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1911
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Points of Trouble
Damon Runyon

THE TENTS OF TROUBLE

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BY
DAMON RUNYON

(Ballads of the Wanderbund, and Other Verse)



NEW YORK
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To
Hamish Loughlin McLaurin,
and other world wanderers.

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BALLADS OF THE WANDERBUND

THE BALLAD OF THE BIG TOWN

NOW I've gone out as a wanderer; as a man o' th'
Where-You-Wills;

An' I've planted our flag in vale, on crag, an' over a
thousand hills.

My blood flows hot as lava, an' it leaps to th' Spring-
time's call;

(For I must go in th' Springtime, an' I'm due back in
th' Fall.)

But I'm sick o' th' wastes o' water; an' I'm sick o' th'
sweepin' plain;

I'm tired o' th' snow an' th' windy blow an' th' peck
o' th' fretful rain.

Oh, I'm sick o' th' whole dam Open, an' th' Forest
gives me a chill —

I'm yearnin' to-night for ole New York;

Whang o' th' music an' pop o' th' cork;

(Sick o' a ration o' maggoty pork —)

An' sore on th' blasted drill!

Now I've camped in the World's far plazas, an' I've
fought at th' ends o' th' Earth;

I've fought an' won from sun to sun an' learned what
a friendship's worth.

I've gasped in the heat o' th' Congo, an' froze on' th'
bergs o' Svork —

THE BALLAD OF THE BIG TOWN

An' my constant dream is th' diamond gleam o' th'
lights that light New York.

For I ache with th' mountain scenery, an' I've stared
at th' wide-eyed sky

'Til I'm blue o' hide an' blue inside an' feelin' I'd like
to cry.

Oh, I've carried th' Gospel an' rifle an' I've traveled in
trails w'ich aint —

An' I'm yearnin' to-night for th' Broadway mess;
Sight o' th' bloods in evenin' dress —

Clink o' th' glass — an' a drink — I guess —

An' th' stink o' perfume an' paint!

I've been in a Sultan's harem; I sabered me way to
his pearls,

But I wouldn't trade th' best they've made for th' least
o' our chorus girls.

I've hopped to a tom-tom's clatter, an' I've shied at the
hula prance,

But th' pulse don't beat in me willin' feet as she does to
a Bowery dance.

For I've slept with a plague o' cholera — an' worse, with
a Borny chief;

From th' Arctic Zone to th' Patagone I've toted a
clammy grief.

I've found where th' Four Winds council, an' I've
chinned now an' then with Death —

But I'm wishin' to-night to laugh an' sing;

THE BALLAD OF THE BIG TOWN

For th' city's roar an' th' music's ring —

(Rustle o' skirts an' an ole time fling —)

An' a chance for an' easy breath.

I've lighted my fires at evenin' 'neath stars you never
have seen —

I've tarried whiles on vacant isles, an' th' waves that
whip between.

But whether I sweat on th' Congo, or freeze on th'
bergs o' Svork —

I 'dream at night o' th' arch o' light that swings over
Home — New York!

For I've hung my warsh in a Temple, an' I've eaten
a Sacred Cow —

Oh, I own nine lives an' fourteen wives (but none o'
them's with me now —

Thank Gawd!)

An' there's thousands o' miles between me an' th' shores
o' th' only town;

An' I'm dreamin' to-night by th' camp fire dim;

(Sick o' th' Trail an' th' Weather's whim;)

An' I'd take a chance at a distance swim

If I knew dam well I'd drown!

THE GHOSTS OF THE GREAT WHITE WAY

HAVE you heard o' the Ghosts o' Broadway, the
jinks o' the Dream Defile?
The Red-Eyed Ghost, an' the White-Lipped Ghost, an'
the Ghost wit' the good, glad smile?
When the ice in the wine-can churns a tune, an' the
glasses skate on the trays
Them Ghosts come out o' their hives an' set an' yarn
in the gilt cafays.
When the lights paint faces o' daylight-gloom to a night-
time-natured glow
They'll tell you tales w'ich are old as sin — that's the
oldest gag we know.

FIRST GHOST

*"I'm the Ghost o' the Wine that flows each night in a
mellow stream to Hell;"*

SECOND GHOST

*"I'm the Ghost o' the Woman who knows some things
she never will dare to tell —"*

THIRD GHOST

*"Well, well! —
I'm the Ghost o' the Song that rafts you along wit' a
liltin', tiltin' lay —"*

THE GHOSTS OF THE GREAT WHITE WAY

ALL THREE

*"Ho, we're the Ghosts o' the Game an' Ghosts you must
tame when you play on the Big White Way!"*

Sure! You've met wit' the Ghosts o' Broadway; the
ha'n'ts o' the Path o' the Wise;

Wit' the lint o' the pillow still stuck in their hair, an' a
bath-room look in their eyes.

When the lights are splashin' the taxi-trails an' the skirts
raise a perfumed breeze

They set in the snares wit' the whirlin' doors an' yarn
at their graveyard ease.

An' the low-neck squadrons pass in review an' hear the
tales for awhile

O' the Wine, an' the Woman, an' bright-faced Song,
that 'drools wit' a good, glad smile.

FIRST GHOST

*"I'm the Ghost o' the Wine that brings the aches in the
dawn o' the day to come;"*

SECOND GHOST

*"I'm the Ghost o' the Woman who soothes the brow
when it throbs like a beatin' drum;"*

THIRD GHOST

*"I'm the Ghost o' the Song that drowns the wrong an'
makes the heart tunk gay —"*

THE GHOSTS OF THE GREAT 'WHITE WAY

ALL THREE

*"Ho, we'll drink an' sing to the joyful ring o' the bells
on the Big White Way!"*

So here's to the Ghosts o' Broadway; where the old bull
fiddle snorts —

The White-Lipped Ghost wit' her bad, sad smile, an'
both o' her fellow sports;

When the music two-steps the hand to the purse an' the
carbonized grape-juice flies

Let's 'drink to the health o' the Broadway Ghosts, an'
the tomb where their history lies.

Oh, the world is troubled enough by woe, an' there's
light on the Dream Defile—

So here's to the Red-Eyed, White-Lipped Ghosts — an'
the one wit' the good, glad smile.

FIRST GHOST

*"Here's to the Woman who soothes the brow an' lays
our fears an' frets —"*

SECOND GHOST

*"Here's to the Wine that lightens the tongue an' softens
the old regrets —"*

THIRD GHOST

*"An' Song salutes the new recruits that come to our
crowd each day —"*

ALL THREE

*"Well! Well! We rattle our bones on the Broadway
stones at night on the Big White Way!"*

"THE SPIRIT OF YOU"

MCSWEAL, of the Battery, private; with a wound
that he couldn't survive.

("Press hard on the blood-flow, doctor; we'll try to
keep him alive.")

McSweal, of the Battery, speaking — to a locket set
turquoise blue —

"No chaplain to see me departing? Well, I'll pray to
the Spirit of You.

"I've groped as a child in the darkness, when it feels
for its mother's breast;

I've cried for a nameless something, and sought for a
lighter rest;

I've listened in blackest silence in hope of a voice I knew,
And I turn from a hopeless praying to pray to the Spirit
of You.

"'T is an old, old, helpless longing that quickens the
stagnant veins;

'T is a world-old crying for something that rouses the
hidden pains;

'T is a hopeless searching for surcease — I've called on
the gods that are true,

And now I recall my religion — but turn to the Spirit
of You.

"THE SPIRIT OF YOU"

"There's a violet scent in my nostrils; there's a violet
breath on my cheek;
I'm seeking no thin-worded parting — well knowing you
never would speak.
Now the moments that waited run swiftly — aye, time
was the friend I knew;
And he's brought me at last to my altar — to pray to
the Spirit of You.

"I've cursed in my moments of passion; besought with
a heart contrite;
But never an answer to praying — though I'm having it
answered to-night.
'Tis an old, old, cold, old longing — 'tis a dreaming that
never came true —
But the blessing of Faith comes to me as I pray to the
Spirit of You."

We laid him out there as he wanted — McSweal, of
the Battery, dead;
With a blanket of perfumed blossoms; and the guidon
under his head;
With the locket still clasped in his fingers — we gave
him a volley or two,
And we left him out there as he wanted — to talk with
the Spirit of You!

"PAL"

(Algeria, 1910.)

THEY'S a guy in a tent beyond me and he's suckin'
a sickly flute;
They's another thumbin' a bum guitar and tryin' to
sing, to boot;
They're givin' a hand to a long, lean stiff who come
from the sout' o' France,
And they's a stink o' strong men needin' a bath as a
gang starts in to dance.
They's a graveyard smell in the very air as the sun
glare sweats the sand
And melts the tallow in the heart wit' the iron o' the
homesick brand;
They's a restless whine from the picket line where the
hosses sway and prance,
And I'm thinkin' o' Pal who died to-day for the giddy
ole flag o' France.

I'm settin' alone in me solitude wit' me thoughts that
are thoughts o' Pal
Who died to-day on the sand-floored plain;
Who's gone for good from worry and pain —
(And he won't be bothered by sun or rain,)
Pal, me dear ole Pal.

"PAL"

We blew from the burg o' New Orleans hived up on
the Kate McGraw —

(We'd croaked a flatty in Baltimore and we beat, by a
nose, the law.)

And Any-Ole-Where was good for us and Any-Ole-
Thing a chance —

So we finds ourselves in a month or two in the crummy
blue clothes o' France.

We were boot to boot as the column charged the same
as we went through life;

I felt him fall and I sensed the "zing" of a boob-face
Arab's knife;

And the gang they laughed when I laid him down to
sleep in the shiftin' sands —

Wit' a touch o' me lips to his red moustache as I crost
his blood-stained hands.

I'm settin' alone in me solitude and me thoughts are
thoughts o' Pal;

(He flopped from his hoss and the charge went by —
There wasn't but me to help him die

And there isn't a soul but me to cry
For Pal, me dear ole Pal.)

We met as kids in the long ago and we trained to men
— and crooks;

Ours was a friendship clost and fast, the kind like you
read in books.

"PAL"

Ours was a friendship women don't break; he onct took
a frail from me —

But I've heard Pal laugh as he stood the gaff for me in
the Third Degree.

I liked that gal but she liked him best — he'd the ways
that a woman knows;

(When a man won't fight for the like of a gal it's as
strong as a friendship goes;)

But ours was a friendship women don't break — when
the time for the choosin' came

My Pal he followed me hard and fast and I reckon I'd
done the same.

So I'm settin' alone in me solitude wit' me thoughts that
are thoughts o' Pal —

Who sleeps to-night 'neath a hard-boiled sky

And the lilies o' France that made him die;

He went wit' never the bat o' an eye —

Pal, me dear ole Pal.

Oh, I liked that gal, but I liked him best and she's
waitin' back there for one;

(He was wounded bad and he had to die so I helped
wit' the butt o' me gun;)

For I stood next to me dear ole Pal wit' the frail that
he grabbed from me —

And a friendship's through when a man goes down wit'
his woman and goods left free.

"PAL"

Dear ole Pal, the Big White Line is a hell of a ways
from here;

But I've planted you deep and planted you tight and
bedded you down wit' a tear;

And you stick there where you've lots of room till the
horn o' the Judgment Day —

And I'll drink your healt' wit' the frail we liked when
I git to the Big White Way!

Yes, I'm settin' alone in me solitude wit' me thoughts
that are thoughts o' Pal;

Who died from a wound and a smack on the head;

(But the frail won't know for me Pal is dead —

And the dead don't talk, w'ich is nice o' the dead —
Good-bye me dear ole Pal!)

THE SONG OF THE STRIKE-BREAKERS

BOX-CARRED an' stockaded;
Bayonet-paraded —

“ Harnessed-bulls ” behind us an' a squad on either side.

Awake, it's bricks an' curses;

Asleep, we dream o' hearses —

That's us! They call us Rough Necks, an' we're picked
because we're tried!

That's us! We're shy o' morals, an' flat in purse an'
pride!

“ Scab! Scab! Scab!

Oh, you lousy labor scab! ”

But it's dollars a day to hear 'em say —

“ Sca-a-a-b!”

W'y the start o' scabbin's in Chapter Four, if I read my
Bible plain;

When Abel he showed his card to God, an' God he was
sore at Cain;

For Cain's work hadn't the Union Brand, though mebbe
he'd struggled hard —

But they wasn't no Open Shop them days, an' a worker
must have a card.

THE SONG OF THE STRIKE-BREAKERS

An', followin' on, they talked in the field; the Bible it
puts that plain,
An' Abel the Union Man, no doubt, he joshed at the
work o' Cain —
With many a stingin' word, perhaps, an' many a verbal
jab,
An' when Cain started to work ag'in, his brother he
called him "Scab!"

So, ever since, as I figure it out, the breed o' the line
o' Cain
Are scabs on the sores o' Abel's folks, an' a tight scab
gives 'em pain;
(Our hands are stained with our brother's blood — Oh,
the swing o' the club and dirk!)
By God, we're shameless enough to live, so we'll live at
our brother's work!

We know the graveyard's wicked leer, an' the roar o'
the fires o' Hell;
It comes as the Trial-car moves along like a boat on a
risin' swell;
Branded vags by the hand o' God, from the strength o'
earth we're barred —
An' in shame we're doin' our brother's work, backed up
by the Enoch Guard!

THE SONG OF THE STRIKE-BREAKERS

Grind the wheels with a bitter wail, as the soaped
tracks jolt an' throb:
Am I my brother's keeper, too, along with my brother's
job?
Out o' the ground his blood it calls, Oh, the weight o'
our load is hard
When we're tryin' to do our brother's work, but minus
his Union Card!

The only Union you'll find to-day that's runnin' an
Open Shop
Is the one our friend Starvation keeps, an' it works you
until you drop;
For God is sore on the sons o' Cain an' the work that
we try to do —
An' a curse growls out o' the mouth o' earth as our
brother's blood seeps through!

"Scab! Scab! Scab!

Oh, you lousy labor scab!"

But it's dollars a day to hear 'em say —

"Sca-a-a-b!"

Jeered, but feared — an' hated;
Cemetery slated;
Battered skulls an' shattered hulls, should we be sat-
isfied?

THE SONG OF THE STRIKE-BREAKERS

Awake it's bricks an' curses;
Asleep, we dream o' hearses —
That's us! They call us Rough Necks, an' we're flat
in purse an' pride;
That's us! There used to be some more, but several
of us died!

BALLAD OF LONELY GRAVES

OH, whether they stand in a desert plain or the
heart of a silent wood
The winds they sing to the lonely graves and the sun
and the stars are good;
And they tell no tales of a wrongful life, but they speak
in a restful way
And the men in the lonely graves sleep well awaiting the
judgment day.

No, no, the lonely graves don't speak, they lie in the
warming sun
And those who pass that way don't know the things
that the dead have done.
They can only look at the silent mounds that the patient
flowers attend —
And muse, as I've mused at a thousand mounds: "Do
you rest well, my friend?"

For the world is seeded with lonely graves, and the
harvest at judgment day
Will be an army of unknown men who will wait in a
quiet way;
And when they turn to the Docket Clerk, and the rec-
ord of years defend
They'll whisper the names to Him low and say:
"Thanks for that rest, Our Friend!"

BROTHERS-BY-OATH

THE AMERICAN NAVY

YESTERDAY, *or day before, his nobbs wuz in th' steerage;*

(Stinkin' an' a-sweatin' an' a-stewin' in th' steerage;)

*Yesterday, or day before, a member o' th' peerage —
Now he's took a bath an' oath, an' he's American.*

Our flag is as broad as the daylight's range, for we've
strung it from Pole to Pole;

An' we're Brothers-by-Oath to half o' th' world who
answer th' navy's roll;

Our flag is as wide as th' Night Time's lid an' it flaps
to th' Four Winds' breath —

*(An' you'll notice our navy's casualty list when it's pay-
ing its toll to Death!)*

Adams come from 'way down South; Appel he is Dutch;
Brady is an Irishman, an' Coogan is th' same.

D'Vorak come from Roosha, so he isn't such-a-much —
But he sleeps beside a Frenchman with D'Arcy for
a name.

Ewarts is an Englisher, an' Fadin' Fog is Sioux;

Gigliuck an Esquimo; Howdinski is a Jew;

Imz is fresh from Germany; Gomez, a Spanish stew—
But each has took his bath an' oath an' passed Ameri-
can.

BROTHERS-BY-OATH

Johann out o' Sweden, an' Jorgen he's a Dane;
Jones a Higgins county rube, an' Keeler from New
York.

Lockhart smells a little Scotch, an' Morgan hails from
Maine —

Hang th' list o' Macs and O's on Edinburgh or Cork!
Philpotts claimin' Pilgrim blood; Quovach is a Pole;
Raoul an' Eyetalian, but he has a tender soul;
Schmidt an' Smith an' also Smythe are half th' navy's
roll —

But every one is labeled with a tag: "American."

Tonka is Kanaka, an' Tompkins Boston bum;

Urquhart is a colleger like Van de Venter Scroows;
Williams a creole suspect, from Noo Orleans he come.

Xanaphe a Grecian gent, who uster shine yer shoes;
Yousefi, his dad wuz Turk, th' line is mostly done;
Zelach come from Switzerland, an' Zurich is a Hun —
But now they're good Americans — a tag on every one —
What th' hell is origin, so long as he's a man?

*Yesterday, or day before, this guy wuz in th' steerage;
(Stinkin' an' a-sweatin' an' a-stewin' in th' steerage;)
Yesterday, or day before, a member o' th' peerage —
But now by bath an' oath he is a clean American.*

BROTHERS-BY-OATH

Our flag is as broad as th' daylight's range an' we've
strung it from Pole to Pole;
Where it will hang by th' grace o' God an' th' strength
o' our fighting roll;
Oh, we're Brothers-by-Oath to all o' th' world an' th'
world it has tears to shed
When it's readin' th' cable-sent casualty list that's
headed: "Americans — Dead!"

THE ARMY OF GOD-KNOWS-WHERE

(CIVIL ENGINEERS)

NO bands are playing gayly when they're going into action.

No crowds are cheering madly at their deeds of derring-do;

They are owing small allegiance to any flag or faction —

Their colors on the sky-line and their war cry, "Put it through!"

Ahead of bath and Bible and of late repeating rifle,

The flags can only follow to the starting of their trail;
They herd the leagues behind them, every mile the merest trifle;

They mark the paths of safety for the slower sail and rail.

They work the Quite Impossible; they scoff the earth and water —

They've solved the problems of the air and found them easy, too.

They quell the ocean's raging, the mountains' fearful hauteur,

As they march toward the sky-line with the war cry,
"Put it through!"

THE ARMY OF GOD-KNOWS-WHERE

Their standards kiss the breezes from the Arctic's cooling ices

To where the South Pole's poking out its undiscovered head;

You can see their chains-a-snaking through the lands of rum and spices —

And East and West you'll always find their unrepining dead.

No time for love and laughter, with their rods upon their shoulders,

No time to think with vain regret of home or passing friends.

They are slipping down the chasms, charging up the mighty bowlders,

The compass stops from overwork; the pathway never ends.

They slit the gullet of the earth; disgorge its hoarded riches

(But life's too short for them to stop and snatch a rightful share);

They've a booking on the Congo putting in some water ditches;

A dating to take tea with death; they make it by a hair!

THE ARMY OF GOD-KNOWS-WHERE

You will find their pickets watching in the unexpected places;

You will hear them talking freely of the Things-That-Can't-Be-Done;

Oh, the Faith they speak so strongly and the Hope that's in their faces —

It lights the gloom of What's-the-Use as brightly as the sun!

No bands are playing gaily and no crowds are madly cheering;

No telegraph behind them tells their deeds of derring-do;

But forward goes the legion, never doubting, never fearing —

Their colors on the sky-line and their war cry, "Put it through!"

THE "HAS BEEN"

*SWEAT o' the hosses in blankets
Breath o' the timothy hay;
Champ o' their teeth at their feedin',
Stamp o' the feet at their play;
Stink o' the racin' stables —
Roar o' the track an' ring —
Is music an' perfume for a Has-Been
Who rode for a furrin' king!*

Me, as is boss o' the jockeys' room, (an' the half o'
them mostly cooks;)

Who'r' makin' their weights in the Turkey baths an'
ridin' to suit the books;

Me, as is elbowed so freely around by all o' this gutter
trash

Once rode a race for a furrin' king wit' a 'Merican
Flag for a sash!

You talk o' yer dippylomatters, an' the fame they has
brought to the flag —

Why, they'll be dead a t'ousand years wit' never a thing
to brag —

But the woild sat up an' noticed, an' it made a con-
siderable splash

When I rode for a furrin' noble gent wit' a 'Merican
flag for a sash!

THE "HAS-BEEN"

I was gettin' me a start at Sheepshead Bay an' workin'
for Father Bill

Who kept me light wit' a ridin' bat an' a mornin's gal-
lopin' drill;

I was up on the sellin' platers an' the mutts that never
could win

When I finds me seat on the hosses' necks an' me hands
as light as a pin.

Me, as is king o' the lightweight jocks in a week at the
Sheepshead meet;

Wit' a cast-iron nerve an' a level nut, an' me judgment
couldn't be beat;

Always somewhere in the money, an' gittin' the best o'
the mounts —

Puttin' them over at t'ree a day, an' only the winnin'
counts!

Me, that they called the Marvelous Kid an' never a
race I t'rowed —

The players no longer follered dope, but only the hosses
I rode;

Never a long shot under me that they didn't make it a
kill —

I rode in the mud at Noo Orleens, an' I rode 'em at
Emeryville.

THE "HAS-BEEN"

So I went wit' me crouch acrost the sea; I'm a frost
when it comes to looks
They give me a big fat hoss laugh, an' I put a crimp in
their books;
Beatin' them bum ole riders an' poundin' the betting
ring —
An' then I'm hired for a president's bit to ride for the
furrin' king!

Me, wit' his mount in a swell stake race, an' a price
'bout twenty to one;
(I'm out all night wit' a gang o' guys a takin' aboard
a bun;)
An' I'm there when the starter calls us, but me judgment
had gone to smash —
Cause I slips on the kingie's colors, wit' a 'Merican flag
for a sash!

Say, it won't be so quiet, when all o' the world's gone
dead
As it was when I rode for the post parade a-bobbin' me
achin' head —
An' never again while hosses run will there be such a
race or ride,
For I rode wit' me head an' me hands an' heels an'
walloped the furrin' pride!

THE "HAS-BEEN"

I give 'em the show of a lifetime, an' I'm as limp as a
rag,
But I wins for his worship's colors, along wit' the
'Merican flag;
It busted the bettin' public, an' Lord, how the lobsters
roared —
They couldn't beat me at ridin' but they beat me before
their board!

Me, as is boss o' the jockeys' room, an' down on the
ground for life;
An' me money had gone in a sucker way before they
slipped me the knife;
I took me tack to the bushes, but me nerve it had gone
to smash —
Since I rode for the furrin' noble gent wit' a 'Merican
flag for a sash!

That's me—as is light as a 'prentice boy, but me hands
no longer are good,
Me judgment o' pace is rotten, an' me legs they is turnin'
to wood;
That's me—as is swipin' the hosses now, an' isn't allowed
on the track —
That they're callin' the good ole Waser — an' the Has-
Been never comes back —

THE "HAS-BEEN"

But, you talk o' yer dippylomatters, an' the fame they
has brought to the flag —

Why, they'll be dead a t'ousand years an' never a thing
to brag;

But the racin' would won't never forget how I makes
that play so brash

An' rode for a furrin' royal gent wit' a 'Merican flag
for a sash!

Sweat o' the hosses in blankets

Breath o' the timothy hay;

Champ o' the teeth at their feedin'

Stamp o' the feet at their play;

Stink o' the racin' stables;

Roar o' the track an' ring

Is music, an' perfume for a Has-Been

Who rode for a furrin' king!

THE SONG OF KING BARLEYCORN

“**R**ICH man, poor man, beggar man, thief ” —
Broken hearts and a Tearful Grief;
“ Doctor, lawyer, merchant, chief ” —
Listen to the roll of Barleycorn!

Down in the Dead Room there they lie;
Down in the Dead Room Sob and Sigh,
Nod to Terror with a fishy eye —
Listen to the dirge of Barleycorn!

Sorrow, Hate and Grim Despair
All lie sheeted and quiet there —
Down in the Dead Room; who's to care?
Listen to the joy of Barleycorn!

Desolate homes and bitter sneers;
Sun-dried graves and women's tears —
(Down in the Dead Room no one hears —)
Listen to the song of Barleycorn!

SONG OF THE STEEL WORKER

WELL, gentlemen — swell gentlemen — in your
frowsy, drowsy clubs,

Take note o' me an' Bill McGhee, an' twenty other
dubs

Who're stuck agin the sky line, like flies agin a wall —
Ho, think o' me an' Bill McGhee, an' watch us as we
crawl

Around the bars, between the stars an' up the shafts o'
day;

You hear the gang when the hammers clang an' the
bullgines hoist away!

“ Ho, give us a job to fix the moon; to tinker the golden
stair!

Give us a chance an' see us prance along a path o' air!
We'll hang for hours by our teeth to the flowers that
grow in the turquoise bed,

An' riffle a seine through the silver rain for the tears
that the angels shed!”

Aye, gentlemen — high gentlemen — in your frowsy,
drowsy clubs,

Take note o' me an' Bill McGhee an' twenty other
dubs

SONG OF THE STEEL WORKER

(The half o' them are come-ons, an' the other half's a scream) —

But watch 'em as they sift between the banks o' risin' steam!

Toward the clouds, above the crowds, above the dinky town —

They follow the flight o' the shafts o' light that God Himself sends down!

Ho, gentlemen — so, gentlemen — at your hasteful, wasteful ease,

Get on to us an' hear us cuss, an' watch us as we squeeze
The girders into decent shape, an' see the graceful way
We swing like toy balloons to meet the comin' o' the day!
Toward the sky we climb so high; through vacant space
we grope —

We're anchored there by earnest prayer, with God our chiefest hope!

“ So give us a chance to paint the clouds, or prop the fallin' stars;

Give us a crack at the milky track, or a job to rivet Mars.

We'll can the thunder an' make Jove wonder who's stealin' his lightnin' bolts —

And step up to Venus, who'll say that she's seen us when we hand her a couple o' jolts! ”

FOR THE CRY OF A LITTLE CHILD

I DREAMED of a legion of women, who waited with
 eyes aglow
In the shadow of Loves Forgotten, by the Ports of the
 Long Ago;
I dreamed of a legion of women whose faces were tenderly mild —
And hark! In the night I heard it — the cry of a little
 child!

I looked on the waiting women through the mist of a
 thousand years;
And some of their eyes were smiling and some were suffused with tears.
Yet they sang as a choir in training, and the song of the
 waiting throng
Was the old, old cry to Heaven: “How long, O Lord,
 how long?”

I dreamed of a legion of women who stood in a driving
 rain;
Who raised their voices singing, yet sang but one refrain;
I looked on the waiting women, and their faces were
 white and wild —
And hark! In the night I heard it — the cry of a little
 child!

BALLADS OF A BEACH COMBER

WHO GOES THIS WAY?

THERE ain't a single reason why a man should go
astray;

There's about a million reasons why he shouldn't.

But who's a-huntin' Reason when ole Folly calls
"Away?"

You needn't try to find it, 'cause you couldn't.

There is many an' many a pathway w'ich is crooked as
a snake;

Likewise there's many a pathway w'ich is straight.

An' they has a lot of sameness, barrin' one is hedged
with tameness

When you clears yer ship beyond th' Golden Gate!

ROSES OF A DREAM

A WOMAN'S a scent of perfume; a snatch of a passing song,
And loving a haze of hasheesh for making the brain go wrong;

Dear Christ! But I loved the odor, the music spoke
Heaven to me —
(Hark! That's the pound of the breakers and the roar
of the open sea!)

Somehow I'm thinking of roses — but blessing the coral
bar

That sends me the song of the breakers — my thinking
might wander too far;

Somehow I'm thinking of roses — and dreaming — and
dreaming — Ah, me!

(Hark! That's the throb of the breakers and the sound
of the open sea!)

Somehow I'm thinking of roses and scenting a rose perfume;

Oh, this is the springtime yonder, and roses are coming
to bloom!

And soon it will be white summer — but what can it
mean to me?

(Hark! There's the song of the breakers and the voice
of the open sea!)

ROSES OF A DREAM

Somehow I'm thinking of roses and light and a lilting
song —

(But loving's a haze of hasheesh for making the brain
go wrong.)

Of roses of white and crimson — of dusk — and a friend-
ly tree —

(Hark! There's the sound of the breakers and the roar
of the open sea!)

Aye, a woman's a scent of perfume, the breath of a
fading rose —

And music don't last forever, however sweetly it goes;
But somehow I'm thinking of roses that carry an ancient
plea —

(Thank God! There's the throb of the breakers and the
roar of the open sea!)

A woman's a scent of perfume, a snatch of a passing song
And loving a haze of hasheesh for making the brain go
wrong —

Did I say that I loved the odor? Ah, well, let the roses
be —

(Hark! There's the wail of the breakers and the sigh
of the open sea!)

THE GODS OF YESTERDAY

'T IS the soul of Matthew passin' in the blackness
o' the night;

'T is the soul of Matthew talkin' to itself —

(Ah, say!)

'T is the echo of his wishes 'fore he goes to feed the
fishes —

'Cause who'd bespeak his own soul but himself?

(Ah, say!)

*" Me, as has bowed in worship at a pagan idol's shrine,
A-chantin' prayers to Something, an' the same was callin'
Mine;*

*Me, as has burned good incense for to drive ill luck away
Am searching — 'cause I'm dyin' — for the Gods of Yes-
terday."*

I have heard the blood a-drippin in a creepy sort o' way;

I have heard his victims cryin' 'fore they died —

(Ah, say!)

I have seen their pinky faces, as he shot 'em in their places

An' I know his soul's a-meanin' when it sighed!

(Ah, say!)

*" I've skimmed the earth o' rotten spume to mold a human
form —*

*The same you see before you an' the same is Matthew
Storm!*

THE GODS OF YESTERDAY

*The same they call the wrecker — an' he's seekin' for to
pray —*

To bow his head a moment to the Gods of Yesterday!"

I've heard him curse his Father-God an' seen him strike
his blows —

(You hear his soul a talkin' to itself?)

(Ah, say!)

An' I'll do some pretty bettin' that his God He ain't for-
gettin'

But'll leave his soul a-speakin' to itself!

(Ah, say!)

*" Me, as has long forgotten how to start a single prayer,
Exceptin' ' now I lay me,' an' my memory's stallin' there;
Where is that man called Jesus — Ah, there's no one here
to pray*

An' take me back a moment to the Gods of Yesterday!"

Aye, the soul of Matthew's passin' an' it's shunned upon
the way —

It's damned before it's startin' on the trip —

(Ah, say!)

An' I'll bet there's spirits layin' all along his path an'
prayin'

That he won't be long in droppin' from his ship!

(Ah, say!)

THE GODS OF YESTERDAY

*“ Me as has bowed in worship at a heathen idol’s shrine
Am huntin’ now in darkness for the Gods that onct were
Mine;*

*‘ I am the Resurrection — an’ the Life’ — forgive me —
say —*

An’ take me back a moment to the Gods of Yesterday!”

THE SONG OF SILENCE

THE surf hallooes to the coral reef, but its voice don't
come to me;

(Long ago it spoke about the city's roaring streets);

Now it tells its story to the sad old open sea —

Knowing it can't quicken none my heart's low, even
beats.

No voices come to pester me across the empty years;

No footsteps falling heavy as to rouse my idle fears —

And all I hear is Silence, which is soothing to my ears,

With its song of "Sh-h-h!"

The West Wind speaks to the mango trees, but I don't
know what he tells —

(Long ago 'twas gossip of the kind I loved to hear);

Now he breathes it softly as the echo in the shells —

Knowing he's no news for me to start a smile or tear.

Oh, heart of mine, we listened long ago for every word;

Oh, heart of mine, we waited, and what hopes within us
stirred;

But now we heark to Silence, and the memory has been
blurred

By its song of "Sh-h-h!"

The sea birds speak to the flowers and the waves talk to
the beach —

(Long ago I listened for a message meant for me!)

THE SONG OF SILENCE

Hopes are buried yonder where the very foam don't
reach —

Let them tell their story to the wide-eyed wicked sea!
Oh, heart of mine, we listened long ago by day and night;
Oh, heart of mine, we waited till our hopes had felt the
blight;

And then we heard the Silence — and the dark was
turned to light

By its song of “Sh-h-h!”

DREAM OF A DROWSY DAY

LALOA sits by the palm leaf hut, nursing our youngest child;

Laloa murmurs some tuneless words in a voice that's meant to be mild;

And I lie dreaming of ancient loves in the shade of a mango tree,

While Laloa sings to my son and heir, but is keeping her eye on me!

(And Laloa wears at her naked waist a long sharp knife, you see!)

They pass before my memory; a cloud of fluttering lace —

Imogene, with her sloe black hair; Grace of the dream-masked face;

Nell, Katherine, the fair Estelle, Helen, and many more
Whose voices call me from the waves that finger the friendless shore —

(But Laloa sits by the palm leaf hut and her blow-gun stands in the door!)

I'm thinking of summer nights long gone, and strolls
'neath a patient moon

When words came brisk to my thoughtless tongue, along
with a lovelorn tune;

DREAM OF A DROWSY DAY

But a man needn't marry all of his loves, nor cherish the
one he gets —

And life would be but a barren waste if he hadn't a few
regrets —

*(Laloa, there, by the palm leaf hut — I'm owing her
certain debts!)*

I feel the touch of their lips again in the breezes' soft
caress;

I loved them all, but the things they meant I didn't re-
gard, I guess;

And I dream sometime that I'd like to go back, perhaps
they remember me —

But Laloa sits by the palm leaf hut with a knife at her
waist, you see!

*(And Laloa will swing with deadly aim whenever she
swings at me!)*

Women are women, world without end, and, mostly,
women are good;

And those that are bad are not to blame, they're only mis-
understood —

For women were all of them made to love by someone,
possibly me —

And I love them all, except Laloa, with my son and heir
at her knee!

*(But Laloa sits by the palm leaf hut in range of my
mango tree!)*

DREAM OF A DROWSY DAY

Oh, Laloa's teeth are a betel nut black and her breath
is a thing to shun,
But Laloa bore me a son and heir, which is more than
the rest have done.
Laloa's father is king of his tribe so my child has claims
to a throne;
And I'm not as jealous of Laloa's love as I was with
some I've known —
(*And then there's Laloa's knife and gun and a temper
that's all her own!*)

THE CONSOLER

THEY wuz slippin' Wingy Wo in a lousy leetle
hole

An' they piles 'is coffin 'eavy with some grub to feed 'is
soul.

Oh, they piles 'is coffin 'eavy with their rice an' souey
too

When I 'appens by th' boneyard an' I smells th' savory
stew.

Then I sees 'is widder settin' by th' grave an' weepin'
sad

Fer ter keep 'is soul from goin' ter th' place o' things
wot's bad.

An' I drors up clost beside 'er an' I whispers in 'er ear
'Till she gives a leetle giggle an' she dries 'er bitter tear.

An' I wuz mighty hungry, so I tells 'er on th' spot
That I met th' soul o' 'usband headed fer th' place wot's
hot;

An' I tells that 'e tole fer ter eat th' bloomin' grub
'Cause 'is time wuz sorter pressin' fer ter catch th' 'Ell-
ward Stub.

An' I eats it with a relish an' so fast I'm like ter choke
While she watches me bewildered from a ring o' punky
smoke;

THE CONSOLER

Then I wipes my lips an' tells 'er that 'er 'usband slippin'
free

'Ad sent 'er back a lovin' kiss an' sent it back by me.

Oh, I gives to 'er a whackin' kiss upon 'er puggy nose
An' she blushes down beneath 'er paint just like a bloomin'
rose.

An' as I wraps my arm around her waist so neat an'
trim —

She sez: "'E sent a kiss ter me — take this un back ter
'im."

An' so we're livin' 'appy an' a-lovin' quite a lot —

An' often thinks o' Wingy Wo 'down in th' place wot's
hot.

'Is ghost it never bothered us; we watches every day —

I wonder if ole Wingy's soul was starved upon th' way?

THE ISLE OF SWEET CONTENT

WHEN I was young — which I used to be, though
my hair is pretty gray —
I heard the old men talk at night of an island far away;
They called it the Isle of Sweet Content, but never a
chart could show

A route to the isle they all revered and sometime hoped
to go.

And they sang a song that stirred the heart and cleared
the clouded brain:

They sang the song of Sweet Content, with voices thin
and almost spent —

They sang a song and sang it long, a song to this re-
frain:

“ Ho for the Isle of Sweet Content —

Ho! Yo-ho!

Follow the stars and the weather's bent —

They know! Yo-ho!

To find the Isle of Sweet Content

Follow the stars and the weather's bent;

Somewhere it lies 'neath southern skies —

Somewhere — Yo-ho! ”

Oh, I was young — yes, I used to be — and they talked
of treasures rare

To be found on the Isle of Sweet Content and I longed
to seek them there.

THE ISLE OF SWEET CONTENT

"East you sail and west," they said, "you beat through
the southern seas

To find this Isle of Sweet Content, where spirits dwell
at ease.

Sail you true to the northern edge and back to the
southern pole:

To find the Isle of Sweet Content follow the stars and
the weather's bent " —

They sang their song and sang it long to cheer a tired
soul.

Oh, I've grown old as we all must do when the shore
lines fade away;

And the old men stroke their whiskers still and yarn in
the old man way,

But I have learned from starry skies and silent shores
they meant

I'd find in the pathless seas of Age the Isle of Sweet
Content.

So I sing the song that stirs the heart and clears the
clouded brain —

"Oh, I was young and victory meant to find the Isle of
Sweet Content."

So I sing their song and sing it long to swell the great
refrain.

WHEN THE SHIPS GO HOME

I'VE seen 'em go from a hundred ports
With th' breath o' Home in their sails.
I've felt th' thrall o' th' Homeward Call
In th' wake they leaves at their tails.
I've heard th' breezes whisperin' Home —
Th' Catch in th' throat I know;
An' I've felt th' dart o' th' Homing Heart
('Way back in th' Long Ago!)

A beautiful sight is th' Home Bound boats
With their bellyin' sails to th' wind;
An' you hears 'em sigh as they're passin' by
Th' ones who stay behind.
Oh, I've seen 'em drift from a hundred ports
An' I've felt th' call to go;
But I've let 'em slide with th' ebbin' tide
('Way back in th' Long Ago!)

As I see 'em go from a hundred ports
I hear th' trees sing " Stay! "
I hear th' note in th' ocean's throat;
In th' song o' th' ocean spray.
Oh, a beautiful sight is th' Home Bound boats,
But we are the ones who know
That our hearts are here since we brought them here
('Way back in th' Long Ago!)

THE KING OF MOO

*M*E an' th' King o' th' Island o' Moo
Settin' beneath a tree;

Laughin' an' talkin' as folk'll do —

Talkin' an' takin' a drink or two —

Spittin' out inter th' lagoon blue —

This sez th' King ter me:

“ Goo! ”

That's all 'e sez ter me:

“ Goo! ”

Oh, fer charmin' conversation just give me th' King o' Moo,

For when th' King's a-talkin' there's no talkin' you kin do.

'E ain't so strong on argyment; on words 'e's mighty shy,
But 'e never tells 'is 'is'try an' 'e never tells a lie.

'E never talks no politics; 'e 'asn't none ter talk;
An' when it comes ter talkin' shop 'is tongue is apt ter balk.

'E never tries no punnin' w'ich you cannot see the point;
An' 'e never tells no stories with th' morals outer joint.

'E never mentions parents, er 'is kiddies, er 'is wife;

'E never spoke onkindly o' 'is neighbors in 'is life.

THE KING OF MOO

'E couldn't talk religion, fer 'e don't know wot it means —

'E never sprung an idea that wuz wuth a hill o' beans.

Oh, fer charmin' conversation just give me th' King o' Moo,

Fer 'e confines 'is talkin' to th' simple word o' "Goo!"

'E doesn't know my langwidge an' on 'is I'm sorter shy —

An' so we gits along an' lets th' world go whizzin' by.

Me an' th' King o' th' Island o' Moo

Speakin' opinions free;

Never no argyin' 'twixt us two;

Laughin' an' takin' a drink er two —

Spittin' out inter th' lagoon blue —

An' sez th' King ter me:

"Goo!"

That's all 'e sez ter me:

"Goo!"

"GHOSTS"

THERE'S a dead white boat in th' Harbor,
There's some dead white folks on deck;
An' 'er bloomin' flag's a familiar rag
'At brings a clutch to th' neck.

But it's only a ghost;
With th' shades o' a host
O' things you've left behind;
A spirit white o' a lost delight
An' you must see it blind.

Oh, th' dead white folks is laughin'
You can 'ear their voices clear;
But th' dead white boat's a ghost afloat
From th' Port o' Another Year.

It's only a shade
So be not afraid;
It's seeking for nothin' here;
An' you needn't hide,
It'll go with th' tide
To th' Port o' Another Year.

THE PRINCE CONSORT

HO! Hi'm th' Chief Adwiser ter a Sub-Queen o' th' Kaiser —

W'ich 'er name is Bambaloozo, an' she rules th' 'Ogan Group;

(You will get it she's a lady — an' 'er 'ide is ruther shady) —

But Hi 'ad ter be 'er 'usband or she'd put me in th' soup!

Hi didn't mean ter land 'er; Hi'm an hinnercent by-stander,

When she turns 'er glims hupon me an' she rolls 'er hye an' sighed.

Then she signs she loves me dearly, an' she hintermates quite clearly

That Hi'd better be contented or she'd 'ave me stewed or fried!

So Hi'm th' Chief Adwiser ter a Sub-Queen o' th' Kaiser —

(Hi'd turn me Kingdom Hinglish, but Hi doesn't 'ave th' say).

Fer it seems th' Prince Consorter 'asn't got th' say 'e orter —

So Hi'm 'tendin' ter me bizness an' Hi don't try gittin' gay.

SONGS OF THE SERVICE

"TAKING ON"

TH' sergeant sez: "Take off yer clothes" —
(Me! Wot's bashful! Ow!)

But if I must I must, I s'pose —

(No use raisin' er row.)

Sez he: "You read these figgers here!

"Eyes O. K. Now how's yer ear?

"What's yer hite — git on that scale —

"Holy Moses! Yer a whale!

"That's all right — I guess you can

"Make a fust class fightin' man!"

Th' sawbones punched me a couple o' jabs —

(Me, wot's naked! Ow!)

In th' ribs a couple o' stabs —

("There!" sez he, "That's how!")

Then he purses up his lips —

Belts me a couple in 'midships —

"Searg," sez he, "I guess we can

"Take this feller fer Uncle Sam —

"Put on yer clothes there, boy, you am

"A fust class fightin' man."

"Now," sez Searg. "Yer pedigree";

(Me, that flustered, Oh!)

"Everything you tell ter me —

("'Cause I want'er know.")

"TAKING ON"

"Where you from an' also why —
"When you wuz young why didn't you die?
"Whose yer 'cestors anyway?
"D'ye know enough ter draw yer pay?
"Take this oath! Hol' up yer han' —
"Now! Yer a fust class fightin' man!"

Out at th' fort sez they ter me —

(Me, wot's mustered in!)

"We'll teach you things, you lubber; See!

("Yer troubles jest begin.")

"Wot'd you do 'fore? Carry th' hod?

"Here! You jine that awkward squad!

"Walk like this an' walk like that!

"Can't you see now where yer at?

"Lord! Don't s'pose we ever can

"Make you a fust class fightin' man!"

THE SONG OF THE BULLET

LAYIN' out in th' rice fields, th' mud half to th'
knees;
Hearing th' lizards croakin' up in th' bamboo trees,
An' all around th' bushes are cloaked in th' white o' th'
mist —
Wot is that noise that breaks th' spell? Sh-h there!
Hist!

"Pang! Zing! Oo-oo-oo-zip!"
That's th' cry o' th' rifle ball,
That's th' song it sings ter all —
"Pang! Zing! Oo-oo-oo-zip!"
Hark to th' song o' th' bullet!

A flash o' light in th' darkness an' all is quiet again;
'Ceptin' th' lap o' th' water — "Stop whisperin' there,
you men!"
Only a stray shot out o' th' night — "Lay quiet there,
you all!"
Hark! Again th' voice wells out in th' song o' th' rifle
ball!

"Ps-st! Bing! z-z-z-z-z-tzip!"
That's th' tune th' rifle sings
Speedin' a note on Death's black wings —
"Pst-st! Bing! z-z-z-z-z-tzip!"
Bow low to th' song o' th' bullet!

THE SONG OF THE BULLET

Th' gray dawn slowly shoves it's way out o' th' eastern sky —

"Load magazines! Git ready, men! Now keep them pieces dry!

Hold that line there! Steady, all!" Nerves drawn tensely tight —

An' out ahead th' chorus starts as th' dawn breaks inter light —

"Pow! P-ow! C-a-ck-c-a-ck-P-ow!"
That's th' song th' rifle ball
Sings in chorus, singin' all —
"Pow! P-ow! C-a-ck-c-a-ck-P-ow!"
Oh, hark to th' bullet chorus!

Chargin' acrost th' rice fields, th' water splashin' high;
"Stop dodgin' there! Don't mind th' song of them wot has gone by;
Keep close ter cover but go ahead! This ain't no fancy drill!
Aim low! Fire fast, you shavetails! An' fire at yer own sweet will!"

"Z-z-z-z-z-! Pang! Bap! Pst-st-st!"
That's th' key o' th' bullet song;
That's th' tune; "Here! Move along!"
"Z-z-z-z-z-! Pang! Bap! Pst-st-st!"
Don't mind th' song o' th' bullet!

THE SONG OF THE BULLET

Someone down there, stretcher men; take him to the rear!

“Go on! Go on! Keep firin’, men, there ain’t no stoppin’ here —

Swing around with th’ left o’ that line an’ make fer that trench ahead —

There’s time enough in the afterwhile ter count up them wot’s dead!”

“Ps-st! Bing! Z-z-z-z-z-tzip!”
That’s th’ dirge o’ th’ rifle ball;
That’s th’ way it moans fer all —
“Ps-st! Bing! Z-z-z-z-z-tzip!”
Oh, ’ware th’ song o’ th’ bullet!

OUTPOST, 4 A. M.

*S*ONS o' th' Mornin', we —
Blessed is Reveille!
I takes my fight in ole daylight
An' after Reveille!

I see a ghost go slippin' by,
I see him through th' trees;
I hears a low, sad, mournful cry
Come slidin' down th' breeze!
I see a goblin' squattin' there
An' chirpin' merrily —
Th' mornin' light's a blessed sight —
An' sweet is Reveille!

*Sons o' th' Mornin' — all;
Sweet is th' bugle call!
Th' nightshades start an' ghosts depart
When they hears that bugle bawl!*

I see them trees take funny shapes,
I see them move around;
I see some big, fat, monstrous apes
A-creepin' on th' ground.

OUTPOST, 4 A. M.,

I see tall men with shiny knives
Come slippin' back o' me —
They hike away at break o' day —
Oh, sweetest Reveille!

Son o' th' Mornin'—Me!
Oh, blessed Reveille!
It ain't so hard a-standin' guard
Just after Reveille!

THE LADIES IN THE TRENCHES

A SOLDIER SONG OF THE SULU ISLES

IF a lady wearin' pantaloons is swingin' wit' a knife,

Must I stop an' cross-examine as ter sex?

"Air you Datto Mudd, his ownself, Ma'am, or air you jest his wife?

Kindly answer 'fore I reach yer solar plex."

If a lady wearin' britches is a-hidin' in th' ditches,

An' she itches fer me ears as souvenirs,

Must I arsk before I twist 'er: "Air you Miss or air you Mister?"

How shell a bashful man 'decide th' dears?

CHORUS

Ladies, if yer wearin' o' yer husband's pantaloons —

(Mercy! how you makes a soldier blush!)

You will have ter take th' chances w'ich is tagged to husband's pantses,

Or stay ter home an' make th' babies hush!

We ain't no clarryvoyants; if yer wearin' pantaloons

We must take you as we find you when th' guns begin their tunes;

An' we cannot be caressin' though you puzzle us distressin',

When yer wearin' o' yer husband's pantaloons.

THE LADIES IN THE TRENCHES

We couldn't pick no ladies when we charged th' mountain height;

(We wuz busy dodgin' bolo-knife an' kreese.)

But if them folks wuz females, w'y, they made a bully fight,

An' I didn't hear no argyments fer peace.

They was cuttin', they wuz stabbin', an' a party started jabbin'

At me Adam's apple; likewise at me eye;

Should I stop fer 'pologizin' ter a person so surprisin'?

If a lady, then her garments told a lie.

CHORUS.—Ladies, if yer wearin', etc.

If a lady wearin' pantaloons is in a soldier jam,

An' she's tryin' most distinct ter take yer life,

Just tell her that yer needed by yer own dear Uncle Sam,

An' ax her pardon as you dodge her knife!

When she cuts an' jabs so spritely, try ter speak to her politely,

An' excuse yerself as nicely as you can;

But you mustn't take no chances an' don't always judge by pantses —

'Cause you cannot tell but wot she is a man!

CHORUS.—Ladies, if yer wearin', etc.

It may appear ungallant, but I haven't learned ter see

Th' difference in a man or maiden's clout.

THE LADIES IN THE TRENCHES

If both air wearin' trousers, w'y, I think you will agree
A bashful man can hardly sort 'em out.

If she doesn't wear her dresses must I stop fer makin'
guesses,

Wit' a bolo-knife a-swingin' round me nose?

An' it causes me ter worry when I'm in a tearin' hurry,

But I have ter do me judgin' by their clothes.

BUGLE CALLS

TH' light is slowly dawnin' an' th' night has turned to mornin' —

Rout 'em out an' make 'em rub their gummy, sleepy eyes.

Don't yer hear them bugle calls a-givin' friendly warnin' —

Don't yer hear 'em tearin' out a tune ter reach th' skies —

Playin', sayin' —

“ I can't git 'em up,
I can't git 'em up,
I can't git 'em up
In th' mornin' ” —

Don't yer hear that bugle song, th' 'day is shore a-bornin' —

Hop inter yer britches — all; inter line in th' barrack hall —

“ I can't git 'em up,
I can't git 'em up,
I can't git 'em up a-tall! ”

Hear th' cooks a-shoutin' fer th' bean pot is a spoutin' —
Grab yer kits an' hurry up an' git inter th' line.

BUGLE CALLS

Take yer share o' rations never kickin' or a-doubtin'—
Hear th' bugle tellin' you th' time has come ter dine —
Playin', sayin'—

“ Soupy, soupy, soupy,
Without a single bean,
Porky, porky, porky,
Without a streak o' lean ”—

Don't yer ast fer “ seconds ” or yer sure ter git a-cloutin',
When th' bugle's hootin' then th' cooks is feelin' mean —

“ Soupy, soupy, soupy,
Without a single bean,
Porky, porky, porky,
An' nary streak o' le — an' ”—

Drill dust on yer shoulders an' yer shoes feel full o'
boulders,

Sleep a-tuggin' at yer eyes before th' recall blows.

Check roll — you must answer prompt — an' don't you
sass yer olders —

Don't you hear th' bugle song compellin' sweet re-
pose —

Playin', sayin' —

“ Lights out —
Lights ——— out —
Lights ——— out! ”

BUGLE CALLS

Douse yer glims an' go ter sleep you ornery, lazy soldiers,
Hear th' bugle tellin' you ter cover up yer toes —

“ Go to sleep —
Go — to — sleep —
Go —— to —— sleep ! ”

THE CAVALRY -

NOW look away you doughboy men an' stick to them
trenches tight;
Peek, if you want'er over yer dirt an' see a purty fight.
Look to yer cinches, one an' all, here goes th' fightin'
crew,
Hoo-ki! Hang onter yer hat — th' cavalry's comin'
through!

*It's rat-tity-tat on th' dusty road,
Here's where th' devil'll git a load —
Hoo-ki! An' th' air is blue
When th' cavalry's comin' through!*

There' some wot likes th' doughboy line, some likes
th' battery,
Some is stuck on th' engineers — for mine th' cavalry.
With yer legs a-straddle a good ole horse — a horse wot's
kind an' true —
Then it's hoo-ki! Hang onter yer hat — th' cavalry's
comin' through!

*Clackety-clack; spit out th' dust,
Foller yer leader if you bust —
Wee-ow-wow! There's a hullabaloo
When th' cavalry's comin' through!*

THE CAVALRY

This "fight on feet" ain't just my style; feel safer on
a horse

When I feel him quiver beneath my knees an' th' captain
shows th' course.

Six-gun in hand an' a yell in my teeth, then I knows
what to do —

Hoo-ki! Hang onter yer hat — th' cavalry's comin'
through!

Ta-ta-ra th' bugle sings —

Feels 's'f you was on wings —

Yee-ow-wow! An' then wa-hoo!

When th' cavalry's comin' through!

THE FILIPINO SCOUT

I KNEW him up in North Luzon, when he was
mustered in

(Chased him 'round the rice-fields till my nerves had
gone to wreck),

His shirt-tail flappin' freely an' his panties rather thin;
Meek an' lowly critter with his shoes hung 'round his
neck.

But now he's me brother in arms,

A-wearin' the same uniform;

But, barrin' the clothes an' barrin the gun,

He's the very same feller I kept on the run;

An' I wonder where he would be at —

Not doubtin' his courage, at that;

He might be all right if it came to a fight —

Still, I wonder where he would be at!

I've seen him move to action 'gainst his people, d'ye
mind

(Now, I'm no roastin' critic, an' speak for myself
alone);

He fought 'em pretty handy — with the white men clost
behind —

But I'm a bit suspicious o' the guy who fights his own!

THE FILIPINO SCOUT

An' now he's me brother in arms,
A-wearin' the same uniform;
But I figger he's fightin' his own family;
Why wouldn't he turn an' go peltin' at me,
Like he useter do out in the sun,
When his commonest gait was a run?
I'm curious to know, if it came to a show,
Which way he'd be aimin' his gun!

I've known him since he saw the States; his chest expansion wide
(His photos o' the white girls wot he writes to every boat —
Your sister or your sweetheart —wore agin his greasy hide),
His swagger an' his pidgin talk, an' collars 'round his throat.

Oh, yes, he's me brother in arms,
A-wearin' the same uniform;
But, barrin' the clothes an' barrin' the gun;
He's the very same feller I kept on the run;
Who sniped me by day an' by night;
Who never stood once for a fight;
I'm curious to know if it came to a show
Just where to expect him to light!

“HIKIN’”

“Hep! Hep! Hayfoot! Strawfoot!
Belly full o’ bean soup — Hep!”

— Ancient lay.

GRAVEL agitators on a long, hard hike —
Hep!

Kickin’ up an orful dust along the dreary pike —
Hep!

Bay’nit scabbard draggin’ o’ yer foot-tracks out;
Mouth a-pantin’ open like a landed mountain trout:
Try ter lag a little, an’ you hear the sergeant shout:
Hep!

Hep! Hep! Murphy git in step;
The hod ain’t on yer shoulder now, so
Hep! Hep! Hep!

Ammunition weighin’ ’bout a quarter of a ton —
Hep!

Blanket roll a-chafin’, an’ yer hand stuck to yer gun—
Hep!

Sweat a-diggin’ furrows in the dust around yer neck;
Mouth is full o’ sand, an’ in yer ears about a peck;
Try ter slack a little, an’ the sergeant sings his check:
Hep!

Hep! Hep! Lengthen out the step!
Kick yer legs out faster, there, an’
Hep! Hep! Hep!

"HIKIN'"

Cavalry goes slidin' by like we was standing still —

Hep!

Sloppin' in their saddles an' they guy us as we drill —

Hep!

Wait until you see the column goin' inter camp,

See us hit the pillows, then it's them wot's got ter tramp,

Guardin' our sweet slumber an' a-shakin' in the damp —

Hep!

Hep! Hep! Liven up that step!

Yer all a-walkin' half-asleep, so

Hep! Hep! Hep!

“GIDDAP!”

(BALLAD OF THE TEST RIDE)

I 'M walkin' me post at the guard house, an' thinkin'
o' nothin' at all,
When I sees me captin' acrost the parade in front o' the
officers' hall;
He's steppin' along remorseful like, an' he's sore, like
a hoss, up front,
An' fur as I am, I feel fer him, fer I hearin' me captin'
grunt:

“Giddap!”

I reckon he's somewhat stiff in his pegs;
(They's a V-shaped slant to the set o' his legs)
An' he's walkin' along like steppin' on eggs —
(Hooray for the doughboy hossman!)

They's a stringhalt limp in his off front leg an' his
caisson's hard to steer;
He favors the nigh hind hoof a bit an' he's cautious
like to the rear:
They's a cold, hard look in his mild blue eyes, an' he
sweats like a fretted Turk —
An' his words come floatin' acrost to me as I notice his
lips at work:

“Giddap!”

" GIDDAP "

But he did his thirty-odd miles to-day
Atop of a hard-mouthed, flint-backed bay,
An' he's tested down to the bone, they say —
(Hooray for the doughboy hossman!)

I reckon as how he dreams " Giddap," and boots hisself
in his sleep;
An' barrin' the blisters an' stove-up pins he probably
figgers it cheap;
But the Lord didn't measure a doughboy's seat fer to
fit a McClellan tree —
W'ich I reckon you ast my captin' now you'll find he
agrees with me;
" Giddap! "

They tell me the test ride's highly prized
By the war department, but them trees ain't
sized —
An' a 'doughboy's trousers ain't galvanized —
(Hooray for the doughboy hossman!)

THE WAGE OF THE FIGHTING MEN

HE warn't no sich a feller as deserves an epitaph,
He were jest a reg'lar soldier an' he fell in duty's
path,
He stood along o' others an' he took his knocks an'
slaps,
(An' he got his full three volleys an' th' same ole taps.)

*"Route step! March!" For yer leavin' of a grave,
He didn't have so much to give but all he had he gave;
An' a soldier has been paid in full when death about him
wraps,
(An' he gets his full three volleys an' th' same ole taps.)*

He were a fust rate feller an' a bunkie onct o' mine,
I filled th' gap his droppin' out made in th' firin' line.
Hero? Nope! Can't say he was — one o' th' reg'lar
chaps —
(An' he got his full three volleys an' th' same ole taps.)

*"Ashes be to ashes, dust to dust," th' chaplain said
When he spoke his little piece above th' soldier wot was
dead;
Then they auctioned off his clothin' an' his other
soldier traps,
(For he got his full three volleys an' th' same ole taps.)*

THE WAGE OF THE FIGHTING MEN

That is th' way you all must go a-fightin' for th' flag,
Just put yer best foot foremost an' don't never let it lag;
An' if you foller out th' lines th' War Department maps
(W'y you'll get yer full three volleys an' th' same ole
taps.)

*"'Bout face! March!" An' let th' bandmen play;
'F you worry about a man wot's gone yer hair'll soon
be gray;*

*Take up some other subject, for th' flag still gayly
flaps —*

(He got his full three volleys an' th' same ole taps,)

THE SONG OF THE SADDLE

*HUNK o' meat an' raw pertater,
Sop — an' 'tater-sop — an' 'tater!"*

Mornin' is peelin' her covers
An' grabbin' her garb o' day;
Out with them Morryphus lovers,
The column is up an' away!
Away on the long, hard hikin'
To meet the dark in the west;
Straight to the night-time strikin'—
Where mebbe there'll be some rest.

*"Hunk o' meat an' raw pertater,
Sop — an' 'tater-sop — an' 'tater!"*

Once with the doughies an' field-guns,
Once with the coast guns, too;
(Plattsburg an' all o' the dead ones —)
Now with the workin' crew.
Up at the peep o' the mornin',
Right at the bugle's squeal —
Hellity-bent at the warnin'—
Stables — the ghost o' a meal.

*"Hunk o' meat an' raw pertater,
Sop — an' 'tater-sop — an' 'tater!"*

THE SONG OF THE SADDLE

Tails o' the hosses draggin'
An' a trail o' dust behind,
Down in the saddles saggin' —
Yee-ho! An' the captin' 's blind.
Miles o' the way behind you,
Miles o' the way before,
An' none to find, or find you —
(They tell you that this is war!)

*"Hunk o' meat an' raw pertater,
Sop — an' 'tater-sop — an' 'tater!"*

Bellies so loose they 're a-flappin'
An' thinkin' yer throat is cut —
Coolin' night breezes snappin' —
Wake up, now, you pig-headed mutt!
Oh, for the life o' the saddle,
With nothin' to do but to ride,
Always upon the skedaddle —
Gosh! That recruitin' man lied!

*"Hunk o' meat an' raw pertater,
Sop — an' 'tater-sop — an' 'tater!"*

THE SKY MARINES

(“ Private Jones, B Company, — Regiment, is assigned to duty with the balloon corps.” — Army Orders.)

*WITH a dynamite bomb in me hand,
A-sailin' the deep-blue sky,
You'll reckon with me on land or on sea
Sometime in the sweet bye an' bye.*

Put away yer coast defense, an' send yer boats to dock;
Muster out yer armies, which the same is crawlin'
ants.

Hide yer little cities, which you thought was built on
rock;

Stow yer apparatus, for you have n't got a chance.

*With a dynamite bomb in me hand,
A-shoutin' ahoy to the moon,
A dinky valve-stop 'twixt a thousand-foot drop,
In a baggy ole war balloon.*

Onct I was a soldier with a rifle in me hand;
(Stop yer moldin' bullets, for you'll need 'em never
more.)

Thought I was a wonder, which no doubt I was — on
land;

Now I knows what horror is a-thinkin' of a war.

THE SKY MARINES

*With a dynamite bomb in me hand,
Oh, pity the earth an' the sea!
I open me hand, and there won't be no land,
An' mebbe there won't be no sea.*

Rent a few tornadoes, if yer thinkin' of a fight;
Hire the rain an' lightnin', an' go buy the wrath o'
Him.
Bribe the day to stay away, an' then corrupt the night;
Even then yer chances 'g'in' our hand is mighty slim.

*With a dynamite bomb in me hand,
I'm a watchin' the shiftin' scenes;
I grin at the crowds, an' the drippy ole clouds
Make a path for the sky marines.*

Put away yer armies now, an' walk the ways o' peace;
What's the use o' playin' while I'm slammin' round
the skies?
Spend yer coin for silk an' gas, an' quiet will increase;
Let yer war-boats founder, an' give me the Nobel
prize.

*With a dynamite bomb in me hand,
I'm watchin' the quiet increase;
I'm a reg'lar dove a-floatin' above
An' argyin' strongly for peace.*

THE GLORY OF WAR

- “**W**HAT makes th’ soldier man desert?” th’ Colonel ast his nurse;
(Th’ same it was a He-Male who was mindin’ o’ th’ kid);
“Th’ war department tells me that it’s daily gettin’ worse —
“My dog rob friend, I wisht that you would find out why it’s did.
“When you get through a-swabbin’ down th’ missus’ kitchen floor,
“An’ emptyin’ out th’ kitchen slops an’ answerin’ o’ th’ door —
“I wisht you’d kindly ascertain why men won’t stay to war —
“’Cause it’s worryin’ th’ noble war department.”

*Left! Step! Left! Step! Why do men desert?
Thirteen casers every month, pants an’ hat an’ shirt;
Workin’ hours easy; only ten an’ twent’ an’ thirt’ —
Say! What makes th’ soldiers quit th’ army?*

- “You don’t presume,” th’ Colonel said, “they’re wantin’ o’ more pay?
 (“An’ don’t forget to give that lawn another healthy roll);

THE GLORY OF WAR

“ Oh, that would be ingratitood; we feed 'em thrice a day —

(“ An', by th' by, please carry in a ton or two o' coal).

“ Now after you have finished o' your little household chore,

“ You might dig up that garden, plant a peck o' seed or more;

“ An' then I wisht you'd ascertain why men won't stay to war —

“ 'Cause it's worryin' th' noble war department.”

Left! Step! Left! Step! Pick an' shovel drill —

Target range in puppy tents an' rain an' fever chill;

Thirteen casers every month an' glory fit to kill —

Say! What makes th' soldiers quit th' army?

“ It's hard enough,” th' Colonel said, “ for officers to live

(“ I wisht you'd beat them carpets well an' fix th' heat machine.)

“ Th' hired girls form a union an' their scale we have to give —

“ It's nice we have you soldiers for to keep our houses clean.

“ Now kindly cuff my charger up an' lock th' stable door;

THE GLORY OF WAR

“An’ don’t you soil your uniform; inspection comes at four—

“Then please go ascertain for me why men won’t stay at war—

“‘Cause it’s worryin’ th’ noble war ‘department.”

*Left! Step! Left! Step! Off we go to war;
Hear th’ mowers rattle an’ th’ coal chutes awful roar!
Recollect them pictures on th’ ‘cruitin’ office door?*

Say! What makes th’ soldiers quit th’ army?

Th’ soldier man must be a man o’ height an’ grand physique,

They study up his character before they let him pass—
Must read an’ write his English, an’ th’ same he has to speak;

Must think a little for himself an’ show a lot o’ class.
In every other walk o’ life there’s room for thousands more

O’ men o’ caliber like him; they grab ‘em at the door—
Now mebbe that’s a reason why th’ men won’t stay at war—

On th’ salary o’ th’ noble war department.

*Left! Step! Left! Step! Sound a jubilee,
Dishpans for our cymbals an’ a dust-rag wavin’ free;
Shoulder brooms an’ mop-sticks when they blow th’ reveille—*

Say! What makes th’ soldiers quit th’ army?

PRACTICE MARCHING

BIG Bill Taft one mornin' rose a-feelin' somewhat
bad,

He thinks about them soldier boys a-restin'.

He sez: "Their muscles will git stiff, Oh, ain't it very
sad

To see them soldier fellers all siestin'!

Ho! Issue them an order to take a practice march;

Their legs'll soon be gittin' stiff like they wuz caked
with starch;

Ho! Issue them an order an' tell 'em for'ard march —

It's fierce th' way them soldiers boys are restin'!"

So it's fourteen miles to Some Place

An' fourteen to th' Fort;

So shoulder arms an' knapsacks

An' order arms an' port.

It's fourteen miles to Nowhere

An' grub a runnin' short,

But think o' what we're learnin' practice march-
in'!

'Twuz Teddy got th' idea when things were gittin' slow;

He wonders 'bout them soldier boys a-restin'.

He sez: "I think we oughter have an exhibition, O

Them soldiers' blood'll likely be congestin'.

Ho! Issue them an order to mobilize at once;

Ho! Issue them an order, we will have maneuver stunts;

PRACTICE MARCHING

Ho! Issue them an order an' all th' army grunts;
For it's fierce th' way them soldier boys are restin'!"

So it's ninety miles to That Place
Maneuvers goin' on.

It's ninety miles to This Place,
An' summer days are gone.

It's phoney fights an' hikin'

An' rollin' out at dawn —

But think o' what we're learnin' practice march-
in'!

From New Year's down to Christmas there isn't much
to do

Exceptin' in th' barracks sorter restin'.

Unless someone gits thinkin' — 'bout every day or two

About them soldier fellers all siestin'.

Then issues forth an order to do a practice drill,

A practice camp, a practice hike, a practice how to kill;

Or issues forth an order to practice to be still —

It's fierce th' way them soldiers boys are restin'.

Then up a hill an' 'down a hill

Th' same as Bonypart;

Five hundred miles a year to do,

So make a healthy start;

Th' officers must do it to —

Oh, cheer up heavy heart!

An' think o' what we're learnin' practice march-
in'!

AUGUST 13 — '98"

When the American troops were attacking Manila, August 13, 1898, the band of a volunteer regiment (First Colorado) played "There'll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town To-night."

THERE'S a sting to the breeze of the morning,
There's a lash in the breath of the sea;
And hark! The bells, the convent bells
Chant a mournful litany.
There's a gloomy mist on the rice fields
That softens the morning glare —
And mark the shells! The shrapnel shells —
As a band strikes up an air:

*"Come along git you ready
Git you brand, brand new gown;
For there's gwine to be a meeting
In that good, good ole town."*

There's a slippery dew on the rifles
Where a trembling hand clings fast;
There's a plaintive whine as the firing line
Churns the mud in hurrying past.

" AUGUST 13—'98 "

A break in the mist-curtained morning
And a shell begins a croon —
Then a rising yell and a blast of Hell
As a band strikes up a tune:

*" Where you knows everybody
Everybody knows you;
Bring along you rabbit's foot
Drive away hoodoo."*

There's a blur of a landscape flying,
There's a dream of a sky stained blue;
There's a widening breach as the field guns screech
And the firing line slides through.
Oh, the convent bells are ringing
In a fervent, broken prayer;
And aching throats re-echo the notes
When the band strikes up the air:

*" When you hear them bells go ting-ga-ling,
All join hands and sweetly we will sing;
When the verse am through the chorus all join in
There'll be a hot time in the old town to-night!"*

Oh, the boats are long in harbor
And the guns have gathered rust;
And those who stayed and were tenderly laid
With a prayer; are "dust to dust."

" AUGUST 13 — '98 "

Oh, the forts are silent ruins
And the shells no longer croon;
But a memory deep is aroused from sleep
When the band strikes up a tune:

*" Please, Oh, please, Oh, do not let me fall;
You're all mine and I love you best of all;
You must be my man or I'll have no man at all —
There'll be a hot time in the old town to-night! "*

Oh, the nodding palms still echo
The tune that the band once played;
And the whimpering waves sing to the graves
Of the men on the grand parade.
Oh, the convent bells are ringing
Through the mists of the morning gray,
And the breezes croon that same old tune
Which still floats up from the bay.

TO THOSE WHO STAY

WE are nosing out the harbor with the shore-lights
blinking dim,
And the women in the cabins bow in silent thanks to
Him;
We are slipping down the channel and we'll soon be far
away —
Let us drink a toast in parting; drink to those who have
to stay!
See the lights fade in the darkness as we're rising to the
swell;
Hear the sentries' note o' gladness as they're calling their
"All's well!"
But along the shores behind us, watching us who slip
away,
Are the new recruits just landed — are the ones who
have to stay.
Oh, the years of foreign service that the army must de-
mand
Ere they turn the soldiers homeward to their own be-
loved land!
Drink a toast to them in parting as the transport swings
away —
For they'll drink to us in future when it's us who have
to stay!

BALLADS OF THE BRAKE BEAMS

A SONG OF THE RAILS

I 'M roostin' here like a Shantycleer on a rod the size
o' a match,
Wit' an open view on either side an' a box-car floor fer a
thatch;
An' I hopes the "shack" don't find me, fer me face is all
he could punch
As I'm beatin' me old friend, James J. Hill, an' eatin'
his ballast fer lunch!
Oh, the ground slips by like a river,
An' me nerves are all a-quiver —
Fer I've bin out on a sort o' a bat an' the rail-joints
sing to me:

*" John Barleycorn! John Barleycorn!
He's brought you where you are —
(Click-click!)
You pay his rates an' ride the freights
But never a parlor car.
John Barleycorn! John Barleycorn!
A hundred thousand men
May play his game, but end the same
An' never see home again!"*

Yep, I'm stickin' here like a sort o' a leech an' the iron
is cold as hate,
While the wind slides t'rough me see-more pants in a
fashion that's sad to state;

A SONG OF THE RAILS

Still, it isn't so bad as a passenger deck wit' a spark to
light me clothes —

An' I'm goin' somewhere, I don't know where, where-
ever this freight train goes.

But the ground bobs up so crazy

That me mind is somewhat hazy —

An' I'm hearin' the rail-joints sing a song I never have
heard before:

" John Barleycorn! John Barleycorn!

You may beat Hill an' Gould;

But John collects what he expects

An' John is never fooled.

John Barleycorn! John Barleycorn!

A rare ole soul is he;

He follows fast from first to last

'Wit' pals like you an' me! "

So I'm roostin' here cut off from death by about the
length o' a hair;

At least I've heard that it's 'dangerous here, but Death
is cheaper'n fare.

For I usually has to hasten along wit' a busted statute
behind —

An' any ole place will hold me now, from the deck, to
pilot or "blind."

Oh, the ground slips by so easy,

An' me perch is a trifle breezy —

I reckon I must be gittin' ole when the rail-joints sing
to me:

A SONG OF THE RAILS

" John Barleycorn! John Barleycorn!

The world is filled with woe;

He follows fast from first to last

Wherever you may go.

John Barleycorn! John Barleycorn!

He rides the rods o' sin —

You pay his rates to ride the freights

An' John will always win!"

THE SOFTEST TOWN

*ALL o' the wise guys rube it now;
Harrer an' seed an' the good ole plow —
Kickin' up dust an' a deuce o' a row —
Tut! Tut! Prosperity!*

Now this is the talk that the Portland Skin
Give me on towns that he's bin in—
Steerin' me right as we sat by a tank in the town o'
Canton, O.

(A good ole traveler is Portland Skin,
An' over the world I reckon he's bin —
An' there isn't a turn or trick o' the road that the Port-
land Skin don't know.)

"Listen!" he says, "When you pick your town,
W'y the biggest town is the softest town;
For the little towns is hostile now for guys like you an'
me.

Take a good big town wit' the big, wide nights,
Wit' the clang o' music an' blazin' lights —
(Oh, the big town growls, but it never bites —
An' there's prosperity!")

"No one works where the bright lights glare,
An' they're always studyin' a bill-o'-fare;

THE SOFTEST TOWN

No one works but the orchestra men an' the taxicab
drivers — see?

It's a big, fat cinch in the big fat towns
Wit' the open face suits an' the low-down gowns,
An' they're drinkin' up wine 'till their liver
drowns —

That's some prosperity!"

This is the talk that the ole time 'bo
Give me on towns an' he oughta know —

"Listen!" he says, "Beware o' towns where they're
raisin' o' grain an' hay!

Beware o' the coast, me boy," he says;

"All o' the middle west," he says;

"For they ain't no suckers out there no more; they're
all in the towns to-day."

"Their night work's done by the kerosene lamps —
They've got no use for the ole time tramps —

The light o' the sun is the time for work in the Boob-
Belt country — see?

Oh, the callous grows in the palm o' the hand;
An' the sweat o' the brow, y' must understand
Is the law o' their lives an' the law o' the land —

Tut! Tut! Prosperity!"

"But no one works by electric light
In the big soft towns where it's always bright;
No one works but reformin' gents, an' mebbe the waiters
— see?

THE SOFTEST TOWN

They's always a noise o' brass an' drums —
From the uptown snares an' the downtown slums —
An' no one cares how the money comes —
Ain't that prosperity? ”

*All of the wise guys rube it now —
Harrer an' seed an' the good ole plow;
Crops an' children — sweat o' the brow —
Tut! Tut! Prosperity!*

DISTANT SHORES

THE VOICE FROM HOME

SOMEONE sticks it in the camp kit; someone hopeful, someone young

(Let us praise the Youth who travel with the crew!)
Someone finds it, jarred and jumbled, and it's sometimes shy a lung,

While its voice is rather limpish and askew.
In the silence of the forests, rifles stacked and campfires low;

Bronzed and bearded faces thoughtful, lighted by the dying glow.

Dear old Death, of long acquaintance, browsing somewhere in the brush —

Comes a squeaky, squawky, squealing elbowing into the hush —

“Urup! Urup! Br-r-r! ‘Stars and Stripes — ’ever’
Played by Sousa’s band — Urup! Br-r!

For the bz-z-z-z-urup-phonograph.
Ta-ta-ra-ra-ra-boom-ta-ratty-tat-tat!”

A grinding, gritty galloping, a grumbling at the bowels;
It speaks of seas and cities and of teeming quays and boats.

Then changing to another tune and mumbling all the vowels

THE VOICE FROM HOME

It vomits words that bring a sob into unwilling
throats.
The slimy silence slides away; the campfire fades from
view;
The forest dark is lighted and old Death himself slips
through.
The voice metallic jangles on; the thoughtful faces
yearn,
While the yawping box leers spiteful as the feeble records
turn.

“ Blup-blup-br-r-r-blong — Asthore —
Sung by the Queen City-br-r-quartette —
For the bz-z-z-urup-phonograph.
Tr-r-r-The night winds are whispering-blong-brr-!”

Someone sighs a trifle wistful; someone hopeful, someone
young;
Someone hums in nervous cadence as a dare.
Someone growls a trifle roughly as by quick emotion
stung,
While the halting needle picks a silly air.
In the silence of the forest, rifles stacked and campfire
low,
Growls the gibing voice metallic of the things we used
to know.

THE VOICE FROM HOME

Oh, it speaks of home and dances; of the jangling city's
stir —

And it brings us in the hushes quiet, holy thoughts of
Her!

“Br-r-r-r-blung! Br-r-Forgotten!

As sung by Miss Hilda-br-r-urup-Jones —

For the bz-z-z-zblong-phonograph.

If a wild wish-blond-be-r-to see and to-bz-z-z-!”

"THE STARS AND STRIPES FOREVER"

A SONG OF THE AMERICAN ARMY INSTRUCTORS IN CHINA

DO you think we've forgotten the land we love in
the scent o' the Heavenly Court?

Us Exiles who work for the Dowager Queen an' rot
in a Chinese port?

Do you think that we soldier for love o' the thing or
the pay that the Chinaman gives —

(The pay that we're saving by living out here the way
that the Chinaman lives?)

Why, the steamers that raft through the Yellow Sea
can tell of a wabby band

That plays but a single old rollicking air when the
liners are 'drawing to land.

Yes, the warboats that slide through the Saffron Mist,—
and their colors they always dip,—

Can speak o' a band making music so sweet when the
drum major yells, "Let 'er rip!"

Do you think we've forgotten the land we love, though
it seems we've been making a trade?

Why, they play that to welcome the Royal Guard, and
they play it on dress parade.

They play it for marching, for flag salute; that swinging,
old, ringing old air —

"THE STARS AND STRIPES FOREVER"

Not playing it, maybe, as Sousa had planned, but the
accent is soft as a prayer.

And the Japanese think and the Britishers guess that it
isn't the music alone

That caused us to teach to the Dowager's band the air
that we love as our own.

It isn't the "Star Spangled Banner," they know, but
they've seen our Legation marines

Salute with a cheer to our pigtailed band that's wonder-
ing still what it means.

Do you think we're forgetting the land we love, in the
glare of the Heavenly Court?

Us Exiles who're training the Dowager's men and mak-
ing them think that it's sport?

Don't you think that the tune that our bandmen play
— though it's weak and it sounds rather droll —

Is a sort of a crying from out of our hearts — and
an echo from out of a soul?

Do you think we're forgetting the flag we love — who
are hearing by day and by night

The rip-roaring, blood-stirring Sousa parade that's
played us to many a fight?

Why, the Yellow Flag some day will dip and wave
with the brasses commencing to roar,

And the pigtails will swing to the "Stars and the
Stripes" as their army goes off to a war!

TOOTS M'GANN

A TALE OF THE CHINESE ARMY INSTRUCTORS

THE gun-flash splits the morning mist;
The bugles sing the reveille;
The sullen dawn is coming on
Across the hostile Yellow Sea.

Up from the South marched Toots McGann,
Chief of the Chinese gunners he;
And green and gray the breaking day
Stole on across the sombre sea.

Out of the South swung Toots McGann;
Creaking piece and dumb caisson;
His men were wet with marching sweat
As forward went they to the dawn.

"Dangers threat," a message went
Into the South to Toots McGann;
And fast he rode with whip and goad —
Chinese — but still American!

A consulate in dire distress;
A Mongol rout on mischief bent;
A fate so grim, a hope so slim,
When to McGann the message went.

TOOTS M'GANN

Mark you! A Chinaman was he
In oath and act — he took their pay;
What right he then to take his men
And go him forth that sombre day?

Mark you! He took the Empire's gold
To serve the Dragon flag full well;
No right at all to heed a call
Of dire distress, whate'er befell.

The leagured consulate it heard
The tramp of men and voices hoarsed;
The mongol rout set up a shout,
Not doubting it was reinforced.

Not doubting Toots McGann had come
With battery to shell the walls;
And at their cheer the leagured fear
That God had failed to heed their calls.

The leagured consulate it heard
A voice that rang clear as a bell;
The clanking guns; an order runs
Along the wind: "With shrapnel shell!"

A flash, a flame, a roar and: "Load!"
As chaff the Mongol rout dispersed;
They left their dead — the silly dead;
The soul of Toots McGann they cursed!

TOOTS M'GANN

Back to the South marched Toots McGann;
His slant-eyed men with hearts of mud.
No fear he had; his soul was glad —
He answered to the call of blood!

What was his fate? Ah, few may say —
For few there are who really can;
But it is lore that never more
Out of the South came Toots McGann.

THE YELLOW FLAG

LATE o' the Sixteenth 'dobies, sergeant and nine
years in;
Now I'm a cavalry captain, hangin' around Tien Tsin.
Me and McMurtie and Masters, sweatin' an army o'
Chinks;
Spreadin' our gospel and tactics, teachin, 'em 'Merican
kinks.

Glint o' gold in the western sky;
That's my crowd a-marchin' by;
That's my flag a-flappin' there —
Smallpox rag in the evenin' air;
Leather faces and crooel eyes —
Hate a-waitin' a chanst to rise!

*One night on the white sea shore I was settin' and half
asleep,
When the mist rose off of the water and a light come
over the deep;
And I seemed to see — I wuz dreamin' — an army ten
million strong
That swept the earth like a cyclone and marched to a
bangin' gong.*

THE YELLOW FLAG

*I seemed to see — I wuz dreamin' — a glint as o' gold
in the sky*

*And I saw through the dust the Yellow Flag as the
army went swingin' by!*

Ninety-two pigtails behind me, rice-eatin', mice-eatin'
rooks;

Hi! but they savvies me lingo when I takes 'em to task
wit me dukes.

Ninety-two pigtails behind; ho, I'm the boss o' the
bunch;

They savvies the port and the shoulder, but never the
'Merican punch.

Off on a whiz in Manila, Yang-Tse-Kiang gets us broke;
Hundred and fifty he offers, all of us thinks it's a joke.
Hundred and fifty, commissions, chanst every day for
to rise —

Here we are teachin' the Chinos; same we wuz taught
to despise!

*I seemed to see — I wuz dreamin' — the faces I'm seein'
each day;*

*The faces I'm knowin' as wooden, like the Joss Gods to
whom they pray.*

*But, say! as I saw 'em — in dreamin' — each face was
grown hard and crooel —*

*And the eyes lit up with a horrid glare as they marched
to the 'Merican rule!*

THE YELLOW FLAG

*They marched in the way I've taught 'em; their flags as
the sunset light —
And everywhere was a yellow face, but never a sign of
white!*

Comrades in mess to some Frenchmen, Dutchmen, and
Japanese, too;
Ho! we're the bold tactic teachers, puttin' the Chinamen
through!
Sweatin' 'em, pettin' 'em careful; judicious use o' the
boot —
Hi! they don't savvy me lingo, but savvies a punch in
the snoot!

Think o' the styles they're a-learnin', fightin' drilled
into their soul —
Frenchy and Dutchy and English, 'Merican, Rooshan
and Pole!
Hi! what a scramble o' scrappin', something like mixin'
your drinks —
But, say! if it comes to a show-down keep your eye on
the 'Merican Chinks!

*Since the night on the white sea shore I've noticed it
time and again;
The slumbering hate and the crooel glare in the eyes o'
me sleepy men.*

THE YELLOW FLAG

*I've watched 'em at drill and their pleasure and always
I see the glare —*

*Don't tell McMurtie or Masters, for they would say
it ain't there!*

*When I see the sunset at evenin' as it's paintin' the western
sky,*

*I thinks when I saw — in my dreamin' — the Yellow
Flag floatin' by!*

Glint o' gold in the western sky;
That's my crowd a-marchin' by;
That's my flag a-flappin' there —
Smallpox rag in the evenin' air;
Leather faces and crooel eyes —
Hate a-waitin' a chanst to rise!

I'm showin' 'em practice not theory; I teach 'em to go
it alone

When they're out on the firin' line fightin' each man to
think for his own.

Perhaps they are backward in learnin' because they're not
bred to the guns —

But wait 'till the next generation, and watch it come
out in their sons!

GHOSTS OF THE DITCH

A SONG OF THE PANAMA CANAL

ED and yellow; red and yellow
Slips the sun into the sea;
Red and yellow; red and yellow
Comes a longing over me;
Comes a longing for the thronging
And the city's bells 'ding-donging;
Comes a longing, longing, longing,
When the sun hides in the sea —

Red and yellow; red and yellow
Slips the sun into the sea.

You can hear th' whisperin' voices of th' Men who
Went Before;

They are gathered in th' ditches an' they number many
a score;

You can hear 'em laughin', jeerin',

You can hear 'em talkin', sneerin',

And their maddening, mocking music cuts us clear unto
the core.

You can hear 'em grabbin' shovels, an' they're turnin'
on th' steam;

They're undoin' all we done to-day — you hear th'
whistles scream —

GHOSTS OF THE DITCH

You can hear the rocks a-rattlin'
Like th' music o' a Gatlin' —
They're throwin' back what we took out an' chokin' up
th' stream!

You can hear 'em touchin' glasses as they take a little
drink;
They're a-pledgin' us for Raw Recruits into th' Devil's
Sink;
You can hear 'em touchin' glasses
As they're pledgin' us for asses;
An' the rattle o' their consciences gives back a golden
clink!

They're leagued with General Fever, an' he's leader
o' th' crew;
Old Miser Death is second, you can hear him talkin',
too;
You can hear 'em all a-plannin'
How we're to have our pannin' —
An' every one a different plan, but any plan will do!
They're a-dryin' up th' oil cups an' they're pluggin' up
the wheels,
(You will notice it to-morrow when you hear the en-
gine's squeals;)
You will hear th' voices moanin'
When th' engine starts to groanin',
For they're getting their gaunt voices tangled in th' en-
gine wheels.

GHOSTS OF THE DITCH

They haven't got a single cheer for Us—the Men Behind—

You only hear 'em tellin' how we're deaf, an' dumb, an' blind;

In our footsteps they a-flockin',

But you only hear 'em mockin',

They haven't got a word o' praise nor even a thought that's kind!

You can hear th' jeerin' voices o' the Men Who Went Before;

Th' movements o' the Men Behind excites 'em to a roar;

And the wind in ghostly voice

Pitches high as they rejoice

When some one drops a shovel an' goes knockin' at their door!

They hover at our elbows as we shove The Job along—
A-swingin' to our coat tails as they try to guide us wrong—

Who dares to think o' stoppin'—

Who stops to think o' droppin'—

Th' Strong will stay, th' Weak will go back home where they belong!

Red and yellow; red and yellow

Comes the cheerful morning light;

GHOSTS OF THE DITCH

Red and yellow; red and yellow
Goes the sullen, hostile night;
And the coolies are awaking—
Work! Before the sun is baking—
Ha! Who talks of courage shaking
With the cheerful morning light?

Red and yellow; red and yellow
Come the soothing morning light!

HOMeward BOUND

WE have left our battered morals in th' Harbor o'
Despair,

An' we're sailin' 'cross th' water headed for th' Port
o' Hope;

We have cleared th' gloomy headlands that have marked
th' Cape o' Care,

An' we've washed our bloomin' conscience with th'
Soon-Forgotten soap!

We have lost th' Blues behind us; there's a smile upon
each face;

We have dropped th' Homesick Longin' in th' tide
which flows behind;

We have left our Debts an' Creditors to them as lost th'
race,

An' we're drivin' 'cross th' waters to th' Land o'
Never Mind!

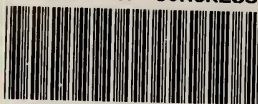
Th' Lights o' Home! We see 'em burnin' clear an'
bright ahead,

An' our hearts are singin' gaily as we climb th'
ocean's slope;

We have left our Cares an' Carin' to be buried with our
dead —

An' we've washed our bloomin' conscience in th'
Soon-Forgotten soap!

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