

boot-shine and shave so ingrained that it will be second nature. We haven't noticed that sort of thing amongst the old "regulars" which are scattered throughout all the battalions. But how about the morning rum habit?

When the soldier's a soldier no more;  
When at last he has done with the war,  
Don't take it too ill,  
If you find that he still  
Has a terrible habit of "soldiering."

A.J.T.

### ODE TO A RATION BISCUIT.

O! TWICE cooked one!  
Twice cooked and overdone!  
Oh! Hardest tack!  
My teeth—both front and back—  
Are sorely put to it, in vain assailing  
Thy stony substance—every effort  
failing  
Until, imagining thy name is Fritz,  
I bare my bayonet, and thou art bits.  
They say in thee  
The Cabbage and Green Pea  
And Haricot  
And Spud are blended so  
Neatly, completely that one can't  
detect 'em  
(As good things happen when we  
don't expect 'em).  
Insert at least the thin end of the  
wedge  
And let us taste some old familiar  
Veg.!

Of nourishment  
I know that thou hast plent-  
Eous store of meat  
And useful things to eat;  
Thou art the cleverest conglomer-  
ation  
Of much in little! but an ideal  
Ration  
In spite of beans, and farinas, and  
fats,  
Thou bears't too close a likeness unto  
Spratts!

Oh doubly baked,  
How have my molars ached  
After a bout  
In which they've suffered rout  
On thy inexorable flanks! Oh  
ruthless  
Bane of the dentist! Spectre of the  
toothless!  
One can but re-attack, and start  
anew  
To hammer off thee more than one  
can chew!

I call to mind,  
In years long left behind,  
On Trail and Track,  
How Damper and Flapjack  
For Grub or Tucker I have cooked  
and eaten;  
And staked a fine digestion, aye and  
beaten  
The woeful messes. But 'gainst  
thee to risk it  
Giving thee Victory as I take the  
biscuit!

'Gainst hunger's prick  
True thou hast proved a brick;  
Oft hast thou saved  
A life or two and staved  
Starvation off; and those who  
question whether  
More efficacious were a chunk of  
leather  
Are ingrates, or have never felt the  
pinch  
Or known the hour their belly bands  
to cinch.

They label thee  
Iron,—Emergency.  
Thou with thy chief companion—  
Bully Beef—  
Hast done thy bit in this dire  
Armageddon  
And when all's over, and I have a  
spread on  
And feeling mellow, then I may recall  
How true thou wert a Comrade after  
all. R.M.F.  
With apologies to *The Brazier*.

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