

JUST COMMENT.

Ye editor did duty on picquet one night last week. Had expected to be sent to Saltwood but landed up at the Junction, where the only break in the monotony of hours was the arrival of a couple of trains. Seeing the fellows roll out of the cars from Folkestone made us rather homesick, but so long as Jones, of the Pay Office, did not kick, we hardly felt that we could complain.

Christmas packages are still the order of the day. From the way many of them have been delayed en route it is evident that the postal clerks will have all they can do for some time to come.

And speaking of postal work, we met with a gigantic surprise one morning last week when we had occasion to visit the Central Post Office for this district. The clerks there were about 500 registered letters behind, to say nothing of the huge bundles and piles of Christmas parcels, which they could not dispose of before the arrival of other truck loads. Then we sometimes swear at the local service.

"Should Auld Acquaintance be Forgot?" It seems that the pipe band of Col. Reid's battalion thinks not. They clubbed together recently and sent their brothers, now at the front, enough cigars to keep them in smokes for many a day. The Camerons are certainly a live bunch in that respect.

And while we are thinking of the Cameron pipers, let us not forget to mention that they presented their postal clerk with a one-pound note and another little token of esteem on Christmas Day.

The bands of the camp seemed well imbued with the Christmas spirit. On the morning of that day we found it necessary to visit all parts of the camp and were lucky enough to make the rounds during church parades. Every musician seemed to be at his best and the way the sweet strains rolled forth made one feel that life is worth the living after all.

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OF

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restoration of a favourable
and suitable peace.

THAT ELUSIVE LEAVE.

(From the *Kia-Ora*, Monthly Magazine of the Battleship *New Zealand*).

Now the day is over
Leave is drawing nigh,
Shadows of a bust up
Steal across the sky.

No more weekly coalings,
No more night defence
All the quids that we have now
Are dwindling into pence.

Staying on board so long now
Has made us rather glum.
But that will soon work off
When with the "long-haired" chum.

Where there's no discipline
Yet they serve out slops,
And in the village pub, Jack,
Smokes and strikes down hops.

But duty's coming nearer,
For leave is growing short,
And soon we'll have a medal
For battles someone's fought.

Then a chap may ask you
"What's that honour for?"
"Wearing slacks in war time,"
Ought to stop his jaw.

Silence may be golden
And swearing indiscreet,
Still, they don't draft angels,
To the British fleet.

"Heave out there, guard and steerage,"
That voice, how loud it seems.
Ah! that means these sweet verses
Are but extracts from my dreams.

SLICK.

FLOWERS IN MID WINTER.

LADS returning to camp one evening last week were more than surprised to find primroses blooming in abundance along the right of way. Flowers are practically unknown in our own country for several months yet and the finding of blossoms of any kind at this time of year is certainly a novelty. Guess we cannot kick about the cold so much over here, after all. (Note: Our information comes from the canteen).

THE DOWNFALL OF DIGNITY.

THE battalion orderly room was the scene of an interesting picture one morning last week, when Sergeant Major Eager ascended to the lofty heights of a rickety bench and started in to roll the window curtain with his usual preciseness. The bench proved unequal to his weight however, and the dignity of the sergeant major suffered a severe shock as he descended to the floor in a heap. Much skin was missing from various parts of his anatomy when he picked himself up. We have received a quiet tip that the bench *might* have been coaxed to give way by a gentle kick.

Who came close to giving the whole sub-staff a surprise a few days ago. Everyone thought he was going to change his undershirt, but all fears were put to rest when he merely turned it inside out and put it on again.

PURELY PERSONAL.

Bugler Fenton seems to be having a good time in Hythe lately. What's the attraction, Fritz?

Adjutant Appleton enjoyed a short leave last week. In his absence Lieut. Playfair acted as censor of *The Clansman*.

Piper McKenzie seems to be quite down-hearted these days. What's the matter, Charley? No parcels?

Bugler Watts, commonly referred to as "Snowball," has returned from his short leave, with smiles all over his face. What's the news, Snowball?

J. O'Neill, of No. 4 Company, enjoyed a vacation at Folkestone last week. Needing exercise badly, he walked home. That's going some.

Several of the bandsmen enjoyed their Christmas and the following day in travel. Many of them got as far as Saltwood and practised saluting.

Pte. Haffern was among the privileged characters who enjoyed a Christmas pass. We thought we knew all about the city of Ashford, but it seems that we could yet take lessons from Haffern. Ask him about the haystack at the edge of the city.

Corporal Steers has been having troubles of his own. He is now attached to No. 4 Company, and was made orderly corporal when the former orderly went away on pass. Then the acting orderly sergeant took an evening off and went down town, throwing the responsibility upon the youthful corporal's shoulders.

Captain Norquay spent his Christmas with relatives in Scotland and came home with a broader brogue and a broader smile than we have seen him use since coming to this camp. Must be something entrancing at home, Captain.

The Orderly Sergeant of No. 3 broke all records on Christmas Day when he ordered a muster parade of his entire company and treated them to cigars and drinks—but we almost forget to mention that the total strength of his company at the time was six men.

We ran across Sergt.-Major Albrough again last week. The genial Scotsman has been quite a stranger recently. Have you been sleeping sergeant-major, or just taking life easy after the strenuous times of handling No. 4?

Sergeant Shiels asks us to state that if the person who is so interested in his movements will make himself known he will find a ready answer to his inquiry. The sergeant is now at the brigade school of gas helmet instruction, and it is generally hinted that he has a helmet already prepared for curious people. Can it be possible that this helmet might contain a well-loaded gas chamber?

Sergt.-Major Thorpe certainly played the game when he returned to camp in the middle of his leave just to make sure that things were going smoothly around the Officers' Mess on Christmas Day. He was more than pleased to find that Corpl. Goode had everything in first-class shape, and that the dinner was set in a way that left nothing to be desired.

Pte. Hodgens, of the Camerons, is now in charge of the recreation room, and is doing good work. In his spare moments he is making the piano work overtime and dispensing music by the hour. No wonder the dry canteen is being complimented on the cleanliness of their kitchen. Music always was known to bring inspiration.

THERE was a young man of East Sandling,
Whose girl wanted delicate handling,
If he sat on her knee
She was cross as could be,
As she liked him to do all the dandling.