

THE LISTENING POST



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Censored by Chief Censor.

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No. 30.

British Expeditionary Force, France, April, 1918.

Price 1 fr.



WHEN WE GO BACK TO CANADA (as the Hun sees it).



THE LISTENING POST may be procured from the following agents:—

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EDITORIAL.

1918 and the "LISTENING POST," with the Battalion that created it, still appearing on the fields of Flanders.

What the new year will give us is not known, but what we hope and believe is, that it will give an end to the German occupation of France and Belgium; reparation (if money and material can repay) for the sufferings undergone by innocent civilians during the long months of German oppression; peace, with the knowledge that it is a peace with honour; and, as the summer gives place to winter, a return to the old homes—to the wide sweeps of the rolling prairies and the eternal snows of the mighty Rockies, then on through to where the warm waters of the Pacific welcome us back to the scenes of the old life.

To the men of British Columbia, and to all our comrades from the Atlantic to the Pacific serving in the Canadian Corps, our wish for 1918 is that you may march on from success to success, driving before you, as you have done so many times before, the battered remnants of Kultur, and at the end of it all a safe return to your homes in dear old Canada.

Our New Policy.

With this number the "LISTENING POST" is compelled to adopt a new policy.

For over two years we have managed, in spite of increasing difficulties, to get out our usual issues in France by French printers. For the past three months we have endeavoured—but in vain—to get a French printer to handle this issue, and have been compelled finally to make arrangements for its publication in England.

An issue of 24 pages about every two months is the most that we can hope for in the future, and if the present paper shortage should get worse this will probably have to be curtailed. This scarcity of paper and its consequent exorbitant price, coupled with the very high costs of printing and the fact that we do not publish advertisements, makes it necessary to fix the price of these issues at One Franc.

Ingratitude.

MR. GEORGE GOODCHILD, the author of "Umpteen Yarns," a recently published slim volume of anecdotes "collected from somewhere in France," seems to us to be wanting somewhat in courtesy. We make no complaint that he has drawn on some of the old issues of the "LISTENING POST" for some of his best stories, even though in so doing he has not seen fit to honour us with the usual acknowledgment. But it seems to us singularly ungracious that he should go out of his way to inform the public in his preface that: "The Colonial has a quick appreciation of a good joke, but he is utterly unable to create a humorous situation. All his anecdotes are local, and have not the broad humour that enjoys a wide appeal. Ninety per cent. of his anecdotes are utterly unintelligible to the average Englishman, and the few successful ones have the effect of being conscious." Maybe; but the point of this sapient reflection, is that most all the best stories retailed in "Umpteen Yarns" are of "Colonial" invention. To attempt to bite the hand that feeds you is to be ill-tempered and ungrateful. Mr. George Goodchild does not quite live up to his name.

THE GHOST OF THE OLD "CHATOO."

"I 'HIS'LL do," said Private Smith, of the —th Canadians, as he threw the tiny beam of his pocket light on the broken façade and yawning doorway of the old "chatoou." He had been disgorged from an archaic leave train after fourteen glorious days in Blighty, given the location of his unit, and told to move. He went, but not in any unseemly hurry. Nature called for the stimulus of food and drink, so it was well on towards dusk before he was clear of the rail-head town. He humped his pack dolefully and trudged along the lonely country road, keeping an ear open for the rumbling of a motor transport, on which he had been counting for a fitting finish to a life of temporary luxury. But no motor transport materialised. A staff car breezed by him, and a motor-cyclist shot past with all the pomp and circumstance of a 'bus, and then silence and night fell on the road. Smith leaned back against the grassy bank by the roadside to rest and ease his shoulders.

so when he saw the old "chatoou" standing black against the sky, he decided to rest there until daylight. The interior was not specially inviting, but Smith was not particular; he had slept in much worse billets many a time. He stepped over the rubble of stonework on the ground floor, and, with the staring eye of his light directing his way, mounted the dismantled staircase. In the shell of a high-ceilinged room he threw off his equipment, kicked aside a litter of old sacks and empty tins, and laid his ground-sheet and blanket in a corner. The wide fireplace had a homely look, but there was nothing left to serve as fuel in the devastated house; the very wall-paper had only survived in patches, and the broken window space had been stripped of its casement. Successive relays of soldiers, French and British, had scribbled their names, units, and personal sentiments on the stained walls; but these did not interest Smith. He drew off the leave boots with a sigh of relief, and, pulling



Bob (with recollections of French economy): "Wot's 'e after now, Bill—rats?"
 Bill: "No, Madame dropped a franc in the straw pile last winter."

He must have fallen asleep there, for when he next came to himself, misty stars looked down on a world asleep. He stretched his cramped legs, lit a cigarette, and took to the road once more. After a time of moody plodding he reached a shell-battered village. A traffic control man stood with his lamp at the cross-roads.

"How far to X?" Smith asked.
 "'Bout five kilometres," answered the traffic control. "Back off leaf?"
 "Yep."
 "How's things in Blighty?"
 "Same old way. People there seem to think the war's goin' to finish Friday week; but we know better." And the custodian of superior insight moved off disgustedly.
 A little way beyond the village, he found himself growing footsore. The leave boots he had bought were hurting his feet,

his blanket and greatcoat over him, composed himself to sleep. He was awakened by a stealthy movement in the room and a muffled clinking of metal. "Rats," he thought, and turned wearily over on the hard floor with his face to the window, through which a veiled moon now shed a soft light. At first, through half-closed eyes, he saw nothing. Then he noticed a black patch in the far corner, and caught a faint rustle. A groan followed—a hollow, chesty note.
 Smith sat up. "Who's there?" he demanded.
 "It is I, Guy de Montivilliers," answered a rusty voice.
 "Who is this disturbs my midnight hauntings? Mortal, if you be one, begone, ere worse befall you!"
 "What battalion d'you belong to—the twenty-sec—?"
 "The Legion of the Damned," responded the voice, with a fine appreciation of its own resonance.
 "Oh, the Third Brigade! That's nothing to get het up about."

The Ghost of the Old "Chatoo"—contd.

"Mortal, you misapprehend," continued the voice, with a hint of annoyance. "I am a disembodied spirit, a shade, an apparition—"

"'S that so?" interjected Smith. "I'm a bomber myself."

"I am a ghost," said the voice, "doomed to walk the—"

"Well, I wish you'd do your route marchin' in another place than a tired infantryman's boudoir," Smith remarked, with some heat. "'S just like you civvies—no consideration for the thin red line o' khaki at all." And he turned his face to the wall and closed his eyes.

This would never do. Guy de Montivilliers felt that his shady reputation was at stake. At all costs this intruder must be impressed.

"Listen!" he commanded, with an ear to the acoustics of the bare room. "I, Guy de Montivilliers, wear these chains and bear this diaphanous outline because—hear and tremble—I slew a man in this very chamber. His blood bubbled and crept along those very boards on which you lie."

"That's some better. Tell us all about it!" And Smith sat up and fumbled for his cigarettes. "I once threw a bomb into a dug-out full o' Germans, meself."

At this point the Ghost groaned—a truly heart-shaking affair, meant to be very, very impressive indeed.

"Try 'er again," counselled Smith. "Draw a deep breath an' let 'er go, Gallagher. You sound like a draft's first blighty."

The Ghost clanked his chains and gnashed his teeth, staring anxiously at Smith to observe the effect.

"Doin' F.P. number one?" queried the latter, pleasantly.

The Disembodied Spirit nearly rent his diaphanous outline in the effort of producing the blood-curdling scream of his ghostly career.

Smith nodded appreciatively. "Fine! Guy, old timer, you're warmin' up. Reminded me of a Hun I once heard on the Somme what got walked on by a tank."

The Apparition looked chapfallen—although he was already about as chapfallen as a ghost could be and stay together. "Your hardihood is impenetrable," he confessed, wryly. "In the whole of a career devoted to hair-raising, pallor production, the shaking limb, the tremulous joint, the staring eye, the blasted intelligence, I have never encountered such armoured impudence."

"Talk like our Colonel, you do," remarked Smith. "But tell us about this ghostin'—d'you work union hours, or are you like a soldier, on the job all the time?"

"Pale phantom of this sub-lunar planet," said the Spirit, "seek not to unravel the mysteries of the Hidden World; pry not into the depths whence spring such as I—"

"Yes, Guy de Montivilliers," interrupted Smith. "That's the chorus, I guess."

"I have seen—" declaimed the Spirit, summoning all his powers for a last assault on the Bomber's nerves—"I have seen blood flow in torrents, the duel, the midnight assassination—"

"Ha! ha! ha!" commented Smith, in a deep undertone.

"These very walls," continued the Ghost, in a hurt voice, "have echoed the screams of the dying, and the wan light of a morning of death has spread like a stain through this shattered casement. Not so long ago men in grey came here with thunders and lightnings, and a fusillade of bullets. Others in blue coats and red breeches pursued them, and all about was an inferno of shrieking steel and a litter of corpses—"

"Napoo," Smith amended. "Go on, Philip Gibbs!"

"The uproar and destruction were such that even I—"

"Go on!" insisted the Bomber.

"Was—was appalled and fled from my ghostly haunts—"

"Bomb-proofer!" denounced Smith. "You cringin', creepin' reptile. Call yourself a Frenchman, an' didn't join the dig-in? You ain't no decent, self-respectin' ghost, bah!" He lit a cigarette. "Beat it before I tear your can off," he ordered, in the tone of finality.

The Shade shuddered and looked wistfully at the Bomber.

"G'wan!" insisted the latter, and the Ghost, with a sigh of despair, disappeared through a portion of the wall which announced that Pierre Lemaitre, soldat, 31e Regiment d'Infanterie, was prepared to espouse a wealthy widow, a rich land proprietrix, or the owner of an estaminet with a good location.

J. W. C.

The Kaiser's Birthday.

On the occasion of the Kaiser's fifty-ninth birthday all was quiet in the trenches held by the famous "Byng Boys"; but even during such quiet times our patrols ever keep a watchful eye open for the celebration that is to be expected at such a time.

One of our men who was on duty at the cruel hour of three ack emma, noticed that the All Highest's main supporter, Lady Werfer, was about to commence her daily duties, and being of a generous nature, he decided to donate a clip of highly-polished .303.

Immediately this presentation was made, Lady Werfer sent her eldest daughter, Minnie, to search for the donor; but when Minnie arrived at the suspected spot and found no one in sight, she burst into tiers (of sandbags).

Captain G. Howie Chutes being close by, heard her sobs, and at once sent his most reliable assistant, Lieutenant O. U. Stokes, to inform her friends of Minnie's fate.

Mr. O. U. Stokes soon reached his destination and immediately spread his message. This caused great alarm, and a search party was at once sent out.

As they had received no definite instructions where to go, they decided to separate, and each went his own way in search of Captain G. Howie Chutes. In doing so they disturbed many peaceful residents in the vicinity, who at once responded by sending up two red flares. Immediately a big row developed at which both sides took a hand until daylight put a stop to their activities.

Spr. F. N. BLUE, C.E.



Civvy: "I suppose that village could be taken by tanks in quick time?"

Sergeant: "Some of the tanks in my platoon would take it in no time at all."

Medical Officer: "You don't mean to tell me that a little thing like that bothers you? Now, tell the truth; if you were in civilian life, would you come to me with a thing like that?"
Private Swingit: "No ——— fear; I'd go to a doctor!"

THE BALLAD OF SHELL-HOLE IKE.

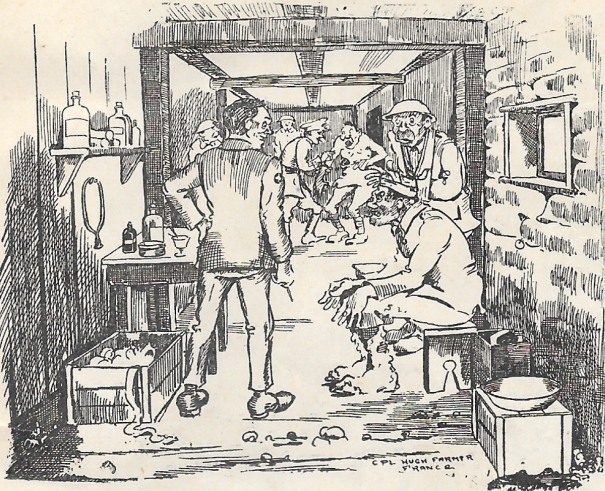
IN the midnight heart of no-man's land,
 Beyond the friendly wire,
 In a mud-lined, jam-tinned shell-hole fanned
 By Fritz' machine-gun fire,
 There sat the ancient Shell-hole Ike
 Up to his knees in mire.

And as he sat on the busted door
 Of the house that wasn't there,
 The murky flash and the deep-mouthed roar
 Of the "heavies" rent the air,
 And up through the ghostly death-haze tore
 The sizzling light of a flare.

A sudden "snip"—and Ike lay still
 In the mud and the slime and the gore,
 But he muttered "prunes" as the leaden pill
 Caused his heart's best blood to pour;
 And he passed in a bound to the Shadowland
 Where the "four-fives" bark no more.

In the midnight heart of no-man's-land,
 Beyond the friendly wire,
 In a mud-lined, jam-tinned shell-hole fanned
 By Fritz' machine-gun fire;
 There lay the ancient Shell-hole Ike,
 Dead, on the reddening mire.

D. F. M



Orderly: "Ullo, cookie, fall into the soup?"
 Wounded Bomber: "G-r-r-r-."

And he thought of the speakers that raved at home
 Of the dastardly, evil Hun,
 How he must be crushed till his crafty dome
 Had vanished from under the sun;
 And he muttered "prunes" in his unkempt beard,
 Then silently reached for his gun.

He thought of those whose duties led
 Far, far from his gore-stained post,
 Whose eyes never saw the streaming red
 As a man gave up the ghost,
 Whose thought of death at a ripe old age
 Was what they feared the most.

He thought of the Staff in the dug-outs deep,
 That were hatching the devilish plans
 That would cause the scenery round to leap,
 And the bath-mats to clap their hands,
 That would probably cause the demise of a few
 Of the guys who are known as the "Fans."

"Two minutes to go"—along the line
 The strongest heart beat fast,
 As they waited the roar of the "over" sign,
 All was still, the seconds passed;
 The dew of death breathed o'er the scene—
 Still Ike growled "prunes" to the blast.

Then the blood-red fangs of death shot out
 With a crash from the throat of hell,
 As if the warring gods in a bout
 Were engaged in a struggle fell,
 While machine-guns rattled the kettle-drum part
 In the "heavies" earthquake knell.

The murky slime of the shell-holes round
 Took on a crimson hue,
 As the eager feet of the bombers' ground,
 And the angry Stokes bombs flew
 In an iron rain, through the rusty wire,
 On Fritz and his deadly crew.



Hogan (relieved in a heavy strafe): "That's me bivvy. If ye get napooed let Cpt. Dunn know where I am."

Joe Thompson's Parcel.

WHEN Joe got his parcel, all neatly sewn up in cotton and addressed in a hand which he did not recognise, he felt that inward glow that comes with the proof that one still has friends.

"People are good," he exulted, as he ripped off the cover and carefully laid it aside for rifle-rag. "Just think of folks sendin' a parcel to a man they ain't even seen. I does me heart good."

"She'll be some parcel, too, I'll bet," he continued in a sort of aside to the boys sitting in the big dug-out affecting an unconcern which they were far from feeling. "Good eats from front to back."

He dug out a pot of jam—damson jam, the label was familiar. Further research disclosed a liberal supply of bully—no, Corned Beef, as Joe was careful to point out—and a large lump of yellow cheese.

When he came across the layer of biscuits—army biscuits, warranted to keep in any climate; to keep, yes, just that—Joe was stricken speechless.

"Rations is up," came a sorrowful voice from the expectant crowd. And even Joe laughed.

'OME, SWEET 'OME.

PEACE had been proclaimed. The Army had been withdrawn from France—with the exception of a few trifling thousands left behind to see that the Bosche prisoners carried out the work of restitution in the spoliated districts—and the Canadian Contingent had left for home on three rafts and a sailing ship (reserved for officers).

The Navy at this period consisted of two boats, which were busy escorting Kaiser Bill to his long, last home at St. Helena. For this reason steam transport was out of the question, and as Canadian troops had long been known as first-class raftsmen, through their many years' practice sailing on bath-mats down the trenches, three of the most up-to-date rafts left in our merchant service were devoted to conveying them back to their native shores.

The boys managed pretty well. With the help of an improvised propeller, made out of a fish-tail bomb and a disused meat-grinder, they were able to do a good two knots an hour—when the wind was favourable. Propeller fatigue, as it was soon called, was far from popular, but, although the boys groused, they took their turns at the handle, for obedience, like grousing, had become second nature.

The food was, naturally, a difficult question. However, they were able to add to their rations by fishing as they went along.

Notwithstanding the duties, which took up much of their time, leisure hours hung heavily on their hands. The national sports of Poker and Black-Jack helped to ease the situation, but card games with cod-fish for chips have their drawbacks—it makes the cards so slippery.

On board the officers' boat there was a gramophone, a souvenir of the old days of stationary trench warfare. It was a long-lived, long-suffering machine, which neither night air nor heavy bombardments had been able to put out of action. It had all the defects common to gramophones of advanced age—its speech was halting and uncertain, its high notes were sheer torture to all but the hardened soldiery who sat round it and gazed lovingly on its ancient, time-battered carcase. It had a habit of feigning death at intervals, but the chief engineer knew and loved all its whims, and was invariably able, given time, to coax it back to articulation. It became a religious belief with the officers that that gramophone would come to no earthly end, but in some sudden tuneful spasm would fly into impalpable dust and wing its way to those regions where song never ceases.

The three and only records were battle-scarred and chipped. On their scratched and roughened surfaces one could faintly decipher "Only One Way," "If You were the Only Girl," and "The Broken Doll." How they had managed to outlive the Grand Strafe defies imagination. Perhaps they had been cared for by some batman of superhuman skill; they may, again, have been casualized and sent down to the Base to cheer our dear and easily-diverted wounded. Whatever the reason, there they were, with music in nearly every line of their war-worn faces.

It was not so much the playing of the gramophone which brought solace and cheer and pictures in the fire to the warriors grouped around it and to the listening men on the rafts, but rather, as one of the boys said, it made one enjoy the silence so much better after it had stopped.

After many weary days traversing the vasty deep, with so much propeller fatigue that none of the boys could look at a meat-grinder in after life and stay a Christian, and so much gramophone exercise that an officer was heard to say that if his brains were laid on the record table they could play those three pieces just as well, and with all the original defects—they sighted Canada.

It must be left to after-the-war scribes to give exactly and in detail the emotions which filled our heroes' breasts as they gazed at the first faint hint of home. But did they emosh? Answer: They emoshed!

The journey up the St. Lawrence was one continual triumph. Every village put off its communal skiff, and the men who had done and dared—in the Pay Office and elsewhere—were amply repaid by the plaudits of their (exempted) fellow citizens for all the hardships and dangers they had endured. Besides, the feeding improved immeasurably. The civilians brought not only gratitude, but grub, and some of the boys became so stout that it was seriously discussed whether they oughtn't to make a Jonah out of the fattest man on Number 1 raft, to relieve the congestion.

At last they reached Quebec. The heights were thronged with people and debt-collectors. From the Citadel the guns spoke a thunderous welcome—and half of the boys took cover on the Point Levis side of the rafts. They were met at the dock by a deputation including the Lieutenant-Governor, the Premier, and several ready-to-wear salesmen. For the succeeding four or five hours the political end of the deputation spoke "a few feeble,

halting words of welcome to our adjectival, adverbial, men, who, etc., etc."

The cackle being cut, the horseflesh had a show, and the boys took leave of one another and departed in batches to the different provinces in which they paid their taxes and had a suitcase in storage.



Bert: "We got a Canadian who ain't scared of air raids. They can't hurt him."

Alf: "Why?"

Bert: "'Cos he's bomb-proof. I heard him tell Ma so."

Trading with the Enemy.

THE night was dark as one black cat, and all was silent save for the occasional "ploof" of a spent Fritzie star-shell container as it lit on the bean of some poor Canuck on listening post. Our gas cylinders were singing gaily; their soothing tones, wafted on the night breeze across No-Man's-Land, brought, not peace, but activity.

Big black Minnie responded at once bringing in her train offerings of pineapples—the plant which grows so well on soil that has been prepared by artillery fire. Poor Minnie was very fat and soon became fatigued, so she sat down ker-flop on the doorstep of a Canadian Soldiers' Home for Little Children. She heaved a sigh of relief—and the home.

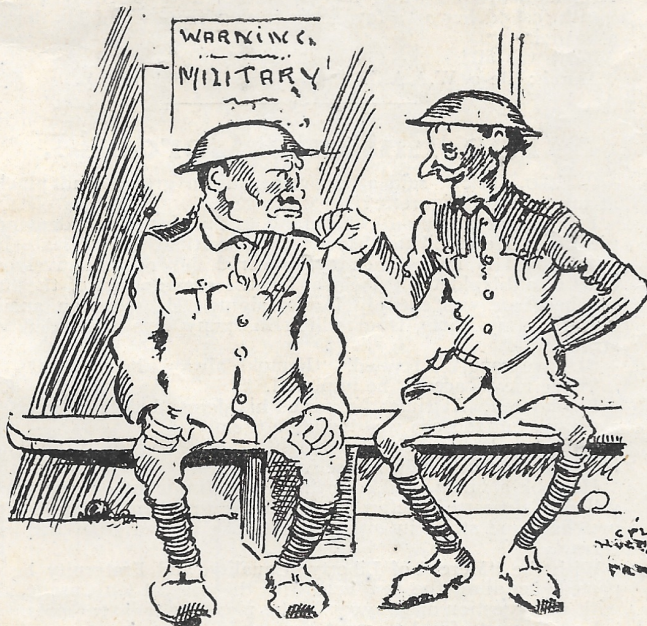
As there were not quite enough pineapples to go round, we sent Stokes over for more. He was in such a hurry, of course, that when he reached the other side he was quite out of breath, and all he could say was, "Dud-dud-dud-bang-dud-bang-bang-bang-dud-wallop!" His order was understood at once and he brought back pineapples, pigs, sausages and rum-jars, and laid them at our feet.



Bill (strafing a fresh guy): "Why, you miserable shrimp, you don't know enough to come in out of a shower."



Pte. Humpty (804372586): "Well, I've managed to keep out of—"



—showers of shrapnel—



—three and a half years, bo'—

To Maud; an Artillery Pack-Mule.

DEAR Maud, whose dark eyes greet me in the night,
 When orders come to carry on the fight
 By packing to the guns that little shell,
 Old mule, with all thy faults I love thee well!
 Oft through the Dantesque gloom and mud, my Maud,
 I've packed with thee, praying unto the Lord
 That we might stay together till the end,
 And then that He a common death might send.

I guess my prayer was never heard, dear heart,
 For soon the Lord decreed that we must part.
 He laid thee low, a mass of flesh and bone,
 And left me here to mourn for thee—alone!
 Still those dark eyes gleam at me through the night,
 And draw me on when I am faint with fright;
 And still I hear thy gentle-footed tread
 When past thou marchest with the restless dead!

GNR. G. T. DONOVAN (C.F.A.).

"Going In."

THE golden russet twilight,
The long straight line of trees,
Shattered and torn by shrapnel,
Immobile in the breeze.

The broken flags of the pavement,
The clattering tramp of men,
The swaying jog of the pack-mules
In strings of nine and ten.

The dismal honk of the lorries,
As they lumber and splash along;
The galloping hoofs of the M.M. P.'s,
The steam-roller's rattling song.

The shattered, broken steeple.
The crosses—wooden and stone—
Uprooted and torn and broken,
The crucifix standing alone.

THAT BIG OFFENSIVE



The falling shades of evening,
The last dying light in the west,
As the first faint stars peep slowly
On a world of strange unrest.

The blinding flash from an iron mouth,
The tearing roar of the guns,
As the screaming shell goes over the line
To burst 'mid the cowering Huns.

The whine of a peevish five-point-nine,
As it grates through the darkening air,
The sickening crash, the answering bangs
From the batteries everywhere.

The earthquake, terrible rending crash
Of a "minnie" on business bound,
As if giant hands were tearing the sky,
To judge by the ghastly sound.

The peering eye of a vagrant flare
With its white and ghostly light,
As it glares o'er the ruined landscape
And pales the face of night.

And here the wreck of a ruined house,
And here a farm once rose;
A broken chair and a rusty plough
Mark the trail the destroyer goes.
And over it all the deep old stars
Look down on the curious sight
Of the extraordinary places
People will go at night.

D. F. M.

At the Base.

THE Colonel entered his office. Upon his desk he found a cold cigarette butt, three burnt matches, a scatter of ashes and the tag off a plug of chewing.

Who had been guilty of this outrage? Investigation established that one Lance-Corporal Binks had feloniously, and in direct defiance of 94 rules and 37 bylaws, committed this sacrilege.

Private Binks soon bore a stripeless sleeve, not to speak of a pack, a rifle, and sundry other love tokens from a provident Government.

And he went up the line. A week later the Colonel again entered his office, and looked around for his W.A.A.C. office-girl. She was not to be seen, but on the surface of his desk were visible: a trace of powder; three hair pins; one safety ditto; a handkerchief (perfumed); a key; puffs, powder, one; a small mirror; one car ticket (out of date); a recipe for hair wash; a crumpled glove; two artificial flowers; a snap-shot of Sir David Beatty; and a field post-card full of contrary statements, alleging that a person by the name of "William" was quite well, had been admitted to hospital, was sick and going on well, wounded and hoped to be discharged soon (no doubt of that), was being sent down to the base, had received a letter, telegrams and parcel, that a letter followed, that he had received no letter either lately or for a long time.

There was no investigation. The Colonel merely rang the electric bell, and when it was answered by Privatress Mabel Smith, asked her as a favour to refrain from using his desk as a boudoir.

That was all!
Moral: Be a W.A.A.C.

The Entente Cordiale.

"ULLO, Jack!" said a tiny voice, and a grimy hand plucked at my tunic. "Cigarette?"

I looked at the infant who clung to my sleeve and demanded nicotine. He could not have been more than five or six at the outside. His large black eyes peered out of the enveloping folds of a dilapidated balaclava, but the greater part of the little pinched face was entirely lost to sight. He wore an ancient pair of army boots, from which his puny legs protruded like straws.

"I have none," I replied. "I smoke always the pipe."
"Give me tobacco?" he implored.
I pondered. At times he varied his demand with requests for a penny, but tobacco was his main theme.
I produced a pouch of "Frightfulness Mixture," the latest issue, and let him help himself.

He took a pinch, and, drawing out a fragment of newspaper, rolled a cigarette. Before he could ask for them I handed him matches, and stood in awe while smoke poured from the balaclava.

With the "Merci" of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity he departed, handling the raw herb with the ease of long usage, and with a suggestion of swagger in the play of the large boots.

I am almost afraid to meet that child again; he may ask for a cigar next time.

Canada.

YES, she heard your call from her snug retreat,
And she sent her bounteous store;
She offered her gold, her cattle and wheat,
And she gave you something more:
Motherland, that you might be free,
She has sent her sons o'er the boundless sea;
Aye, this is her priceless gem,
The heroes of many a bloody fight
And many a contest grim,
The sons you sired of the bull-dog brood,
The grim-jawed boys of the fighting mood,
May God watch over them!

LEAD SWINGING—THE NEW CAREER.

"O H—! What have we here?"—M.O.

THE last few years of animated mineral deposits in Europe have led to the rise of many things, and incidentally to the Profession of Lead Swinging. The origin of the term is wrapped in the dim, damp mists of obscurity, and was only discovered by much prayer, fasting, and religious following of the Law of Diminishing Return. Some great authority, who had devoted fully fifteen minutes to the subject, evolved the following theory:—

The ultimate aim of every God-fearing private is to procure the much coveted P.B. after his name and number. This ensures him against the terror that flieth by night and the pestilence that wasteth at noontide. This eminent person, by a process of reasoning too complicated to be even hinted at under twenty volumes, noting that P.B. was the symbol for lead, gave the title of Swinging the Lead to all efforts aimed at the ad-

Methuselah towards the end of his earthly sojourn. Action should be marked by spasmodic effort—especially in the presence of witnesses.

3.—A particular malady should be taken up as a hobby. The appropriate symptoms should be worked out with care, and held to with religious, resolute, rigorous determination, both before and after breakfast, in the face of the severest cross-examination. What the malady may be is a matter of indifference, but it should be borne in mind that premature baldness, or similar troubles, are not likely to bring you to your coveted haven.

4.—Above all things, the impression must be created that your greatest fear is that you will not be allowed to face the crafty Teuton again; that your one aim and ambition in life is to take part in bombing raids, ration, wiring and working parties, and



Private Swingit: "I has it here every morning, sir, in the same place."

M.O.: "Now look here, if you were back in civil life would you come to me with a thing like that?"

Pte. Swingit: "No, I'd see a Doctor."

dition of the remark P.B. to a soldier's Medical History Sheet.

In order to "swing it" successfully, several broad underlying rules must be followed, but there is an infinitude of possibility open to the enterprising and the original. The pre-requisites for embarking on a Lead Swinging career are:—

1.—An expression of deep fedupitude with the world in general. A suitable one can be copied from any old-timer when the latest draft is describing his miraculous escapes on the way up from the Base.

2.—A general flavour of mild decay (decrepitude feeblyness), such as one would expect to observe in the bodily habit of

all the festivities that go to make up the social life of the more undesirable map locations in France; that to leave such a charming occupation would cause you great, and possibly fatal, agony. This is a very good line, and if judiciously followed will be certain to produce the desired result.

GENERAL REMARKS.

The Government, unfortunately, will not accept such bald statements as "I am sick" without a careful scrutiny of the statement maker, together with such vital information as next-of-kin, religion, length of service, etc., all of which shed a broad light on one's illness.

Lead Swinging—The New Career—contd.

The machine for the examination of candidates for the Lead Swinging Course is called the M.O. The M.O. machine is constructed in the following manner:—

Early in youth selected members of the human family are set aside, and all symptoms of human feeling completely expunged from their emotional equipment. The recess thus created is filled up with a supersaturated solution of the quintessence of scepticism. Then, after having been subjected to various hardening processes, whose formulas involve the entire Greek alphabet, the M.O. machine is ready for use.

The equipment is very simple, consisting chiefly of a sand-bag full of No. 9 pills, a few assorted chisels, and a large knife.

The hour selected for the M.O. machine to operate is usually a little after bed-time, say five or six in the morning. When the victim appears in the presence, he is asked a large number of questions covering the entire scope of human activity. To the answers to all these questions the M.O. replies "Hm," or in extreme cases "Humph."

In the rare case of a favourable decision being registered, expressions of undue levity or pleasure should be rigorously repressed, and any hint of self-congratulation excluded from the countenance. This may be done by reflecting on such subjects as the shell-hole-on-the-right idea, the empty-jam-tin notion, or the busted bath-mat theory.

Thus it may be seen that the way of the Lead Swinger is not strewn with roses, but is filled with governmental pitfalls into which the unwary may fall, and the rosy prospect of all his leaden dreams be brought to nought.

D. F. M.

THE ALLIES.

AN ACROSTIC.

Fair Country, light of heart, of gracious speech,
Resenting those intruders who o'er-reach
And force on you a bloody opposition,
No sacrifice of yours in these past years
Can fruitless be: though you must rain your tears,
Enduring now a ruinous transition.

Revolting from the slavery of the past,
Untrodden Freedom's ways you seek at last,
Subconscious of the latent force within.
Strike hard! Nor let the traitor's artful rôle
Intimidate and turn you from the goal.
Awake, O Lion-Heart! Arise and win.

Brave Nation, why are you thus beaten back,
Ejected from your land by foreign foe,
Looted and ravaged by a brutal pack?
Germany found you in her path, and so—
Indignant and surprised at seeing you
Undaunted, plucky—she more savage grew,
Murdering women. Woe upon her, woe!

Breathing the fresh, free air of sea-girt isles,
Remembering Runnymede and the great pact,
Indignant are you that the Teuton's wiles
The solemn pledge at Hague should counteract.
Arm and avenge! And call your children too
(India also, she'll to you be true),
Newfoundland, Canada, by Anzacs backed.

Intrigued into a bond you most dislike,
Tempted you were by alien "friends" to strike
Against your friends the "foe."
Later you shook the shackles from your loins:
You said to Wilhelm, "No."

Allied to Freedom and to open ways,
Making the most of chances and of days,
Eye clapt to your glass, you viewed the distant strife.
Reluctant to believe a friend a foe

(Ill-eased though you were), at last you go
Clean through all barriers and join the show.
All Hail, Columbia! Come death, come life.

E'en as the snowball rolled along increases,
Taking momentum with its onward course,
Collecting small and sometimes larger pieces,
Each in its way contributing its force:
The rights of people all in common danger,
Echo the call—come, Portugal and Greece,
Roumanian, Japanese, and Serbian stranger,
Around the united standards fight for Peace.

P. B. (Canadian Infantry).

O TEMPORA! O MORES!

[NOTE.—Under the title, "Bleeding Belgium White," the "Weekly Scotsman" says: "A new decree requisitions all brass instruments and domestic utensils down to the smallest detail. These include fenders, stove-parts, ovens, umbrella-stands, curtain-hooks, curtain-rods and rings, knobs of bedsteads, stair-rods, pumps and piping, chandeliers, handles of baths, window and door fastenings and knobs, etc."]

WHEN I volunteered for service
Overseas against the Hun,
Sure, I guessed he'd maybe end me
With a bayonet, bomb, or gun;
But I little thought before me
Lay the lowly fate and vile
Of receiving my quietus
Through a flat-iron or a file.

When the stove-part or the bed-knob
Penetrates my shrinking skin,
Shall I roll my eyeballs heavenward,
Shall I shout through battle's din,
In a voice, dramatic, piercing,
"I am ended—I am gone"?
No, indeed, I'll much more likely
Wail instead, "Put me in pawn,
For I've things enough inside me
To furnish homes a few—
And the Hun, my gentle Maggie,
Is a better shot than you."

Should my wounding not be fatal,
Should I live to eye askance
Articles of household usage
Dug out by the surgeon's lance—
Curtain-rings and armchair castors,
Carpet tacks, and things akin—
From that hour mortification
Positively would set in.
For a scar so unheroic
As is caused by kitchenware
Would be more than I could stomach,
Would be more than I could bear.
I should clamour for a blighty
Of the good old-fashioned type;
Not the sort of thing resultant
From a length of water-pipe.

As in hospital I rested,
Convalescing by degrees,
Could I suffer people asking,
"Soldier, will you tell me please,
Was it bomb or was it bullet
Laid you low and brought you here?"
Could I answer firmly, bravely,
" 'Twas a piece of chandelier"?
Would they listen if I told them
That the main-spring of a clock,
Or the ferrule of a "broly,"
Or the innards of a lock,
Caught me unawares and laid me
Side by side with heroes bold—
Splinter-chipped and bullet-ravaged,
Bomb-disfigured, shrapnel-holed?

No, my Hun, if you must slay me,
Do it neatly, do it well,
With the missiles of convention—
Not a bath-tap or door-bell.

J. W. C.

We note that an esteemed English contemporary is offering a prize for the largest potato sent in—no doubt an excellent way of helping out the Editor's diet these hard times.

In the same way and for the same purpose, we are prepared to place the person on our free list who sends in the largest rum issue. Competitors are warned that no dilution or otherwise tampering with the spirit will be tolerated: quality will count as well as quantity. Entries must be packed so as to appear as much as possible like religious literature, to ensure safe transit through the mails, and must be labelled: "Comforts for the Troops, Editorial Department, THE LISTENING POST."

THAT SHOVEL

