

AN ARMY WITH BANNERS: "The confident flower of French chivalry" drawn up on the field of Agincourt. Below, right: Katharine (Renee Asherson) and Alice (Ivy St. Helier) on the battlements at Rouen.

TO begin with, the picture transports us to Elizabethan London, and we float across the Thames and enter the newly-erected Globe Theatre. We see the gathering of the audience, the preparation of the actors, and early scenes of the play acted in the exuberant style of that day under conditions that were so familiar to the poet himself. Then the hampering confines of the Globe dissolve and

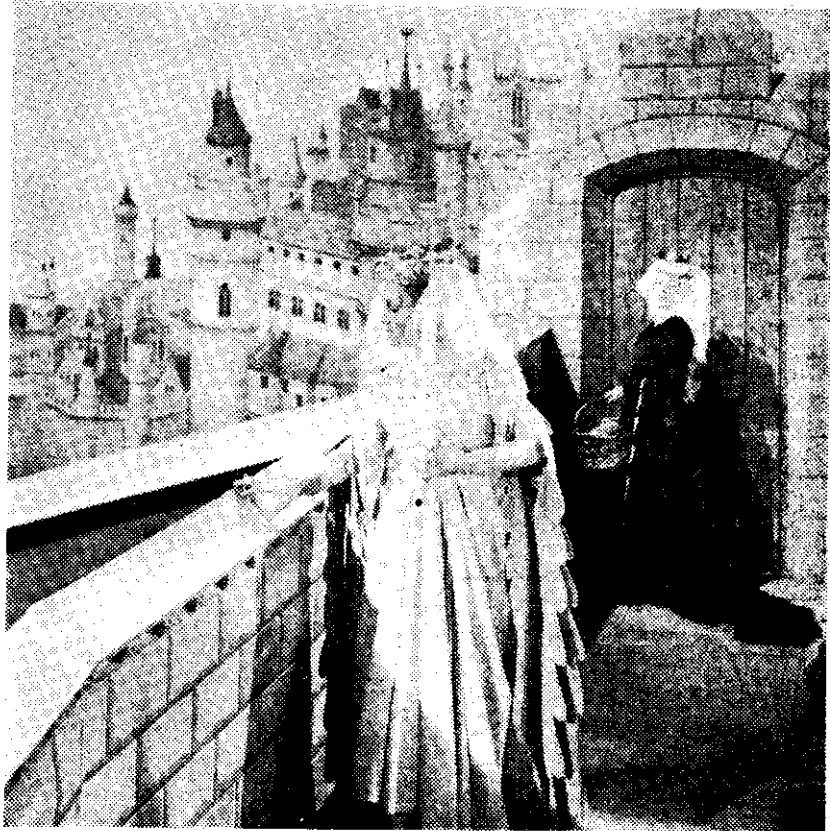
... with imagin'd wing our swift scene flies
In motion of no less celerity
Than that of thought

to the vasty fields of France and to the French Court. Not a France that is mere earth, but a France of the medieval romances, of knights of chivalry, depicted as the exquisite illuminations of some precious manuscript of Froissart's Chronicles would depict them, in colours of unreal loveliness—in other words, a France conjured up by the imagination of Shakespeare as it peopled the pages of Holinshed's *Chronicles*.

We see the exhausted English soldiery waiting through the night for the expected doom; we see the confident flower of French chivalry wishing for the dawn anticipating their triumph. We see



IN THE GLOBE THEATRE, LONDON: A scene from the earlier part of the play, which the film here shows to us as it would have been presented to an audience of Shakespeare's own day. Olivier, crowned, is next to Felix Aylmer, as the Archbishop of Canterbury.



the most terrific charge of the knights, and the deadly patience of the English archers. And then, after an agony of suspense, we are given an illuminating flash of military tactics by which we see how it came about that the English won the Battle of Agincourt.

Last, we see the exquisitely fantastic love-making of Henry and Katharine.

And through it all we are feasted with pictures that are so beautiful in their colour and composition that it is with pain that we see them pass away; and

we wonder how all that loveliness can be shut up in a tin container till the next night's showing.

It is difficult to praise too highly the men who have given us this feast—the producer, historical research workers, the artists and actors, the photographers, and William Walton for his splendidly fitting music. To see a film such as this is to undergo an experience which cannot but stir one's spirits to high endeavour and tune one's feelings to the gentle touch of beauty.