

UNDER THE DEODARS

anything. Babies, Diphtheria, Mrs. Bent and The Master, I whooping in a chair, and The Dowd ; in from the clouds. I wonder what the was—all the motives.”

“do you think?”

“ask me. Go to sleep.”

ONLY A SUBALTERN

... Not only to enforce by command but to encourage by example the energetic discharge of duty and the steady endurance of the difficulties and privations inseparable from Military Service.

—Bengal Army Regulations.

THEY made Bobby Wick pass an examination at Sandhurst. He was a gentleman before he was gazetted, so, when the Empress announced that “Gentleman-Cadet Robert Hanna Wick” was posted as Second Lieutenant to the Tyneside Tail Twisters at Krab Bokhar, he became an officer *and* a gentleman, which is an enviable thing; and there was joy in the house of Wick where Mamma Wick and all the little Wicks fell upon their knees and offered incense to Bobby by virtue of his achievements.

Papa Wick had been a Commissioner in his day, holding authority over three millions of men in the Chota-Buldana Division, building great works for the good of the land, and doing his best to make two blades of grass grow where there was but one before. Of course, nobody knew anything about this in the little English village where he was just “old Mr. Wick” and had forgotten that he was a Companion of the Order of the Star of India.

He patted Bobby on the shoulder and said: "Well done, my boy!"

There followed, while the uniform was being prepared, an interval of pure delight, during which Bobby took brevet-rank as a "man" at the women-swamped tennis-parties and tea-fights of the village, and, I dare say, had his joining-time been extended, would have fallen in love with several girls at once. Little country villages at Home are very full of nice girls, because all the young men come out to India to make their fortunes.

"India," said Papa Wick, "is the place. I've had thirty years of it and, begad, I'd like to go back again. When you join the Tail Twisters you'll be among friends, if every one hasn't forgotten Wick of Chota-Buldana, and a lot of people will be kind to you for our sakes. The mother will tell you more about outfit than I can, but remember this: Stick to your Regiment, Bobby—stick to your Regiment. You'll see men all round you going into the Staff Corps, and doing every possible sort of duty but regimental, and you may be tempted to follow suit. Now so long as you keep within your allowance, and I haven't stinted you there, stick to the Line, the whole Line and nothing but the Line. Be careful how you back another young fool's bill, and if you fall in love with a woman twenty years older than yourself, don't tell *me* about it, that's all."

With these counsels, and many others equally valuable, did Papa Wick fortify Bobby ere that last awful night at Portsmouth when the Officers' Quarters held more inmates than were provided for by the Regula-

tions, and the liberty-men of the ships fell foul of drafts for India, and the battle raged from the Yard Gates even to the slums of Longport, while Drabs of Fratton came down and scratched the cheeks of the Queen's Officers.

Bobby Wick, with an ugly bruise on his forehead, a sick and shaky detachment to manœuvre in the East, and the comfort of fifty scornful females to atter his loneliness, had no time to feel homesick till the *Malabar* reached the mid-Channel, when he doubled his emotions with a little guard-visiting and a great many other matters.

The Tail Twisters were a most particular Regiment. Those who knew them least said that they were up with "side." But their reserve and their intricate arrangements generally were merely protective delicacy. Some five years before, the Colonel commanding had looked into the fourteen fearless eyes of six plump and juicy subalterns who had all applied to enter the Staff Corps, and had asked them why three stars should he, a Colonel of the Line, command a dashed nursery for double-dashed bottle-suckers who put on condemned tin spurs and rode qual mokes at the hiatused heads of forsaken Black Regiments. He was a rude man and a terrible. Where the remnant took measures [with the half-butt of an engine of public opinion] till the rumor went abroad that young men who used the Tail Twisters for a crutch to the Staff Corps, had many and varied things to endure. However, a regiment had just as much right to its own secrets as a woman.

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When Bobby came up from Deolali and took his place among the Tail Twisters, it was gently but

firmly borne in upon him that the Regiment was his father and his mother and his indissolubly wedded wife, and that there was no crime under the canopy of heaven blacker than that of bringing shame on the Regiment, which was the best-shooting, best-drilled, best set-up, bravest, most illustrious, and in all respects most desirable Regiment within the compass of the Seven Seas. He was taught the legends of the Mess Plate, from the great grinning Golden Gods that had come out of the Summer Palace in Pekin to the silver-mounted markhorhorn snuff-mull presented by the last C. O. [he who spake to the seven subalterns]. And every one of those legends told him of battles fought at long odds, without fear as without support; of hospitality catholic as an Arab's; of friendships deep as the sea and steady as the fighting-line; of honor won by hard roads for honor's sake; and of instant and unquestioning devotion to the Regiment—the Regiment that claims the lives of all and lives forever.

More than once, too, he came officially into contact with the Regimental colors, which looked like the lining of a bricklayer's hat on the end of a chewed stick. Bobby did not kneel and worship them, because British subalterns are not constructed in that manner. Indeed, he condemned them for their weight at the very moment that they were filling him with awe and other more noble sentiments.

But best of all was the occasion when he moved with the Tail Twisters in review order at the breaking of a November day. Allowing for duty-men and sick, the Regiment was one thousand and eighty strong, and Bobby belonged to them; for was he not

a Subaltern of the Line—the whole Line and not but the Line—as the tramp of two thousand one hundred and sixty sturdy ammunition boots attested? would not have changed places with Deighton of Horse Battery, whirling by in a pillar of cloud and a chorus of "Strong right! Strong left!" or Hogan of the White Hussars, leading his squadron for a day was worth, with the price of horseshoes thrown in for "Tick" Boileau, trying to live up to his fierce blue and gold turban while the wasps of the Bengal Cavalry stretched to a gallop in the wake of the long, lolling Walers of the White Hussars.

They fought through the clear cool day, and Bobby felt a little thrill run down his spine when he heard *tinkle-tinkle-tinkle* of the empty cartridge-cases falling from the breech-blocks after the roar of volleys; for he knew that he should live to hear the sound in action. The review ended in a glorious charge across the plain—batteries thundering after cavalry, the huge disgust of the White Hussars, and the Tail Twisters hunting a Sikh Regiment, till the lean lathy Singhs panted with exhaustion. Bobby was dusty and dripping long before noon, but his enthusiasm was merely focused—not diminished.

He returned to sit at the feet of Revere, his "super," that is to say, the Captain of his Company, to be instructed in the dark art and mystery of managing men, which is a very large part of the Profession of Arms.

"If you haven't a taste that way," said Revere, between his puffs of his cheroot, "you'll never be able to get the hang of it, but remember, Bobby, 'tisn't

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best drill, though drill is nearly everything, that hauls a Regiment through Hell and out on the other side. It's the man who knows how to handle men—goat-men, swine-men, dog-men, and so on."

"Dormer, for instance," said Bobby, "I think he comes under the head of fool-men. He mopes like a sick owl."

"That's where you make your mistake, my son. Dormer isn't a fool *yet*, but he's a dashed dirty soldier, and his room corporal makes fun of his socks before kit-inspection. Dormer, being two-thirds pure brute, goes into a corner and growls."

"How do you know?" said Bobby, admiringly.

"Because a Company commander has to know these things—because, if he does *not* know, he may have crime—ay, murder—brewing under his very nose and yet not see that it's there. Dormer is being badgered out of his mind—big as he is—and he hasn't intellect enough to resent it. He's taken to quiet boozing and, Bobby, when the butt of a room goes on the drink, or takes to moping by himself, measures are necessary to pull him out of himself."

"What measures? 'Man can't run round coddling his men forever."

"No. The men would precious soon show him that he was not wanted. You've got to"—

Here the Color-Sergeant entered with some papers; Bobby reflected for a while as Revere looked through the Company forms.

"Does Dormer do anything, Sergeant?" Bobby asked, with the air of one continuing an interrupted conversation.

"No, sir. Does 'is dooty like a hortomato," said Sergeant, who delighted in long words. "A di soldier, and 'e's under full stoppages for new kit. covered with scales, sir."

"Scales? What scales?"

"Fish-scales, sir. 'E's always pokin' in the mud the river an' a-cleanin' them *muchly*-fish with thumbs." Revere was still absorbed in the Comp papers, and the Sergeant, who was sternly fond Bobby, continued,—"'E generally goes down th when 'e's got 'is skinful, beggin' your pardon, sir, they *do* say that the more lush—in-*be*-briated 'e is, more fish 'e catches. They call 'im the Looney F monger in the Comp'ny, sir."

Revere signed the last paper and the Sergeant treated.

"It's a filthy amusement," sighed Bobby to him. Then aloud to Revere: "Are you really wor about Dormer?"

"A little. You see he's never mad enough to sen hospital, or drunk enough to run in, but at any mi he may flare up, brooding and sulking as he does. resents any interest being shown in him, and the time I took him out shooting he all but shot *m* accident."

"I fish," said Bobby, with a wry face. "I hire a c try-boat and go down the river from Thursda Sunday, and the amiable Dormer goes with me—if can spare us both."

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Bobby, the Captain of a *dhoni*, with Private Dormer

for mate, dropped down the river on Thursday morning—the Private at the bow, the Subaltern at the helm. The Private glared uneasily at the Subaltern, who respected the reserve of the Private.

After six hours, Dormer paced to the stern, saluted, and said—"Beg y' pardon, sir, but *was* you ever on the Durh'm Canal?"

"No," said Bobby Wick. "Come and have some tiffin."

They ate in silence. As the evening fell, Private Dormer broke forth, speaking to himself—

"Hi was on the Durh'm Canal, jes' such a night, come next week twelve month, a-trailin' of my toes in the water." He smoked and said no more till bedtime.

The witchery of the dawn turned the grey river-reaches to purple, gold, and opal; and it was as though the lumbering *dhoni* crept across the splendors of a new heaven.

Private Dormer popped his head out of his blanket and gazed at the glory below and around.

"Well—damn—my eyes!" said Private Dormer, in an awed whisper. "This 'ere is like a bloomin' gallantry-show!" For the rest of the day he was dumb, but achieved an ensanguined filthiness through the cleaning of big fish.

The boat returned on Saturday evening. Dormer had been struggling with speech since noon. As the lines and luggage were being disembarked, he found tongue.

"Beg y' pardon, sir," he said, "but would you—would you min' shakin' 'ands with me, sir?"

"Of course not," said Bobby, and he shook accordingly. Dormer returned to barracks and Bobt mess.

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"Anyhow," said Revere, three weeks later doing his best to keep his things clean."

When the spring died, Bobby joined in the general scramble for Hill leave, and to his surprise and d secured three months.

"As good a boy as I want," said Revere, the miring skipper.

"The best of the batch," said the Adjutant t Colonel. "Keep back that young skrimshanker P sir, and let Revere make him sit up."

So Bobby departed joyously to Simla Pahar v tin box of gorgeous raiment.

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rather more sickness in the out-villages than I care for, but then I'm so blistered with prickly-heat that I'm ready to hang myself. What's the yarn about your mashing a Miss Haverley up there? Not serious, I hope? You're over-young to hang millstones round your neck, and the Colonel will turf you out of that in double-quick time if you attempt it."

It was not the Colonel that brought Bobby out of Simla, but a much more to be respected Commandant. The sickness in the out-villages spread, the Bazar was put out of bounds, and then came the news that the Tail Twisters must go into camp. The message flashed to the Hill stations.—"Cholera—Leave stopped—Officers recalled." Alas, for the white gloves in the neatly soldered boxes, the rides and the dances and picnics that were to be, the loves half spoken, and the debts unpaid! Without demur and without question, fast as tonga could fly or pony gallop, back to their Regiments and their Batteries, as though they were hastening to their weddings, fled the subalterns.

Bobby received his orders on returning from a dance at Viceregal Lodge where he had—but only the Haverley girl knows what Bobby had said or how many waltzes he had claimed for the next ball. Six in the morning saw Bobby at the Tonga Office in the drenching rain, the whirl of the last waltz still in his ears, and an intoxication due neither to wine nor waltzing in his brain.

"Good man!" shouted Deighton of the Horse Battery, through the mists. "Whar you raise dat tonga? I'm coming with you. Ow! But I've a head and a half. I

didn't sit out all night. They say the Batter bad," and he hummed dolorously—

*"Leave the what at the what's-its-nama
Leave the flock without shelter,
Leave the corpse uninterred.
Leave the bride at the altar!"*

"My faith! I'll be more bally corpse than though, this journey. Jump in, Bobby. Get on man!"

On the umbrella platform waited a detachment of officers discussing the latest news from the cantonment, and it was here that Bobby learned the real condition of the Tail Twisters.

"They went into camp," said an elderly Major called from the whist-tables at Mussoorie to the Native Regiment, "they went into camp with a hundred and ten sick in carts. Two hundred fever cases only, and the balance looking like ghosts with sore eyes. A Madras Regiment came and walked through 'em."

"But they were as fit as be-damned when they left them!" said Bobby.

"Then you'd better make them as fit as be-damned when you rejoin," said the Major, brutally.

Bobby pressed his forehead against the rain windowpane as the train lumbered across the Doab, and prayed for the health of the Tail Twisters. Naini Tal had sent down her carts with all speed; the lathering ponies of the Indian Road staggered into Pathankot, taxed to the stretch of their strength; while from cloudy

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the Calcutta Mail whirled up the last straggler of the little army that was to fight a fight, in which was neither medal nor honor for the winning, against an enemy none other than "the sickness that destroyeth in the noonday."

And as each man reported himself, he said: "This is a bad business," and went about his own forthwith, for every Regiment and Battery in the cantonment was under canvas, the sickness bearing them company.

Bobby fought his way through the rain to the Tail Twisters' temporary mess, and Revere could have fallen on the boy's neck for the joy of seeing that ugly, wholesome phiz once more.

"Keep 'em amused and interested," said Revere. "They went on the drink, poor fools, after the first two cases, and there was no improvement. Oh, it's good to have you back, Bobby! Porkiss is a—never mind."

Deighton came over from the Artillery camp to attend a dreary mess dinner, and contributed to the general gloom by nearly weeping over the condition of his beloved Battery. Porkiss so far forgot himself as to insinuate that the presence of the officers could do no earthly good, and that the best thing would be to send the entire Regiment into hospital and "let the doctors look after them." Porkiss was demoralized with fear, nor was his peace of mind restored when Revere said coldly: "Oh! The sooner *you* go out the better, if that's your way of thinking. Any public school could send us fifty *good* men in your place, but it takes time, time, Porkiss, and money, and a certain

amount of trouble, to make a Regiment. 'S'pose the person we go into camp for, eh?"

Whereupon Porkiss was overtaken with a grinchy fear which a drenching in the rain did not and, two days later, quitted this world for a better where, men do fondly hope, allowances are made for the weaknesses of the flesh. The Regimental Sergeant Major looked wearily across the Sergeants' Mess when the news was announced.

"There goes the worst of them," he said. "It'll be the best, and then, please God, it'll stop." The Sergeants were silent till one said: "It couldn't be any other, and all knew of whom Travis was thinking.

Bobby Wick stormed through the tents of his company, rallying, rebuking, mildly, as is consistent with the Regulations, chaffing the faint-hearted; halting for a moment in the watery sunlight when there was a change in the weather, and bidding them be of good cheer when their trouble was nearly at an end; scuttling on a pony round the outskirts of the camp and back to the men who, with the innate perversity of soldiers, were always wandering into infected places or drinking deeply from rain-flooded marshes; exhorting the panic-stricken with rude speech, and then once tending the dying who had no friends to attend them without "townies"; organizing, with barbaric energy, the burned cork, Sing-songs which should allow the men of the Regiment full play; and generally, as the saying is, "playing the giddy garden-goat all round the camp."

"You're worth a half a dozen of us, Bobby," said Revere in a moment of enthusiasm. "How do you keep it up?"

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each man reported himself, he said: "This usiness," and went about his own forthwith, Regiment and Battery in the cantonment e canvas, the sickness bearing them company. fought his way through the rain to the Tail temporary mess, and Revere could have he boy's neck for the joy of seeing that ugly, ie phiz once more.

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"You're worth a half a dozen of us, Bobby," said Revere in a moment of enthusiasm. "How the devil do you keep it up?"

Bobby made no answer, but had Revere looked into the breast-pocket of his coat he might have seen there a sheaf of badly-written letters which perhaps accounted for the power that possessed the boy. A letter came to Bobby every other day. The spelling was not above reproach, but the sentiments must have been most satisfactory, for on receipt Bobby's eyes softened marvelously, and he was wont to fall into a tender abstraction for a while ere, shaking his cropped head, he charged into his work.

By what power he drew after him the hearts of the roughest, and the Tail Twisters counted in their ranks some rough diamonds indeed, was a mystery to both skipper and C. O., who learned from the regimental chaplain that Bobby was considerably more in request in the hospital tents than the Reverend John Emery.

"The men seem fond of you. Are you in the hospitals much?" said the Colonel, who did his daily round and ordered the men to get well with a hardness that did not cover his bitter grief.

"A little, sir," said Bobby.

"Shouldn't go there too often if I were you. They say it's not contagious, but there's no use in running unnecessary risks. We can't afford to have you down, y' know."

Six days later, it was with the utmost difficulty that the post-runner plashed his way out to the camp with the mail-bags, for the rain was falling in torrents. Bobby received a letter, bore it off to his tent, and the programme for the next week's Sing-song being satisfactorily disposed of, sat down to answer it. For an hour the unhandy pen toiled over the paper, and

where sentiment rose to more than normal ti Bobby Wick stuck out his tongue and l heavily. He was not used to letter-writing.

"Beg y' pardon, sir," said a voice at the te "but Dormer's 'orrid bad, sir, an' they've ta orf, sir."

"Damn Private Dormer and you too!" said Wick, running the blotter over the half-finish "Tell him I'll come in the morning."

"'E's awful bad, sir," said the voice, hesi There was an undecided squelching of heavy b

"Well?" said Bobby, impatiently.

"Excusin' 'imself before' and for takin' the 'e says it would be a comfort for to assist if"—

"*Tattoo lao!* Get my pony! Here, come in the rain till I'm ready. What blasted nuisances! That's brandy. Drink some; you want it. Hair my stirrup and tell me if I go too fast."

Strengthened by a four-finger "nip" wl swallowed without a wink, the Hospital Orde up with the slipping, mud-stained, and very d pony as it shambled to the hospital tent.

Private Dormer was certainly "'orrid bad." all but reached the stage of collapse and v pleasant to look upon.

"What's this, Dormer?" said Bobby, bendi the man. "You're not going out this time. You to come fishing with me once or twice more :

The blue lips parted and in the ghost of a said—"Beg y' pardon, sir, disturbin' of you n would you min' 'oldin' my 'and, sir?"

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all but reached the stage of collapse and was not
pleasant to look upon.

"What's this, Dormer?" said Bobby, bending over
the man. "You're not going out this time. You've got
to come fishing with me once or twice more yet."

The blue lips parted and in the ghost of a whisper
said—"Beg y' pardon, sir, disturbin' of you now, but
would you min' 'oldin' my 'and, sir?"

Bobby sat on the side of the bed, and the icy cold hand closed on his own like a vice, forcing a lady's ring which was on the little finger deep into the flesh. Bobby set his lips and waited, the water dripping from the hem of his trousers. An hour passed and the grasp of the hand did not relax, nor did the expression of the drawn face change. Bobby with infinite craft lit himself a cheroot with the left hand, his right arm was numbed to the elbow, and resigned himself to a night of pain.

Dawn showed a very white-faced Subaltern sitting on the side of a sick man's cot, and a Doctor in the doorway using language unfit for publication.

"Have you been here all night, you young ass?" said the Doctor.

"There or thereabouts," said Bobby, ruefully. "He's frozen on to me."

Dormer's mouth shut with a click. He turned his head and sighed. The clinging hand opened, and Bobby's arm fell useless at his side.

"He'll do," said the Doctor, quietly. "It must have been a toss-up all through the night. Think you're to be congratulated on this case."

"Oh, bosh!" said Bobby. "I thought the man had gone out long ago—only—only I didn't care to take my hand away. Rub my arm down, there's a good chap. What a grip the brute has! I'm chilled to the marrow!" He passed out of the tent shivering.

Private Dormer was allowed to celebrate his repulse of Death by strong waters. Four days later, he sat on the side of his cot and said to the patients mildly: "I'd 'a' liken to 'a' spoken to 'im—so I should."

But at that time Bobby was reading your letter—he had the most persistent correspondent any man in camp—and was even then about that the sickness had abated, and in another the outside would be gone. He did not intend that the chill of a sick man's hand seemed struck into the heart whose capacities for a dwelt on at such length. He did intend to illustrate a programme of the forthcoming whereof he was not a little proud. He also intended to write on many other matters which do not concern us, and doubtless would have done so but for a feverish headache which made him dull and unresponsive at mess.

"You are overdoing it, Bobby," said the Doctor. "Might give the rest of us credit of doing your work. You go on as if you were the whole of the camp into one. Take it easy."

"I will," said Bobby. "I'm feeling done with it now." Revere looked at him anxiously and said nothing.

There was a flickering of lanterns about that night, and a rumor that brought men out of their cots to the tent doors, paddling of the naked doolie-bearers and the rush of a galloping horse.

"Wot's up?" asked twenty tents; and twenty tents ran the answer—"Wick, 'e's done."

They brought the news to Revere and he said: "Any one but Bobby and I shouldn't have credited it. Sergeant-Major was right."

"Not going out this journey," gasped Bobby. He was lifted from the doolie. "Not going

sat on the side of the bed, and the icy cold pressed on his own like a vice, forcing a lady's touch was on the little finger deep into the flesh. He set his lips and waited, the water dripping from the ends of his trousers. An hour passed and the grasp did not relax, nor did the expression of the face change. Bobby with infinite craft lit himself with the left hand, his right arm was bent to the elbow, and resigned himself to a night

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But at that time Bobby was reading yet another letter—he had the most persistent correspondent of any man in camp—and was even then about to write that the sickness had abated, and in another week at the outside would be gone. He did not intend to say that the chill of a sick man's hand seemed to have struck into the heart whose capacities for affection he dwelt on at such length. He did intend to enclose the illustrated programme of the forthcoming Sing-song whereof he was not a little proud. He also intended to write on many other matters which do not concern us, and doubtless would have done so but for the slight feverish headache which made him dull and unresponsive at mess.

"You are overdoing it, Bobby," said the skipper. "Might give the rest of us credit of doing a little work. You go on as if you were the whole Mess rolled into one. Take it easy."

"I will," said Bobby. "I'm feeling done up, somehow." Revere looked at him anxiously and said nothing.

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"Wot's up?" asked twenty tents; and through twenty tents ran the answer—"Wick, 'e's down."

They brought the news to Revere and he groaned. "Any one but Bobby and I shouldn't have cared! The Sergeant-Major was right."

"Not going out this journey," gasped Bobby, as he was lifted from the doolie. "Not going out this

journey." Then with an air of supreme conviction—"I can't, you see."

"Not if I can do anything!" said the Surgeon-Major, who had hastened over from the mess where he had been dining.

He and the Regimental Surgeon fought together with Death for the life of Bobby Wick. Their work was interrupted by a hairy apparition in a blue-grey dressing-gown who stared in horror at the bed and cried—"Oh, my Gawd! It can't be 'im!" until an indignant Hospital Orderly whisked him away.

If care of man and a desire to live could have done aught, Bobby would have been saved. As it was, he made a fight of three days, and the Surgeon-Major's brow uncreased. "We'll save him yet," he said; and the Surgeon, who, though he ranked with the Captain, had a very youthful heart, went out upon the word and pranced joyously in the mud.

"Not going out this journey," whispered Bobby Wick, gallantly, at the end of the third day.

"Bravo!" said the Surgeon-Major. "That's the way to look at it, Bobby."

As evening fell a grey shade gathered round Bobby's mouth, and he turned his face to the tent wall wearily. The Surgeon-Major frowned.

"I'm awfully tired," said Bobby, very faintly. "What's the use of bothering me with medicine? I don't—want—it. Let me alone."

The desire for life had departed, and Bobby was content to drift away on the easy tide of Death.

"It's no good," said the Surgeon-Major. "He doesn't

want to live. He's meeting it, poor child." And he blew his nose.

Half a mile away, the regimental band was playing the overture to the Sing-song, for the men had been told that Bobby was out of danger. The clash of the brass and the wail of the horns reached Bobby's ears.

*Is there a single joy or pain
That I should never know?
You do not love me, 'tis in vain,
Bid me good-bye and go!*

An expression of hopeless irritation crossed the boy's face, and he tried to shake his head.

The Surgeon-Major bent down—"What is it, Bobby?"—"Not that waltz," muttered Bobby. "That's our own—our very ownest own. . . . Mummy dear."

With this he sank into the stupor that gave place to death early next morning.

Revere, his eyes red at the rims and his nose very white, went into Bobby's tent to write a letter to Pa Wick which should bow the white head of the Commissioner of Chota-Buldana in the keenest sorrow of his life. Bobby's little store of papers lay in confusion on the table, and among them a half-finished letter. The last sentence ran: "So you see, darlin' there is really no fear, because as long as I know you care for me and I care for you, nothing can touch me."

Revere stayed in the tent for an hour. When he came out his eyes were redder than ever.

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Private Conklin sat on a turned-down bucket, and
listened to a not unfamiliar tune. Private Conklin was

a convalescent and should have been tenderly treated.

"Ho!" said Private Conklin. "There's another bloomin' orf'cer da-ed."

The bucket shot from under him, and his eyes filled with a smythyful of sparks. A tall man in a blue-grey bedgown was regarding him with deep disfavor.

"You ought to take shame for yourself, Conky! Orf'cer—bloomin' orf'cer? I'll learn you to misname the likes of 'im. Hangel! *Bloomin'* Hangel! That's wot 'e is!"

And the Hospital Orderly was so satisfied with the justice of the punishment that he did not even order Private Dormer back to his cot.

IN THE MATTER OF A PRIVA

Hurrah! hurrah! a soldier's life for me!
Shout, boys, shout! for it makes you jolly and free.
—*The Ramrod Corps.*

PEOPLE who have seen, say that one of the queerest spectacles of human frailty is an outbreak of hysterics in a girls' school. It starts without warning, generally on a hot afternoon, among the elder pupils. A girl giggles till the giggle gets beyond control. Then she throws up her head, and cries, "*Honk, honk,*" like a wild goose, and tears mix with the laughter. If the mistress be wise, she will rap out somewhat severe at this point to check matters. If she be tender-hearted, and send for a drink of water, the chance is largely in favor of another girl laughing at the afflicted one and herself collapsing. Thus the trouble spreads and may end in half of what answers to the *La Sixth* of a boys' school rocking and whooping together. Given a week of warm weather, two stately promenades per diem, a heavy mutton and rice meal in the middle of the day, a certain amount of nagging of the teachers, and a few other things, some amusing effects develop. At least, this is what folk say who have had experience.