

would have cared: but his grandfathers on both sides had been Wesleyan preachers, and the preaching strain came out in his mind. He wanted every one in the Club to see that they had no souls too, and to help him to eliminate his Creator. As a good many men told him, he undoubtedly had no soul, because he was so young, but it did not follow that his seniors were equally undeveloped; and, whether there was another world or not, a man still wanted to read his papers in this." "But that is not the point, that is not the point," Aurelian used to say. "Then men threw sofa cushions at him and told him to go to any particular place he might believe in. They christened him the 'Blastoderm'—he said he came from a family of that name somewhere in the prehistoric ages; and, by insult and laughter, strove to choke him dumb, for he was an unmitigated nuisance at the Clubs; besides being an offence to the older men. . . . Not a soul was interested in McGoggin's soul. He might have had two or none, or somebody else's. His business was to obey orders and keep abreast of his files instead of devastating the Club with 'isms.' " Such is the fun which Kipling pokes at the shallow unbelief of the present day.

III.—HIS PURITANISM.

Next to the "Recessional," the "Hymn Before Action" is perhaps the most distinctive utterance of Mr. Kipling's national religion.

"The earth is full of anger,
The seas are dark with wrath,
The nations in their harness
Go up against our path.
Ere yet we loose the legions,
Ere yet we draw the blade,
Jehovah of the thunders,
Lord God of battles, aid!

"High lust and froward bearing,
Proud heart, rebellious brow,
Deaf ear and soul uncaring,
We seek thy mercy now!
The sinner that foreswore thee,
The fool that passed thee by,