



A MORNING picture paper recently published the photograph of a number of British recruits from Rathnew, near Wicklow—"a village of mud cabins." Those lucky beggars should never feel homesick in the Flanders mud.

One often hears the phrase—"Carrying coals to Newcastle." The saying reminds me that several members of the Battalion have recently received from well-meaning friends at home parcels containing such homely dainties as tins of Maconachie Rations, "Bully beef," and even jam. One well known corporal's folks sent him the "M and V" as a delicacy (for they are



"Receiving parcels of homely dainties."

advertised in England as selling at 1s. 6d. a tin), and a certain lance-jack's recent "tuck-box" had "bully" and jam amongst its contents. Such rations might come in handy if we had the ill-luck to be prisoners of war, but so far there has been no shortage of foodstuffs in the army.

The "Dovecote," otherwise the Headquarters' batmen's billets, recently wrestled with a mighty problem, which threatened to flood that usually peaceful community with dissension. The trouble arose through the advent of a quartette of chickens, addressed to the C.O., which, on arrival, were found to be so "high" as to warrant the batmen and orderly room staff being turned out for tube-helmet drill by the R.S.M. The Colonel's servant, never having homesteaded, knew nothing of chickens or their habits, and argued that they should be cooked, but the chef thought otherwise, and threatened to resign if the atmosphere of his sanctum was polluted. The tension of the situation was ultimately relieved by the birds walking away of their own accord.

Another problem, of a somewhat different nature, lately troubled the transport of the Eighth Battalion ("The Little Black Devils"). This, also, has been cleared up, though not to the complete satisfaction of those immediately concerned. In this case, "the Solomon come to judgment" is a young man with a pretty wit and possessed of a Sherlock Holmes intellect. He recently wrote to *Punch* to say that "the Canadians were throwing over to the enemy a number of intoxicating shells, which fact explained the short issue of rum!" (Ugh!)

Private Drayton, who evidently believes in keeping posted with the world's happenings desires me to ask *Jack Canuck* if "The Cop on the Corner" hasn't got cold feet through standing there so long?

An account which has reached me of Corporal Bennett's narrow escape from drowning when accompanying the medical supplies rig to headquarters, goes to show that there are dangers in the firing line other than those of shot and shell. The sad part of the story is that the popular corporal did not go to a college where the art of natation was included in the curriculum!

Private Simpson, of D Company, owns to a weakness for sketching. The Art Editor has endeavoured to secure his valuable services for the *Gazette*, and thus hand down his work to posterity, but *Punch* got wind of the new genius and so "beat us to it."

I am credibly informed that this is Leap Year. So there is still a sporting chance for many old bachelor friends of my acquaint-



"Still a sporting chance . . . This is Leap Year."

ance, especially in view of the reported shortage of men in the matrimonial markets of the world.

A good story is being retailed, with C.Q.M.S. Macdonald as the centre of interest. Now "Mac," like most Canadians, is extremely partial to condiments, so when he sat down the other day to a lunch of "bully" hash, he opened up a bottle of what he took to be Worcester Sauce, and, pouring the contents copiously over the appetising dish, sat down to enjoy his meal, with the remark that "You can't beat the old Worcester Sauce, can you?" Unfortunately, the "sauce" turned out to be camp coffee, and what with a ruined dinner and the chaff of his colleagues, "Mac," was in no frame of mind to attend a V.M.C.A. service! Oh, no!

There is a certain young man working around the Q.M. Stores who evidently did not belong to a field naturalists' club when in civil life. The fact that this young gentleman recently designated some cock pheasants as *crows* lends colour to this belief.

Napoleon gave birth to the phrase: "An army travels on its stomach." I suppose that is why so much care is taken in the

selection of army cooks. (All right, Egbert, I'm not throwing nose-gays at the "mulligan" artists of your Company.)

Although ice-cream puffs cannot be had out here, there is a certain N.C.O. in the Signalling Section whose recent itinerary of the London suburbs has disclosed to him, so it is said, the location of the only "original home of ice-cream puffs" in Blightie.

Private Seaward, one of the Battalion runners, used to tell me that he didn't object to the flooded trenches the least bit, and I have only lately found out the reason for his nonchalance. "Gurk" used to be a deep-water sailorman.

Regimental Sergeant-Major (giving paternal advice to N.C.O.'s going on leave): "Now, if you are caught with a bottle going on the boat, you will probably be sent back."

Brilliant N.C.O.: "And if we are caught coming back with one, will we be sent back to Blightie?"

R.S.-M.: "No chance, Kid!"

One day, at their billet near the firing line, the Battalion Pioneers endeavoured to cement the *Entente* by helping a peasant-homesteader to bring home the cows. The animals were safely corralled—that is, all except one obstinate beast. But a gallant



"A gallant Sergeant . . . brought her to reason."

Sergeant, with a determination worthy of Broncho Billy of cinema fame, went after her, and, getting a firm grip of her "steering gear," brought her to reason—and the barn. Scores of film companies would have given a thousand "bucks" to get that picture in all the nicety of its realism and detail.

"Andy," the *Dead Horse* circulation man, has got a new job as officer's batman. An extraordinary general meeting of the staff of the *Gazette* is to be held to decide if the incident calls for a vote of congratulation, or of sympathy!

What punishment should be meted out to the man who, acting as guide for a select party of men needing tonsorial treatment, takes them to a dentist?

M.O. (to Private Blank, who is trying to "swing the lead" and get "down the line"): "What did you join the army for? Did you think this was a blankety-blank Kindergarten?"

An English phonograph firm advertises, as "the great pantomime success," the following records:—"Somewhere in France, Dear Mother," and "When I Leave the World Behind." Very comforting records to send to us fellows out here—what! I fancy the manager of the concern in question would have made a most successful traveller for a firm of undertakers!

A London newspaper has declared that "the soldier of to-day is not a drinker. He frequently turns down his rum issue for chocolate." Will the paper in question kindly forward us the present address of "the soldier of to-day"?