

RUDYARD KIPLING

AN APPRECIATION

"Gobind, the sadhu. A holy man. Gobind the one-eyed. A prince of story-tellers, old and waiting death in the monastery of Dhunni Bhagat, his voice most like the rumbling of heavy guns over a wooden bridge, told me these things."

"And what," said Gobind, "is your honoured craft, and by what manner of means earn you your daily bread?"

"I am," said I, "one who writes with pen upon paper not being in the service of the Government. I write of all matters that lie within my understanding and of many that do not. But chiefly I write of Life and Death, men, women, and Love and Fate, according to the measure of my ability, telling the tale through the mouths of one, two or more people."

"In what manner think you is it best to set about these tales?"

"How do I know? Yet, how should I not know?" said Gobind, throwing out his knotted hand. "God has made very many heads, but there is only one heart in all the world, among your people or my people. It is in my heart that grown men are but as little children in the matter of tale and the oldest tale is the most beloved. According! tell them first of those things that thou hast seen and they have seen together. Thus their knowledge will piece out thy imperfections. Tell them of what