

Now the question which outvies the election of mayor for the New Year is this:—

WHO OWNS THE MUFF?

I leave it at that. You may put your legal mind on the subject and send the solution, together with six coupons, when you will receive one of our beautiful watches, provided you enclose five dollars for the chain and cost of mailing.

Remember me to the Rats.

PEGGIE.

With acknowledgments to my sister.

R. H.

#### Answers to Correspondents.

Naturalist (Scouts)—It is disrespectful indeed to refer to your officer as *some* bird.

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Squiffy ("C" Company)—It is no business of yours that one of the editors of this journal has turned teetotal since the no-treating Act came into force. He does not deny being a Scotsman.

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Injured (Brigade Staff)—If the 1st Division do think themselves the salt of the earth—*we should worry*.

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Knobkerry ("B" Company)—We really can't say if it was C.S.M. Collett who took the club with him out into "No-Man's-Land" to kill the dead Frenchman. It may have been.

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Gertie (Grimsby Beach)—No, we do not require any more sandbags at present; everything is liquid, send us bottles.

#### Assistance to men going on leave.

For the benefit of men going on leave we have compiled a few questions which will inevitably be asked by a curious civilian public. To assist the harassed soldier we give a few answers which invariably satisfy them.

Q.—Isn't this an awful war?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Have you killed many Germans?

A.—(1) No.

(2) Thousands.

Q.—What kind of officers have you?

A.—(1) Good.

(2) Bad.

(3) Indifferent.

Q.—Does the sergeant steal your rum?

A.—Never mind.

(To be continued.)

#### In our Alley.

No doubt if we stayed here long enough the place would become one of the Classic Resorts to which

Holidayers would flock. When we first lit on it, it was only a discarded French trench, famous for its smell and its ancient historical air. There in bygone ages many Frenchmen fought and fell. There the P.P.C.L.I. spent days of hard fighting. But, as I say, these achievements are shrouded in the mists of time.

There is a history in the very names under which it has striven vainly for eminence. It has been known in turn as Suicide Lane, Bomber's Paradise, Snipers' Gulch, Whiz-Bang Alley and Corrigal Crescent. It is now known as Big Bill Boulevard. The names throughout savour of poesy and onomatopœa.

Whiz-Bang Alley! The words suggest a whiz-bang falling with the debris pattering down afterwards. Corrigal Crescent gives one the idea of men hurrying round in obedience to the indefatigable officer, whose name is hereby immortalised. Big Bill Boulevard! Here you have poetry at its best. The alliteration is fine and suggestive of bullets buzzing by bringing Blokes to Blighty.

The Alley is bounded on the South by a hedge, which, in the last few weeks, has shown unusual sprightliness. It has grown in that time from a ragged row of dissipated bushes to an impenetrable barrier. It is suspicioned in high places that a certain lance-corporal, unofficially known as Cupid, had a hand in it, but this the hedge will not admit.

Owing to recent fine weather the Alley is beginning to find its feet again. The dug-outs will soon be once more on solid ground, and there will then be no need for buoys to show their location.

The war will probably end some day, then the Belgian farmers will go "back to the land." But "Memory often in days sublime" will bring one back to the good old days of rat hunting, game shooting, swimming and shell-hole digging, which I spent in B. B. Boulevard. R. H.

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#### The Medical Officer.

Ah! Who is this who lurks within the darkness of a hole?

And can it be that our M.O. has habits like the mole?

His victims clamber down the stairs; the sick both grave and gay.

And like the proverb "those who came to cough remain to spray."

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#### The Best lies Ahead.

Away with bemoaning; away with your fears,

Look out to the oncoming days,  
The world marches forward with vanishing years,

Unhindered by checks and delays.  
The dark hours of sorrow then try to forget,

The dead past must try to bury its dead,

The sunshine is gleaming in front of us yet,

The best lies ahead.

H. B. BRIDIN,

"A" Coy.

#### Aunt Jane's Corner.

Love-knots untied by an Expert.

Perplexed (Signallers), writes:—My pal and I are devoted to the same young lady. Each of us loves her very deeply and she sends us both parcels regularly, and seems to lavish her affections equally on both. What should I do?

A.—Search me.

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Blighty ("D" Coy.)—I became very much attached to the young nurse who attended me at —, and she returns my tender feeling. What would you advise?

A.—Get another Blighty.

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Auntie (Owen Sound)—The dear boy who wrote such a touching story on trench life has, we believe, gone to the Base.

No, dear lady, Base does mean Degenerate, but *not* this time.

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Anxious (Dunnville)—We are acquainted with your sweetheart and know him to be of reproachless character; in fact, he is now being measured for his halo already.

#### English Literature.

As it appeals to the mere Colonial.

The immensity of the popularity which the English Magazines enjoy in the trenches is a compliment to those who contribute to them, and to all responsible for their production. The pictures are good; the matter generally is excellent; at no time does it fall below indifferent—but we would do ourselves an injustice if we supposed that they portray truthfully English modern life and manners.

For example, why does every short complete story of the war centre round personages of no less rank than a second lieutenant? Why is this individual usually in the Guards or the Buffs? Why is he invariably the Hon. Billy or the Hon. Dicky or Lord Blankingham, a mere happy-go-lucky, *blasé* sort of a boy educated at Eton and Oxford? Why, in fact, is he the Honourable Any Diminutive of a character fondly imagined by a title-worshipping proletariat to be typical of the average Englishman?

Again, why does the N.C.O. drop his "aitches," and speak English like a grass-eating cow-puncher from Western Manitoba. He is never an educated man; he is never *Their* class. The private of the story is always a bovine creature of no account who doesn't know his head from a cauliflower, and who makes rude, ill-bred jokes which his superiors overlook; in fact, they condescend to laugh at them.

Why all this twaddle which goes for story and plot in these strenuous days? Why all the nauseating snobbery contained in every Magazine, every weekly paper? The greatest of sinners are those of the type which