

author's point of view. It is a story of American naval life, or more specifically life in the United States marines. Perhaps the best way to express the present reviewer's source of antagonism to the whole spirit of the book is to say that it recalled, by way of contrast, a short story written many years ago by Major,—or as he then was, Captain—Charles King. The story in question dealt with a private in the army, stationed at some isolated Western post. The man in question, little more than a boy, is suffering from acute homesickness. To the keen eyes of the commanding officer's wife, it is obvious that what he misses is the ministration of women, mother, sisters, perhaps some one still nearer and dearer. But the companionship of womankind is precisely what it is impossible for him to have, because he is only an enlisted private, and strict army discipline forbids even the briefest friendly talk between a private, no matter how refined, and an officer's wife or daughter. And the consequence is that the good woman, who would so gladly have mothered the poor lad, must stand aside and see him eat his heart out, until one day he commits suicide,—and all because the iron discipline of the army must be preserved at any cost,—and rightly so.

But in *The Wall Between* we have a parallel situation portrayed in a spirit of revolt. Mr. Paine obviously is not in sympathy with the traditions of the service, and he proceeds to set them at defiance. Kendall is an enlisted man who by sheer force of character and executive ability has worked his way up to the position of assistant quartermaster, the highest position he can hope to hold. He has entered the service under a shadow, an undeserved one, for he is bearing the burden of his father's financial errors; but he still has friends who believe in him, and while on leave of absence, he re-visits old scenes and as a malicious fate will have it, is brought face to face with a certain Lieutenant Burkett, one of his own superior officers. Naturally, the lieutenant resents being forced to meet on terms of equality one of his own men and a most

"THE WALL BETWEEN"

The Wall Between, by Ralph D. Paine, is either an enjoyable or a keenly annoying volume, according as the reader finds himself in sympathy or not with the

unpleasant altercation follows, in which Kendall addresses the lieutenant in terms which under ordinary circumstances would have led to court-martial, which he escapes through a sheer technicality. Now, while on leave, he has met and fallen in love with a girl who turns out to be the niece of his own colonel, and who also has awakened the interest of Lieutenant Burkett. All of which is the prelude to a lengthy series of intrigues and falsehoods, designed by Burkett to ruin the man who has incurred his animosity. In the end, Sergeant Kendall wins glorious laurels at the battle of Managua, Lieutenant Burkett disgraces himself by cowardice in face of the enemy, the Colonel's niece defies navy traditions and her mother's commands, and openly avows her intention of marrying the Sergeant. But the latter, recognising that the Wall Between would always remain, shutting out his wife from the social sphere in which she was born, resigns from the service and contents himself with the cashiership of a modest bank in a country town. All of which the author obviously believes is a convincing proof of the iniquity of naval discipline. Yet it is quite likely that a good many intelligent people will refuse to be convinced that the good of the service would be promoted by the establishment of something on the order of the free and easy and utterly illogical social relations that have made Mr. W. S. Gilbert's *Captain of the Mantelpiece* memorable.