## SPEAKING CANDIDLY

## MY FRIEND FLICKA

ALTHOUGH our little man is not prepared to stand up in his stirrups to express his enthusiasm for this picture, those people-we have all met some of them - who regard horses as being far more lovable, intelligent, and beautiful than humans, will undoubtedly hail it as the best picture of this or any other year (as the advertisement-writers so reticently put it). All through this 89-minute Technicolour version of Mary O'Hara's novel, droves of magnificent horses gallop, canter, or browse across sun-drenched vistas of lovely Utah scenery, with the camera's attention focused mainly on one of them, a little sorrel filly. The film's equestrian and scenic attractions are so great that one is likely to overlook that the seven human members of the cast act almost as naturally as the horses-particularly Roddy McDowall as the small boy who learns to grow up through being given the wild filly to tame and cherish. telling this simple, idyllic story the director has kept himself under close rein: there is a commendable absence of mawkish sentiment. Only the colour cameraman is allowed to take the bit between his teeth, and no one should begrudge him the opportunity.

## DAYS OF GLORY

SHORTAGE of manpower in
Hollywood is probably the
chief reason why this film is
heralded as containing a cast of
"new personalities." Now I am
all for new faces on the screen—in fact,
I'm all for anything which upsets the

all for new faces on the screen—in fact, I'm all for anything which upsets the Star System—and there are certainly some interesting new faces in Days of Glory. But it is not very much good having an interesting face if you haven't got somewhere interesting to put it. And

that's the trouble here.

The production, by a gentleman named Casey Robinson, is about the activities of a band of guerilla fighters behind the German lines in Russia. At least, that's where they're supposed to be, but they always stay right in the middle of Hollywood. Mr. Casey Robinsbn had, I think, some good ideas to start with - there's a certain realism about the scenery and some of the characters in the opening scenes - but he lost them as he went along and as his propagandist fervour became mixed up with Hollywood clichés. So we get, in the guerilla hide-out, the two clowns who squabble fraternally; the beautiful enig-matic girl, a ballerina from Moscow, who threatens to distract the comrades from the stern path of duty; a good deal of semi-sadistic talk (and action) about the sheer joy of killing Germans; and finally a welter of slaughter and sacrifice in which the guerillas fight to the last man (and woman). This climax would be a lot more effective if the last man and woman did not try to recite the Red Army oath together above the noise of gunfire. I am assured that it was the Red Army oath; I thought at the time it must be the Soviet marriage service.

(continued on next page)



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