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Kipling's women

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KIPLING'S WOMEN

BY

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College of the State University of Iowa in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of
Arts

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OUTLINE

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Even the most ardent admirers of Rudyard Kipling as a writer must admit that the women characters of both his prose and his poetry receive the unmistakable condemnation of many readers. Critics unite in hurling bombs of reproach at this English literary genius for his lack of gallantry and chivalry. Indeed they censure him not only for what is wanting in the women of his stories but for positive reasons as well -- because of unattractive and unwomanly traits which he has seen fit to give to some of his female characters. Kipling is accused of brutality, cynicism and orientalism. Mr. R. Thurston Hopkins accuses him of orientalism, and says also that the woman is not normal who is a Kiplingite! He thinks she should not even read of such barbarism against her sex. The defects in Kipling, according to William Lyon Phelps, are coarseness and cynicism. "A woman rejoicing in the perusal of these tales seems as much out of place as she does in the office of a cheap country hotel, reeking with the fumes of whiskey and stale tobacco and adorned with men who spit with astonishing accuracy into distant receptacles." Mr. Richard LeGallienne speaks of Kipling's view of women as "in general, amused, somewhat contemptuous and bitter
and entirely fatherly." J. W. Clark thinks that Kipling has not given us women "well-observed, sweet, pleasant, human, strongly weak, and, above all, distinctly feminine." He would say that the Kipling women are neither lovable nor respectable. Almost every critic of Kipling denounces his women and hurls most severe criticism at the "Vampire," some even saying that this poem is the bitterest thing ever written against the female sex.

All must concede that Kipling has broken away from the old conventional manner of writers which made all women spiritually beautiful -- idealistic creatures, humanly impossible as a permanent type. The Kipling variety of woman may be unpopular; but she is a real woman of to-day as a clear-eyed, brave-spoken observer has seen her, and fair-minded critics must be glad that the sex is neither unduly lauded nor unjustly condemned.

The purpose of this paper is not so much the rebuttal of hostile accusations that have been flung at Kipling, as the presentation of what the writer believes to be Kipling's true attitude toward women. He may seem bitter, pessimistic and, at times, even coarse, but he is a realist, true to "the God of things as they are," and, although too much of an artist to deal in didacticism, he instinctively presents the moral for us to apply. He does not over-emphasize the spiritual and has little place for the love element if it
be not secondary to a large service. He expects women to be workers, as well as men, although he has a peculiar sensitiveness to their troubles and hardships in the line of duty. In everything he is very independent, outspoken, audacious. Kipling presents three distinct types of women in his writings -- destructive workers, idlers, constructive workers -- the classification being based on the degree of human service rendered. His attitude toward life as shown in these types results partly from the large influences of his time and race and partly from his own nature, personal experience and temperament.
Kipling's Attitude Toward His Women Characters

On first reading Kipling's stories and poems one is surprised at the apparent variety of attitude he takes toward his women characters; one is confused at the "blessing and cursing" which is written by the same hand. Some characters receive his unrestrained admiration; others are entirely condemned. Toward the Blind Woman in "They" or toward Dinah Shad, his feeling is clearly quite different from that he sustains toward Mazie or the Vampire. For the former, a true and simple woman, it is compassion, almost affection; for the latter, a false and complex deceiver, it is contempt and abhorrence. Since, then, from the same fountain comes both the sweet and the bitter water, is there, it may be asked, any unity in Kipling's attitude toward women? Is his verdict as changeable as his changing moods, or does he have some definite tests which he applies? It is the aim of this chapter to show that the variety in Kipling's treatment of women rises from the subject itself; his attitude, therefore, is not the variable: indeed it is most constant.

The quality of first importance in Kipling's attitude toward woman is his pronounced preference for women who work for the good of humanity, and his strong dislike for those who squander their time in idleness or
in the accomplishment of low aims. Woman, as an efficient being, busy at some work which contributes to the common welfare, never fails to be lauded by Kipling; but woman, a passive being cumbering the earth, or woman, an active agent of evil, debasing mankind, is censured most severely. Society finds no value in the vampire, neither does Kipling. On the other hand he greatly admires woman who performs her highest possible duty, who consciously does her best. Effort and service are the standards by which he estimates her. 'Law, order, discipline, duty, obedience' are words sweet in his ear. If she comes up to the test of usefulness in these requirements, he likes her and sees to it that his reader does also.

Service, then, is the basis of difference between the Vampire and Mother o' Mine, those two types that he sees poles apart. The former leaves society worse off by her having lived; the latter is fulfilling a high mission in the economy of the world, is carrying out God's plan. The Vampire's contribution is negative; the mother's, positive. Between these two extremes may be classed all the rest of Kipling's women, their positions in his frank estimate, being determined by the degree of service they achieve.

Woman must be earnest in service or in his eyes she possesses no halo of virtues. She is indeed a

1. McAndrew's Hymn.
spiritual creation to Kipling only as she makes her spirituality evident in a material way. She is not saved by faith unless her faith be shown by her acts. Truly her faith, without works, is dead. For this reason many of the most beautiful characters in literature, if Kipling had put them into a story of his, might have dwindled into insignificance. The Sister in Milton's Comus would diminish into the Miss Allardyce of "Wee Willie Winkie" -- a character not bad but passive, a mere existence. Many of Shakespeare's women might be little more; Desdemona could be neither the "gentle" nor the "divine". Kipling, then, rather deprecates the traits which most writers consider the "flesh and blood" of women. With him simplicity, innocence, timidity, save in the native Indian woman from whom he expects less, all are in the background, but he demands from the civilized woman the power of individual and self-forgetful effort, an energy of devotion to duty, an earnest and vigorous life. Only woman, nobly at work, receives his tribute of admiration and praise.

A second point to be noted in Kipling's attitude toward woman is the minor place he gives to the element of love, an attitude which is in accordance with the position he takes toward spiritual attributes. Indeed none of his stories has to do entirely with courtship or the prenuptial affection between man and woman. And
even as a part of a narrative, this element, so evident in the modern magazine story, is absent, to a great extent, in Kipling's writings. Perhaps to some his women are a disappointment for this reason, for certainly the person who dotes on a love story, is destined to be unsatisfied by Kipling. He prefers that his characters accomplish something in the world rather than use their time in what he seems to consider foolish sentimentality. "All the kissin' in the world aint like havin' a medal to wear on your coat," he says in "Drums of Fore and Aft."

Romance is not entirely lacking, however, for it gains a beautiful presentation in NAULAHKA. The love of Kate Sherriff and Nicholas Tarvin for each other is so strong that Tarvin follows Kate from Colorado to India, hoping thus to win her, the girl of his choice. In the end she is persuaded to give up nursing, which she had previously chosen as her life work, and to return to America with Tarvin. Scattered throughout the story are delightful descriptions of love making. Again in Mulvaney's courting of Dinah Shad, there are most beautiful touches of sentiment. Certainly, though a successful courtship is not necessary to a successful woman, Kipling does not totally disregard a display of affection, nor the mating of the sexes by the romantic process. Recall the tender little passage in the story,
"False Dawn," a tale that turns upon blunder in a proposal of marriage:

"I saw that look upon her face which comes only once or twice in a lifetime -- when a woman is perfectly happy and the air is full of trumpets and gorgeous colored fire, and the earth turns into cloud because she is loved."

Kipling is not afraid, however, to face the seamy side of married life; for not all married people have the tenderness and continuity of feeling that rose-wreathed valentines predict. Here is a grim look, "close up," in "Three and an Extra:"

"After marriage comes a reaction, sometimes a big, sometimes a little one; but it comes sooner or later and must be tided over by both parties if they desire for the rest of their lives to go with the current."

Again in "The Brockhurst Divorce Case," where Kipling certainly sides with the just Nemesis, one comes upon this revealing outlook, true perhaps to life, if not to the matinee-girl ideal:

"Perhaps he gave way to the quiet savage feeling that sometimes takes by the throat a husband twenty years married, when he sees across the table the same face of his wedded wife and knows as he has sat facing it, so he must continue to sit until the day of her death or his own. It only lasts for three breaths as a rule; and must be a throwback to him of a time when men and women were rather worse than they are now."

In his resume of the books of his library, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, speaking of Stevenson, Kipling's great prototype, and touching also on the love-intent, seems to voice approval of the omission of this well-known motif of love and marriage in fiction:

"The modern masculine novel, dealing almost ex-
clusively with the rougher and more stirring side of life, with the objective rather than the subjective, marks the reaction against the abuse of love in fiction. This one phase of life, in its orthodox aspect, ending in the conventional marriage, has been so hackneyed that it is not to be wondered at that there is a tendency sometimes to swing to the opposite extreme, and to give it less than its fair share in the affairs of men.

"In British fiction nine books out of ten have held up love and marriage as the be-all and end-all of life. Yet we know in actual practice that this may not be so. In the career of the average man his marriage is an accident; but it is only one of several. He is swayed by many strong emotions, his ambitions, his business, his friendships, his struggles with the recurrent dangers and difficulties which tax a man's wisdom and his courage."1

Other thoughtful critics also justify the sparing use of the love motif in fiction. Evelyn May Albright, of the Ohio Wesleyan University, sums up the case quite rationally:

"It is to be remembered, that however universal and normal it may be, the young love of the conventional romantic type is at best a fleeting passion and that it is generally limited in its influence to the two characters concerned.**** It is to be hoped that more and more magazines will so broaden the range of their themes that the sentimental love story will take something like its true rank in accordance with its actual value in determining human character, in accordance with its actual place in the whole of human life. Until this phase of the adolescent passion is relegated to its proper place, the deeper and saner human emotions of mature love, affection and kindliness that prompt to lives of duty, of benevolence and charity, of purity and constancy, possibly of tragic sacrifice, cannot be set upon their proper pinnacle."2

Although, on the one hand, Kipling does not allow his characters to wallow in romance, nor make romance an end in itself as is often the case in Galsworthy, yet, as evidenced in passages in "False Dawn," "The

2. The Short Story, by Albright, p. 191.
Courtin' of Dinah Shad" and in the poem, "Shadow Houses," he does not absolutely reject romantic love as Bernard Shaw would do in his MAN AND SUPERMAN. The explanation of this negligible treatment of sentiment is that with Kipling successful romance is secondary to large human service. He sees love in perspective as only one factor of life. In the NAULAHKA both Kate and Tarvin, while their wooing was in progress, continued their respective labors in India with unabated energy. At the last Kate gives up being a nurse, but it is to take up the work of being a home-maker for Tarvin, another phase of woman's service, he would say. The courting of Mulvaney and Dinah Shad did not disturb the equilibrium of the participants; they were able to continue their usual duties, but in the end the romance culminates happily in marriage. When such an element of real love does not enter in, the result is a Mrs. Reiver, from whom poor, innocent Pluffles had to be rescued by the kind-hearted Mrs. Haulcsbee -- a story which the reader leaves with a feeling of disgust for its mock romance. The conclusion is that, though Kipling can make romance attractive, yet, if romance exists for the hectic excitement of love-making, all its charm for him is taken away. He does not ignore sentiment, but he makes it secondary to what he considers much more important -- service.

The third element to be recognized in the discussion of Kipling's attitude, is that he has a common

1. The Rescue of Pluffles.
test for men and women. Woman need not feel that she is too sternly treated at his hands, for he expects no less from his own sex than he does from her. He regards the world as a universe of beings put here for one purpose; their success is the accomplishment of that purpose, be they men or women. The individual who works is the one who wins regardless of his sex. This was true in the case of Harvey Cheyne,¹ a weak effeminate boy, who was rescued from drowning by the crew of "We're Here." His moral and physical salvation was brought about by the change from his previous petted life to the rough-and-tumble of the New England fisherman. The boy became physically fit, well-disciplined, self-reliant and altogether improved. He was no longer helpless, but was able to contribute his bit to the accomplishment of those vital tasks that presented themselves. Work and activity had brought about this new state. Every man should endure a no less strenuous test, if the discipline is needed to make him into a useful member of society. Kipling demands, too, that his own life be usefully employed. This hope is expressed in his own invocation that he may each day perform some worthy service to help the working out of God's plan:

"By my own work before the night,
Great Overseer, I make my prayer."

Although he claims for himself, and for men in general, an important calling, Kipling does not wish the

¹ Captains Courageous.
business of woman to be of less significance. He does not think that it should be, and so he puts the whole race, male and female, on an equality. Woman is not, in his view, the weaker sex; she is man's equal; she has her work to do as great as his, though diverse. Kipling does not drop on his knees and look up at his characters. He does not worship them as the chivalrous Sir Walter Scott is accused of doing. They are not Queens of Love and Beauty to sit in canopied seats and be admired. Yet he does not look down upon them nor take the attitude of Maupassant and Flaubert, the attitude of a biologist who is studying the nerve reactions of insects pinned to his laboratory table. Kipling stands on a human level with his characters, men and women, looking them frankly in the eye. He judges them by the common standards; he sets for them a common goal. This attitude has a scriptural foundation. When Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden, the curse was not laid upon man alone, but woman received a separate and distinct portion; the former was henceforth to earn his living by the sweat of his brow and the latter forever in sorrow to bring forth children. Kipling refers to this in "An Imperial Rescript":

"You can lighten the curse of Adam when you've lightened the curse of Eve."

In the fourth place, even though he puts woman on a level with man, Kipling is not insensible to the special hardships and dangers which she endures in being of service. Of course he pays little heed to the misfortunes

of the vampire or idler, but, on the other hand, he is acutely affected by any ill that comes upon the woman who is of use in the world. If women have tried to do their part, Kipling's feelings toward them are most benevolent. In "Dirge of Dead Sisters" he expresses a noble appreciation for the work of the nurses who died in the South African War, not forgetting the fatigue and pain they suffered:

"Bold behind the battle line, in the open camp
all-hallowed
Patient, wise, and mirthful in the ringed and reeking town,
They endured unresting till they rested from their labors --
Little wasted bodies, ah, so light to lower down."

Farther on in the poem, Kipling says these honorable women deserve "praise with love and worship", for they sacrificed their own lives that others might live. Every stanza speaks of the hardships that they endured and the appreciation that should be given them by South African soldiers. In "The Song of Woman," Kipling makes a touching plea for the service of the mother who has born the children, and of the mother-hearted woman who has served and saved without children of her own:

"If she has sent her servants in our pain,
If she has fought with death and dulled his sword,
If she has given back our sick again,
And to our breasts the weakling lips restored,
Is it a little thing that she hath wrought?
Then Birth and Death and Motherhood be naught."

The work of the mother is perhaps not so con-
spicuous as that of the nurse, but it is the greatest
that woman can perform; so that it is very proper that
Kipling should pause to pay her his tender tribute. He
considers the death of a child the tragedy of a mother's
life, for it is destruction to her ambition and hope; he
repeatedly mentions this particular trial. In writing to
a friend at the time of the death of a child of his own,
Kipling speaks of the great sorrow, and closes by saying
that "it is the mother who bore him who suffers most
when the young life goes out." In Ameera,1 who frets
herself to death over little Tota, he presents a like
pathetic grief most touchingly. Kipling reaches the
highest point of feeling when he writes imaginatively
of his own mother:2

"If I were drowned in the deepest sea,

    Mother o' mine!

    Oh mother o' mine!

    I know whose tears would flow down to me,

    Mother o' mine!

    Oh mother o' mine!"

Once more Kipling's sensitiveness and justice
appear when he expresses the bitter cry of a wronged
woman in "Mary, Pity Women." He does not class this outcast
with the vampire as many people would, for he thinks her
failure has been a result of ignorance and blunder. She

1. Without Benefit of Clergy.
2. Mother o' Mine.
has lived up to the light that she had. In this poem each stanza is the cry of the woman who has been betrayed by the man she trusted; interspersed in italics is a quatrain giving the reply. Her love for this masculine vampire has been most sincere; he has had his fun and will soon be away. She pleads:

"You'd like to treat me fair?
You can't because we're poor?
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!"
The reply is heartless:

"What's the good o' pleading, when the mother that bore you,
(Mary, pity women!) knew it all before you?
Sleep on 'is promises an' wait to your sorrow
(Mary, pity women!) for we sail tomorrow!"
The writer's sympathy is so decidedly with the wronged girl that the reader cannot fail to get that one view of the situation.

In spite of the fact that Kipling expects the same amount of effort from man and woman, he regards her work as different and her nature diverse and believes that she is worthy of a certain affection and tenderness that he would not think of bestowing on man.
Fifthly and lastly, Kipling has an independence of attitude toward women. He is independent in his judgments. He writes what he pleases regardless of woman's race or her position in society; the women of India, "those neater, sweeter maidens in a cleaner, greener land," he treats with as much respect as the women of England, and the wife of the peasant is just as worthy of esteem as her ladyship. Kipling's heroines come from no one class: 

"They're like as a row of pins --
For the Colonel's Lady and Judy O'Grady
Are sisters under their skins."

Each woman places herself in a rank through what she accomplishes in the world, and Kipling allows the highest and the lowest types to be a mixture of the various classes of society. He would place the Queen of England in the lowest type if her service were not worthy of a higher position. While doing so he might create antagonism to his writings, but, if once firmly resolved, the opinion of people can have little effect upon him; he continues to be fearless. He is independent, too, in his expression. Kipling does not mince words or try to embellish with graceful language; he does not strive for the finely artistic or the delicately poetical. His women are not as Daniel Gabriel Rossetti's in the "Blessed Damozel:"

1. Mandalay.
2. The Ladies.
"The blessed damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of Heaven
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of water stilled at even."

Kipling uses his every day language, barrack-room
language or something more dignified. It is true that
he has been criticised for this and especially for
referring to Queen Victoria as the "Widow at Windsor,"
when he says:

"'Ave you 'eard o' the Widow at Windsor
With a hairy gold crown on her head?"

Nevertheless Kipling continues to use his barrack-room
expression with quite as much liberty as previously.

Writing as Kipling in the first person, the American
Bookman once presented his independent spirit as
follows:

"I will write what I please. I will not alter a
line. If it please me to do so, I will refer to her Gracious
Majesty — bless her — as the little fat lady at Windsor,
and fill the mouth of Mulvany with filth and oaths. I
will not meet people. If I am on ship-board and prefer
passing the time drinking Scotch whiskey, I will so. I
will not truckle to old women or fawn upon fools. Here
is my work. You may take it or leave it. I am playing
off my own bat. I am traveling alone — always alone."

It must be concluded that Kipling's attitude,
despite some passages of perhaps unnecessary outspokenness,
is not so barbarous and brutal as many critics would
make it. Neither is he cynical and pessimistic. Rather
he is honest and sincere, wishing to help and not to
deride. He has a very definite conception of what woman
should be — the servant of humanity — and he remains
true to this standard throughout all his writings. Everything else is minor and trivial. Spirituality and the love element are given only secondary consideration. In Kipling's estimate of himself and of men in general this is no less true. He expects humanity to be about the business of humanity. He shows, however, a special sensitiveness to woman's trials and troubles, but only when she has done her duty to the fullest extent. Of course not all women serve in the same degree and these degrees of service are the bases for the types of women which are to be discussed in the next chapter.
CHAPTER II

Resulting Types of Women.

The group of Kipling's women falls into three divisions. First of these is the destructive worker or vampire, a social menace, a positive harm, preying on mankind and undoing the efforts of others. She resembles the fable werewolf who leaves the lair and wanders by night sucking the blood of persons asleep, so cruel and stealthy and vitiating is her work. Next above this actively malignant type ranks the idler, who has no purpose in life beyond the satisfying of merely selfish ends; she not only performs no service, but also absorbs and nullifies the service of others. She lives on other people, not for them. Highest in rank is the third class, the constructive workers, who differ from the evil worker and the non-worker in that they work for the good of all, and devote themselves to the furthering of other people's welfare. The nurse and the kindly neighbor come under this head; and the mother's name leads all the rest, as one fulfilling a most vital purpose in the economy of the race.

Kipling has been most severely criticised for daring to portray such a repulsive type of woman as the
vampire. Indeed some say that his poem bearing this
title is the worst thing ever written against the sex,
and, for this reason, his friends have urged him not to
include it in any collection. Kipling has seen the
vampire as William Watson has seen "The Woman with the
Serpent-tongue," and he writes of her without apology,
ascribing to her such qualities as cruelty, deceit,
wantonness. Perhaps this good might be said of her --
that she works at her business very industriously, being
ever on the alert in seeking whom she may devour. She
not only seeks diligently until she finds the object of
her pursuit but she greedily seizes and swallows him
before he is aware.

The vampire's work accomplishes a two fold
destruction, affecting not her victim alone but herself
as well. Though the ruin that she brings about may not
be complete, yet it works havoc, either material or
spiritual, with some phase of both lives. Nicholas Tarvin,
in the NAULAHKA, was caught in the web of Mrs. Mutrie,
who without the knowledge of her newly-wedded husband,
bargained with him for the beautiful necklace, which he
was to bring her from India in exchange for the influence
she might use in persuading her husband that the "Three
C" should go through a town in which Tarvin was interested.
In this instance the destruction was to material ambitions,
for the hopes of both were frustrated and finally abandoned.
Bessie Broke, in THE LIGHT THAT FAILED, destroys the
life work of Dick Heldar, his picture, "Melancholia," by wetting it with turpentine and scraping it with a palette-knife. That her own character falls because of the act, Torpenhow reveals, when, seeing the ruined picture, he remarks, "That's Bess -- the little fiend." The misfortune for Dick is a material one; for Bessie, it is spiritual. In "The Rescue of Pluffles," Mrs. Reiver succeeds, by infatuating Pluffles, in enticing him away from his fiancee. "Little by little Pluffles fell away from his old allegiance and came over to the enemy by whom he was made much of." Had it not been for Mrs. Hauksbee, his destruction would have been complete. As it was it became necessary for him to tear himself away from his old career and attempt the slow process of reducing "his affairs to some sort of order." Kipling says, "He paid for his schooling." Mrs. Reiver was driven on by this experience in her course of moral depravity, if such a thing were possible; for indeed she was already "bad from her hair -- which started life on a Brittany girl's head -- to her boot-heels which were three and three eighths inches high." She lost her influence in the story, for now disillusioned, the other characters knew what to expect from her. In this case there was a loss of reputation for Mrs. Reiver and the spiritual lowering for her prey Pluffles. The complete downfall one finds in the despoiler of the "Vampire." She worked the entire destruction of her victim. He wasted his years
and his affections, his fortunes and his endeavors; was stripped even to his foolish hide. The woman is represented as lacking absolutely in moral sense; she is but a "rag and a bone and a hank of hair." This poem, by the way, was written as an elucidation of a picture exhibited at the New Gallery in 1897 by Kipling's cousin, Phillip Burn-Jones. The painting depicts a man stretched out upon a bed with death written on every line of his pallid face. The Vampire, a woman with a cold, hard expression, is bending over him, calmly watching his passing. She is elegantly clothed and apparently not at all distressed by the evil she has brought about. Destruction, then, is the business of the vampire as Kipling has portrayed her in his stories and poems.

Interesting, too, is the means by which she accomplishes this evil. She must first attract her victim and then persuade him to have at least a degree of confidence in her; after that developments seem to come rapidly. Sometimes it is unnecessary for her to make great effort to captivate her dupe, but at other times she must give the matter more attention. In the case of Mrs. Mutrie and Tarvin, her charm worked unconsciously; Tarvin saw in her the fellow conspirator that he sought and "he found her very willing." "THAT was the way to reach the president. He had perceived it as soon as he entered the car. He knew her history and had even known her father." Bessie Broke is thrown
into relation with Dick as a result of fainting near the door of the house where he lives with Torpenhow. She, befriended by the two men, becomes the model for the artist, Dick, and wins a degree of trust from him which she is not deserving. Mrs. Reiver, making mischief her business, deliberately lays the trap for Pluffles. "She laid herself out to that end and who was Pluffles to resist." "He learned to fetch and carry like a dog, and to wait like one, too, for a word from Mrs. Reiver." Like her, the Vampire maliciously ensnares her victim, we may believe, by personal attractions. He called her his "lady fair;" to him she was a creature of charms. To succeed, then, Kipling's vampire must insome way work herself into the confidence of the one against whom her machinations are directed.

The catastrophe is usually the waking of the victim to the fact that he has been deceived and led in a downward path. This is not so noticeably the case with Tarvin, because he was not innocently entrapped. Dick shows his realization of his loss in his words, "You've given me and Torpenhow a fair amount of trouble." Although poor Pluffles is unable to fathom his situation by himself, he does with Mrs. Hauksbee's help discard Mrs. Reiver and marry his former fiancee. The Vampire is discovered by her victim in the last stanza, but it is too late for him to get a new start in life:

"And it isn't the shame and it isn't the blame
That stings like a white hot brand ---
It's coming to know that she never knew why
(Seeing at last she could never know why)
And never could understand."

Although Kipling abhors the vampire, he seems to feel that she is what she is because of inherent qualities that cannot be eradicated. She "never could understand."

What was true of the Vampire was true also of Mrs. Mutrie. She was a woman with a history. Bessie Broke was an unfortunate street waif who did not know because she had never had a chance. Mrs. Reiver made wickedness her business. It came perfectly natural to her. The vampire, then, is not so much immoral as she is unmoral.

The idlers, the great middle class of Kipling's women, no doubt must share with the vampire the blame for the author's lack of popularity as a delineator of women characters. They are not attractive and are a type that make the world no better off for their being in it. Their only occupation is the satisfying of selfish desires, and it makes no difference what inconveniences others may suffer in the obtaining of these ends. Most of this type, the reader feels, have missed golden opportunities of service, which were so near them that the least effort might have made their lives very much worth while. It is, then, what they do not do rather than what they do that makes the idlers the repellant characters that they are.

The earmarks of this class are quite as evident as one finds in the case of the vampire. The idler follows
the path of least resistance, of mere inclination. If she begins life with any initiative, any impulse to support herself, or render any equivalent for her livelihood, her constant idleness destroys her capabilities and possibilities of activity. The idler lives off other people, and hence leaves society worse for her having lived. She becomes only a creature demanding and commandeering aid and comfort from all who cross her path, and when she is gone the world is really better off without her.

The idler exerts no strength or power, either physical or mental, and it is this lack of purpose that renders the type so displeasing. The real source of her want of initiative is her selfishness. Maisie in THE LIGHT THAT FAILED spends her time dabbling in paint in the attempt to produce the picture, "Melancholia," an occupation requiring no effort or sacrifice. Selfishness and disregard for others are evident in her treatment of Dick, whose attentions she spurned.

Again in Mrs. Cheyne of CAPTAINS COURAGEOUS one finds a character who is absolutely lacking. She, a proverbial millionairess, delights in idleness as she lolls about hotel corridors, lounges in her boudoir or dawdles at some empty show of industry. Instead of being a helpmate to her husband,
whose wealth offered boundless possibilities, she was a drawback. To quote from "The God from the Machine," she was "wan av thim lamb-like bleatin', pick-me-up-and-carry-me-or-I'll-die girls."

Typical of this class also is Tillie Vennerin "Wressley of the Foreign Office." She lacks purpose in life beyond the enjoyment of the pleasures of the moment, and her frivolity makes her attractive to the more serious Wressley, who is easily a victim of her flighty ways. She is willing to take her own selfish enjoyment from him, but refuses even to look at the book upon which he has worked long and hard. She pushes it away from her with the remark: "Oh your book? It's all about those howwid wajahs. I didn't understand it."

The idler leaves the world no better off for her having lived, which is perhaps the one thing about her which Kipling dislikes most. A person should live for more than the present enjoyment, Kipling thinks. The life is eternal, and so longer than the brief three score and ten. The idler has no such view of life; she lives for the present only. In the end of THE LIGHT THAT FAILED, Maisie disappears, and Kipling makes the significant statement, "And this is the end of Maisie."
Mrs. Cheyne failed to discipline the young son Harvey and thus missed the greatest opportunity of her life. Tillie Venner refused encouragement to Wressley in the great undertaking which meant so much to him. These women, typical of the Idlers, can be credited with no service, the thing which Kipling values as the very essence of life.

Because Kipling excels in delineating these amusement-seeking and flirtation-avid women, it is asserted that he finds women mostly of this worthless variety, or of a sort bordering upon it, although he does not portray them as wholly lost to social usefulness. Such an annotation is found in the Spectator of England in 1892:

"Mr. Kipling's English women (for the native women of India, obeying their own laws and customs, refused to be degraded to the level of their European sisters) offer us varieties of feminine passion and nothing else. Mrs. Hauksbee is frivolous, Minnie Thregan petulant, Maisie obstinate, Anonyma impetuous. They talk slang like their brothers; are as cynical and free-spoken; have no belief in the old-fashioned virtues and have nothing that we can call principle at all."

But it may be contended that these were the sort of women that Kipling's keen eye saw in India and that so he pictures them with his unsparing pen. In the struggle for existence in that strange tropical land, not only physically under the heat and light of the coppery skies but also in the struggle for social and financial standing among the ambitions and intrigues,
the futilities and privations of the artificial life are so pitiless that women, as well as men, forget honor in clutching for place and gold and gain.

The constructive workers are the women that Kipling likes and he succeeds in making them very attractive. They are constantly serving humanity in various capacities. Their works extend into many fields, but broadly speaking include two phases — work outside of the home and work in the home, or the social workers and women who are home makers.

Kipling's social worker comprises a much larger group than the strict use of that term implies, for she is not only one who endeavors to improve social conditions but may also be any lover of humanity, trying to promote the good of others outside her own household. The work of this class is consequently broad in its scope, ranging from the care of the sick and from various other philanthropies even to the intriguing and planning of the society woman if it be done in a spirit of helpfulness. The "Dirge of Dead Sisters" pays a tribute to certain of this type, the nurses, who tended wounded soldiers in the South African War, and emphasizes the value of their contribution:

"When the days were torment and the nights were terror, When the Powers of Darkness had dominion on our soul— When we fled consuming through the Seven Hells of fever, These put out their hands to us and healed and made us whole."
Again in the NAULAHKA, this type appears in Kate Sherriff, who goes to India as a medical missionary and finds work among the natives in a hospital. "Her life seemed to release itself from her, until it gave itself to them." "Only Kate knew how much remained to be done. The hospital was at least clean and sweet if she inspected it every day, and the people in their fashion were grateful for kinder tending and more skillful treatment than they had hitherto dreamed of." Miss Martyn, known as William the Conqueror, has quite a different task as she goes about the famine district, relieving the children with food and necessary comforts. She represents the social worker in the more restricted sense. Just as worthy of a place in the group, Kipling thinks, is the kind-hearted Mrs. Hauksbee, who is never more happy than when using her clever "sleight-of-hand" as the heroine of a social comedy. She is a favorite with the author and appears in several of his stories, including "The Rescue of Pluffles," "Venus Annodomini," "Kidnapped," "Consequences" and "The Education of Otis Yeere;" each time her business is that of snatching an unsophisticated fellow-being from the claws of a harmful intriguer. The social worker's field is large if it include all these phases of work, but it must necessarily be so in order to reach every province where humanity is needy for relief from any misfortune.

This ministering servant is usually quite conscious
of the magnitude of her task, for she must see the
affliction of her subject first before she can answer
the call of the benefactor. The work must be before her,
then, and its accomplishment brings a still enjoyment,
which is the reward for service. The nurses in "Dirge
of Dead Sisters," as they arrived on the battle field
looked gravely from the "sun-scarred Red Cross coaches"
realizing the serious business before them, but they smiled
with satisfaction as they "wiped the sweat away" and
revived the sick and wounded who were "like to die."
Kate Sherriff in early childhood had been "stilled and
awed" at the heart-breaking story of India as told
by a Hindu woman; the ambition to befriend misery and
bring health and healing remained with her, although a
year's course in a training-school had set her more
thoroughly on fire for her work. Even though in the end
Kipling allows her to meet with discouragement in order
that she may accept Tarvin's persistent offer of
marriage, yet she sees many fruits of her labors. Once
she "laughed musically in her delight at seeing the
boy recovering strength." Later his father weepingly
shouts, "It has come back. A gypsy has done this. A
gypsy has done this." Through her brother, William, the
Conqueror, learned of conditions in the famine district,
and after much persuasion gained Martyn's consent to her
going. She is delighted when, among the stricken, her efforts
are successful, and once cries out, "I've saved two
babies." Again "she skipped from brick to brick laid down
on the trampled mud, and dosed her charges with warming medicine that made them rub their little warm stomachs."

Mrs. Hauksbee is complete master of every situation in the society world and seems, almost by instinct, to know what course to pursue in order to accomplish results.

In "Kidnapped," Kipling says, "She heard of the lamentable conditions of Peythroppe, and her brain struck out the plan that saved him. She had the wisdom of a Serpent, the logical coherence of a Man, the fearlessness of a Child, and the triple intuition of a Woman." Through her advice the victim of Miss Castries' wiles was escorted away by Three Men, so that when the marriage-day arrived, the bride-groom did not come. Mrs. Hauksbee does not appear in the story after her work is done, but no doubt she breathed a sigh of relief as she did after the rescue of Pluffles. Like the other social workers, she saw her task and began it understandingly; in the end she could look at its successful completion. An opinion of Kipling's power to depict a woman of this order is given by Prof. G. W. Gerwig in "The Art of the Short Story:"¹

"It has been said that Kipling cannot draw a woman; but what can be better in the line of strong, capable, courageous, tender, womanly woman than William, the Conqueror. Her first introduction to us is with the scar of honor on her forehead; the suggestion of trial she has had in the past; the promptness of her decision to encounter even greater perils in the future; her tact, her resourcefulness -- all the qualities which we are made to feel that she possesses, place her in the front rank of heroines of fiction."

¹. pp. 92-93.
The members of Kipling's social workers are in every case possessed of brains, for they are able to diagnose conditions and administer the treatment that will alleviate the sufferings of humanity. Even John Palmer, who elsewhere in his RUDYARD KIPLING speaks rather reproachfully of Kipling's women, admits that, inspite of all said against Mrs. Hauksbee, she has a "clever brain." These women turn their talents to good and intelligent use, and sometimes they are given specific credit for this as in "Mary Postgate," where is found the following remark:

"Now a woman's business was to make a home happy for — for a husband and children, **** but it was a fact. A woman, who had missed these things, could still be useful — more useful than a man in certain respects."

The business of Kipling's supreme type of constructive workers, the mother, is most indespensible in the economy of the world, and hence her claim in his reckoning to the highest position in the scale of the sex. It must, however, embrace a broader service than that of the narrow self-centered mother like Mrs. Cheyne in CAPTAINS COURAGEOUS; she was more hinderance than help to her son Harvey. Far different was the love of Mother o' Mine, whose indulgence was a sweet memory and an eternal inspiration. She it is whom Kipling includes in this type, but the group must also be large enough to contain that one not as blest, but just as deserving as this more fortunate sister, she who prompted
by maternal instinct, like Bisesa, is not permitted to experience the great parental joys because of hampering environment. Indeed the woman with a taste for homemaking, opening her heart and fireside to the needy, may also reveal a motherhood worthy of reverence and respect; she is the Martha "careful and troubled about many things." Broadly speaking, the mother includes all women who exercise their homemaking instincts in whatever channels circumstances have decreed that they shall dwell.

The "Mother o' Mine" type is found in Mary Gloster, who so engrafted herself into the heart of her husband that he longed on his death bed to be cast into the sea near the spot where she had been buried. "I want to lie by your mother ten thousand miles away," he told his son Dick, their only living son, who was indeed a disappointment in his marriage to a "thin-flanked woman as stale as a bone." He got her social nonsense, so the Gloster family was done; indeed a contrast with his mother who, Sir Anthony says, saved the money and made a man out of him. Ameera was also an example of true devotion; her tremulous passion, her hopes, her fears and her agonies of disappointment combine to form some of the most tender pages that Kipling has written. According to the narrative, John Holden, an Englishman, bought a Mussulman's daughter from her grasping hag of a mother, and hired a house for the two. Ameera was very beautiful and adored Holden, who returned
her worship. When she bore him a son her cup of happiness was full. But Tota, "the gold-colored little god," after having grown old enough to talk, died of the seasonal autumnal fever. Ameera was completely heart-broken and Holden hardly less so. It needed only the death of his wife, which followed not long afterward, to make his desolation complete. The Blind Woman in "They" was less fortunate; she had never married and was lonely for the caressing hands of babies. Her love was so perfect and so spiritual that children, who had departed to the Great Beyond, were permitted to return to her protection and bounty. These ghost children were drawn to earth again by the mother-love of this childless woman. Often bereaved parents visited her in the secluded woods where she dwelt in an ancient house of "lichened and weather-worn stone flanked by semicircular walls," and here they received comfort and encouragement to rise above the material world and live on her high spiritual plane. Truly only the most sublime mother-love can master such disappointment in life. The Kulu Woman in KIM was a "Martha" and extended most cordial hospitality to Kim and the Lama. At one time she befriended Kim when he was sick and in need, and showed a remarkable mother instinct in spite of her flux of talk. "She is at least a woman of open hands," was the Lama's conclusion. Her joy over a new grandson is an additional phase of her mother nature and her pride breaks forth in, "None but a Grandmother should ever oversee a child." Wherever
is found the mother-instinct, will also be found a touching and tender story in the writings of Kipling.

Kipling's mother, then, is interested in humanity as the social worker is, but she has a love and tenderness that is even bigger. Those whom she mothers are indeed a part of herself -- her own flesh and blood -- and she is willing to make any sacrifice for them. The mother differs from the social worker in that the natural instinct plays a greater part in her life and work. The social worker, it may be said, is ruled by love and the intellect; the mother, by love and the heart. The mother's work is absolutely indispensable, but the social worker's is not so essential. To no other class could Kipling pay this eulogy:

"If I were hanged on the highest hill
    Mother o' mine!
    Oh, mother o' mine!
I know whose love would follow me still;
    Mother o' mine!
    Oh, mother o' mine!
    x x x x x
If I were damned o' body and soul,
    Mother o' mine!
    Oh, mother o' mine!
I know whose tears would make me whole,
    Mother o' mine!
    Oh, mother o' mine!"

These types sweep in all of Kipling's women, 


classifications now and then overlapping, as when Kate Sherriff, the nurse and medical missionary, marries Tarvin to become a home maker, or when Mrs. Hauksbee, in general a mere idler, makes herself a sort of social providence to save unsophisticated young men from the reaching antennae of the parasite women.

Kipling, paying homage to the home maker, honors the highest and most universal personality of the constructive worker. The mother has the approval of science and has had the applause of literature and the reverence of the scriptures. Penelope holding sacred her hearth for her husband, the wife of Hector, comforting her frightened child — these are mothers and home makers dear to the world down long ages. The sweet mother of Jesus has been a symbol of love and care for millions. The little home in Bethany is one of the most beloved vistas in the scriptures. Kipling has drawn from it types of one of his most striking poems touching human service. So Kipling is his own best critic against unjust criticism. With all his iconoclasm and satire, he has never flouted the sacredness of the woman in the home, but has glorified the spirit of a mother — the woman who is the cherisher of the innocent and helpless and the comforter and protector of the desolate and afflicted.
CHAPTER III

Reasons for Attitude and Resulting Types

After observing Kipling's point of view in regard to the women of his books, it is interesting to reckon at possible reasons for such an attitude and resulting types. A writer is always swayed in some degree by the literary atmosphere about him; his predecessors, his contemporaries, the movements of his period, all lay claim to their share of his inspiration. And then, of course, the personal phase -- environment, temperament, religion -- enters in also. Kipling is no exception to this general rule; his work is not sporadic, but has been influenced by those large and small elements which condition the work of all writers.

Kipling's idea of women of his time is not the whimsical creation of a moment. One sees the source of his various types of womanhood in the peculiar circumstances and conditions in which he lived, in the deep-rooted principles taught him in his early life. His standards of womanhood were moulded by the current opinion of his day, his ancestry and religion. Kipling's women are the logical outgrowth of his life.

The age from the literary standpoint was one of great unrest. The eighteenth century had been on the whole an era of the acceptance of tradition and revelation, an era of sentimentalism, which is the simulation of feeling without adequate basis of emotion. The nineteenth
century was a time of spiritual rebellion and mental conflict. It found science challenging religion; optimism challenging pessimism; convention see-sawing with innovation. The last years of the century were a period of sharp transitions. In literature, there appeared such movements as socialism, imperialism, nationalism, rationalism, aestheticism. Each had its followers and sought to adjust the uneasiness of the times. Historians, in recording the epoch, place young Kipling in the front, particularly as to imperialism.

Mr. G. K. Chesterton, discussing aspects of literature at the close of the nineteenth century, balances some of the literary leaders and ideals then being superceded by the newcomers. He speaks of Dickens using reality to give an effect of romance, of Thackeray using romance to give an aspect of reality. He speaks of Meredith taking nature naturally, as that which saves, and Hardy taking nature unnaturally, as that which betrays. He speaks of the Esthetes living in the super-refinements of life and the Decadents living in the decay of life.

A quotation on the latter point says: 1

"Upon this cold and brilliant drawing room, which was Henry James at its highest, and Oscar Wilde at its worst, there broke two positive movements,..... destined to break up the old Victorian solidity beyond repair. The first was Bernard Shaw and the socialists; the second was Rudyard Kipling and the imperialists."

Discussing the same epoch, the English critics, Ford Maddox and Hueffer, also bringing in the literary luminaries of that bright era of the 90's, again announce Kipling:

1. Victorian Age in Literature, by G. K. Chesterton, p. 231.
"That was the day of discoveries. It was an exciting, a wonderful time. In those years Mr. Rudyard Kipling burst upon the world with a shower of stars like those of a certain form of rocket. Mr. Zangwill was 'looming large.' To-Day was a wonderful periodical; it serialized the first long novel of Mr. H. G. Wells. Mr. Anthony Hope was growing immensely strong. Mr. J. W. Barrie was beginning to boom. Mr. Crockett was 'discovered' and Olive Schreiner lectured the Almighty for the benefit of Hempstead."

Mr. Hueffer characterizes this new school as more vivid, more actual, more every day than the novels of its stifling pre-Raphaelite predecessor.

Kipling, as has been said, disdains Scott's romantic heroines. He has none of the drawing-room trivialities of the mid-Victorian. He has none of the tragic philosophy of Thomas Hardy and George Meredith; he is more of an observer and a journalist than a philosopher. He has none of the sentimentality of Dickens, but he has some of the flare of Dickens for fellowship with the common average man. He has none of the large sweep and finality of Thackeray, but he has the touch of social satire. Becky Sharp would have found sisters in the Simla ladies. He has not George Eliott's tragical insistence upon the choice of action as judgment upon the soul, but he has her deep sense that deed spells character. Kipling has somewhere spoken of Stevenson as his more immediate literary master. It is probable that he caught from Stevenson the sturdy conviction that there is at the heart of life a rational essence and that man is here to mould circumstance. It is this robust philosophy, so like Robert Browning's, that commends him.
Here, then, in the midst of such a literary unrest, moved to a degree by his predecessors and contemporaries, enters young Kipling, the idea of empire and conquest on his brain. It is the Kipling of action advancing with the knowledge of the might of science in his mind, and with the idea that man is the master of his own soul.

Kipling, however, is not only a product of his own literary age, but he is an outgrowth of his times in a larger sense. A wider world than the merely literary one influenced him. Indeed he is a typical development of the expansion going on in modern times. Man has been made master of the earth, air and the mighty deep. He has compassed the globe with wire, and with rails of steel; he has opened a pathway in the air at inconceivable altitudes for winged ships, flying at a speed unequaled by the highest rate on the earth's surface. In all these lines improvement had been the goal and the brains of the past several decades have endeavored to think out effective means of accomplishing practical results. The period has been one of growth and improvement in every department of science, trade and industry. The press and the platform have used the progress of the modern world as the means of many stirring and thrilling appeals as they praise the miraculous advances. Rudyard Kipling himself readily gets into the swing when he writes such stories as "With the Night Mail," "007" and "The Ship that Found Itself." He
uses steam engines, telegraph lines, bridges and flying machines as others have used the chariot and the castle. Says Edwin Markam, noting this modernness and vividness:

"Kipling's vision is essentially objective and concrete. His mind is unique in its quickness to take impressions, to make assimilations. He absorbs the technicalities of the professions, the secrets of experts, the wisdom of adepts, the cant of hypocrites, the instincts of animals."

Much of Kipling's poetry is filled with eulogy of the wonders and miracles of the times. Speaking of ships, he says:

"Up rose the deep, in gale on gale,
To bid me change my mind again--
He broke his teeth along my rail,
And, roaring, swung behind again."

Again he sings of the deep-sea cables:

"Here in the womb of the world -- here in the tie-ribs of earth
Words, and the words of men, flicker and flutter and beat --
Warning, sorrow, and gain, salutation and mirth --
For a Power troubles the Still that has neither voice nor feet.
"They have wakened the timeless Things; they have killed their Father Time;
Joining hands in the gloom, a league from the last of the sun.
Hush! Men talk to-day o'er the waste of the ultimate slime,

1. The Miracles.
2. The Deep-Sea Cables.
And a new word runs between, whispering, 'Let us be one!'

The "grindin'" and "rippin'" of steam presents an additional progress, which Kipling writes about in "M'Andrew's Hymn." He recognizes the power of the agency, but, realizing his own inability to present its romantic phase, longs for "a man like Bobbie Burns to sing the song o' Steam." In spite of all the great forward movements, there are still vast undiscovered advances to be made: 1

"Till a voice, as bad as Conscience, rang indeterminable changes
On one everlasting Whisper day and night repeated —

'something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look behind the Ranges —

'something lost behind the Ranges. Lost and waiting for you. Go!"

Born and raised in such a world of accomplishment and possibility, Kipling would not be true to the spirit of his times were he not sturdy, active and energetic.

Kipling's life is thoroughly in harmony with his times, of which fact his remarkable activity is abundant proof. Whatever he did, he did with all his might and his time was never spent in idleness. Even so early in his career as his school days at United Service College, when he edited the college paper in addition to carrying the regular curriculum, he showed signs of his future greatness. Later, at the age of seventeen, Kipling became

1. The Explorer.
sub-editor of the Lahore Military Gazette in India and not long afterward advanced to the position of editor of the Pioneer. The editor of the Gazette once remarked of Kipling:

"If you want a man who will cheerfully do the work of three men, you should catch a young genius. He will pull his load up hill and kill himself in the attempt."

Kipling traveled extensively and contributed much to magazines and papers. He visited at various times India, China, Japan, America, England and Africa, sometimes making a number of visits to the same country, and in this way he gathered much material for stories and poems. One could imagine how this sort of life might drift into laziness, but the fruits of Kipling's pen bear witness that he had no such tendency. A list of publications for ten years, 1890-1900, will substantiate this fact:

THIRD EDITION OF PLAIN TALES FROM THE HILLS in 1890; LIFE'S HANDICAP, 1891; THE LIGHT THAT FAILED, 1890-1891; BARRACK ROOM BALLADS AND OTHER VERSE, 1892; NAULAHKA, 1892; MANY INVENTIONS, 1893; THE JUNGLE BOOK, 1894; SOLDIERS THREE AND OTHER STORIES, 1895; WEE WILLIE WINKIE AND OTHER STORIES, 1895; THE SECOND JUNGLE BOOK, 1895; THE SEVEN SEAS, 1896; AN ALMANAC OF TWELVE SPORTS, 1897; THE DAY'S WORK, 1898; STALKY & CO., 1899.

This ten years is a fair example of Kipling's busy life. Although of late years his pen has not been quite so prolific, he has not been altogether idle. He has taken part in politics, made speeches and written occasional verses and poems. That Kipling was able to travel and
be active in every line that presented itself and besides
to find time for so much writing is the marvel of it all.
His life has truly been one of ceaseless and unending
toil.

Such a life is what might be naturally expected
from a man possessing the inherent traits which belong
to the character of Rudyard Kipling. Virility is ,to
such an extent, his one distinguishing mark that his
enemies as well as his friends willingly grant him
this distinction, although occasionally they do not write
flatteringly of this triumphantly healthy virile power.
He has been called "the poet of the red corpuscle," a
title truly deserved. Indeed this significant appellation
furnishes the subject for a poem written by Aloysius
Coll to deride Kipling. A few verses, however, intended
to magnify his "inimitable cruelty," may serve the most
benevolent purpose of emphasizing his power and spirit:

"I have read it, Rhyming Rudyard, that vermillion

is your color,

That you scorn the use of ink

That is yellow, black or pink

For a tiny drop of blood that is red, red, red."

Kipling's exuberance of strength was so keenly
felt by Henry James that he once remarked:

"Extreme youth is what I may call his window-
bar -- the support on which he somewhat rowdily leans
while he looks down on the human scene with his pipe
in his teeth."
In a volume of the New England Magazine, Jabez T. Sunderland is even more loud in the recognition of Kipling's wonderful power:

"He is distinctly the poet of power. This is shown in his style which is rugged, seldom smooth or polished...... There is little melody in his verse but plenty of virility. Occasionally he is tender, though not often, but he is always strong. He cares little for the beautiful, but he cares much for deeds that display vigor, tenacity, courage, determination and contempt of ease. He likes nothing so well as strength."

It might also be interesting to note how Richard LeGallienne, a Kipling specialist, regards the esteemed literary artist:

"His work nobly enforces those old-fashioned virtues of man, which, it is hoped, will never go out of fashion......... His mere vitality, apart from the variousness of it, is a joy to contemplate."

Indeed it may be safely said that every critic, whatever else he may say of Rudyard Kipling, does not fail to pronounce him strong and energetic.

These critics only echo what his writings have told many times. One cannot read the poetry of Kipling without being impressed with its vigor and force. His poems in SEVEN SEAS AND BARRACK ROOM BALLADS thrill with life as they tell of the giant forces of nature and the will power and daring of men. The "Song of the English," included in the first collection, praises the power of a nation conscious of her great possessions and unparalled...
means of enjoyment. They have a vigor that is characteristic of all the author's verse. Energetic, indeed, is the movement one finds in the barrack room poetry. It seems to swing along at almost double quick time. Quite as stirring are his prose works. He revels in a subject which calls for power and strength. "The Bridge Builders" tells of a mammoth engineering feat of spanning the Ganges with a huge bridge. The completion of the work required a period of three years and a force of five thousand men. Only a Kipling could present such a theme with appropriate force and power. The freshness of the invention and the vigor of the narrative unite to form a style typical of this rare master of English literary art.

Again if one recalls Kipling's parentage, he need not wonder at the son's extraordinary freshness and energy for these are his heritage from his remarkable ancestry. His father was of Holland lineage, his forefathers having come to England from that country some four hundred years ago. He, an artist of considerable ability, was of deep and wide culture and a witty talker. His talent as an entertainer enabled him to number his acquaintance by the legion. Kipling acknowledges his father's help in the volume, IN BLACK AND WHITE, where he says:

"These tales collected from all places, and all sorts of people, from priests in Chubaa, from Ala Yar and the carver, Jiwun Singh the carpenter, nameless men on steamers and trains around the world, women spinning outside
their cottages in the moonlight, officers and gentlemen
now dead and buried, and a few, but these are the very
best, my father gave me."

Kipling's mother, whom her son called the "wittiest
woman in India," was the daughter of a Methodist
clergyman at Endon, in Staffordshire. As her maiden
name suggests, she was of Scotch-Irish ancestry and
its liveliness was found in rejuvenated abundance in
young Rudyard. Couple with this the courage and per­s­
severance of the paternal strain and the result is a
combination that is fearless and unconquerable. Virility,
then, is Kipling's greatest gift of nature.

Kipling's religion has also been a compelling
force in his life. His course of action and even the
products of his pen were often inevitable because of
this vital power, which guided and directed him. Kipling
was never one to shout his religion -- he did not love
to pray standing in the synagogue to be seen of men.
He preferred rather to live his religion.

The first element in this most vital part of
Kipling is his strong belief in an omniscient, omnipotent
God. This is evident again and again in his poetry.
The "Recessional," a great religious poem, commemorated
the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria
and shows a faith in God as the eternal and supreme
Being, whom people should remember even on the greatest
occasions. Each stanza closes with the refrain:

"Lord God of Host, be with us yet,
Lest we forget -- lest we forget!"
Kipling's God is the master of all, and it is to Him everyone must answer for the deeds done in the body. This with a belief in Heaven is emphasized in the following:

"When earth's last picture is painted and the tubes are twisted and dried,
When the oldest colors have faded, and the youngest critic has died,
We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it -- lie down for an aeon or two,
Till the master of all good workmen shall put us to work anew."

Then in the new work:

"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."

Man's part in Kipling's creed is to be never idle but ever doing, whatever the hands find to do, with all human might:

"For still the Lord is Lord of might
In deeds, in deeds, He takes delight."

In "McAndrew's Hymn" he again refers to the life of deeds:
"But I ha' done what I ha' done,
Judge Thou if ill or well."

In his "Song for the Flyers," written no doubt with the thought in mind of his own boy, since killed in aviation work, he echoes in the last stanza this faith in duty:

"If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after you are gone;
And so hold on when there is nothing in you,
Except the will which says to them, 'Hold on'!
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run --
Yours is the earth and everything that's in it
And what is more -- you'll be a man -- my son."

In the "Envoi" of SOLDIERS THREE Kipling asks with solemn import the great question for all:

"Lo, I have wrought in common clay
Rude figures of a rough hewn race!
For pearls strew not the market place!
Yet is there life in what I make?
O, Thou, who knowest, turn and see,
As Thou hast power over me,
So have I over these;
Because I wrought them for Thy sake,
And breathed in them mine agonies.
Small mirth was in the making. Now
I lift the cloth that cloaks the clay
And wearied at Thy feet I lay
My wares, ere I go forth to sell.
The long bazaar will praise — but Thou —
Heart of my heart, have I done well?"

Was it any wonder, then, in the dramatic sweep of Kipling's genius, a new woman was ushered into his fiction? With the breaking up of old conventions had come a new idea of the place of women in the scheme of things. Tennyson's "Princess" was a feeble step in the new advance. Ibsen's plays with their ideal of woman as primarily a being with personal rights and social duties were abroad in the world. Whitman's idea of woman as a comrade and a strong mother of men, was sounding across the seas. For the time the woman with spiritual attributes solely, Shakespeare's woman, Browning's woman, the woman also needed in the rounded ideal of life was pushed to the background. So with only a trace of the woman of sentiment, Kipling created his women bearing children and serving humanity. Indeed his own life, his personal traits and religion were too full of the red blood of action to conceive of woman as a sentimental, baleful beauty or a sheltered and pampered idler. His woman must be ardent of heart, alert of mind and eager of hand for service in aid of humanity both in the home and outside of it. Kipling's ideal could not consistently be otherwise. Indeed if she were, he would be false to his age, to his own personality and that most vital part of him, his religion. So one
finds sounding through all his work and implied or uttered in all his characters -- men or women -- the creed of service. For woman as for man the future here and hereafter depends in his count upon one's use of life in thus "carrying on." The reward that each will receive in the Last Judgment, Kipling thinks, will be meted out according to the stewardship exercised in thus aiding the need and the deed of humanity.
CONCLUSION

It must be concluded, then, that critics, who condemn Kipling as a pessimist, a cynic and an orientalist, are entirely false in their judgment. He is not embittered against women as a result of experiences in early life; he has not been so much in India that he is ignorant of the women of his own race. On the other hand, he is a realist who fearlessly paints the female sex as he has seen it. If there be good there must be bad, even among women; and so Rudyard Kipling, wishing to be true, has written "The Vampire." With just as earnest conviction he gives the world the tender verses of "Mother o' Mine." The reasoning is false which infers that he hates women because he has written the former, and does not conclude that he reverences and adores them because of the latter.

When Kipling takes service as a basis of his classification of women, he is truly a product of his age, a time when efficiency is the great watchword. Nothing is worth while that does not function, whether it be a piece of machinery, a bit of nature, or a human being. Kipling is, then, in perfect accord with his epoch when he expects of women a great service. Indeed his own personality and temperament were such that to be true to himself he must demand energy and effort even on the part of his female characters. He was too practical
to admire passive virtues, and so the halo that he gave the female sex was a halo of service.

With such a conception, too, Kipling has demonstrated that he has the right sense of proportions, for who can deny that after all the most important thing in the world is the work that each individual performs -- the good he does to his fellow men. Sex does not lessen the responsibility by one jot, so that woman, according to Rudyard Kipling, owes her fellow beings the earnest use of her God-given talents. Commerce and politics, in the last decade, have also begun to recognize this and women have become capable and useful in lines before unthought of. Kipling does not have just this same conception of the business of woman, her work to him is not the same as man's, for her field is more concerned with the home; but as industries are calling women out into the world of activity, so Kipling summons them away from the passive, idle lives into great and noble service. Perhaps in portraying women in this way, he is hailing a new day in literature, when that which is artificial and sentimental shall be done away with or at least given only proper consideration, and that which is permanent -- even eternal -- shall be placed foremost. It may be that Kipling is one of the forerunners of a time when men shall not write as if seeing through a glass darkly, but they shall know to put the first and most important where it rightfully belongs.
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