



"Cold, lad?" said a deep voice nearby.

old and new songs of two peoples, British and American, he has committed to memory. He is our "leading man," a shining light in the concert

firmament. We have heard and helped him to sing in the course of one crowded period of thirty minutes the following varied programme: "Tipper-

ary," "Silver Threa's Among the Gold," "My Old Kentucky Home," "Fight the Good Fight," "A Wee Deoch an' Doris," "When the Midnight Choo-choo Leaves for Alabam," "The Maple Leaf," "Cock Robin," "Get Out and Get Under," "Where is My Wandering Boy To-Night," "Nearer, My God, to Thee," and "I Stand in a Land of Roses, though I Dream of a Land of Snow." But there is one song we never sing, "Home, Sweet Home." Home is too sacred a subject with us; it touches the deeper, aye, the deepest, chords, and we dare not risk it, exiles that we are.

Very often there are strange paradoxes in the words we sing, when compared with reality. . . . "I stand in a land of roses!" Well, not exactly, although Salisbury Plains in the summer time are, like the curate's egg, "good in parts." But the following line is true enough of many of us. We do "dream of a land of snow"; of the land, and those far, far away in it. Sometimes we sing "rag-time melody," but that is only pour passer le temps. There is something which prompts us to other songs, and to sacred music. It often happens that in our tent there are three or four men with voices above the average who take a real delight in singing. One of the most beautiful things of the kind the writer has ever heard was a quartette's singing of "Nearer, My God, to Thee." Fine, well-trained voices they possessed, blending truly and harmoniously, which rang out al-

most triumphal in the frosty night. They sang it once, and then again, and as the last notes died away the bugles sounded the "Last Post."

Taa-Taa, Taa-Taa, Ta-ta-ti-ti-ti-ta-ta-ta-ta. Ti-ti-ti-ti-ti-ti-ta-ta-ta-ta-taa, Taa-Taa, Taa-Taa, Taaa, Tiii!

Verily, even under canvas, music hath charms to soothe the savage breast.

RATTLESNAKE PETE

VERY tall, thin, and cadaverous, with a strong aquiline nose, deep-set, piercing black eyes, bushy eyebrows matching them in colour, and a heavy, fiercely waxed moustache, streaked with grey, he was a man who commanded respect, if not fear.

In spite of his sixty years he was as straight as the proverbial poker, and as "nippy on his pins" as a boy a third of his age. Two ribbons rested on his left breast—the long service ribbon and that of the North-West Rebellion. His voice was not harsh, nor was it melodious, but it could be heard a mile off and struck pure terror into the heart of the evil-doer when he heard it! Rattle-Snake Pete was, as a matter of fact, our Company Sergeant-Major.

Withering was the scorn with which he surveyed a delinquent "rooky," while his eyes shot flame, and in the terrified imagination of the unfortunate being on whom that fierce gaze was bent his ears seemed to curve upwards into horns, until he recalled the popular conception of Mephistopheles! We called him—when he was safely beyond hearing—Rattle-Snake Pete, but that worthy bravo was far less feared than was his namesake.

First of all, the Sergeant-Major was a real soldier, from the nails in his



Quartette, Chorus or Noise.

boots to the crown of his hat. Secondly, he was a man of strong prejudices, and keen dislikes, and, lastly, a very human, unselfish, kind-hearted man.

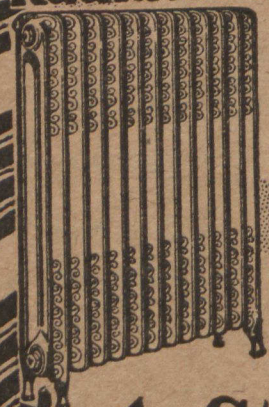
Discipline was his God, smartness on parade and off the greatest virtue in man, with the exception of pluck. He ruled with a rod of iron, tempered by justice, and his keenness was a thing to marvel at. At first we all hated him with a pure-souled hate. Then, as he licked us into shape, and the seeds of soldiering were sown, we began to realize that he was right, and that we were wrong—and that, after all, the only safe thing to do was to obey!

One day a man was slow in doing what his corporal told him to do. As was his habit, the S.M. came on the scene suddenly, a lean tower of steely wrath. After he had poured out the vials of his displeasure on the head of the erring one, he added: "I'll make you a soldier, lad, or I'll break your heart!" He meant it; he could do it;

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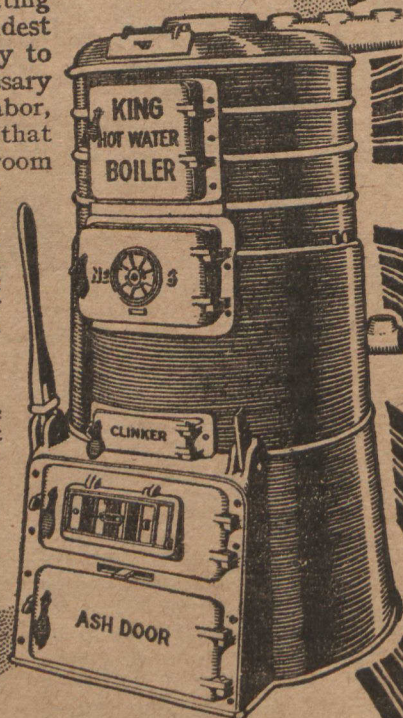
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