

## THE ADVENTURES OF IGNATZ HUMP, SOLDIER AND BATMAN TOO.

By R. ATHER RAWTEN.

- Ignatz Hump :** Soldier : Her :o Batman. In love with.
- Marie Brillon :** Once a lace-maker, now, by the cruel vicissitudes of war, barmaid in an estaminet — also heroine. Kind of stuck on Ignatz.
- Old Man Brillon :** Marie's father.
- Auguste** Villain : Roadmender : Spy : Marie's cousin.
- Other Accessories :** Canadians . Soldiers : Human Beings.



### The Adventures of Ignatz Hump.

(CONTINUED)

Bye and bye Ignatz rose with the statement he was cleaned of his last sou.

Philosophically our hero made his preparations for a turn in the trenches, as his battalion was going « in » that night. He rolled the Exalted One's bedding, laid out the trench kit and made his own simple arrangements.

At dusk the battalion fell in and plodded along the muddy roads beneath the dripping branches of the leafless trees. Near the top of the ridge they halted, and after a short rest strung out in single file and moved over the crest.

That wonderful but inexpressibly tiresome nightly illumination was in progress — the show, staged across half a continent, of which the curtain rises promptly at dusk. Far down in the trough of the shallow valley where the trenches lay facing one another, flare-lights blazed incessantly. The accelerated rifle fire of the « evening hate » rose to a continuous rattle, punctuated periodically by the wicked stutter of a machine-gun. But, by the time the long file of men had wound down to the lower ground the sudden recurrence of activity had died away to the occasional muffled thump and swish of stray shots and the jar and thunder of a trench mortar bomb or two.

Laden with the unholy burden of a soldier and a batman Ignatz stumbled along to trench 796 — the official name of his home for the succeeding term of days. He did not feel excessively happy, for house moving in the trench zone is not unaccompanied by risk. However, by the time he trod the familiar « bath-mats » and had seized the best dug-out available, he felt more normal and in higher spirits.

The following period of days was, for Ignatz, a time of undeviating virtuousness — nothing else being possible. He batted assiduously and with all the acquired knowledge of much trench experience. At no time was he without either coke or charcoal. His store of dry wood was never done. Others might stamp and swear round empty braziers, but in the snug corner of 796 the faint, cheerful glow of the best and biggest trench fire framed the small face of our hero from dusk onwards.

Nothing worthy of note happened, and in due course the battalion was relieved, and started on the long hike to the rest billets ; the long trudge during which the art of grousing attains its fullest flower.

Tired and utterly fed up, Ignatz dumped his master's belongings in his hut and then started

on a tour of investigation. This ended in the discovery of a bottle of whisky belonging to the Exalted One. Very little of it had been consumed, and Ignatz, in momentary revolt at the pressure of things in general, refreshed, perhaps too lavishly. Anyhow, when he went in quest of an « eye-opener » next morning, he found a label tied to the neck of the bottle bearing the curt admonition — « Have a heart » — and the signature of his superior. Our hero was hurt. « As if I'd touch his old whisky », he mumbled to himself. (a libel on the liquor, by the way, for it was Christopher's most recent and rankest blend).

Early in the forenoon he got orders to proceed to the village of Hemenen for the purpose of procuring a few delicacies for his master's table. Well supplied with money, he started out in a cheerful frame of mind, down the greasy « pave ». At the cross-roads he fell in with « Dutch George » a Hollander born, but, by the grace of heaven, latterly a B. C. logger. George — oh, happy man — could speak Flemish, so together they repaired to the market place, and after some consideration and much haggling, bought a rabbit.

Exhausted by their labours they then went in search of refreshment and — thanks to George — found it. The day wore away in recuperation till our hero's rabbit, which he still carried, began to show signs of deterioration. It was not a sufficiently durable rabbit for a whole days outing, so, ere the shades of dewy evening descended on the dusky plain, it was severely frazzled in places.

When the money began to go done Dutch George and Ignatz parted company and our hero made for home with his rabbit.

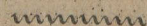
It was a disastrous day for Ignatz. His boss refused to listen to his explanations and would not even be mollified by the rabbit. Our hero was soundly cursed and « returned to his company, forthwith. »

« Cruel, unkind world, » — or words to that effect — said our hero next day as he slid and jostled on the stretch of mud that did duty for a parade ground. As soon as he was dismissed he tore off his equipment and made for the Estaminet a la Frontiere.

He found Marie deep in converse with a tall artilleryman with bow-legs and bright buttons. Now, if there was one person more distasteful to Ignatz than another, it was just that sort of soldier. « Blasted non combatant. » He thrust a truculent elbow on to the bar and called for beer. But, alas for his dignity, when he came to pay he searched his pockets in vain. « W'at, you broke ? » demanded Marie. « Flatter'n a hot — cake, » responded our hero, « but I'll fix it up next pay ». Marie grudgingly allowed him credit until then, and smarting under the disdainful eye of the artilleryman he betook himself to the most remote table, there to brood on the frightful retribution he would exact from the tall artilleryman with the bow-legs and bright buttons. For one mad moment Ignatz even thought of assaulting him, but the architectural dimensions of the stranger forbade, and torn with jealousy of the man who was absorbing Marie's brightest smiles and most winsome glances, he left.

He sat into a game of « Black-jack », but his ill luck still persisted and before evening had fallen « he would have to be hittin' the trail » and returned to camp.

(To be continued)



One of our co-workers at the taming of the Bosche owns to a peculiar calling in civil life: He states that before the war he earned his bread by selling live homing pigeons to Chinamen. The chief draw-back, he insists, was the unwisdom of attempting to sell the same pair to the identical. Think more than about twice.