

## "FLANNELS"

BY FREDERICK C. CURRY

"WHO'S that short-sighted chap that comes late on parade every night?" asked the drill sergeant, as he crammed a load into his pipe.

"Guess you mean our future war correspondent, Mr. Travis, of B Company," was the answer.

"When I was with the Battery—Kingston—you know," he added, as if we didn't, "I met a chap of the same sort, same stupid face, same string tying his specks to his ear, and same gorilla-like walk, only more so. Thought he was a bloomin' Kipling. We let him think it; it paid us, too.

"We caught sight of him outside the gate reading the enlistment poster, and the sergeant, thinking he could rope him in and get his little bit of graft, went out to bring him into the fold. He returned, leading this little innocent by the ear so to speak.

"What 'ave you got,' says one of us, 'a rooky?' 'Gawd 'elp the Batt'ry when it comes to that,' says the sergeant, 'E's a reporter. 'Ere trumpeter, show this man around the barracks.' And he leaves the dear boy on my hands.

"I showed his nibs around, pointing out the old souvenir cannon and the canteen and other points of interest. He didn't seem properly amused, and finally said, 'I wish they'd let me stay in that cell-room.'

"Guard-room,' I snorted, 'if you ever get in the cells you will know the difference.'

"Anyway,' he says, 'it's just like one of Kipling's stories. I suppose you have read them all.'

"No, but Mickey Dolan and I acts parts of them sometimes at the Christmas concert.'

"What!' he almost yells, 'where is he? He's just the man I want.'

"I explained cautiously that Mickey was at present doing a tow-path at the far gate. This was a lie, but it would afford me time to think. Mickey was back in the guard-room, wondering what was keeping me so long.

"I added, as a precaution, lest we miss anything good, that we would both be off duty the following afternoon.

"He gulped the bait down whole. 'Meet me,' he says, 'at the head of the bridge at three o'clock, and we will go for a row on the river. The Canadian soldier has been neglected too long! I'm going to write him up! I will be the Canadian Kipling.' And for the first time I saw even a spark of interest showing back of those black-rimmed goggles. Just then the sergeant came down the path, asking me, oh so politely, if there was any part I had forgotten to show the gentleman, as, if so, he would show him round personally and save time. Mr. Kipling, junior, disappeared. I was glad, my mind was so full of ideas I needed a little rest to develop them.

"When I got back I tackled Mickey while the irons were hot.

"Mickey, my boy,' I said, to begin with, 'will you come with me to-