

the overwhelming pressure of that "public opinion" he hates and despises. But not so with Kipling in *his* work. He is a strong man and will not yield. His strength, his fearlessness of hostile criticism, above all, his intense love of the real and the true, is displayed in every line. He is a realist in the best sense of the word; one that we can enjoy throughout and never feel a sense of degradation and impurity creeping over us as we read. He paints things as they are and yet with the instinct of the true artist shuns such models as would draw from us the sickening cry, "Unclean, Unclean." The first soldier in the "Last Shot" is emblematic of Kipling's work. Before everything it is real and true to life; we can see the desperate figure standing forth upon the canvas as though alive, blood-stained, powder-blackened, torn and dishevelled, every lineament real as life, the whole figure pregnant with strength and action, yet with none of the disgusting detail of the modern realist, or mawkish sentimentality of the second rate novelist.

Some of the word pictures in "The Light that Failed" are very gorgeous. Kipling seems to be endowed with the true eye of the artist, revelling in a wealth of warm, glowing color, and delicate gradations of light and shade. Dick and "Torp," the war correspondent of the "Central Southern Syndicate," are talking of old times on the Nile. "Recollect some of those views in the Soudan?" said Torpenhow, with a provoking drawl.

Dick squirmed in his place. "Don't! It makes me want to get out there again. What color that was! Opal and amber, and amber and claret, and brick-red and sulphur—cockatoo—crest sulphur—against brown, with a nigger-black rock sticking up in the middle of it all, and a decorative frieze of camels festooning in front of a pure pale turquoise sky." He began to walk up and down. "And yet, you know, if you try to give these people the thing as God gave it, keyed down to their comprehension, and according to the powers He has given you—"

"Modest man, go on."
"Half-a-dozen epicene young pagans, who have'n't even been to Algiers, will tell you first that your notion is borrowed, and secondly that it isn't Art."

Another thrust at "Sacred Art"! Kipling speaks in the bitter tone of a youthful genius whose first picture has just been refused by the Academy, because it is in a realm of Art too far above the heads of the public to be appreciated or understood. Perhaps Kipling's first attempts were neither appreciated nor understood either. Mayhap the iron at one time entered into his soul also, and now, even in the days of prosperity, rankles when he thinks of the past. At any rate there is an undertone of bitterness running through some of Dick's remarks that is too sincere, too real, not to have sprung from a chord in Kipling's own breast, vibrating in brotherly sympathy with the struggles of genius against the shackles of so-called Art.

But we have almost forgotten the story in "The Light that Failed." We have seen the two orphan children playing in the evening on the desolate sea shore, where Dick swore to be true to Maisie and Maisie vowed eternal fidelity to Dick; and then we had a glimpse of Dick alone in the Soudan, wounded perhaps unto death, and "calling aloud to the restless Nile for Maisie—and again, Maisie! The next time we see them they are together again—this time in the roar of London, each struggling for fame and fortune by means of brush and palette, Maisie, desperately and with head bowed submissively to the decrees of Art, and Dick savagely kicking over the traces with a grim determination to be free and succeed in spite of all. And Dick gains a glorious success; but Maisie labors on patiently, desperately, hungering for fame and yet finding it not; so wrapt up in her Art, that she has neither time nor inclination for the wealth of love that Dick lays at her feet. She is no longer the child that pledged her troth by the sea-shore. She is now a woman battling blindly against fate, striving for a fame that is beyond her reach, her whole soul given up to her profession. She confides in

Dick; tells him all her hopes and fears; asks his advice; calls him by the old pet names of childhood, and yet she cannot love him. It is the same wilful Maisie that we saw in the old days down by the sea, tormenting Dick and "spoiling his aim."

And then the days begin to darken and the light to fail. Dick's strong ungovernable spirit is at last subdued by the awfulness of the misfortune that falls upon him. Day after day he sits in his studio, stone blind, appalled by the surrounding blackness that seems to press upon him as though it would suffocate him with its intensity; playing with his last three letters from Maisie who is studying in France at Vitry-sur-Marne, and hugging them to his breast in his hours of loneliness and misery. He will not write to her of his misfortune. He wants her love but he will not have her pity. He could not win the former in his days of strength—can he expect anything other than the latter in his hour of infirmity?

But at last she hears of his affliction. She too has had her sorrow. Her hopes are all blasted. Success, fame, fortune, she begins to realize, are all beyond her. Her soul is sick for a little human sympathy, and she longs now for that steadfast love that a few months ago she had only spurned and repelled. But Dick doesn't write. Her last three letters are unanswered and she feels she is forgotten and alone. But Torpenhow comes at last and tells of the strong man childishly playing with the three letters he cannot read, in the darkened studio in London. The next scene, and the last, is in London. Maisie and Torpenhow ascend four flights of stairs. They enter the studio, the door clicks behind her and Maisie finds herself alone with the man who loves her.

Dick thrust the letters into his pocket as he heard the sound. "Hello 'Torp! is that you? I've been so lonely."

His voice had taken the peculiar flatness of the blind. Maisie pressed herself up into a corner of the room. Her heart was beating furiously, and she put one hand on her breast to keep it quiet. Dick was staring directly at her, and she realized for the first time that he was blind. Shutting her eyes in a railway carriage to open them when she pleased was child's play. This man was blind, though his eyes were wide open.

"Torp, is that you? They said you were coming."

Dick looked puzzled and a little irritated at the silence. "No! its only me," was the answer in a strained little whisper. Maisie could hardly move her lips.

"H'm," said Dick composedly without moving, "this is a new phenomenon. "Darkness I'm getting used to; but I object to hearing voices."

And then he sets to work to discover whence came that voice, and at last he touched her with his groping hands.

"It's Maisie!" said he with a dry sob.

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ÆSCHYLUS' AGAMEMNON.

(vv. 958-973.)

There is a sea, and who shall drain it dry?
There is a sea, which breeds the costly dye,
And can incarnadine full many a robe.
And Agamemnon's house—through Heaven's smile—
Is not a beggar, nor knows poverty.
Right willingly would I have vowed to tread
On countless robes, if so the oracles
Had ordered, when I prayed for thy return.
For while the root which bears the tree lives on,
The foliage reaches to the house and spreads
A shelter 'gainst the sweltering summer heat:
So when thou comest to thy house and home
'Tis like warm winds in winter; but in summer,
When heaven is ripening the sour grapes to wine,
Then come there cooling winds upon the house
When the true master turneth to his home.
Ah, God! thou God of strength, now grant my vow,
And Thine own counsels quickly perfect Thou!—M. II.