

Tommy Atkins. The Canadians are also in the habit of receiving many parcels—both from England and Canada. There are bound to be delays and "accidents" with Christmas parcels, owing to the tremendous strain which will at that season of the year be placed upon the resources of the postal "machine." Everything depends upon the senders of parcels religiously carrying out the instructions issued in respect of parcel mail for the Front. If any readers have failed to receive parcels which they know have been dispatched by friends, it may be of interest to them to find out if the senders duly carried out the instructions. But it will be seen from the following reference to the subject that it will be practically hopeless to expect any parcels that have not been properly packed to turn up!

From December 1st, the maximum weight for a single parcel sent from England to France or Flanders has been limited to 7 lbs. As far back as November 24th the British newspapers contained notices to the following effect:—

In military interests, the War Office points out, it is necessary to limit parcel traffic to the troops during the Christmas season, and the public are requested to send only articles of real utility. Fruit, perishable articles of all descriptions, bottles, pudding basins, &c., are prohibited, and will not be accepted for transmission.

All parcels must be packed in covers of canvas, linen, or other strong material. Parcels which do not comply with these requirements are *unlikely to reach their destination safely*, and if observed in course of post *will be returned to the senders*. The name and address of the sender must be written on the outside, and parcels which do not comply with this condition will be refused.

We shall comfort ourselves with the reflection that we should be grateful for small mercies.

Petty Thefts at the Base.

THERE are some men too small to be placed under a microscope. Frequently, particularly of late, there have been brought to our notice cases of petty thefts which, though of small account in themselves, show that there are men wearing the badge of the Maple Leaf who are nothing less than uniformed thieves. These men hold

down *soft* jobs miles away from the firing line, and their particular *métier* is to indulge in petty larceny. They are not courageous enough to thieve on a large scale, but pilfer whatever they imagine will not be missed. And this pilfering is done at the expense of their comrades in the firing line or in the rest camps adjacent to the firing line. We will quote one concrete instance. A couple of weeks ago a consignment of socks was received from Canada for distribution to sick and wounded men lying in the hospitals and rest camps near the front line. Several of the socks contained this brief note:—"Hope you will enjoy the chocolate and cigarettes enclosed." But there was no sign of cigarettes or of chocolate. Perhaps



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leaving the notes intact was an oversight on the thieves' part, but it also might have been a deliberate attempt to add insult to injury. Men whose sense of true comradeship has been strangled by rapacity and greed cannot be expected to possess any humane feelings. These blackguards give their comrades a bad name, and we cannot blame the men in the firing line if they have aught but a withering contempt for the men whose duties keep them in safety miles away from the scene of the fighting. "Graft" is as old as the mountains, and doubtless we shall have to continue to put up with it in one form or another, but the English

language fails us when we try to find an adequate description for men who can stoop so low as to rob the wounded and the sick.

R. W. T.

Grin!

(A Parody on R. W. Service's Poem of the same name.)

IF you joined the First Contingent and you're sorry that you came—

Grin!

If your Sergeant isn't friendly, and your credit's on the wane—

Grin!

Don't let his black looks scare you—he is only seeking fame;
Keep smiling, though you're itching to "get back" at him again

Be cheery, and you'll find Life's *jake* if you but "play the game"—

So Grin!

If lost is your smoke helmet, and the O.C. cuts up rough—

Grin!

Seven days of "First Field's" nothing, though it *does* sound rather tough—

Grin!

If your pay gets lost in transit (and sure that is bad enough!),

Why, what's the use of whining? You'd only "trade" the stuff

And give it those dear people who can never charge enough!

So Grin!

The mud may reach your armpits—(but so it does the Hun!)—

Grin!

Your boots may leak like sewers, while from out them streamlets run—

Grin!

The "pariah-dogs" may glitter as they saunter in the sun.

Don't heed them. Grin! And you will find a new life has begun.

You've stood the test of *Service*, and the man in you has won!

So Grin!

If you're feeling kind of "lousy," and a hot bath would be *jake*—

Grin!

Don't grumble if a tired S.M. a nice excuse should fake—

Grin!

If the dear things should torment you, and you from sleep should wake—

Be tender! Shoot them one by one and burn them at the stake!

Then take your shirt and throw it, with a big splash, in some lake!

And Grin!

Don't let the loss of breakfast or of dinner spoil your view—

Grin!

Your daily pay of "Dollar-ten" will surely pull you through—

Grin!

The cooks may rave, the Q.M. swear, till everything is "blue";

"Lost Rations" had long whiskers ere you joined Sam Hughes's "crew."

Don't worry! Go on grinning, and see the damned thing through!

And Grin!