

## KISMET.

"Yes, sir; I believe a man is safe until the shell comes with his number on, and then it'll dodge round the traverse and turn a few hand-springs to get him, and what is more, I don't believe mine has left Krupp's yet."

It was Sandy speaking, and it was the inevitable old topic of narrow escapes and coincidences, which somehow always happen to crop up when we are round the dug-out brazier. But Sandy got no further with his "spiel," for the rations arrived, and with them a big Canadian mail, of which, Sandy, as usual, got a big share. For Sandy has as many friends in Canada as he has in the Battalion, and such a good-natured, indefatigable lad as he helps a fellow with his friendship. No matter how miserable the weather, and the fatigue, he was always smiling and cheerful; he simply refused to get "fed-up," and fought against it as a disease.

But the reading of the mail even was interrupted, for in drifted the S.M. and corraled the bunch of us for a special working party. How a fellow hates to leave his mail half-read, especially after waiting two weeks for the "only girl," whether wife, mother, sister or fiancée, always writes something worth while, but we had to pocket our letters, adjust our respirators, and beat it.

I guess our thoughts were far away, as we wandered down the trench, for we scarce noticed the few shells that were coming over, until with a whizz-thud, a "dud" hit the trench mat, almost at Sandy's feet. 'Twas full moon and very bright, so that Sandy was able to have a good look at the shell, which, had it burst, would have cleaned up a few of us.

"It's got me number," yells Sandy, "me number down pat, and it's a 'dud.'"

We had a difficulty to persuade him not to carry the shell away, but finally he "cached" it away, declaring that "he'd have the shell-nose anyway," and off we started down the trench again, Sandy in the lead.

"Just a couple of feet and I'd have got it fair on the 'bean,' and 'napoo,' anyway, 'dud' or not," and so he kept on talking, all tickled to death with his "close one," so that he passed the "Keep low" sign where Heinie often enfilades the trench with his machine guns. So we yelled to Sandy, but as we spoke a gun rattled, and he reeled and dropped. The bullet had got him, and got him good, too. Buck chased off back to the aid-post for a stretcher, while Slim and I got a field dressing on his wound, and although we had a rough trip back to the M.O.'s dug-out, the plucky little beggar never let out a groan, but talked some about "troubling us and sorry he couldn't walk."

The M.O. could do nothing much for him but hurry him out, for, the sergeant told us, he hadn't much of a chance.

But game to the last the plucky little beggar wished us good luck, and as the Field Ambulance carried him out he called, "And don't forget, boys, like I did, that machine gun bullets don't have numbers."

They buried him the next day, and when we went out for rest we fixed his grave up.

And now as we sit around the brazier and talk about our narrow escapes, we think of Sandy, although somehow we rarely talk about him, for he is gone and we miss him; yet we don't mourn him, for it is us and those dear to him who lose most in losing Sandy. For he had gone to solve the Big Mystery, and while Sandy wasn't what you might call religious, he was a good friend, true and honest, and he never went back on a chum; kind and

thoughtful at all times, he was a good soldier and a real man, and if the Big Boss of the Universe expects any more of us than this, the future is going to be mighty hard on the rest of us.

With the coming of Spring comes sports, and as gladly as we welcomed the warm sunshine, so also did we embrace the opportunity afforded us for good, clean, healthy sport, and although not heading the honours list in the Brigade Sports Meet, we may congratulate ourselves there are lower places than that which we occupy, and that's a good sign for divisional sports. Sniping eggs and milk is good innocent amusement, but the young blood demands something more strenuous these days, and "Barkis is willin'" seems to be the slogan, for everybody is doing something, some running, some playing "ball," some football, and some "kicking," although happily there were very few entrants in this last event, and with a continuance of the *esprit de corps* shown the unit should have a very successful season.

"Practice makes perfect," and Carroll in the 220 yards and Owen in the mile certainly showed the lack of same; as also Schell and McLean in the jump. Whilst all four were successful in being "placed" and gathering points, they showed the "spring meeting feeling" too markedly to be passed up, but on present form and with the very essential training they should "carry lots of money" in the Corps sports.

Before leaving field events, mention should be made of the boys who pulled together on the tug-o'-war team. Rather than let the event pass without a "rep." team from the unit, they made one up on the field. That's the spirit, Sir Biddeley, and lots of it, eh?

The ball team, under the able management of Captain Thomas, have so far "come through with the goods," as was anticipated, for whilst not winning the Brigade championship, they clearly demonstrated how they could win the divisional. Yes. It's some lubricant, Practice. The absence of Thorsteinson from the game, owing to sickness, robbed the team of a very valuable asset, but he'll be around soon. Yes. Nig can play ball all right, and he didn't learn it in France. He's from "those pine-clad sandy slopes."

The first game of the series requires very little description, it being more of a "work-out" than a series game. "Stiky" Kribbs at one time made third base on that smooth glide of his, and that and Bessey's smart double play were the outstanding features of the game. Owing to a late start the game was declared in the third innings with the score standing at 16-2 in our favour. Maybe headquarters did not come to play ball but to witness the 1st and 3rd Battalion game, but the work-out showed a few weak points, which were remedied in the next game, when we beat the 4th Battalion 9-5.

Jumbo, "the bloke wot frows the ball," was as smooth as ice in January, and he pitched good stuff until the 8th, when the opposition got a little fresh, and loose fielding gave the 4th Battalion five runs. "Soixante-dix," after several attempts to catch foul balls, brought off a very sensational play by running, sliding, and finishing half-way under a barbed-wire fence on his back, with the ball safe in his mitt. That put the lid on the 4th, and left us the chance of pulling off the championship, but the 3rd Battalion, who had been resting since their last game, found our boys a trifle tired and stale, and they were not slow to realize their luck, and scored a win of 11-3 over us. The play was good for awhile, but on the whole very loose, "Soixante-dix" throwing wild on