

CHATTERTON LECTURE ON AN ENGLISH POET

KIPLING'S MAGIC ART

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**I**N 'The Song of the Banjo' Kipling gives that instrument a voice, and it speaks of

. . . tunes that mean so much to you alone—  
Common tunes that make you choke and blow your nose—  
Vulgar tunes that bring the laugh that brings the groan—  
I can rip your very heartstrings out with those.<sup>1</sup>

The poet admired the banjo, and respected its power. It spoke, he claimed, with the wisdom of the centuries; and much of his own poetry is set to its tunes. They are an embarrassment to his critics. The first Chatterton lecturer on Kipling, Professor Andrew Rutherford, bravely avowed his boyish pleasure in some of the 'simple, unsophisticated' poems; less confident critics have approached Kipling with elaborate caution, for fear of the banjo tunes: only 'the good Kipling' is respectable reading for the critically mature.<sup>2</sup> But it is not stories like 'Mary Postgate' that contain, it seems to me, the kernel of Kipling's art; rather it is the vulgar ditties, laden, like the potent cheap tunes which are interwoven with our lives, with quite illegitimate emotional power. If one is to understand his art and his aims, it must be through an understanding of the uncritical, emotional responses which he deliberately sought to call up.

Just as the banjo tunes are charged with emotions which belong to the situations they recall, rather than to their independent power, so many of Kipling's verses are inextricably embedded in frameworks of circumstance which add to their significance. Each framework is personal, and 'means so much to you alone'; but it is also public, and forms a bond with those to whom, we discover, it is also significant. The voice of the Radio Uncle who read the *Just So Stories* to me has a special

<sup>1</sup> 'Song of the Banjo', 1894, quoted from *The Definitive Edition of Rudyard Kipling's Verse* (London, 1940), p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> See Andrew Rutherford, 'Some Aspects of Kipling's Verse', *The Proceedings of the British Academy*, li (London, 1965), 378; and the discussion of critical attitudes in Elliot L. Gilbert, *The Good Kipling* (Ohio, 1971), pp. 3-13.

place in the hearts of thousands of others of my generation. It is not simply that many of Kipling's pieces belong to that adolescent world where we are always reading things for the first time, and so linking them emotionally with whatever mountain, hill, or stream was first illuminated for us by their visionary gleam; rather that the verses appeal on a primitive poetic level, at which each poem's delivery, its circumstances, purposes, and concomitant rituals are as important as its content. Kipling deliberately sought in much of his poetry to evoke this aspect of the enjoyment of verse—its connection, as he felt, with other aspects of life. Poetically used words were his tools for intensifying and dignifying the emotional experience of everyday life, and leaving each of his readers to return to his own life with a new idea of its importance and its shape.

This is, as T. S. Eliot pointed out, a magical conception of the use of art.<sup>1</sup> Eliot cited R. G. Collingwood's definition: 'A magical art is an art which is representative and therefore evocative of emotion, and evokes of set purpose some emotions rather than others to discharge them into the affairs of practical life.' Collingwood further defined the effect of magic as 'the exact opposite of a catharsis' intended to 'develop and conserve morale' because the 'emotions aroused by magical acts are not discharged by those acts'.<sup>2</sup> He gave Kipling's art as an instance, and added further generic examples: all military music, hymnody, and those poems in which the subject-matter is propaganda and is held to be more important than the manner of writing. T. S. Eliot did not feel that this notion of art was sufficient to cover all aspects of Kipling's work; and some of the corollaries which Collingwood offers as consequent upon the definition do not relate to Kipling's methods and achievements. Collingwood was of the opinion that magic could only become 'true art' in the hands of an artificer by whom the artistic and the magical motives, the interest in perfecting the creation itself, and in its emotional effectiveness for a particular task, were not felt to be distinct, and that this state of mind has been impossible since the Middle Ages. But to present Kipling, the craft-obsessive mason and maker of tribal lays, as a post-medieval magical writer to whom the 'goodness or badness' of a poem 'has little, if any, connexion with its efficacy in its own proper work' is to miss the point of his magic. I would like to examine, therefore,

<sup>1</sup> T. S. Eliot, *A Choice of Kipling's Verse* (London, 1941), Introduction, p. 20 n. 2.

<sup>2</sup> R. G. Collingwood, *The Principles of Art* (Oxford, 1938), pp. 66-9.

the magical methods, as well as the magical motives, of Kipling's verses, and attempt to explore his verse and his ideas about it by means of the notion of the magical power of words.

Kipling himself did not say much about the springs of art; what ideas he did articulate have been felt to be inadequate to the analysis of his stories, especially the later, denser examples; but they chime well with a magical view of his verse. In *Something of Myself*<sup>1</sup> he speaks throughout of his sense that his artistic life was controlled from outside; he begins by 'ascribing all good fortune to Allah the Dispenser of Events' and later attributes all good work to 'the peremptory motions of my Daemon', which caused him to produce stories so nearly vicariously, as it were, that when he looked at them and at his success, he felt "Lord ha' mercy on me, this is none of I." In the course of some few stories and poems he elaborates upon this idea: the best-known example is 'Wireless',<sup>2</sup> the story in which a consumptive chemist's assistant, of most homely and modern aspect, becomes, when drugged, a receiver through some accidental cosmic sympathy for certain lines of Keats which are drifting about the ether struggling to get themselves expressed. Through the juxtaposition with experiments with wireless Kipling implies that poetry is like radio, 'the Power—our unknown Power—kicking and fighting to be let loose . . . There she goes—kick—kick—kick into space'. The magic, it seems, rests in the words themselves, and has in this case very little to do with the poet and his personality or motives. It is a version of the inspirational theory of poetry, as Kipling's choice of a Romantic poet indicates and the narrator's pronouncement later in the story underlines: he says (in the slightly pontifical tone that many of Kipling's literary narrators adopt) that we must 'Remember that in all the millions permitted there are no more than five—five little lines—of which one can say: "These are the pure Magic. These are the clear Vision."' They are, you will recall, the fragment of Keats the chemist is struggling to get right:

Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam  
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn

and a snatch of 'Kubla Khan':

A savage place! as holy and enchanted  
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted  
By woman wailing for her demon-lover.

<sup>1</sup> London, 1937, pp. 1, 113, 78.

<sup>2</sup> *Traffics and Discoveries*, 1904, Sussex edition, vol. vii, pp. 215-43.

They are quintessential Romantic lines, appealing to the supernatural as a source of creativity.

In verses about the creative process Kipling offers a variation on Romance as the root and object of poetry. It becomes 'the Boy-god' who inspires engineers driving steam-trains as he inspired cavemen tipping arrow heads and sailors trimming sails, all of them looking back the while and mourning his passing; it is the identity of purpose that unites a cockney singer with 'Omer smiting his blooming lyre and which conversely sets apart Ung the artist and his father from their clients who cannot see the pictures waiting to be made.<sup>1</sup> It is a man's appeal to some force outside himself, to vision, history, and idealism. One notices that the extension of the idea immediately takes in not only other arts; but also activities which are not artistic in their nature—Kipling perceives a continuum of human activities which all have their own versions of the combination of inspiration and craftsmanship. Everything from civil administration to cooking is a magical gift, and its possessor is dignified and justified by his painstaking practice of it. The writer, then, is gifted with words; they are the Magic; his is the obligation to work it.

Collingwood specifies in his definition of the magical artist that it is important for his artifact to be representational: since it is created not for its intrinsic beauty, but for the emotional effect it will have, the only vital requirement for success is that its meaning and purpose should be clearly articulated.<sup>2</sup> At first blush this seems to fit much of Kipling's verse. It is often said that his poems are simpler than his stories, and have fewer levels of meaning; that they can be taken in at first reading and offer no further reverberations or complexities. This, indeed, was the basis of that critical view of his work which dismissed the verse as good bad poetry or not poetry at all but mere balladdeering.<sup>3</sup> But it is not what Kipling understood by the magical power of verse. He did indeed intend to write for those who would use his verses 'to develop and conserve morale', to raise their emotions to be discharged in action; but he sought, therefore, for ways of using words not simply, to deliver a

<sup>1</sup> 'The King', 1894, *Definitive Edition*, pp. 376-7; 'When 'Omer Smote 'Is Bloomin' Lyre', *Definitive Edition*, p. 351; 'The Story of Ung', *Definitive edition*, pp. 345-8.

<sup>2</sup> Collingwood, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-9.

<sup>3</sup> See, for instance, George Orwell's essay 'Rudyard Kipling', 1942, *Collected Essays* ed. S. Orwell and I. Angus, 4 vols. (London, 1968), vol. ii, pp. 184-97, 194, and T. S. Eliot's use of the term 'ballad-maker', *op. cit.*, p. 6.

message to the greatest number of active persons, but covertly, obliquely, magically, as a charm, to put spells on them. They listened to the story he told, and responded not to its superficial meaning alone, but to its tone. The effect of words lay for him in their irrational potency; and in shaping the obvious and simple phrase, understood by all, to the tune that would work on the hearer on an irrational level.

Kipling's way of working on verse confirms the primacy in the imaginative process of the inarticulate pattern: he would take up a tune, picking it out of the air or asking another person for a suggestion, and work the words out of himself to its cadences, which he would alter as he worked to suit his purpose. The selection of the patterning tune would be at random not, I think, because it was irrelevant, as some critics have implied,<sup>1</sup> but because it was the *donnée*, the Daemon-given element—the most important element of all. To see the connections between the original poem and Kipling's one must consider their irrational levels. Sometimes Kipling plays off the tonal and the articulated statements in ironic counterpoint; but more often, more characteristically, the words become incantations whose force is generated chiefly by their stress, their repetition, and tonal values they acquire. In *Captains Courageous* there is a scene in which the uses of song are made plain.<sup>2</sup> The boy Harvey, who is being educated by his contact with the simple working life, listens to a fo'c'sle sing-song. After a ballad with 'an old-fashioned creaky tune' and a beautiful chorus which 'made Harvey almost weep, though he could not tell why', the black Scottish cook sings, and the effect is 'much worse . . . he struck into a tune that was like something very bad but sure to happen whatever you did. After a little he sang, in an unknown tongue . . . the tune crooned and moaned on, like lee surf in a blind fog, until it ended with a wail.' It is, he says, the song of Fin M'Coul. They are overwhelmed. Then the ship's boy sings, and is reproved for approaching in his song taboo words, the last verse being 'a Jonah'. Suddenly the black Celt is moved to prophecy and second sight. A complex of magical notions surrounds the singing of sailors' songs; they are potent words, influencing the success of the trip as well as the spirits of the crew, and equally potent when only their tune is understood.

The appropriateness of this apparently very primitive version

<sup>1</sup> See Charles Carrington, *Rudyard Kipling, His Life and Work* (London, 1955), p. 356.

<sup>2</sup> *Captains Courageous*, 1897, *Sussex Edition*, vol. xx, 67-74.

of the poetic use of words to Kipling's chosen audiences need not be laboured. Moved by his Daemon and by his convictions to address poetry to those ignorant of its sophisticated languages, to children, for example, and to soldiers, he was obliged to rely heavily upon the understanding which can be derived from comprehending only the tone of voice in which the language is spoken. In exploring the magical qualities of Kipling's verse I shall accordingly begin with the verses in which this restriction is most powerful, his poems for or about 'the people', the soldier songs with their reliance upon popular forms, and his writing for children or adolescents, where he resorts to a use of words inspired by childish story-telling and play. The techniques developed in these special writings were carried over into the 'mixed form' of stories and poems which marks the apex of his achievement, and they became tools for subtle and complex purposes.

There are several stories which hinge upon the irrational power of words used by popular singers or by children. 'The Village that Voted the Earth was Flat'<sup>1</sup> is based upon the premise that a song, conceived and delivered in the music hall, could affect all England profoundly and one village permanently. The punishment of universal derision is visited upon the cruel and greedy village through the power of illusion: in a fake crusade they are persuaded to vote that the earth is flat; and then it is driven home by the song that is made about them. This ditty, deliberately banal, and deteriorating into guttural belches and delirious howls, is composed in Kipling's own manner, by modelling upon an existing song, ' "Nuts in May" with variations'; but its power is compulsive, even frightening. It is launched in music hall and cinema, and then 'the thing roared and pulverised and swept beyond eyesight all by itself—all by itself' until it finally prostrates the House of Commons:

Then, without distinction of Party, fear of constituents, desire for office, or hope of emolument, the House sang at the tops and at the bottoms of their voices, swaying their stale bodies and epileptically beating with their swelled feet. They sang 'The Village that voted the *Earth was flat*': first, because they wanted to, and secondly—which is the terror of that song—because they could not stop.

There is an instance of words chanted and sung to precipitate action amongst another, perhaps less rational group, Stalky and Co's schoolmates, in 'The United Idolaters'.<sup>2</sup> They delight in

<sup>1</sup> *A Diversity of Creatures*, 1917, *Sussex Edition*, vol. ix, 163–214.

<sup>2</sup> *Debits and Credits*, 1926, but in the *Sussex Edition* included in *Stalky and Co.*, vol. xvii, 193–216.

words: 'As the Studies brought back brackets and pictures for their walls, so did they bring back odds and ends of speech—theatre, opera, and music-hall gags—from the great holiday world.' These fragments act as jokes, and also talismanically, the possession and use of jargon being, for Kipling especially, a sign of the potent inner ring. In this story a craze for *Uncle Remus* sweeps the school, and nonsense chants pass from boy to boy. Eventually the stirring effect of the words issues in action, rival quasi-religious allegiances grow up, some supporting Brer Terrapin and others the Tar Baby, and 'House by House, when the news spread, dropped its doings, and followed the Mysteries—not without song . . . Some say . . . that the introits of the respective creeds ("Ingle—go—jang"—"Ti—yi—Tungalee!") carried in themselves the seeds of dissent.' Battle ensues, and as a result of the destructive orgy, exhilarating and cathartic to the boys, a practical purgation follows: a misfit temporary master, who does not understand the Coll., is forced to leave.

Kipling's version of effective poetry for the people, rather than for literary critics, has many sources. The most obvious is the London music hall. Kipling's acquaintance with the halls, in so far as it influenced his writing, seems to have been brief but intense. In the autumn of 1889 he moved to lodgings in Villiers Street, and plunged into the life of the metropolis. Already a sought-after new writer, he held himself aloof from literary circles, and deliberately sought to know England at the level of the streets. In *Something of Myself* he recorded the three-month involvement with the music hall opposite his lodgings, Gatti's-under-the-Arches, where he 'listened to the observed and compelling songs of the Lion and Mammoth Comiques, and the shriller strains—but equally "observed"—of the Bessies and Bellas'. The experience of 'the smoke, the roar, and the good-fellowship of relaxed humanity at Gatti's "set" the scheme for a certain sort of song'.<sup>1</sup> The songs were the *Barrack-room Ballads*, based on his observation of soldiers in India and of the Guardsmen who frequented Gatti's, and filtered through the attitudes of the 'elderly but upright barmaid' he took with him to the hall. In 'My Great and Only',<sup>2</sup> which is more contemporary evidence of these events, since it was one of the sketches he sent back to his Indian newspaper from his English visit, he expatiated more fully on his

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit., p. 80-1.

<sup>2</sup> *The Civil and Military Gazette* (Lahore, Jan. 1890), reprinted in *Abast the Funnel* (New York, 1909), *Sussex Edition*, vol. xxix, 259-67.

exploration of 'the diversions of heathendom' as exemplified by the London music hall. In his sketch he claimed to have written a music-hall song, and to have had it performed with great success by a Comique singer. There are various unlikely or discrepant details in both these accounts. He does not say, for instance, how a barmaid came to have free time to accompany him regularly to evening performances in the music hall; and while he apparently gives convincing detail of his meeting the singer, through advertisements for songs in the theatrical press, it is not explained how the man came to be performing, at that moment, at Gatti's. If the writing and performance of Kipling's music-hall song is a fiction, however, it is only the more interesting; for the story is in that case a fantasy of success in a kind, one may presume, that he coveted for himself, at a period when literary recognition was coming to him very freely already.

Kipling clearly knew much about the hall. Many details of 'My Great and Only' fit exactly with the events at Gatti's in these months. It seems very likely that there was, as he claims, a singer with whom he became friendly. They were friendly people, and susceptible to admiration and cigars. It may have been Leo Dryden, who was the singer who delivered the song that in the sketch Kipling says was a rival to his own composition. It was called 'Shopmates', a parody of a tragic ballad called 'Shipmates', and itself, according to Kipling, 'a priceless ballad' of 'grim tragedy, lighted with lurid humour'. It is more likely that his acquaintance was James Fawn, who appeared at Gatti's on the same bill as Dryden for the week beginning 11 November and stayed after him until the Christmas change of bill on 23 December. Fawn was a versatile comic singer, who began with convivial and character songs—the less 'swell' end of the Comique range—and moved on in later years to be an old-fashioned red-nose comic. In these months he was involved in a successful court action to protect his most famous song, 'Ask a P'liceman', from performance by another singer in a pantomime. This may have suggested Kipling's ironic remark that he was taught about property rights in songs by the singer he befriended, who stole his from him. The current topic of debate in music-hall circles was the issue of 'protected' material, as Kipling mentions in the sketch; he also says there that his song borrowed the chorus of a 'protected' piece, which seems to make it less likely that his song was performed freely, as he suggests.

In 'My Great and Only' snatches of Kipling's song are given,



and another verse from it is introduced, as being sung by Ortheris, at the end of the story 'Love o' Women',<sup>1</sup> where it serves as a last facet in the framing of a grisly incident. It is clearly the forerunner of the *Barrack-room Ballads*; but it is not so clear that Fawn would have sung it. Its resemblance to his songs is more apparent than real. The differences emerge when it is set beside the song which I take to be its inspiration, which Fawn did sing in the autumn of 1889. This was called 'The Soldier', and was written by E. W. Rogers and published by R. Maynard in 1890. Rogers was a successful song writer, who worked for Marie Lloyd and George Robey as well as Fawn, producing among other things 'The Lambeth Walk'. Kipling knew 'The Soldier'; he quoted, or rather rewrote, the most significant verse of it in relation to his own piece in 'The Army of a Dream', a story published in 1904.<sup>2</sup> 'The Soldier' has six verses, and a chorus which varies, as that of Kipling's music-hall song does, with each repetition. Roger's song, however, follows the usual pattern of the music hall character study and takes up a new, unrelated aspect of its subject for each verse. This practice had a practical use, in that a song going badly could be cut or stopped at any point. Kipling had noticed the structure; he says that his song consisted of a chorus plus 'four elementary truths'. It is clear, though, from the portions given, that its story was one indivisible whole. While the song Fawn sang presented in turn various soldiers from a militiaman to General Gordon, Kipling's tells the story of a guardsman's rejection by an undercook, and his subsequent wooing of a housemaid. It has a punchline ('An' . . . she can't foot the bill') which really only makes sense in relation to the convention about soldiers' sponging on women which is enunciated in the other song:

Who is it mashes the country nurse? The soldier!  
 Who is it borrows the lady's purse? The soldier!  
 Getting it toddles towards the bar  
 Orders a drink and a big cigar,  
 Hands it back quietly, and says ta! ta! the soldier!

This is the stanza improved upon in 'The Army of a Dream'.

'Oo is it mashes the country nurse?  
 The Guardsman!  
 'Oo is it takes the lady's purse?  
 The Guardsman!

<sup>1</sup> *Many Inventions*, 1893, *Sussex Edition*, vol. v, 359-92.

<sup>2</sup> *Traffics and Discoveries*, 1904, *Sussex Edition*, vol. vii, 245-305.

Calls for a drink, and a mild cigar,  
 Batters a sovereign down on the bar,  
 Collars the change and says 'Ta-ta!'  
 The Guardsman!

The description of the gallery at Gatti's, when he thought they 'would never let go of the long-drawn howl on "Soldier"' could easily refer to their response to Fawn singing Rogers's song. The piece is a typical music-hall character sketch; it is superficially completely explicit, simple, and repetitious, while the complexity of the audience's response to the character presented is accommodated by juxtaposition. The listeners are invited in each verse in turn to recognize a different aspect of the soldier: his laughable conceit in his ludicrous uniform, his humanity in enjoying a good tune and a good drink, his culpable unscrupulousness with women; finally a contrast is made between the despicable fake soldier, the militiaman, and the real one, whom 'we must admire'. Crosscurrents are added by the mentioning of well-known names, Kassassin, Roberts. Kipling rejects this broad sweep of reference. His soldier resembles a broadside ballad hero, the protagonist of a drama of pride and passion on a humble level. The refrain he borrowed, 'And that's what the girl told the soldier', suggests the series of innuendoes it no doubt originally accompanied; but the pattern of the chorus he adds to it owes more to older popular tradition, and accommodates a much more compressed, economical, and powerful use of words than in the real song Fawn sang:

Oh, think o' my song when you're gowin' it strong,  
 And your boots are too little to 'old yer,  
 And don't try for things that are out of your reach,  
 And that's what the Girl told the Soldier,  
 Soldier! Soldier!

*That's what the girl told the soldier.*

The whole piece, pulled together by the repetition of descriptive lines in the first and last verses which no music-hall writer could have produced—'At the back o' the Knightsbridge Barricks / When the fog's a-gatherin' dim'—has an art which far outstrips E. W. Rogers.

What Kipling really admired, I feel, was not the songs, though he repeatedly said they were 'works of art',<sup>1</sup> but their

<sup>1</sup> See his correspondence about the music halls, and especially the song 'Ka-foozle-um', published in J. B. Booth, *The Days We Knew* (London, 1943), pp. 29-35. The extant printed version of 'Ka-foozle-um' is by S. Oxon, printed in 1865, and is a jocular tale of the wooing of a Turkish

presentation, and their audiences' response. Their effect upon the people was magical; its potential at a time when poetry seemed to be shrinking in upon itself and appealing to fewer and fewer readers, was unlimited. At the end of 'My Great and Only' he invoked the 'mighty intellect' who would one day 'rise up from Bermondsey, Battersea, or Bow . . . coarse, but clear-sighted, hard but infinitely and tenderly humorous, speaking the People's tongue . . . and telling them in swinging, urging, ringing verse what it is that their inarticulate lips would express'. Here, and again in 'The Village that Voted the Earth was Flat', he described the triumphant reception of the potent song. As the Comique began, the poet clutched his pot of beer, and hoped for the presence of heavy-booted guardsmen. At the first verse he fancied he 'could catch a responsive hoof-beat in the gallery . . . Then came the chorus and the borrowed refrain. It took—it went home with a crisp click.' They joined in the chorus, with a howl, and were 'hooked . . . With each verse the chorus grew louder'; and at the final repetition, 'as a wave gathers to the curl-over, singer and sung-to filled their chests and hove the chorus, through the quivering roof—horns and basses drowned and lost in the flood—to the beach-like boom of beating feet'. The potent animality of the images is very noticeable.

The song in 'The Village that Voted the Earth was Flat' is sung by a woman clearly modelled on Nellie Farren, whom Kipling saw in burlesque at the Gaiety, and admired for her boyish charm, but also, it seems clear, for the devotion which she inspired in the gallery boys:<sup>1</sup>

maiden by a Jew of whom her father disapproves and whom he eventually murders; its humour is reminiscent of W. S. Gilbert. The tune seems to have been popular with the writers of burlesques. Lewis S. Winstock, in his article 'Rudyard Kipling and Army Music', *Kipling Journal*, June 1971, pp. 5–12, mentions that it has now become an obscene song, 'The Harlot of Jerusalem', and speculates as to what versions Kipling knew; the apparent nonsense word 'ka-foozle-um' seems to have had overtones of brotheldom as early as 1825, when scene seven of *The Life of an Actor*, performed at the Adelphi, took place 'Outside of Mrs Cafooslem's Boarding House'.

<sup>1</sup> See the account of her following in W. Macqueen-Pope, *Nights of Gladness* (London, 1956), pp. 143–4. They ran as a bodyguard every night by her carriage, and welcomed her back from tours with huge banners emblazoned 'The Boys Welcome Their Nellie'. The impresario Bat in this story seems to owe something to the Gaiety manager George Edwardes. In a bad poem addressed 'To Lyde of the Music Halls' ('A Recantation', *Definitive Edition*, pp. 369–70) about Marie Lloyd, invoking her by the extraordinary

She swept into that song with the full orchestra. It devastated the habitable earth for the next six months. Imagine, then, what its rage and pulse must have been at the incandescent hour of its birth! She only gave the chorus once. At the end of the second verse, 'Are you *with me, boys?*' she cried, and the house tore it clean away from her . . . It was delirium. Then she picked up the Gubby dancers and led them in a clattering improvised lockstep thrice round the stage till her last kick sent her diamond-hilted shoe catherine-wheeling to the electrolier. I saw the forest of hands raised to catch it, heard the roaring and stamping pass through hurricanes to full typhoon; heard the song, pinned down by the faithful double-basses as the bull-dog pins down the bellowing bull, overbear even those; till at last the curtain fell . . . Still the song, through all those whitewashed walls, shook the reinforced concrete of the Trefoil as steam pile-drivers shake the flanks of a dock. Notice the insistence upon sub-human, but immensely powerful, expression. The power with words to move masses of people to physical demonstration was the art Kipling wished to learn from the music hall.

A further important aspect of that magic is also contained in these scenes. The worker of the spell is the performer; the writer feels his power in private, safe even from the awareness of his existence amongst those whom he moves. 'Dal, the woman singer, is vulnerable, being as overwhelmed in emotion as her audience, and can only whisper her gratitude huskily; but Kipling, safe in the knowledge that 'They do not call for authors on these occasions' felt that whatever joy might be sent him, the success of his music-hall song gave him perfect felicity, an utter happiness which fame greater than Shakespeare's could not surpass. As the lines of the song mutated in the instant oral tradition of the drunken music-hall audience under his window that night, he murmured to himself, ' "I have found my Destiny" '. If none of it really happened, such an invention is even more striking than the recording of feeling supercharged by the heat of the moment. The desire for self-effacement has often been observed in Kipling's poems: it is, of course, the whole burden of his epitaph; and it issued first in conjunction with the desire to express and call out strong emotion, in the character-song formula of the *Barrack-room Ballads*. The occasion on title of 'Singer to Children!' he again stressed the power and consequent obligations of the popular singer:

Yet they who use the Word assigned,  
To hearten and make whole,  
Not less than Gods have served mankind,  
Though vultures rend their soul.

which he actually attained the sort of overwhelming success which he describes so ecstatically here was to come later, with 'The Absent-Minded Beggar'. He certainly enjoyed the popularity which the song (and pockets full of tobacco) gave him with the troops in South Africa, but he hardly felt the piece was his own. He gave its profits to the fund for the troops, and for some time he left it out of his collected verse; the remark that he would shoot the man who wrote it, if it were not suicide, is often taken to mean that he was ashamed of its 'elements of direct appeal', its open sentimentality, and backhanded aggressiveness.<sup>1</sup> I think it more likely that it is a rather coy reference to his disowning of the song, coupled with the ambivalence he always shows towards great popular success. There is a tantalizing mystery for him in the compulsive tune which thrusts itself on the attention long after conscious critical faculties have rejected it in wearied revulsion. In 'The Absent-Minded Beggar' he created that self-activating artifact, and in reality, as in the fantasy of 'My Great and Only', 'Builded better than he knew'. His disclaimer has the same force as the last line of the earlier piece, which dismisses his success: 'and the same, they say, is a Vulgarity!'

The *Barrack-room Ballads*, however, have more about them than that. In them the music-hall strain is tonally dominant; but like all his ballads, they draw formal and verbal elements from many other kinds of popular poetry. Poets of the people, in 1889, wrote not only for the halls, but also for the newspapers and magazines and the drawing-room; for the schoolchild and reciter, as well as for the variety artist. Kipling felt their verse too partook of the magical, in that it affected large audiences of unliterary persons, and evoked emotion closely concerned with action, issuing in practical results within the communities for which it was written. In *Captains Courageous* the fishing community, gathered together for its memorial day, is moved by a recitation by an 'actress from Philadelphia', whose 'wonderful voice took hold of the people by their heartstrings'<sup>2</sup> despite the inferiority of the port of Brixham as she describes it to their own town. The Victorian popular poets drew upon sources of which Kipling too was aware, and to which he could turn directly, in older popular verse: upon folk-song and oral ballads, broadsides and chapbooks, hymns, and the post-Romantic tradition of narrative verse on patriotic, historical, and nationalistic

<sup>1</sup> See *Something of Myself*, pp. 150-1.

<sup>2</sup> Op. cit., p. 193.

subjects which was fathered by Scott and Macaulay. A ballad like 'Danny Deever' welds together Rossetti's 'Sister Helen' and an obscene army song; 'The Widow's Party' takes the highly serious ballad of 'Edward, Edward', familiar still from the Romantic versions of Percy and Scott, and treats it as a writer for the broadsides or the early music hall would, undercutting it by rendering it in comic cockney. 'Snarleyow', under a name from Marryat, couples a stanza shaped like that of a comic ballad by W. S. Gilbert, 'Etiquette', for example, with a music-hall chorus of downbeat cynicism, to tell a story George Sims would have made tear-jerking and Kipling makes tragic. The elements of all nineteenth-century ballad making can be traced in the collection, with additions from sources which supply rhythm, without any words at all, like the tramp of feet on a route march or the rather different beat of parade-ground drill. In rendering the character song of Tommy Atkins, inspired by the Indian Army, James Fawn, and the gallery at Gatti's, Kipling brought batteries of verbal magic from many sources to bear upon the model and the audience, and his spell was hugely successful.

The first of the *Barrack-room Ballads* were published by W. E. Henley, in the magazine he wielded as a weapon in his struggle with Aestheticism. Soldierly poems were very much to his purpose. He also edited such poems into 'a book of verse for boys', *Lyra Heroica*, in 1892. He thought it the first such collection, but it was anticipated by several popular poets and editors of books of recitations, including Frederick Langbridge who, in the autumn of 1889 as Kipling studied humanity in the streets of London, was editing *Ballads of the Brave: poems of chivalry, enterprise, and constancy*, to be 'a good Boys-Poetry-Book'. He was in turn inspired by William Cox Bennett, who had aspired to the creation of a history of England in verse, for the inspiration of the working classes and the young, in 1868. These are clearly magical uses of poetry, following Collingwood's definition, intended to inspire emotions to be discharged into the business of life. Kipling was the inheritor of these ambitions, and indeed partook more fully than he would have liked to think of the drive to convert and educate which came down to the late Victorian Empire-builders from their Evangelical parents. Accordingly he felt that children, like uneducated adults, were fit audience for his spell-binding; and just as his music-hall-inspired poems for the soldier drew upon all aspects of nineteenth-century popular poetry, so he brought the resources

of a craft much wider than that of the average versifier of history to bear upon the educative task. In 1911 Kipling cooperated with C. R. L. Fletcher in producing a history book with interspersed verses; but his best historical/educative poems accompany his own fictional writing for children. In the Mowgli stories, *Kim*, and most clearly in *Puck of Pook's Hill* and *Rewards and Fairies*, one may see the full scope of his mixed form of story and songs, where the verses contribute at levels beyond or below or alongside the rational, augmenting, or modifying the pattern of the narrative with magical reinforcements.

In his earlier writing for children the education aimed at was moral, and only in a very general sense historical. He sought, through the stories and verse of *The Jungle Books*,<sup>1</sup> to evoke the child's sense of the possibility of belonging to a society with a character, aims, and organization transcending but also protectively encompassing the individual. The Law is set out, and illustrated; dissent of various kinds is voiced, and accommodated or suppressed; and emotional acceptance, the internalizing of the sanctions enforcing social control, is encouraged, all through the use of verses beside or within the narratives.

The basic attraction of the Mowgli stories is the transformation of domestic realities—mother and father and brothers, and uncles and other adult teachers—by the exotic settings of Mowgli's jungle, which makes both the exotic accessible and safer, and the everyday more exciting and important. The pleasurable juxtaposition begins on the first page: the chapter heading to 'Mowgli's Brothers' is a quite alien and exciting section of something called 'Night-song in the Jungle'. The verse is high and mysterious, about 'the hour of pride and power'; the first sentence of the story is domestic, half-comic, about scratching and yawning and spreading out the paws 'to get rid of the sleepy feeling in their tips'. Wolves are humanized and made familiar; their jungle law, the moral ordering of the universe which accommodates both wolves and little boys, when they obey it, has been mentioned and is to be demonstrated.

The use of incantation and repetition, and of words of power and ritual, is pervasive in the stories; Mowgli repeatedly saves himself by the Master-Words of the Jungle, repeated in all the right languages. The Law Baloo teaches is couched in eminently chantable verse, which he, and his pupils real as well as fictional, deliver in 'a sort of sing-song', and learn from it their part.

<sup>1</sup> 1894 and 1895; *Sussex Edition*, vol. xii.

Conversely in the story of 'Kaa's Hunting' the Bandar-log have their song, expressing the philosophy which leads to their horribly ignoble death, and demonstrates their social worthlessness. But the impulse of Mowgli to selfish and careless play, which he must learn is wrong, is shared by the child reader. At the end of the tale, after punishment and forgiveness, the story is flipped upwards, indeed almost undercut, by the addition of the text of the monkeys' song, which delights by its verbal energy, irony, and invention: 'Here we sit in a branchy row . . . Then join our leaping lines that scumfish through the pines . . .' It is offered to be enjoyed, and now that we have learned by the story to see through its attractions, we can also enjoy our superiority to its enticements.

There is a related effect in 'Rikki-Tikki-Tavi', where the vanity and empty-headedness of the taylor-bird are mocked and criticized throughout the story, as he wastes time making a series of premature or unhelpful songs instead of assisting in the fight against the cobras. At the end, though, his chant in honour of Rikki-Tikki-Tavi is given:

Who hath delivered us, who?  
Tell me his nest and his name.  
Rikki, the valiant, the true,  
Tikki, with eyeballs of flame,  
Rik-tikki-tikki, the ivory-fangèd,  
the hunter with eyeballs of flame.

This combines a joke for the adult reader of the story, in that it is a parody of Swinburne, a good example of the excited poet foolishly singing for the victories of others, with a comic-heroic praising of the mongoose which is very satisfying to the child listener or reader as a contrast to the modesty he shows himself at the end of the tale.

A rather different use of the division between layers of the story which the juxtaposition of narrative and verse can give is the climatic use of 'Mowgli's Song', at the end of 'Tiger! Tiger!' The tale has demonstrated Mowgli's, the individual's, essential separateness: having learnt the Law of the Jungle, which admits him to the society of the disciplined and truly adult, he has made the painful discovery that others do not keep the Law, and so no ideal community exists; he has gained only his selfhood, and the society of a few equal individuals. Adherence to the Law under this disillusion is the hardest moral lesson to learn, especially where duty is taught entirely, as it is here, in terms of society, without relating it to a superhuman



power which offers future justification. Mowgli passes the test, and triumphs over his enemies, and departs laconically at the end of the story into the grown-up world which he has entered through his ordeal. The reader, however, is presumed not to have arrived yet at this transition; and so after the tale, his emotions of angry triumph, and pain and grief for Mowgli's sufferings, are given expression in a verse. 'Mowgli's song' is the song of the younger self, the reader; in strange, unrhymed verse 'that came up into his throat all by itself' it voices the reader's protest, and asks the unanswerable question as to why the world is so hard, and ends with 'My heart is heavy with the things that I do not understand'.

The combination of song and story in this way is not pursued in the following books: *Captains Courageous* uses songs integrated with the narrative, as do some stories in *The Day's Work*: 'The Brushwood Boy', for example, has a music-hall song sung by the troops and a sort of children's song to the piano used to reveal the possessors of a common dreamworld to each other, suggesting again a magical idea of the sources and powers of poetry. In *Kim* deliberately riddling use is made of snatches of verse for chapter headings: it is not so much that their relevance to the story is obscure, rather that they set the incidents or emotions of the chapters they head into quite other contexts, and deliberately jolt the attention of the reader away from the immediacy of the tale. They stress the fictional nature of the story: it is capable of expression, they suggest, in other terms, the incidents are not uniquely real but related to art and archetypes often expressed differently. They appear to be snatches from longer poems. These were then later completed, but it was important at their first use that they were not recognizable, so that they seize the attention and suggest the existence of other tales unread. Poetry is felt, as in 'Wireless', to have a life of its own, only occasionally and intermittently accessible to the reader, through the poet, and for him equally impossible to command, dependent upon the revelations of his Daemon. Their effect upon the story is like that of an epic simile; they relate the aspect of the story which they isolate to other worlds, enlarging and at the same time distancing the narrative, controlling focus and perspective. Their expression in rhythms and vocabulary so remote from those of the story is deliberately unsettling.

In the *Just So Stories*<sup>1</sup> the intercutting of different modes is

<sup>1</sup> 1902; *Sussex Edition*, vol. xiii.

even stranger; it arose out of the circumstances of oral narration, and is uncomfortable for the reader who has only the printed page. There is a pervasive sense of the private language and the shared joke. This is felt most obviously in the contrasting styles of the stories, which are in a heavily stylized, poetic language, and of the commentary accompanying the pictures, which attempts to reproduce the factual simplicities and unexpected twists of conversation with small children. Responses to questions Kipling's own children asked are incorporated, and attempts are made to extend the shared jokes to other children. In this book the verses, which were completed after the stories, are broadly of two kinds. Some, like the mouth-filling sing-song of *Old Man Kangaroo*, are poems for children to chant, using words for their amusing qualities of sound. Others take up the implicit relationship between the adult and the child to whom he tells the fantastical tales and bring their domestic life into focus. An example is 'When the cabin portholes are dark and green', the vignette from the life of a travelling family which appears at the end of the story of 'How the Whale Got its Throat'. This domestication of the story by the verse can have a moralizing effect, as in 'The Camel's Hump', where the fun of chanting and the relation of the story to the world of the nursery combine to drive home the moral point:

Kiddies and grown-ups too-oo-oo,  
If we haven't enough to do-oo-oo,  
We get the hump—  
Cameelious hump—  
The hump that is black and blue!

Kipling's affection for his daughter which prompted the book is most openly expressed in the verses; in the intimate and tender poems which he attaches to the stories of Taffimai he combines the expression of his personal feeling with a humour and ingenuity which also please the child reader.<sup>1</sup> These poems move decisively towards the kind of writing for children that he was to develop in the Puck stories. They have the primitive poetic satisfaction of delightful rhymes: 'racial talks and such' / 'gay shell torques and such', 'Broadstonebrook' / 'come and look'. They extend the world already introduced in their stories, and without the explicitness of narrative they

<sup>1</sup> We have the testimony of several readers, including Rosemary Sutcliff ('Rudyard Kipling', *Three Bodley Head Monographs* (London, 1968), pp. 95-6) that children are aware of the depth of love expressed in the Taffimai stories.

make available a complex of feeling that attaches to that world for Kipling. His sense of the transience of childhood is connected in the poems to the loss of past times, and the child, unable to conceive of either idea herself, is put in touch with both through simple images of the natural world and by the connection which is made to the particular, mortal, but endlessly recurring love of father and daughter.

There runs a road by Merrow Down—  
 A grassy track to-day it is—  
 An hour out of Guildford town,  
 Above the river Wey it is.  
 Here, when they heard the horse-bells ring,  
 The ancient Britons dressed and rode  
 To watch the dark Phoenicians bring  
 Their goods along the Western Road . . .  
 But long and long before that time  
 (When bison used to roam on it)  
 Did Taffy and her Daddy climb  
 That down, and had their home on it . . .  
 Of all the tribe of Tegumai  
 Who cut that figure, none remain,—  
 On Merrow Down the cuckoos cry—  
 The silence and the sun remain.  
 But as the faithful years return  
 And hearts unwounded sing again,  
 Comes Taffy dancing through the fern  
 To lead the Surrey spring again.

In these verses one also feels Kipling's ability to convey the sense of history as something real, of which the child reader or listener is a part;<sup>1</sup> but the flowering of this is in *Puck of Pook's Hill*<sup>2</sup> and *Rewards and Fairies*.<sup>3</sup> The former was unequivocally meant for tales told to children, with his own, now old enough to be introduced to less fabulous histories, as its first audience. In *Something of Myself*<sup>4</sup> he wrote of *Rewards and Fairies* as stories which 'had to be read by children, before people realised that they were meant for grown-ups' and it is in that volume that he takes the next step in his use of poems, working 'the material in three or four overlaid tints and textures', which took the mixed form away from the writing for children which had

<sup>1</sup> See Rosemary Sutcliff, 'Kipling for Children', *Kipling Journal*, Dec. 1965, pp. 25-8: 'history is something to do with oneself'.

<sup>2</sup> 1906; *Sussex Edition*, vol. xiv.

<sup>3</sup> 1910; *Sussex Edition*, vol. xv.

<sup>4</sup> *Something of Myself*, p. 190.

inspired it to become the major medium of his mature work. The crosscurrents between the poems and the various levels of the stories came to serve as a means of holding together the parts of his audience, and satisfying them at different levels of comprehension, intellectual and emotional. The poems for children had always had this function in some ways. In *Puck of Pook's Hill* he worked to spread the significance of the stories through the various effects of narrative and verse, and so bring home the awareness that history affects everybody's life, and that the child is involved in, and may begin to approach emotionally, processes beyond comprehension on a rational level. With linked verses and tales Kipling impresses the linkedness of all things.

The techniques already developed in writing for children are taken further. The shift of point of view, so that the verse voices the attitude of someone who has been seen only incidentally in the story, is carried over from *The Jungle Books* into the 'Pict Song' which concludes the story of 'The Winged Hats.' It is used with a new seriousness. The awareness that political and imperial struggles, with which the story involves us, are felt quite differently by the subject peoples in the background and underfoot is an important insight, dramatized and made available by the verses. Other juxtapositions have an effect more like the chapter headings in *Kim*, in that the poems, surprising the reader by their difference of tone from the stories they accompany, make him aware of the same set of ideas or circumstances existing in different contexts. An example is the 'Smuggler's Song' which concludes 'Hal o' the Draft', which not only shifts the focus of our sympathy from Hal and the king's agent to the smugglers they have outwitted, but also makes us perceive the smuggling as outliving the richly Elizabethan setting of the story, and occurring in Georgian times. Hal's recognition of the ballad Dan sings, and his interest in new objects in modern England that he can make use of in his own art, have already made clear a vital continuity of human interests and occupations. It gives life to the history that Dan can't be bothered with when it comes as a lesson.

The humanizing of the lessons of history makes them, of course, less clear cut, and so on other occasions the stories are summed up and their import made more explicit in the verses. At the end of the series of Saxon and Norman stories in *Puck of Pook's Hill* the runes of prophecy on Weland's sword, which have been seen to be fulfilled, are given as a magical verse, and the reader perceives the continuity of the events thus epitomized.

The verses are used to simplify or make concrete the message of the story more often in *Rewards and Fairies*, where they are used by Kipling in his effort to make complex stories of adult activities comprehensible to the child reader. 'If' is placed as a summary of the qualities needed and exemplified in the political manoeuvres discussed in the American tales, in the midst of which it appears; after 'Simple Simon', the layered and elliptical tale of the dedication of Francis Drake, refracted through Cattiwow's struggle to shift the log and Simon's devotion to his friend and his untimely iron ships, the essentials of Drake's character and its making are summed up in a very simple form in 'Frankie's Trade', an appropriate sea shanty. The story of St. Wilfrid and his priest and the conversion of the heathen Meon, which handles ideas about faith and allegiance and diplomatic relationships, is simplified but also deepened and affirmed in the verses at the beginning and end. 'Eddi's Service' shows Eddi the priest in a more Christian and saintly light than he appears in the story; and 'Song of the Red War-boat' voices the heathen's devotion to his leader which is overborne and perhaps subsumed by the Christian's service to his God.

There is a very wide range of form and tone in these poems, reflecting the variety of their functions. Ballads and shanties are appropriate to the settings of some stories, and they are suitable to the purposes of incantation and epitome; in other places the need is for a poem which will elevate or dignify, supplying ritual weight rather than working rhythms to stories which break down 'history' into tales of individual lives for the sake of the child's response. In these tales the lesson to be learnt is important in general terms, and its relation to a system of belief and behaviour to which they too owe allegiance needs to be solemnly understood. This is the governing motive of the books: Kipling's belief in history and the importance of place, continuity, and tradition, in moulding people to their destiny and duty. It is expressed in the songs of Puck and Sir Richard, and 'A Tree Song', all voicing love for England; in Thorkild's song of love for his native shore; in the dialect verses praising Sussex called 'A Three Part Song', and in 'A British-Roman Song', rising to the climactic 'Children's Song' at the end of *Puck of Pook's Hill*, when Dan and Una and the readers are supposed to find their own voices to add to the songs of praise. Love of country thus approached through history necessarily involves, as in the work of Sir Walter Scott, a sense of mortality, of the loss of past times and the transience of one's own; and

'Cities and Thrones and Powers', perhaps the best poem of the earlier volume, captures the poignancy which is so important in the intensity of the emotions involved:

Cities and Thrones and Powers  
Stand in Time's eye,  
Almost as long as flowers,  
Which daily die:  
But, as new buds put forth  
To glad new men,  
Out of the spent and unconsidered Earth,  
The Cities rise again.

This is placed at the beginning of the long story of Rome's doomed Empire, and is laden with rhythmic suggestion of that fall. But the story begins by shifting the mood abruptly and ironically to a matter-of-fact and homely level: 'Dan had come to grief over his Latin.' This is a tonal effect developed from the juxtaposition of domestic and exotic in the *Just so Stories*; here it serves both to bring home the relevance of the tale to the reader, and to relieve him of some of the awe and solemnity of the subjects handled by giving a familiar point of reference. A similar effect opens 'A Doctor of Medicine', a grim story about the plague with Culpepper as its ironically treated hero; there the opening is a hymn about astrology, set, I think, to the tune of 'Immortal, Invisible, God only wise', which depends bathetically to the opening of the tale: 'They were playing hide-and-seek with bicycle lamps after tea.'

The reverse of this effect is seen when Kipling uses a much more complex poetic form than that of the hymn to add intensity of feeling unavailable to the child reader on an explicit narrative level. The story of the 'Marklake Witches', for instance, has overtones which Dan and Una do not grasp. The reader is admitted to some of them with the author's help over the fictional children's heads, but there are levels which only adults familiar with matters of prejudice and ignorance will infer. All the weight of sadness in the tale is, though, conveyed in 'The Way Through the Woods', in a poetic image of limitation and loss available to all readers through the sound of the poem:

They shut the way through the woods  
Seventy years ago.  
Weather and rain have undone it again,  
But now you would never know  
There was once a road through the woods

Before they planted the trees.  
It is underneath coppice and heath,  
And the thin anemones.  
Only the keeper sees  
That, where the ring-dove broods,  
And the badgers roll at ease,  
There was once a road through the woods.

The shifts between the high and the homely are much more complex than in the earlier books, especially when the group of poems and stories is a long one. *Puck of Pook's Hill* begins with such a series. We have the mysterious 'Harp Song of the Danish Women', and then the story descends to the cockleshell boat the children sail in the stream. Their vessel is dignified by their imaginations, until the tale moves, by the teasing contrast made between their scraps of modern science and his medieval hardihood, to Sir Richard's real voyage. It ends in further jokes. Then Thorkild's sea shanty strikes a heroic note, but the ensuing story plunges into corrupt power politics; the whole is resolved by the gnomonic runes on Weland's sword. By the time Kipling had followed this method through to the end of the second book, his loading of the stories with allegories and allusions had rendered the connections quite obscure on a conscious level to any but an inquiring critical eye. 'The Tree of Justice' contrives to connect a ballad about poachers and fairies, Old Hobden, the children's dormouse, the keeper's gallows, the mad King Harold and the bitter jester Rahere, thieving gipsies, and an enigmatic carol about the cycles of the world. It is quite possible, however, that the child who had followed and learned by Kipling's method through the two volumes might respond to the final song on a level of intuitive appreciation as acute as any.

For my final point is that Kipling believed in the power of art, and especially of poetry, to influence the imagination beyond the level of consciousness, with a magical, irrational, effect, which he pursues. Throughout these stories literature is used as a link with the past, as one of the most powerful bonds between people, an epitome of tradition and a potent weapon for it. The stories make this explicit, while the poems seek to wield the book itself in that way, to cast its spell upon the reader. An extended example is the first Roman tale, 'A Centurion of the Thirtieth'. It begins with the potent 'Cities and Thrones and Powers', and shifts for its locating, homely note to learning Latin. This is a meaningless chore to Dan at the beginning of the tale; but the *Lays of Ancient Rome* are

stimulating, and the game Una plays from them leads to her contact with the ancient Roman Parnesius. He, ironically, has never been taught the history of his own people. He has, however, a living faith, which he expresses in his hymn to Mithras, in Latin which to the children has 'deep, splendid-sounding words' (in the story of St. Wilfrid, too, they respond to the tunes of Latin chant, deeply stirred by the *Dies Irae*). The story closes with 'A British-Roman Song' in an English metre derived from a classical one, and the next tale, leading straight on, opens with a new Lay of Ancient Rome, a jaunty marching song for the legions whose theme in fact foreshadows the doom of the Empire. Thus the songs within the stories are potent in themselves, incantations and evocations, and learning is done through emotional responses to them, leading to the understanding of them on other levels.

This, then, is what poetry was for Kipling. He used and explored its irrational, magical powers, hoping to intensify and enlighten by directing the most primitive of our responses to words. His ballads, chants, and incantations are not falsely naïve, not a rejection of complexity and subtlety in poetry; rather they are the strong essences of a literary craft most subtle in its methods. To approach the deeper springs of motive and character he used verse, as Dan and Una innocently use the words of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, conjuring up Puck, who leads them through songs and stories to the possession of their heritage. Kipling's poems conjure up people, who lead his readers to understand others and themselves, and the emotional language that we have in common.