

of mess 5, some of the good-natured ones of which taxed themselves to the amount of nearly a dollar to procure from the sutler something more palatable for our first meal than 'hard tack and salt horse.'

After 'taps' the lights were put out, and we disposed ourselves upon the tent-floor to sleep, in the manner of spokes of a cart-wheel, our feet toward the hub, which consisted of the gun-rack around the tent-pole, there to revolve in the circle of dreams of home and friends far distant. Before closing our eyes, however, and while inquiries were plied and answered thick and fast, one of the mess startled the newcomers by exclaiming—

"A rat! A rat! I have him!"

"Pass him around!" was the general cry.

"Now I've got him!" another exclaimed. This was followed by a gurgling noise, as in the first instance.

The 'rat' came nearer, and presently I smelt him. There was no mistaking that 'rat,'—he came from Jersey and was surnamed 'lightning,' and cost the fourth part of a soldier's pay for one month. Being eagerly pressed to taste him, I did *taste*, but that was all—the smell was enough, and I passed him over to the next man.

Sleep at length overcame me, and I dreamed of rats made of glass, squealing "Jersey lightning! Jersey lightning!" until morning, when I awoke to find myself surrounded by comrades busy eating breakfast. Beside me stood a dipper of smoking hot coffee, some hard bread and salt beef, provided by one of the most thoughtful of my new friends.

After guard-mounting (9 A. M.) the recruits were drawn up in line, assigned to the various companies, examined by the surgeon, and, after a few words of encouragement or

advice from their captains (and mayhap a glass of whisky), returned to their quarters, feeling relieved, no doubt, that the affair was over.

Thus, in the course of about an hour, the recruits were disposed of, and duly incorporated with the regiment—to share in its marches and marches, its skirmishes and scratches, its picket duty and plunder, its whisky and quinine, its tents and hospitals, its hard tack and salt horse, its pea soup and pea coffee, its baked beans without brown bread, its pride and its perils, its glory and its graveyards.

Home from the Colonies.

A TRIP TO FAIRYLAND.

"We did not go to Fairyland upon the day appointed.

In Morumbidgee, where, when it rains, it rains, and the hail-stones are at times so large as to kill birds, and even young lambs, we can promise our visitor fine weather, as one takes lodgings, 'for a month certain;' but in England, in respect to all projected out-of-door entertainments, there is, even in summer, the greatest uncertainty. Man proposes, but the heavens settle it. It was wet for days; and, moreover, I was not in a fit condition for an excursion of pleasure. There are few colonists who do not bring back with them some remembrances from their adopted land in the shape of a disease. The 'little pre-cant from India' is liver complaint; from the Gold Coast and the West Indies, it is *ague*; and although Australia is but a poor country for illnesses, yet not to be altogether behind the rest, it gives us a liability to influenza. I was laid up in half moon Street with an attack of that most ridiculous ailment—the eye-closer, the mouth-opener, that enemy of distinct pronunciation, which confuses *ps* with *bs*.

During this infiction, nothing could exceed at first the courtesy, and afterwards the attentive kindness of my new-found friends. Their names, I learned, were respectively Charles Martin and Angus Layton; but it suited our humor to call one another X, and