

THE ENGLISH IN THE ARMY. BY RUDYARD KIPLING.

We have a common tradition one thousand years old of the Things One Takes for Granted. A warrant officer said something, and the groups melted quietly about some job or other. That was the way of it. That same type of voice was speaking in the commissariat in Bugmah; in barracks in Rangoon; under double awnings in the Persian Gulf; on the rock at Gibraltar—wherever else you please—and the same instant obedience, I knew, would follow on that voice. And a foreigner would never have understood, as you would have understood, had you been there. I went round to make sure of my right as a taxpayer under schedule D, saw the men in their hammocks sleeping without shading their eyes, four inches from the white glare of an electric; heard the stokers chaffing each other at the ash-heap, and fetched up at the mess-table, it is my murmuring fragments of the riot act into a subordinate's ear. When he had entirely finished the task in hand he was at liberty to attend to me, and again I enjoyed your trip, sir. You see (I knew what was coming) we haven't quite shaken down yet. In another three months we shall be some more. No ship is ever at her best till you leave her. Then you hold her up as a shining example to your present craft. For that is the way of it. My marine—the skirmisher in South American suburbs—stood under the shadow of the poop looking like a man with an arm for saluting purposes; but I knew him on the human side. "Goin' off to-morrow, twenty of us here, but if you ever want to see the marine, it's not here, it's in the barracks, and he's worth your while to"—and he gave me the address of a place where I would find plenty of marines. He spoke as though his men were not men, but class animals; and a foreigner would have taken him at his word.

A Commodious Coffee-Grinder. The entire ward room explained carefully that their commodious coffee grinder must not be taken as a sample of the navy at its best. Wasn't she a good sea boat? Oh, yes—remarkably so. Couldn't she go upon occasion? Oh, yes. She could go upon occasion, but wasn't a patch on certain other craft, being only a third-class cruiser—practically an enlarged destroyer—a tin pot of the thinnest. Now, my last ship, the captain began, that was an unlucky remark, for I remember that last ship and a certain first night aboard her in the long sweet of the morning when the captain took heaven and earth and the admiralty to witness that all cluttered-up boxes of machinery and bags of tea and sugar and flour were the worst. To hear him now she must have been a trifle larger than the Majesty, with twice the powder's speed. "Come and see next year when we've shaken down a bit," said the wardroom, "and you'll like it better." That was impossible, but I accepted it. Our cruiser was going to refit at some dockyard or another in a few days, and I gathered that it would be no fault of the captain, the wardroom, or the warrant officers if she did not arrive with a list of alterations and improvements as long as her mainmast. So it is with every ship. The dear boys take her out to see what she can do, and in that process discover what she cannot do. If by any arrangement of rearrangement of stay, stanchion, davit, steam pipe, bridge, boat checks, or hatchways she can, in their judgment, be improved, rest assured that the doctor, the carpenter, or the fitter will be by her side, and you'll pass over her. We won't give you any trouble. Just a few minor repairs, and our own people will carry them out, when you've refit in the least. Send the stuff alongside and we'll attend to it.

Discontented With Impudent Thieves. To her just and picturesque demand that the wardroom suspend the suspension, saying unofficiously, "You are all a set of discontented and impudent thieves. Go away." The ship, considering her own comfort, and for the rest of the commission, replies, also unofficiously, "Ah, you're thinking of the So and So. She was a nest of thieves, but you're gone, and we're good. We've the most upright ship you ever clapped eyes on, and you're the finest yard in the kingdom. You're up to all the ropes. There's no getting round you and you'll pass over her. We won't give you any trouble. Just a few minor repairs, and our own people will carry them out, when you've refit in the least. Send the stuff alongside and we'll attend to it."

Stolen Paint. Late in the afternoon that defrauded one sends over to the Earl Bird and wants to know if she has seen or heard anything of some oak-bauks, a new gateway grating, some brass work, and a few drums of white paint. "Why, was that yours?" says the first lieutenant. "We thought it was ours." "Well, it isn't. It's ours, where is it?" "I'm awfully sorry, but I say, won't you come and have a drink?" They come just in time to see the brass rods in position; the oak bauks converted into some sort of boat furniture; the gateway platform receives their weary feet, and a fine flavor of paint from a flat forward tells them all they will ever know of the missing drums. Then they call the first lieutenant a pirate, and he, poor lamb, says that he was misled by the chuckle-headed understrapper who brought the stuff alongside. Words cannot express the first lieutenant's contrition. It is too bad—too bad, but you know what these dockyard chaps can be. With soft words and occasional gin and bitters to fortify them, they take their boat again, for he has studied diplomacy under the West African kings. They return to their ship, being young and guileless, at the reception is not cordial. Their captain says openly that he has not one adequate thief in the ship, and that they had better go into the church. They should have captured the understrapper early in the day. He will speak to the other captain. And he does, like a brother, next time he meets him, galley passing galley, going to call on the admiral. "You infernal old pirate. What have you done with my paint?" cries the robbed one. "Me, sar? Not me, sar? My brother Manuel, sar. That paint mafesh, Done

THE SOLDIER'S LIFE IN YUKON. Letter from Lieut.-Col. Evans at Selkirk.

The following is a copy of a letter just received in Ottawa by a friend from Lieut.-Colonel T. D. B. Evans, of Winnipeg, commanding the Canadian troops in the Yukon territory. He had just reached Fort Selkirk, 180 miles above Dawson, where he intended to winter. My Dear — This letter will take a long time to reach you, as no more steamers are going out, and it will be a month before my steamer will be working. In my last letter I mentioned my trip up from Dawson to here as an awful one. Now I shall go into details. My steamer was the Willie Irving, known as the Yukon Willie and the fastest boat on the river. There were sixty of us penned in a small cabin, and twenty rapids long by nine feet wide, and about seven feet high in the centre, and sloping down to about five feet at the sides. The water was so fast that the Indians in camp here, and was on three legs and had a gaping wound in his scalp. He is all right now, and has again settled down into reputable work. The Dawson detachment of 50 N. C. O. and men with Captains Bursall and Ogilvy reached Dawson safely. I passed them on the 2nd of my way up and they gave me a farewell cheer. I was sorry to have missed them at Dawson, but the Willie Irving was the last boat to leave and there was no choice left. They had a Maxim gun with them and are a fine lot who will do credit to the force. I have been very busy since my return, but always steal away for an hour's tramp in the woods with my gun and "Spuds" about 5 o'clock and get back by 6.30, when it is quite dark. Work at the Fort. We are a very busy community in this barracks of ours. Between carrying up supplies, cutting cordwood in the bush, building a large cache of supplies, and getting the barracks and completing the inside work at the barracks buildings, everybody is at it hard from 7 a. m. until 6 p. m., but easier times are near at hand, and with the consciousness of having performed six months' hard and trying work cheerfully and well, Thomas Atkins may look forward to a pleasant, but by no means idle winter. The weather is very disappointing. We have had a glorious autumn and no colder than good old Manitoba, and it did go to 3 degrees below zero a few nights ago, but we were not here then. It is here had been no thermometer present to betray the secret. The climate suits everybody, and the full of health and vigor. Major Bliss looks better than I have ever seen him, and Dr. Moser and Thacker look positively fat. I am sorry Major Talbot and Bursall are away. They were the only two officers who were with me with the advanced party, and they were staunch and loyal supporters of the hard and sometimes very monotonous work on the trail, at Eslin Lake, and at Fort Selkirk. I shall see Bursall when the ice roads open as my "dog" team is already being trained for my trip to Dawson. I am issuing the winter kits to the men, so that when the "dog" comes we shall all be ready. I shall send you a few "snap" shots when we put on our winter war paint. The last news from Dawson contained the death of Miss Pfeiffer's yellow kitten. He was killed by dogs at the barracks at Dawson, and he seems hard luck after braving all the dangers of the trail and developing into a mouser of great excellence to meet so untimely an end. My last letters from home dated the 9th of August. I hear that all the Canadian mail is stopped at Skagway. In any event as the boats have stopped running we cannot expect letters before Dawson, and I can't be far away. I shall fare worse than you, as I think our letters have gone out, but I am without news, but the same kindly Providence is looking after our well-being, and a month or two will soon slip by, and I will send you a farewell telegram from Lady Aberdeen. Yours, etc. T. D. B. EVANS.

The Fares and Meals. The cost of the trip was \$120 from Dawson to Selkirk, 180 miles) and the meals were \$1.50 each additional. The evening meal consisted of cold tongue and beef (tinned), a salad of raw onions and string beans, and some apple sauce—the latter was good. Dawson we were to have left at 8 a. m., but were detained first by the customs and secondly by the police until 4 p. m. The police arrested and fined me for carrying a Maxim gun in charge of theft. Another passenger fell off the wharf on to a pair of moose horns about 20 feet below and cut his head badly. The pilot also was engaged for the trip was very drunk and jumped off the boat just as we were about to start, and the boat sailed without him. Another very ill man, according to a stolid Dutch passenger, jumped overboard, but we were not allowed to stop. The captain had been married only two days before, and during the long and weary trip my Dutchman ascribed all his ailments to the fact that he was a very interesting and amusing old chap, and regaled me with the whole history of his life, and his family, and he sold me some of his wares, and he cleared \$400.00 out here next year, and I am sure I wish the old boy luck. Start of the Trip. But to go on with the trip. We left at 4 p. m. on Saturday, October 1st. We made very poor progress all next day, as the boiler was reported "backing" on Sunday morning. The passengers tried to commit suicide with opium and was about to finish off the boat. The last news from Dawson contained the death of Miss Pfeiffer's yellow kitten. He was killed by dogs at the barracks at Dawson, and he seems hard luck after braving all the dangers of the trail and developing into a mouser of great excellence to meet so untimely an end. My last letters from home dated the 9th of August. I hear that all the Canadian mail is stopped at Skagway. In any event as the boats have stopped running we cannot expect letters before Dawson, and I can't be far away. I shall fare worse than you, as I think our letters have gone out, but I am without news, but the same kindly Providence is looking after our well-being, and a month or two will soon slip by, and I will send you a farewell telegram from Lady Aberdeen. Yours, etc. T. D. B. EVANS.

On Friday morning, at half past eight, the boiler gave completely out, and we drifted on a bar near the shore. It took us until 5 p. m. to overhaul the boilers and until noon on Saturday to get off the sand-bar. On Sunday, at 2 p. m., we reached Fort Selkirk, after a trip of 84 days' distance. All the passengers were in a great state of anxiety lest they should be frozen in, as there was a great many of them. The "dog" team was a "Swiss Water Bill," a noted gambler, was one of the passengers, but was a very mild-looking specimen, and he was not a bad fellow. The Philip B. Low, carrying some of my supplies, arrived at the same time as our boat, and needless to say we were warmly welcomed by the force. Captain Pearce, who had come around by St. Michael's with the supplies, was glad to receive terra firma, but it took only for a day, as on Monday I sent him back with the Philip B. Low to bring up the Governor Pingree, which was stuck on a sand-bar about 40 miles below. 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