

Answers to Correspondents.

ENQUIRER.—The names Harlock, Hutton, Huntley, Head, &c., are all spelt with an initial H, which should be pronounced.

MINSTREL.—Yes, we heard that it was intended to start up a circus in opposition to your show, but no details are available.

S.H.B.—Our advice is to leave Norwich alone until bye-and-bye.

W.E.C.—We note your complaints and agree that you must have been hungry, but where were your emergency rations?

E.B.J.—Leave is not granted to Denmark.

X.Y.Z.—Your enquiry, *re* the Shoe at Blug Street, has been referred to Captain McGreer.

The Troubles of "Props."

You see, 'twas like this. I volunteered for the job of "Props" at our Minstrel Show. To bring the "end men" on the stage it had been arranged to pull off a stunt with an armoured anti-aircraft car. For weeks they had been painting it. Nobby did most of the work, being a born artist. He could paint so realistic that the O.C. said as how we'd lose our right to the protection of the Red Cross if a German aeroplane seen it, so we had to take it in the Hospital to finish. Nobby sure was a nut, an' his rivets, wheels, and searchlight beat the band for accuracy of detail. For the gun we was goin' to use a piece of stove pipe, but we couldn't buy it in this one-horse town, so we took a piece of roofing off the building we was billeted in and used that, and it sure was some gun. The whole car was painted in the latest varticust—or whatever they call themselves—style. It wasn't what you'd call gaudy—jes' plain red and yaller, with bits of green and blue here and there.

Well, the night of the show arrived, and we took the outfit up the Hall. The idea was that Jimy was to spot a 'plane, and after a violent discussion as to what kind of 'plane it was, Jack Higham was to 'phone to the gunner to shoot at the blame thing. A shell was then to hit the car—a tremendous explosion—and the car was to be run off of to the wings, leaving the funny guys on the stage.

Well, the orchestra started up, and the opening chorus was put over, and then we moved on to the stage. There was Jack Higham, Jimmy Goode, Ed. Barrows, and "Stinse"—the corner men—behind the car, with me and Smithy holding it up and carrying the props. I fell over the strut holding up the wings, and said something as I was glad the Padre didn't hear. But I recovered myself and carried on.

Well, "there's strange things done on the marge of Lake La Barge," allright, allright; but there was stranger things done behind that dog-gone car that night. The first part was allright except that the car wobbled so, Jimmy's binoculars—a couple of Vichy bottles tied together with adhesive—fell off and was smashed. The audience seen the joke and laughed, though I couldn't see anything to laugh at. Then Jack was to telephone to the engine-room. My cue to ring the bell (taken off the Orderly-room cycle) was 'telephone,' but I couldn't find the bell. "Stinse" was trying to help out, but couldn't make the grade as he was wearing gloves. I dropped my hat, an' grabbed the bell out'n his hand and I got it to ring, but long after Central had 'em connected. Well, then they started to argue about aeroplanes in front, and before I knew where I was, they was goin' to fire the gun. Jack got up on the gun platform and then I had to fire off a pistol. Well, Jack blew out flour from the gun before I was ready, and then I couldn't find the pistol, though I had stuck it in me pants so as to have it handy. Well, Ed. seen what was happening, seen the "gat," grabbed it and fired it, just as a man in the wings was pulling the shell out'n the gun with a piece of string. The darn string broke and the shell fell on to the stage. Then Finn hit a biscuit box with a hammer to show the shell had exploded, and let go a chicken. We sure had that chicken trained. It flew out over the stage, and landed on the bonnet of the car. Then it turned it's back on the audience. Well, I don't like to say what happened. I sure thought it was goin' to lay an egg. Next the shell was to burst, but some guy had taken my cap to sweep away the broken glass. I had the powder for the 'terrific explosion' in it, an' as I couldn't find it there weren't no bang, and we run the dam' contraption off the stage.

That finished the act.

Now, I'm wondering if I've lost my job.

Extracts From Orders :—

786. HORSES.—Horses are not be tied to trees, as they are liable to bark and bite them.
413. DRESS.—When on pass, N.C.O.'s and men will wear the belt only.

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