

on the point of his shovel and huris it into the enemy trench. Judging by the aroma of welsh - rarebit, which, a few minutes later, floats back to our lines we may call the incident closed.

By a system of wireless telegraphy which was in use long before Marconi's, the message has gone down the firing line, that the M.O. is on the war - path. The Infantry are as busy as the Crown Prince on a looting expedition. Some are hiding dirty mess tins, others are hiding butter, condensed milk, jam, bread, bacon and Maconochies. The Stretcher Bearers are busy dusting their faces with boric powder to cover the real estate and probably a two or three days growth of fungus, or picking up very small pieces of cigarette ends and match stalks around their dugout.

The M.O. recognizes the S. B's instantly by their smart soldier - like bearing. "Are there any sick lame or lazy in this company?" he asks. "I dont know Sir", reply the S. B's in chorus. "What are you here for?" is the next question. The S. B's are unable to answer this, so they suggest going around the trench to find out if there are any sick, lame or lazy.

"Yes and bring them to headquarters if there are any, and look sharp about it." It may be as well to explain here that the headquarters he refers to is not the palatial building that its name implies, but merely a spacious dugout somewhere down the trench where the Battalion Officers do all their thinking, eating and sleeping. There is a difference of opinion among the ranks about, how the Officers do put in their time. If you asked a cook or batman, he would say, "23 hrs. eating and 1 hr. sleeping". Ask an N. C. O. he would say, "12 hrs. sleeping, and 12 hrs. writing orders." Again if you asked a private he would say, "24 hrs. finding us something to do." But the Sgt. Major who is "The power behind the throne" as it were, would say, that the Officers put in all their time worrying the life out of him, of drinking lime juice.

It may be by accident or just a remarkable coincidence but the M.O. usually arrives at headquarters just when the occupants are about to eat. Very often it is lunch time. The Officers pretend not to notice this, and invite him to have a cup of tea. The cook hearing this, whispers something to a batman about a "hungry scotchman" and unearths a nice beef stake which he had previously hidden away for his own dinner.

Whilst this is being cooked, the M.O. goes through sick parade. This trying ordeal would take away all desire for food from any civilian doctor but an army doctor is too hardened to allow all the tales of suffering he hears, such as headache, toothache, earache and pains in the back, to even reach his heart let alone his stomach, the men are lined up outside and each one is rehearsing his own symptoms and a few he has borrowed for the occasion.

— NOTE —

If the readers will stand for it and the circulation manager will permit me, I will endeavour to get the rest of this thrilling adventure finished in our next issue.

If it is only half as painful reading it as it is writing it I know how you feel. But we need the money.

The Diary of a Real Soldier

Sunday. — Walked several miles in the blazing sun to interview the transport officer. The result was very discouraging. He asked me if I understood Gaelic. When I answered in the negative, he explained that Gaelic was the only language used around his outfit, and the horses had forgotten any other language they may have known in their youth. After a glance along the lines I gave a sigh of dross pair, for it was plain to be seen that if that bunch of quadrupeds ever had any youth it must have been about the time St. Andrew was driven out of England for stealing them. As a drowning man grasps at a straw I asked for a cook's job on this precious transport. With the usual contempt that a rider shows for a footslogger he started to walk away and I fancy he said something about his horse-having a preference for uncooked food whilst on active service I must have looked as disconsolate as I felt, for as I was starting back to my company, one of the fellows whom I had been desirous of cooking for, left off grooming a horse to tell me to cheer up and try again when the regular transport officer returned from leave. On my way back I had a brilliant idea literally knocked into my head by a man on a bicycle who pushed me over into the ditch. As I scrambled out to look who the rider was and incidentally to cuss him, I recognized him as a "runner" or orderly. Why had I not thought of it before? For running is my long suit. I once heard the fellows say that I raced my own shadow when the Huns dropped a Whiz - bang at the door of my dug - out. I don't doubt their statements for a minute, for when that Whiz - bang dropped I wasn't worrying much

about my shadow. I didn't care if I never saw it any more. I don't care now even, what they do with it. The Huns may shell it, or bayonet it, or bomb it, or gas it, or mine it, or torpedo it, or if it were possible, they might even take it to Berlin, which is the last indignity any respectable shadow would submit to. What I was Worrying about was my precious neck. Must find out how to become an orderly, or runner.

Monday. — Had quite a time locating the "man higher up" in charge of the runners. Some of the runners appeared surprised when I asked them who their officer was. The various uncertain answers I received inspired me more and more to get myself attached (ore semi - detached would be more appropriate) to this bunch of nomads. After a piece of detective work which would have roused the professional jealousy of Sherlock Holmes or Arsene Lupin I found that the only man who can appoint a runner is the Sergeant-Major. This military looking person had evidently heard of my running abilities, for instead of timing me on a hundred yards dash, he told me to stand to attention, button up my tunic, put on my hat straight, throw away my cigarette, also several small Union Jacks which decorated my hat band. He also told me I looked like a Christmas tree, and the enemy would make a special target of me if they saw too many Union Jacks. The result of this trying ordeal ended in my being accepted as an orderly, and if I can hold on to this job the enemy will have to use a powerful X ray if ever they want to make a target of me, even should I be wearing nothing else but Union Jacks. I was shown an ancient looking bicycle for use on the highways. If I could make a getaway before, I ought to have no fear now for anything less speedy than a Zeppelin.

Tuesday. — Barring the batman's job (which I wasn't fitted for any way, and only a piker would mourn over) this orderly job is the most "Cushy" berth I've had since I undertook to defend our mighty Empire. If a message has to be taken to the trenches I wend my way cautiously through the communication trench, taking observations from time to time just to make sure that I am not in danger of being cut off, should the enemy have gassed every body in the front line. When the message is delivered I can go back at my leisure but I prefer to go as quickly as possible as I have a huge pile of magazines and books to read, including a thrilling tale by Jules Verne, entitled "Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea". Had a difference of opinion with a fellow in the firing line which accounts for my eye being in a sling. Just because I tripped over his feet which were sticking out of a dugout, he made some rude remarks about runners in general and me in particular. It's an ill wind that blows nobody good though, for the Mamselle at the estaminet thinks I am a hero. She thinks I got my eye closed by a Hun during severe hand to hand fighting. I hate to tell her the truth for I have such a good standing with both her father and mother. Since I have had this job, my French is improving wonderfully and I have asked several of the girls to "promenade" with me, but the one I like best always says "Aprez le guerre", whilst the others are a little more encouraging, though they always fix the hour for a promenade when I can't possibly be away from the battalion. Some of the fellows must feel jealous when Mlle., smiles at me. Oh if only the "old man" could see me now, or when Gabrielle shakes my hand and says "Au revoir".

Wednesday. — Life is just one dam thing after another. Only 24 hours ago I was as happy and contented as it is possible to be on this side of the English Channel. But all is changed now. I feel like a thief who has been "caught with the goods". It all happened through leaving that accursed bicycle at the door of the estaminet. Just as I had got to the most important part of my story and had told the Mamselle how I, alone, singlehanded, had captured a German trench and 200 prisoners, who should walk in but a Military Policeman. Yes, that green colour red bicycle resting against the door, had attracted his attention, and in he walked. Before I had time to make my getaway, or say "Bon jour" to Mlle, he had his big ugly hand on my shoulder. I tried to explain that I had only been in there minute, just to get a drink of café au lait but he pretended not to hear me and guided me to the door. I caught just one last glimpse of Mlle, and since then I have lost all faith in the opposite sex. She was stuffing her handkerchief into her mouth to keep from laughing out loud. The military policeman has my name and number and the only sentence I am not up against "shot at dawn". One thing I'm sure of, and that is that the boys in the company will hear of a vacancy for a good runner, married man preferred.