

**Rag Time: a collection of military poems suitable for recitation, by
Lieutenant Colonel J.D.F. Donegan, RAMC**

Publication/Creation

1912

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/pwt2gzvm>

License and attribution

You have permission to make copies of this work under a Creative Commons, Attribution, Non-commercial license.

Non-commercial use includes private study, academic research, teaching, and other activities that are not primarily intended for, or directed towards, commercial advantage or private monetary compensation. See the Legal Code for further information.

Image source should be attributed as specified in the full catalogue record. If no source is given the image should be attributed to Wellcome Collection.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

Redacted by

2073

John Luther Johnson

184

Nov 3rd 1842.

RAG TIME

'Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see,
Thinks what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be.'

ALEXANDRA POPE.

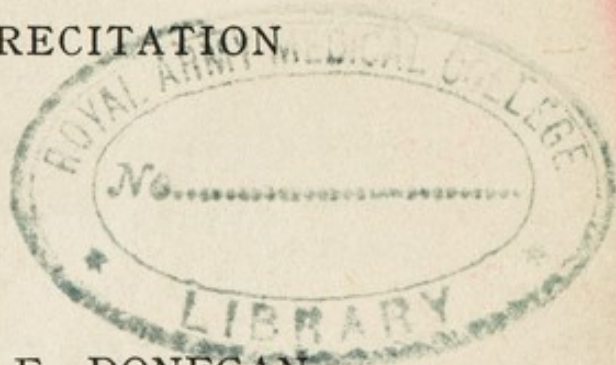
RAG TIME

A COLLECTION OF MILITARY POEMS
SUITABLE FOR RECITATION

BY

LIEUT.-COL. J. D. F. DONEGAN
ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

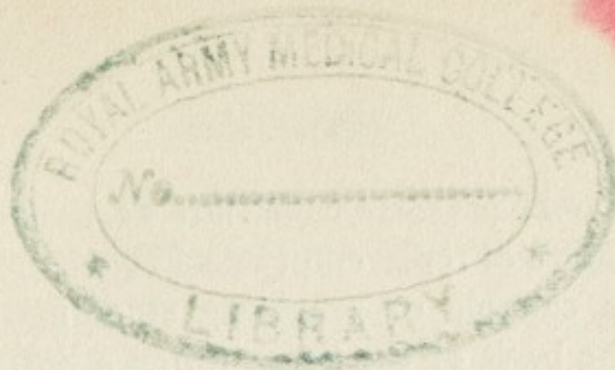
AUTHOR OF 'CAMP FIRE SONGS,' ETC.



LONDON
LYNWOOD AND CO. LTD.
12 PATERNOSTER ROW
1912

TO THE GENERAL OFFICERS COMMANDING,
UNDER WHOM I HAVE SERVED IN THE
FIELD, THIS VOLUME IS RESPECTFULLY
DEDICATED AS A TOKEN OF
REGARD AND ESTEEM

J. D. F. DONEGAN,
Lt.-Colonel, R.A.M.C.



INTRODUCTION

THE rôle of public reciter is indeed a difficult one to support ; more particularly to a military audience, which as a rule is more inclined to be attracted by purely vocal efforts of any description.

I do not mean to infer that a good recitation is not well appreciated. Indeed it is ; and to be able to recite is a most useful accomplishment, especially to a singer (for encore purposes) when the ordinary regimental institut  piano does not appear to blend with the human voice to the vocalist's entire satisfaction.

At times there is not much volume in a barrack piano ; in lieu thereof, it usually contains plenty of cobwebs and cigarette ends : as time goes on it shows a tendency to become a Marconi or wireless instrument.

But I am not alluding to singing ; on the other hand, I am advocating the cause of reciting as a contrast.

A reciter must understand that no matter how good he may be, or no matter how he may be appreciated, he will never be received with the same wild outburst of applause as a songster. 'Music hath charms,' etc., etc., and as a rule an audience is inclined to be savage when admission to the entertainment is obtained gratuitously while the sitting-down accommodation is limited. A military audience is always divided by a hard and fast line into

front seats and back seats, which latter consist of gymnasium fixtures, gables of roofs, empty packing-cases, or any available space capable of providing standing-room. What is called the back of the house (often a barrack square or open desert) accommodates those who are so desirous of witnessing the performance, that they would even if necessary pay for admittance. In contrast, the front seats are usually occupied by ladies, officers, civilians of social standing, and individuals who do not take the slightest interest in the spectacular display, possessing only two ideas: (1) To sit next and talk to whom they wish, regardless of the performers; (2) To obtain supper or some other form of refreshment at the officers' mess on the termination of hostilities.

Hints to Military Reciters

1. Unless programmes are provided at the entertainment at which you intend to recite, it is a sound principle to announce the fact; otherwise it may be imagined that you are trying to sing a song without any tune.

2. Do not as a rule expect to be encored. Encore really means a call on the part of the listeners for more noise of any sort.

How to speak. 3. Be slow, deliberate and clear in your speech, and take your breaths as you would in singing.

Necessity of clear articulation. 4. Be most careful to articulate each word clearly. Remember that although you may be able to struggle through with a popular song without pronouncing the words, if the audience can't hear you in a recitation, even the cats on the roof will join in with shrieks of derision.

The following points should lead you to suppose that you are doing well and being appreciated :—

1. When there is dead silence amongst the audience.
2. When the lookers-on place their hands on their knees, and gaze intently at you.
3. When your comical allusions are received with a gentle titter of laughter.
4. When your appeals to pathos produce watery eyes, snuffling or nose-blowing.

Signs of
approval
from
audience.

The following points should lead you to suppose that you are not doing over well, and that the sooner you conclude the better :—

1. When you see the ladies yawning, and putting their programmes over their mouths.
2. When you are cognisant of conversations being held at the door relative to members of the audience demanding their money back.
3. When you hear from the back of the house such remarks as : Cheese it ! Give him a chance ! Put out the lights ! Where is my gun ?
4. When the stage-manager inadvertently lowers the curtain before you have concluded your oratorical effort.

Signs of
failure of
performer.

One of the most important essentials in reciting is to be absolutely word-perfect, and know what one is going to say as well as a parson knows his prayers. It is not enough simply to learn the verses out of a book ; they must be repeated time after time in the desired tone of voice, and with every intended gesture, until the words come like second nature, and flow from the mouth as softly and gently as castor oil from a bottle.

How to
learn a
recitation.

I should recommend any one who intends to recite, to go over their lines at least twenty times on the day of the performance. To rehearse properly, one requires open country or a sea beach. The novelty wears off if a recitation is gone over too frequently in the barrack-room (before those who will eventually form the audience), and one is more than likely to be informed of the fact on the night of the entertainment.

I have seen reciters use a book or have short notes on a bit of paper as an aid to memory: personally I don't think it looks well on a stage; it is too like a man giving an exhibition of the art of swimming with a life-belt on.

Not long ago I was riding through the streets of Alexandria on a bicycle, and as I was due for a turn at a regimental gaff in the evening, I was repeating to myself in a loud voice 'The Canteen Discussion,' published in this edition. Absolutely regardless of the vast horde of foreigners, Berberines and Egyptians, I had just arrived at the line,

'You're a rotten lazy grouser, and I wish you were in Hell,'

when I was ignominiously knocked off my perch by an irate Italian. I tried to explain that nothing personal was intended, but alas, my assailant knew no English with the exception of some technical expressions, adjectives and terms of endearment which he had picked up from a Scotch overseer of works when employed in the construction of the Assuan Dam. I always thought it remarkable how he understood what I was saying.

Attitude
on stage.

When reciting, one should endeavour to be as natural as possible. It is not necessary to stand strictly to atten-

tion like a stuck pig while the lines are being repeated ; neither does it add to the effect to walk forwards and backwards across the stage, like a caged tiger in a zoo : there is a happy medium in all things.

The position can always be changed. If one tires of the right, they can change over to the left : especially during applause. In pathetic parts, should the audience be in tears, it is not a bad plan to do three or four laps of the stage after every full-stop. If the people you are entertaining appear to enjoy their misery, it is your duty as a reciter to prolong it as long as possible.

Personally, I lay no claims to be an exponent of the art on which I take the liberty of writing ; my remarks are only intended for a beginner, or any one who is contented with the standard of mediocrity.

In my humble little verses, I have tried to keep off the beaten track, and have alluded to the ordinary everyday episodes of military life in preference to the more glorious ones, not considering myself capable to do so.

I have not fought a single battle, spiked a gun or killed a bugler ; neither have I worried sentinels at night with the roll of drums. My cannons are well fed and looked after, so they don't roar ; my battlefields are all properly irrigated, so no wounded crave for water ere they die.

I take the liberty of including one song ; or, to be more accurate, the words of a song entitled, ' The Health of our Guest of To-night.' To any one with any idea of musical originality, it would not be a difficult matter to make up a suitable tune, more particularly under the jovial conditions to which it applies : it would be ' a time in the affairs of man ' when any sort of music would satisfy. As a

Prizes
available.

stimulant to composers, I am prepared to offer three valuable prizes for the best musical score received :

1st Prize. A suitable epigram on the tombstone of the winner, written by myself.

2nd Prize. A very handsome plated table letter-weight : weighs incorrectly, otherwise perfect.

3rd Prize. A green parrot, deported from the island of Las Palmas for using insulting language towards the clergy.

I shall now conclude this my introduction, with apologies for a rather lengthy and uninteresting preamble.

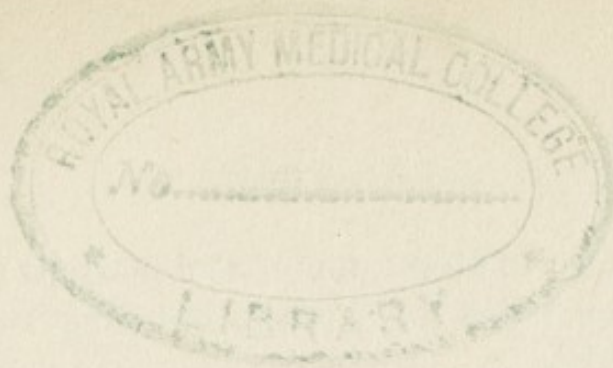
J. D. F. DONEGAN.



CONTENTS

	PAGE
LADYSMITH NIGHT	13
THE ABINGTON BUCKS	15
MARRIED OFF THE STRENGTH	17
THE HORSE GUARD'S LADY	19
CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS	22
THE SECTION D MAN	24
A CHOICE OF WEAPONS	26
PRIVATE GRIN'S LEGACY	29
THE RETIRING TERRITORIAL	31
A CANTEEN DISCUSSION	33
THE MAN AT THE TOP OF THE TREE	36
ONE OF THE DRAFT	39
REMINISCENCES OF SOUTH AFRICA	41
THE PRIVATE OF SEVENTY-THREE	43
AERIAL SCOUTING	46
THE OLD CANTEEN PIANO	48

	PAGE
A MILITARY MARK TAPLEY	50
A MILITARY WHO'S WHO	53
TO A MILITARY DIVORCÉE	55
IN REAR OF THE KETTLE-DRUM	57
THE PARROT PARLOURMAID	58
SONG: THE HEALTH OF OUR GUEST OF TO-NIGHT	60
RECITATION FOR A GENTLEMAN WITH SLIGHT IMPEDI- MENT OF SPEECH	62



LADYSMITH NIGHT

LAST Ladysmith Night in London is known as Ladies' day.
Inside the Café Royal there was a great display,
For there the defenders dined, as yearly they always meet.
On this occasion females were mobilised in the street.

The Circus of Piccadilly with thousands began to fill.
The crash and the din of battle was worse than on Waggon
Hill.

Soldiers suggested funk-holes, and borrowing iron rails,
While womankind wrought destruction, with implements
used for nails.

The ladies' army mustered; a plan of attack had they;
Shop windows were their objective, indeed 'twas a grand
display
Of splendid organisation, a movement of every class
Of franchise-wanting maidens, determined on breaking
glass.

And at this sumptuous banquet no tankard retained a drop
When they 'd drunk to their fallen comrades : outside was
like Spion Kop :

There amazons fought like fiends, unhelmeting brave
police,

While warriors sat at table, dining in perfect peace.

In garments torn to atoms, unmuzzled matrons preached
Their doctrine, Votes for Women, but Rag Time at last
was reached.

Then modesty caused surrender ; they had to admit defeat—
The loss of a skirt was trying to those without pretty feet.

We all have to live and learn : equality there must be,
For sexes as well as classes, on air-ship, on land or sea.
De Wet was indeed elusive, his whereabouts hard to tell,
But now he has got a rival—uncatchable Christa-Bell.

THE ABINGTON BUCKS

THE Abington Bucks were a wonderful corps :
They stood at the top of the Roll
For shooting and marching and ambulance drill
And cooking without any coal.
At football and cricket they headed the list,
Their band was the best ever known,
Their average height was just seven foot six,
Their average weight fourteen stone.

The average number of misbehaved men
Was nil, as from crime they were clear :
The average number of constantly sick
Was well under one in the year :
The average number of dogs in the corps
Was only what orders allowed :
The average number of church-going men
Was simply the whole blessed crowd.

In Marathon races and efforts of skill
Their record was second to none :
In all mimic warfare the side they were on
Invariably came out and won.
The men were teetotallers, saving their pay :
A scheme they had in contemplation,
Of building a Dreadnought and sending her as
A gift from the corps to the nation.

But just at this time reconstruction took place
And strange Territorial movements,
The Regular Army was greatly reduced
Amongst many other improvements.
The Dreadnought as promised, she never was built,
Its order the corps countermanded ;
Instead there was weeping and gnashing of teeth,
As the Abington Bucks were disbanded.

The Colonel Commanding was wild in his rage,
The General wrote and protested,
The men of the corps they got quite out of hand
And other Departments molested.
An orthodox answer arrived in due course ;
Therein it most clearly was stated
That all were aware of the regiment's worth,
Its records were not overrated.

But rules had been made and could not be repealed,
So said the Official Recorder ;
Reductions of units were made by a clerk,
And in strict alphabetical order.

MARRIED OFF THE STRENGTH

GOOD-BYE to you, poor old girl; look after the darling kids.
You 'll write to me all about them and do as your mother
bids.

I know that at times she's cranky, and when I am far away,
Don't mind what she says about me; it all may come right
some day.

You 're not on the strength of the army, you 're only a
private's wife.

No wonder your mother cursed me,—I ruined her
daughter's life.

There 's many you might have married; it 's strange how
you most preferred

The tail of a marching regiment; it 's wonderful, on my
word.

Now I am away off foreign, it 's terrible hard to bear;
I wish you were coming, darling; I could not afford the fare;
I could not afford your rations, or cost of your simple
clothes;

I could not afford to house you wherever the regiment goes.

I wish I had never seen you, still loving you as I do;
Your mother does all the barging, there 's never a word
from you.

I 'll forward my wretched pay, dear ; the devil a cent I 'll
spend,
The devil a cent I 'll borrow, nor the devil a cent I 'll lend.

See, there 's the pipe you gave me, and now it is overboard ;
My smoking days are over, tobacco I can't afford.
I 'll live on the barrack refuse, on charity from the men ;
They 'll think me a rotten blighter, but will not dislike
me when

I talk of you and the kiddies—by then we 'll be far apart.
The boys won't turn against me, as each has a great big heart
For any one in misfortune : a lame dog on a stile
Being helped by a common soldier, that 's the crest of the
rank and file !

The women who 're on the strength, dear, get quarters and
coal and light.
They 're not picked for good behaviour, because, as I said
last night,
It 's all done by rank and service. The corporals' list is small,
But think of a wretched private, he 's hardly a chance at all.

They 're lowering down the gangway, and slacking away
the line ;
The bandsmen are going aft, dear, to turn on ' Auld Lang
Syne.'
Good-bye ; it is perhaps for ever. Oh ! try and control
those tears.
Live on for an old age pension to help your declining years.

THE HORSE GUARD'S LADY

Now Jenny was a lady's-maid, and Jenny joined the Blues ;
She had a lover in the Scots, but did not care for trews ;
A martyr to appearances, attracted so by gilt,
She chucked the honest Lothian as he didn't wear a kilt.

Soon gallant Trooper Herbert Prind had Jenny at his feet—
First sight affair—while he was doing escort in the street.
The King she did not notice, Prind possessed a look that
kills,

So he captivated Jenny who was busy paying bills,
In the motor of her mistress gaily driving round in state,
A glance from Prind assuring her she 'd really met her fate.

He was riding at attention, from the ranks he could not stir,
So he tickled up his charger with the rowel of his spur ;
The animal began to prance, his riding was admired,
She 'd the outline of his figure, which was just what he
desired.

A notice in the *Morning Post*, saying, Would the lady who
Was motoring near Whitehall Place—? brought Jenny
into view,

And they had a merry meeting ; she considered Prind
deserved

The respect of all the marquises with whom he said he
served.

Then Jenny gave descriptions of the duchesses she knew.
She mixed in good society ; the blood of bluest blue
Flowed through her grand employer's veins, but not
 through Jenny's own :
Still she knew a real pearl from an imitation stone.

They fixed up an engagement : I am very much afraid
Jenny never told her lover that she only was a maid ;
And he being rather reticent, gave her to understand
That he soon would be the Adjutant or Second in command.

And then came an elopement and a wedding on the sly ;
They possessed the same intention—'twas to servitude
 good-bye,
Being very young and foolish (the maid just in her 'teens),
Having both the same ambitions—living on each other's
 means.

Doing grandly for a fortnight, soon they drifted near the
 rocks,
When both made true disclosures, oh ! it caused such awful
 shocks,
For then it was they realised they had not got a cent ;
Heart-broken and distracted to the river-side they went.

There Prind was apprehended for being absent without leave,
And they led him back to barracks with a hand on either
 sleeve ;
There they tried him and awarded him detention in a cell ;
The doctor daily visits him and says he's doing well.

Poor Jenny's joy is over, she to labour has to stoop,
But the men have kindly promised her the washing of the
troop.

She 'll have to do it carefully, or else the job she 'll lose.—
This wasn't her intention when she joined The Royal Blues.

CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

DID you ask me was I going home at Christmas,
To see the poor old mother and the dad ?
Of course I 'm not, and how could you expect me ;
It 's not my fault if they are old and sad.
Indeed I 'd be a wretched stamp of soldier
If I possessed a thought of going away,
Considering I 'm specially selected
To decorate the rooms on Christmas Day.

You see those rolls of red and yellow paper ?
I 'll have them cut in strips before to-night ;
In grand festoons they 'll hang from every ceiling ;
Believe me, it will be a splendid sight.
The notices—Success to Captain Hopkins,
Long life to Quartermaster-Sergeant Bull—
You 'll see them on the walls before the morning,
The letters done in lumps of cotton wool,

All intermixed with bands of tinsel paper,
And shining forth like meteors in the sky ;
Just notice what the place is like at present,
You 'll see what I shall make it by and by.
I 'll also do Good Wishes to the Colonel,
A blaze of imitation diamond pins,
And Congratulations to our Quartermaster :
A week or so ago his wife had twins.

I won't have time to decorate the tables,
The barrack-rooms are jobs enough for me :
It 's the kind of work that takes a real artist—
Of late I 've made it quite a speciality.
I 'll let you see the hand of man is powerful,
With box of tacks and half a pot of paste ;
I 'll make this room a mediæval palace,
A monument of elegance and taste.

But when the Christmas dinners are all over,
I 'll go and see my mother with delight :
You 'll tell her I was busy decorating,
And that was why I had not time to write
To wish them all a very happy Christmas.
Don't tell me to my parents I 'm aversed :
I love them very dearly, I assure you,
But still I must admit that Art comes first.

THE SECTION D MAN

I 'm out of the blooming army, serving in section D ;
Now I 'm a 'bus conductor, that is my job, you see ;
Armed with a bag of coppers, tickets all day I punch,
Working from dawn to midnight, never a sit-down lunch.

No church parade on Sunday, marching behind a band ;
' Fares, please ! ' my one expression, so you can understand
Why I am discontented, why I should wear a frown ;
Why I should feel delighted whenever the 'bus breaks down.

That means a change of duties, mending the injured part,
Passengers asking questions, ' When is she going to start ? '
Sometimes I never answer, often I never know,
Frequently my reply is : ' Perhaps in a month or so.'

Then fares commence protesting, using insulting talk,
Some stick it out ten minutes, others get off and walk ;
But when the driver tells me our driving pinion 's broke,
That means my relaxation—I can recline and smoke.

Cleaning my hands with rubbers, thinking of former days
When I was once a soldier, out with the old Queen's Bays,
Lying on top of kopjees, hearing the bullets hiss,
If they 'd have fetched up closer I 'd have avoided this.

For it's a dog's existence, facing a wintry breeze,
Charging for kids as adults, unless they sit on knees,
Helping the fat old women off of the 'bus and on,
Oh for the canteen sing-songs! oh for the days since
gone!

If I'd my life all over, would I enlist once more?
Yes, I'd return to-morrow back to the dear old corps.
But they'd refuse to have me, unless we mobilise:
That may mean war and bloodshed. Then how the nation
cries,
Saying that fighting's cruel. What if it is? Who knows
Of constant 'bus vibration, when buttons drop off my
clothes?

A CHOICE OF WEAPONS

'I 'm glad to see,' said Lancer Smith, 'we 'll use the lance
again

On all parades, on all patrols, and also likewise when
On active service we are sent it won't be left in store.
Yes, we 'll be proper Lancers, as we always were before.
God help retreating armies when we are in pursuit !
A yell, a charge : no foolishness like getting off to shoot :
Those burghers' ways of fighting in future we 'll ignore.
Here 's luck to our traditions : Death or Glory Boys once
more.'

'The lance you think so much of,' said a trooper (a
Dragoon),

'Was sampled in our front ranks ; we thought it like a
spoon,

A luxury on peace parades ; for business, we found
That if we stuck an enemy, we left it in the ground.
You want retreating armies ; but what makes them
retreat ?

It is the sword, the mighty sword, that brings about
defeat.

On the uselessness of lances no longer shall I dwell,
When forces are disorganised, umbrellas do as well,
As fleeing foes won't look behind to see how you are armed.
By law they can surrender ; they are not the least alarmed.

Your weapons are, in standing camp, of use I won't deny;
When ropes are tied between them you can hang your
clothes to dry.'

'Your sabres or your lances,' said a private of the line,
'Would never frighten me, you know; you'd not make me
resign

My place or my position; with a rifle in my hand
I'd blow you both to blazes. I hope you understand;
Your range is only inches, while mine I count in miles—
My little nickel bullet would lay you out in piles.
Your mothers would be sorry that you ever lived or
grew.

No use in war; a street row is the proper place for you.
A mob's the thing to charge at when the water-hose is
burst,

At every fat policeman you can get a cut in first;
If weapons should be missing, when you terminate the
fray,

The municipal officials will return them next day.'

Then gunners joined in, and with the riflemen agreed.—
'Artillery, you know,' they said, 'the fate of war decreed.'
Ere they had told their audience exactly what they felt,
Nearly everybody present was unbuckling his belt.
These parliaments on warfare had discarded useless speech,
And were looking round for missiles they could find within
their reach;

All notice-boards and barrack-stools were greatly in
demand,

They travelled with velocity and passed from hand to hand.

Then suddenly a bugle-call resounded far and wide.
A fire in the barracks ; they fell in side by side ;
These animated arguers forgot that they had fought,
But all remembered discipline, a thing that they were
taught.

Comparisons are odious, for each one has a place
In an army or a navy when danger they 've to face,
And arguing and fighting between each varied ranks
Will never win a battle nor deserve a nation's thanks.

PRIVATE GRIN'S LEGACY

'Go, tell the nursing sister, and let the doctor know,
That Private Grin is failing ; he is getting very low ;
He is shifting on his pillow ; I cannot keep him still ;
He 's calling out for witnesses ; he wants to make a will.'

The staff were soon assembled. Then the sufferer began :
'I want to make my will, sir, I 'll do it while I can.
I want to leave—Excuse me, I 'm so tender to the touch—
I want to leave my savings.' The sister said, 'How much ?'

'How much ?' said Private Grin ; 'indeed a tidy bit, it 's
true ;
I 'm dying, so I leave it——' The doctor asked, 'Who to ?'
His question was unanswered ; just a struggle in the bed,
A stifled respiration, and Private Grin was dead.

They took him to the mortuary. On gathering his kit
They found a scrap of paper, just a tiny little bit :
It was in his own handwriting, the name was underlined—
His final will and testament, unwitnessed and unsigned.

It said, 'I leave to Mrs. Brook, my colour-sergeant's wife,
What ought to be a thousand pounds—her husband saved
my life.

She stuck it out at Ladysmith, none better could you find.
I 've no relations ; she 's to get what I can leave behind.

' I 'd leave it to the sergeant, but I would not like to trust
That, with such a lot of money, he would not go on the bust.
But she will be more careful ; she will stow it well away
For her darling little children to inherit it some day.'

That will, of course, was useless, by law being set aside,
And a very short while after, the colour-sergeant died.
His wife and seven children got assistance from their corps ;
They 'd the clothes that they stood up in, and God help
them, nothing more.

Half-yearly, in the papers, there 's the name of Private Grin,
Unclaimed estate—a thousand pounds—they want his next
of kin.

For many years they 've advertised, but no one makes a
claim—

He said he 'd no relations ; it 's a most uncommon name.

And Mrs. Brook, in poverty, obtains out-door relief ;
Allusions to unclaimed estates accentuate her grief.
I wonder if Grin's worldly wealth by honest means was
made,

For his dying debt of honour will be never, never paid.

THE RETIRING TERRITORIAL

I 'm chucking the Territorials when my four years is done.
I 've helped them at all their sing-songs and many a prize
 I 've won,
Being one of their tug-of-war lads and one of the shooting
 team—
A regular slap-up soldier—in fact, a perfect dream.

The Adjutant 's very sorry ; the Colonel he nearly cries
When he thinks of the coming future and all of the fond
 good-byes
He 'll get from those who 're leaving and mustering out
 like me—
The corps I 'm in is losing four hundred and twenty-three.

Men who are staunch and honest, men who had hearts in
 work,
Willing for general service, never the chaps to shirk
Drills or the year's manœuvres, boys who could march all
 day,
' As good as a line battalion,' I 've heard a general say.

And one that could be relied on, if left in a corner tight,
A quid to a broken bottle that we 'd pull through all right.
Don't think that because we 're leaving our valour is on
 the wane.
We cannot stand the racket. You listen and I 'll explain.

When we go on manœuvres, we get a soldier's pay,
Our rations, the tent we sleep in, our clothes, and a bob
a day ;

For fourteen days we're training—yes, all that I say is
true—

In civil life our employers dock us of all our screw.

I've got a job in a saw-mill at two pound two per week ;
It's all I've got to keep me, at times I've a narrow squeak,
With children wanting schooling, and prices raised all
round—

The missus is dead against it, as nothing for her is found.

It's not of myself I'm thinking: I know that I get my board
Down three pound ten each training ; it's more than I can
afford

To pay for my little outing, and so I have got to go ;
Still, leaving the dear old regiment will really be a blow.

I can't dictate to employers, nor can I answer back
When they scoff at the Territorials, and threaten me with
the sack

Because I am serving in them and trying to lend a hand,
And all of my comrades' bosses are just of the self-same
brand.

Next year I'll regret my absence, whenever the ' Fall in '
sounds.

My wife says my martial ardour has cost close on thirty
pounds ;

Still, I'll fight if the nation wants me, and go where my
country bids,

But who will support the missus, and also the darling kids ?

A CANTEEN DISCUSSION

THEY were talking in the wet canteen, where soldiers quench
their thirst,

All sitting round at tables. The drinks were ordered first,
Then Private Michael Smith held forth: he had a lot to say
On the relative connection of proficiency and pay.

Himself a third-class shot, the cause was evident and clear
From his workman-like appearance when he faced a mug
of beer.

The bullets from his rifle went on most erratic trips,
But arm him with a tankard, and he 'd never miss his lips.
The younger soldiers listened while Smith did all the talk,
Having numerous libations, his throat being dry as chalk.
Of any occupation he thought soldiering the worst,
So his commandant, the army, and the Government he
cursed.

He thought himself ill-treated; he 'd annoyances galore;
Choice sanguinary adjectives, he used them by the score.
He 'd tear the Army Council, so he stated, limb from limb;
The army was a place for fools, it never suited him.
Then suddenly an onlooker got up upon his feet
And said to Smith, 'Now, mark you, I've no entry on my
sheet;

I'm bidding fair to get one; it is on account of you,
For I'll beat you till your ferret eyes are changed to black
and blue;

You're a rotten lazy grouser, and I wish you were in Hell:—
Yes, a mass of inefficiency and discontent as well.
You talk about injustices occurring in the corps ;
If you had proper justice, they'd have hanged you long
before.

Now what's your crab with soldiering ? that you consider
low ?

If other jobs are better paid, for God's sake get, and go !
Should anybody want you, he can get you if he tries ;
He will find you such a darling, such a beauty, such a prize.
When you are ill in hospital, your nurse and your cham-
pagne,

A passage on a troop-ship, and a warrant on a train.
Would you get those in civil life, I ask you, Mr. Mick ?
Why, the Colonel can't afford them for his family when sick !
I'm proud of being a soldier, and I think it only right
That every man in England should be taught to ride and
fight ;

I see all the advantages, to you they don't appeal,
No scope for your attainments ; you're over full of "zeal."
The officers that you abuse have grievances I know,—
When corps are over strength with brutes, the colonels
have to go,

Unless they civilise them—it's no easy thing to do ;
There are some beyond the limit, as for instance, worms
like you.

For you're the class that gives an honest soldier a bad
name ;

Folk take you as a sample and imagine we're the same :
"We'll keep the flag a-flying" is not your battle-cry ;
It is "Keep the prison open, I'll be in there by and by."

As the champion of the Service was concluding his discourse
The provost-sergeant entered, and cleared the place by
force.

The arguers adjourned to discuss their rights and wrongs,
And went for one another like a hammer and a tongs :
Poor Smith, a battered morsel, was taken home to bed,
With half a dozen putties twisted neatly round his head.
They told him, to console him, while his wounds were
being dressed,
That in his fight and argument, he came off second best.

THE MAN AT THE TOP OF THE TREE

THE SUDAN, 1908

YOUNG Bray sat and smoked by the banks of the
Nile ;

He 'd only just come to Khartoum :
Possessing no house, near the Gordon Hotel
He had hired a little back room.
As civil subordinate he had come out,
Some said for the good of his health,
His pay, but a starvation wage where he was,
He looked on at home as great wealth.

The beautiful sunsets had no charm for him,
The sand-banks he never admired ;
Being down on his luck, in a horrible mood,
He did not know what he desired.

Just then an acquaintance, one Corporal Jones,
Perceiving lugubrious Bray,
Came over towards him, began to converse
In a nasty and jocular way.
'Halloo, Mr. Death's-Head, you 're not looking bright ;
Your chief, has he damned your whole clan ?
Why, that does not matter, forget and forgive,
It 's a way we have in the Sudan.

You 'll learn that climate at times irritates ;
 A boss must be quickly obeyed,
 As temper and temperature keep on a par
 At a hundred and twelve in the shade.'

' Oh, damn your Sudan ! ' was Bray's ugly retort,
 ' There is nothing here I can admire ;
 To get a job anywhere else on God's earth
 Is my one, and my only desire.
 They talk of the prospects, and tempt us abroad ;
 There is nothing here good I can see.'

' There is,' answered Jones, ' there is one that's all right—
 It's the man at the top of the tree ;
 The chap who is running the whole bally show—
 You cannot blame him for the heat—
 Why, any civilian, or soldier as well,
 Is willing to die at his feet.
 He's got such a knack of commanding respect,
 A vast horde of natives likewise,
 He may be thought lenient, but this I would swear,
 That justice he never denies.
 And that is why he is respected and loved,
 Why his slightest wish is obeyed :
 If asked my opinion, I'd give it ; it's this :
 That sirdars are born and not made.
 There're many who're capable him to replace,
 Some things they might greatly improve,
 But will they, I ask, possess his moral power
 Of getting men out of a groove ?

And making an army—of enemies once—
So loyal, obedient and true?
Could you suggest any one who can do that?
I can't; I shall leave it to you.'

'I'm no use at riddles,' Bray pertly replied,
'Still willing with you to agree
That few can but equal, and none can excel,
Your man at the top of the tree.
But I'm at the bottom; yes, down at the roots.
Though honours on others may shower,
From what I can see, it's apparent to me
That I'll never come out into flower.'

'You probably won't,' answered Corporal Jones;
'You're jibbing at things like a mule.
Go up to your collar, and pull all your weight;
Don't mind finding fault: you're a fool.
There may be officials who are not A1,
But loyal let both of us be
To a country that's but in its infancy yet,
And the man at the top of the tree.'

ONE OF THE DRAFT

I 'M off with the draft to China ; we 're over a hundred
strong,

Good-bye to you, mother darling, I 'll write to you before
long

From Halifax or Jamaica, or any port we touch,—

My geographical knowledge it never was up to much.

Still I know we start from Southampton, and then due
south we bear.

Or is it north ? I 'm uncertain, and not prepared to swear.

But we 're bound for the Bay of Biscay, and Spain, from
where wine is brought,

And they 'll stop the ship and show us the spots where
Lord Nelson fought.

I wonder if I 'll be sea-sick. I think not if I take care—

I sailed from Brighton to Ramsgate and never turned a
hair.

Oh ! wasn't it blowing awful ? Some thought we should
be a wreck,

And the woman who used to sell apples was stretched on
the upper deck :

But there was I smoking Woodbines, and talking about
the view,

As fit as the fat old captain or half of the bally crew.

I 'll have to sleep in a hammock, as that is the rule at sea

For sailors and private soldiers and all of the likes of me.

And that I shall not object to, as Paddy MacCarthy said ;
He 'd fixed one up on a clothes-line ; he 'd rather it than
a bed.

Once more good-bye to you, mother : no, don't come down
to the train,

For if you come, I 'm certain, I know I could not refrain
From blubbing just like a baby, so give me a helping
hand.

There 're lads without mothers going, and they would not
understand

Why I should have eyes all bloodshot ; they 'd think I was
not a man.

I 'll say good-bye from here, dear ; it's far the better plan.
Of course I 'll come back for certain, sure China 's not
far away—

Why, the tea that you 're so fond of arrives fresh every day !
And on the Marconi system, if I could afford the price,
I 'd send you a message hourly : now would not that be
nice ?

So, mother, be bright and cheerful, and let the neighbours
see

That you are a soldier's mother, and braver by far than he
Who 's ordered away off foreign. You 'll promise me not
to cry

Except for the first ten minutes. Now, mother, my own,
good-bye.

REMINISCENCES OF SOUTH AFRICA

WE have trekked all day and trekked all night
But the camp is further still ;
Shall we struggle on as best we can ?
We will, my lads, we will.
We 're badly fed, a proper bed
For months we have not seen ;
We 're never heard complaining,
But what a time it 's been !
When leaders are in error,
We 're often the excuse ;
Though worn out and jaded,
We don't resent abuse.
When sick and weary we depend
Upon some general's whim ;
It 's always the same verdict—
' There is nothing wrong with him.
Take him away and make him work ;
Flog him if he won't try ;
Let another have his rations
If you think he 's going to die.'
It 's hard, my lads, to bear it,
But we 'll do it all the same ;
Be our troubles ten times greater,
We shall not disgrace our name.

And as we fall out one by one,
And drop at the roadside,
Let us rejoice ; we 've done our best :
Then welcome death with pride.

As these heroic sentiments are not with men the rule,
Some of you may learn a lesson from your gallant slave,
THE MULE.

THE PRIVATE OF SEVENTY-THREE

THE army, you know, is devoted to pets,
Each branch has a different style ;
The dog and the bear and the woolly-haired goat,
The tiger, the tame crocodile.
The antelope, too, plays a prominent part,
And monkeys enlist by the score.
I once saw an ostrich and wild kangaroo
Each shown on the strength of a corps.
For Tommy must lavish affection on beasts
When he has no sweet Marjory,
But the funniest pet that I ever observed
Was a private of seventy-three.
Now Paddy Maloney, the man that I mean,
He served in a Fusilier corps ;
When I saw him last, he was doing right well
In the year nineteen hundred and four.—
A marksman who never was seen on the range,
A good-conduct man steeped in sin,
When sober enough at the athletic sports
The veteran's race he would win.
He often ran blind when the race started late,
From drink feeling weak at the knee.
A wretched example to men of to-day
Was this private of seventy-three.

But all ranks were blind to the crimes against Pat ;
To punish him now was no use ;
Even he in command could not Pat reprimand
Without getting back sound abuse.
As Paddy's rough tongue on ball-bearings was slung,
His glibness at coarse repartee
Made some offer thanks they had not in their ranks
Any privates of seventy-three.

Now why was Pat kept ? It is right you should ask.
And how did the unit connive
At keeping him on when he ought to have gone
Before he had reached forty-five ?
In spite of reports which refer to men's age,
With all the inspections each year,
I'll have you to know Mr. Pat would not go ;
He made himself perfectly clear.
When Pat reached the limit, his papers got lost :
Not all, but a critical page :
In next year's Returns, as nobody knew,
They took his own word for his age.
' For military purposes,' Patsy remarked,
' I'm just two-and-twenty, you see,
But when it's seniority in our own corps,
Remember I'm seventy-three.'
And Paddy he serves with the colours to-day ;
No job for him now can be found,
Except in the officers' mess on guest night
He's often brought in and walked round.
The President's end he's reluctant to pass ;
Decanters for him have a charm ;

They act as a magnet attracting poor Pat—

He cannot restrain his right arm.

And Pat says he 'll stay with the corps till his death—

It is hard to say when it will be ;

If I 'm any judge, he is not going to budge,

He will live to four hundred and three.

AERIAL SCOUTING

A PROSPECT OF THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE

THE party is fallen in, sir, I thought you 'd inspect at flight.
The petrol tanks are full, sir, and the compasses seem all
right ;

At present we 're in close order (just seventeen miles apart),
Six thousand foot elevation ; we 'll open out when we
start.

The bugler's megaphone, sir, is wrong ; I am sure he knows
That at fifty miles no one hears him, no matter what call
he blows.

I 'd make it a personal charge, sir ; amongst some other
things

He's damaged his back propeller, and torn his lateral wings.
His vertical superstructure is quite a disgraceful sight—
He saw the Battalion Orders, and knew he was warned for
flight.

Excuse me mounting my flyer ; there 're two recruits I see,
And one 's hung up on a steeple, the other has fouled a tree.

Here, can't you see where you 're going ? You 're damn
nice chaps in air ;

You 've done for yourselves now nicely. Oh, why can't
you take more care ?

You 've got your feet to steer with ; haul up in the wind ;
yes, luff.

You knock against every chimney ; my God ! ain't there
room enough ?

The Captain is now ascending, just wait till he sees you here :
Hang on with your legs and arms, Brown, and don't be
convulsed with fear.

The first-aid men with ladders are over there, just in
sight ;

I 'm sorry if I spoke roughly ; they 'll lower you down all
right.

The commandant mounts his flyer, and soars to his force on
high,

Acquainting them with his orders : they 've got to patrol
the sky

To look for opposing forces ; with keenness they 're all
endowed ;

They know that they must take cover behind any star or
cloud.

No footprints have they to guide them ; by odour they
localise

Positions of foreign air-ships with noses instead of eyes.

All capable aviators ; there is not a man but knows

That other aerial parties resemble a flock of crows.

THE OLD CANTEEN PIANO

I 'm an old canteen piano,—I was once a semi-grand,—
And I've been in better houses; that, I hope, you understand.
Though my castors may be missing and my frame may
show decay,

Like many hired articles, I 've known a better day.
My notes are made of ivory; though old and yellow, still
A ramping raging elephant for years they helped to fill;
To wander through the jungle was once their great delight,
But now by men with grimy nails they 're hammered every
night.

I started with a princess in a boudoir in the past;
My life was too luxurious, I knew it could not last:
Though chords of Strauss and Mendelssohn have echoed
forth from me,

I 'm now reduced to vamping in the humdrum key of C.
My pedals, often pressed to help a voice like silvery lute,
Now scratched by iron toe-caps on an ammunition boot;
My keyboard stays undusted, but that I don't regret,
But when my treble notes are used to hold a cigarette,
I wish they were of celluloid that they may go on fire,
Destroying perhaps my whereabouts, which I do not admire.
My strings for many a year have never felt a tuner's key,
So they 're relaxed, the doctor says, and I of course agree.
The wear and tear is awful; I wish I could arrange
To get a Sol Fa (tonic), or better still, a change.

Discordant notes resound from me—I 'm shoved against a wall—

But no one seems to mind them, the singer least of all :
I get my mornings off, and this I 'd really like to say,
I am not made the delinquent when a player cannot play.
I hate your so-called experts, with their likes and their dislikes,

Why, a soldier is delighted with whatever note he strikes.
Be it discord : never matter, his machine he won't abuse,
And an old piano likes that ; it is pleasing to amuse.
I 've given up regretting when I can't assist a voice ;
I came here through necessity, and now remain from choice.
Gay recruit, I 'm at your mercy, that in future is my rôle ;
Lacking music in your fingers you have music in your soul.
So good-bye to Balfe and Chopin, stirring chords or light refrain ;

I 'm an old canteen piano,—to the end I 'll so remain.

A MILITARY MARK TAPLEY

Now Billy M'Ausland as private was really a wonderful chap,
He looked at the bright side of nature, and laughed at a chance of mishap ;
Being never an atom downhearted, he smiled when all others would cry,
So willing to cheer a companion, some means of consoling he 'd try.

And once when he met a delinquent, who 'd got from his cruel C.O.
An award he was not over pleased with, he stopped him and spoke to him so :
' You 're in wonderful luck, I assure you ; as prisoner you are not addressed ;
The army won't tolerate insults ; it 's soldier you 're called (in arrest).
No prison for you, nor hard labour ; you could not stand such an affront ;
Your abode is the barracks (detention) from now till the end of the month.'

One night in the new married quarters, a terrible fire occurred ;
They burst into flames in an instant, a horrible sight, on my word.

The damage was dreadful, heartrending ; midst all the confusion and fuss

Bill saw a disconsolate widow, and started consoling her thus :

‘ You ’re in wonderful luck, I assure you, although you ’ve lost all you possess,

Including your husband and children. I pity you in your distress,

But still you ’re in luck, as I told you ; your nightgown is threadbare and old ;

Thank God it ’s a fine summer evening, as otherwise you might take cold.’

Then William took part in a shipwreck, an awful collision at sea :

Wherever assistance was wanted, upon the spot Billy would be.

Where others were helping with labour, M’Ausland he helped with his tongue ;

He said to the drowning around him, the hearty, the aged, and young :

‘ You ’re in wonderful luck, I assure you. Oh ! try, you *must* try and be brave.

And please do not swallow salt water. Oh ! keep on the top of the wave.

You envy me !—I ’m in a lifeboat !—that you may be saved may God grant.

It ’s you who ’re in luck, as I told you : I might be capsized and you can’t.’

One day at the butts a poor marker got shot through the
lungs on the range,
And some ran to look for the doctor, and others to transport
arrange.
Too many they crowded around him, but few tried to keep
the ground clear.
Then Billy arrived, and thus started his poor wounded
comrade to cheer :
'You're in wonderful luck, I assure you; that bullet it might
have gone through
Your abdomen. That would be awful! Ah! then I'd
indeed pity you.
The treatment, it would be so trying, as they'd give you
nothing to drink,
And now they will fill you with brandy, no matter how low
you may sink.
You may have to die, I admit it, but so will the whole bally
crowd :
Remember you're injured on duty, of that you have cause
to be proud.'

A MILITARY WHO'S WHO

It was at a summer levée which I happened to attend,
There many high officials were on view,
And a casual acquaintance who was standing by my side
So very kindly told me Who was Who.
'That officer in red,' I asked, 'oh, what a grand
physique!
Now what is he? He weighs eighteen stone three!'
'Oh, he,' replied my confrère, 'is a colonel in command
Of a splendid branch, the old Light Infantry.'
'And that very little officer (I troubled him again);
That tiny man, with eyes let in like prunes?'
'My friend,' he answered quickly, 'he's the adjutant,
I think,
Of those gallant chaps—our Heavy Horse Dragoons.'
'And that officer beside him with his hand upon his
sword?
That novel-writer's model for romance?'
'Oh, he,' said my informant, 'is a paymaster, you know;
He regulates our stipends at a glance.'
'And that rather aged veteran? (I felt I'd asked
enough)
That grand old man!—a hero, I presume?
Some old Crimean fighter: you see him over there?
That soldier at the corner of the room.'
'This very aged officer,' my friend to me remarked,
'The old man who is making his way out—

I do not see his badges, so I cannot tell his rank,
But you know what he is in?—he's a Boy Scout!'
And as I journeyed homeward in my taxi down the
street,
I thought while I was held up by delays,
That, judging from appearances, it's very hard to say
What any one belongs to nowadays.

TO A MILITARY DIVORCÉE

GOOD-BYE to you, my wife that was ; the limit you have
reached ;

The court will be the next place we shall meet.

O my honest true affection which you treated with
disdain !

But the judge the charge against you will repeat.

May another make you happy as your husband failed
to do ;

Your love, no longer pure, no man can rob.

A soldier's wife I made you ; 'twas an error I admit,

As I found you were unequal for the job.

With your winning airs and graces and your captivating
ways,

You remember how they liked you in the corps ?

Now a line is drawn between you ; you have done it all
yourself ;

So it never wants to see you any more.

The regiment disowns you ; on its name you've cast
a slur—

If in sorrow, we won't hear you cry or sob :

You capitulated honour when you might have made a
stand—

A soldier's wife, unequal for the job.

Your note to-day that tells me of the only man you love,
Regardless of your altar vows to me ;
There 's our child without a mother while his mother is
alive,—

As years roll by your fallacy you 'll see.
You ask me to forgive you. I may do so for myself,
But you 'll never see your boy, our darling Bob.
A soldier's wife I made you ; I admit, a great mistake,
As you proved yourself unequal for the job.

IN REAR OF THE KETTLE-DRUM

I 'm lacking in martial ardour ; no soldier, alas ! I fear ;
I am not a Territorial, nor was I a Volunteer ;
My life has been uneventful, rejecting the crust for crumb,
But I feel a man when marching in rear of the kettle-drum.
I never have worn a medal ; a rifle I 've never fired ;
At war I 've never mustered ; still I 've got what my heart
desired—

The music I most admire, the clang and the loud tum-tum,
As I do my hard day's marching in rear of the kettle-drum.
Yes ! the drum is indeed a kettle, but from spout and
cover free ;

It is played by my little grandson, his age is exactly
three.

When he makes me march behind him I 'm foolish (what
some call rum),

But I feel a child when marching in rear of the kettle-drum.
And the kettle-drum and its player mean such a lot to me !
Yes ! every day I 'm sent for, wherever I chance to be.

I 'm aged and old and crippled, but when I am feeling
glum,

I long for my marching orders in rear of the kettle-drum.

THE PARROT PARLOURMAID

WE have one domestic servant, she a general is called ;
Each morning she complains of being alone ;
I hear she 's most amusing to her many outside friends,
Being what we call a human gramophone.
Our private conversations get repeated in the street ;
My wife she often tells me of her fears ;
And if I speak at dinner I 'm subdued with the remark,
' Hush ! Mary repeats everything she hears.'

We have a rich relation who has not been over well—
We live on expectations, I may say,
And many married subalterns are just in the same boat ;
It is not joy, existing on one's pay.
I dearly love my grandaunt, though she does not want to
die,
Although she is a martyr to the gout ;
We pray for our intention when our bank-book comes
along,
It 's usually Mary's evening out.
And should I talk at dinner about what would put us
right,
My wife becomes at once convulsed with tears.
I 'm sick of the expression, ' Dear, you ought to have more
tact.
Hush ! Mary repeats everything she hears.'

We 're getting far more popular ; the people we dislike
Are always now most gracious when we meet ;
My wife will talk at meal-times, saying ' Mrs. Smith 's a dear '
And ' Mrs. Brown is such a sweet *petite*.'
I know that she detests them ; should I tell her speak the
truth,
Then Mary at the parlour door appears :
Our conversation 's ended, and I 'm squashed with the
remark,
' Hush ! Mary repeats everything she hears.'

I 'm getting tired of Mary ; I would boot her if I could ;
I can't afford to pay her monthly wage,
To say nothing of insurance that is coming into vogue :
She 's making me the liar of the age.
If I am feeling thirsty, I say, ' Take away the drinks.
I shall clip the garden hedge : go find the shears.'
I 've a bottle in the flower-bed, but I must not swallow loud,
For Mary repeats everything she hears.

THE HEALTH OF OUR GUEST OF TO-NIGHT

(Song)

My comrades, I give you a toast,
I 'm sure that you all will respond ;
My voice is not clear, so I hope you can hear,
You gentlemen over beyond.
My toast is our guest of to-night,
The best of good fellows, that 's true ;
He 's tried and found worthy of all he can get,
That 's the verdict arrived at by you.

Chorus

So keep your full glasses in sight,
You 'll drink to my toast with delight,
With musical honours : I 've this to propose,
It 's the health of our guest of to-night.

Let our chairman stay long at his post ;
Let the rest of us afterwards boast
How of care we were free, of the great *bon ami*
We 've the honour of acting as host.
To one who is now in our midst,
Am I right in saying he can depend
That every one who is present to-night
Will be always to him a true friend.

THE HEALTH OF OUR GUEST OF TO-NIGHT 61

Chorus

So begone with dull care for a while,
And let every face wear a smile.
The wine let it pass, and replenish each glass :
Don't keep it dammed up like the Nile.
Let the rafters re-echo applause ;
Let the ring of our cheering excite
Those others who are not amongst us to drink
THE HEALTH OF OUR GUEST OF TO-NIGHT.

Note.—It is an easy matter to make this song applicable to more than one, by substituting the plural for the singular. The words 'Good Fellow' can be altered at will to 'Sportsman,' 'Huntsman,' 'Yachtsman,' 'Statesman,' 'Postman,' or any other celebrity.

RECITATION FOR A GENTLEMAN WITH
SLIGHT IMPEDIMENT OF SPEECH

It was the scho-scho-schooner *Hesperus*
That sailed the wi-wi-winty sea,
And the ski-ski-skipper had taken his little dau-dau-
daughter
To help to make the tea : no—
To see how sick she 'd be : no—
To bear him co-co-company : yes.

Fair was her hair, like the ra-ra-raven's foot,
Her mou-mou-mouth like the daw-daw-dawn of day,
When open wide, she had inside
Of teeth a grand display : no—
No semblance of decay : no—
A strong desire to p-p-p-pray : yes.

The ski-ski-skipper he stood beside the helm,
His pi-pi-pipe was on the hatch,
The little daughter asked him, Would she go and fetch a
match ? no—
Did his trousers want a patch ? no—
If the rocks the ship would scratch ? yes.

The ski-ski-skipper then said to his child,
How strong our grog must be !
Last night I only saw one moon,
To-night I counted three : no—
There 's something biting me : no—
The ship sails by the lea : yes.

When just in sight of Pu-Pu-Putney
The ship began to sink,
The skipper said, as Cambridge sunk,
There 'll be no race, I think : no—
Let 's have another drink : no—
We 're near to danger's brink : yes.

Such was the wreck of the *Hes-Hes-Hesperus*
On the woe of Norman's Reef ;
Insurance firms protested
That old Taffy was a thief : no—
That they knew she 'd come to grief : no—
That the crew were now at rest : no—
That the captain did his best : no—
That I quite forget the rest : yes.

