

LOVE'S QUEST.

I.

The Four Winds of Heaven
Swept past me one day,
I questioned them each
As they sped on their way:
"Who will carry me safely,"
I said, "on Love's quest?
Of all four, who will bear me
The soonest to rest?"

II.

"Say, what wilt thou give me,
O North Wind?" I cried.
"I take, but I give not,"
The North Wind replied.
From the South came a breath
That seem'd blown from above;
It whispered, "I fly
To the Dreamland of Love."

III.

"Hope lives in the Future,
There is none in the Past;
Come with me," said the West Wind,
"Ere the skies overcast."
"What riddle," I asked,
"O East Wind, do you speak?"
"Nothing new, nothing good,
In the World can'st thou seek."

IV.

I answered: "It matters not
Whither I go;
To the warmth of the South,
To the North, with its snow;
"Love, I turn to thy dwelling,
Wherever it be;
For what is the East
Or the West to me?"

FREDERIC B. HODGINS.

"THE LIGHT THAT FAILED."*



YEAR ago the name of Rudyard Kipling was unknown to us. To-day there is none more familiar. He is flashed into prominence on the literary horizon like a meteor, fresh, original, vigorous, strong with a strength that seems likely to outlive even the blighting effects of a too easily gained popularity. His short stories of East Indian life first brought him before the public; to-day everybody is reading his first novel, "The Light That Failed." The publication of this story has been awaited with a great deal of interest by the literary world. Speculation was rife as to whether Kipling could acquit himself cleverly in a continued story. He had already proven himself a master in short stories, his success as a novelist was yet to be assured.

"The Light That Failed" has set all speculation at rest. Kipling has shown himself to be more than an interesting story teller; he is a novelist of a very unique order. In this last work he has told a story of an intensely interesting nature in a style which at first, perhaps, only arouses one's curiosity, but which in the course of the narrative captivates one by its vigor, its naturalness, its truth to everything real in life. There is a strength about the whole book that denotes the hand of a master, and such an amount of freshness and originality as does one good to read; it is like a breath of sea air, a draught of sparkling water on a dull and sultry day. One is aroused, one is refreshed, one longs for more.

The realness of the story is what impresses one. "Dick Helder" and "Maisie" stand forth on the very first page

* Lippincott's Magazine for January.

as living, breathing, actual beings. There is the joy of life thrilling through them, and in the stir and movement of the first few chapters, the reader feels himself almost an actor in a living drama, not a spectator at a lifeless, dumb-show. We are hurried from the bleak, dismal sea shore, with its poppies shivering in the night wind, where two lovely children are at play with an old revolver, and where "Maisie" "spoils Dick's aim," to the glittering sands of the deserts of Egypt, where, in the shock and tumult of battle, we see Dick once again, now facing death, revolver in hand, now tottering in the arms of a comrade, and moaning deliriously that some one has "spoilt his aim." We are wonderfully taken with these two characters. As children, they are quaint, naive, unusual; endowed with a wild carelessness for everything but each other that is almost savage in its naturalness. As man and woman they do not change. There is the same freedom from restraint, the same impetuosity and passion as in days of childhood. Dick has a wild, wolfish, untamable spirit that Maisie alone can subdue and soften; and Maisie herself in womanhood loses none of her childish imperiousness and wilfulness until Dick's awful misfortune calls forth the deeper, truer feelings that have been lying latent in her tender, womanly heart. The Bohemian life of these two in London, their friends, their occupations, their surroundings, are all intensely interesting. We find ourselves sympathizing with Dick in his imprecations against Art, and pitying poor Maisie, who is sacrificing herself upon that altar. There is no better passage in the book than Dick's outburst against "Art," and in it are seen many of the peculiarities of Kipling's style.

"Dick dragged forward a canvas laid face to the wall. 'Here's a sample of real art. It is going to be a fac-simile reproduction for a weekly. I called it "His Last Shot." It's worked up from a little water color I made outside El Maghrib. Well, I lured my model, a beautiful rifleman, up here with drink; I dored him and I redrored him and I tredrored him, and I made him a flushed, dishevelled, bedevilled scallawag, with his helmet at the back of his head and the living fear of death in his eye and the blood oozing out of a cut over his ankle-bone. He wasn't pretty, but he was all soldier and very much man. . . . I did him just as well as I knew how, making allowance for the slickness of oils. Then the art manager of that abandoned paper said that his subscribers wouldn't like it. It was brutal and coarse and violent—man being naturally gentle when he is fighting for his life. They wanted something more restful, with a little more color. I could have said a good deal, but you might as well talk to a sheep as to an art-manager. I took my "Last Shot" back. Behold the result! I put him into a lovely red coat without a speck on it. That is Art. I polished his boots—observe the high light on the toe. That is Art. I cleaned his rifle—rifles are always clean on service—because that is Art. I pipe-clayed his helmet—pipe clay is always used on active service and is indispensable to Art. I shaved his chin, I washed his hands and gave him an air of fatted peace. Result, military tailor's pattern plate. Price, thank heaven, twice as much as for the first sketch, which was moderately decent."

"And do you suppose you are going to give that thing out as your work?"

"Why not? I did it. Alone I did it, in the interests of sacred, homebred Art and *Dickenson's Weekly*."

What a picture! What sarcastic bitterness in every word of this tirade! We feel that Kipling is quite at home here in an attack upon what he calls "Sacred Art." Probably he too has felt its shackles weighing upon his genius, and, having felt, knows how to sympathize with Dick in his savage struggles to overthrow this Juggernaut that seems bent upon crushing out all truth and reality in the works of the artist. In the above extract we have seen that Dick, in a moment of bitter cynicism that we can well understand, (for even genius will allow itself to play tricks with the public in a spirit of revenge) consents to efface his personality at the decree of "Sacred Art" and yield to