

ing to the possession of a spice of the Rabelaisian spirit which helped to give him his vogue. In every age when art has a strong accent, when it displays vigour, inventive power, originality, you can trace part of it back to Rabelais. And yet Kipling was no copyist. How inviolate he keeps his own characteristics and power.

He undoubtedly moved more people than any other living poet, and it cannot be denied that he wrought a great change in the literary spirit of the age. George Gissing, the English novelist, noted it and wrote in the "Whirlpool": "It's the voice of reaction. Millions of men, natural men, revolting against the softness and sweetness of civilization—men all over the world, hardly knowing what they want, and what they don't want." But he was wrong, they knew, but it was something that Gissing had little sympathy for. They revolted less against the mild and gentle life than against the unwholesome and effeminate life.

Mr. Kipling did this great thing for literature. He expressed emotion in language which was as far as possible removed from the language of decadency, and he taught the world that there were certain profound manly feelings which might be explained without the preliminary unmaning of aestheticism, and his distinction lies in the fact that he uttered them with vehemence and intensity. In Kipling's mind poetry was not an effeminate, weak-minded, sentimental pursuit, as some people considered it to be, but rather it reflected the lusty vigor of ordinary life, an intense feeling for sheer beauty, a vivid sense for men and things. The sound ideas underlying the revolt are set out by Kipling in his story "The Light that Failed," and wrought into the fabric of his great romance "Kim"—which is a story realistic in form but romantic in spirit. There are brief and exquisite prose sketches in "Kim," rarely excelled in the whole range of English literature. It is the best of his long works. In that remarkable work one gets glimpses of all India in black and white. Kim is a street Arab from Lahore, derelict child of an Irish soldier; an alert precocious little vagabond, whose apprenticeship to the secret service gives him a unique education in the shady walks of Anglo-Indian life. His journeys through India as the disciple of an old Lama brings before the reader a rich panorama of the multifarious life of the country.

But Kipling does not shine as a writer of long stories; not one of his longer novels has any real plot to hold the reader's attention. In the domain of the short story he is easily the first great creative artist among modern writers.

The first ten years of his literary activity was given over to a wonderful reproduction of East Indian life as seen through sympathetic English eyes. Born in Bombay in 1865, he absorbed Hindustanee from his native nurse, and he saw the native as he really is, without the guard which is habitually put up against the alien. The son of John Lockwood Kipling, professor of architectural sculpture in the British School of Art at Bombay, and of a sister of Lady Burne-Jones, it was not strange that this boy should have developed strong powers of magnetism or that his mind should have sought relief in literary expression. His school days were spent at Westward Ho, in Devon, where, though he failed to distinguish himself in his studies, he established a reputation as a clear writer of verse and prose. At seventeen young Kipling returned to India, where he secured a position on the "Civil and Military Gazette," of Lahore. After five years work on this paper, writing short stories and poems and descriptive sketches,