

"WHIZ-BANG MORTON."

Little Morton wasn't much of a man to look at. "Whiz-Bang" was the derisive misnomer applied to him by his comrades in arms. Oh, yes, he was a soldier. At least, he wore khaki, and every two weeks he presented his pay-book to the most popular man in the unit, viz., the Regimental Paymaster.

His mail was addressed to Sapper J. E. Morton, —th Co., Canadian Engineers, B.E.F., France, but his experience as a sapper or miner was so limited as to be almost nil.

You see, he wasn't one of the "old contemptibles," nor yet a "draftee" or "Military Service" man." He was merely one of the multitude of young Canucks who quietly stepped into the gap left by the "glorious dead" at Ypres and Festubert and other memorable places. Quite a commonplace young fellow with a mother and a sweetheart somewhere "back home."

During his short stay in France and in the rare intervals when he wasn't rusticated in the "clink," he collected a few souvenirs. For poor "Whiz," so provokingly slow in word and action, was yet fast enough to be always in trouble with the powers that be. Not a malicious chap, not one of the bad men by any means—just one of those unfortunates born under an unlucky star.

At various intervals and on several different occasions he has sent home such trophies as a German spiked helmet, a bayonet, a wrist-watch, a trench cap, a star-shell pistol, and a variegated collection of "Heinie" shoulder straps, numerals, and buttons.

But still he vaguely felt that there was a great want in the number of his war relics: an unknown something that was missing. At last he found the solution to the baffling problem.

It was just after the taking of a famous ridge by our troops. Back in a small town behind the lines he met a chap who was preparing a parcel of souvenirs to send home. Occupying the post of honour amongst his little stock was a German officer's cloak. — gorgeous garment of fine grey cloth, lined with rich scarlet silk. Immediately on sight of this splendid raiment, Morton knew that he had discovered his long-sought and greatly-desired treasure trove.

That night he looked on the wine when it was red, and also when it was white—in fact, he wasn't quite sure how many colours the liquor possessed. At any rate, he missed the night roll-call, and was "up for office" the next morning.

Now, his face was as familiar to the O.C. as the wife of that honourable but rather irritable gentleman, and "Whiz" was to him as red is to a bull. Added to this was a rather dark-brown taste in the O.C.'s mouth, an unpleasant relic of a banquet the evening previous. Hence the somewhat stiff sentence of fourteen days No. 1 which he issued out to poor Morton.

In the seclusion of the cellar of a deserted and dilapidated house which served as a prison-cell, "Whiz" learned of a bombing raid which was to take place that night. Then it was with the great idea "scintillating with brilliancy and suffused with glory," developed in his mind. He would volunteer to go on the raid, and with a little luck, he would be saved from an inglorious and distasteful period of detention, and, what was of greater import, he might secure the coveted prize of which he dreamed.

The night was dark. Not an ordinary darkness, but a dense, black, inky cloud of a night, in which the end

of a lighted cigarette gleamed like a veritable red star. Slowly and carefully picking their way through the numerous shell-holes and the curling, clinging masses of broken barbed wire, a small party of men was heading over "No man's land" in the direction of "Fritzie's" front line.

At various intervals along the Brigade front, numerous other parties were emulating our party, but with them we have no dealing.

Third in line, and closely shadowing a bombing sergeant, "Whiz-Bang Morton" trudged manfully on, heavily laden with the various impedimenta which he was to use in the "scrap."

Some engineering genius had discovered a new method of destroying dug-outs and blocking trenches. The work of the sappers in the party was to operate the explosive system, and each man was detailed to a dug-out or part of the trench which was to be his particular objective.

As soon as the party came within bombing distance of "Fritzie's" line, the bombers rained a volley of "Mills" at it, and immediately the explosions were silent the entire party moved forward at a run.

Rushing directly for the dug-out to which he has been assigned, "Whiz" stumbled and slid downstairs. The stairway had one turning in it, about half way down it diverted at a right-angle. Turning the corner swiftly with his rifle ready, he caught a glimpse of a white staring face, and then came a flash of light, a sharp report, and he felt a stinging pain in his left hand.

Holding his rifle in the crook of his arm, he fired point blank at the face. Without pausing he flew down to the chamber below, and immediately he knew that his luck was in. The room had evidently been used as a headquarters of sorts, judging from the amount of official documents lying around on the tables and on files. At the far end, where another entrance opened out, he saw a crumpled heap on the floor, where it had rolled down from above. But what appropriated the major portion of his attention was an article of military apparel which hung from a nail on the wall. It was an officer's cloak.

Quickly he laid his charge of explosive, and lighting the fuse he ran upstairs and made for the point where the party entered.

Too excited to think lucidly of anything, he still retained a firm hold of his prize. Stumbling along in the darkness, he became aware of a peculiar pain in his left hand and arm, but could not quite make out what it was.

Then it was that he found young Stewart, a lieutenant in his company, who had been hit in the leg and couldn't walk. Somehow or other they got to an R.A.P., and both made "Bl'gthy."

"Whiz" now has only one finger and a thumb on his left hand, and will probably be discharged, but he doesn't worry much. The silk-lined coat is in Canada, so he is satisfied.

BOXING.

Quartermaster-Captain J. S. Walker is open to box all comers for the Flyweight Championship—Marquis of Queensberry Rules. Best purse accepted.

The fight between Johnny Canuck and Heine Allemande is still in progress. In a few words with Johnny at the ringside he tells me he is reserving his famous ridge punch, that one which gave him a good start on points, and is developing a new one. The odds are still in his favour, for Heine, although staying with it, practically admits he was bluffing and needed the mon badly.

CUB.