

We'd starve? What do I care!

We might, but this is shore:

I want the name--no more--

The name, an' lines to show,

An' not to be an 'ore....

Ah, Gawd, I love you so!

What's the good o' pleadin', when the mother that bore you

(Mary, pity women!) knew it all before you?

Sleep on 'is promises an' wake to your sorrow,

(Mary, pity women!) for we sail to-morrow!

FOR TO ADMIRE.

The Injian Ocean sets an' smiles

So sof', so bright, so bloomin' blue;

There aren't a wave for miles an' miles

Excep' the jiggle from the screw.

The ship is swep', the day is done,

The bugle's gone for smoke an' play;

An' black agin' the settin' sun

The Lascar sings, "Hum deckty hai!"[9]

For to admire an' for to see,
For to be'old this world so wide--
It never done no good to me,
But I can't drop it if I tried!

I see the sergeants pitchin' quoits,
I 'ear the women laugh an' talk,
I spy upon the quarter-deck
The officers an' lydies walk.
I thinks about the things that was,
An' leans an' looks acrost the sea,
Till, spite of all the crowded ship,
There's no one lef' alive but me.

The things that was which I 'ave seen,
In barrick, camp, an' action too,
I tells them over by myself,
An' sometimes wonders if they're true;
For they was odd--most awful odd--
But all the same now they are o'er,
There must be 'eaps o' plenty such,
An' if I wait I'll see some more.

Oh, I 'ave come upon the books,
An' often broke a barrick rule,

An' stood beside an' watched myself
Be'avin' like a bloomin' fool.
I paid my price for findin' out,
Nor never grutched the price I paid,
But sat in Clink without my boots,
Admirin' 'ow the world was made.

Be'old a cloud upon the beam,
An' 'umped above the sea appears
Old Aden, like a barrick-stove
That no one's lit for years an' years!
I passed by that when I began,
An' I go 'ome the road I came,
A time-expired soldier-man
With six years' service to 'is name.

My girl she said, "Oh, stay with me!"
My mother 'eld me to 'er breast.
They've never written none, an' so
They must 'ave gone with all the rest--
With all the rest which I 'ave seen
An' found an' known an' met along.
I cannot say the things I feel,
But still I sing my evenin' song:

For to admire an' for to see,

For to be'old this world so wide--
It never done no good to me,
But I can't drop it if I tried!

FOOTNOTES:

[9] "I'm looking out."

L'ENVOI

When Earth's last picture is painted, and the tubes are twisted and
dried,
When the oldest colours have faded, and the youngest critic has died,
We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it--lie down for an æon or
two,
Till the Master of All Good Workmen shall set us to work anew!

And those that were good shall be happy: they shall sit in a golden
chair;
They shall splash at a ten-league canvas with brushes of comets' hair;
They shall find real saints to draw from--Magdalene, Peter, and Paul;

They shall work for an age at a sitting and never be tired at all!

And only the Master shall praise us, and only the Master shall blame;

And no one shall work for money, and no one shall work for fame;

But each for the joy of the working, and each, in his separate star,

Shall draw the Thing as he sees It for the God of Things as They Are!