

a bayonet any more. Naturally you forgot it. After telling this cove off, you bow to the inevitable, unhitch a few more clips, and put the stiletto on. Then you grab your coat carrier and do up your pack. Then someone takes the pack and holds it up, and carefully explains to you that the carrier is inside out, all the weight pulling on the stiches, and that if you march 16000 miles, the said stiches are likely to come asunder. Of course you know all about it yourself, so if you have time you turn the carrier to the right-about; if not, just let it go as it is. Then off to duty. By the way, have you ever noticed how easily the gear gets out of plumb when the haversack and water bottle are taken off? On the word "Turn out the guard!" you grab at the nearest portion, usually a shoulder strap. It's odds on it, being all twisted in a lump, and you get out, with some of the buckles sticking into your back. I have overcome this difficulty by placing a small gyroscope in the mess tin. I have no hesitation in telling you this, as I have secured the patent right. Supplies of the above are expected by the "Navua," and can then be got at the Canteen, price 1 mark 50.

But the most unkindest cut of all was the introduction of the mess tin. You can't get a decent sleep when on duty since it went on to the equipment. You can't lie down for the darned thing. You can't even get a seat and lean up against anything. I used to dig a hole in the ground for the mess tin when I wanted a lie down on duty, but you can't be digging holes all over the place can you? I have been seriously thinking of giving the mess tin and cover away for a pineapple, and doing C.B., but Sandy Weir says there are plenty of mess tins, and I suppose another would be issued.

A prize of 10/- is hereby offered for anyone who can successfully solve the mess tin muddle.

Taken altogether, the Mills' Webb equipment is an everlasting curse to us. The old hand-dog was far better. Ask anyone who was in the South African

war. Ask anyone who wasn't. All tell the same story.

May the day soon come when it and I part company for ever; and if ever I put a Mills' Webb Equipment on my shoulders again, well.....—K.T.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

Dear PULL-THRO'—

Perhaps you may be pleased to hear from your little Hiawatha, and to hear all about dear old New Zealand, for, you know, New Zealand does still exist, and Queen Street and Lambton Quay look much the same as they did six months ago: Yes, and all the pubs are in the same places. The Royal Oak is still in Manners Street, and the Waverley—but why insult Aucklanders by telling them where the Waverley is? A terrible thing has happened in Palmerston North. The Bank of New Zealand has skipped across to the other side of the street. Who is interested in a bank, you may ask? Quite right—a bank is not an important matter—but, it is in the place the old Royal was. That is an important matter. Any fool can get tight at the Royal, but it takes a good man to get an overdraft at the Bank.

And, dear "PULL-THRO'," please remember, if you have not forgotten New Zealand—New Zealand has not forgotten you. Every week lists of the sick are published in the papers—I mean those who have the luck to get up to the big hospital. No such distinction awaits the victims at the camp hospitals, except, perhaps, a brighter crown in heaven; but then all martyrs get them. And then there is that 500 middle-aged men who are going to relieve you all. The papers are always harping on you and what you are going to do. Each yarn is different from the last—just like the good old Yellow Flag wirelesses. Hiawatha had the pleasure of meeting one of the men between forty and forty-five who are going to relieve you. He was—its no use use beating about the bush—"stunned," very "stunned." Hiawatha was in uniform, and the recruit came up and said he was

going to Shamo. Hiawatha informed him he could go to the Devil for all he cared. The beery one then asked Hiawatha if he thought Samoa would suit him. Visions of the Tivoli and the back verandah of the International rose up and seemed an appropriate setting for the child of Mars. Then I bethought me of the clear pure water at the bathing hole, and as I had already decided a wash would not go amiss, I said Samoa was just the place for such as he. And he went away mumbling that he had fought with the Lancers. So the force is coming alright.

It seemed so funny when I got back to wrestle with a collar and get out of the beastly habit of saluting when you are in mufti. I saluted two girls and a chemist before I get used to the feel of a cap. Also its a great joy to eat a meal without keeping an eye skinned for flies in the prepared dishes—and a man does not go to sleep in a firm conviction that a centipede is going to bite him. Of course I am not going to say a man can't get bitten at nights—but it ain't centipedes. One thing the public can't grasp here is that there is a wireless installation at Samoa and so you get news as soon as we. They think it is only through the New Zealand papers that you have learned that the "Scharnhorst" and her dear lady friend had breathed her last some months ago. When I tell them all about the quarter million's worth of machines, they are surprised. They thought we were a land-grabbing syndicate, pure and simple. I don't tell them how the messages come through, though I remember standing by Stumpy when he was trying to read a wireless, he got tangled up in three-syllable words and finally wound up by saying "Damn them wireless—they'd be all right if they did not put in words that the Devil himself couldn't understand." But it wasn't the words they put in—its what they left out that troubled me. Are they any better at receiving the messages now?

O, I must tell you:—On the way back we had a load of German prisoners. We "brummys" did the grand over them and became quite friendly. There was one, a dear little sissy boy, with pink cheeks, Fougard by name. We called him "Alphouse." I took quite a fancy to him. He is now cracking stones under the auspices of a certain establishment at Mount Eden. I don't know what possessed me the other day, but I bowled up to his residence and asked to see him. The warder showed me in, and after a long delay in a cold stone room, I was shown into the chief warder's presence to state my request. Merciful Heavens! I have seen some hard dials in my time, but never in my wildest nightmare have I seen a harder looking doer than the said chief. My heart sank as I asked to see the German prisoner. "Why?" he spat at me. "Friend—Guard on steamer." "No!" said the face. Well, believe me "Pull-Thro'" I battled for half an hour but all to no avail. It's word was law. In the end I asked it if he thought I was a German spy; as the face looked through me into the wall beyond: did I look like it? Still looking—"because for a downright out-and-out lady-killing Whlan, your own front piece takes the bun." Younger warders titter. Hiawatha exit. Poor Alphouse!

Well, I must say good-bye. Give my love to all the boys and tell them that I have executed most of the commissions I haven't forgotten. I have yet to ring up a girl for one of the boys at the canteen; and tell Miss Barber that the photo of her isn't good. You cannot tell whether it is her sweet self or cow chewing grass ("do you wonder?"), so I have not sent it to the address she gave me.—Hope to see you soon.—HIAWATHA.

#### THE MOANING OF THE TIED.

Work a little, sing a little,  
Whistle and be gay,  
Scrub a little, drill a little,  
Making "shows" all day.  
Growl a little, eat a little,  
Don't forget to say—  
Cheer up, chaps—the troopship's going.  
Any blessed day.

There once was a man called the Kaiser  
Who said "I'll give France a surpriser,"  
But the Bear and John Bull  
Gave his flash "mo" a pull  
And said, "Before long you'll be wiser."

#### Battery Boys Beerless Boosting.

What a night!—variety and plenty of it. Boxing, singing, talking, dancing, coffee, free "soft" drinks, and smokes. The ingredients of the Battery's New Year pudding, well mixed and done to a turn. Time 5½ hours, at boiling point on New Year's Eve. Served with "Old Lang Syne" when the gun fired at the passing of the old year.

The Skipper and Lieut. Reed had a very willing three rounds to set the ball rolling—then followed many other successful—for one man—bouts; no knock-outs speak of being recorded. Much merriment was caused by the blind-fold boxing—a perspiring gunner fighting the air in the hopes that his opponent might be mixed up in it somewhere, was worth seeing.

Bomb. Pierard, Gunners Walker, Cotter, and McGirr, put in some good work at the vocal programme.

Gunner Bark in the double shuffle and step dance brought down the barracks. At the piano (very kindly lent by the Rev. C. J. Kinnersley) Bombs, Dinnie, Pierard, and Gunner McGirr helped the evening on.

And the dancing was immense. It's a popular fallacy that the fair sex is essential, and the dances without them don't happen, but our experience "on this momentous occasion" was that—and the floor was as gritty as most floors, and the heat was "in tents."

One word, and you will understand why this little bun struggle was such a splendid success; all arrangements were in the hands of Sgt. Gill Howe.

Owing to the thousands (of mosquitoes) being turned away, the performance will be repeated on the Transport....., let us hope at a very early date.—H.A.P.

There is distress all over the world. The Belgians are starving, a half-a-million are out in the States, the Prohibition Party in New Zealand is still suffering from the shock of the last elections, and now, to cap all, there is famine and drought in the Vaima canteen.

#### Pickings from the Picquet.

NUMBER 2.

"I reckon this picquet job is alright."

"I reckon it's up to a bloomin' big head. Some of the boys 'll be doing their nuts. There's nothin' here to stop of a night, but half-starved Chows and overfed Samoans."

"It's good for active service; plenty to eat, and easy times with the girls."

"This, active service? Have you been in the real thing; when the little, lead devils are hummin' like bees in the swarmin' season, and bits off your mates are splashing around the landscape? No. Well, I have—And if you sit down, I'll tell you something. Got a light?—Thanks."

"There was a chap, I won't say his name—I'll call him "Jumbo." For years we were pals. Then, one day he met a little girl; and got tied up. We cut adrift then. A couple of years after I picked him up at the front in my contingent. He told me why he came. I was sorry—But it turned out O. K. since.

"Jumbo" had no schoolin', but he made enough at fishing to get grub. Sometimes he would be away for two or three days. One night he came home to find a cove kissin' his wife. He didn't say much. He just told his wife to get. And when the cove chipped in, he chased him out with a poker. Then he left home.

"Jumbo," me, and about a dozen others were out scouting, just at day-break. I was out on the right, "Jumbo" was out on the left.

Suddenly from the boulders ahead, the enemy started pumping lead into us. There was a Hell of a mess. All hands seemed to drop at once. I got it in the legs; and had to lie there and watch "Jumbo" fight like a tiger. I saw "Jumbo" and a mate surrounded by half-a-dozen foes. Then he stood alone, as his mate went down. His rifle swung round like a whirlwind, smashing heads like eggs. I watched him lay the six out. Then he picked up the wounded mate, and staggered back towards the main camp.