

howitzers, and the rats still gambol playfully in the straw.

The time is passing very quickly, and the Colonel rises to speak. To-night he is hardly recognisable as the same stern justice who holds court at nine-thirty every morning. He speaks of the peculiar conditions under which we are fighting—so near the firing line and yet in comparative safety—of the cheerfulness of the men, not only in this, but in other battalions, and of the certainty of victory. Then, drawing on experiences gained in the South African campaign, he touches on a subject very near and dear to the hearts of us all—the life and adventures of a bottle of RUM from the time of its birth until it is killed by the private soldier.

"Bonnie Dundee," the regimental march, then "God Save the King," and the concert is over, and we go back through the mud to our billets, much happier and with freshened memories of home and of all that is dear to us.

"Us."

OUR "FEETBALL" MATCH.

THE PIONEERS *versus* THE TRANSPORT.

It had been a freezing night, and the ground was in a perfect condition for the game which was to decide the destination of the rum issue (of the losing side). Many a quaking heart beat under a service tunic, many a stalwart man thought of home and mother as he faced the opposing side, fearful of what would be his end when once the battle was over; but each and every man was willing and ready to lay down his life for the issue of rum. Many the stakes that change hands. Millions of dollars are staked, with the hope of the stakers becoming multi-millionaires in quick order. The genial referee approaches, hearts beat a little faster, the omens of fate kindle in every man's breast. Whist! not a word is said as the referee raises his whistle to his lips, a breathless silence pervades the atmosphere. The battle has commenced—the battle on which the fate of nations depends.

The Transport, with a mighty rush, endeavour to take the Pioneer position by storm, but nothing doing, thanks to the com-

bined efforts of Scotty and Mike, who stem the tide of battle and take the ball into the enemies' quarter, only to be repulsed and having to fall back on their half-backs, who nobly defend their position against overwhelming odds. But fate had decreed that the victory was not to be theirs, and, with incredible courage, the Transport general advances to the attack, and heavily bombards the position of the Q.M.S., who is defeated, in spite of wonderful tactical operations, and the first death is to the Pioneers, who lose their first goal. The mud-stained heroes once more take their positions, and the desperate struggle is once again on. Skirmishes, flank attacks, bombardments from the rear, fouts in the back, and all the science of modern warfare flash and dart before the bedazzled eyes of thousands of cheering spectators. Concentrated rushes and skilful combinations mark the progress of the game as the Pioneers advance under cover of the dirt on their perspiring faces, determined to do or die. Deep were the plans that had been laid, stealthy were the steps of the oncoming victors; the enemy were taken completely by storm, and before them the oncoming horde scatter as chaff before the wind. The Pioneers C.O., taking advantage of the route detailed Captain Gregory to advance and make terms of peace, which he did in a manner worthy of a 49er, by neatly placing the pill beneath the beams, and, honour being satisfied, it was decided to prolong the battle for a further five minutes. Again the shrill blast of the whistle, again the onslaught in which thousands bleed for the right and thousands swore at the wrong; backwards and forwards swayed the tide of battle. Wounded men fought on, too much was at stake to quit. At last, with a rush that could not be stemmed by all the armies of the world, the Transports, with a mighty attack, bomb the goal of the enemy, and, reducing it to atoms, score the final and deciding goal; and, with heads proudly poised, march in column of route from off the blood-stained field, amid the voluminous cheers of the admiring crowds, who swarm over each other in trying to catch a glimpse of these world-heralded heroes.

JUNIOUS.

Drill Sergeant (to awkward squad): "A rifle bullet will go through more than a foot of solid wood. Remember that, you block-heads!"