

is full of them and of their heroism, and can hardly contain all the books that are being written about them. Mons and Ypres have crowned them: the soldier passes—as Kipling says with his usual vivacity—from one extreme to the other in popular estimation. In the days of peace he is a “brutal and licentious soldiery.” (See “Departmental Ditties,” pp. 59–62.) The churches will not look at him. The Methodists, whom Learoyd joins, because he is in love with a consumptive Methodist girl, frown upon him: he is a brand barely plucked from the burning: he is the sort of person who will enlist: and when he *does* enlist, they cast him out: all but the dying girl who knows a man when she sees one. (“On Greenlow Hill,” pp. 82–83.)

I was speaking of Kipling as technically better educated than some of the other writers we all of us discuss. I meant merely that as a fact he has much more Latin and Greek and more English literature than Mr. Wells, or than the melancholy and more interesting peasant novelist Thomas Hardy. Kipling evidently never learned the classics well enough to appreciate them much: he went to them like other school boys to scoff: he did not remain to pray. A few Greek words like *θαλαμίτης* and *θρανίτης, δρόμων* and *κατάφρακτον* belonging to his beloved art of navigation, a song with a crude beginning from Horace, and a glance at Admiral Phormio, these are the chief relics of his school classics. (See “Traffics and Discoveries,” p. 36, “When the robust and brass-bound man,” etc.) But the result is that his literary education gives to Kipling’s tales a peculiar literary flavour not found in these other writers. It makes his absurd and humorous characters more absurd even than Dickens’ characters in a way, though in another way they are much less absurd, because much less extravagant in personality. A literary quotation in Kipling on illiterate lips seems grotesque, but it is only a verbal grotesqueness. In Dickens’ delicious extravagances the grotesqueness lies in the murdering and misapplication of some quotation,