

THE CHINESE GANGSTER.

[It may be explained, for the benefit of those not very well informed on the establishments of Chinese Labour Companies, that "Gangers" are their native N.C.O.'s—ED.]

IT was a first-class road in the forward area, and it ran more or less parallel with the front line trenches, some 10 or 15 kilometres back of them. To say that it was a busy road is hardly a fit description, for it was fairly jammed with traffic—lorries, marching men, puffing Billies, trekking guns, supply column, motor-cars of all sizes, shapes, and makes, and the countless accessories which throng the lines of communication in an area occupied by a modern British Army.

The two pillars that stood at the porch or entrance of King Solomon's Temple could have been no more immovable than he was—that Chinese ganger standing, childlike and bland, at the gateway of the compound in which, for the time being, His Majesty's umpteenth Chinese Labour Company was making its home.

Over some twenty camouflaged bell tents, around which a five-foot barbed wire fence had been erected, this heathen warrior kept watch and ward, a sort of combination hall-porter

and car checker. I suppose he was thinking of something as he stood and watched the ever-changing procession passing in front of him, but in so far as one could see it made no more impression upon him than it did on the painted image of the crucified Christ erect on its wooden cross a few yards farther along the road, one of those numerous wayside sanctuaries which abound along the French highways. Spectators, both Orient and Occident—side by side—and in a way oddly alike; the Chinaman, alive, yet seemingly lifeless; the Cross, without life, yet symbol of the living Christian God.

Round the bend in the road comes a shuffling band, worn and weary Huns: captured samples of the vaunted Prussian Guards, prisoners from beyond the Ridge and fresh from the Corps Cage.

Past the sightless eyes of the figure on the Cross, and slowly onward past the ganger on guard, wound the procession. Nothing in the ganger's face indicated that he was in any way interested in that stumbling, dusty band,



BIG GAME-HUNTING - STALKING THE WILY CAMOUFLAGE

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