with a knife after a prolonged struggle, there is good enough camera trickery for lads and lassies and mayhap a few parents to believe that Johnny Weissmuller took his life in his hands when he agreed to act in this jungle feature.

Another player who has a rough time is Maureen O'Sullivan, who plays Jane Parker, the heroine of this pictorial transcription of Edgar Rice Burroughs's tale. Miss O'Sullivan is snatched from the ground and carried by Tarzan to his abode in the trees. Tarzan, being an excellent terms with apes whose lingo he appears to know, warns these beasts that the white girl is not to be killed or harmed. At least one presumes this, for, ape man or not, he falls in love with Jane and she with him. His vocabulary of English is as limited as that of a dog, and therefore it is all the more amusing when the girl, after trying to teach the jungle man to say "You" and "Me," asks him to let her see the color of his eyes. But she appreciates that Tarzan cannot understand her and so she, in spite of being a captive for the second time, coolly suggests that he knock when he enters her boudoir.

The scenes wherein Tarzan swings from tree to tree and takes a high dive into a lake are done most effectively. He makes a peculiar cry, a noise like blowing on a comb covered with paper, when he requires assistance. The elephants are usually on the qui vive and they lumber along to Tarzan and help him or his friends.

This fantastic affair is filmed with a sense of humor. W. S. Van Dyke, producer of "Trader Horn," was at the helm in the making of this tale, in which Harry Holt, Jane, James Parker, Jane's father, and others are bent on trying to find the legendary spot known as "Elephants' burial ground," where there is supposed to be millions of dollars' worth of ivory. Whether there is or not matters little, for old Parker, played by C. Aubrey Smith, never lives to tell, and Jane elects to stay in the jungle with Tarzan, who, it might be said, is an apt pupil in learning to talk English as time goes on. It is

to be construed that he who seeks the ivory will meet his end before he can get his men to dig up the tusks. Perhaps it is the curse of the elephants.

As a side issue here there are a number of hippopotamuses who take great pride in extending their cavernous mouths. Mr. Van Dyke probably brought some of the pictures of the wild beasts back from his trip to Africa, but through crafty ideas and neat photography Messrs. Aubrey Smith, Neil Hamilton, who appears as Henry Holt; Maureen O'Sullivan and others find themselves, or their shadows, in the midst of Africa. And besides lions, leopards and what not, there are also dwarfed blacks and real savages, some of them with amazing decorations on their physiognomies.

Mr. Weissmuller does good work as Tarzan and Miss O'Sullivan is alert as Jane. Mr. Aubrey Smith makes the most of his part.

### An Italian Production.

ZAPPATORE, an Italian musical romance, with Gustavo Sereno, Tina Renaldi, Silvio Orsino, Mina Violetto and Anna Martelli; directed by Gustavo Sereno; music by F. Albano; a Napoli Film production. At the Harris Theatre.

Almost engulfed in great waves of old-fashioned moving picture sentiment, an interesting Italian musical film, with about one-half of one per cent conversation, arrived at the Harris Theatre yesterday afternoon under the name "Zappatore." Built around the Neapolitan popular song of the same name, "Zappatore" is the story of a young law student who spends the hard-earned money of his peasant parents in luxurious living in Naples, and fails to graduate. He is sent away from home in disgrace and finally wins the coveted degree through the aid of the Count whose daughter becomes his bride.

But in elaborating this story the director has brought to the screen some excellent scenes of life in the provinces and in Naples itself, backed up by agreeable music and capable acting—Signor Sereno and Signora Renaldi, as the country couple whose honest toil has brought them a modest fortune. Signor Orsino is natural as the son, Signora Martelli is an interesting adventuress and Signorina Violetto is captivating as the motherless daughter of the kind-hearted nobleman who knows how to appreciate real human values wherever he finds them.

Spectators who have seen the beauties of Naples will especially appreciate the lovely views, and everybody will agree that the young couple are enjoying their honeymoon under ideal conditions. The captions are in both Italian and English. Ria Rosa, a popular Neapolitan singer, appears on the screen in "Sott' e Canelle" and other songs as an additional attraction. H. T. S.

### In Hungary.

DIE CSIKOS BARONESS, a German musical film, with Gretl Theimer, Paul Vincenti, Ida Wuest, Julius Falkenstein et al.; directed by J. and L. Fleck. At the

## Tarzan the Ape Man

M-G-M production and release, featuring Johnny Weissmuller, directed by W. S. Van Dyke. Story from the 'Tarzan' series of novels by Edgar Rice Burroughs, with adaptation by Cyril Hume; dialog by Ivor Novello. Cameramen, Harold Rosson and Clyde de Vinna; film editors, Ben Lewis and Tom Held. At the Capitol, New York, March 25. Running time, 70 mins.

Harry Holt.....Neil Hamilton  
Jane Parker.....Maureen O'Sullivan  
James Parker.....C. Aubrey Smith  
Mrs. Cutten.....Doris Lloyd  
Beamish.....Forrester Harvey  
Riano.....Ivory Williams

A jungle and stunt picture, done in deluxe style and carrying large draw possibilities from the following of the Burroughs book series. Tricky handling of fantastic atmosphere, a fine, artless performance by the Olympic athlete that represents the absolute best that could be done with the character and the nationwide interest that attaches to the printed original looks like sure-fire boxoffice.

Picture itself, aside from the book interest, will carry the release, which has multiple angles of appeal. Footage is loaded with a wealth of sensational wild animal stuff. Suspicion is unavoidable that some of it is cut-in material left over from the same producer's 'Trader Horn' (done by the same director, by the way). These sequences have the stamp of verity, laying a convincing background for other matter that must have been done by technical tricks. The real thing is so obviously genuine that when they do work with a camera trick conviction is so set that the well-managed phonies never arouse suspicion.

The idyllic side of the story has been shrewdly handled and fortified by romantic settings and pictorial beauty that entirely disarm the grotesque situation of a civilized English girl falling in love with a young jungle savage, be he ever so ideal in stature and courage. Sequence of the young people splashing about a forest pool, for instance, has in it enough of visual beauty to discount any feeling of unreasonableness in the romantic situation. Be the situation however implausible, the mere poetic beauty of the backgrounds makes it all charming.

Some of the stunt episodes are grossly overdone, but once more the production skill and literary treatment in other directions compensates for exaggerations. Tarzan is pictured as achieving impossible feats of strength and daring. One of them has him battling single-handed and armed only with an inadequate knife, not only with one lion, but with a succession of a panther and two lions, and saved at the last minute from still a third big cat only by the friendly help of an elephant summoned by a call of distress in jungle language.

Some of these incidents invited a mild giggle, but startlingly graceful leaps among the tree tops by Weissmuller, swinging through the branches on creeper vines and bending tree boughs provide the progress of the weird tale with persuasive action. The athletic Johnny, in short, makes Tarzan believable, because he does it with seeming ease and naturalness the things that Tarzan would do.

The wild animal stuff is remarkably well managed. There is, for one thing, a monkey in the simian colony, of which Tarzan is a part, a medium-sized chimpanzee that is the last word in animal acting, the ultimate in animal high comedy,

fleeing in terror from a pursuing lion, carrying messages for Tarzan, or making friends with the girl.

Picture has its thrills. One of them is Tarzan's swimming of a wide river, pursued by alligators, only to be saved in the nick of time by a friendly hippopotamus which swims up, takes the hero on its back and ferries him safely to shore. This trick was accomplished with utmost realism, although the inference is obvious that it was a device. What carried it over was a previous sequence showing a river full of hippopotami, probably a dozen or 15, and likely a cut-in from the genuine stuff gathered for 'Trader Horn.' Once the idea was planted the subsequent trick slipped by.

Story that introduces the Tarzan character is slight, but played by the cast assembled with simple directness that makes it as acceptable as possible. An English trader (C. Aubrey Smith) and his young partner (Neil Hamilton) are about to start in search of the traditional elephants' graveyard where ivory abounds, when the elder man's daughter from England (Maureen O'Sullivan) appears at the trading post and insists upon going along. The three start on their dangerous project with a crowd of African natives. The adventures grow out of their travels, ending with their capture by a band of pigmies (where they gathered half a hundred dwarfs for the purpose is another Hollywood miracle) and escape when Tarzan once more calls upon his elephant friends for a final sequence recall, by its rush and whirl, the finish of 'Chang.'

Miss O'Sullivan acquits herself well in a difficult role, while the performance of Weissmuller really makes the picture. Whether the swimming champ will ever find another such outre role to play is the barrier to his career on the screen, but for this production he's a smash.

**Rush.**

# W.P. „Tarzan“ 1913

Im Primus-Palast

Edgar Rice Burroughs' Erzählungen vom Waldmenschen Tarzan hätten nur dann verfilmt werden dürfen, wenn man dazu die gleich beflügelte Phantasie aufbrachte, mit der sie geschrieben wurden. Aber auch der zweite Versuch — der erste wurde noch in der Stummfilm-Zeit gemacht — ist gescheitert, mußte scheitern, weil Märchen und spekulative Sensation sich einander ausschließen. Van Dyles Regie baut vor uns nicht nur ein Talmi-Afrika auf, dem man die Hollywooder Kulisse nur zu sehr anmerkt, er bevölkert es auch mit Tieren, deren Dressur jede Illusion vollends zerstört, trotz der Tierkämpfe, trotz der Versicherung im Programmheft, „daß alles nur auf der Leinwand lebt“.

Oder grade deswegen. Leinwand-Leben: Das ist es, wenn eine Londoner Schöne in den afrikanischen Urwald mit sechs Koffern angereist kommt, sich mit Creme das Gesicht wäscht und sich in den Waldmenschen verliebt; wenn sich Tarzan mit westeuropäischer Ritterlichkeit nachts vor der Höhle schlafen legt, in die er das Mädchen verschleppt hat; wenn — bis zum Happy end, so üblich wie in jedem beliebigen Spielfilm, stolpert man oft über solche Zwiespältigkeiten von wilder Natur und gelackter Kultur.

Als Tarzan hat man das Schwimmwunder Johnny Weißmüller herausgestellt. Ein Prachtkerl, wenn er seinen durchtrainierten schlanken Körper von Ast zu Ast schwingt, wenn er sich von hohem Felsen mit kühnem Kopfsprung ins Wasser stürzt und seine Crawl-Kunst zeigt. Ueber seine und der andern Darstellung aber am besten