

**"TELL IT TO THE MARINES!"**

Since the days when our great grandmothers wore those cute, frilled and lacey pantalettes and the scoop-shovel hats from which Samuel Morse obtained the wire necessary to the completion of his first telegraph lines, America has been repeating this injunction. For so long a time that the memory of the present generation runneth not to the contrary. "Tell it to the Marines" has been a much-used part of the average American's vocabulary of catch phrases.

And yet there appears to be a universal ignorance of the origin and proper interpretation of this saying. As handed down from one generation to the other, the meaning of "Tell it to the Marines" has been so twisted and contorted that the average American has employed it in a jeering, derogatory sense and has accompanied it with an upward turn of a scornful lip.

On the printed page, too, "Tell it to the Marines" has been employed to convey a meaning almost the exact opposite to that intended by the author of the saying, who was none other than the good-natured, ease-loving King Charles II of England in the middle of the Seventeenth Century.

Illustrating the wrong interpretation writers have placed on the expression is the following from the pen of one who had otherwise displayed extreme care as to accuracy of detail in presenting a short history of the achievements of the United States Marines:

"The old time salt had a feeling of contempt for land-lubbers, and because the Marines did not actually work the ship, the sailors considered them gullible and ignorant. Hence the expression, 'Tell it to the Marines.'"

Now as to the true interpretation of this famous saying of which the United States Marine is more than proud:

The saying is traced to Pepys, author of the famous diary, and it is said by him to have originated with King Charles II of England.

It so befell, the story goes, that his light-hearted majesty, with an exceedingly bored expression on his swarthy face, was strolling in the shade with

the ingenious Mr. Pepys, secretary to the Admiralty.

"I had a speech yesterday at Deptford," said Mr. Pepys, "with Captain of the Defiance, who hath but lately returned from the Indies and who told me the two most wonderful things that ever I think I did hear in my life." Among the stories told were those of fish flying in the air.

"Fish flying in the air!" exclaimed his majesty. "Ha, ha, a quaint conceit which 'twere too good to spoil with keeping. What, Sir the turned and beckoned to the Colonel, Sir William Killigrey of the newly raised maritime regiment on foot, who was following in close conversation with the Duke of York). We would discourse with you on a matter touching your element. What say you, Colonel, to a man who swears he hath seen fishes flying in the air?"

"I should say, Sire," returned the sea soldier simply, "that the man hath sailed Southern Seas. For when your Majesty's business carried me thither of late I did frequently observe more flying fish in one hour than the hairs of my head in number."

Old Rowley glanced narrowly at the Colonel's frank weatherbeaten face. Then with a laugh he turned to the secretary and said, "Mr Pepys, from the very nature of their calling, no class of our subjects can have so wide a knowledge of seas and lands as the officers and men of our loyal maritime regiment. Henceforth whenever we cast doubt upon a tale that lacketh likelihood we will tell it to the Marines—if they believe, it is safe to say it is true."

Is it any wonder, then, that the United States Marine is proud of that saying?

A Marine can do anything. A Marine has been everywhere. A Marine knows everything. If in doubt, ask a Marine. If it is true, a Marine will tell you so. If it is a lie, a Marine will brand it as such. For a Marine KNOWS.

This, then, is the present-day meaning of the saying, "Tell it to the Marines."

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Gratitude is not only the memory but the homage of the heart—rendered to God for his goodness.—N. P. Willis.


The power of fortune is confessed only by the miserable, for the happy impute all their success to prudence or merit.—Swift.

Cicero calls gratitude the mother of virtues, the most capital of all duties, and uses the words grateful and good as synonymous terms, inseparably united in the same character.—Bate.

I am more and more convinced that our happiness or unhappiness depends far more on the way we met the events of life, than on the nature of those events themselves.—Humboldt.

True gentleness is love in society, holding intercourse with those around it. It is considerateness; it is tenderness of feeling; it is promptitude of sympathy; it is love in all its depths, and in all its delicacy.

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