

Why Fatty Didn't Marry.

THE whole sub-section was gathered round the old creosolite tin, which served as a stove, in a wooden hut of that ramshackle variety to which our friend Fritz is so unaccountably partial, somewhere in that dreary cemetery which lies between civilisation and the Hindenburg Line. We were all smoking, a few of us dozing, some writing, and nearly all listening to that born grumbler and raconteur, Tom Evans, as he indulged his habit of reminiscence.

"Ay', boys," he droned, "It takes a lot of men to make an army, and for the life of me I can't see what we want with some of them we've got in it. The army of to-day isn't composed of soldiers like it used to be twenty years ago. Then you knew where you were and what you'd got to do, but nowadays, you can't always tell for certain whether you are talking to a Lance-Corporal or a Brigadier-General. I've met some queer specimens of humanity in this new army, some good and some bad; but I think the most peculiar cuss I ever met was a chap called Fatty. I suppose he had another moniker hitched on to the Fatty, but very few of us knew it or troubled about it, except his No. 1 and the C.O., who must have been conversant with it from studying Fatty's crime sheet, which wasn't what you'd call a white one.

Our hero hadn't long been camouflaged in a khaki uniform before we found out that he'd never make a garner

and he was too big and awkward and heavy to make a driver. Now, in the Artillery, when they find blokes not much use as duty men, they have various devices for getting rid of them. Some are recommended for commissions, others are raised to the honourable station of N.C.O.s, and the remainder get Staff jobs as 'employed men,' sanitary men, cooks and batmen.

Fatty, however, in his younger days, had confused the corner pub with the school buildings, and had not accordingly stowed away much book knowledge, so the authorities had no option left them, especially as the sanitary job was full, but to chuck him into the cook-house, and see if he could learn the noble art of spoiling good grub. I'll give Fatty his due and admit that he made a very good cook. I never met a man who could manipulate Bully as well as he could. About that time, we were extremely busy taking 'Jerry' prisoner, and you old hands know what happens on such occasions. We had Bully for breakfast, Bully for dinner, Bully for tea and, if there was any Bully left, we had it for supper. Fatty opened people's eyes when he showed what could be done with Bully. We got it varied like. We had boiled Bully and Rice, stewed Bully and Onions, roast Bully and Spuds, Bully Irish Stew, Bully Welsh Rarebit, and Heaven knows what other forms and styles. There was a yarn in the Battery that Fatty once got a bit fuddled and fried the Bully in Vin Blanc, but I can't say

whether it's true or not. For the edification of any conscripts there may be among you, I may say that all this occurred in the good old times, when every second house was an estaminet, and you could get Vin Blanc chucked at you for a franc a bottle; now a bottle will cost you ten francs and a thirty mile tramp to get it.

Fatty got to be rather a general favourite, as he was a happy-go-lucky sort of fellow and ready for any devilment that came along. Now, you can never tell what little thing will change a man's whole life. It may be a splinter of shrapnel, or, as was the case with Fatty, a piece of paper. He was breaking up an old ammunition box one day when he discovered it—a piece of writing paper with a girl's address on it and a request that, if it fell into the hands of some lonely soldier, he should act like a man and correspond with the girl. He told nobody about his find, but it was noticed that he gave up visiting estaminets and avoided the Crown and Anchor board for about a week. All his spare time was spent in pondering, scribbling and rubbing out what he had written. I don't know how many writing pads he used up, but in about ten days' time he brought the result of his labours to the Quarter-bloke. It was Fatty's first love-letter, not very neat looking, with scratches and blots and daubs here and there and a big row of crosses at the bottom. I couldn't spell it for you as it was written, but it read something like this:—

Dear Lily,

I send you this love-letter, hoping you will send me a parcel with fags in it. I love you very much. Hoping this finds you as it leaves me in the pink—

Then came his name and the crosses. Fatty knew his shortcomings and was not satisfied with his composition, so he asked the Quarter to rewrite the letter for him and put it shipshape in point of grammar and spelling. 'Perhaps we'll be able to bamboozle her out of a couple of parcels of fags' says Fatty, 'she must be ugly-looking or hard up for a chap when she had to put her name in the shell-box on the chance of getting one.' Sergt. Jones was acting Quarter then and, thinking to get a rise out of Fatty, he wrote two letters, one of which was shown to Fatty and never left France, whilst the other was a grand affair and left in a green envelope. It said that the writer was the son of a doctor in Cardiff, and was a very lonely soldier who joined the army simply to see what life in the ranks was like. He had always wished that he could get a nice girl to correspond with him. It would be such a great help to him. He would be glad to exchange photos with her. Then came a lot of sentimental balderdash. Mind you, it made no mention of a parcel. The Quarter was too clever a bloke to bungle the thing at the start. I knew all about his capers, because I was storeman at the time, and, of course, read all the correspondence.

By return of post a letter came for Fatty. I think it was about the first he ever got, as his people didn't trouble to write to him very much. It was a very nice letter, and told him a lot about his dear Lily. She was a nurse's daughter working on munitions, not because she needed to do it, but for patriotic reasons. She was out to beat the Hun. She enclosed her photo, and if the portrait was faithful, she was not a bad looking little thing. One of her

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eyes, however, didn't seem to run properly in double harness with the other one; so, when her photo was shown round the Battery, the boys nicknamed her 'Squinty.' Fatty was delighted with his letter, and so proud of the photo that he nailed it up on the cook-house door. Every time you went for a bit of grub you could see Squinty smiling down on you. Williams said that he was sure he had seen her on the streets of Liverpool; Stokes was certain she used to wash for his rich aunt in Cardiff; whilst Sergeant David was positive that she got six months at Swansea on one occasion for 'drunk and disorderly.' Fatty put all these remarks down to jealousy, and he was fly enough to tear off the address from his letter, so that all the boys were in the dark as to where she hailed from, until someone got round the Post Orderly and found out that the post-mark on his letter was Bridgend. In less than an hour, over a dozen chaps had come to tell him how they had walked out with Squinty when she was dough-punching in the biscuit factory. They had all chucked her over when they found out she had false hair.

Fatty turned a deaf ear to all these tales, and gave the Quarter a permanent job as secretary. Thence-forward weekly consignments of love were forwarded by post across the Channel, and parcels came with unfailing regularity in return, containing cake, fags, mittens, gloves, socks, knitted scarves and various articles too numerous to mention. The Quarter-bloke got hold of a photo of Tom Davies, who was without doubt the best looking chap in the Battery, and wrote across one corner of it 'Ever yours, Fatty,' and sent it to poor Squinty, who must have felt

as proud as Punch when she saw it. I don't think anyone would recognise Fatty from that photo, because he was a pug-nosed, flat-faced, ugly lump of humanity, with a knowing corner-boy look on his dial, and resembled Davies about as much as an ape does a Gaiety girl. Each love-letter surpassed its predecessor in enthusiasm, until at last things reached such a point that the Quarter, without even consulting Fatty, wrote a letter, making Squinty a proposal of marriage, which was accepted with great promptitude. When he spelled through the letter conveying this acceptance, and realised that the maiden was determined to become Mrs. 'Fatty,' poor Fatty was flabbergasted. He pondered hard over the matter and, at last, came to the conclusion that the Quarter had not played his cards properly. But the Quarter brazened the matter out; and when he asked Fatty if he remembered the night he dictated the last letter, the latter had to admit that he did not. The truth was that he had spent some time at the estaminet on the night in question, and when a man has disposed of a couple of bottles of Vin Blanc he is not entirely responsible for his actions. So it was easy enough for the Quarter to persuade Fatty that he had really sent the young lady an invitation to enter the holy bonds of matrimony, and that it would be a very inconvenient thing for him to back out of it. Squinty would only have to write to the C.O., and it would be all up with Fatty, especially as the C.O. had daughters of his own. Again, unless he stuck to his promise, it would look as if he had received all those parcels under false pretences, which was a court-martial offence. He was a lucky chap to get such a nice girl,

earning plenty of money at munitions, and the best thing he could do was to get the banns published as soon as possible, and get married when he went on leave.

Fatty did not relish this advice very much, but he made the best of a bad job and did as he was told. The Padre looked after the necessary preliminaries (as they say in the National Sporting Club), and we were all on tenterhooks waiting for the marriage between two idiots who had never seen or spoken to each other.

About this time a big push started up Ypres way, and in the excitement of the stunt we quite forgot all about Fatty and his matrimonial affairs, and he slipped away on leave without anyone remarking his absence. When he returned, things had quietened down considerably, and we all had time to notice that he was conspicuously deficient of all those signs of exuberant happiness which are normally manifested in the newly wed. The Quarter sent for him to come to the stores, on the plea that he wanted him to fill up his wife's allotment paper, but what he really wanted to know was, how the marriage he was responsible for engineering had turned out. It was a very mournful Fatty that came to the stores, and a very surprising yarn he had to relate.

Arrived at Bridgend, he drove at once to his intended's address, a nice quiet little house in a nice quiet little street. When he rang the bell, who should answer the door but Tom Davies, who had gone home on leave about a week before Fatty, and, standing on the passage behind him, was Squinty!

'Well, my man, what do you

want?' said Tom, looking at Fatty with the air of a man in possession, and treating him as if he apparently had never clapped eyes on him before.

'I've come to see my promised wife,' said Fatty, 'and what, may I ask, are you doing here *with her*, Mr. Davies?'

'Lily dear,' said Tom, turning round to the lady, 'I expect this is one of those shell-shock blokes, or else a fellow home on leave who has drunk more than is good for him, and come to the wrong house.'

'Perhaps so, dear,' says Squinty, 'But the poor fellow looks very much like one of those gorillas they have in the Zoo.'

Tom then drew her arm through his with a fine air of proprietorship and, turning to Fatty, said 'You'd better clear out of this, my man, Mrs. Davies, that is to be, does not at all relish your appearance. She says that the sight of you makes her come all over queer. We are expecting some friends and relatives around shortly, and have not got time to bother with you.'

'But she promised to marry me!' yells Fatty, 'I've been writing to her these six months.'

'Lily dear,' says Davies, 'show this poor deluded creature the photo of your soldier sweetheart with whom you corresponded out there.'

'Here it is,' she replies, pulling out her blouse the photo of Tom which the Quarter had sent, 'and I'm proud and glad I am going to marry him. Of course, I only knew him under his nom-de-plume of 'Fatty' until he came home on leave.'

'On looking closer at this poor fellow, my dear Lily,' says Tom, 'I believe I recognise him as a cook in my old Battery, a sort of a non-com-

batant, you know, doing a WAAC's work. I suppose he has got some delusion on the brain through hearing me speaking about you.'

Then, turning to Fatty, he says, 'If you go back to the Battery you can tell all the boys that I've been transferred here to work on munitions, and that my wife and myself wish them all the very best of luck, especially the Quarter-Master Sergeant. Good-night, my man.' And with that he shut the door in poor Fatty's face.

So you see Fatty was spared the trouble of filling up an allotment form. Of course, Davies got the address from the Quarter, and, as he had leave before

Fatty, it was quite easy for him to cut that gentleman out.

There's one bit of advice I'd like to give you chaps. If you're drivers, handle your own horses, and don't let other chaps drive them, or they'll spoil them. If you're courting, handle your own girl, and don't let a Quarter-bloke or any other bloke have a hand in the pie. By the way, Fatty swears that Mrs. Davies does not squint, neither has she got false hair, but she's got a house of her own and it's paid for.

Good-night, boys, I believe I'm next on picquet—."

J. D. O'SHEA.



"ARRESTED IN HIS MAD CAREER"

A Midwinter Night's Dream.

A PLAY IN ONE ACT AFTER SHAKESPEARE (AND DINNER).

Scene : A Room in a Chateau.

Time : 22.00 hours.

CHARACTERS :

LYSANDER	..	..	..	A LIEUTENANT-COLONEL.
ALEXANDER	..	..	..	A MAJOR.
SARTORIUS	..	..	..	ANOTHER MAJOR.
NAPHTALIO	}	..	..	FAIRLY FULL LIEUTENANTS.
THESPIS				

(When the Curtain rises, Lysander and Alexander are seated at good deal tables with a good deal to do. A war is heard without).

LYSANDER : Old Alexander, what makest thou the time ?
Methinks we lingered fondly o'er the wine
This night.

ALEXANDER : 'Tis two and twenty hours indeed—
Alas ! I am o'erburdened with this pile
Of parchments. 'Tis indeed a purple war !

LYSANDER : Ay ! I am weary o't, and hate the thing.
The silken dalliance of my country home
Has whispered to my flesh seductively,
And yet in quiet way I hate the Huns.
Hence shall I stick it out until the end,
And so for work ! The Honours List is nigh
And honours I must presently apportion
To such as rendered doughty services
In this past year.

ALEXANDER : 'Twill be a teasing task.
How stands my dear old friend Sartorius ?
He's fed the hungry bellies of our guns
With weighty argument since Ides of March.
His traffic he has used unsparingly,
And run supplies up to the seat of War,
Where in the outflung posts our soldiers sit
In amply-fed defence of Liberty.
How stands my dear old friend Sartorius ?

LYSANDER : Methinks his wheel of fortune I will turn
 And do him honour with an O.B.E.
 And yet, although he oiled the wheels of war
 From Toutencourt to Sixteen Don 1.8.,
 There rankles in my mind one rotten thing--
 One damning phase of failure, all the way
 From Toutencourt to Fourteen Ack, 2.9.
 The Engine 'tis that lights our Cinema.
 I gave him charge to run the blessed thing
 And thus successfully illuminate
 The stage whereon my troupe of Thespians
 Make miserable, mirthless mummery.
 Alas ! 'Tis there his services have failed.
 For, when on rare occasions I have sate
 And lent my plaudits to the awful night,
 I have perforce peered through a gathered gloom
 As black as Erebus. My eyes have strained
 To catch a glimpse of some fun-furrowed face
 Owned by whom I knew not--neither cared!--
 If only good Sartorius could produce
 For *one* all-glorious night sufficient light
 Of ample amperage to still the storm
 That nightly rises in poor Thespis' breast,
 Then he should gladly have an O.B.E.
 (*Enter Sartorius looking splendid.*)

SARTORIUS (*salutes*) : Good evening, sir.

LYSANDER : Good evening, old Sartor !

I like your boots, your gauntlets, too, I vow,
 Are beat in splendour only by your hat
 That crowns a head of hair immaculate.
 What hast thou done to-day ?

SARTORIUS : I got me up

This morning with the lark, a private lark
 I keep.

It rises, Sir, at noontide every day,
 I laboured like a Trojan on my face,
 With razor and with Alabaster Cream,
 Then did I don my armour and partook
 Of such poor viands as the war allows.
 Soup, strawberry, one, and sparrows' knee-caps, two ;
 Dove's breasts on toast and mushrooms mashed in milk.
 A sorry meal ! But sorry, too, is war.
 And then I got me in my chariot
 And rode adown the battlefields to you,
 And here I am !

- LYSANDER (*amused*): Deliver thy diversion an thou wilt.
 Thy discourse should prove palatable fare
 Unto this feast of fun and flummery.
- THESPIAS : I thank you, Sir (*To Sartorius*): Thou know'st a gudgeon pin ?
- SARTORIUS : A gudgeon pin ! A fisherman's device
 To land a gudgeon from its element.
 I know a gudgeon pin. What fool does not ?
- ALEXANDER : Say'st thou a widgeon pin ? I know the bird.
 'Tis but a migratory water fowl.
- THESPIAS : A gudgeon pin connects the piston crank
 At its attenuated terminus
 To what is called the piston-head. A nut
 Should keep this self-same junction well secure
Thou art a nut, and yet thou hast not done
 This most essential, fundamental thing.
 Again, to make the motive-giving spark
 Co-operate and synchronise with gas
 And thus produce a proud explosion,
 There is affixed, by Grace of God, a thing
 Called a magneto. 'Tis a small device—
 Perchance thou hast heard mention of the name
 In course of thy most unrelenting search
 Into the realm of facts mechanical ?
- SARTORIUS : The name is dimly reminiscent—Ay !
- THESPIAS : Perchance thou knowest that there is a bush
 Installed with a rim of insulation.
 Also a column moving in the bush
 That, *ipso facto*, makes and breaks the spark
 At speed affected by its revolution.
Thou art a column moving in the bush,
 And yet thou hast omitted to perform
 This most essential, fundamental thing.
 There seems to be more break than make in thee.
- SARTORIUS : The futile prattle of puerility !
 Methinks the manner of thy wild attack
 Is but surpassed in hapless lunacy
 By just the matter o't !
- LYSANDER : Correct him then !
 In thine own expert phrase elucidate
 This mystery mis-called mechanical.
- SARTORIUS : I prithee, Sire, 'tis not for me, I vow,
 To diagnose a case that lieth far
 Outside the scope of my activity.
 But since thou bidd'st me do't—I will expound.
 'Tis thus ! The tank wherein petroleum

Should rest in tame potentiality
 (And thence in evanescent eagerness
 Should flow to meet the spark)—This tank, I say,
 Has been mischarged with water undistilled.
 'Tis but a minor error on the part
 Of one of my mechanics. What is more,
 I cannot have young Thespis there
 Ticking me off! And I don't care a damn
 What anybody says. I've done my best!
 Give me two hundred pounds and one week's leave
 And I will get an engine that will run
 And work the lights of 40 towns until
 The last pip emma of eternity.
 It really makes me wild after all I've
 done (and to blazes with blank verse)
 to have a professional pierrot
 always badgering me about his beastly lights—
 if only he'd put on a decent show, it wouldn't
 be so bad, but, personally, I've sat in front
 and been bored stiff, and so have hundreds of
 other chaps I could mention, and I'm jolly
 sick about it, and I'm sorry if I lost my temper, Sir!

LYSANDER :

Methinks thy dissertation is undone!
 Thy diatribe unbuttons down the front;
 And there are rents within thine argument.
 What say'st, Naphtalio?

NAPHTALIO :

I can see light
 In something that Sartorius has said.
 He spoke of one week's leave! Two hundred pounds!
 I know an engine in Londinium
 And could return with just the very same
 In fourteen days, with your permission, Sire.

ALEXANDER :

I know an engine in Londinium
 With azure eyes and raven hair withal.
 I can see light with your permission, Sire.

THESPIS :

And with your kind permission, so can I!
 I know the sweetest engine on the world,
 And to the very same pledged I my troth.
 I can see light with your permission, Sire.

SARTORIUS :

I am the King of Light, and I submit
 (Bowing me down before your majesty
 In humble supplication), I submit
 That this suggestion emanates from me.
 Be just to inspiration when it comes
 Like bolt of gold from blue of genius!

I was the first to know an engine, Sire,
 So should *my* engine take the precedence.
 Give me the ducats and the yellow form,
 Then shall the engine of mine own acquaintance
 Be made to function. *I* can see the light
 With your permission, Sire !

LYSANDER :

I, too, do know

An engine in dear old Londinium,
 And I would fain betake me there apace.
 I, too, can see the light—and yet more light
 Than all of your most unperceiving eyes.
 Yon book of yellow parchments bring to me !
 So shall the five of us begone awhile,
 In ardent searchings after luscious light.
 Here are your passes ! May auspicious gales
 Speed your swift ways across the foam-flecked seas.
 Good luck to you and au revoir, my friends !

* * * *

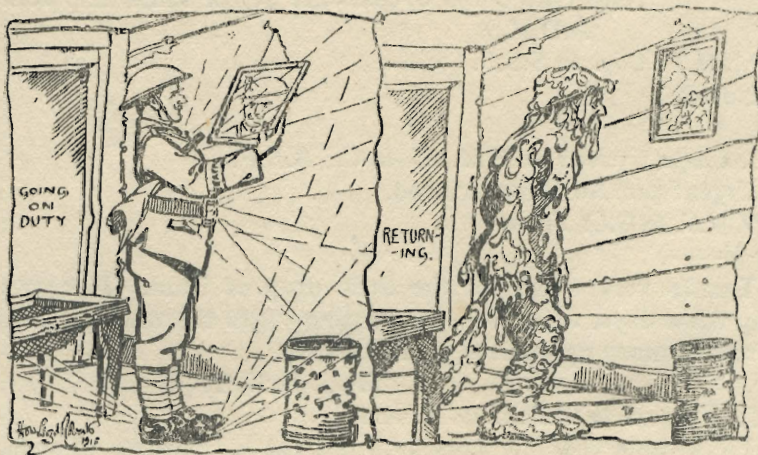
[*A cannon ball falls near with a loud explosion.*]

Excunt all hurriedly to Londinium.

E. B.

(THE END.)

The Traffic Picket.





ST. REMY, DIEPPE.



STREET IN DIEPPE.

A Mixed Affair.

From 38th Div. Q. to Train. 0900 hours.

1460 men arrived Reinforcement Camp last night aaa. Please supply rations before 0830 hours to-day.

From O.C. Train to S.S.O. 1100 hours.

Passed.

From S.S.O. to S.O. Nth Brigade.

Reference attached, please add these figures to indent of Employment Coy. (at present acting as Reception Camp) for drawing this morning.

From S.O., Nth Brigade to S.S.O.

With reference to the Rations for Advanced Reception Camp, I presume you mean Railhead Party, which is at present indenting under the name of Divisional Wing, but is on the strength of the M.T. Co.

From S.S.O. to S.O., M.T. Co.

(1) Please call at the Refilling Point of Nth. Brigade and collect the Rations of the Railhead Camp, which is temporarily amalgamated with the Battle Surplus, and deliver them on the same lorry which conveys the rations of the Salvage Officer, Horse Burial Party, Gas Officer, and Welsh Wails.

(2) Please deliver also :—

20 Galls. Rum to Corps Cyclists.

2 Barrels Bi-carbonate of Soda to Gas Officer (through Reinforcement Camp).

800 lbs. Oats to attached Hussars (Divisional Wing).

Note that Corps Cyclists are at the same Map Reference as A.D.M.S.

From S.O., M.T. Coy. to S.S.O.

Noted.

* * * * *

From O.C. Corps Cyclists to F.M., C.-in-C., B.E.F.

Urgent aaa No Rum received.

From A.D.M.S. to O.C. Train.

Dear B—,

Thanks very much for the little drop of Rum. It comes in very handy these days, when V— is so stingy with the whisky. Major S— and myself much appreciate your kindness.

Yrs., A. G. T.—

From O.C. Hussars to D.D.S. & T. Army.

Please note that my horses do not eat bicarbonate of soda. May a more palatable ration be substituted, please. Please note further that I have left the Divisional Wing, and am now attached to the Reinforcement Camp.

From D.D.S.T. Army to H.Q. Corps.

Reference above, please cause instructions to be issued which will ensure complaints being forwarded through the proper channels.

From Gas Officer to S.S.O.

Please note that, owing to the probable move of the Reinforcement Camp, I have attached myself to the Divisional Wing since the middle of last week. Please hasten delivery of Bi-carbonate of Soda.

From O.C. Horse Burial Party to 38th Div. Q.

800 lbs. Oats received with rations from Divisional Wing. Have handed over to Salvage Officer.

From 38th Div. Q. to O.C. Train.

Passed.

From O.C. Train to S.S.O.

Passed. Please quote authority for issue of Oat Ration to dead horses.

From O.C. Railhead Camp to 38th Div. Q. 1800 hours.

2,846 men arrived without rations since day before yesterday aaa. No rations delivered here aaa. Men express a desire to eat the Lieutenant Quartermaster, who is at present hiding in the cellar aaa. Please wire instructions.

From 38th Div. Q. to Train.

Passed.

From O.C. Train to S.S.O.

Passed.

From S.S.O.'s Clerk to A.A.Q.M.G.'s Clerk.

? ? ?——! ! * * ! * ? ! ! ! ! ! * * ?——!

From A.A.M.Q.G.'s Clerk to S.S.O.'s Clerk.

(Censored).

From O.C. Theatres to S.S.O.

Dear Major,

I forgot to tell you that the Welsh Wails moved yesterday into the Chateau previously occupied by the Advanced Reception Camp. Rations came up very promptly this afternoon, and I want to thank you for your generosity. There are only ten of us and you sent us rations for nearly 1,500! I've had a great time, old man. I have had a long queue of starving civilians lined up here since tea-time, and I've been doing the good old Father Christmas stunt. I got rid of everything except 10 tins of jam which I am saving as a special present for Colonel L——. (You see, old man, I'm sweating for leave again). I'll come and look you up to-night about 2 o'clock on my way home from dining with Balloons. Cheerio, old man, and many thanks.

Yrs,

E—— B——.

From D.A.D.V.S. to S.S.O.

Why haven't the Hussars had any Oats?

From Investigation Dept. to S.S.O.

It has come to light that the Disbursing Officer of your Division has been drawing four times his authorised ration. You yourself have been feeding him in quadruplicate as follows: (1) through Reinforcement Camp; (2) through Railhead Party; (3) through Employment Coy.; (4) through Divisional Wing. Please forward explanation and adjust.

* * * * *

From O.C. Train to A.D.M.S.

Dear T—,

I wish you'd drop in and look at my S.S.O. He is behaving in a very strange fashion. He sits all day in front of a table, on which he has a lot of bottles, labelled Reception Camp, Gas Officer, Hussars, etc. These bottles are filled, one with Rum, another with Oats, a third with Bicarbonate of Soda, and so on, and he keeps swopping the contents round and laughing to himself in a most inane manner. Please do what you can. I am very short of officers. That fellow H—, who sometimes understudies him, does nothing else nowadays but write rubbish for the Divisional Souvenir. You never read such rot in all your life.

Yours,

T.E.B.—.

P.S.—I don't understand your note about Rum.

H.



“Y Ddraig Goch a Ddyrry Gychwyn.”

I.

MAE'R Ddraig wedi cychwyn a'i chynffon i fynny,
A'r Ellmyn yn crynnu pan glyw swm ei thraed,
A dilyn y faner mae meibion y bryniau,
Arwriaeth hen oesau sy'n fyw yn eu gwaed.
Etifedd y Plas gydag aer yr hen fwthyn,
A safant yn ddigryn dros ryddid y byd ;
Ag ysgwydd wrth ysgwydd wynebant y gelyn,
Gweriniaeth a ofyn am aberth mor ddrud.

II.

Mae'r Ddraig wedi cychwyn, a'r byd yn ei gwyllo,
A'i lluoedd yn rhuthro i ferw y gad :
Gwladgarwch sy'n fflamio yng nghalon pob milwr,
A gwaie y gormeswr a heriodd ei wlad ;
Fel corwynt drwy grinddail ymlaen yr ymdeithiant,
Pwy edrydd eu rhamant, wroniaid difost,
Ymlaen yn ddiystyr o'u bywyd eu hunain,
I fywyd neu gelain, heb gyfrif y gost.

III.

Mae'r Ddraig wedi cychwyn, gwell angau na chwilydd,
Cyflawnder i'r gwledydd a gais hi o hyd ;
Marwolaeth fai bywyd dan iau brwnt yr Ellmyn,
Digofaint yw emyn carnleidr y byd.
Hen allor gweriniaeth yw calon y Cymro,
Ei eciaeth yw brwydro dros oesau a ddaw.
Na dyfod cywilydd yn agos i'w enw
Mae'n well ganddo farw a'i gledd yn ei law.

9th Sept., 1918.

“MYFYR MON.”

The School of War.

(We understand that the following instructions were omitted from D.R.O.'s owing to the prevalent shortage of paper.)

1. EDUCATION.—*Special equipment for personnel engaged in.*—The following list of articles of equipment available for issue is republished for information. Demands to be forwarded through the usual channels:

Boards—black. Mark I.

Do. mortar, red tasselled.—General Staff-Officers, for the use of.

Do. mortar, steel-lined.—Infantry Battalions, for the use of.

Canes—disciplinary, thin.

Do. do. thick.

Gowns—service, black—for use on L. of C.

Do. do. drab—for use in the forward area.

Special care is to be taken in demanding Gowns, service, as confusion frequently arises with Gowns, night (see Nurses, issue of articles of clothing on repayment to).

Pens—fountain, Officers.—To be carefully distinguished from Pens, sheep. (See Live sheep for Indian Personnel, equipment of.) It has been found that the practice of wearing fountain pens behind the right ear when on parade leads to a considerable leakage of ink down the neck of the wearer. To remedy this approval is given for a special issue of blotting paper at the scale of 2 pads per Battalion.

Slates—Service.—It has been found that after a short period of use this article is covered with writing and figures, and therefore quickly becomes unserviceable.

The practice of licking the slates in order to obtain a clean surface is believed to be injurious to health and will be discontinued forthwith. Approval is given for the issue of sponges—slate-cleaning, medium, and Tins Water, small. To apply, grasp the sponge firmly but gently in the right hand, at the same time holding the slate in the left hand. Dip sponge in water-tin and rub on slate with a circular motion. The water, when consumed, may be replaced.

Stockings—blue.—Approval is given for an issue to personnel of the Q.M.A.A.C.

Tables—Multiplication. Mark II.—Demands for this article are to be submitted by all units immediately. All tables of Mark I type are to be returned to Base forthwith, as it has been ascertained that the formula $2 \times 2 = 5$ is incorrect.

2. **HOWLERS—Treatment of.**—A special Army Form (A.F. W9999) has been prepared and will be issued to all Services, Departments, and Units. Os. C. Units will render a weekly return on this form showing the number of howlers committed by all ranks under their command during the preceding seven days. An allowance of howlers will be made on the following scale :—

Colonels	100 per week.
Majors	80 do.
Captains	60 do.
Lieutenants	50 do.
2nd Lieutenants	40 do.
Other ranks	30 do.

All howlers surplus to this scale will be shown on the return.

3. **SCHOOLS OF INSTRUCTION.**—It is notified for information that the Kindergarten School for Recruits will open on the 3rd prox. Only *Infantry* need apply. Candidates should report to O.C., Kindergarten, at 0830 hours. They must milk and feed up before starting. Full bottles and service bibs will be carried. Transport will be provided by O.C.M.T. Coy. on the scale of two perambulators for every five recruits. These vehicles will be painted in blue and gold. O.C. Train will detail 2 donkeys (small) for recreational purposes. He will be personally responsible for their upkeep, and will replace all casualties from H.Q. Train establishment. In no case will they make two journeys or approach within two kilometres of 'B' Echelon or the Major General.

There will be a Mess in the School. The Salvage Officer will clean it up. The Canteen Cart will distribute Milk and Buns to all toddlers. O.C. Divisional Baths, will attend daily at 0600 hours. He will be supported by the A.P.M. The C.R.E. will arrange immediately to wire all fireplaces and put the jam cupboards in a state of defence. He will also detail one Company of R.E.'s to construct cradles. Telephonic communication will be maintained with the nearest Q.M.A.A.C. centre, to which reference will immediately be made in all cases of emergency.

It is further notified that a co-educational school for Officers and personnel of the Q.M.A.A.C. will shortly be opened. Except in the case of previously co-educated candidates, preference will be given to those who are (a) over 40, (b) married.

H.

A Ballad of the East.

TO MARION, ÆTAT : 13.

*Marion dear, be pleased to listen
To this very tragic tale ;
It will make your bright eyes glisten
And your cheeks with horror pale.*

*There's a moral—girls and boys on
This should ponder, one and all—
“ Let us learn to shun like poison
PRIDE THAT GOES BEFORE A
FALL.”*

* * * * *

ONCE there lived a Man in Berlin,
Gifted with unusual ‘ side ’ ;
His moustache had such a curl in
It, that CHARLIE CHAPLIN cried



When he saw it ; but the KAISER
(You have guessed that it was he)
Gloried in his hairy visor,
Like a wicked Pharisee ;

Wove a web of vain ambitions
Far beyond his humble means ;
It would take expert staticians
To compute his countless dreams.

For he never was contented
With his little POTSDAM plot ;
Thought he ought to have indented
For a better sort of spot.

Scorned the good old German *Bratwurst*,
And the savoury *Sauerkraut*,
“ Try the stuff on the tom-cat first ! ”
(Such remarks he'd use to shout).

In his eye there burned a latent
Fire, like a smouldering brand,
When he listened to the blatant
Music of a German Band.

With his feet upon the fender,
In his mouth a fat cigar,
He would dream of Eastern splendour,
Picture how, in some bazaar,

He would sit amid the *houris*
Eating *hashish* all the night
(*Hashish*, I am almost sure is
What we call Turkish Delight).

He would read how Alexander
Upset Persia's apple-cart,
Getting King Darius' dander
Up ; how also Buonaparte

Seated on a camel's back had
Scoured the deserts of the East ;
If not quite to Sarawak, had
Got to Acre's gates at least.

Why should not a Hohenzollern,
Pride of all the Prussian race,
Like a bear climbing a pole, earn
In the Sun his rightful Place ?

So this monarch Occidental
Hatched in his deluded brain
Schemes of conquest Oriental
Like a second Tamburlane ;



Buckled on his shining armour,
Fastened mail about his fists,
Just as though, to please some charmer,
He proposed to grace the lists.

Summoned his two trusty minions,
VON DER GOLTZ and WANGEN-
HEIM :

Said, " Oh ! haste on fleetest pinions,"
(Meaning—do not waste much time).

" Call at once on old Herr TALAAT
(*Sehr verehrter, hochgeboren*)
Not forgetting my old pal at
' Royal Palace, Golden Honr ! '

Tell them that I, Christian William,
Have digested Al Koran ;
Aided by a Beecham's Pill I am
Quite a good Mohammedan.

I will help the One True Prophet
Conquer all this wicked world ;
Push the infidels right off it,
(Here his lip scornfully curled)

Such as Englishmen and Scotties,
Not to mention men of Wales,
Where of lost souls such a lot is
That your True Believer pales ;

Russians, Serbians, Greeks and French-
men,
Portu-geese and men of Rome ;
I'm the Prophet's Only Henchman,
Mecca is my spirit's home."

Forthwith he proclaimed a jihad
(Turkish for a ' Holy War '),
And the Crown Prince asked if he had
Got a place for just one more.

But his father gave a jump that
Shook the tinsel on his crown,
Cried "*Himmel ! Du böse Lump*, that
Is no billet for a clown !

Get thee to the L in Flanders,
That's thy reference on the map,
This job's for LIMAN VON SANDERS,
He's a decent sort of chap."





So was born the strange alliance
 'Twixt the Crescent and the Cross,
 Holy zeal backed up by science
 And the very needful dross.

"*Deutschland, Deutschland über alles,*
 William on the top of that,
 William Allah's bosom pal is!"
 With such words did old TALAAT



Gather round him in a twinkling
 Many a scarlet-gleaming fez;
 Added Prussians (just a sprinkling)
 Sent them forth to take Suez.

"*Frisch auf!*" he remarked (in German)
 "*Aber seid Sie nicht zu keck.*"
 But they heeded not his sermon,
 And they took it in the neck.

In the neck they went on taking
 It throughout the long campaign,
 Sometimes missing, sometimes making
 Quite a mentionable gain.

With their bleaching bones they whitened
 All the highways of the East;
 William couldn't see this sight and
 Didn't mind it in the least.

Through the weary months of marching
 'Twas the same unvarying tale—
 Abdul always did the parching,
 Fritz it was who quaffed the ale.

Fritz it was who gave the order,
 Abdul did the dirty work;
 Shoved the foe across the border,
 (But he came back with a jerk),

Slew the infidel Armenian,
 Fifty thousand in a bunch,
 With a fury more than Fenian,
 While VON SANDERS ate his lunch.

Far aloof from human passions
 In an atmosphere serene,
 Studying the latest fashions
 From a German magazine;

And Berlin shouted a paean
 For some mythic victoree
 Gained in villages Judaeon,
 Or in Mesopotamee.



In Stamboul was no elation,
For Mahomet was fed up,
Prayed that he might find salvation,
Guessed that he'd been sold a pup ;

" It's a long, long way to Baghdad,
And the trains are running slow ;
And the issue seems to lag, Dad !
Tell me—oh, why did you go ? "



Many a German mile he'd plodded,
And the end was not in view,
And his men were pushed and prodded
Till their patience was 'napoo.'

On the bonny banks of Jordan
They received the final biff ;
Allenby's elastic cordon
Caught them full and stretched them
stiff.

Then, indeed, the Potsdam Caliph
Furiously did rage and grouse,
And the Crown Prince, like a bailiff,
Hung about his father's house,
Sometimes singing, sometimes humming
In a manner quite inane
(When he heard his father coming)
This ridiculous refrain :—

* * * * *

But his papa answered lowly :
" Guess the times are out of joint,"—
Thereupon proceeding slowly
To digest—The Fourteenth Point.

H.



Nach Berlin.

(With Apologies to *Land and Water*).

WHAT is happening? We all know that something has happened, is happening, and is going to happen. But what is it? I repeat—what on earth is it? We all know that by 8.26 a.m. on the morning of Monday, the twenty-seventh of May was concluded the third phase of the second step of the preliminary operation of the great final conglomerative offensive, which offensive is intended to have as its main result the final rupture of the enemy's line; on which line the enemy has now stood, or wobbled, for more than four consecutive years. We know that. But what of it? I repeat—what of it?

Before we can answer this momentous question (on which depends our judgment on the final result as well as the immediate trend of the war), we must consider another question. Unless we can answer this other question, we may go on writing for ever about 'vast accumulations of shell,' 'the new tactic,' 'grievously extended fronts,' 'compelling the enemy to a gradually stiffening but temporarily elastic withdrawal of his forces,' and so on, but it will be of no use. The question I have in mind relates to the last movement of the enemy, up to the time of going to press. This is the question—Did he go, or was he pushed?

Before we can look this question in the face, we must first understand the situation. And to understand the situation we must first appreciate the ground. (Appreciating ground is one

of my best stunts—you watch). Before the battle, the enemy was aligned along an escarpment forming the south-eastern boundary of a chalk down, the north-westerly and two-thirds of the south-westerly slopes of which run diagonally across a glacia, which is interrupted by a ravine, through which ravine runs a sluggish brook, two feet deep along 746 yards of its total course of 1,132 yards (or, counting its sinuosities and double-bankings 1,483 yards), and from one foot to fifteen inches deep along the remainder. (Do you follow me, Watson?) Over this brook is (or was) a bridge, 312 feet above sea level, over which bridge runs (or ran) the axis of the road which formed the chief secondary line of enemy communications for supply, relief, evacuation and joy-riding. This line of communication merges gradually into a causeway; which causeway runs over a bare plateau, diversified only by one small wood, two broken fences, four apple trees and a now deserted pig-sty. I passed that pig-sty in the late summer of 1913, when I was spending a holiday in this part of France; and, if it has not been cleaned out since, it must by this time constitute a serious natural obstacle, such as to compel the enemy to an eventual retirement over the whole of this sector, and perhaps other sectors of his now grievously extended front.

The plateau in question is called the Plateau des Cochons; which title is a local title, and means the Plateau of the

Figs. It is situate in the Commune called Tas-de-Fumier, in the Department called Somme, in the country called France.

I say that to appreciate this ground, to grasp this situation, and especially the vital point or nodal crux of the pig-sty, is to penetrate to the inner essence of this last move on the part of the enemy. And I will leave it at that. One thing only I would add. The enemy fights upon a theory. So does the Allied Higher Command. But what those theories are, Heaven only knows. I'm sure I don't. *But neither does the Editor of the 'Times.'*

NUMBERS.

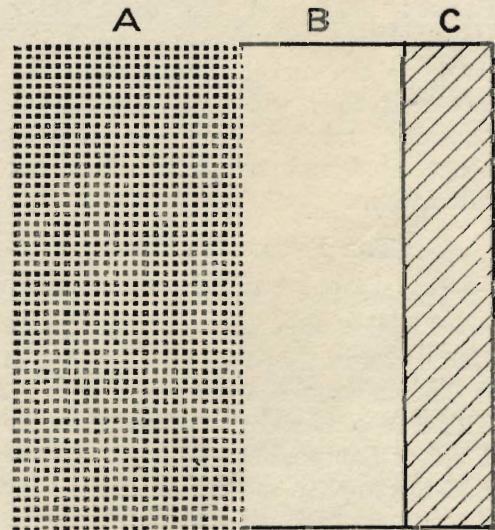
I find myself obliged to revert once more to a problem the elucidation of which has filled more pages of this journal than any other theme connected with the War (which began, as my readers will remember, in August, 1914).

Although ever since September, 1914, that is to say, one month after the outbreak of war, I like Alexander Pope, have "lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came," there still remain people so absolutely fatuous, so intrinsically blind and so fundamentally stupid, that they fail to grasp the most elementary outlines of this problem, *i.e.*, the Problem of numbers. Among them I may mention the *Times*, the German public, the population of Timbuctoo, and every military expert except myself.

The problem is really quite simple. Let us suppose that the German Army is composed of 400 men, the British Army of 80 men, and the French Army of 40 men. I need hardly say that the supposition is fantastic. That is a point I find it convenient to omit for

the present. Let us further call the German Army A, the British Army B, and the French Army C. Now, it is clear to everyone—except the people mentioned above—that A is more numerous than B, and that B is more numerous than C. Also, that B and C together are more numerous than A. To be more numerous is to possess a numerical superiority, and to possess a numerical superiority means to have a preponderance in numbers.

In case the position is still obscure to some of my readers, I append a diagram (No. 1) in which the black portion marked A, represents the German Army; the white portion, marked B represents the British Army; and the shaded portion marked C, represents the French Army.



Now it is clear from the above diagram, as well as from the preceding argument, that if the issue of the War depended on numerical superiority alone, the war would long ago have ended in our favour. The fact that such is not the case suggests that we

must reconsider our hypothesis. We are, in fact, compelled to a Revision of the Hypothesis. Such a Revision of the Hypothesis I propose to undertake next week.

To continue. My readers will remember that last week I came to the conclusion that the German Army at present in the field could not number less than 2,222,206 men, or more than 2,222,210 men. I am now able from certain information at my disposal (you must recollect that I was once in the French Artillery) to be even more precise. The lower number turns out to be absolutely accurate. It appears that Unteroffizier Johann Donnerwetter, of the 378th Inf. Regt., overstayed his leave by 10 days, and is now doing F.P. No. 1 in the backyard of Potsdam Palace; and that the three other marginal men are seriously ill in hospital owing to the surfeit of sausages. The fact that they will figure among the 'hospital returns' of four months hence need not seriously affect our calculations.

THE RECENT VICTORY.

Just as this journal goes to press, news comes of a smashing victory in that sector of the Western Front which is known as the Champ du Dragon. This title is a local title, and means the Field or Camp of the Dragon. I have had to complain more than once of the discourtesy with which both the enemy and the Allied Higher Command have treated me in invariably arranging their decisive battles for Monday afternoons. All the world knows by this time that I write this weekly article on Tuesday morning. It is obvious to the meanest intelligence that this arrangement leaves me quite insufficient time to deal with the news properly. This is a serious

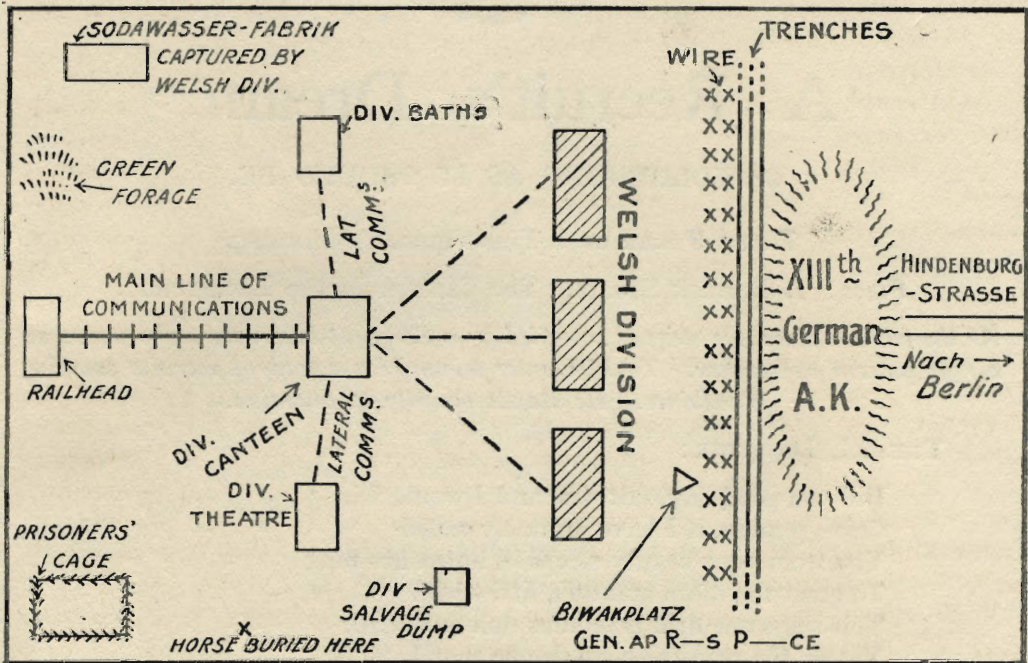
matter, and I trust I shall not be obliged to refer to it again.

Even from the meagre details to hand, it is clear that the action which has just taken place in the vicinity of the Champ du Dragon is in the nature of a decisive action. From an examination of the character of the subsoil in this area, which I made in the early Spring of 1909, I have felt an inner certainty that the decisive action would take place here or hereabouts. The only doubt which remained in my mind was as to the precise form the engagement would take. That we do not know. What we do know is that the enemy's total effectives have suddenly and unexpectedly been reduced by the whole strength of the XIIIth Armeekorps (commanded by Genl. Von Windup), and that he has been compelled to a rapid drawing in of his last reserves in order to fill the gap thus made. As I pointed out last week *that he has no reserves*, the position is decidedly interesting. The following diagrams give the situation as it was before the battle of yesterday (Monday), and as it is at the moment of writing.

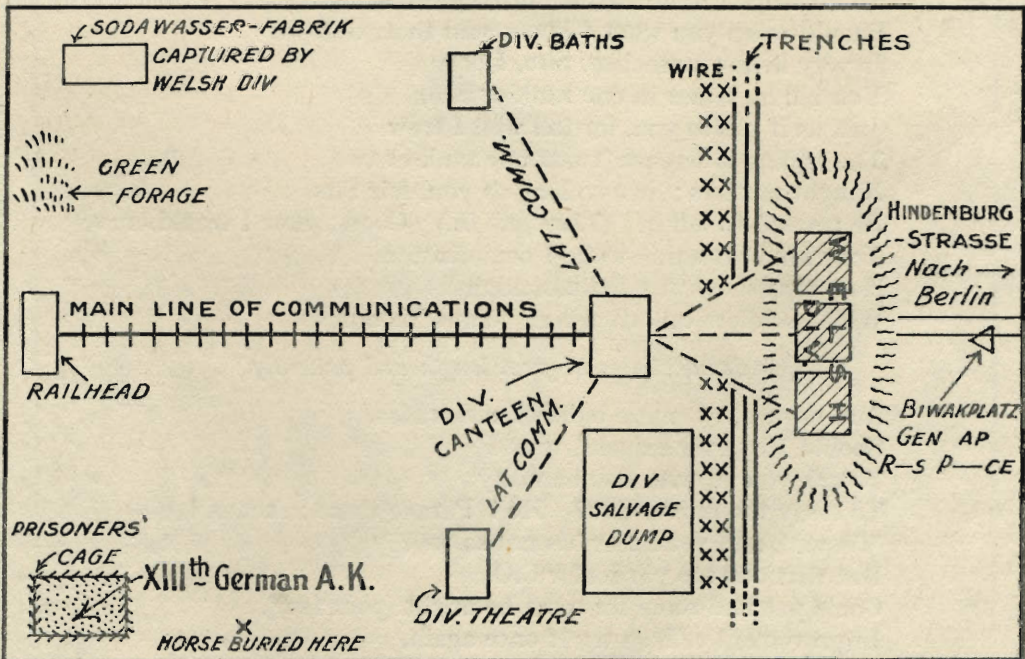
I hope to give a detailed account of this engagement in the Special Welsh Supplement of this journal, which will be issued next week. This Supplement will also contain a special article by me on the Problem of Numbers.

NOTE.—Before this article can appear in print, the War has come to an end. Readers of the last paragraph but two will understand my feelings. I have decided to give up military criticism, and to study Old Testament history. I am already engaged upon a new interpretation of *The Book of Numbers*.

H.



SITUATION 9-47 a.m. MONDAY.



SITUATION 9-47 a.m. TUESDAY.

A Recruit's Dream.

Or, SOLDIERING AS IT SHOULD BE.

Time : 9 a.m. on a Fine Summer's Morning.

Place : A Barrack Square. The Canteen in the Background.

As the curtain rises, the stage is occupied by a Sergeant-Instructor, who wears an air of patient expectancy. To him enter leisurely a squad of recruits smoking Woodbines. He stands smartly to attention.

THE S.I. LOQUITUR :

Bid you good-day, fair sirs, and I would fain
 Crave pardon, if I have untimely called
 You from your beauty sleeps in hutments snug
 To greet the morn and do a little drill.
 This self-same drill is tedious dull and hard,
 Yet do the powers above decree that I,
 Unworthy though I be and all too slow
 To impart the subtle art of forming fours,
 Should teach you what I know, and that, God wot,
 Is very little ; nathless, Sirs, I pray
 You fall in, either in one rank or two.
 Just as it please you, for full well I trow
 The trifling difference 'twixt one rank or two
 Naught matters ; just so long as you, fair Sirs,
 Be pleased to fall in (*They fall in.*) Good ; now I would crave
 Your kind attention while I demonstrate
 How to assume that fell posicioun
 Which soldiers call attention. Thus 'tis done.

(He demonstrates at great length and patiently.)

And now, most gentle band of camarades,
 Should I be over exigent, were I
 To ask you all with due humility
 To essay the movement ? Ho ! Parade there ; 'tchun !
 'Tis well, and yet I fear 'tis not so well
 But that our too particular C.O.
 Could yet find room for what he might (poor fool),
 Improvement call, so try it once again,
 And this time let me pray you earnestly
 To do it as one man and not to look

As if the omnipotent God had given at birth
 To some two left feet and those set on wrong.
 But stay, perchance I ask too much of you
 On this warm morning, and I trow that all
 Would sooner smoke or prop up the Canteen
 And blow the froth from foaming pots of ale
 (For Canteens now are open all the day
 From earliest dawn until the midnight horn
 Proclaims the much enduring Canteen Staff
 Must have some rest from drawing Bass his Beer.)
 So now, that you may leave this happy scene
 In soldier fashion, on the word 'dismiss'
 Turn to the right, not hurriedly, but turn
 As though you did it just to please yourselves,
 And, having turned, a momentary pause,
 And then fall out. What Ho! Parade! Dismiss!

*As the curtain falls, exit the S.I. arm-in-arm with two of the recruits singing
 the Soldiers' Chorus out of Faust.*

G. W. T.



Sea Foam.

O H, singing sea, what need of speech ?
 Each wave is a laugh on the foam-crowned beach,
 Or a beat in a joyous rhyme.
 His eyes as grey as the seas of the North,
 He comes—with a kiss that will banish forth
 The fears of the waiting time.

Foam, foam, foam, white sea !
 Weave a bridal robe for me ;
 Here are pearls from a silver strand,
 That mermaids toss from hand to hand,
 Wings that bear his ship safe home—
 Foam, white sea, foam !

Oh, sighing sea, I have no tear,
 What drift of seaweed was his bier ?
 What wave has kissed his eyes ?
 The mist is a pall for the dying sun,
 The tide's on the ebb, and my watch is done,
 While my soul with the curlew cries.

Foam, foam, foam, white sea !
 Swiftly weave a shroud for me—
 For a moment clear, the white flecks stand
 Like the dumb despair of a drowning hand.
 New treasure is laid in the mermaid's home—
 Foam, white sea, foam !

N. I. E.



Interview with the Welsh Dragon.

BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

THE news that the Welsh Dragon had arrived home on short leave spread like wild-fire through Cardiff and the surrounding district and caused universal excitement. Within ten minutes all the reporters in South Wales were racing each other to the railway station, and, by the early afternoon, the foremost and less corpulent of them might have been seen gallantly mounting the slopes of Cader Idris in the direction of a large cave, where it was understood that the Dragon was temporarily resident. The evening papers had one and all promised special editions and advertised exclusive interviews. The special editions appeared, but there were no interviews.

Next morning, the Lord Mayor of Cardiff received a letter from the Dragon, thanking him kindly for the gift of reporters. They were, he said, the more welcome, because he (the Dragon), on leaving the Division, had omitted to bring his rations for the following day. The only complaint he had to make was that the *W.. M..* representative, although on the whole he was a succulent morsel, had been inconsiderate enough to wear patent leather boots, which were extremely bad for the digestion. The *S..W..N..* man also had been a bit on the tough side. Nevertheless, he (the Dragon) was very grateful and begged the Lord Mayor to convey his sincere sympathies to the widows and children of the now deceased gentlemen. The Lord Mayor

wired his acknowledgments at once, but omitted all reference to his Corporation. He thought the word might lead to misunderstanding. . . .

It was, therefore, with some trepidation that I received a wire from the editor of the Divisional Souvenir telling me to interview the Dragon, and report as soon as possible. I reported at once. I reported sick. But I was given Medicine and Duty, and there was nothing for it but to swallow the medicine and carry on with the duty.

I found the Dragon asleep. He was talking in his sleep. "Never again," he was saying. "Oh, never again," and then rather mournfully "Drat his patent leather boots," and again "I shall have to go and see Doc. Jones about it in the morning." I awakened him tactfully by whirling a gas-alarm rattle. He was up in a trice, and knocked over all the furniture with his tail in a desperate effort to find his box respirator. Suddenly he saw me, and became wide awake at once.

"Good evening," I ventured.

"Evening," he replied. "But, arn't you a little early? I don't—er—dine till 19.00 hours. Still if you are ready —"

"Oh, I haven't come to dinner," I rejoined hastily, "I represent the Welsh Divisional Souvenir."

"If that's the case, he replied, "I am very glad to see you, but"—and a gleam of suspicion lit up his eyes—"I hope you are not the gentleman who

painted that little red beast they call a ——."

"Not at all, not at all," I interrupted, and, producing my pencil and note book, "What do you think of the war?" I asked.

"Yes, quite; quite," he replied, "It is a lovely day to-day, is it not, to-day? But not quite such a lovely day to-day as it was yesterday, do you think?"

This was rather disconcerting. I tried a new tack. "Can you give me," I said, "the exact map reference of your birthplace?"

"It is regretted," he answered, "that this information cannot be supplied. As a matter of fact, the maps were all lost when Noah moved his camp. After we had regained our old line I got the Town Major of Ararat to look the matter up. He reported that he could find no trace of my original billet, but he assigned me a new one—this place they call Wales. There were not many people there, he said, but what there was, was pretty hot stuff, and would just suit me. And he wasn't far wrong," he concluded thoughtfully.

"You seem to have a pretty good memory," I said, "for ancient history. Perhaps you can throw some light on that difficult problem, the origin of the Welsh language?"

"Certainly," he replied. "I remember the incident well. It occurred at the Tower of Babel, where, of course, all languages originated. There was a young man standing at the bottom looking up with his mouth wide open, when one of the workmen above inadvertently dropped a chunk of mortar into it. Naturally the young man began to splutter . . ."

"Now, as to your family," I went

on. "You must have a lot of connections at your time of life?"

"Ah!" he said, "There you touch me on a tender spot. We are a most unfortunate family. We are seven. Two of us in the ——no, that isn't right. But they are all gone now—all except myself and the old fellow in China. They've been a long time gone. And you happen to arrive on a most unhappy anniversary—April 23rd—St. George's Day, you know, I always associate that date with a very sad accident that happened to a brother of mine. I cannot bear to speak of it . . . And then there was poor old Polly —"

"Who?" I almost shouted.

"Polly," he repeated, "Apollyon, you know. We always called him Polly for short. Only yesterday I was reading the account of his death in Dai Bunyan's book. Poor old Polly. No one ever understood him properly. I'm sure Bunyan didn't. The truth is, old Polly was handicapped by his feet—'the feet of a bear,' Bunyan calls them unkindly. 'You know, old son,' said Polly to me, when he was about to enter the Valley of Humiliation and could see Christian pulling up his socks at the other end, 'I have a sort of feeling in my back toes that the other chap's got the Valley, and I'm going to get left with the Humiliation.' 'Don't you believe it,' says I, 'Give him the cross buttock with your off-hind, and he'll go down like a bag of bran.' But I was wrong, and he was right. Poor old Polly." And he flicked a tear from his cheek with the spike of his tail.

"Then there was my cousin," he continued, after a short pause. "The one who had the job of guarding the apples in the garden of the Hesperides. You remember the tale? A chap

called Hercules said he calculated he'd have those apples. But he knew there was only one chap who could get them, and that was a wight yclept Atlas. Now, Atlas was the most westerly of all the ancients. He was, so to speak, the first of the Americans. When old Herc rolled up, this Atlas johnnie was enjoying the pleasant task of holding the sky and the earth apart, and when he glimpsed old Herc in the offing, old man Atlas was as pleased as Punch. 'Mighty glad to see you, stranger,' said he. 'Hev you gotten such a thing as a chew on you? I want ter tell you that I hev been on this durn job a durn long time,' he says, 'and I aint had so much as a *smell* of to-bacco.' 'You out for a square deal?' says Herc. 'Waal, I guess so,' says Atlas, 'What's your game?' I can't tell you all they said, but it ended up with Herc taking on the human doorpost biz, while old man Atlas nipped along and off-loaded the fruit."

"But what was your cousin doing?" I asked.

"Well, the truth is, he had made a slight miscalculation. He reckoned he was on to a soft job, so he set about to amuse himself. He picked some of those apples himself and made cider of them. Now, he wasn't used to cider, and when old man Atlas got around, he was as drunk as an owl, and that was the end of *his* perfect day."

"But I always think," he resumed, "that my uncle of Ethiopia had the thinnest time of the lot. He was done in by a fellow called Perseus. He was wrongly accused of being after a girl; this Percy chap was keen on. Anne was her name."

"Anne?" I queried.

"Yes, Anne—Anne Dromeda. An

honest girl, but poor—no catch for my uncle in any case. In fact, they say she was absolutely on the rocks at the time.

"That accounts for four," I said. "There still remains one other, I think?"

"Yes, of course," he rejoined, "I had nearly forgotten the Fool of the Family. He lived in the river Seine.* Liked the taste of it, *he* did. That's why we called him 'Gargle.' Silly ass, he was. Stepped ashore at Rouen one day, and walked straight into a fire. Some people said it was short sight, others suspected that he had some interest in an insurance. Anyhow that finished *him*."

There was a pause, while the Dragon chewed a few hot coals and gazed alternately in a queer meditative sort of way I quite failed to understand, first at a large frying pan, and then at me. I thought the moment a favourable one for tackling him on the question I had been trying to lead up to before. So I put it to him in a tactful, non-chalant sort of way.

"When do you think the war will end?"

"Yes, quite, quite. It's a lovely day to-day, is it not ——"

I plunged. "Did they give you enough rum?"

That fetched him. "*Enough* rum? Well, of course, if you call a beggarly 500 gallons a week enough for a healthy young dragon!"

"I suppose you know," I said (I had been dining with the S.S.O. the week previously), "that this is more than any other Division was getting?"

"Very likely," he rejoined. "But

* The Dragon called Gargouille was lured out of the Seine at Rouen by a condemned criminal, who led him into a fire. Ever afterwards a condemned criminal was pardoned in Rouen on Ascension Day.

they don't keep dragons. Look at the —th Division with their old pelican. Now I ask you, do pelicans drink rum? And then there is that lot with the sheep. I believe they are an army. Did anyone ever hear of a sheep drinking rum? Now *do* be fair, George."

I tried to pacify him. "Apart from this question of rum," I began, "I don't suppose you have any other complaints to make with regard to your treatment?"

"No other complaints? What's the use of being in the army if you can't grouse? There's that Requisition Officer chap now. I wrote to him in July about green forage of which I was sorely in need at the time. All the reply I got was "I observe that you are classed as a heavy draught animal. Your allowance of green forage is, therefore 5 kilos per diem and 6 kilos on Sundays. Last week you overdrew to the extent of 15,000 kilos. Kindly adjust."

"I also had some trouble with D.A.D.O.S. He actually tried to issue me with the usual scale of equipment. I had to teach him that there are *Special Scales* for Dragons. As a matter of fact, I'm wearing them now. . . But the Canteen Officer took the biscuit. I went to see him on a little matter of whisky. He looked at me for a moment with his cold, pitiless eye, and 'You must remember,' he said, 'That you are rationed now. One bottle a week is all I can allow you with, perhaps, a bottle of port, if you don't tell the Gunner Headquarters.' I had to bring a lot of pressure to bear—and I weigh 40 tons in my socks—before I could get him to see the other side of the question. But I got my whisky. The rest of the Division had to go rather short for a time, and very sick they were about it.

But I told them that, if I had any more of their lip, I would join the Royal Air Force. As a matter of fact, that was all bluff, because I had already been rejected after a trial flight, owing to serious engine trouble."

"Now, will you tell the readers of the *Divisional Souvenir*," I asked him, "what you consider to have been your most terrible experience in the Great War?"

"With pleasure I will, now just," he replied, lapsing in his excitement into his Welsh mode of speech. "It was in 1914, look you, when I was down by Colwyn Bay with Dai Watts-Morgan's army. It was a terrible time I was having down by there, Dai bach. There was one morning I remember, he tried to get me to form fours and lie flat all at once, look you, and I trod on my own back toes, Dai bach, and got my tail mixed up with my teeth. Oh, it was a terrible time I was having down by there. But you must excuse me —" he became English again. "I do not think you realise the time. It is 18.45, and I dine at 19.00 hours. I always like to have my guests—er—*dressed* for dinner. Hadn't you just better slip round and see the cook? And, if you happen to have a bottle of Lea and Perrins on you —"

* * * *

If you, gentle reader, with your romantic disposition, were gazing on that evening from your chamber window at Arthog towards the slopes of Cader empurpled with the last gleams of the departing day, you must have seen what looked like a cloud of dust descending the mountain-side at a terrific speed. That, gentle reader, however unbecomingly and ungrammatically, was *ME*. H.