

Hun's marksmanship. Only twenty-five men will be allowed on the field at once after the performance to gather shell-noses, pieces of shrapnel, etc., to send home for Christmas. Anyone causing a disturbance will be sentenced to bring in a yard of German wire or in extreme cases, two field-guns.

R. S.

✱ ✱ ✱
Smithy!

An old soldier's story.

Last summer in Town, I'd occasion to meet

A hero, returning in glory.

The day was in June, on account of the heat

We adjourned to a snug little place of retreat

Where he told a remarkable story.

He coughed the dry cough that a sergeant'll hear

When he's issuing out a rum-ration ;
He looked at me vaguely—his meaning was clear.

So taking the hint, I rang up for a beer
Which he perished in true British fashion.

"I aint one as boasts an' I means wot I say ;

You take it from me there is capers
Take place in the Ditch jest over the way,

An' sich things is happenin' every day
Wot you don't never see in the papers.

Just take for example, it struck me by chance

Of a case wot is very old 'Ist'ry,
'Baht a gallon o' rum that 'as led us a dance

Through two parts o' Belgium an' 'alf over France

An' the bloomin' thing still is a myst'ry.

The kick o' that rum 'ud enrage a giraffe

An' we aint got no necks 'alf as mighty,

But we goes every night for a keg and a 'alf

'Fore Fritzzy begins with 'is evenin' Straf'

And don't take no chance of a Blighty.

Now Smithy arrove from the depot at Brum.

An' at rations was jest a young stager,

So the corporal told 'im to stay back an' come

By 'imself when 'e'd drawn out our issue of rum

From the Company-Sergeant-Major.

We sets off alone, an' leaves Smithy be'ind

An' 'oofs up a trench like a river ;
We all felt a little bit merry inclined
For never a man 'ad a thought in 'is mind

That the rum 'ad gone wanderin' for ever.

We waits for a while an' we lights up a fag,

Not one of us felt the least flurried,
We sat on a fire-step chewing the rag

Till we noticed the time was beginnin' to drag

An' we all became absolute worried.

We sees the C.O. in a regular way
(An' believe me the ol' man's a terror),

'E swore an' declared as 'e'd stop off our pay

A penny or tuppence or thruppence a day

Until we 'ad straightened the error.

There's times w'en a reg'ment 'll kick up the dooce

An' do things as they're never paid to.

Since we was all worryin' abaht this 'ere juice,

We shouted to Fritz as we'd patch up a truce

Till we found w'ere ol' Smithy 'ad strayed to.

We details a party an' goes out to see
W'ere the pore little perisher wanders,

An' beginnin' at A, we winds up at P,
An' searches an' searches till finally we

'Ad looked almost all over Flanders.

The sneers o' the Terriers an' Kitchener's rips

Was fierce—Oh, we didn't 'alf cop it.

The Johnnie Canadians, all smackin' their lips,

Use to shout "Say, Jack, wotcha got in yer hips?"

Yells the Gurkhas "Sh'rab-wallah, he hop it!"

We went up to fust lines ; back to reserves,

Till the thing knocked the lot of us barmy

For it's more than any ol' soldier deserves

An' to cut it all short we got down wi' the nerves,

An' so did the whole bloomin' Army.

For a month the Battalion was sent to the Base

Till the story grew into a myth,

But time, so to speak, wont never efface

The memories o' that there perishin' chase

For our rum an' for poor little Smithy."

W. W. M.

✱ ✱ ✱

A Madras Incident.

In the early nineties I was lying in Madras Harbour. "Good Friday" came along and most of us wanted to shake a leg ashore. Leave up to then had been sparingly granted. However, with a whole day ahead of us, a few got leave to spend twenty-four hours on terra firma.

Arriving ashore we had tiffin, then hired coaches and a guide, doing all the sights in record time. Madras at that time was in a restless state, and seething with native agitators. Also the religious feast of Ramadan was in progress. It was considered unsafe for Europeans to prowl around at night, all stores being closed and every place in darkness. After dinner, the boys were feeling just fit, and it was proposed to view some of the religious processions. The proprietor begged us to get escorts to

our boats, and not attempt any fooling around the native quarter. He might as well have talked to a stone wall. I knew he was right, but had to keep with the bunch for protection. Well ; off we went, and presently came to a temple all lit up and full of natives. At the same time up came a procession consisting of a hand cart, with some figure in it, surrounded by naked torch-bearers. They looked like a lot of devils, grinning and jumping around. I wormed my way into the Temple and got a pretty good view of some girls doing a Nautch-dance when a gentlemanly-looking old native tapped me on the shoulder and whispered, "Don't you know that Europeans are not allowed in here?" I begged his pardon and edged my way out to the steps. Arrived there, what was my horror to behold my crazy pals toss one of their number into the procession cart, man the handle, and set off down the street full tilt. I slipped down the steps and round the pallisading—it was no healthy place for me. The natives, I think, at first were paralyzed by the audacity of the thing, as they could only stand and stare. I had only got round the corner when the wildest yells broke out. I ran hard, but things began to fly around me, which must have hurt my feelings, for I foolishly stopped and faced the mob. I had just turned when a half coconut husk hit me on the side of the head, fracturing my skull and laying my left eye on my cheek. I was a bit dizzy, and before I quite knew it, they were round me in a howling mob. It seemed to come back to me in a flash, the words of an old sergeant, "Boy, if ever you get in a tight hole with the natives, go for their stomachs." I did that same with a will. How I got out I don't quite know, but found myself running like a deer down a side street. My pals never stopped ; they made the wharf and the ship all right, while I made record time to an Ambulance Station and police protection. I was escorted on board by the police (some disgrace!) and found my pals safe on board, and of course, I was "it" sure enough. Next morning the "carpet" for me, before the "Old Man." I was senior ; I should have known better ; it was awful to think of my leading my juniors astray in the manner I had done ; besides disgracing the service. Six months' shore leave stopped ! Laughed at by everyone ! I was in "sick bay" for a couple of weeks, when the riots started. The coolies burned up some jute factories and played the devil generally, killing some civilians and one officer. Our Marines were ordered ashore and I managed to stow myself in the Lieutenant's boat, having coaxed the medico to get along with him. Well, I got a little of my own back and with added interest too. The city was soon under martial control and some of the ringleaders got short shrift. Moral, boys ! "Don't fool with a 'Joss Cart.'"

MARINE.