

Grady's Squad

By JOHN M. OSKISON.

CORPORAL Grady, young and enthusiastic, was getting his squad together for a special evening drill under the big arc lights at the end of X Company street.

"Squad four, fall in!"

"Grady, what in?"—The rest was shocking, coming from big Morrisey. But Morrisey reached wearily under his cot and dragged out his rifle; he buckled on a wide canvas cartridge belt and limped outside the tent.

"Come back here, Lester!" The corporal saw his tenderest lamb ducking away in the general direction of the Y. M. C. A. tent, where hurried and frequent letters to a girl in New Hampshire were composed. Lester came back whistling, to hide his disappointment.

Brown and Hardy returned from the Camp Exchange untidy as to face and hands because of a bag of very ripe plums. Grady took one as he sprinted across the street to rouse Searles and Crawford, the two members of his squad not quartered in tent 31. Gentleman Phillips was all ready, standing easily under the stars, bareheaded and serene.

"Fall in," Grady ordered again, and stood facing his squad.

Phillips moved up from No. 4, rear rank, to take Grady's place, and Searles, at No. 3, rear rank, moved into Phillips's place.

"Squad, attention!" commanded Grady, his voice a little uncertain in the upper register. "Squad, forward!"

Nobody moved, for Morrisey had cautioned, *sotto voce*, "Wait for the command of execution!"

"What the?"—began Grady, then remembered. "I was wrong. Squad, forward, march!" The seven stepped off toward the arc lights.

"On a 'forward, march!' command," muttered the critical Morrisey, "you don't have to precede it with 'squad.'"

"Squad, halt!" It was a ragged halt. "I got you, Morry," remarked Grady. "You were right. Dress up to the left! Attention!"

"Should have given 'attention' before the order to dress," insisted Morrisey.

"Right again—oh, hell!" Grady's fingers were fumbling the stock of his rifle, as his memory fumbled the drill instructions. "I want you fellows to call me down on this drill." "We're at 'attention,' and can't talk," objected Morrisey.

"At ease!" Grady sputtered. "You ought to have given 'rest!'" said Morrisey.

"Rest!" shouted Grady. "I may make every mistake in the regulations, but I'm going to drill this squad for ten minutes."

"That's the stuff!" said Brown. "Mistakes is the middle name of this squad—but it won't be if we all collaborate with the Corp."

"Now, attention!" cried Grady. "Forward, march!" The rifles came to right shoulder in seven distinct cadences, and the squad split to get past a large telephone pole. "Column right!"

"Pardon me, Corporal," ventured Phillips. "You don't give 'column right' to the squad; it's 'right turn!'"

"Squad, halt!" The rifles came down reluctantly. "At ease—I mean rest!" Grady stood opposite Phillips. "Who's got a copy of the drill regulations?" Grady challenged.

"I'll beat it to the tent and get mine," volunteered Hardy. When he came back, Grady took the book and turned to the "School of the Squad" to read:

"To turn on moving pivot, being in line—right turn, march! The movement is executed by each rank successively and on the same ground." That's right, Phillips. Grady read on dejectedly. He thrust the little volume in his breeches pocket and straightened.

"Attention! Forward, march! One, two, three—bring your rifles up together!"

"In the best military families they call 'em 'pieces,'" Morrisey admonished.

"Squad, halt!" shrieked Grady. "Right again, Morry. Come out and take command of the squad for five minutes."

Morrisey hesitated. "U—Morrisey!" urged Brown. "I'll help you if you go wrong." Grady fell in at No. 4, and Lester moved up to take Morrisey's place.

"Forward!" commanded Morrisey, and the squad was about to step off when Brown whispered savagely, "Wait for 'march!' the command of execution, you boobs." Morrisey had stepped out as he bellowed his command, but stopped to turn a surprised look upon the waiting seven.

"We await the command of execution, oh Caliph!" reminded Brown. "The voice should rise on the preparatory command, and the command of execution should come out with a snap."

"Brown, you take the squad," ordered Grady. So they wrangled and scrambled through half an hour of drill not required by the camp routine. They brought up in a drooping, perspiring huddle at the door of tent 31, and resolved themselves into a low-voiced debating society, whose subject for debate seemed to be the wisdom of the makers of drill regulations. Beyond the board fence separating the camp from the world stood an ice cream booth. The squad's debate ended in a motion, put by Grady, to adjourn to its hospitable counter and destroy eight dripping cones. But Lester begged off, and resumed his interrupted march on the Y. M. C. A. tent; his whistling as he went expressed an eager heart.

Tattoo was sounding as the seven clattered back into the camp grounds—9 o'clock, and lights out!

"Good night, Searles! Good night, Crawford!" Lester came slowly down the company street to tent 31, flexing a lame right arm. There was incoherent talk as the six men undressed, rolled up the sides of the tent and hauled blankets snug about their necks. From tent 30, ten feet away, came a coarse voice:

"Hey, you fellows! Save that chatter for a conversational manual! We want to sleep."

"All right, precious! Sweet dreams!" In five minutes Grady, little father of Squad 4, was snoring rhythmically. Of course, Squad 4 was the best squad of

FINGER-NAILS HAS GOT A LANGUAGE

By BLANCHE BRACE

"SHOW me your nails, and I'll show you what you are," said the manicure miss, digging her file into the quick of her customer's third finger, with a dreamy smile.

"Yes, and I can tell you whether you come from Skeeunk or Paris, whether you belong in The Bronx, or on the Avenue. I can tell you whether or not you've got Newyorkitis, and just how violent your case is.

"Understand the psychology of nails, do I? Sure, that's me. There ain't nothing I can't tell from them—what your morals are, and your mind, if any, and little things like that. I can tell without looking at your feet whether you wear white kid boots that cost \$7 a pair, or whether you take the elevator up, and save \$2.50."

It was very wonderful. There she was, only a manicure miss—hit or miss, I've even heard her women patrons call her, when her file ran bloodily far afield, while she gave tongue to great philosophies. Yet, there within a buffer's throw of the Grand Central Station, right in the midst of her daily toil, she had worked out a noble new cult, turning the snip of her little curved scissors and the slap of the pink goo into a poetry and a religion. She was the Miss Bobby Burns of the Buffer, the Miss Abe Lincoln of the Nails, and I asked her to enlarge upon her ardent theories.

"It's like this," she began, going on filing, automatically, while she fixed her eyes raply on the ceiling. "Everything in the world's got a language. You know—flowers, and postage stamps, and how to drop handkerchiefs in the hotel lobby, and all that. Well, finger nails has got a language, too, and I know what it is. That's all."

I assured her that it wasn't all. It wouldn't be proper, I told her, for my nails perhaps at that very minute to be talking gossip or scandal, or passing on to other digits the off-color jokes from the latest musical comedy, while I knew nothing about it. Now that she had brought up the subject, she must furnish me with a phrase book to the language of the finger nail.

"Take what I said about knowing where you come from, by your nails," she said. "That's straight. They're regular little baggage labels, nails is. Take that last lady I did. She was from Boston. You always know them, because they ask for a quietly cultured polish, no real shine at all, and insist upon having nails shaped like half-moons, when every one else is having them with a tooth pick point. That's right.

"We get a lot of brides here, being so close

to the Grand Central Station. Been spending their honeymoon and their husband's cash at Niagara Falls, you know, and run on over to have a look at the Big City, so they can hold hands in the shadow of the Metropolitan Tower. Well, they come to us, naturally—all women who have their hands held take good care of their nails, you know. When you see a woman who don't, you may know that she's never been in love, or that her husband's quit flirting with her, or that she's an old maid. Fact. Well, the funny thing about those little brides is that they always insist on having the pink left on. It ain't good form, you know, but that's the way they will have it. Maybe it's because they're seeing life through a pinky glow, and can't bear to have any of it rubbed off. Or maybe it ain't that."

She paused, and sawed gently at the third finger of my right hand with her manicure scissors, evidently in two minds whether or not to amputate it. Finally she decided to leave it on.

"Yes," she went on. "There sure are regular equatorial divisions among nails. Take the average girl from The Bronx, frinstance. She wants a celluloid finish, and isn't happy with anything else. I guess it's something in the air up there. But the Fifth Avenue girl goes in for individuality, in finger nails. 'You gotta make 'em suit my style,' she says. 'I want a finger nail to make me look tall and slender.' 'Please give me the clinging vine finish,' or, 'I must have an interesting nail—sort of witty one, y'know?' And, of course, we do know, and we give it to her. That's our job.

"The Broadway element isn't so hard to suit. It ain't original, it's imitative. Give it a Charlie Chaplin shine or a Billie Burke cut, and it's satisfied, as a rule. Sometimes the singers insist upon soulful nails, and we give it to them. I ain't very strong for soulful nails, myself, but every one to his own likin'."

"Upstate they always have square nails, and they wear 'em short. Did you ever notice that? But of course you never did. Poughk'psie, though, wants 'em shaped like an acute triangle, and folks from New England have 'em done like half a berry pie.

"We sort the nails from Albany and some of the wards here at home into two piles—the graft and the governmental. When you don't know whether a man's a statesman or a grafter, all you have to do is to look at his nails. No, I can't exactly tell you what it is;

it's just something that you have to feel. Maybe a grafter will come in, and I can show you what I mean. The last statesman was in year before last.

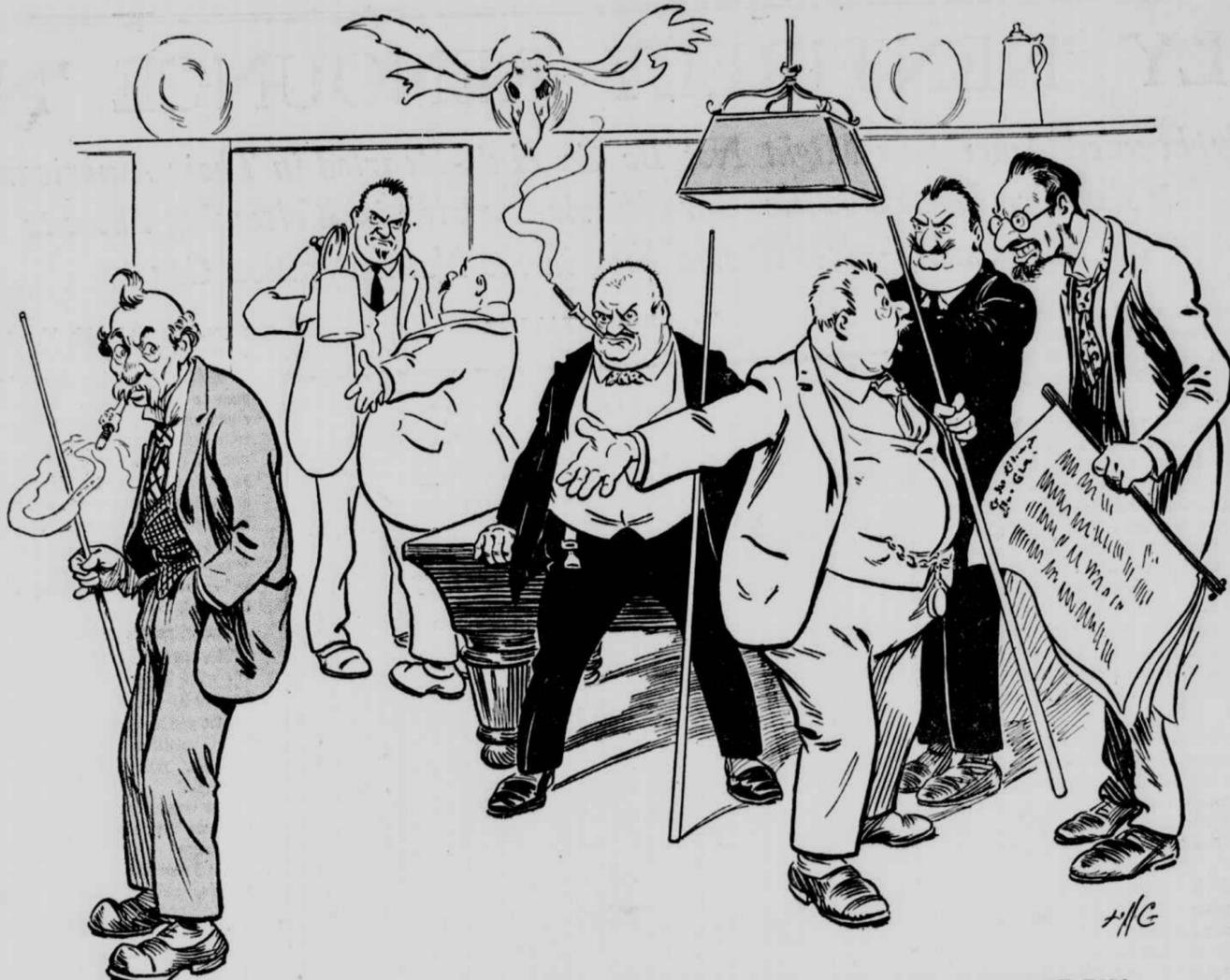
"Speaking generally, the men who come to us are of two kinds—those who say soft things about liking to have a pretty girl hold their hands, and how they could go on having their



"It Takes from Three to Five Years to Build Up a Real New York Nail."

Ethel Plummer

LUCKLESS HERR VON HANDKASE MAKES THE FIERCE BREAK OF PUTTING A LITTLE ENGLISH ON THE BALL.



A Plattsburg Yarn

the company's sixteen, just as X Company was the best in the provisional regiment. Of course! And Grady was the best d-d corporal hammered out of the thousand rookies who reported!

Grady encouraged controversy, criticism and comment. He early discovered Morrisey's rabid fear of a German invasion, and forthwith raised the question of England's "tyrannical control of the sea." They fought to a point where Morrisey cried out passionately: "The worst mistake we ever made in this country was to revolt against England!"

"Cheers for King George!" Grady danced in delight. On a later day, when the squad was stretched in rest on the soft grass of the parade ground, Brown bestowed upon Morrisey the name that stuck. Morrisey was disposed comfortably on his back, pillowing his head upon a well arranged pack, when Brown dropped down beside him.

"Morry," he wheedled, "may I rest my head upon the German Peril?"

The German Peril proved to be a far-travelled rookie, stored with intimate gossip of Balkan diplomatic agents, of the American colony in Paris, of revolutionary leaders in Central America. He shared with Phillips a passion for Montaigne and with no one an exaggerated reverence for English common law.

Phillips, born to leisure, seemed never to have used it; he was the squad's model of alert efficiency—never hurried, never ruffled, never late. If he tired, he never spoke of it; if his feet went sore, no one but himself and the doctor knew it. He turned out to be the squad's pride on the rifle range. He became left sergeant of his cavalry platoon on the strength of his love for horses and his intimate understanding of the mounted man's poise. By the very perfection of his self-effacement he became a personality. Speak of Gentleman Phillips to any rookie of X Company and you would get the comment:

"Pawdon—a bully chap!" It was mockery, but with no sting.

In Hardy, impulsive stock broker, the squad acquired its one "bolo man." Out of a possible score of 250 for the 50 shots fired at the targets at four different ranges, Hardy scored 142—in the judgment of army gossips proof that he would be more dangerous armed with a bolo than with a rifle.

The squad is the unit of a fighting force—the one essential, important unit. Its commander, the corporal, is the sustaining hand for all who outrank him—sergeant, lieutenant, captain, and clear up to the general in command. He builds the squad spirit, that indefinable quality of respect for discipline, alertness and eagerness to act which makes an army invincible.

Grady roused in those seven men—broker, diplomat, man of leisure, lawyer, writer, merchant, manufacturer—the fighting, striving spirit. He made the squad conspicuous for its zip. It was a tough job, fit for a youngster of Irish blood. That he did it, Grady probably never knew. Near the end of the camp he looked his men over and took stock of his own deficiencies. Then he said:

"A rookie leading rookies—what could be worse!"

There was an instant chorus of protest from the seven.

"Nix!" Brown specified. "The best d-d corp. in the company!"

"You know it!" supplemented Searles.

for the first time, always are. The women try to throw a bluff, and pretend they've been used to it from the cradle. But the men get scared to death, and go all limp, and you have to prop up their paws against the hand mirror. Yes.

"It ain't always such a scream, though. There's the middle aged married woman who comes in with her fingers all over peach stain from making preserves, and soggy with dish-water, and wants 'em restored to their youthful slowness and beauty. You can tell her age just from looking at her nails. You always can, in fact."

"What?" I exclaimed, jerking my hand away.

"Say," said the manicure miss. "Don't you put that down. D'y'e want to ruin my trade?"

"—ABSULY 'NENTIRELY—"

Continued from Page One.

if America had been a little more whole-hearted in welcoming them to citizenship—if she had shown a little more interest in them at a time when that interest would have mattered to them tremendously.

Franklin Lane would have done it. Read over again the last part of the ritual he wrote for those Indians. Get your district leader to read it, and your Congressman. Then think what it would mean to a newly naturalized American if he could repeat a pledge like that.

When it comes time for Franklin K. Lane to go; when, in obedience to the inscrutable workings of Providence and politics, it becomes necessary to supersede him as Secretary of the Interior by some eminent—Republican—manufacturer of cloaks and suits or plumber fixtures; when that happens I wish he might be persuaded to go to the second floor of the Federal Building, at the lower end of City Hall Park, and show us how to welcome our new citizens. If there were more Franklin K. Lanes in this country there would be fewer phenates.

nails done forever, and those who don't. Mostly it's the married men who are in the first class—and you can dope their age out from the fact that the further the other side of forty-five they get the more sentimental they are. Last week one of the fifty-odd who usually hands out the best line of talk had his wife with him when he came in, and didn't dare say a word. It was real pathetic."

She tried unsuccessfully to pry off the thumb nail of my left hand, with an orange wood stick, and lapsed into a sulky silence at her failure. Resisting an impulse to put the injured digit into my mouth, I inquired what she had meant by Newyorkitis, and how finger nails revealed symptoms of it.

"It's a disease more common than appendicitis, and twice as fatal," she declared. "It's what makes the women from Paris, Ill., call the village 'little old N'York,' and try to pretend that their baby eyes first blinked at the Woolworth Tower, before they've learned not to take a Third Avenue 'L' to get to Grant's Tomb. I've shined about 112 nails to-day, from various parts of the globe, and the only owners of 'em who didn't try to convince me they were New Yorkers were the ones who really belonged in New York. And they were busy knocking the place.

"A dozen operations wouldn't take this New York craze out of folks' systems. And it comes out something dreadful in their nails. They want them done like real New York ones, and they don't hesitate to say so. It's the one thing that I can't do for 'em. It takes from three to five years to build up a real New York nail, and it is never so successful unless done in childhood."

"You said something about morals and mind," I reminded her.

"Sure," she said. "Once I turned a murderer over to the police—didn't you read about it in the papers? No, it wasn't no blood stain that gave me the clew. He just had criminal nails, that was all. That and a scar on his wrist the posters had told about. And once I located a rich miner from Alaska by the gold dust under his nails. But I didn't have sense enough to keep it to myself, and the yellow-haired manicure who used to sit next the door married him first."

Being a philosopher, she chuckled over the mishap.

"Say, he was a funny one!" she said. "Folks who come in to have their nails did