

It's like a book, I think, this bloomin' world,  
Which you can read and care for just so long,  
But presently you feel that you will die  
Unless you get the page you're readin' done,  
An' turn another--likely not so good;  
But what you're after is to turn 'em all.

Gawd bless this world! Whatever she 'ath done--  
Excep' when awful long--I've found it good.  
So write, before I die, "'E liked it all!"

#### BARRACK-ROOM BALLADS.

When 'Omer smote 'is bloomin' lyre,  
He'd 'eard men sing by land an' sea;  
An' what he thought 'e might require,  
'E went an' took--the same as me!

The market-girls an' fishermen,

The shepherds an' the sailors, too,  
They 'eard old songs turn up again,  
But kep' it quiet--same as you!

They knew 'e stole; 'e knew they knowed.  
They didn't tell, nor make a fuss,  
But winked at 'Omer down the road,  
An' 'e winked back--the same as us!

"BACK TO THE ARMY AGAIN."

I'm 'ere in a ticky ulster an' a broken billycock 'at,  
A-layin' on to the sergeant I don't know a gun from a bat;  
My shirt's doin' duty for jacket, my sock's stickin' out o' my boots,  
An' I'm learnin' the damned old goose-step along o' the new recruits!

Back to the Army again, sergeant,  
Back to the Army again.  
Don't look so 'ard, for I 'aven't no card,  
I'm back to the Army again!

I done my six years' service. 'Er Majesty sez: "Good day--

You'll please to come when you're rung for, an' 'ere's your 'ole back  
pay;

An' fourpence a day for baccy--an' bloomin' gen'rous, too;

An' now you can make your fortune--the same as your orf'cers do."

Back to the Army again, sergeant,

Back to the Army again;

'Ow did I learn to do right-about turn?

I'm back to the Army again!

A man o' four-an'-twenty that 'asn't learned of a trade--

Beside "Reserve" agin' him--'e'd better be never made.

I tried my luck for a quarter, an' that was enough for me,

An' I thought of 'Er Majesty's barricks, an' I thought I'd go an' see.

Back to the Army again, sergeant,

Back to the Army again;

'Tisn't my fault if I dress when I 'alt--

I'm back to the Army again!

The sergeant arst no questions, but 'e winked the other eye,

E' sez to me, "'Shun!" an' I shunted, the same as in days gone by;

For 'e saw the set o' my shoulders, an' I couldn't 'elp 'oldin'

straight

When me an' the other rookies come under the barrick gate.

Back to the Army again, sergeant,  
Back to the Army again;  
'Oo would ha' thought I could carry an' port?  
I'm back to the Army again!

I took my bath, an' I wallered--for, Gawd, I needed it so!  
I smelt the smell o' the barricks, I 'eard the bugles go.  
I 'eard the feet on the gravel--the feet o' the men what drill--  
An' I sez to my flutterin' 'eartstrings, I sez to 'em, "Peace, be  
still!"

Back to the Army again, sergeant,  
Back to the Army again;  
'Oo said I knew when the Jumner was due?  
I'm back to the Army again!

I carried my slops to the tailor; I sez to 'im, "None o' your lip!  
You tight 'em over the shoulders, an' loose 'em over the 'ip,  
For the set o' the tunic's 'orrid." An' 'e sez to me, "Strike me dead,  
But I thought you was used to the business!" an' so 'e done what I  
said.

Back to the Army again, sergeant,  
Back to the Army again.  
Rather too free with my fancies? Wot--me?  
I'm back to the Army again!

Next week I'll 'ave 'em fitted; I'll buy me a walkin' cane;  
They'll let me free o' the barricks to walk on the Hoe again  
In the name o' William Parsons, that used to be Edward Clay,  
An'--any pore beggar that wants it can draw my fourpence a day!

Back to the Army again, sergeant,  
Back to the Army again:  
Out o' the cold an' the rain, sergeant,  
Out o' the cold an' the rain.

'Oo's there?

A man that's too good to be lost you,  
A man that is 'andled an' made--  
A man that will pay what 'e cost you  
In learnin' the others their trade--parade!  
You're droppin' the pick o' the Army  
Because you don't 'elp 'em remain,  
But drives 'em to cheat to get out o' the street  
An' back to the Army again!

"BIRDS OF PREY" MARCH.