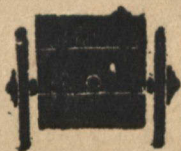


THE STRAFER



LAW

· DONE · INTO · PRINT · BY · THE ·
66TH BATTERY, C.F.A.

Sgt. W. C. McArthur

FOLDER 216



HE WHO FLOPS
QUICKEST
LASTS LONGEST.



* The asterisks mark my share - D.M.C.

THE STRAFER

Published every once in a while (D.V.) by the

66TH BATTERY C.F.A.

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Editor - - - SERGT. E. E. CARNCROSS.

Business Manager GR. G. H. MCLEAN.

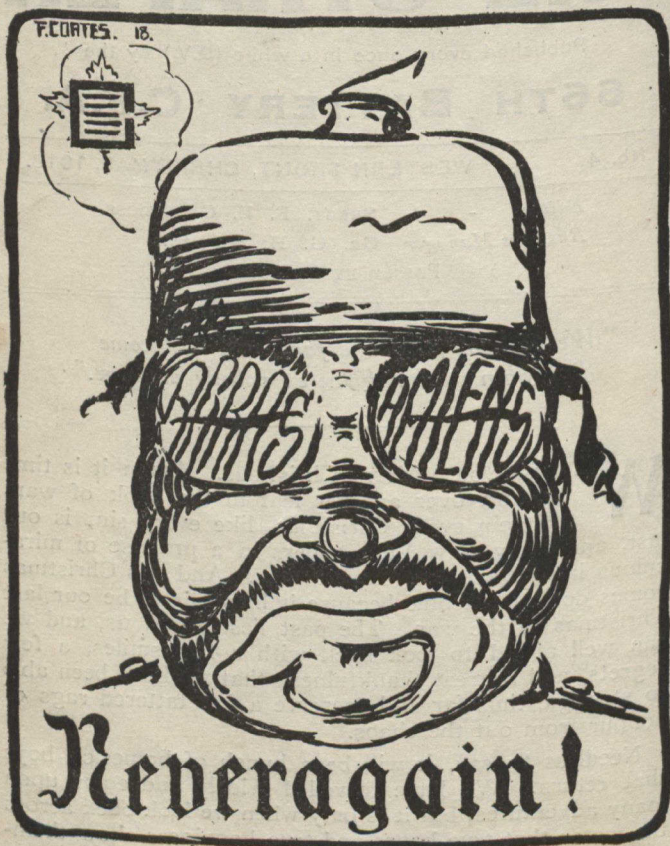
PASSED BY CENSORS.

*"We beat our pates and fancy wit will come
But when we knock there's nobody at home."*

—♦— by Sergt. Carnecross.

WE wish you a Merry Christmas. Again it is time to turn over another leaf in the book of wars wherein every Christmas, like every sin, is our last, and every New Year ushers in a promise of miraculous improvement in our fortunes. And this Christmas comes doubly welcome because it bids fair to be our last Christmas of the war. The past lies behind us, and we can well afford to look back with a few smiles, a few regrets, and a great thankfulness that we have been able to struggle thus far and preserve a few tattered rags of honour from out the chaos.

Needless to say, it will be a bunch of homesick boys that return. We have travelled widely and come upon many adventures, but it is only when we look back across the water that true hopes and true happiness show them-



selves. We can hardly wait to return to greet old friends, to see what changes await us, to learn how far the world has progressed in our absence, and to taste again of the very best place in the world—Home. What an offensive will be launched in Mother's pantry! And all those good Canadian girls of ours. Oh my! And here is Christmas come—and gone—and Peace only a little way off, and—

Still a Ruby kindles in the Vine,
And many a Garden by the water blows.

Meanwhile, we must remember the words of that fighter, statesman, and prophet, Lloyd George, "Let us get on with the war."

* * * * *

MAY the devil take the Censors. They turn the smooth highways into endless jolty ribbons of cobblestones; they freeze the genial currents of a fellow's literary aspirations; they pour ice water into the red-hot fountains of love; they turn the exalted into the ordinary, the sublime into dust; they stint one's imagination; with their impious hands they murder our finest dreams; they put their wretched blots across the best effusions of a fellow's make-up, and the great unwritten gives way to letters of straw tone and tantalising brevity. And here now there comes to our ears the latest story regarding their mischievous work. A Canadian girl, in writing to her soldier boy in France, enquired who was this "Mr. Censor" who was continually butting in along their little path to El Dorado. Mr. Censor straightway appended a few brief sentences of explanation, and now, dear girl, she knows not whom she loves the most, the Censor or her soldier boy. The eternal feminine is an unstaple product at best. We can

forgive most things, but he who takes advantage of this weakness in human nature—well, may the devil take him!

* * * * *

THERE is a certain type of people in this world who make it their aim in life to hate, loathe, decry, and calumniate any work that savours of decency. They have been, and are, busy in Canada running down the Y.M.C.A. The Y.M.C.A. is a decent institution, giving its best to the Canadian Soldier in France. This very fact is enough to condemn it in the eyes of such critics.

Get wise to this class of men. They are the "Intellectual" mongrels and culls of our society. They are not representative of the true Canadian soldier. They kick high and think low. They abuse and besmirch their own social privileges. They stand for the rotten and retrogressive in society. No one is obliged to tolerate them. Expose them, work against them, vote against them, throw them out, and The Great War Veterans' Association will do well to have a care that this type does no more talking in their conventions.

* * * * *

OTHER than the mystery which travels with the interior of a lady's handbag, there is probably no greater mystery than that which surrounds our editorial desk. It is only right that our readers should know something of the centre from which every once and a while (D.V.) this magazine has its birth. Hence a pricking conscience forces us to dissect our Editorial Desk and lay it bare to the critical eyes of the public. It will indicate to them the width of our field, our broad-

mindedness, and the varied and waring elements that enter into our daily lives. They will also see that it is as Pat Thompson says of the army, "It ain't the work we mind, but its the damned stupidity of it."

Our desk is a modest affair, flat-topped, with four pigeonholes along the back, and a double row of ammunition boxes down either side, leaving a rectangular hole in the middle, through which protrude the legs of the literary genii who pen this perpetration. Just where our iron-plated heels meet the earth, the ground is considerably torn up and pulverised, betraying both our rustic origin and the frenzied fervour with which an idea is developed when once it percolates into the adamantine crust of our upper story. No downy cushion conforms to the shape of our weary body, but three chalk-filled sandbags constitute the seats of the mighty. The top sandbag is in shreds, exposing the whitened chalk inside. Likewise the seat of our breeches, is in shreds, giving us a more prepossessing appearance while sitting down than standing up. Lying open on the top of the desk is a long and tear-stained epistle to Quartermaster-Sergeant Knubley, imploring him to give us a new pair of pants, and containing an unprintable summary of the Major's latest criticism on our appearance. Beside this are clippings of four jokes from *La Vie Parisienne*, a mutilated copy of *Life*, a pair of wobbly shears that had done the damage, and a copy of the Lord's Prayer, written in shorthand, for quick reference when the Huns' first salvo of 5.9's land twenty yards out to the left.

We will now start at the right-hand pigeonhole and examine the contents of this desk, travelling from right to left across the top. In the first hole is an article for the STRAFER, "Whither Are We Drifting, and if so, to

what Extent," by our Right Section Commander, in which reconnaissance is spelt with a "k." Under this is a treatise on the "Futility of Flopping for Duds," by our Left Section Commander. As yet these are the only two contributions received for future issues, and we may be forced to deviate from our prepared plan of four issues per year for the next five years. In the next hole is an untouched plug of Macdonald's Chewing Tobacco, a package of Flag Cigarettes, and the Editorial Pipe, with the stem chewed through, betraying a firm grasp of the subject in hand. Next follows an open space to conform to the rectangular aperture beneath. Across the centre of this is stretched a wall motto in black and gold—

"Flop, and the world flops with you,
Stand, and you die alone."

In front of this is a dried up inkwell with four dead flies in it, a rusty pen, a copy of *Ten Nights in a Guard Room*, and a life-like reproduction of a S.O.S. flare travelling north-east by north, with its tail over the dashboard.

We now come to the first of the left-hand holes. It contains the sketch of a model gunpit, a pamphlet by the General Staff on "The Strategical Relations of Glitter and War," a tin of Brasso, a siege candle, an order for a bath, spanner No. 170, and a confidential letter from Von Hindenburg, asking if we thought it advisable for him to cross the Somme on the ice in August. In the left-hand hole is a tin of St. Charles Cream, a comb, a broken mirror, a grooming brush, a hard tack, a pair of socks with pink tops that she did "All herself," a guide to Paris, a love letter, and a volume of *Forty-Seven Thousand Pet Names for my Horse*, incapable of translation into foreign languages.

With this comprehensive review we now go to the lower regions.

In the top right-hand drawer we find a pair of suspenders, a forgotten fifty franc note, a ring made of a horse shoe nail, and a brass thimble which constitutes the Editor's idea of a rum issue. In the next drawer is an eighteen pounder shell case, a Mills' bomb, an indoor baseball, and a pair of kid gloves, once white as the driven snow but now considerably tarnished. In the lower drawer is a statement in triplicate from Lloyd George, acknowledging receipt of the last speech we wrote for him. There was also some correspondence with the German Foreign Office, pointing out the nourishing qualities of pine sawdust, with detailed data on its chemical analysis, rendered in terms of protein, carbohydrates and fat.

On opening the upper left-hand drawer we are greeted by a dried and faded rose that fell from her bosom in the dear dead days before the war. Once it was red, red! Tenderly and dreamily we raise our eyes and look backward into the years. A voice that calls and calls, a few ripples of girlish laughter; a faint rustle of fluff and lace, a few strands of hair coming down a little at the sides, and blowing idly across the cheek, and then—bang! the drawer went shut, and we carry on with our woeful reconnaissance. The next drawer contains reel after reel of crimson coloured tape in an intricate maze that showed no beginning or end, illogical, unwieldy and befuddled. Entangled in this is a little tin soldier, a wooden cross and a card with "Wait and See" printed on it. As we close the drawer we spied a golf ball and a reel of fishing tackle with sinker and hooks attached, one of which was still baited with the dried mummy of a grasshopper. And now we come to the last drawer. Ah, yes; two months

ago we had put in there a full side of Flavelle's Dessicated Bacon. Slowly we open the drawer, but the bacon is gone. In its place is a warped and wizened piece of pork resembling a peanut, and in the bottom of the drawer a crack which the water has used in seeking its own level. A bit of wrapper still sticks to the side, and on it we read a prayer beginning, "My God, what can I do for the Boys?"

Here, reader, it is no longer a mystery. You know the desk from which the STRAFER springs, and you can appreciate the alternating currents of existence that riff and raff, and churn and eddy and gurgle through the editorial soul as we sit, pen in hand, heels in the dirt, the unexpended portion of the seat of our pants on the chalky sandbag, and a halo around the spot where our neck has "Just growed up and haired over."



*

My Old Army Mug.

THROW it away?
Not in this war, boy; not in this war.
My good old mug;
Dirty, war-scarred veteran of all my battles;
Chipped, cracked, streaked, and spotted with grease;
Blackened over many a fire.
An "original" cup;
A cup with no box car number.
Throw it away?
Never!

Back in the early days,
Back in the smoky old huts at Witley,
There you came to me, old-timer,
Clean and white, fresh and sanitary,
Just as I pinched you from the Sergeant's Mess.
Over in Blighty you went through all the battles,
All the campaigns, and all the rainy bivouacs,
"Just like they do at the front";
And then,
When we hit the trail for a real war
You dangled gracefully from my haversack,
A thing to envy, a thing to be jealously guarded.
Through the long months in France,
Faithfully, patiently you have campaigned it;
Down at the Waggon Lines,
Listening to drivers
Squabbling over a chunk of bread or a hard tack,
Snarling over an odorous Maconochie.
You have put up with all this at meal times,

And up at the guns,
Time after time you have done your duty;
A true philosopher, taking what has come your way and
saying nothing.

Stewed tea, boiled tea, tea that was camouflaged water;
Issued cocoa, Café au Lait from Canada,

Chocolata,

And the tears rolled from your rim

When looking around

You saw box after box of Oxo

Piling ahead, coming and evercoming,

And now and again

Occasions of moment, of joy and hilarious laughter.

You caught the rum issue,

The good old red-eyed bug juice,

As it gurgled and splashed

From the hands of the niggard who held it.

Up at O. Pips,

Skirting the edge of the trenches,

In dug-outs and cellars,

Smoky and stuffy and full of rats;

You have heard the bully beef sizzling—

Bully and onions, the signallers' favourite—

While you have held an anæmic concoction,

Pale, sweetish, and full of dry tea,

Tasting of wood smoke and ashes,

That washed down the Huntley and Palmer's.

Many a time,

Torn by my troublesome conscience,

You have been my shaving mug,

My wash basin;

Even in desperate spasms of cleanliness

Holding the stuff for a sponge bath.

What cup could do more?
 None, I say, none!
 Or, produce it,
 You who sip tea from real china,
 Dinky, transparent, hand painted;
 A thing of pink teas
 And conventional evenings,
 But no good for a soldier;
 A dirty old trooper in khaki.

Throw it away? Wash it?
 Say, bo,
 One more remark, and I'll deal you
 A blow that will can you forever.
 Get out of here; compree?
 Departez—toute suite.

*

—◆—

“What for be ye grieving MacDougall?”
 “Eh, mon, t'think of all the free concerts ganging to
 waste out here and my Jenny's t'hame.”

*

—◆—

He worked his way down to her heels,
 He groomed with a circular stroke,
 And now he knows just how it feels—
 The circular stroke of a moke.
 Poor fellow, he started to fade,
 He never seemed able to rally
 Since he went on parade,
 And his No. 1 said
 “You might have slept in this Reveille.”

“The Fightin’ Fifth.”

—◆— *by Sergt. Carncross-*

THE war went ill, and but a single glance
 Revealed unfavourably the map of France;
 And he who moved our armies divers ways
 Upon this checker board of nights and days
 Stood deep in thought. He scratched his ear, and then
 He shut his eyes and scratched his ear again,
 When suddenly a smile stole o’er his face;
 A thought took root, and, with a better grace,
 He tapped a bell and took his pen and wrote
 A message which with blushes we must quote:
 “To win this war we haven’t got a chance
 Unless we get the Fightin’ Fifth to France”;
 And in a week the war’s one greatest annal
 Read thus: “The Fightin’ Fifth have crossed the
 Channel.”

In other days, when first the war was new,
 Old Gabriel having little else to do
 Sounded his horn and lifted up the hatches,
 And out his cherubs fluttered in red patches,
 Strutting it forth with credit and precision,
 God’s own anointed—The First Division.
 For every single man had gazed upon
 The eastern star above the field of Mons,
 And even if he’s only out a week,
 By some strange supernatural freak
 Of mind, the sad illusion slowly dawns
 Upon our hero that he’s out since Mons.
 Is it not strange how two small patches red

Put years of war into a draftee's head,
Make him a soldier old and better than
This war's most ancient seasoned veteran !

The war progressed. 'Twas difficult to win,
So more and more the troops came pouring in,
And when the Angel mobs outgrew themselves,
They lined them up, picked out the unwashed elves,
Gave them a bath, their numbers carefully reckoned,
Tacked on " Black " patches, and behold—the Second.
They were the noble sons of England's daughter,
Afraid of nothing 'cepting soap and water ;
They'd tumbled from their high celestial flavour,
Down to a very homely dug-out savour ;
And fittingly they bear their gallant shield,
As batmen to all Canada's forces in the field.

But still the months rolled on, the dirty Huns
Kept up the fight with endless men and guns,
And e'en with two divisions in the field
We could not make the hateful Boches yield.
They fought so well that our Sir Sam inferred
We'd lose the war unless we found the Third.
No sooner said than done ; they stood in patches blue,
'Tis said they stole heaven's colours coming through.
We only know that they the bluff put up,
They'd been in France since Hector was a pup.

Now men who're tainted with the supernatural,
With nine lives are possessed as cats are all ;
And so as time went on they grew and grew
Until authorities wondered what to do.
For them remained the only sad recourse,
They had to go to work and make the Fourth.

They came—a low, green-patched, conglomeration,
Resulting from a tactical condensation.

Time was when they, in turn, were looked upon
As Cox's army, covered o'er with scum;
And now we know, 'tis true, it comes to mind
"A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind,"
For after gnawing at the underdogs bare bone,
They didn't have the heart to pass much on;
And when we shoved them from their lowly station,
They looked at us with kind consideration.

We were across. The old boys sipped their beer
And said, "Say, Mac, The Fightin' Fifth is here."
Ah, yes, like dogs turned loose to rustle fare,
We wondered, begged, and lived on cupboards bare;
Like fools, following honour and our nose,
Rushed where the thickest fire announced most foes,
Until we ran into that mild corrosive
Influence in war that's known as High Explosive.
We searched for dug-outs, shell holes, or a cavern,
To serve our dirty troopers for a tavern;
Or, failing these, perhaps a spare dog kennel,
But learned such things are scarce this side the channel.
We were the junior force, an imposition
Upon the presence of each old division.
The First and Second, Third and Fourth, the pith
They were of troops; they didn't need the Fifth.
So with contempt they deigned to look upon
The poor, blind, grovelling, dusty worms;
The dirty, bedraggled, conscripted mob,
Untrained, unskilled, a worthless daub,
Scum of the earth, a yellow fightless myth,
The lousy, frowsy, filthy Fightin' Fifth.
For months it was the "Mons" angelic wail,

The Fightin' Fifth shot short at Passchendale
(But sad to say that then we were at Loos,
And couldn't get a line into the "noos");
While their new mythological machinery
Invented tales that fairly scorched the scenery.
And up and down, from Ypres to Verdun,
Shells falling short on going to the Hun,
Presaged the Fifth. Their wicked presence showed,
Their bungling handiwork forever flowed;
And when at length authorities were moved
To action, subsequent investigation proved—
Oh, well, it matters not, such reason doesn't,
It was the Fifth whether it was or wasn't.
We lived it out, and to our tasks proved equal,
But that's what must be mentioned in the sequel.

The sequel! Well, 'tis short. They were mistaken,
For somehow we ne'er failed "to land the bacon";
Our barrages gave the Hun so hot a welcome,
At first he thought, and now he knows, a hell came;
And to old taunts sneered in phrases witty,
We made no answer, but we "Took the city,"
And troopers say the Hun has got his mawful,
And that our barrages are something "Bloody awful,"
And every private in the blinkin' infantry
Wants to be backed by the Fifth Artillery,
And Corps Commanders, as a relaxation,
Halt their carts and fork out congratulations;
And now you'll note the rhyme is getting rotten,
So we'll stand down on credit we have gotten.

The path of Light Duty leads but to the kitchen.

THE STRAFER.

PHOTO OF
GUNNER WITHKINS
TAKEN IMMEDIATELY
AFTER RECEIVING A
PARCEL OF "EATS"
FROM CANADA.



THIS IS
DRIVER DOAPE
A FRIEND OF
WITHKINS'S WHO
READILY ASSISTED
WITH THE
UNPACKING.



THE GAY LOTHERID
WHO CARRIES THE
MAIL THROUGH MUD,
AND SHELL SWEPT
AREAS, MINDLESS
OF ANY
DANGER.



EDITORS NOTE:-
THIS HERO HAS
TO HIS CREDIT
MANY V.C.'S
AS WELL AS THE
ORDER OF THE
BULL.

DVR. TITE-WAD
WHO NOW
WISHES HE
HAD LOANED
WITHKINS
THAT FRANC
THIS A.M.



MARIE LOUISE
QUEEN OF THE
ESTAMINET, WHO
RECEIVED MANY
OF THE CHOCOLATES

THE OLD
HENIE BAYONET
WHICH PLAYED
SUCH A PROM-
INENT PART
IN THE UNPACKING



PANORAMA VIEW, SHOWING THE
"REST BILLET", CROSS MARKS THE
ROOM IN WHICH PARCEL WAS OPENED.

APOLOGIES TO OUR
OFFICIAL ARMY PHOTOGRAPHERS

Gunner Wind Up.

In a two minute heartrending soliloquy on
 "The Daddy of all Sensations."

— by "Slim" Mockey —

Scene: Night, and utter darkness in a strange and war-battered wilderness with a Hun Bombing Plane overhead.

"I'm a-coming, I'm a-coming, I'm a-coming." *(Drone of a Gotha engine)*

Bang! Bang! Bang!

"Wow; hear that? Wish they'd make these tin lids bigger. G'wan, close your mouth and stop stargazing; you'll swaller an 'Archie' Dud."

Younn! Younn! Younn!

"Wonder if he means me? Oh Lord! A hole, a hole, my kingdom for a hole! Do you think he'll unload here? Hey, if he gets me, send this whizz-bang ring to the 'Jane,' and just say that I died with her name on my lips, eh, Bill?"

"Hurrah! He's gone. Now for a bunch of sleep. Say, what are you there, a one man brass band? Close up that sawmill for the love of Mike; if you don't can that snoring I'll strike you off the strength of the Battery. I want to get some sleep. Here they come again. I'm going to get up. Go on, quit your 'shiverin.' You're scared. Let them come. We're here before them. Hey, you in that tent, douse the glim. Com' awn, shake a leg; don't you compre English? Lights out!"

"Tell that S.M. he's a headache."

"Hear 'em, Bill? Hear 'em? Holy old wall-eyed mackerel, there must be a dozen up there. Lay off that now, I ain't got cold feet. I'm asleep. Don't care if

Sergeant Major

there's fifty. Can't get my wind up. They gotta hit yuh to get yuh."

Werrn! Biz-z-z! Bang! Bang!

"Wow! This ain't no health resort; I'm hitting her up for the bomb proof. Comin', Bill? Ugh; Lord deliver me. Who swiped my boots? Com' awn up, Bill, they're gone. The bomb proof for me. I'm not dead yet. We're liable to get leave next year, and I don't wanta be no sacrifice battery.

MSS. Found on a War Correspondent.

THIS morning I took a stroll up to the front line. For the first time in my career the shells weren't falling like rain, and machine-gun bullets whizzing by with a hum like a hive of bees swarming. This is just a slight lull following the four days' struggle by our splendid troops for the possession of the village of Buzzville. Through the whole attack a high moral has existed amongst our troops. In one day our patrols brought in seventy-five thousand prisoners and one thousand seven hundred and eighty guns of all calibres. A party consisting of a Sergeant and eight men stormed a "Bertha" gun, bayoneted seventy-five of the crew and brought the gun triumphantly back to our lines. During the attack I witnessed the proceedings from a hill twenty miles back, so I speak with authority when I say that the enemy literally ran forward in thousands, with hands in the air and shouting "kamerad," eager to give themselves up. Our troops had no difficulty in

efficaciously handling the gigantic task which confronted them, having been specially dieted on chicken salad and oyster stew during the many days occupied in rehearsing for the big clash. The optimism prevailing amongst the wounded is amazing. Our casualties were very slight, and one man with whom I talked had only one arm and one leg blown off. He chatted freely, and expressed his appreciation at having got "Cushy" wounds. The same fine spirit prevails amongst the commissioned ranks. In conversation with one subaltern, he expounded the hardships of such an undertaking. The mess was all disorganised, and "It's beastly awkward not being able to obtain one's eggs for breakfast." The quality of "Black and White" deteriorates as the war goes on. There is nothing further to report.

A.G.M.D.

*
 ————— ◆ —————
 Bring on the Maconochie Bud; they got one hundred thousand prisoners yesterday.

*
 ————— ◆ —————
 Frail orphan of a summer come and gone,
 Untrammelled by the iron feet of war,
 Yet holding promise of a better dawn—
 A butterfly upon our dugout door.

*
 ————— ◆ —————
 IT USED TO BE.
 If a man who was nimble and spry on his legs,
 Saw a cannon ball coming right for him,
 By shifting his carcass a couple of pegs
 The thing would completely ignore him.

all the good grub is supposed to go to the prisoners, so when the troops see Maconochie canned stuff instead of bacon, they conclude that we have made a big haul of Fritz's.

*

Back on Rest.

The long, white road runs up and down
 By hills that are fair to see,
 Marked in patches of green and brown,
 And here in the valley a red-roofed town
 Slumbering peacefully.

Oh! the sky of France is warm and blue,
 The blossoms are on the tree,
 The birds are singing the long day through,
 Singing because the world is new,
 Just as the world should be.

But up and down the long, white road,
 All through the pleasant day,
 Soldiers march with their heavy loads
 By rumbling lorries, where shells are stowed,
 Over the hills and ~~far~~ away.

Over the hills and far away
 Where all the land is dead;
 The hills are ugly, and bare and gray,
 The villages lie in a dull decay,
 Ashes and dust instead.

The leaves will never open there,
 The blossoms bloom no more,
 All that was peaceful and good and fair,
 Died in the heavy, poisoned air
 In the desolate trail of war.

But the grass is green and the sun is bright,
 Happily live we here,
 Only the muttering guns at night,
 And the high balloons in the evening light,
 Tell us that war is near.

Moonshine.

As I dreamt yesterday night, 'neath the moon's waning
light,
Cross my fancy there flitted a wonderful sight,
And now of my vision—
With fitting precision,
My brows duly knit—I'll give you the sum.

Methinks I had passed from the place where we last
Wrought vengeance on Fritz for the way we'd been
gassed,
And now with a pension
Of quite a dimension
I was living a life of comfort and ease.

I lived in a land where the food wasn't canned,
Where the wines and liqueurs were the very best brand,
When I wished for a drink,
Why I turned to a sink
Where the lager frothed merrily forth from the tap.

In this land of delight, where the lights gleamed so bright,
No laws there existed to mar my delight,
If I wanted to roam,
Then I needn't come home
Till the cock crowing loudly presaged a new dawn.

If I liked a cravat, or the style of a hat,
Or the shape of a coat with lapels rolled or flat,
I went out and got it,
Nor thought when I bought it
That styles and the Army might not quite agree.

As I roamed up and down in this wonderful town,
 I chanced on a maiden with soft eyes of brown,
 I went up to meet her,
 But ere I could greet her
 Some damn fool awoke me—to ask for the time.

H. McL.

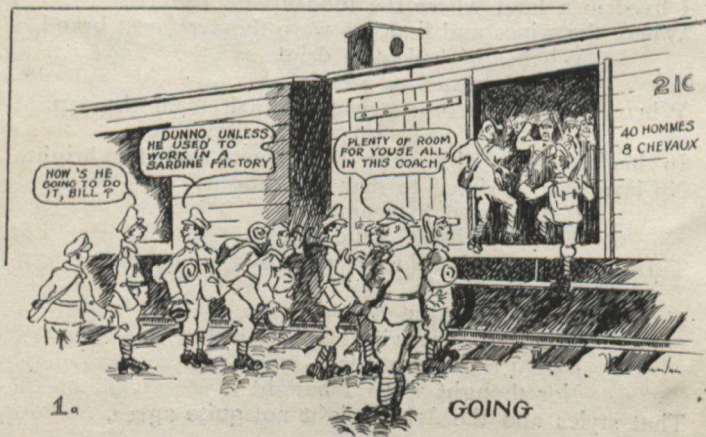
Slim: "What are you readin', Fat?"

Fat: "The downfall of Queen Irene."

Slim: "Is it deep?"

Fat: "No, she was caught by the bucket."

Slim: "Well, well."



"SIDE-DOOR PULLMANS"

***"We are but helpless Pieces of the game He plays
Upon this Chequer Board of Nights and Days."***

2 a.m. Reveille sounds. The strains break the stillness of a peaceful valley nestling amongst the hills of northern France. Here and there a light appears. Into the semi-darkness figures pass, and here where a moment ago all was silent, stands a body of khaki-clad men who seem to have sprung up from the earth. A distant hum is wafted on the breeze. Closer and closer it comes. Lights out. The distant murmur is now a steady throb overhead, and a dozen shafts of lights pierce the sky searching out the author of the unwelcome sound. Flash; bang! Flash, bang! The bombing Gotha is at its deadly work, and similar sounds reverberating from the further slopes tell us that somebody else is getting it.

The throb dies to a low murmur and gradually ceases, We carry on. Horses are watered and fed, and kits are strapped to the limbers. The long line of men extending to the cookhouse denotes the issue of bully and hard tack. An hour later the dawn is breaking. "Walk march." The teams stiffen in their harness and the column is on its way. Along the road we go, up hill and down, along the country side, through towns and villages, many of them bearing the scars of war, and a few which Providence has saved from the trail of flaming steel. The fields of grain spread out golden in the morning sunlight, square against square, a patchwork of green and gold, a veritable carpet upon the world. On we go until at length a railway siding comes into view. A train rolls up. With little confusion and much sweat of brow the whole column is loaded on the cars. One blast of the whistle, the engine coughs and groans, and the train with

its horses, men and guns pulls out. For where? Who knows? Only God and General Jackson, and they won't tell. Hour by hour the rattle of wheels upon steel continues, occasionally broken by a stop to avoid a passing train. The country along the route seems deserted. At length the train pulls up. We have reached our destination. In the waning light a cathedral spire stands out on the skyline. Where are we now? Where do we go from here? These questions still remain unanswered. Darkness is falling which does not facilitate the process of unloading. "All correct." Everything is unloaded and ready to take the road. Again comes the throb of engines in the air, and a score of beams search the heavens. First one flash and a bang, then they come in quick succession, punctuated by an occasional burst of anti-aircraft fire. But we must be on our way. Down the road we go leaving the bomb-swept village to its fate. On and on through the darkness. Along winding roads and through war-torn villages until with the first ray of morning light we settle down to rest in a field. With the dawning day the low clouds break into a dismal drizzle. The wearisomeness of travel begins to tell, and through the day we rest. With dusk we are ready to move. A long line of packhorses laden with messages of death. Again for weary miles we trudge. Traffic impedes us—such traffic as the Strand has never seen. Vehicles and guns are in countless numbers, horse-drawn, motor and tractor-drawn, other lines of packhorses each upon a like mission. Here and there up ahead a bright light shoots skyward. We are nearing the front line. Again and again more lights illuminate the scene. The enemy is looking for movement. He must not know of our concentration. It must be carried out in secret. Through fields of grain our road runs. The

column is halted, the ammunition unloaded beside the road and carefully concealed with straw. And so upon successive nights the process is repeated until at length in neat piles it awaits the day of the attack. Meanwhile under cover of darkness our guns are dug in and carefully camouflaged. Nor are we alone in this, for numerous other units are carrying out similar operations. All is ready, guns are in position. Amid the low-lying mist and gray light of the early dawn, cavalry wait in thousands, with numberless tanks and armoured cars. Stand to! The "Zero hour" has arrived. The whole earth and sky quiver and throb with a thundering volcanic roar. THE BIG PUSH HAS STARTED.

Why can't Fritz strafe us when we have our boots on?

* Cosmopolitan France—A Chinese Labour Corps private and a French Barmaid swearing at each other in broken English.

Douse the glim, Mac, it's a Heinie!

Why do our officers always give us "Stand To" just when it is "Grub Up"?

* It is a wise bird that has flown before the S.-M. comes around with an after supper detail.

Hun: "Kamerad! Me wife, three children."
Tommy: "'And me the blinkin' pin, we'll soon 'ave a widow and three orphans."

***“What dire offence from amorous causes springs
What mighty contests rise from trivial things.”***

DEAR AUNTIE,—I must write to you on a subject that is occupying my whole heart, and I must blurt out the horrible truth in a single sentence. I have broken my engagement with Charlie. I have tried to face the situation calmly and judge reasonably, and the action I have taken appeared to be my only method of extricating myself from a position that had become intolerable. As I turn my mind back to those lovely days before the war when Charlie and I were such good pals, and had such good times together, and then compare these days with the wretched darkness of the present time, my whole heart freezes within me, and my once brilliant hopes crumble down into so much ashes and dust. At any rate, Auntie, dear, I shall endeavour to make my position clear to you.

As you know, Charlie responded to the great call and went out to fight. A week ago he returned home on leave—a changed man. His once easy command of the English language had given way to a strange jargon. Everything was either “Bon” or “No Bon,” and he had a stupid variety of expressions as “Napoo,” “Finee,” “Encore Madmoiselle,” and “Bon Couchey.” He was continually whistling and humming a ragtime which ran:—

Oh, Mademoiselle from Armentieres—Parlez-vous;

Oh, Mademoiselle from Armentieres

Give me a kiss for a souvenir,

Hinky, dinky, parlez-vous.

Meal times were my worst trials. At breakfast he

made a grab for a loaf, and with a huge dirty jack knife cut off a large chunk, which he called his "ration." He used a slice of this as a plate, first dipping one side in the bacon fat while he spread a second slice with jam as though he feared there would be none left when he was ready for it. His plate disappeared simultaneously with his bacon, and in this operation his jack knife played a far too important part. He brought his dirty old mess tin to the table, and insisted on drinking his tea out of it with a horrible sucking sound. For the remainder of the ration he found some secret hiding place, and then kept clamouring for "seconds."

When breakfast was over he made me stand at attention in the middle of the kitchen floor, where he inspected me, not infrequently making sarcastic remarks on the way I was wearing my clothing. The bathroom made no appeal to him, for he washed in a pail, his whole toilet taking a surprisingly short time. He always insisted on using a fine china tea cup half filled with warm water as a shaving mug. He obtained possession of little Arthur's tin trumpet, by the aid of which he roused us long before daylight, and thumped on my door and insisted that I "Show a leg."

After supper, instead of retiring to the parlour with me as in bygone days, at nine o'clock he would again blow the trumpet, put out all the lights, turn off the gas at the meter, and insist that we all "Spread our flops."

He refused to sleep on a bed, but rolled himself in a blanket, and using his tunic for a pillow and his greatcoat for a quilt, he slept on the floor. He would not allow anyone to leave the house without a written pass, and he frequently came prowling around the rooms after night checking up his "Roll." But he most annoyed me by what he called a "Kit Inspection," when he made

me place my whole wardrobe and personal effects out for inspection. You will understand, Auntie, how embarrassing my position as a young lady would be. He insisted that I show a tooth brush, a knife, a fork, a spoon, a spare pair of laces, and a piece of soap. He sorted out some other articles, and ordered me to "Ditch" them. My face was crimson. He would then depart on a "Salvaging expedition," returning with vegetables and even chickens, but I have an awful suspicion they came from our neighbours' gardens. I would write further, but I think I have told you sufficient. Charlie, my own boy, my own darling Sergeant; my heart still calls to him in unguarded moments, the old light of bygone days still burns in my breast, and then the horrid shadow of war comes as a curtain enclosing my heart, my hopes, my all, in the utter blackness of despair. Much love, Auntie, from

Your sad little niece,

HELEN.

★

He sobbed when he kissed her good-bye,
 Big salty ones rolled down his face,
 But why should he weep,
 Or lose any sleep,
 When the son-of-a-gun pulled a job at the base.

You'll never get to heaven if you always play safe.

"And where were you in the Great War, daddy, when that Hun airplane came after you?"

"Oh, I was under the waggon with the rest of them, sonny."

Our Culinary Staff.



Frenzied fiction has applauded,
And the world at large has lauded
Tommy Atkins for his fight against the foe ;
But no word of praise is given
To the heroes who have striven
In the conflict with Maconochie and Co.

To appreciate this section,
One must have a close inspection
Of the personnel that puts the pot to boil,
So with this as our intention,
We will make some casual mention
Of those tireless, optimistic sons of toil.

We have men of every nation,
Men of high and lowly station,
Cooking cookies for their comrades at the guns.
In their efforts, we might say,
Feeding fighters for the fray,
They help to hinder Hindy's howling Huns.

Now our cooking staff's a dandy,
For each man is really handy
When it comes to getting up a mess of stew,
While their steaks cannot be beaten,
And their hash is always eaten,
If a roast be ancient they can make it new.

With Bomb. Williamson to lead them,
And you bet they always had him,
It's no wonder that they always get ahead.
Like the Biblical illusion,

THE STRAFER.

He performs the great illusion,
Of feeding half-a-hundred on a two-pound loaf of bread.

His right-hand man's Kinsella,
He's a mighty decent fellow
Whose powers as a cook we all proclaim.

He can make most tasty dishes
From a few of Brunswick's fishes,
Or with bully or with "Mac" just the same,

But the men who feed the Army
Must at times go almost barmy
When they listen to Jack London's long lament ;

His statistics are the newest,
And his facts are quite the fewest,
But his chevrons quell the rookie's rude dissent ;

And to these, the friends of men,
We will fill our glasses when
In days to come we gladly drink their health ;

For the service they have given,
'Gainst the odds which they have striven,
May their ways be those of happiness and wealth.

De Witt Verner thinks that if the troops are all as
loyal to their country as commercial travellers are to their
wives, then God help the Union Jack.

Do not aspire for stripes in the belliachers squad, the
competition is too keen.

His courage scorns the shells that fly,
His stout heart knows no fear ;
But he hates to think that as he dies
He'll be wearing that cursed Bandolier.

A Night at the O. Pip.

It was rather warm work carrying the rations, water, and kits up there in the dark. There were three of us along with the officer. I had the two water cans, Duffie the rations, and the Bomb. the kits. It was necessary to wait for darkness, not only on account of the Huns sniping, for the O. Pip was quite close to the line, but mainly so that there would not be any movement near it which would draw attention to that particular spot.

Arriving at the O. Pip the mail was read, ration looked over, and then the toss for shifts during the night. A raid was to be put on that night so the officer chose the two-hour period, which would cover the period of the raid. The rest of the night was split up by the remaining three of us, the man on last shift being delegated to cook the breakfast. One of the telephonists tested out the lines—there were two that ran over the ground in different directions to minimise chances of our communications being cut—and then turned in.

It was about two o'clock when our guns opened up to cover our raiding party. The shrapnel burst in red tinkling flashes above the ground, while the high explosive, bursting on percussion, gave forth a less vivid illumination. The roar of the bursting shells and the crack of the eighteen pounders behind, the flashes of the guns and the screech of shells overhead gave the effect of a violent thunder and wind storm. From the enemy's lines rockets and flares—greens and reds and luminous whites—were sent up, which lit up No Man's Land like day. The machine guns added to the uproar, and a few moments later the retaliation of the enemy's guns came. One of his whiz-bangs had already broken one of the

telephone lines, and we were fervently hoping that the other would stay in. Gradually the din diminished, the machine-gun fire slowed up, and soon there was only the occasional crack of a Hun "whiz-bang," or of our eighteen pounders that echoed through the night. The report of "All quiet" had just been sent to the Adjutant when whiz, bang! a shell burst near the O. Pip, and our last thread of communication was broken by it. Out started the two telephonists along the wire, and soon found the break, mended it, tapped it, and tested out the wires. They were O.K. It was a different matter with the other line. They followed it across for half a mile with a few shells bursting around and splinters flying, but so long as none came too close all was well. They found the break in a trench. A working party had been cleaning out the trench and had broken the wire. It was a long hunt to find the ends, but they were eventually located and connected. On the way home a shell happened to come closer than usual. Instinctively they dove into the nearest shell hole, to find it filled with barbed wire. They extricated themselves and resolved forever to stay out of shell holes. The splinters were easier to face than sitting on barbed wire. Bed seemed good after their trip, and nothing awakened them until breakfast—which was not served in bed.

History repeats itself—so do intelligence reports.

We only have one spoon for all pots.

Jack Bird thinks that those who get out of this war with a whole hide will have souvenir enough to take home.

You are sure to get hives if you smoke "Beeswings" (Andy).



*

LEADEN sky and dying sun,
Purple shadow over the hill,
Blood-red flash and crack of a
gun,
Moan of a shell—and the world
is still.





NEVER STAND
BEFORE YOUR O.C.
OR BEHIND A MULE.

