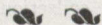


been wounded; here's wishing them a speedy recovery and a good time in Blighty.

Our correspondent deploras the paucity of local news, but what would you? These be moving times my masters.

By the way, isn't it rather up to the new chums to render a little literary assistance? After three and a half years spent in strenuously chasing the bow-wow around this old Western Front, one is naturally fed up, fatigued, and mentally paralysed; whereas the new comers are, or should be, full of pep.

Their impressions have not become stale; each new experience is vivid and clear cut, possessing all the charm of novelty, while as a contrast to training camp life, their present existence furnishes a blaze of interesting local colour.



## "Pic-Toc"—Before and After.

"Lights Out" had blown, and as this may attain some publicity, I hate to mention the fact that our hut was not in total darkness. For a moon was shining, and here and there a little glow flickered from a good-night flag.

A figure in semi-deshabille was silhouetted in the soft light that filtered in.

"I don't mind having to go to bed," said the shadowy person, "I can see some sense in that; but what I do object to," he continued, as he placed his breeches under the pillow (he kept his coin in the breeches pocket—yes, he's a Scot) "what I do object to is this getting up in the morning and attending that blamed (I choose that word in lieu of the very reprehensible epithet used) jerks. Yessir, I don't so much mind getting up for breakfast, but P.T. huh!"

This tirade concluded, the man from Scotia got under the blankets.

From the end of the hut came a voice in tones more of sorrow than anger. "Mac," said the voice, "I'm ashamed of you. Don't you know physical training is one of the most important subjects in our curriculum. Your breakfast would be a poor meal without the necessary exertion received to digest it, and incidentally to strengthen your muscles, clear your mind, and make life worth living." There was a pause, during which a deep basso snore and a high crescendo made themselves heard above the lesser lights. "Yes, sir," added the voice, "P. T. is a great thing. Before I joined the Army I was a weak, weedy wretch. I never knew the joys of our matutinal exercises. My knees were wobbly, they inclined inwards, my limbs sagged, and my chest was yet to be discovered. My whole frame was decrepit, I could not think clearly, my brain was sluggish, my mental capacity weak. I was a poor dilapidated, miserable-looking specimen of humanity. Now look at the change—"

Mac raised on his elbow. "Wot change?" he queried. Then came a grunt from the far off corner, and the music of Morpheus reigned supreme.



## Good Old Mudhook.

The country folk call it the Green Lane, but on the maps where it runs between two historic English towns, as straight as a surveyor's chain, it appears as—Street; one of those great highways the Romans built across Britain, and succeeding generations cannot wear out, though the motor-lorries have latterly rutted it sorely. On some flat land adjoining it Canadian Engineers are now engaged at work on a task of national importance. Many armies have marched over it.

(100 A.D.)

The young centurion called a halt, and his small company of legionaries at once threw themselves down on the grass, where the axes of the captured Picts had made a small clearing in the bush. Otherwise the Green Lane ran wide and straight, between unbroken walls of British forest, much as a settlement road in the Clay Belt of Northern Ontario does to-day.

Hardly were they at ease when one of the soldiers produced a deer's-horn cup and some rough bone cubes. These latter he rattled in the cup and called to his comrades to come and take a chance.

They clustered round and the heavy copper coins changed hands. "My last denarius," said a tall young legionary. "By Jupiter, if I lose thee I go hungry till we reach Sarum, six days march from here, for the rations would not feed one of your starveling Picts.

The cubes rattled and the dice fell: the banker gathered in the coins, the centurion bade them "fall in" and the column resumed its march.

(1645 A.D.)

The Ensign of the patrol of Cavaliers halted at an opening off the Green Lane. His long locks fell over a lace collar, and the sun shone on his steel helmet and breastplate.

"Dismount," he ordered, "and take your ease: the Roundheads are not in sight."

A debonair veteran, scarred on the cheek by a Parliament pike at Naseby, slipped his hand into a holster and produced three ivory cubes.

"There's a fine piece of level greensward," he challenged; "who will throw a main with me?"

Plumed hats gathered round him.

"No pay have we had from his Majesty's coffers for many a month," said a youth, scarcely out of his teens; "but here is the Carolus my mother sent me on my last birthday. If this goes the way of the rest, then I am without a penny till we spoil some d—d Shaved Pate."

He threw it down, the dice rattled and fell, and Scarred Cheek drew it in.

A horseman spurred into the clearing. The Ensign shouted: "To horse, the Roundheads come," and the little patrol rode off.

(1917 A.D.)

The last drop of mulligan had been drained from the dices of the —th Field Company in the field just off the Green Lane, where they were at work on a task of national importance, when the big corporal drew a piece of oilcloth, decorated with various figures, from his knapsack, and sat down on the grass.

"Come on, my lucky lads," chanted he, "the more you put down, the less you pick up—follow me and wear diamonds."

In a few moments a circle of Engineers cut off all view of the game from the road. The dice rattled and fell, the coins dropped on the cloth, and were lost or taken up.

A slim driver from British Columbia threw down a Canadian bill. "A two-spot from the old home," said he. "Here she goes on the old sergeant-major."

"Murder on the old sergeant-major," chanted the corporal, and the dice rattled and fell.

"One old mudhook," he sang, as he gathered up the dice, "one little diamond and the name of the game. Come on my lucky lads," as he raked in the money off the board, "where you like and where you fancy."

"I'm broke," said the young driver. "When's next pay day?" And the bugle blew "Fall in" for the Engineers to resume work of national importance.