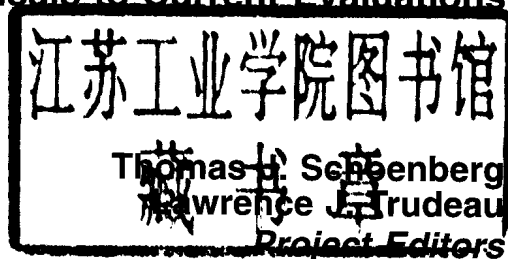


Twentieth-Century
Literary Criticism

TCLC 167

Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism

**Criticism of the
Works of Novelists, Poets, Playwrights,
Short Story Writers, and Other Creative Writers
Who Lived between 1900 and 1999,
from the First Published Critical
Appraisals to Current Evaluations**



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Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism, Vol. 167

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Preface

Since its inception more than fifteen years ago, *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism* (TCLC) has been purchased and used by nearly 10,000 school, public, and college or university libraries. TCLC has covered more than 500 authors, representing 58 nationalities and over 25,000 titles. No other reference source has surveyed the critical response to twentieth-century authors and literature as thoroughly as TCLC. In the words of one reviewer, “there is nothing comparable available.” TCLC “is a gold mine of information—dates, pseudonyms, biographical information, and criticism from books and periodicals—which many librarians would have difficulty assembling on their own.”

Scope of the Series

TCLC is designed to serve as an introduction to authors who died between 1900 and 1999 and to the most significant interpretations of these author's works. Volumes published from 1978 through 1999 included authors who died between 1900 and 1960. The great poets, novelists, short story writers, playwrights, and philosophers of the period are frequently studied in high school and college literature courses. In organizing and reprinting the vast amount of critical material written on these authors, TCLC helps students develop valuable insight into literary history, promotes a better understanding of the texts, and sparks ideas for papers and assignments. Each entry in TCLC presents a comprehensive survey on an author's career or an individual work of literature and provides the user with a multiplicity of interpretations and assessments. Such variety allows students to pursue their own interests; furthermore, it fosters an awareness that literature is dynamic and responsive to many different opinions.

Every fourth volume of TCLC is devoted to literary topics. These topics widen the focus of the series from the individual authors to such broader subjects as literary movements, prominent themes in twentieth-century literature, literary reaction to political and historical events, significant eras in literary history, prominent literary anniversaries, and the literatures of cultures that are often overlooked by English-speaking readers.

TCLC is designed as a companion series to Thomson Gale's *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, (CLC) which reprints commentary on authors who died after 1999. Because of the different time periods under consideration, there is no duplication of material between CLC and TCLC.

Organization of the Book

A TCLC entry consists of the following elements:

- The **Author Heading** cites the name under which the author most commonly wrote, followed by birth and death dates. Also located here are any name variations under which an author wrote, including transliterated forms for authors whose native languages use nonroman alphabets. If the author wrote consistently under a pseudonym, the pseudonym will be listed in the author heading and the author's actual name given in parenthesis on the first line of the biographical and critical information. Uncertain birth or death dates are indicated by question marks. Single-work entries are preceded by a heading that consists of the most common form of the title in English translation (if applicable) and the original date of composition.
- A **Portrait of the Author** is included when available.
- The **Introduction** contains background information that introduces the reader to the author, work, or topic that is the subject of the entry.
- The list of **Principal Works** is ordered chronologically by date of first publication and lists the most important works by the author. The genre and publication date of each work is given. In the case of foreign authors whose

works have been translated into English, the English-language version of the title follows in brackets. Unless otherwise indicated, dramas are dated by first performance, not first publication.

- Reprinted **Criticism** is arranged chronologically in each entry to provide a useful perspective on changes in critical evaluation over time. The critic's name and the date of composition or publication of the critical work are given at the beginning of each piece of criticism. Unsigned criticism is preceded by the title of the source in which it appeared. All titles by the author featured in the text are printed in boldface type. Footnotes are reprinted at the end of each essay or excerpt. In the case of excerpted criticism, only those footnotes that pertain to the excerpted texts are included.
- A complete **Bibliographical Citation** of the original essay or book precedes each piece of criticism. Source citations in the Literary Criticism Series follow University of Chicago Press style, as outlined in *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 14th ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993).
- Critical essays are prefaced by brief **Annotations** explicating each piece.
- An annotated bibliography of **Further Reading** appears at the end of each entry and suggests resources for additional study. In some cases, significant essays for which the editors could not obtain reprint rights are included here. Boxed material following the further reading list provides references to other biographical and critical sources on the author in series published by Thomson Gale.

Indexes

A **Cumulative Author Index** lists all of the authors that appear in a wide variety of reference sources published by Thomson Gale, including *TCLC*. A complete list of these sources is found facing the first page of the Author Index. The index also includes birth and death dates and cross references between pseudonyms and actual names.

A **Cumulative Nationality Index** lists all authors featured in *TCLC* by nationality, followed by the number of the *TCLC* volume in which their entry appears.

A **Cumulative Topic Index** lists the literary themes and topics treated in the series as well as in *Classical and Medieval Literature Criticism*, *Literature Criticism from 1400 to 1800*, *Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism*, and the *Contemporary Literary Criticism Yearbook*, which was discontinued in 1998.

An alphabetical **Title Index** accompanies each volume of *TCLC*. Listings of titles by authors covered in the given volume are followed by the author's name and the corresponding page numbers where the titles are discussed. English translations of foreign titles and variations of titles are cross-referenced to the title under which a work was originally published. Titles of novels, dramas, nonfiction books, and poetry, short story, or essay collections are printed in italics, while individual poems, short stories, and essays are printed in roman type within quotation marks.

In response to numerous suggestions from librarians, Thomson Gale also produces a paperbound edition of the *TCLC* cumulative title index. This annual cumulation, which alphabetically lists all titles reviewed in the series, is available to all customers. Additional copies of this index are available upon request. Librarians and patrons will welcome this separate index; it saves shelf space, is easy to use, and is recyclable upon receipt of the next edition.

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When citing criticism reprinted in the Literary Criticism Series, students should provide complete bibliographic information so that the cited essay can be located in the original print or electronic source. Students who quote directly from reprinted criticism may use any accepted bibliographic format, such as University of Chicago Press style or Modern Language Association (MLA) style. Both the MLA and the University of Chicago formats are acceptable and recognized as being the current standards for citations. It is important, however, to choose one format for all citations; do not mix the two formats within a list of citations.

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Brossard, Nicole. "Poetic Politics." In *The Politics of Poetic Form: Poetry and Public Policy*, edited by Charles Bernstein, 73-82. New York: Roof Books, 1990. Reprinted in *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism*. Vol. 127, edited by Janet Witalec, 3-8. Detroit: Gale, 2003.

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Brossard, Nicole. "Poetic Politics." *The Politics of Poetic Form: Poetry and Public Policy*. Ed. Charles Bernstein. New York: Roof Books, 1990. 73-82. Reprinted in *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism*. Ed. Janet Witalec. Vol. 127. Detroit: Gale, 2003. 3-8.

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Rudyard Kipling

1865-1936

(Full name Joseph Rudyard Kipling) English short story writer, poet, novelist, essayist, and autobiographer.

The following entry provides an overview of Kipling's life and works. For additional information on his career, see *TCLC*, Volumes 8 and 17.

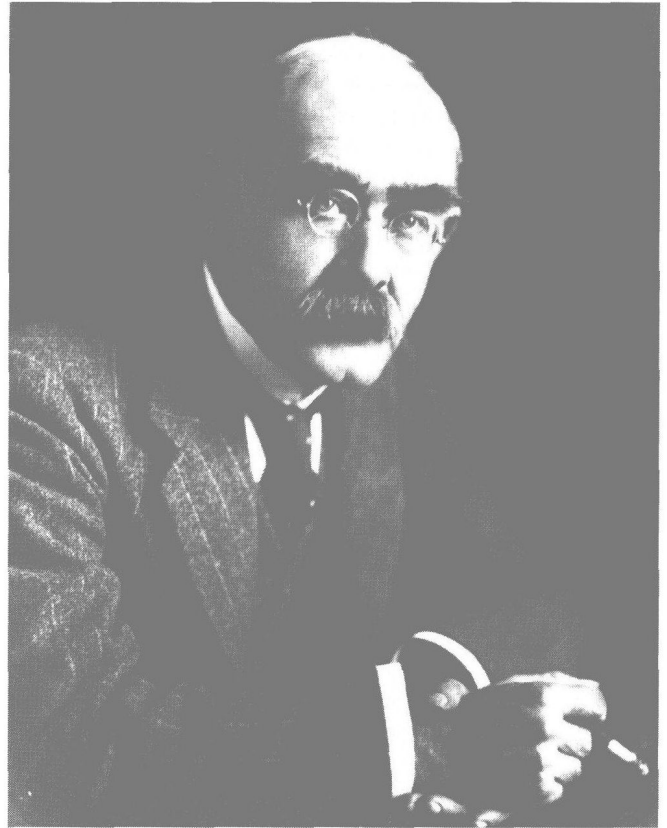
INTRODUCTION

Creator of much of the world's most popular short fiction, Kipling is perhaps most famous for his insightful stories about Indian culture and Anglo-Indian society. His masterful, widely-read stories for children are collected in *Just So Stories for Little Children*, *Puck of Pook's Hill*, *Reward and Fairies*, and two volumes of the *Jungle Book*. Many commentators consider Mowgli, the central figure in the *Jungle Books*, one of the most memorable characters in children's literature.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Kipling was born in Bombay, India to English parents. At the age of six he was sent to school in southern England, an unhappy experience that he wrote about in his story "Baa Baa Black Sheep." For five years he lived with unsympathetic guardians in a foster home, and at the age of twelve he was sent to boarding school in Devon. Despite being bullied and ostracized by his schoolmates during his first years there, Kipling wrote fondly of his public school experiences in the collection *Stalky & Co.* (1899). Just before his seventeenth birthday, Kipling returned to India to work as a journalist on the *Lahore Civil and Military Gazette* and the *Allahabad Pioneer*. The stories he wrote for these two newspapers, published in 1888 as the collection *Plain Tales from the Hills*, earned him widespread recognition in India.

Kipling returned to England in 1889 to pursue a literary career. Soon after arriving in London, he began collaborating with Wolcott Balestier, an American literary agent. In 1892 Kipling married Balestier's sister Caroline, and the couple lived on her family's estate in Vermont for four years. During this time Kipling produced the two *Jungle Books* (1894-95) and began writing *Kim* (1901), which is considered by many to be his finest novel. Disenchanted with American society and devas-



tated by the death of his daughter Josephine in 1899, Kipling returned to Europe, eventually settling in Sussex, England, a locale that figures prominently in the stories from *Puck of Pook's Hill* (1906) and *Rewards and Fairies* (1910). In 1907 Kipling received the Nobel Prize in Literature for his short fiction and novels. He was the first English author to be rewarded with this honor. He died in 1936 after struggling with years of illness, and was buried in the Poet's Corner of Westminster Abbey.

MAJOR WORKS

Kipling's fame as a short fiction writer is based on three types of stories: his exotic tales of India, his narratives about the military, and his children's books. As a journalist in India, Kipling had the opportunity to explore many facets of Anglo-Indian culture, and the East provided the setting for much of his early fiction. He wrote stories about virtually every sector of Indian soci-

ety. These tales are imitative of the French *conte* and are considered remarkable for their innovative plots and deceptively simple structures. Kipling was fascinated by the military. The lives of British soldiers in India, the Far East, and during World War I inspired many of his stories. His early portraits of British soldiers during peacetime are light-hearted, but also realistic. Kipling's later military tales depict the horrors of World War I with tragic insight. He achieved perhaps his greatest literary success with the stories he wrote for children, most of which contain elements of humor intended for adults as well. Kipling fashioned these tales to be read aloud, and critics agree that the oral beauty of his writing makes these stories particularly memorable. Kipling's most famous works, the two *Jungle Books*, chronicle the life of Mowgli, a boy who is abandoned by his parents and raised by wolves to become the master of the jungle. Commentators often note Kipling's gift for anthropomorphism in his fiction, and the animal characters in the *Jungle Books* are presented with simplicity, humor, and dignity.

Of Kipling's four novel-length works, only *Kim* was critically well received. Called "the finest story about India in English," *Kim* is also a revealing self-portrait of its author. Through his young protagonist, Kipling explored the duality of his emotional commitment to both British imperialism and Eastern philosophy and values. While some critics contend that a lack of introspection on the part of the protagonist of *Kim* forms the primary fault in a potentially great work, others hold that Kipling's penetrating scrutiny of his dual attachments, as well as his sympathetic depiction of the Indian people, place this novel among the masterpieces of English literature. In his poetry, Kipling broke new ground by taking as subject matter the life of the common soldier and sailor in such activities as drinking, looting, and brawling.

CRITICAL RECEPTION

Kipling began writing poetry and short stories in the mid-1880s, and by the turn of the century he was one of the most widely read authors in England. Prestigious newspapers including the *Times* of London and the *Scots Observer* published his stories regularly and, by 1896, his works had been collected in a uniform edition. Kipling was not without detractors, however, and some commentators rejected his stories as imperialist, vulgar, simple-minded, and unnecessarily brutal. Critics concur that Kipling's early success stemmed, in part, from his ability to inspire deep emotions in his audiences. Few readers reacted with indifference to his writing. The imperialist views Kipling expressed in his Indian stories also contributed to his initial success; however, later in his career after political tides in England had shifted,

his stories were considered outdated and his popularity waned. Focus shifted from his literary accomplishments to the jingoist and racist aspects of his stories and poetry. Following his death, a major reassessment of his talents led to his recognition as an astute storyteller who possessed profound insights and a rare gift for entertaining. In 1942, T. S. Eliot prefaced a new collection of Kipling's poetry and verse with a lengthy and favorable reassessment of Kipling as a poet. Eliot's study has been the starting point of many subsequent analyses of Kipling's poetic accomplishment, which is still in contention. Although his novels and stories are not uniformly praised, Kipling is nonetheless regarded as one of the masters of the short story form. His entertaining children's stories and exotic tales of India are enjoyed by readers of all ages to this day.

PRINCIPAL WORKS

- Schoolboy Lyrics* (poetry) 1881
- Departmental Ditties, and Other Verses* (poetry) 1886
- In Black and White* (short stories) 1888
- The Phantom 'Rickshaw and Other Tales* (short stories) 1888
- Plain Tales from the Hills* (short stories) 1888
- Soldiers Three* (short stories) 1888
- The Story of the Gadsbys* (short stories) 1888
- Under the Deodars* (short stories) 1888
- Wee Willie Winkie* (short stories) 1888
- The Light That Failed* (novel) 1890
- Life's Handicap* (short stories) 1891
- Barrack-Room Ballads, and Other Verses* (poetry) 1892
- The Naulahka: A Story of West and East* [with Wolcott Balestier] (novel) 1892
- Many Inventions* (short stories) 1893
- The Jungle Book* (short stories and poetry) 1894
- The Second Jungle Book* (short stories and poetry) 1895
- The Seven Seas* (poetry) 1896
- Captains Courageous* (novel) 1897
- The Day's Work* (short stories) 1898
- From Sea to Sea. Letters of Travel.* 2 vols. (sketches) 1899
- Stalky & Co.* (short stories) 1899
- Kim* (novel) 1901
- Just So Stories for Little Children* (short stories and poetry) 1902
- The Five Nations* (poetry) 1903
- Songs from Books* (poetry) 1903
- Traffics and Discoveries* (short stories and poetry) 1904
- Puck of Pook's Hill* (short stories and poetry) 1906
- Abaft the Funnel* (short stories) 1909
- Actions and Reactions* (short stories and poetry) 1909
- Rewards and Fairies* (short stories and poetry) 1910
- A Diversity of Creatures* (short stories) 1917
- The Years Between* (poetry) 1919
- Letters of Travel, 1892-1913* (sketches) 1920

Land and Sea Tales for Boys and Girls (short stories and poetry) 1923
Debits and Credits (short stories and poetry) 1926
A Book of Words (speeches) 1928
Thy Servant a Dog (short stories) 1930
Limits and Renewals (short stories and poetry) 1932
Souvenirs of France (essays) 1933
Something of Myself for My Friends Known and Unknown (unfinished autobiography) 1937
Complete Works in Prose and Verse. 35 vols. (collected works) 1937-39

CRITICISM

Michael Brock (essay date March 1988)

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[In the following essay, Brock explores "the relationship between Kipling the writer and Kipling the political advocate."]

When Rudyard Kipling received the Gold Medal of the Royal Society of Literature in 1928 he said:

Fiction is truth's elder sister . . . It is the oldest of the arts, the mother of history, biography, philosophy . . . and, of course, politics.²

It is that link—the relationship between Kipling the writer and Kipling the political advocate—which forms the subject of this talk. Did Kipling go too deeply into political questions? Would he have done better to accept that creative writing does not consort well with political advocacy? In one of his last stories the truffle-hunting dog Teem is given the refrain: "Outside his art an artist must never dream."³ Was this the view at which Kipling had arrived after many political disillusionments? If it was, should we accept it as valid?

There were three dominant elements in Kipling's background and early training. He had the aptitudes and inclinations of the artist, the journalist, and the preacher. Let us look first, however briefly, at the pictorial artist, the son of the art school principal and museum curator. Kipling revered Burne-Jones, his 'Uncle Ned', and his headmaster, 'Crom' Price, who had also been a minor Pre-Raphaelite in youth. He took immense trouble with his descriptive passages, such as the scene in *Kim* on the Grand Trunk Road at evening. Throughout his work there is a consummate mastery of visual detail. As C. S. Lewis wrote, "How the light came in through the oar-

holes in the galley,—that little detail which everyone who had served in a galley would remember and which no one else would know—that is Kipling's quarry."⁴

Secondly, we have the journalist. Kipling was in temporary charge of the *Lahore Civil and Military Gazette* a week before his seventeenth birthday. His six and a half years as a reporter and assistant editor in India were formative. They gave him a fine training in the craft of writing, but little chance to form habits of reflection and next to no experience of the clash of philosophies. He left India, splendidly equipped as a short story writer. He was also ineradicably imprinted with the attitudes of the institution which for several years had been as he later wrote, 'the whole of his outside world',⁵ the Lahore Club.

Let us turn, thirdly, to the preacher. Both of Kipling's grandfathers has been Methodist ministers. The wish to preach, to testify to the truth as he saw it, was strong in him. Here is a passage from "*On the City Wall*", written in India when he was twenty-two. You will hear in it the dogmatic and prophetic notes which he was to sound so loudly a few years later.

Year by year England sends out fresh drafts for the . . . Indian Civil Service. These die, or kill themselves by overwork, or are worried to death or broken in health and hope in order that the land may be protected from death and sickness, famine and war, and may eventually become capable of standing alone. It will never stand alone; but the idea is a pretty one, and yearly the work of pushing and scolding and petting the country into good living goes forward.⁶

This first phase of Kipling's career ended, as will be explained in a moment, with the publication of his poem, "*The Flag of England*", in April 1891⁷ when he was twenty-five, for that poem signalled his assumption of a mission as the prophet of Empire. The political hints which he gave in his first, very active phase were various. In that passage from "*On the City Wall*" the British Raj in India is extolled without qualification. At other times it is represented as imperilled only by the foolishness of a Liberal Viceroy with his leaning towards Indian self-government. In "*The Head of the District*", first published in January 1890,⁸ Yardley-Orde, the dying Deputy Commissioner of a frontier district, is depicted as a hero; and, when His Excellency contrives to have a Bengali appointed to manage that turbulent piece of frontier, disaster is prevented only by the devoted skill and courage of Orde's colleagues and subordinates.

More commonly it is the courtiers and bureaucrats of Simla who are the objects of Kipling's satire. In one set of lighthearted verses about a Civil Engineer, published in Lahore when he was twenty, he embroiders the Biblical theme of Potiphar's wife.

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,
Is seven years junior to Me;
Each bridge that he makes either buckles or breaks,
And his work is as rough as he . . .

Lovely Mehitabel Lee,
Let me inquire of thee,
Should I have riz to where Potiphar is,
Hadst thou been mated to Me?⁹

In some stories the Indian services seem to be rotten, or at the very least inefficient, not merely at the top, but all through. In *"Thrown Away"*, first published in *Plain Tales from the Hills* in 1888:

India is a place where . . . good work does not matter, because a man is judged by his worst output, and another man takes all the credit of his best as a rule. Bad work does not matter, because other men do worse, and incompetents hang on longer in India than anywhere else. . . . It is a slack country, where all men work with imperfect instruments.

In such pieces there are many echoes of the talk in the Lahore Club. The political attitudes revealed in this talk would have been various and fluctuating. They were summarised some years ago by C. S. Lewis in a passage which cannot be bettered.

When we forgather with three or four trusted cronies of our own calling, a strong sense of community arises and is enjoyed. . . . That enjoyment can be prolonged by several different kinds of conversation. We may all be engaged in standing together against the outer world—all those fools outside who write newspaper articles about us which reveal their ghastly ignorance of the real work . . . As long as that conversation lasts, the profession appears a very fine one and its achievements very remarkable . . . And that conversation, if we could do it well enough, would make *one* kind of Kipling story. But we might equally spend the evening standing together against our own seniors: those people at the top—Lord knows how they got there while better men rot . . . While that conversation lasted, our profession would appear . . . very rotten and heart-breaking . . . And out of all that, *another* kind of Kipling story might be made . . . But we sometimes like talking about our juniors . . . We have been on the job so long that we have no illusions about it . . . Nobody will thank you for doing more than you need. Our juniors are laughably full of zeal . . . Ah well, they'll soon get over it! . . . And thus, yet *another* Kipling story might arise.¹⁰

In this first phase until 1891 the political content of Kipling's writing was therefore incidental. He could not avoid politics when writing of the Raj, because it was a political entity, and during the Viceroyalty of the Liberal Ripon a controversial one; but there was little coherence or system in his early political allusions. In politics as in all else he was echoing those Clubs in Lahore and Allahabad. He was writing until 1889 for an Anglo-Indian public and his readers did not want a

youngster preaching at them. They wanted a neat epigrammatic version of their own views. This was what Kipling gave them, well salted with scandals in high places and episodes of violence. He had one great advantage where the Club and the officers' messes were concerned. Lord Dufferin, Ripon's successor as Viceroy, was friendly with his family, so that he had the entrée, when the hot weather came, to the courtiers' world of Simla. Added to this was the young 'artist's human retort to that intolerable tolerance,' in Dixon Scott's words,

with which the workers, the doers, fighters, men of action, regard his anaemic indoor trade . . . Young Kipling . . . would prove . . . that a certain small spectacled sub-editor fond of poetry was not quite the innocent lamb that he looked . . . One of the most effective ways of out-Heroding Herod is to yawn wearily when the head is brought in . . . Kipling's yawn was a masterpiece . . . The mess-rooms were duly impressed.¹¹

When Kipling reached London in October 1889 he took its literary circles by storm. The work which he had sent ahead of him made the editor of the *St. James's Gazette* exclaim, "may be . . . a greater than Dickens is here."¹² Within six months *The Times* had devoted a long article to this twenty-four-year-old writer, crediting him with some of Maupassant's qualities; and Henry James had pronounced him to be "the star of the hour."¹³ Within a year Robert Louis Stevenson was writing from Samoa that Kipling was "too clever to live."¹⁴ This success palled quickly. Kipling was unhappy in 1890, partly because he had overtaxed his health and was unsettled in his personal life, but partly because of that Methodist inheritance. He agreed with what an artist from Gatti's music hall told him: 'It is all right to keep on knocking 'em; but, outside of that, a man wants something to lay hold of.'¹⁵

Moreover the sort of people who had not been admired in the Lahore Club—socialists, militant trade unionists, Irish Nationalists and sentimental Liberals—seemed to be in the ascendant in London. *Fabian Essays in Socialism* were published in 1889; and a few weeks before Kipling landed the London dock strike had ended in a triumph for the dockers. In February 1890, to Kipling's fury and the delight of the Liberals, the Special Commission cleared Parnell of complicity with the recent Irish outrages.

The intellectuals of the Left "derided my poor little Gods of the East," as Kipling put it, "and asserted that the British in India spent violent lives 'oppressing' the Native." They must be answered by a presentation of the true gospel so readable that no one could neglect it. The account in *Something of Myself* of how Kipling embarked on his Imperial mission is well known. He was working on the verses which were published in

April 1891 under the title "**The Flag of England**". The key-line "persisted in going 'soft'". He asked his parents: "What am I trying to get at?" Instantly his mother answered: "You are *trying* to say: 'What do they know of England who only England know?'" "In the talks that followed," Kipling wrote,

I exposed my notion of trying to tell to the English something of the world outside England—not directly but by implication . . . Bit by bit, my original notion grew into a vast, vague conspectus—Army and Navy Stores List if you like—of the whole sweep and meaning of things and effort and origins throughout the Empire . . . After I had got it straight in my head, I felt there need be no more "knockin' 'em" in the abstract.¹⁶

A mission to tell the British about their Empire seems a tall order for a writer of twenty-five; but Kipling's plan was not a grandiose youthful folly. In a malicious fictional portrait of Beatrice Webb, H. G. Wells wrote that she and Sidney had P.B.P., for *Pro Bono Publico*, engraved inside their wedding rings; "and she meant it," he added, "as no idle threat".¹⁷ Kipling's Imperial mission was 'no idle threat'. His confidence in his ability to attract a wide readership was not misplaced; and, though he did not know this, he would have the tide with him: Imperialist sentiment was growing in Britain as elsewhere. By 1891 the world of the older Gladstonian Liberals was disappearing. New inventions—the submarine cable, the steel ship, the triple expansion marine engine, and refrigeration techniques—were bringing distant lands and their products closer to Europe. The scene was dominated now by great powers, intent on extending their spheres of influence and controlling the areas where their nationals had invested, or might invest, capital. Kipling's "poor little Gods of the East" were soon seen to be a growth stock. In 1894 a protectorate for Uganda was declared by the Liberal government; and when the Conservatives gained office in the following year Joseph Chamberlain, by now the most compelling figure in British politics, became Colonial Secretary. The immediate future did not lie with those Fabians and Liberals who had been so maddeningly superior to Kipling in 1890. The hero of H. G. Wells's *New Machiavelli*, who is supposed to have been up at Cambridge during the Boer War, says: "The prevailing force in my undergraduate days was not Socialism but Kiplingism."¹⁸

Kipling's adoption of his Imperialist mission therefore proved felicitous; but, in intention at least, it was neither a sell-out to the establishment nor a formula for boosting his sales. Kipling never cherished political ambitions in the ordinary personal sense.¹⁹ Throughout his career he took great care to be his own man. He refused all offers of public honours (including, more than once, the Order of Merit) and any payment for his political verses.²⁰ Unlike Belloc, or A. E. W. Mason, or Conan Doyle, or John Buchan, he could never be tempted into

becoming a Parliamentary candidate. As to sales, planning how best to take advantage of the market was not his style. He had a journalist's awareness of readers' tastes. As he wrote many years later in "**The Fabulists**": "Unless men please they are not heard at all." But his experiments and new departures were not made simply to 'catch a market' and he never stuck with a line of work simply because it was selling well.

Did the Imperial mission entail a loss of literary integrity? Did the Imperialist advocate overwhelm the reporter? Was there room in Kipling's picture of "the whole sweep and meaning of things and effort and origins throughout the Empire" for difficulties and defects? The balance certainly changed. There was no more about bad work not mattering in India. "**The Bridge Builders**" was first published in 1893. Here is Findlayson as the Ganges flood sweeps down:

His bridge would stand what was upon her now, but not very much more; and if by any of a thousand chances there happened to be a weakness in the embankments, Mother Gunga would carry his honour to the sea with the other raffle . . . There were no excuses in his service.²¹

This change of tone should not mislead us into thinking that, while the earlier writing gives Kipling's candid views, these have been submerged after 1891 in a flood of Imperialist propaganda. Neither the earlier nor the later stories give a balanced account of the complex governmental system maintained by the British in India. The late Lord Hailey, who joined the Indian Civil Service in the Punjab in 1895 and served in India for nearly forty years, told me that he regarded the early Simla tales as misleadingly derogatory. He had known Simla only a few years after Kipling's time there: it was, he said, intellectually a serious place, its tone being set by the formidably intelligent élite of the Indian Civil Service. It seems reasonable to suppose that, on balance, the Indian services were better than Kipling's representation of them in the early Simla stories, and less good than they would appear from the sketch of Findlayson in "**The Bridge Builders**". Kipling, it must be added, did not make everything roseate in the later stories. The Government of India nearly ruined Findlayson's bridge by adding two feet to its width at the last moment "under the impression that bridges were cut out of paper". In "**William the Conqueror**", first published in 1895, while the principal characters toil heroically at famine relief, three of their colleagues are "grossly incompetent".²²

Kipling's mission extended far beyond India. He had made various visits on his way home in 1889, for instance to Singapore and Vancouver; and between August and December 1891 he visited the Cape, New Zealand and Australia. But north India remained for a decade the only part of the Empire where he had been

more than a touring reporter. He kept his head during the excitements of the 1890s better than some others. He was living in Vermont when the Jameson Raid took place in the last days of 1895. The Raid, and the congratulatory telegram which the Kaiser sent to the Transvaal Government after the raiders had been captured, elicited verses of commendable moderation from Kipling:

From panic, pride, and terror,
Revenge that knows no rein—
Light haste and lawless error,
Protect us yet again.²³

Compared to the trash in defence of the raiders published by the new Poet Laureate, Alfred Austin,²⁴ those pedestrian lines rank as a model of good sense.

Indirectly Kipling may, however, have contributed to the "light haste and lawless error" of the Jameson Raid. He had sometimes contrived to make warfare sound like a 'lark'. In *The Light that Failed*, published in several forms in 1890 and 1891, the war correspondents rejoice over "the glorious certainty of war in the Soudan at any moment."²⁵ The volume of stories published under the title *Many Inventions* in 1893 includes one about a group of subalterns talking to an elderly novelist. One of them is describing an expedition against da-coits in Burma.

'I think I am beginning to understand a little,' [says the novelist].

'It was a pleasure to you to administer and fight?'

'Rather! There's nothing nicer than a satisfactory little expedition, when you find your plans fit together.'²⁶

Some of the tragedies to which such notions could lead were comparatively small. In August 1894 Captain Frederick Lugard (Lord Lugard as he later became) was pressed to join a naval launch in an expedition up the Niger against a slave-raiding chief. The preparations seemed to him somewhat light-hearted. He declined to go; but the Vice-Consul joined the party which left in high spirits. The launch soon returned, her decks stained with blood, and carrying a cargo of dead and wounded, the Vice-Consul among the latter. Nana, the slaver, had been found to command cannon in plenty.

"These young chaps see what *war* means," Lugard noted in his diary, "they were *horrified* and I fancy it has choked off their martial ardour a good deal and they no longer 'hope to goodness Nana won't give in without a fight after all our preparations,' as they said to me before."²⁷

The tragedies were not all small. The Jameson Raiders did Britain serious damage. In "**The Head of the District**" the Liberal Viceroy who had the Bengali appointed was accused of being "a trifler with the lives of men". Liberal Viceroys were not the only ones open to that charge.

The missing note in these Imperialist writings is that of realism. Kipling never understood that rejecting the sentimentality of some late Victorian liberals did not make him a realist. In 1898 after sailing twice with the Channel Squadron he commented: "Any other breed with this engine at their disposal would have used it savagely long ago."²⁸

Kipling neglected here the somewhat obvious fact that, as the British had only a very small army, they were not in a position to use their preponderant sea power aggressively. He did not comprehend that it was precisely this fact which made British naval supremacy acceptable to other nations. As Eyre Crowe was to put it a few years later, the statesmen of a country which could not itself command naval supremacy would rather see it in British hands than in those of any great land power.²⁹

The school stories, *Stalky and Co.*, were published in book form on 6 October 1899. In the last story Stalky repeats on the Indian frontier a deception which he has used successfully at school. In the final passage Kipling takes the stage to say:

India's full of Stalkies—Cheltenham and Haileybury and Marlborough chaps—that we don't know anything about, and the surprises will begin when there is really a big row on . . . Just imagine Stalky let loose on the south side of Europe with a sufficiency of Sikhs and a reasonable prospect of loot.

The capacities of the various Stalkies were soon put to the test. Five days after *Stalky and Co.* had been published Britain was at war with the two Boer Republics.

The Boer War was the second turning point in Kipling's political life. Within a few months of its outbreak he realised that the "Cheltenham and Haileybury and Marlborough chaps" were much less well trained and resourceful than he had thought. In "**The Outsider**", published less than nine months after the *Stalky and Co.* volume, the picture of Second Lieutenant Walter Setton was unflattering:

When he could by any means escape from the limited amount of toil expected by the Government, he did so; employing the same shameless excuses that he had used at school or Sandhurst . . . For the rest, he devoted himself with no thought of wrong to getting as much as possible out of the richest and easiest life the world has yet made; and to despising the "outsider"—the man beyond his circle.³⁰

Kipling's view of these public school products had thus changed completely. He now characterised them, in one of his most famous phrases, as "the flannelled fools at the wicket . . . the muddled oafs at the goals."³¹ He joined ardently in the campaigns which the defeats in the Boer War engendered for army reform and national efficiency. From 1903 onwards he engaged more deeply in politics and took political questions more seriously.

Kipling did not fit naturally as a party man. He was, as Beaverbrook put it, "hostile to politicians [and] . . . often impatient with leaders of the Tory party."³² On the other hand he belonged with the party of order and Empire.³³ After he had settled in Sussex he came to put a high value on the continuities of national life. He thus became a strong, though idiosyncratic, Conservative partisan. He even managed to put the Liberals' overwhelming victory of 1906 into perspective:

Cities and Thrones and Powers
Stand in Time's eye,
Almost as long as flowers,
Which daily die.³⁴

Like many other Conservatives of the time, and nearly all other readers of the *Morning Post*, Kipling was immensely distrustful of democracy. Though keenly interested in new techniques of communication such as wireless telegraphy he never realised how potently in India and Africa they would stimulate the demand for self-government. Throughout his life he wrote of the Indian Congress Party as if it owed its influence to a succession of foolish Englishmen, whom he satirized as 'Pagett, M.P.'. "If you care to look up some of my old Indian work," he told F. N. Doubleday in April 1919, "you'll see that what I wrote then covers what is happening in India today."³⁵ In November 1930, discussing the Indian independence movement with his friend Gwynne, the editor of the *Morning Post*, he wrote: "Of course, the thing is a Brahmin plot."³⁶

Thus a deeper involvement in politics made Kipling no more realistic. He still believed that sound political views were reducible to a few simple maxims: it was his business, as he put it, to serve 'the Gods of the Copybook Headings'.³⁷ He wrote as if all his imperialist heroes—Theodore Roosevelt, Rhodes, Jameson and Joseph Chamberlain—were glorified versions of the Indian administrators whom he had admired in his youth. His poem "**The White Man's Burden**" was a plea to the United States to take over the administration of the Philippines.³⁸ The obituary verses on Rhodes foresaw a day in South Africa when

. . . unimagined Empires draw
To council 'neath his skies.³⁹

This was too much for one irreverent commentator who pointed out that the skies, unlike the diamond mines, were a South African feature which Rhodes had not owned, while 'Mr. Dooley', for the American Democrats, summarised Anglo-American imperial expansion as: 'Hands across the sea and into someone's pocket.'⁴⁰ Like many upper class people Kipling saw the Tariff Reform campaign which Joseph Chamberlain launched in 1903, not only as consolidating the Empire, but as taking British politics off class war lines: the tariff was supposed somehow to produce both full employment

and a revenue for social reform. In praise of Chamberlain Kipling wrote,

Where Dothan's dreamer dreams anew
Of vast and farborne harvestings:
And unto him an Empire clings
That grips the purpose of his plan.⁴¹

When this verse was published in August 1904 a more photographic image would have shown an experienced political operator fighting ruthlessly for the control of the Conservative party, and moving warily where the Empire was concerned. Chamberlain had good reason for this wariness. The passage in his opening campaign speech appealing to the colonies to concentrate on primary production was so liable to anger industrial interests in the colonies that a tactful alteration had to be made in the 'official version'.⁴²

Though Kipling's political activity was far greater between the Boer War and the Great War than in the 1890s his political influence was almost certainly less. The Boer War had ended a certain kind of noisy Imperialist sentiment in Britain. The strong silent Empire builders were held to have done too much talking and to have fallen down on the job. Moreover some of Kipling's pronouncements were such as to make his political allies tremble. Kipling's poem "**Our Lady of the Snows**", extolling the Canadian Preferential Tariff of 1897, was perhaps a little extravagant. His open letter of September 1911 condemning the reciprocity proposals between Canada and the United States was far more extravagant: this agreement might lead, he suggested, to Canada being 'compelled later on to admit reciprocity in the murder-rate of the United States'.⁴³

The Home Rule Bill of 1912, whereby the Irish were to be granted a measure of self-government, moved Kipling to strident denunciation. His poem "**Ulster**" was published in several countries by careful arrangement on the day in April 1912 when Bonar Law, by now the Conservative leader, was to make an important speech in Belfast.⁴⁴ It was not altogether helpful to the Conservative cause. Kipling's fervent indictment of Home Rule included the lines:

We know the wars prepared
On every peaceful home,
We know the hells declared
For such as serve not Rome.

"This," wrote Mark Sykes, a Conservative M.P. and a Roman Catholic, "is a direct appeal to ignorance and a deliberate attempt to foster religious hatred."⁴⁵

Speaking to a great crowd of Conservatives at Tunbridge Wells in May 1914, Kipling said:

Ireland is sold today. Tomorrow it may be the turn of
the southern counties . . . Why not? . . . Six months
ago you would have said that the plot against Ulster