

Uncle Walt

*Rudyard
Kipling*

ALAS FOR R. KIPLING! When he was a stripling, and filled with the fire of his age, he looked like a dinger—the all-firedest singer that ever wrote rhymes by the page. His harpstrings he pounded with vim till they sounded like strains of a Homeric brand, and people, in wonder, inquired who in thunder was filling with music the land. “At last—now we know it—the world has a poet, who’ll set all the rivers afire,” in this way we hailed him, when critics assailed him, and knocked on his bargain sale lyre. The years have been flying, and old bards are dying, and some of the young have been called; and Rudyard the rhymers is now an old timer, string-halted and painfully bald. And harder and harder, with counterfeit ardor, he whangs at his lusty old lyre; it’s kept caterwauling and wailing and squalling, when it ought to be flung in the fire. O hush up its clangor! In sorrow, not anger, we proffer this little request; let’s think of the stripling—the long vanished Kipling, and let the old man take a rest.