

HOW THE TROOPS JOURNEYED FROM PORT ARTHUR TO TORONTO.

(From personal observations of ye Editor, illustrated by Mr. J. W. Bengough.)

A PRACTICAL philosopher once remarked that "life is not all beer and skittles," and all who have seen the stained uniforms and bronzed faces of the veteran militiamen who have now arrived at their homes will be disposed to agree that soldiering embraces something else than the "pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war." Rough and ready were the men of the Midland Battalion and Quebec Voltigeurs who embarked on the C. P. R. steamship Alberta, with a comfortable conviction that now, at any rate, the hardships of the campaign were over. The scene upon the wharf was animated. The amount of baggage was considerable. It seemed to include everything from a war club to a husky dog, and bags, bales, and boxes represented property, the nature of which could only be guessed at. However, "many hands



TRANSFERRING THE BAGGAGE.

make light work," and a very brief time served to enable the contents of the cars to be transferred to the hold of the vessel. During the progress of the embarkation, in one place might be seen a stalwart wounded corporal, whose tunic shows the marks of perforation by seven rifle balls, talking (politics, of course) to two of the prettiest girls that could be seen in a day's march. In another, a few paces off, a keen observer would note a certain artillery



A WRITING-DESK.

subaltern of Ottawa, whose desire to see active service impelled him to get attached to the Midlands, when he found his own corps condemned to rest at home in inglorious ease, making a back upon which a comrade could write a despatch to the "Girl I left behind me," (political again, of course,) that would not brook delay. Before long the inevitable "last man" had crossed the gang plank, after making complete his tender adieu to a very charming vision of female loveliness. No sooner had the good ship moved off from the wharf to the music of the cheers of the assembled population of Port Arthur and the strains of the excellent band of the steamer United Empire, whose captain's beaming face shone with enthusiastic lustre, than all began to make themselves comfortable. It took some little time to get settled down on board the vessel, for, notwithstanding her great capacity, the scene on the main deck was eminently suggestive of the familiar comparison with sardines in a box. The Midland boys occupied the forward part of the vessel, and the Voltigeurs the portion abaft the engine. A regular guard was mounted by each corps, though, happily, their services were not required for the maintenance of order. During the first day out, a prisoner who had evidently imbibed "not wisely, but too well," and whose obstruc-



GOOD-BYE SWEETHEART.



"IN DURANCE VILE."

erous behavior caused restraint to be necessary, sat handcuffed on the fore-castle, under the



CAPT. LE VASSEUR TELLS OF THE SCALPS HE HAS TAKEN.

eye of a vigilant sentry. Throughout the remainder of the trip, nothing came under the

notice of the passengers to suggest the need of military discipline. The conduct of the troops was excellent, and the fraternization of the Midlanders with the Quebeckers a pleasant feature. In the saloon, it took but a short time to make the officers of the two corps acquainted with each other, and the best of feeling soon prevailed.



THE INDIAN WAR DANCE.

The officers of the Voltigeurs were mostly young men of martial physique and all of them were gentlemen of education and refinement. They had improved their opportunities of studying the ways of the noble red man, while doing garrison duty in the country of the Blackfeet and so became adepts in the performance of the Indian war dance. The ladies on board the Alberta never tired of this diversion, and constantly requested its repetition. It was an inspiring sight to witness the officers of the gallant 9th squat themselves in a circle on the poop deck, and, after gravely passing the pipe of peace around, rise one after the other to relate the wonderful feats they had performed in the way of horse-stealing and lifting scalps. Then it was grand to see the entire group rise to their feet and move round in exact imitation of the peculiar step of the so-called dance of the Indian braves.

Nor were the accomplishments of the gallant 9th confined to mimicry of the practices of the poor Indian; all of them were capital vocalists, and many instrumental performers of by no means inferior merit. They kept the pot boiling with some fun or other every evening, and made themselves particularly agreeable to the ladies. If any one wanted an accompaniment played, they were always ready to oblige, and that was how we came to have "Rule Britannia" given, with full musical effect and splendid chorus, by a Sergeant-Major from



"RULE BRITANNIA."

Toronto, an ex-guardsmen, who was wounded at Cut Knife Creek, after serving Her Majesty twenty years without a scratch. The most wonderful thing about this trip was how the steward managed to give a good square meal to every one of the 1,100 passengers three times each day. All of the soldiers took their meals in the saloon, though only the officers and the wounded—irrespective of the rank of the latter—were accommodated with staterooms. The truth is, these C. P. R. boats are in themselves models of strength and security, while their domestic economy is such as to ensure every comfort and convenience to passengers.

The steady progress at fourteen miles an hour soon brought us to Sault Ste. Marie,



RECIPROCITY.

where no obstruction was offered by the U.S. authorities to the vessel conveying troops through the locks. On Owen Sound being reached the pretty little town was seen to be gay with bunting, and a most artistic triumphal arch had been erected on the wharf. Here the firemen kept an open space for the landing of the troops, who were successively marched off to partake of a nice repast provided by the ladies. Afterwards, upon the wharf might be seen pretty girls begging specimens of hard tack from the volunteers, when an exchange of autographs would take place—he writing his upon the biscuit, she writing hers inside his helmet. It is hard to say whether this preliminary exchange of name on the part of the ladies may in any particular case be productive of a permanent one hereafter, but such chances are not altogether beyond the possibilities. The enthusiasm of everybody seemed unbounded, and one colored gentleman manifested his goodwill by passing down the train and bestowing his



"BRESS YE, BRAVE BRUDDERS"

fervent blessing upon the boys occupying the cars. He was greeted with hearty cheers,