

BY MARY SPENCER WARREN. ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR.*



LANCE-CORPORAL FLANAGAN — THE OLDEST RANKER IN THE ARMY.

If you want a correct idea of what our Army is composed of, what it can do, and how it lives, you cannot do better than go to Aldershot, where you will find some 18,000 troops quartered, in this, the very stronghold of military life.

As you may suppose, the accommodation requisite for such a vast number is prodigious, and the North and South Camps are perfect towns composed of barracks.

My business is chiefly with the rank-and-file; but, as I have the opportunity of seeing the residence of the General in Command, and also

any of the Officers' Quarters, I proceed to these places first. As you know, His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught is the General in Command, his residence as such being Government House, Farnborough. This is an easy drive out from Aldershot,

* This paper was prepared by the special permission of His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, and Colonel T. Kelly-Kenny, A.A. General and Chief Staff-Officer, the latter kindly according every facility for the writer's visitation and inspection of the Aldershot Barracks.

through one of the Camps, and along some wonderfully pretty lanes, rich with sweet-smelling pines. The house—which stands back in some charming though not extensive grounds—is of only moderate size, but has an extremely picturesque appearance.

Inside, it seemed to me one of the most tasteful residences I have ever entered—drawing, dining and sitting rooms all showing perfection of arrangement. A special attraction is the number of beautiful Indian pictures, brought home as reminiscences of the Duke's residence in that country. The profusion of plants, too, must not be overlooked, more especially those in a sort of conservatory sitting-room, transposed by the Duchess from a former verandah. I have no intention, however, of describing the contents of Government House, and have only mentioned it as the residence of the Queen's son—a general who has done much for the betterment of the private soldier; and who may be best described, perhaps, in the words of a non-commissioned officer, with whom I afterwards talked, as "one of the kindest and smartest officers in the Service."

From here, I go to take a brief survey of some officers' quarters and an officers' club. The former are on a comfortable, if somewhat plain, scale. The exteriors are bright with flowers, and picturesque with trees; the interior most worth seeing is the dining-room, with its flowers and regimental plate. An ante-room (which is the only one I can photograph for the constant coming and going of the officers) has its chief and

most cherished decoration in the flags which hang there, one (the Beloochee Standard) having been captured in battle.

The club—for officers of all regiments—stands in very fine grounds, which include tennis courts and cricket ground; a good band enlivening proceedings.

Now to the real purpose of this paper, which is intended to show under what conditions the soldier lives, and whether he benefits or otherwise by joining the colours.

In these days of keen competition it is

research, and numerous interviews with all sorts and conditions, I unhesitatingly affirm that in the Army all these advantages can be secured by any well-conducted young man, whether of good education or no.

I am quite aware that many will at once say that, in their opinion, it is not the field for the energies of those who have been educated sufficiently for the clerk's desk or mercantile house, but that it is only a shelter for lazy ne'er-do-wells. Stay one moment. What do they really *know* about the Army,



OFFICERS' ANTE-ROOM.

somewhat difficult to select any trade that is not overcrowded and also underpaid. If you should succeed in gaining a fairly remunerative post, how long can you be sure of retaining it? Trade fluctuates, other and newer energy is brought to bear, and you are ousted from what you thought your stronghold, with no provision in hand for a "rainy day," and nothing before you but a weary round of letter-writing, and miles of tramping for situations that somebody has secured before your application. Is there, then, anything open to our young men that is likely to prove a certainty? where, no matter what happens, they are a fixture, and in prompt receipt of their pay, and not only that, but always have an opportunity of social and financial advancement? After exhaustive

and the prospects of those who enter its ranks? That it has been, and still is, a refuge for a percentage of disreputable characters, I cannot deny, but with such, as they enter, so they generally remain. Perhaps they do not go quite the length of dissipation they have formerly, as the punishment that would be brought to bear deters them; but the discipline often fails in completely curing, and many only just manage to keep within bounds, while others find their way to the military instead of civil prisons. But what calling is free from black sheep? Does not the black coat often cover vice and villainy that would insure the red coat being drummed from his regiment? Depend upon it, there are thousands of young men in the ranks whose conduct is such that no man need



GOVERNMENT HOUSE—THE OFFICIAL RESIDENCE OF
H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT.

be ashamed to call them friend and brother.

With a large majority of people the uniform seems to be indicative of disgrace, and the wearer of it an individual to be carefully avoided. I cannot help thinking that much of this is due to the custom of the officers never to appear in regimentals when not absolutely necessary. No sooner is parade, march, or field-day brought to a conclusion than they rush into *mufti*, as though ashamed of their profession, its accoutrements, and duties. This is sure to produce a dislike to uniform among civilians, and is calculated to plant and foster a certain sort of contempt with the soldier. To my mind, the Army is not only a lucrative profession, but also a very honourable one, and it is a matter of deep regret that it is not more popular.

That those who join its ranks thereby do a decidedly good thing for themselves I will now endeavour to show. First, as to the pay, applying, of course, to privates only—before promotion, good conduct pay, or any gratuity can be gained. This varies from 1s. per day in the Infantry, to 1s. 9d. per day in the Household Cavalry.

The pay may not seem much, but the clothes, board, and lodgings are items of considerable magnitude; and there are other and various privileges and allowances that go to make the position of the soldier a desirable one.

Of course, it is understood that each man is provided with a "free kit" on joining, consisting of serviceable articles of clothing and bedding, together with requisite articles for messing. Additional bedding is served out for winter, and necessary changes of

clothing are allowed for season and climatic variations. Some articles of clothing are renewed annually, so that with careful wear the men have very little expense in that direction. Many provide themselves with additional things, such as light walking boots (facetiously styled "lady-killers"), extra pairs of gloves, sticks, handkerchiefs, etc.; but this expenditure is optional, and the majority of the things not an absolute necessity.

So much for clothing; now with regard to rations. Here, again, our man is decidedly better off than he who is "something in the City" on small wage, whose luncheon (as he styles it) is of the lightest, or the agricultural labourer who only partakes of meat on an average of one day in seven. A soldier sits down to an ample meal three times in the day, with no thought or care for where the next is to come from; as regularly as the time comes round there it is, all ready for despatch. A certain number of men told off for the duty get ready each meal under directions; and bake, boil, stew, puddings, etc., are skilfully prepared and served to the hungry, hearty men, and soon disappear from view. I went through one of the cook-houses, where dinner was being prepared for three hundred and forty men; and a first-rate meal it was too—consisting of soup, roast beef and pudding. Splendid joints of meat, with the bones taken

out for the stock-pot. Having duly tasted, I can testify to the good quality.

During dinner an officer makes the détour of the barrack-room with the customary formula: "Any complaints?" Then is the time to speak if anything is wrong as to quality and quantity, and immediate redress is obtained if the grievance is real. The meals are served on long deal tables that are vigorously scrubbed after each serving. Just a few regiments put cloths on, but these are only a small minority.

Take into consideration that food is cooked *en masse*, and you will see at a glance that the allowance to each man can thus be made to go much further, and furnish a more substantial and savoury meal.

For special occasions—such as Christmas, for instance—a different ration is issued, much being given also by the officers, and roast beef, turkeys, plum pudding, and other good things, make glad the heart of every son of Mars.

Tea and sugar are commodities the soldier must pay for, but they are issued from the canteen, of better quality for a smaller outlay than can be obtained elsewhere; so that after reckoning for all stoppages, each man can average about 4s. 6d. per week for pocket-money. How many working men are there, who, after paying for everything—clothes, food, and lodging—have that amount actually in hand?

At these same canteens our man can purchase his ale and tobacco, and almost everything he can possibly want, for the lowest figure. Here he can sit in the evening, if he

chooses, and with music, song, small drama or farce, pass his time. The canteens are under the direction of a committee of officers, and are carried on under the most rigid investigation. Any profits that may accrue from sales go towards amusement and festivities for the men. The canteen I visited is used by two regiments, and will seat about five hundred, the men downstairs, and the non-commissioned officers in a gallery at the rear. The cost of entertainments averages £25 per month.

Coming to accommodation for sleeping and living, I am bound to confess that it might be better. At the same time, a very great improvement is manifest of late years. Where the men formerly lived in huts—low-roofed, cramped, and stifling—they now occupy large airy barracks; these being built in streets or avenues, many of them with trees planted at either side, and some even showing neat gardens.

Each barrack-room is constructed to hold from twelve to twenty men; the cots are arranged round the walls, and are so fashioned that they can be shut to half-size to sit on. All the occupants' clothes and odds-and-ends are arranged above on a shelf and in straps, with boots, etc., underneath. Pictures and photographs relieve the whitewashed walls. A long deal table and forms run down the centre of the room for messing, and here the whole twenty have to eat, sleep, clean their arms, boots, etc., and perform every requisite function. On some foreign stations, and occasionally at home, a separate dining-room is provided—the extension of this provision is much to be desired. One great consideration is, that although somewhat cramped, everything is most scrupulously clean, daily scrubbing operations being rigorously performed by the men themselves.

The sergeants' mess, the coffee bar, the recreation room, and temperance room, are in blocks apart; and two or three of these are of sufficient interest to photograph. First I may mention the sergeants' mess—this special one belonging to the Cheshire regiment; it is really two large rooms with a



HUTS, WHERE THE MEN FORMERLY LIVED.



A BARRACK ROOM.

mid archway. The walls are painted in buff, with a terra-cotta dado, on them hang large portraits of the Queen, Prince Consort, Prince and Princess of Wales, and a number of battle pictures, many of them being presentations. Amongst the latter I may mention the "Battle of the Boyne" and the "Roll Call." In one part of the room is a fine billiard table, at the other end being the dining table, with its crimson cloth and flowers in profusion. On the mantel is a collection of eighteen silver cups, some of them very fine ones, chief of which, perhaps, is one known as the "Viceroy's Cup." This was won by Sergeant

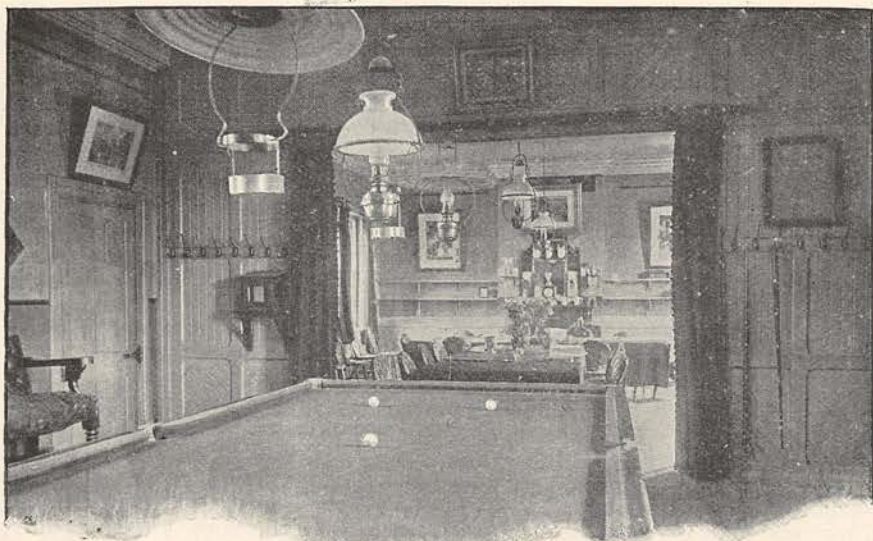
Walden in 1886-7, he at that time having the proud distinction of being the best shot in India.

The recreation room is a large, airy apartment, with a number of photographs of the Royal Family on the walls; a good piano at one end, two fine billiard tables, a substantial writing table, and several smaller ones for chess and draughts. In addition there is a good supply of daily and weekly papers.

At the coffee bar may be purchased all sorts of temperance drinks and light eatables. Long tables and forms are provided

for the visitors, and the place is made gay with advertisement cards of all sorts. The temperance room is after the style of the recreation room, only better furnished, inasmuch as the floor is carpeted, and the tables have cloths on. So much then for accommodation beyond what is afforded by sleeping quarters. And all these may be enjoyed by the men for the small subscription of 2d. per month.

Nearly every regiment has its cricket and football, and sometimes dramatic club. The annual sports are always quite an event, officers and men taking part, and vying with



THE SERGEANTS' MESS.

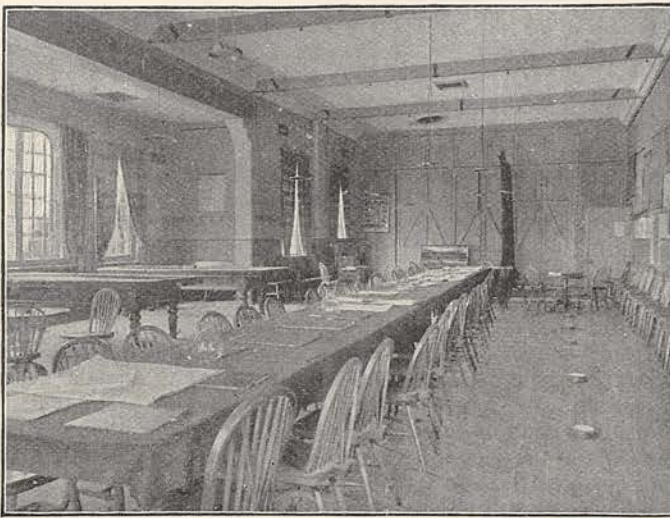
each other to make the affair the success it invariably is. Good prizes are given, and the attendance is large and fashionable.

One thing I was much struck with, and that was the very good bath-house for the use of each regiment: hot and cold water laid on, and the premises open all day to all comers.

Next to be considered is the soldier's education. He is compelled (unless an educated man) to attend the regimental school until he can take the fourth-class certificate, then if he chooses to discontinue he is at liberty to do so, although this course would be ill-advised, as each of the four certificates

who have risen from the ranks, while a few are annually rewarded with commissions as lieutenants. Nor must I forget the good-conduct pay, trade pay, etc.

Privates of good conduct, after two years' service, are granted 1d. a day, and after six years 2d. per day. If a man knows any trade he can, in addition to his regimental pay, earn from 4d. to 1s. 4d. per day extra. If promoted to corporal he has extra duty to perform, and then receives from 3d. to 1s. per day for his work. Taking this table, if an unskilled man of good conduct makes up his mind to it, he can at the end of, say, three



RECREATION ROOM.

that can be gained make him eligible for a step higher in rank—the first-class fitting him for an officer's commission.

As there are between seventy and eighty non-commissioned officers and about ten warrant officers to each regiment of cavalry and each battalion of infantry, numerous opportunities of promotion occur for the well-behaved soldier.

Speaking of non-commissioned officers, it may be as well to here quote the rate of pay for the same. In the first place, a man—if he is of good character—can gain his first step as lance-corporal at the end of two years' service, and receives, according to his regiment, from 1s. 3d. to 2s. 1d. a day. If he after a time rises to sergeant's rank he receives from 3s. 6d. to 5s., while a warrant officer, such as sergeant-major, has an average of 6s.

Riding-masters and quarter-masters head the list, with pay from 9s. 6d. to 15s. 6d. per day. All these positions are filled by men

years in the Infantry, be in receipt of about 12s. per week after all deductions, while a tradesman soldier can by that time be earning much more. Will it surprise some of our City clerks to learn that the pay of regimental clerks commences at 2s. 6d. per day? Many of the former would be glad of board, lodging, and clothes, and that amount of hard cash in addition.

Strong inducements are also offered the men to obtain prizes for good shooting, and everything is done that can possibly be done to help a man who is willing to help himself. Should he be on the sick list, there is the hospital, with every care and comfort, all free of expense. The one at Aldershot, called the Cambridge Hospital, is a fine, handsome building, very commodious, and standing right on a hill, from whence one can get a clear view of Farnborough and the country round.

The soldier's lot compares most favourably with civilian life in the way of the spare time and

annual holiday of the men. It depends very much to what branch of the Service the soldier belongs as to his daily leisure. Of course, if to the Cavalry, he has his horse to care for, but even then he is anything but overworked; while an Infantry man is practically free from about three in the afternoon. He is at liberty to leave barracks and go where he pleases, so long as he puts in an appearance by 10 p.m. If his conduct is good he can generally obtain a pass until midnight, should he require it. The exceptions are when he is told off for fatigue duty, or has to mount guard. The "fatigue" consists in the performance of the necessary work of the regiment; mounting guard means twenty-four hours in full uniform, two hours on "sentry-go" and four off, the latter being spent in the guard-room, either in front of the fire or reclining on the guard bed; he is allowed to smoke, but must remain in full dress all through the time. It is astonishing how well some of them, especially the old soldiers—will sleep through the relief time. No matter what is going on, nothing disturbs him until the words "Guard, turn out!" ring out; then, instantly, every man is on his feet. Continuing the holiday subject, occasionally a day's leave of absence can be obtained, and every year a furlough of *six weeks'* duration, with money paid in advance. How many clerks and tradesmen can say they enjoy a privilege of that description? Some fortunate individuals may get two weeks and wages the same, but many—mechanics and others—do not get that. The rule is, that if

they take a holiday they must lose the time, so large numbers never get one, as they cannot afford it. I am pleased to find that still greater facilities for travelling have been conceded to our brave defenders, inasmuch as the railway companies have generously allowed them, when in uniform, to obtain return tickets for single fare; by that means they can take more extensive and frequent journeys than formerly.

Very much more might be said of the advantages a soldier enjoys while serving with the colours; but I should also like to point out what is done to help him in the future, to set him on his feet when his time has expired.

The general length of service is seven years with the colours and five in the reserve, which latter means a short annual drill and a gratuity of £3. You will understand that I am speaking here of the simple rank-and-file. The men, then, are entitled to their discharge from active service at the end of seven years. I have heard numbers of the world's grumblers say that a man may give the best seven years of his life, then be thrown on the world to do as he can, and that he is practically worthless for civil life. Now, glance at the actual facts.

In the first place, £3 per annum has been accumulating for him as "deferred pay"; this gives him a total of £21. How many working men can put their hands on the like amount? Added to this—if he has been a careful man—he can have more than doubled the amount by his savings; so that, as a



COFFEE BAR.

matter of fact, he can leave the Service with between £40 and £50 in hard cash, and a good suit of civilian clothes presented to him by the Government. Not a bad start that! At the present moment I know a flourishing tradesman who formerly served his seven years, then married and opened a newsagent's shop; he now drives his own carts and serves other and smaller businesses. If, however, our man is seeking employment, there is a register kept in all regimental districts to help him to obtain it, and in addition to this he is eligible for the police, the railway, and the post office.

The National Association—having its chief office at Buckingham Street, Strand, and branches in all the principal towns—registers the men free of charge. Also he can, for a payment of £2, join the Commissionaires, where he is certain of work of some sort—the members being employed by many large firms in trustworthy offices, also acting as night telegraph messengers, check-takers at theatres, race-meetings, etc.

Their average earnings are 28s. per week, but if well educated they can earn from 30s. to 50s. weekly wage. Out of every shilling earned the members must pay a penny to the corps, this going towards clothes, etc. There is also a rule that every man must pay in at least 1s. per week to the bank, for which he receives 4 per cent. interest. He can, if he chooses, live at the corps' headquarters, paying 3s. 3d. weekly for single room, or sharing double-bedded room for a smaller amount. There are also separate quarters for married men. If a man is ill, he has about 8s. per week from the sick fund.

Numbers of the men, however, do not leave the Army when their term is up. Some are getting on, and aspire to still higher rank; some are

on foreign service, and take on again, receiving a bounty for so doing. Many serve their twenty-one years, and are then entitled to a life pension varying from 7s. 7d. to £1 6s. 3d. per week for non-commissioned officers and men, and £1 1s. to £1 15s. for warrant officers. It must here be borne in mind that many men, even after long service, are still capable of years of work, as, joining the colours at an average of nineteen years of age, a soldier is discharged at forty, a strong, hearty man, with a large amount in hand from deferred pay and savings, and a certain income for the remainder of his days.

Many remain from love of the Service: such an one is Flanagan, a man of the Cheshires, who has served with the colours for no less a period than thirty-seven years, and who was really the first man on the roll of the 2nd Battalion, then commanded by the present General David Anderson. A quarter of a century of his time has been spent on foreign service. He enjoys the distinction of having served for a greater number of consecutive years than any man on the Army strength. He is a lance-corporal, and wears the highest number of good-conduct badges that a soldier is entitled to; and has the Indian medal and clasp. He is a great favourite with the officers and men of the regiment, and—as they say—can show front with the best man of the brigade.

I have as briefly as possible gone thoroughly into the question; and, though undoubtedly many thousands do better in civil life than they would ever do as soldiers, yet I trust I have succeeded in proving that the Army, with its fair and regular pay, its immense facilities for promotion, its life of complete freedom from care, and other numerous advantages, is a fine opening and a brilliant profession for well-conducted young men.



LOVEDAY: A TALE OF A STIRRING TIME.

By A. E. WICKHAM, Author of "Two Women," etc.

CHAPTER XX.—TARLETON TELLS.



LAST October I went to Exeter," began Tarleton.

Food and excitement had brought a flush to his thin, fallen-in cheeks, but dark marks still encircled his eyes, and his thick lips trembled with rage. His

hand shook so that the cup he raised to his mouth spilled half its contents on the table.

"I knew one or two fellows in the town—Saltern, who lives near the cathedral, and Davey. You remember them at school?"

He addressed Hugh's back.

"Yes, I remember Davey."

"They were full of a Mr. Moreland, his daughter and niece, who had come to live in a house—a small house—in a side street."

"Where had they come from?" said Hugh.

"From London, they said."

"There was no castle in Scotland, then?"