

OUR PERIODICAL PLAYLET

An Uutruthful Trench Episode.

Dramatis Personae.

Fritz. Caretaker of German trench.

Mina. Wife of Fritz.

Heinie. The Hired Man.

A sergeant, a corporal of scouts and several Canadian fighting men.

Act. 1. Scene 1.

The trench opposite.

Time. 5 p. m. any old night, December 1916.

(Fritz: aged Hun person, sex-male, emerges from deep dug-out, looks at his watch, scans the dank and dismal horizon, lays his porcelain pipe on the firing step).

Fritz. (angrily)

« Mina ! Heinie ! It iss der hour of der efening strafe.

Fall in ! Lively, now, lively ! »

(Mina, an elderly Bosche beauty ; and Heinie, a shambling figure in field gray, appear from different ends of the trench and fall in).

Fritz.

« Parade — achtung !! Donner und blitzen, ass you vos.

You, Mina, gom to life und behave !

Vonce more. Parade — ACHTUNG !!!

Dot vos not so worse. Now, bay attention !

(Confidentially).

You Fritz vill man der' sausage' gun ; und keep a close watch for dose verdant trench mortars.

You, Mina, vill man der flare lights ; und be very careful none of dose forever straft Canadians creeps up und swipes der trench ven ve vos not looking.

Both of you, if you vant me, I vill be my dug-out, within. »

(The two shuffle off in opposite directions.

Fritz looks anxiously round, mutters to himself with super venom : — « Gott strafe dose Canadians. Vy der teufel can't they let us enjoy der fruits of our most glorious achievements ? » — resumes his pipe and descends laborious into the dug-out).

End of Act. 1.

Act. 2. Scene 1.

The Canadian trench.

(Group of battalion scouts are seen seated around a brazier, cooking « mulligan »).

Scout Corporal. (sadly).

« Mulligan's no darn good without turnips. »

Private.

« There's some 1914 turnips over by the German wire. Their trench runs through an old turnip field. »

Scout Corporal. (hopefully)

« Fine, well make a real mulligan — or Blighty. Who'll come ? »

All.

« Me. »

Scout Corporal.

« One's enough. You, Shorty, bring a sand-bag. »

(The two climb over the parapet, walk over to the German wire and proceed to disinter dead turnips.)

Scene 2.

The German trench.

(Mina, attracted by the noise, fires one more than the regulation flare every half hour, and discovers the scouts at their nefarious work.)

The scouts bombard Mina with over-ripe turnips, and Mina turns in the general alarm. Heinie pumps the sausage gun for der Vaterland — and all he is worth.

Fritz crawls from his dug-out, grabs the machine-gun and begins to spray lead all over the landscape.

Safe in a shell-hole the scouts wait until things have quietened down, and then return to the trench with their turnips.)

Fritz. (later)

« Heinie, Mina, let us tank der good old German Gott for a most glorious victory. »

Act 2. Scene 3.

In Canadian trench.

(Mulligan making proceeds ad. lib.).

Scout Sergeant.

(later sleepily).

« It's a horrible war. »

Scout Corporal.

(yawning).

« Worst I was ever in. »

(They sleep.)

German official communique of following day :

An attack, in mass, made by Canadian troops on our entrenchments and fortified positions in the sector of — was repulsed with extraordinarily sanguinary losses.

The News-Editor.

THE LAST STRAW

I ain't much given to grousin' ;
Though it's every Tommie's right, —
(To tell the truth there ain't no time,
In this ere sort o' fight.)
But it makes me awful sore to see
The way they wet-nurses Fritz,
After 'e's 'ollered « Kamerad ! »
An' reached for the sky wiv 'is mitts.

It don't seem to matter a' atom
'Ow dirty an' mean' e' 'as fought,
'E gets used like a bloomin' mascot,
When 'e ought to be whipped, 'e ought.
'E gets a barf, an' a nice new shirt,
An' a good dry place to sleep,
While I flops down where I 'appens to be,
Though the mud is a metre deep.

They 'ands 'im a pick an' shovel,
An' puts 'im at mendin' roads,
Or sends 'im down to the rail-eads
To 'elp wiv the various loads.
An' fer this they pays 'im four pence a day,
In spite of ail that is done
To prisoners of war in Germany.
Bli' me ! — It takes the bun.

If it was n't for one little 'appening,
I might 'ave kept mum on me woes,
But now I'm aseeing a lurid red,
An' I'm up on the tips o' me toes : —
*I was tramping along wiv a 'ea'y pack
'An' pretty near sweatin' b'ood,
When a lorry load o' Fritz went by
'An' splashed me a l over wiv mud.*

I've played the game wiv Fritzie.
An' used 'im square an' white,
But after that I could see 'im burned
Wiv a kind of un'oly delight,
An' next time I'm up in the trenches,
An' 'ave to go over the top,
I 'ope the mud will be plentiful,
For I'm goin' to use Fritz as a mop.

R. WILLIAMS, 1st C. D. T.