

THE PROPHETIC QUALITIES OF RUDYARD KIPLING'S WORK

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## PREFACE

Rudyard Kipling, born in 1865, began writing for publication before he was twenty and continued doing so until near his death at sixty. From the year of his triumphant literary conquest of London, 1890, to the present, his work--partly by its quantity but more especially by its variety--has aroused a wide spectrum of critical reaction, from enthusiastic approval to virulent condemnation, and it still perplexes many appraisers. It is true that since Charles Carrington's careful biography (1955)<sup>1</sup> dissipated the distorted psychological theses, and since such critics as Bonamy Dobrée (1929),<sup>2</sup> Thomas Stearns Eliot (1941),<sup>3</sup> J. M. S. Tompkins (1959),<sup>4</sup> and Randall Jarrell (1961)<sup>5</sup> have conceded him what may never have been

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<sup>1</sup>The Life of Rudyard Kipling.

<sup>2</sup>The Lamp and the Lute.

<sup>3</sup>A Choice of Kipling's Verse.

<sup>4</sup>The Art of Rudyard Kipling.

<sup>5</sup>Introduction to The Best Short Stories of Rudyard Kipling.

in doubt--major literary rank, there has been a general toning down of the stridently derisive criticism of Kipling.

Nevertheless, critics still tend to seek to come to terms with him through Procrustean theories that omit much and distort more. Thus, J. I. M. Stewart compares Kipling's novel The Light That Failed to Thomas Hardy's Jude the Obscure and D. H. Lawrence's Lady Chatterley's Lover, calling them all the works of geniuses but "sick" men.<sup>6</sup> C. S. Lewis is sure "that Kipling is a very great artist," but he finds the informing thesis of nearly all of Kipling's work a "master passion" for "the intimacy of the closed circle."<sup>7</sup> And Noel Annan tries to force Kipling into a sociological framework that equates Kipling's "Law" with the anthropologists' culture, and cuts off a major portion of his writing by claiming Kipling considers "the truth of religion irrelevant."<sup>8</sup> Even Dobrée, usually cited not only as the first critic to discuss a significant body of Kipling's work and

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<sup>6</sup>Rudyard Kipling, p. 93.

<sup>7</sup>"Kipling's World" from They Asked for a Paper. Delivered as a Lecture in 1948 and first published in The Kipling Journal, XXV, Nos. 127, 128 (September, December, 1958), 8-16, 7-11; No. 128, 8.

<sup>8</sup>"Kipling's Place in the History of Ideas," Victorian Studies, III (1959-60), 327.

to treat Kipling as a major artist, but also as the critic who has placed the greatest emphasis on Kipling's mythical or other-than-realistic quality, fails to establish a logical connection among his many brilliant insights into Kipling's themes because the frame of reference is too limited. That Kipling conceived of the universe as "indifferent"<sup>9</sup> and yet governed by a God of grace and compassion, whose chief concern is that "His banished be not expelled from him,"<sup>10</sup> is a confusion of viewpoints only partially and incorrectly explained by the theory that Kipling was irreligious at the beginning of his career and religious in the latter half of his life when suffering destroyed his confidence.<sup>11</sup> It is, unfortunately, typical of critics who believe that the God (or goddess) Kipling worshipped was Britannica, or that "his subtilized Jehovah" was an outmoded concept that he made serve in place of a better name for the Source of his craftsmanship.<sup>12</sup>

The God Rudyard Kipling found in countless experiences and to Whom he dedicated his art is not incompatible with

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<sup>9</sup> Rudyard Kipling, Realist and Fabulist, p. 6.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>11</sup> Richard Le Gallienne, "Kipling's Place In Literature," Munsey's Magazine, LXVIII (November, 1919), 245.

<sup>12</sup> Dobrée, The Lamp and the Lute, p. 63.

the Judeo-Christian understanding of God in the fullest implications of Biblical teaching about Him. He is Creator, not just of the Garden of Eden but of all things and all men; He is Eternal; He is the Designer of History; His Law governs Man, His Love redeems Man; He is the only One worthy of adoration and praise; His ultimate purpose is to fit Man for His company. Each major figure in the Bible, from Abraham to St. Paul, had as his life purpose the discovery and communication of some facet of Man's growing understanding of this God, although most of these figures were to their contemporaries unorthodox.

It is the thesis of this study that Kipling, seen through his work, fulfills a prophetic role, from the agony of lonely commitment to the authority of an inspired message. Furthermore, he uses the language and material of the Bible and other religious resources as an essential idiom of his art, and he establishes the framework for his artistic themes on a God-oriented structure of Divine Law for the universe, Divine Love for all creatures, Divine Concern with all Reality, and Divine Source for all Truth. Recognition of this divinely ordained and controlled framework clarifies Kipling's intent, enriches his artistry, and resolves the inconsistencies of lesser bases of analyses.

The term prophetic is used, then, in its Scriptural sense: the work of men under divine mandate who look at their world with spiritually heightened insight and present messages of judgment and mercy. No attempt will be made to re-evaluate his literary greatness, nor is the identification of his central purpose intended to negate the validity of interpretations of his varied interests. While occasional reference will be made to contradictory or corroborating evidence outside the poems, stories, novels, speeches and other writing of Kipling, the chief emphasis will be placed on a wide selection of individual works, with the intent that both the quantity and the consistency of the prophetic qualities may be revealed. Kipling's statements of his own prophetic "call" and God-given "message," and his complex uses of prophetic characteristics in his art will be explored for the purpose of discovering a literary--and if the artist is judged sincere, a personal--philosophy comprehensive enough to serve as a key to his total work.

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Rudyard Kipling's work is permeated with material from the Bible and other religious sources. It also exhibits a tone of authoritative insight similar to that of the Biblical prophets. While many critics have commented on either his Biblical language or his prophetic tone, the significance of these qualities has not previously been systematically explored in order to ascertain his major frame of reference. Defining a prophet as one who understands his vocation as a mandate under God, with a message based on God-given insights, this study traces Kipling's statements of prophetic call, dedication and message throughout a wide selection of his writing, in all its genres and periods, to verify his prophetic point of view as the comprehensive frame of reference necessary to understanding individual works.

Kipling identifies his "vocation" as a prophetic mandate in a variety of ways. For example, in the poem "The Explorer" he repeatedly claims that his work is under God's guidance and fulfills a part of God's design for history, alluding to the anointing of Saul as the first king of Israel to establish his Biblical view of history. "My New-Cut Ashlar," a prayer-poem rich in artistic symbolism and Biblical allusion, asserts that his prophetic message is based on a God-given vision prefigured in the experience of the Apostle Peter. In "To the True Romance" the Spirit Kipling serves is given the attributes of the Holy Spirit. The record of awesome spiritual experiences such as mystics report is implied in "The Prayer of Miriam Cohen"; Kipling acknowledges having had some form of mystical experience from childhood, mentioning these "fortunate hours" in a number of his stories and in his autobiography. There is much other evidence that Kipling dedicated his talents in the manner of religious prophet; among others who recognized this are T. S. Eliot, Charles E. Carrington (his official biographer), and his sister, Mrs. Alice Fleming.

From this point of view, his pervasive use of Biblical and other religious material becomes integral to his art, expressing not only his meaning but relating

him to the prophetic tradition. In his frankly religious or prophetically denunciatory selections, of which there are considerably more than those generally known, Biblical allusions and traditional religious concepts not only intensify the artistic effectiveness of the work but identify Kipling's larger design. This use of prophetic language is even more striking in his many apparently non-religious selections, in which Biblical allusions often furnish the key to an adequate interpretation by pinpointing the chief emphasis desired or placing the specific incident against a spiritual, universal and God-centered frame of reference. Even his occasional seemingly irreverent use of Biblical or other religious material reveals both a knowledge of these sources and a concern with presenting them with fresh validity.

In the light of his acknowledged prophetic vocation and his artistically responsible use of prophetic language, his major themes of Law, Love, Reality and Truth become expressions of his prophetic conviction that the world was created and is sustained by an omnipotent God whose ultimate purpose is to continuously establish a divine-human partnership, effective in this life and perfected in immortality. The conviction was based on his prophetic vision--that God is concerned with

all of His creation and that nothing touched by His Grace is "unclean." Such a frame of reference comprehends Kipling's many interests, identifies the source of his values, and enriches the artistry of his work.

## A PROPHEMIC VOCATION

### Characteristics

There are qualities in the work of Rudyard Kipling-- qualities of cosmic concern, passionate involvement and religious orientation--that can best be explained by the concept of a Biblical prophet. Evidence that Kipling so understood his work, as a vocation under God, as a prophetic mandate, is found in a wide selection of his writing, in all its genres and periods. Sometimes the statement of his prophetic role--from call to fulfillment--is complete in one work, as in the poem "The Explorer." Sometimes it is evident from the tone of the selection, a tone of thundering denunciation of his nation's sins, as in "The Islanders," or a tone of challenge to total commitment to an idealistic destiny, as in "A Song of the English," or a tone of divine compassion, as in "The Supports." Again it may be the use of religious allusions or quotations as key lines in a story, as in "Madonna of the Trenches," or it may be the exploration of the complexities of traditional religious concepts, as in "On the Gate: A Tale of '16."

Even more significant than these isolated examples are the many related and supporting selections and the total cumulative evidence of his religiously oriented insights and expressions, all of which argue persuasively that he was not simply writing in the language of his day nor for the religiously sympathetic market, but in language appropriate to his prophetic intent.

His searching vision<sup>1</sup> and his courageous idealism<sup>2</sup> have often suggested to critics and commentators the label "prophetic": "'Poet and prophet for all the human race";<sup>3</sup> "a Seer, a Prophet, a Visionary, with all his realism";<sup>4</sup> "Kipling was something rarer than a philosopher, he was a prophet."<sup>5</sup> But the religious orientation of his prophetic

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Lynd, Books and Writers, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup>Victor Bonney, "Some Aspects of Kipling's Greatness," The Kipling Journal, No. 38 (June, 1936), pp. 49-50. The Kipling Journal began using volume numbers with the March, 1939, issue, No. 49, volume V.

<sup>3</sup>L. C. Dunsterville, "Message to the English Speaking Union," The Kipling Journal, No. 39 (September, 1936), p. 80.

<sup>4</sup>Gerard E. Fox, "Rudyard Kipling the Tribal Singer," The Kipling Journal, XIV, No. 82 (July, 1947), 8.

<sup>5</sup>T. S. Eliot, "The Unfading Genius of Rudyard Kipling," The Kipling Journal, XXVI, No. 129 (March, 1959), 11.

nature has rarely been understood, in part because both his friends and his enemies have seen him as the prophet of British traditions and imperialism: "His imperialism is the healthy kind which our race held before itself as an ideal";<sup>6</sup> "He appeals strongly to the spirit of adventure and achievement which lies deep at the roots of the British character";<sup>7</sup> "We think of Kipling most of all as the poet Laureate of the Army and the Navy and the Empire, of India and the Jungle and Public School";<sup>8</sup> "Loving his country and countrymen, with a proud and passionate love, yet flaying them with whips of scorpions, like a prophet of old, when he thinks they are not living up to the sturdy traditions passed on by their rough forefathers."<sup>9</sup>

While critics have found it difficult to avoid the label "prophet," they tend to explain the source and dedication of Kipling's prophetic qualities according to their own interests or convictions. In addition to the familiar

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<sup>6</sup>"Kipling the Interpreter: How a South African Sees Him," The Kipling Journal, No. 18, (June, 1931), p. 60.

<sup>7</sup>Robert Stokes, "Kipling and the Spirit of the Age," The Kipling Journal, No. 26 (June, 1933), p. 40.

<sup>8</sup>Sir Francis Goodenough, "The Humour of Kipling," The Kipling Journal, No. 37 (March, 1936), p. 26.

<sup>9</sup>A. E. G. Cornwell, "The Apostle of Work and Service," The Kipling Journal, No. 48 (December, 1938), p. 131.

bias of Empire or British traditions just cited, artistic inspirations or hereditary inclination may be emphasized. Thus, H. Crichton-Miller, making "Some Psychological Observations on Kipling's Writings," points out that the inspiration of "The Explorer" comes by "direct intuition" which is the mark of "the true prophet," but he dilutes the whole experience to a fulfillment of the creative quest.<sup>10</sup> And Hilton Brown finds Kipling explained by his ancestry, "a long line of Yorkshire Nonconformists, crossed by a Scottish Highland strain also given to religion as a form of self-expression,"<sup>11</sup> and deprecates Kipling's preacher- and prophet-like "certainty of revealed knowledge," by charging that both the prophets of Israel and Kipling often made "hasty generalizations, and hastier moral judgments."<sup>12</sup>

Furthermore, the irregularity of his "creed" confused many. Kipling often criticized the conventionalized religious practices or practitioners of his day.<sup>13</sup> So, of

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<sup>10</sup>The Kipling Journal, XIV, No. 84 (December, 1947), 7-8.

<sup>11</sup>Rudyard Kipling, p. 85.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 87-88.

<sup>13</sup>"Kaspar's Song in 'Varda,'" Traffics and Discoveries, VII, 193; "Lispeth," Plain Tales from the Hills, I, 1-8, Kim, XVI; "Jobson's Amen," Diversity of Creatures, IX, 207-208. All references to Kipling's works will be cited by the original book title and the volume and pages in The Burwash Edition of the Complete Works in Prose and Verse.

course, have most prophets! Also, he sometimes used and approved such "unorthodox" material as bits and pieces of the teachings or traditions of Hinduism and Mohammedanism.<sup>14</sup> This, too, is not unlike prophets who have presented an interpretation of God bigger than that of denominational or racial dogma.<sup>15</sup> And he often wrote on "shocking" or "unreligious" subjects,<sup>16</sup> for he found nothing God had made "common or unclean."<sup>17</sup> Roger Lancelyn Green decided "He must be claimed as a convinced Theist rather than a convinced Christian,"<sup>18</sup> but Sir George MacMunn insisted that one "cannot read Kipling's works, especially his verse, without realizing that he was a very sincere Christian."<sup>19</sup> Certainly Kipling's use of Biblical material is proportional

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<sup>14</sup>"The Miracle of Purun Bhagat," The Jungle Books, XI, 291-309; the poem "The Captive," Traffics and Discoveries, VII, 3; Kim, XVI.

<sup>15</sup>Souvenirs of France, XXIV, 322; Amos, Jonah, etc.

<sup>16</sup>"'Love-o'-Women,'" Many Inventions, V, 325-354; many of the Plain Tales from the Hills, I, and Departmental Ditties and Barrack-Room Ballads, XXV.

<sup>17</sup>Acts 10:14; "My New-Cut Ashlar," Life's Handicap, IV, 413-414. All Biblical references to Oxford University Press edition of Authorized King James Version of The Holy Bible.

<sup>18</sup>Kipling and the Children, p. 120.

<sup>19</sup>"Kipling and the World's Religions," The Kipling Journal, XV, No. 85 (April, 1948), 3.

to the size of the Old Testament and the New. And while on one occasion he expressed unwillingness to accept the divinity of Christ,<sup>20</sup> his dominant tone and themes endorse the basic Judeo-Christian concepts. Therefore, this study will assume that his Biblical allusions and other religious material may be understood in their generally accepted sense unless specific reasons are present for doing otherwise.

### His Call

Kipling understood the dedication of his talents to a religiously oriented or prophetic vocation as a response to a "call," the Source and Overseer of which was God and the Nature of which was spiritual and comprehensive. Identification of the Source is stated or implied in at least one extant letter, in a number of poems and stories, in speeches, and by a member of his family. In 1897, Kipling wrote to C. E. Norton: "'I am daily and nightly perplexed with my own responsibilities before God.'"<sup>21</sup> In "The Explorer,"<sup>22</sup> which is the most complete poetic statement of his prophetic vocation, the poet, speaking through

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<sup>20</sup>Carrington, p. 138.

<sup>21</sup>Carrington, p. 248.

<sup>22</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 200-204.

the poem's persona, says: "Then I knew, the while I doubted--knew His Hand was certain o'er me." As he struggles to decide whether or not to choose an easier way, he recognizes that God knows the terror that he is experiencing. The identification of God as the One Who sent the "Whisper" that drove him forth is reinforced by the allusion to the Biblical story of the anointing of Saul, with all this event's overtones of divine mandate, personal reluctance, and prophetic significance:

Saul he went to look for donkeys, and by God  
   he found a kingdom!  
 But by God, Who sent His Whisper, I had struck  
   the worth of two!

And concluding his wry recital of who will get the credit for his exploration ("Came, a dozen men together . . . They'll be called the Pioneers!"), he identifies the One behind the entire enterprise as "my Maker." For, like the Biblical prophets, Kipling saw all history as the unfolding of God's design, with his personal role coming at the intended moment in that design:

God took care to hide that country till He judged  
   His people ready,  
 Then he chose me for His Whisper, and I've found  
   it, and it's yours!

Other evidence that Kipling thought of the Source of his prophetic call as God is found in the implications of

"To the True Romance."<sup>23</sup> The framework of this poem is a knight's chivalric commitment to his lady, but the "Thee" of the poet's allegiance is a Spirit so creative and powerful that it can hardly be less than that manifestation of the Triune God known as the Holy Spirit.<sup>24</sup> Affirming this interpretation of Kipling's dedication of his talents is a statement made by his sister, Mrs. Alice Fleming, in 1937, the year after Kipling's death: "Critics to-day are apt to forget that Rudyard Kipling felt from the beginning that the word of the Lord was laid upon him, and that he had to do that for which he was sent."<sup>25</sup>

In addition to recognition of a Divine Source for his initial commitment, Kipling understood God as the constant Overseer of his career. This is most clearly presented in the poem "My New-Cut Ashlar,"<sup>26</sup> which is a prayer addressed to "Great Overseer." The poet, here speaking in the person of a stonemason working on a temple, confesses that whatever "good" he has accomplished was "compelled" by the Master's Hand, and that he is to blame for any failure "to

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<sup>23</sup> Many Inventions, V, xi-xiv.

<sup>24</sup> Job 33:4; Ps. 139:7-13; Isa. 11:2; John 14:26; Rom. 15:19; I Cor. 2:10, etc.

<sup>25</sup> "The Annual Luncheon," The Kipling Journal, No. 42 (June, 1937), p. 63.

<sup>26</sup> "L'Envoie" to Life's Handicap, IV, 413-414.

meet Thy Thought." He pleads that the "depth and dream" of his desire and the bitterness of his paths are fully known to the One "Who . . . made the Fire . . . [ and ]. the Clay." He proudly claims the divine-human kinship for all true craftsmen as part of God's eternal design, but he insists that he has a special part to play in building "that dread Temple of Thy Worth." And he asks that whatever happens, he may be permitted to keep his special relationship to God, his "vision," that he may thereby remain free of men's influence--the better to serve them, as God directs. The religious implications of this poem are strengthened by its language and allusions. While the term ashlar is found in Masonic ritual rather than the Bible, and its definition<sup>27</sup> makes it a symbol of artistic craftsmanship, the basic metaphor of the poem, the building of a temple dedicated to God, alludes to both the Hebrews' concern with such a temple, from Moses to the time of Peter and Paul, and to the New Testament concept of a living temple of true worshippers,<sup>28</sup> most strikingly presented by Peter when he called each Christian a "lively stone" and Christ the "chief corner

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<sup>27</sup>A squared stone building block finished to a degree that makes possible the use of little or no mortar.

<sup>28</sup>I Cor. 3:16; 6:19; II Cor. 6:16; Rom. 12:1.

stone."<sup>29</sup> That Kipling had this reference in mind is suggested by the poem's line "nought common on Thy Earth," which is an echo of "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common," the thrice-repeated command of God to Peter in his vision on a housetop in Joppa.<sup>30</sup>

That Kipling consistently experienced God's oversight of his work is the purport of the statement in the letter to C. E. Norton already cited, a statement which emphasizes the continuing ("daily and nightly") nature of his commitment to God-assigned tasks. This divine direction is expressed fictionally in the words of the artist-protagonist of The Light That Failed: "you must sacrifice yourself, and live under orders."<sup>31</sup> In the fourth chapter of his autobiography, in which he explains how he arrived at his choice of the Empire as one of the major symbols of his work, Kipling admits that the unusual experiences that fitted him for this choice were so beyond his choosing, yet so appropriate, that they could only be explained as "fantastic" and arranged by "Fate."<sup>32</sup> That his choice of the term fate is not intended

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<sup>29</sup> I Peter 2:4-7.

<sup>30</sup> Acts 10:9-16.

<sup>31</sup> XV, 99.

<sup>32</sup> Something of Myself, XXIV, 409.

to belie his religious meaning is indicated by the fact that as soon as he explained to his family his "notion" of trying to "tell to the English something of the world outside England--not directly but by implication," it was pointed out to him that he sounded like his grandfathers, both of whom had been Wesleyan Ministers. Furthermore, it should be noted here, that his "vast, vague conspectus" was to be an explanation not of imperialism but "of the whole sweep and meaning of things and effort and origins throughout the Empire."<sup>33</sup> Hilton Brown catches some of this religious (rather than merely patriotic) sense of vocation when he writes: "If, as Kipling fervently believed . . . the Empire was not only a duty and a responsibility but a direct and God-sent means of [national] salvation, then it was time [for him] to assume the mantle of Jeremiah and speak plainly."<sup>34</sup>

Certainly it was Kipling's conviction that God directed his work that explains both the tone and the message of his most prophetic works. His tone of authority in such denunciatory works as "The Islanders," "The City of Brass," and "Justice," and of pious remonstrance in such poems as

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 418.

<sup>34</sup>Brown, p. 106.

"Recessional," "The Covenant," and "'Non Nobis Domine'" would be, as some critics have so charged him,<sup>35</sup> unacceptable presumption or hypocrisy unless he was writing under the conviction that his insights were truly prophetic. The introductory poem of his great song of Empire, "A Song of the English,"<sup>36</sup> clearly indicates this point of view. He calls his people to humble themselves before "the Lord our God Most High," Who opened the paths to the building of empire and Who holds His "chosen" people responsible for effective service that will "let men know we serve the Lord!" In the final stanza of this prologue he pleads that his audience will see through his imperfect art "the truth" which God has shown him "in the ends of all the Earth!" Allusions to God's making a dry path through the Red Sea for his chosen people, the Israelites,<sup>37</sup> to the singleness of of heart with which the Lord must be served,<sup>38</sup> and to the establishment of a peace acceptable to God,<sup>39</sup> strengthen the

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<sup>35</sup>Richard LeGallienne, Rudyard Kipling: A Criticism, p. 129; Stewart, p. 52.

<sup>36</sup>The Seven Seas, XXVI, 3-4.

<sup>37</sup>Ex. 14.

<sup>38</sup>Matt. 6:21-24.

<sup>39</sup>Ps. 29:11.

religious implications of this statement of the nature of his work. This prophetic viewpoint (that of a man working under the direction of God) is discoverable, to a greater or lesser degree, in nearly everything he wrote. As T. S. Eliot noted: "beyond" his remarkable talents and his "mask of the entertainer" there was "a queer gift of second sight, of transmitting messages from elsewhere, a gift so disconcerting when we are made aware of it that thenceforth we are never sure when it is not present."<sup>40</sup>

Consistent with Kipling's understanding of God as the Source of his "call" and as the Overseer of the "vocation" to which that call led is his indication that the call was spiritual in nature. In "The Explorer,"<sup>41</sup> the call was "a voice, as bad as Conscience," and "everlasting Whisper," "His Whisper." In "My New-Cut Ashlar"<sup>42</sup> it is "Thy Thought," "dream," "vision." In "The Prophet and the Country,"<sup>43</sup> a story which clearly reflects some of Kipling's own experiences, the American "Prophet"-protagonist considers his message a "revelation" which he received as a "vision." He

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<sup>40</sup>A Choice of Kipling's Verse, p. 22.

<sup>41</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 200-204.

<sup>42</sup>Life's Handicap, IV, 413-414.

<sup>43</sup>Debits and Credits, VIII, 129-148.

foresees the judgment of his people with all the fervor and awe of a "Fundamentalist," and he feels his suffering is akin to that of "ancient prophets an' martyrs."<sup>44</sup> There is evidence that in this story Kipling is both the narrator and the voice behind his protagonist. The narrator uses first person and refers to the semi-mystical experiences that Kipling acknowledged having had since the age of twelve.<sup>45</sup> Despite the eccentricities and limited education of the story's prophet, Mr. Tarworth, Kipling asserts his sympathy: "I had no desire to laugh."<sup>46</sup> Mr. Tarworth's message-- "Protect any race from its natural and god-given bacteria . . . [and] . . . you automatically create the culture for its decay, when that protection is removed."<sup>47</sup>--is one facet of Kipling's own "message," a notable example being the story "Thrown Away."<sup>48</sup> And his closing description of Mr. Tarworth attributes to him "a child's awed reverence," not only recalling Christ's admonition that unless men become "as little children," they cannot enter the kingdom of heaven,<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 146-147.

<sup>45</sup>Something of Myself, XXIV, 367.

<sup>46</sup>Debits and Credits, VIII, 136.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

<sup>48</sup>Plain Tales from the Hills, I, 17-28.

<sup>49</sup>Matt. 18:3.

but also reflecting Kipling's own consistent humility before God.

One of the strongest affirmations of the spiritual nature of Kipling's call and vocation is the descriptions of his "fortunate hours." In the beginning of the story just mentioned, "The Prophet and the Country," he says:

It was long since I had spent a night in the open, and the hour worked on me. Time was when such nights, and the winds that heralded their dawns, had been fortunate and blessed; but those Gates, I thought, were for ever shut.<sup>50</sup>

And the story ends with the fulfillment of this "fortunate hour" expectation:

. . . and the wind which runs before the actual upheaval of the sun swept out of the fragrant lands to the East, and touched my cheek--as many times it had touched it before, on the edges, or at the ends, of inconceivable experiences.<sup>51</sup>

When he uses a similar incident in "The Vortex,"<sup>52</sup> despite the Rabelaisian humor the story develops, he gives this "fortunate hour" quite specifically religious implications:

To me, as I have often observed elsewhere, the hour of earliest dawn is fortunate, and the wind that runs before it has ever been my most comfortable counsellor. . . . I went to bed . . .<sup>53</sup> . . . at peace with God and Man and Guest . . .

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<sup>50</sup>Debts and Credits, VIII, 134.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 148.

<sup>52</sup>A Diversity of Creatures, IX, 289-292.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 351.

C. A. Bodelsen feels that in Kipling's fortunate hours "a veil is drawn apart; reality assumes sharper outlines and brighter colours, and is experienced with an intensity beyond that of everyday life." Such experiences, he points out, are "outside the scope of normal perception," and are therefore "incommunicable" except in such implications as the writer can put in the art form he chooses.<sup>54</sup> Other hints Kipling gives of the spiritual nature of his vocation suggest that these "incommunicable" experiences were sometimes considerably more than pleasant premonitions of coming events. In "To the True Romance"<sup>55</sup> the Spirit he serves is such that he realizes he cannot know it fully until he dies; for the present it is "Enough for me in dreams to see/ And touch Thy garments' hem"<sup>56</sup> for "Thy feet have trod so near to God/ I may not follow them!" This Spirit teaches "Life all mystery"; it was before Creation, "A whisper in the Void." His descriptions of heaven and hell suggest imaginative spiritual experiences that strain even his talents with language:

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<sup>54</sup>Aspects of Kipling's Art, p. 6.

<sup>55</sup>Many Inventions, V, xi-xiv.

<sup>56</sup>Matt. 14:36.

Beyond the path of the outmost sun through utter  
 darkness hurled--  
 Farther than ever comet flared or vagrant star-  
 dust swirled--<sup>57</sup>

. . . . .

The three nosed-dived at that point where In-  
 finity returns upon itself, till they folded  
 their wings beneath the foundations of Time  
 and Space, whose double weight bore down on  
 them through the absolute Zeroes of Night and  
 Silence.<sup>58</sup>

But the strongest description of his awesome moments of  
 spiritual awareness--experiences of God's nearness so vivid  
 as to be painful--is found in the last three stanzas of  
 "The Prayer of Miriam Cohen":<sup>59</sup>

Hold us secure behind the gates  
 Of saving flesh and bone,  
 Lest we should dream what Dream awaits  
 The soul escaped alone.

Thy Path, Thy Purpose conceal  
 From our beleaguered realm,  
 Lest any shattering whisper steal  
 Upon us and o'erwhelm.

A veil 'twixt us and Thee, Good Lord,  
 A veil 'twixt us and Thee,  
 Lest we should hear too clear, too clear,  
 And unto Madness see!

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<sup>57</sup> "Dedication," Barrack-Room Ballads, XXV, 161-162.

<sup>58</sup> "Unconvenanated Mercies," Limits and Renewals, X,  
 330-331.

<sup>59</sup> Songs from Books, XXVII, 130.

Not only was the prophetic vocation to which he was called spiritual in nature; it was comprehensive-- comprehensive with regard to his life, his career, his art. The poem that most completely states Kipling's prophetic vocation, "The Explorer,"<sup>60</sup> touches each of the acknowledged characteristics of the prophetic experience: the prophet must believe in a divine Creator and Controller of all things, both Friend and Lawgiver of His people; he must see his fellowmen realistically, with the heightened spiritual insight that isolates the seer; he must suffer the agonizing tensions between states of doubt-fear-despair and hope-discovery-exaltation; he must proclaim the message his Voice has given him; and while those to whom he speaks may be blind or stubborn, he must persist, sometimes being rewarded by a spiritual fulfillment that justifies his suffering, whether or not he lives to see his insights vindicated by history.<sup>61</sup> The poem relates how, having listened to God's Whisper but being wary of trying to persuade any of his neighbors of its validity, the Explorer set out on his lonely adventure. Very shortly his sense

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<sup>60</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 200-204.

<sup>61</sup>Dr. Delton L. Scudder, class notes on "Characteristics of Mysticism."

of "call" was tested, when his plains-bred ponies were killed by "the Norther," just as persistence (not miraculous "faith that moveth mountains") had led him to the pass. Then came the real test, the inner struggle: "Still--it might be self-delusion--scores of better men had died--/ I could reach the township living, but . . . I didn't." Even after he chose to go "down the other side," he had to fight his way through mountain wilderness and across a desert that drove him crazy and turned his "toes all black and raw." Reaching the "kingdom" he'd been sent to find, he surveyed, took samples, estimated methods of development, then worked his way back over the same difficult trail. When he presented the news of his "find," he not only saw others get the credit but realized that few if any could understand either the physical or the spiritual experiences he had had. Nevertheless, since God had judged "His people ready," it was right that they should inherit this rich new land, God's present to them. Finally, the Explorer experienced the illuminating realization of the meaning of all this to him--the supreme fulfillment of his individuality, the establishment of his spiritual worth in that he had fulfilled the role God had chosen for him. Kipling's known experiences parallel this fictitious drama closely enough to strengthen the

interpretation of it as a poetic statement of his total commitment to a "called" vocation. Early in his life he recognized the special factors (talents, insights, unusual experiences) that marked him for a special vocation.<sup>62</sup> He early decided he could explain his "call" (whisper, voice, vision) only by implication.<sup>63</sup> England's physical and ideological climate (the "Norther") was almost too much for him, both physically and spiritually.<sup>64</sup> But he chose to obey his call, to depend upon God rather than men, to keep going, to present his "findings," and to reaffirm his faith in God's control of history.<sup>65</sup> In 1897, when he wrote this poem, the bitterness of Dick Heldar's reaction to London, in The Light that Failed (1890), had matured into the prophetic remonstrance of "Recessional" (finishing "The Explorer" interrupted his completion of "Recessional"<sup>66</sup>). Part of the explanation may be found in the passionate affirmation of his prophetic role revealed in the closing lines of "The Explorer":

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<sup>62</sup>Something of Myself, XXIV, 409.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., 418.

<sup>64</sup>Carrington, p. 157; "In Partibus," "Letters on Leave," "The Adoration of the Mage," "A Death in Camp," Abaft the Funnel, XXIII, 173-210.

<sup>65</sup>Carrington, pp. xix-xx.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., p. 264.

God took care to hide that country till He judged  
 His people ready,  
 Then He chose me for His Whisper, and I've found  
 it, and it's yours!

Yes, your "never-never country"--yes, your "edge  
 of cultivation"  
 And "no sense in going further"--till I crossed  
 the range to see.  
 God forgive me! No, I didn't. It's God's present  
 to our nation.  
 Anybody might have found it but--His Whisper came  
 to me!

The comprehensive nature of the true prophetic vocation--  
 from the initial dedication, through the costly struggle of  
 discovery and presentation of the given truth, to the reward-  
 ing spiritual exaltation--is presented, with varying com-  
 pleteness and emphases, in a number of other selections.  
 "My New-Cut Ashlar"<sup>67</sup> is a prayer rather than a dramatic  
 lyric. Its tone is not that of an unprofessional explorer  
 speaking to frontier people but that of an artist in lonely  
 communion with his Maker. Here is the expression of that  
 true humility that only the prophetic--the "chosen"--can  
 know. The poet knows that he has been given a vision, that  
 he has been chosen to contribute to the "Temple of [God's]  
 Worth," and that he is capable of producing the nearly per-  
 fect work called for. Nevertheless, he knows that his "good"

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<sup>67</sup>Life's Handicap, IV, 413-414.

work was accomplished under the guidance of the Master Hand,<sup>68</sup> that he must accept the responsibility for all the poor work, and that his special role in God's purposes does not protect him against the "bitter paths" into which his human "Fire" and "Clay" lead him. His prayer acknowledges that it is God's Grace that illuminates everything for him, and he pleads that he may keep both his vision and his independence of men--dependence upon God--so that he "may help such men as need." Again, in "The Prophet and the Country,"<sup>69</sup> the prophetic experiences are recorded, from the revelation of a spiritual truth, through the years of total commitment of time and resources, to the painful rejection by those who should have understood, the confession of frustrated feelings and the final experience of a new and rewarding awareness of the divine-human relationship. In the story "The Knife and the Naked Chalk"<sup>70</sup> the protagonist knows that he has special spiritual obligations, laid upon him by his training and his clear understanding of his people's need (expressed in the Biblical terms "The sheep are the people."); he undertakes the necessary but terrifying adventure, alone; he suffers

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<sup>68</sup> Luke 18:19.

<sup>69</sup> Debits and Credits, VIII, 129-148.

<sup>70</sup> Rewards and Fairies, XIII, 351-372.

nearly unto death and sacrifices one of his eyes for the instrument of their salvation; they accept his gift by denying his humanity; the loss of human fellowship forces him to a greater commitment to his religious role. In "The White Seal,"<sup>71</sup> since the characters are animals, there is no direct mention of God or religion; nevertheless, the White Seal is "chosen" by something beyond his will since he is born different from the other seals; he spends a long period alone discovering knowledge his fellow seals need; he has to argue and then fight until he is bloody, to get them to listen to his "truth"; then he must accept the slowness with which most of them act upon his message.

In addition to describing in these selections something of his sense of the completeness of his prophetic dedication of his life, Kipling has left here and elsewhere evidence of his understanding of the completeness with which he was to dedicate his entire career. He was to use his art prophetically, not just for a few public hours of exalted patriotism or national suffering, but from the beginning to the end of his career, touching every subject that interested him, and using every means appropriate to his talent. His career began early: Schoolboy Lyrics was privately printed

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<sup>71</sup>The Jungle Books, XI, 265-288.

in India in 1881; he began working on the Civil and Military Gazette, in Lahore, before he was seventeen; he had work accepted by Mowbray Morris, editor of Macmillan Magazine, in London, before he was twenty-four.<sup>72</sup> Kipling has not left a record of any single moment or hour that he would henceforth point to as the beginning of his prophetic vocation, although he does state that his mystical "fortunate hours" began in his twelfth year.<sup>73</sup> Among the Schoolboy Lyrics there is an "Argument" and a fragment of a "Projected Poem to be called 'The Seven Nights of Creation,'" <sup>74</sup> evidence that in his early teens he was interested in using his talent on a profound religious subject. Other early works include the witty attack on religious liberalism "'O Baal, Hear Us!'" <sup>75</sup> and the passionate denunciation of man's propensity to look for substitutes to God's Law "'New Lamps for Old!'" <sup>76</sup> "A Song of the English," the acknowledged expression of his manifesto of dedication, was published

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<sup>72</sup>Something of Myself, XXIV, 409-410.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid, 367.

<sup>74</sup>XXVIII, 20-21.

<sup>75</sup>Other Verse, XXV, 71-76.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., 114-117.

in 1893 but conceived at least as early as 1889, according to Carrington.<sup>77</sup> His statement of the sacrificial nature of worthwhile art, put in the mouth of the semi-autobiographical protagonist of The Light that Failed, was written in 1890, the year of his literary conquest of London. This is also the year in which he sent to his parents the telegram bearing simply Genesis 45:9,<sup>78</sup> appropriating by allusion not only the triumphs but also the "chosen of God" status of the Biblical Joseph (Rudyard Kipling's rarely used first name was Joseph). Among the other works already cited as significant statements of his sense of prophetic vocation, "My New-Cut Ashlar," with its remarkably mature understanding of the nature of his work and the price he must pay for its completion, is the "L'Envoi" of Life's Handicap, published in 1891; "To the True Romance," with its complex interpretation of the nature of God's relationship to creativity and of his own special relationship to this side of God, and that revelation of awesome mystical experience "The Prayer of Miriam Cohen" are both dated 1893; and the dramatically comprehensive prophetic lyric "The Explorer" was finished in 1897.

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<sup>77</sup>Carrington, p. 210.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., p. 158.

Although the evidence of the chronologically comprehensive nature of his prophetic vocation for the years between 1897 and 1930 is found chiefly in the tone with which he denounced, reassured, or enlightened his readers on subjects ranging from Biblical incidents to modern warfare to science fiction, there are selections that reveal facets of his personal prophetic commitment. "The Palace" and "Sussex"<sup>79</sup> are both dated 1902. The first poem, faintly suggesting King David's disappointment at being forbidden to build the Temple,<sup>80</sup> strongly implies the poet's sense of his place in a larger Design. While "Sussex" extols the place that Kipling lived from 1902 until his death and that he came to love above all other spots, its theme of God's Design (benign, inclusive, and creative) is not only the central theme of Kipling's prophetic message but the basic conviction of his own prophetic vocation. "The Knife and the Naked Chalk," already cited as a fictional statement of the comprehensive nature of his sense of prophetic vocation, is part of Rewards and Fairies,<sup>81</sup> published in

<sup>79</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 211-212; 213-216.

<sup>80</sup>II Sam. 7:3-5; I Chron. 28:11.

<sup>81</sup>XIII, 351-372.

1910. "The Pilgrim's Way" is an undated poem near the end of The Years Between,<sup>82</sup> which includes a few early poems but chiefly those of the War years, 1914-18. The poem is an informal prayer, frankly in the voice of the poet, asking God's assistance in helping his fellowmen to understand God's love. "The Prophet and the Country,"<sup>83</sup> with its reference to Kipling's "fortunate hours" and his sympathetic portrayal of another "Prophet," was published in 1924. In 1930 he wrote a story about St. Paul and followed it with a poem, "At His Execution,"<sup>84</sup> the tone of which so strongly resembles the tone of "My New-Cut Ashlar" and "To the True Romance" that the poet's sympathy with St. Paul seems founded on, or at least intensified by, his own experience. The poem is based on I Corinthians 9:22 ("I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."), alludes to "the great Light and Word" which converted Saul the zealous Pharisee into Paul the dedicated Apostle,<sup>85</sup> and concludes with the request that the "self" he had sacrificed to the Lord might in the end, when his course is

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<sup>82</sup>XXVI, 395-397.

<sup>83</sup>Debits and Credits, VIII, 129-148.

<sup>84</sup>"The Manner of Men," Limits and Renewals, X, 195-216, 217.

<sup>85</sup>Acts 9:1-31.

done,<sup>86</sup> be restored to him. "'Non Nobis Domine!'"<sup>87</sup> Kipling's poem for the Pageant of Parliament in 1934, speaks for his nation but in a tone of deep personal affirmation of faith in the "Power by Whom we live--/ Creator, Judge, and Friend." The consistent awareness of his prophetic role that these chronologically comprehensive selections imply is affirmed by Kipling when, in the last chapter of his autobiography, published posthumously in 1937, his advice to young writers reveals his own spiritual commitment throughout his life: "All your material is drawn from the lives of men. Remember, then, what David did with the water brought to him in the heat of battle."<sup>88</sup> What David did was pour "it out unto the Lord."<sup>89</sup>

Just as Kipling believed that his prophetic vocation or dedication was comprehensive for his life and for his career, he believed that it was comprehensive for his art--both its form and its content. The prophetic viewpoint was to illuminate, or at least touch, every subject and every art form he used. That it did so is the implication

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<sup>86</sup>II Tim. 4:6-8.

<sup>87</sup>Miscellaneous, XXVIII, 291.

<sup>88</sup>Something of Myself, XXIV, 509.

<sup>89</sup>II Sam. 23:16.

of T. S. Eliot's comment already quoted, and such comments as that of Mrs. Oliphant: "our souls are penetrated not by the sense of failure, but of the terrible and splendid warfare of everlasting good against overwhelming yet temporary evil";<sup>90</sup> or that of F. York Powell: "He is an artist born, but also a born preacher. . . . He preaches Faith, Hope, and Charity. He has enforced, again and again, the necessary lesson of sympathy with everything that lives."<sup>91</sup> Authorized editions of Kipling's work published during his lifetime include five novels, "two hundred and fifty short stories, a thousand pages of verse, and several volumes" of speeches, letters, etc.<sup>92</sup> Furthermore, he generally adhered to the artistic rule of never doing the same thing twice.<sup>93</sup> Consequently, within the various genre of the above list may be found an incredible range of verse forms and some true poetry;<sup>94</sup> short stories in the manner of the Latin masters; stories rising from the

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<sup>90</sup>Review of Life's Handicap under "The Old Saloon," Blackwood's Magazine, CL (November, 1891), 728-735.

<sup>91</sup>"Rudyard Kipling," English Illustrated Magazine, XXX (December, 1903), 295-298.

<sup>92</sup>Carrington, p. xx.

<sup>93</sup>Something of Myself, XXIV, 503.

<sup>94</sup>Eliot, A Choice of Kipling's Verse, pp. 8-9.

pages of the Bible; stories in the language and tone of Muslim thought and lore; stories from the heart and tongue of the Soldiers Three; satiric tales from "naughty" Simla; romantic tales of heroic and/or charming Indians, Anglo-Indians, Americans, and Englishmen; terrifying tales of Eastern mystery and Western degradation; tales of animals, machines, prehistory; parables, allegories, fables, and much more; a picaresque novel, three very different romances, and a novel of craft. That Kipling intended all of this to serve God--"one stone the more . . . in . . . the Temple of Thy Worth"--and men--"that I may serve such men as need"--because God's Grace had shown him "nought common" or unworthy such use is clearly stated in "My New-Cut Ashlar."<sup>95</sup> That he recognized many would not understand how this could be is the purport of a letter written to a boy of sixteen who had written to thank him for stories and poems he liked: "'If you have found out from my tales that wickedness of any kind does not pay, you've learned something I have tried to teach very hard. Of course, I can't go about and cram a sermon into a tale but I try to get at the same point obliquely--and so far no one has found me out.'"<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>95</sup>Life's Handicap, IV, 413-414.

<sup>96</sup>'Letter to unnamed member of a Thepney Club," The Kipling Journal, No. 77 (April, 1946), pp. 5-6.

And just how persuaded he was of his prophetic principle that all forms of art could serve God's purposes is expressed in the closing lines of "A Recantation"<sup>97</sup> (a 1917 tribute to a music hall singer whom his son John and many other young servicemen "adored" and who sang as usual, for their sakes, on the night news came of the death of her own son):

Yet they who use the Word assigned,  
To hearten and make whole.  
Not less than Gods have served mankind,  
Though vultures rend their soul.

#### His Message

The comprehensiveness of Kipling's prophetic dedication is reflected in his message. Just as he understood God as the Source of his prophetic call and the Overseer of the prophetic vocation to which that call led, a prophetic vocation both spiritual and comprehensive, he consistently sought to present the message that God was in Reality, the original and continuous Creator, Designer, and supreme Power in the universe, and that God's Purpose was Creativity, the Revelation of Himself, and the Establishment of the divine-human partnership. Each of these phrases is an attempt to explain the essentially unexplainable, to express

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<sup>97</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 360-361.

in ordinary language a spiritual concept that even religious language has never fully expressed. This concept, a central theme of all Judeo-Christian prophets, is that the Supreme Being is as real as, if not more real than the phenomena men call reality, and that this omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent One continually re-establishes the meaning of life through His Creative Design, i.e., His continuous creativity, His eternal plans, and His supreme power. It is this concept that Kipling was convinced God had called him to reiterate in modes that would reach an audience no longer (to some extent never) reached by strictly religious teaching. The truth of his message--"the whole sweep and meaning of things and effort and origins"<sup>98</sup> as he found it "in the ends of all the Earth!"<sup>99</sup>--was, in simple terms, that God is concerned with all facets of life. Hence, Kipling's great range of subject material and artistic techniques is integral to his prophetic message. Moreover, his persistent introduction of spiritual overtones and religious language in artistic or prosaic comment on subjects often thought inappropriate for such treatment is likewise integral to his message. That Kipling was deeply

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<sup>98</sup>Something of Myself, XXIV, 418.

<sup>99</sup>"A Song of the English," The Seven Seas, XXVI, 3.

convinced of the importance of this comprehensiveness is vehemently presented in the short poem "Kaspar's Song in 'Varda.'"<sup>100</sup> This poetic parable describes the "children's" futile efforts to catch a "Psyche" (symbol of both the butterfly and the soul); finally, bruised and discouraged, they listen to their "father," who tells them to "gather out of my garden a cabbage leaf," under which they would find "dull grey eggs that, properly fed/ Turn, by Way of the worm to lots of/ Radiant Psyches raised from the dead." In the last stanza, the poet bitterly denounces those spokesmen for institutional religion who would deny God's concern with cabbages and worms:

"Heaven is beautiful, Earth is ugly,"  
The three-dimensioned preacher saith,  
So we must not look where the snail and the slug lie  
For Psyche's birth . . . And that is our death!

A more complete statement of Kipling's prophetic message--that God is concerned with all facets of life because He is both the original and the continuing Creator, because His Design is eternal, and because He is the supreme Power in the universe--is found in the prayer-poem "My New-Cut Ashlar."<sup>101</sup> In this poem Kipling asserts

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<sup>100</sup>Traffics and Discoveries, VII, 193.

<sup>101</sup>Life's Handicap, IV, 413-414.

the continuous nature of God's creative relation to life in the allusion to Eden as a concept essential to all craft; he implies the centrality of God's design in the controlling metaphor of the poem, the building of a temple, and in his identification of his work as one more "stone" "In that dread Temple of Thy worth"; and he acknowledges God's omnipotence when he calls Him "Great Overseer," and insists that it is His hand that compels all achievement. But the capstone of this poetic statement of the comprehensiveness of God's concern is the Biblical allusion<sup>102</sup> which identifies his "vision" or message. The lines "It is enough that, through Thy Grace,/ I saw nought common on Thy Earth./ Take not that vision from my ken--" not only add the religious significance of a direct command of God ("What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common."<sup>103</sup>) to one of the greatest Apostles (Peter), at a crucial point in Christianity's development (its expansion to include Gentiles), but they also clearly state that nothing God has created is beneath His or His prophet's concern. Again, the inclusiveness and creative nature of

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<sup>102</sup>Acts 10.

<sup>103</sup>Acts 10:15.

God's concern with what men call reality is the meaning of the opening and closing lines of the poem "Sussex":<sup>104</sup>

God gave all men all earth to love  
 . . . . .  
 That, as He watched Creation's birth,  
 So we, in godlike mood,  
 May of our love create our earth  
 And see that it is good.<sup>105</sup>

In "The Necessitarian"<sup>106</sup> a special facet of God's comprehensive concern is presented. The poet first questions "Whose hands . . . empty upon earth . . . the very Urns of Mirth," then concludes "it must be . . . the selfsame power as went to shape His Planet or His Rose." In the story "The Conversion of St. Wilfrid,"<sup>107</sup> still another facet of God's relationship to men's reality must be learned by Eddi, Wilfrid's chaplain, who first fears Meon's clever pet seal, Padda, as a demon, then acknowledges that God can and does use even animals in His holy purposes. In "The Church that Was at Antioch,"<sup>108</sup> Kipling has the Apostles Peter and Paul learn that God has not left Himself without witness<sup>109</sup> even in the pagan faith of

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<sup>105</sup>Gen. 1:31.

<sup>106</sup>Traffics and Discoveries, VII, 161.

<sup>107</sup>Rewards and Fairies, XIII, 439-460.

<sup>108</sup>Limits and Renewals, X, 77-99.

<sup>109</sup>Acts 14:17.

Mithras, an historically "real" expression of the ideas and ideals of many Roman soldiers.

Kipling's conviction that God was to be discovered in and understood through Reality he puts in a presumed quotation used as an introduction to two of his longer short stories, "On the Gate: A Tale of '16"<sup>110</sup> and "Uncovenanted Mercies"<sup>111</sup>: "If the Order Above be but the reflection of the Order Below: as the Ancient affirms who has had experience of the Orders . . ." Both stories develop situations that argue that life-after-death is a continuation of life-before-death and that God's compassionate concern is not limited to the noble and the righteous but includes such "real people" as ordinary war casualties, a pair of illicit lovers, and a self-pitying coward. Kipling was also, in true prophetic fashion, very sure that God was concerned with governments and cultures, and that no peoples could ignore His eternal Design or His Power. In the denunciatory poem "The City of Brass"<sup>112</sup> he outlines the history of a people who forgot that their "Fates were made splendid by God," and drunk with pride, "ran panting

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<sup>110</sup>Debits and Credits, VIII, 227-249.

<sup>111</sup>Limits and Renewals, X, 323-346.

<sup>112</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 415-418.

in haste to lay waste and embitter forever/ The wellsprings of Wisdom and Strength which are Faith and Endeavor."

Such people, according to Kipling, are punished by God, Who grants them what they strove for, "the heart of a beast in the place of a man's heart," and then removes them from "the roll of the Nations."

God's working in and through Reality, fulfilling His creative, eternal Design, is the message of "The Explorer."<sup>113</sup> An outwardly ordinary man builds his barns and strings his fences in a "little border station where the trails run out and stop" and his neighbors assure him there is "no sense in going further." But when God "judged His people ready" to develop a new realm, He put this man's spiritual and physical resources to work preparing the way. While the Explorer heard God's Whisper, the "people" understood only "ores," "wood and cattle," "water-transit," and the like. Nevertheless, this preoccupation with "reality" does not invalidate God's plan to give them this rich new country. The poem's allusion to the anointing of Saul adds to this apparently realistic narrative of American westward expansion the symbolic significance of the relationship of God to His prophet and to His people in that moment in

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<sup>113</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 200-204.

Hebrew history in which the Children of Israel demanded a visible king like other nations, and over Samuel's protests, God granted their wish. And although the Explorer heard a divine voice, had visions of future cities, and heard mysterious rivers, he had to walk every step of the way through mountains, desert, and wilderness, and back again. So sure was Kipling that God was constantly and creatively concerned with all facets of life, he had only contempt for those who saw religion as pious disengagement from reality. In the poem "The Sons of Martha"<sup>114</sup> he praises those who back their faith-that-moveth-mountains<sup>115</sup> with appropriate effort, and mocks those who "preach that their God will rouse them a little before the nuts work loose . . . [or] . . . teach that His Pity allows them to drop their job when they dam'-well choose." As his Explorer points out, God takes reality seriously and He expects His followers to do so, a principle Kipling developed into one of his major themes, God's Law, a theme to be discussed more fully later. But Kipling also saw God using reality--as the Creator, Designer and Sustainer of that reality has a right

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<sup>114</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 372-374.

<sup>115</sup>Matt. 17:20.

to do. In the beautiful little poem "The Answer"<sup>116</sup> Kipling presents a God Who graciously responds to the complaint of a fallen rose, a God "Who hears both sun-dried dust and sun," but a God Who, at the same time, asserts His role as Creator, Designer and Sustainer of life:

"Sister, before We smote the Dark in twain,  
Ere yet the stars saw one another plain,  
Time, Tide, and Space, We bound unto the task  
That thou shouldst fall, and such an one should ask."

And in "The Legend of Mirth"<sup>117</sup> the cosmic imagery and immortal themes blend perfectly, as Kipling's prophetic message indicates they should, with the mundane duties of the Four Archangels, Raphael, Gabriel, Michael, and Azrael, ministering to "The tedious generations of mankind . . . gross, indifferent, facile dust." The point of the poem is that the Seraph Mirth was sent by God to teach the Four, chief ministers of His will, to look upon reality --"tales of the shop, the bed, the court, the street,/ Intimate, elemental, indiscreet"--with a saving sense of humor.

This divine concern with all facets of life is, after all, the logical concern of the Designer, Creator and

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<sup>116</sup>The Seven Seas, XXVI, 53.

<sup>117</sup>A Diversity of Creatures, IX, 289-292.

Sustainer of life or reality; it is also the direct expression of God's Purpose, which is creativity, revelation of Himself, and establishment of the divine-human relationship. While orthodox Christianity tends to emphasize the Edenic Fall and the re-establishment of a Father-child relationship through Christ's redemptive sacrifice, Kipling tends to emphasize the creative divine-human partnership of Eden and of all creative moments since. It should not seem strange that an artist would understand Truth in these terms, and, as subsequent exploration of Kipling's major themes will show, this creative viewpoint does not deny Man's propensity to disobedience or the importance of God's redeeming love. Kipling clearly identifies God's Purpose in such lines as the following:

Who, lest all thought of Eden fade,  
Bring'st Eden to the craftsman's brain--  
Godlike to muse o'er his own Trade  
And manlike stand with God again!<sup>118</sup>

Again, in the opening and closing lines of "Sussex":<sup>119</sup>

That, as He watched Creation's birth,  
So we, in godlike mood,  
May of our love create our earth  
And see that it is good.

he is emphasizing God's joy in creativity and His desire to reveal Himself and establish the human-divine relationship

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<sup>118</sup>"My New-Cut Ashlar," Life's Handicap, IV, 413-414.

<sup>119</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 213-214.

in and through Man's acts of creativity. Kipling felt that too many interpretations of Eden forgot that "Adam was a gardener, and God who made him sees/ That half a proper gardener's work is done upon his knees."<sup>120</sup> And too many interpretations of heaven seemed to have missed the creative nature Kipling saw in it: "And oft-times cometh our wise Lord God, master of every trade,/ And tells them tales of His daily toil, of Edens newly made";<sup>121</sup> or "When Earth's last picture is painted . . . We shall rest . . . Tell the Master of All Good Workmen shall put us to work anew."<sup>122</sup> That God's Purpose was creativity is the essence of Kipling's description of the Spirit he served in "To the True Romance":<sup>123</sup>

Since spoken word Man's Spirit stirred  
 Beyond his belly-need,  
 What is is Thine of Fair design  
 In Thought and Craft and Deed.  
 Each stroke aright of toil and fight,  
 That was and that shall be,  
 And hope too high wherefore we die,  
 Had birth and worth in Thee.

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<sup>120</sup>"The Glory of the Garden," Later Songs from Books, XXVII, 292-293; Gen. 2:15.

<sup>121</sup>"Dedication," Barrack-Room Ballads, XXV, 161-162.

<sup>122</sup>"When Earth's Last Picture Is Painted," The Seven Seas, XXVI, 157.

<sup>123</sup>Many Inventions, V, xi-xiv.

Kipling further declares that this creative Spirit "did'st teach all lovers speech/ And life all mystery." The Spirit's Power is that of the divine Creator: "Time hath no tide but must abide/ The servant of Thy will." It is also that divinely self-limited power that works through men: "And Captains bold by Thee controlled/ Most like to Gods design." In this same complex poetic statement of Kipling's understanding of the One he served, it is clear that that One desires to reveal Himself to men, for those who love Him "prove" His "excellence august" and "discover" that He is "perfect, wise, and just." Further, He is "Pure Wisdom," "the Voice" that gives courage to men and comfort to those who fail; in fact, He is the "Charity," "Faith," and "Truth" that men discover in all the significant moments of life.

Identifying God's Purpose as revelation of His creative nature and His desire to maintain a partnership with man is the intent of Kipling's frequent use of the Eden image. He is fully in the Christian tradition, especially from the Renaissance on, when he sees the Garden of Eden as the prototype of the perfect divine-human relationship: God walks and talks with Man and Woman, who acknowledge His supremacy but know themselves as His co-workers. It is this divine-human partnership ("Godlike to muse o'er his

own Trade/ And manlike stand with God again!") that the craftsman discovers when he thinks of his work in Eden terms ("lest all thought of Eden fade,/ Bring'st Eden to the craftsman's brain.").<sup>124</sup> And it is the refusal to maintain this Edenic relationship, substituting human for divine supremacy ("We have fashioned a God Which shall save us hereafter./ We ascribe all dominion to man"),<sup>125</sup> that destroys nations. In "New Lamps for Old"<sup>126</sup> it is the "Lying Spirit" under the "Eden-tree" that first tempted man to try substitutes for obedience to God and that tempted him to all subsequent choosing of false "lamps" that light "the Path of Toil that runs to the Gate of Death." In "The Enemies to Each Other,"<sup>127</sup> a witty, pseudo-Islamic story of Eden, the first man and the first woman destroy their paradise by worshipping themselves. And in The Jungle Book story "How Fear Came"<sup>128</sup> the Creation and the Fall are retold in terms appropriate to a Jungle Eden as an explanation to Mowgli and all the animals present of how

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<sup>124</sup>"My New-Cut Ashlar," Life's Handicap, IV, 413-414.

<sup>125</sup>"The City of Brass," The Years Between, XXVI, 415-418.

<sup>126</sup>Departmental Ditties and Other Verse, XXV, 114-117.

<sup>127</sup>Debits and Credits, VIII, 1-17.

<sup>128</sup>XI, 63-83.

disobedience to the "Lord of the Jungle"--disobedience rooted in careless egotism--led to the imperfections of their reality.

Basic to Kipling's prophetic message that God is creatively present in man's reality, seeking to re-establish the divine-human relationship that man's ego and foolishness have destroyed, is the philosophy that argues that the spiritual world ("the Order Above") is understandable from the physical world ("the Order Below"). "On the Gate: A Tale of '16,"<sup>129</sup> which argues this position, is hopeful, affirmative, even gaily witty in tone, for Kipling sees God's Purpose of re-establishing the divine-human relationship as an expression of God's Love. All the saints and the waiting just-deceased souls at the Gate of Heaven rejoice when St. Peter recalls "Samuel Two, Double Fourteen":

"Yet doth He devise means that His banished be not expelled from Him." It is unfortunate that so sensitive a critic as J. M. S. Tompkins sees only the "darkness" of the Abyss<sup>130</sup> in Kipling's admission that God's revelation of Himself is limited to even His "chosen," in this life. Tompkins quotes Rider Haggard's account of a conversation, between

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<sup>129</sup>Debits and Credits, VIII, 227-249.

<sup>130</sup>The Art of Rudyard Kipling, p. 196.

Kipling and himself on this subject, in which Kipling acknowledged occasional experiences of the nearness of God but that he had found these moments of mystic communion hard to maintain. It was his feeling that this was meant "'to be so; that God does not mean we should get too near lest we should become unfitted for our work in the world.'"<sup>131</sup> How fully Kipling understood too vivid an awareness of God's presence would be more than human flesh could stand is the burden of "The Prayer of Miriam Cohen,"<sup>132</sup> which closes with the request that there be "A veil 'twixt us and Thee, God Lord . . . Lest we should hear too clear . . . And unto madness see!" This same need of a limited-revelation is found in "To the True Romance,"<sup>133</sup> which not only echoes the above line with "A veil to draw 'twixt God His Law/ And Man's infirmity," but points out that he cannot follow "feet" that trod too "near to God" or "know" the Spirit he serves until he dies. Nevertheless, Kipling is sure that such revelation as God wisely permits transforms both "devil and brute . . . To higher, lordlier show," and that "Who holds by Thee hath Heaven in fee"

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<sup>131</sup>Lilias Rider Haggard, The Cloak that I Left, pp. 160-161.

<sup>132</sup>Songs from Books, XXVII, 130.

<sup>133</sup>Many Inventions, V, xi-xiv.

and "possess in singleness/ The joy of all the earth."  
It is, after all, the realization that God has revealed Himself ("His Whisper") and used him as a partner in His eternal Design (when "He judged" the time was ripe, "He chose me") that brings to "The Explorer" the exaltation that ends this poetic statement of Kipling's prophetic vocation.

The evidence so far cited supports the conclusion that Kipling understood his career as a prophetic vocation; that is, the work of one under a divine mandate to interpret his personal experiences and his times in the light of universal spiritual truths. He believed the Source of his "call" to dedication was God, and he acknowledge God as the guiding Hand in all that he did worthily. He believed that the nature of his "vocation" was spiritual and comprehensive, intended to use all of his experiences, his talents, his insights to present a God-given message that was likewise spiritual and comprehensive. The message was that God was vitally involved in all experience, individual and universal--involved as the original and continuous Creator, as the eternal Designer, and as the supreme Power of Life. Furthermore, God's Purpose was to be understood as Creativity and the Revelation of Himself that He might continually re-establish the divine-human relationship.

This initial argument for the thesis of this study--that recognizing the prophetic qualities in Kipling's work clarifies his intent, enriches his artistry, and resolves the inconsistencies of lesser bases of analysis--will be reinforced by an exploration of his use of prophetic language. Kipling, noted as an artist for his almost-too-great-concentration<sup>134</sup> and his "passionate exactness of language,"<sup>135</sup> found it right to use the language and thought of the Bible to an extent seldom realized by modern readers and often slighted by modern critics. A survey of his extensive and appropriate use of religious material is the purpose of the next chapter.

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<sup>134</sup>Carrington, pp. 370-371; also, Lewis, No. 127, pp. 8-9.

<sup>135</sup>G. S. Fraser, The Modern Writer and His World, p. 66.

## A PROPHEMIC LANGUAGE

### Definition

One of the means of determining an author's chief characteristics is identifying his language. In the broadest sense that the term language may be understood with regard to literature, that is, as the entire artistic media of a writer, Kipling's language is strongly prophetic. This is not surprising when he is dealing with religious subjects, such as prayers and hymns, or the re-creation of Biblical situations, or the creation of parallels to Biblical material. However, the frequency with which he dealt with these subjects is a surprise to many and is significant in determining his religious or prophetic viewpoint. More surprising and significant, by sheer weight of evidence, is the consistency with which his artistic insights into public events, common human experiences, and his own personal experiences are spiritual insights, insights best expressed in prophetic language. Identifying the prophetic qualities in Kipling's language becomes, then, more than a tabulation of the number of times he uses names and quotations from, or allusions to, the Bible or other religious

material. These elements of his language are, of course, important, and their number is impressive. But the crucial element in evaluating the prophetic qualities of his language is recognition of his purpose, for the purpose establishes the tone and the importance of the religious language in each individual work. The following survey of his works will be concerned with both the amount and the meaning of this prophetic language; it will also reveal that Kipling used this language throughout his career.

Kipling's use of Biblical and other religious material is rather generally acknowledged. William Lyon Phelps commented that anyone who knew the Bible well could hear it in everything Kipling wrote.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, this notable characteristic is usually misunderstood. R. Thurston Hopkins attributed Kipling's "love of Biblical language" to his artistic search for "sonorous expressions."<sup>2</sup> Major-General Ian Hay Beith attributed "his constant employment in all his writings of the language of the Bible" to his inherited Puritanism.<sup>3</sup> W. Somerset

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<sup>1</sup>"As I Like It," Scribner's Magazine, XCII, No. 2 (August, 1932), 109.

<sup>2</sup>Rudyard Kipling: A Character Study. Life, Writings, and Literary Landmarks, p. 73.

<sup>3</sup>"Rudyard Kipling," The Kipling Journal, XVI, No. 89 (April, 1949), 4.

Maugham praised Kipling's use of "the whole language" (the language of the Bible as well as the language of the streets), but, blinded by his own philosophical viewpoint, he insisted that Kipling improved when he discarded "his unseemly addiction to Biblical phrases."<sup>4</sup> Actually, Kipling never discarded his religious language or the thought it so aptly expressed. In his autobiography, which he wrote near the end of his life (it is unfinished and was published posthumously), while discussing the power of his Daemon, he writes: "If ever I held back, Ananias fashion, anything of myself . . . I paid for it by missing what I then knew the tale lacked."<sup>5</sup> The Ananias alluded to is that tragic Ananias who thought to fool Peter (and God) by secretly withholding a portion of his possessions when the Early Church decided to have all its property held in common. Ananias dropped dead as Peter denounced him--not for his economic caution but for his attempt "to lie to the Holy Ghost."<sup>6</sup> Again, discussing whether or not he was "psychic," which he denies, Kipling alludes to "the road to Endor." This is a reference to Saul's pathetic recourse

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<sup>4</sup>Maugham's Choice of Kipling's Best, p. xxviii.

<sup>5</sup>Something of Myself, XXIV, 502.

<sup>6</sup>Acts 5:1-5.

to a "witch" at Endor (despite his own decree banning such practices) when, after Samuel's death, he felt utterly cut off from God's guidance.<sup>7</sup> Kipling had earlier developed this situation into a compassionate remonstrance to bereaved mothers and widows, in the poem "En-Dor." And in his advice to young writers, the allusion to David's act of pouring out the water from the well at Bethlehem<sup>8</sup> has already been cited in chapter one as evidence of Kipling's total prophetic commitment. Furthermore, his last collection of short stories, Limits and Renewals, published in 1932, contains two stories based directly on Biblical material, "The Church That Was at Antioch" and "The Manner of Men"; a story dealing with a little French Catholic church and its admirable curé, "The Miracle of Saint Jubanus"; a story of Satan, Archangels, and spirits in Hell, "Uncovenanted Mercies"; and a number of "religious" poems. These and many other selections will be examined for their prophetic language and thought in the subsequent survey of those works that have religious subjects and those works that have non-religious subjects but spiritual insights.

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<sup>7</sup>I Sam. 28:3-25.

<sup>8</sup>II Sam. 23:16; Something of Myself, XXIV, 510.

Religious Subjects

A survey of Kipling's use of prophetic language begins most readily with his frankly religious selections: prayers and hymns, Biblical re-creations, and selections that use Biblical characters or situations as a starting point to develop modern parallels. Of the hymns the most famous is "Recessional,"<sup>9</sup> written as a postscript to the Imperial Jubilee of 1897. Included in many hymnbooks and a favorite on occasions of solemn national significance, "Recessional" calls upon rulers (at the time it was written, the rulers of history's greatest empire) to remember "Beneath whose awful Hand" they hold dominion, and to remember that their only acceptable offering is "An humble and a contrite heart," a quotation from Isaiah 57:15. The repeated phrase "Lord God of Hosts," which has many possible sources in the Bible,<sup>10</sup> recalls both the history and the theocratic viewpoint of the Old Testament. The lines "Lo, all our pomp of yesterday/ Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!" carry strong prophetic overtones. Isaiah used the word pomp to pronounce "woe" upon an apostate Israel ("and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp . . .

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<sup>9</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 316-317.

<sup>10</sup>Hos. 12:5; Amos 9:5; II Sam. 5:10; Ps. 80:7; etc.

shall descend into [Hell] ")<sup>11</sup> and, later, upon their enemies ("Thy pomp is brought down to the grave.")<sup>12</sup> Ezekiel used pomp as a mark of shame four times.<sup>13</sup> In the New Testament, "great pomp" is used to describe the worldly glory of King Herod Agrippa II, before whom Paul as a prisoner plead the cause of Christ; the story ends with tragic irony when Agrippa is "almost" persuaded but retreats from religious decision to routine administrative matters.<sup>14</sup> Of course the allusions to Nineveh and Tyre recall the prophetic dooms pronounced upon these two proud cities; also pertinent is Christ's denunciation of cities that failed to repent before His work: "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sack-cloth and ashes."<sup>15</sup> Few readers can be expected to recall all the specific Biblical references behind each of the religious terms in this poem, but most readers are strongly aware

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<sup>11</sup>Isa. 5:14.

<sup>12</sup>Isa. 14:11.

<sup>13</sup>Ezek. 7:24, 30:18, 33:28, 32:12.

<sup>14</sup>Acts 25:13-26:32.

<sup>15</sup>Matt. 11:21.

of its prophetic tone. By assuming the point of view that recognizes God as the Lord of history, of power, of the ethical law of the universe, and of men's devotion, and by using the form of a hymn and diction that "sounds" like the Bible or that actually alludes to Biblical material, Kipling is using prophetic language--language that is appropriate to his intent and that enhances his message.

Another notable poem-hymn or prayer illustrating Kipling's use of prophetic language is "'Non Nobis Domine!'"<sup>16</sup> written thirty-seven years after "Recessional," for the Pageant of Parliament, in 1934. This poem uses few if any specific allusions to Bible verses (the first line of the last stanza, "O Power by Whom we live--" may echo Acts 17:28, "For in him we live, and move, and have our being"), but uses throughout traditional religious language: from its Latin title, repeated in the opening and closing lines and their translation ("Not unto us the Praise!"), to such familiar terms as "Judgment," "confess," "godless," "forgive," "Creator, Judge, and Friend." The poem is a fine example of Kipling's ability to unite traditional religious language with his own particular prophetic message, in this

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<sup>16</sup>Miscellaneous, XXVIII, 291.

case his central theme--that God is vitally concerned with both the physical and the spiritual worlds. The tone of the poem is also prophetic in that Kipling confesses and petitions for his nation but does so, like a Jeremiah<sup>17</sup> or a Paul,<sup>18</sup> through his own convictions and feelings. The emphasis of the poem is the honesty and humility Kipling always felt before God; it also reflects his consistent concern with achievement or creativity. The "Lest we forget" of the earlier national prayer, "Recessional," has become the confession that "we" have forgotten--holding "too high" the "noise which men call Fame" and the "dross which men call Gold," and undergoing "hot and godless days" despite heart-knowledge that only God can crown "All knowledge or device/ That Man has reached or wrought." And the awesome power of the "Lord God of Hosts" and the unspecified threat of the "Lest we forget" of the earlier poem have been mitigated by identifying the "Power by Whom we live" as "Creator, Judge and Friend," One who will forgive, sustain, and lead Men to understand to Whom the Praise for all achievement really belongs. Another striking example of Kipling's use of prophetic language

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<sup>17</sup>The Lamentations of Jeremiah.

<sup>18</sup>Rom. 9:1-3.

(traditional religious diction, Biblical allusion and in this instance, the form of a hymn) is "The Children's Song."<sup>19</sup> The first and last stanzas of this thirty-two-line poem are pledges of allegiance to "The Land of our Birth"; the intervening six quatrains make it quite clear that men serve their country best by serving God. The opening line of the second stanza, "Father in Heaven Who lovest all," (The title under which four stanzas of the poem appear in many hymnbooks<sup>20</sup>), is an echo of the Lord's Prayer and that most familiar of all New Testament verses, John 3:16. "For God so loved the world . . ." The third stanza begins, as do the next four stanzas, with "Teach us," recalling the Disciples' request of the Master, "Lord, teach us to pray."<sup>21</sup> Other allusions are made to bearing the yoke,<sup>22</sup> making of one's life a worthy sacrifice,<sup>23</sup> walking with God,<sup>24</sup> and forgiving and loving "all men 'neath the sun!"<sup>25</sup> Kipling's well-known emphasis on

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<sup>19</sup>Songs from Books, XXVII, 93-94.

<sup>20</sup>Music by Timothy R. Matthews.

<sup>21</sup>Lk. 11:1.

<sup>22</sup>Matt. 11:29-30.

<sup>23</sup>Rom. 12:1.

<sup>24</sup>Mic. 6:8, and the entire pattern of discipleship during Christ's earthly ministry.

<sup>25</sup>Matt. 6:12; Acts 17:26.

manliness is here clearly related to its religious significance: youth should learn "steadfastness and careful truth," that they may, through God's Grace, lead their Nation to "The Truth whereby the Nations live"; and they should learn to "rule" themselves, "Controlled and cleanly," that they may bring, "if need arise,/ No maimed or worthless sacrifice."<sup>26</sup> To this message of God's Grace and Truth as central to individual and national well-being, he adds his own high ideal of dedication: that one should look to God rather than friends for judgment of his achievements and learn to walk with God, "uncowed/ By fear or favour of the crowd." Then he reminds his hymn-singers that strength must be matched with compassion and that "Mirth that has no bitter springs" is essential to loving and forgiving others. While the tone of this poem reflects its intent--instruction of children rather than the admonition of a nation--it demonstrates, as do the other hymns cited, the appropriateness and effectiveness of Kipling's prophetic language.

Kipling wrote a number of other poems that are identified by their titles and/or their form as selections which might be expected to use prophetic language. "Hymn

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<sup>26</sup> Lev. 22:21-22.

Before Action"<sup>27</sup> is a prayer and a hymn to be used by military men before going into battle. In language reminiscent of Old Testament battle accounts, it describes the approaching clash, then prays "Jehovah of the Thunders,/ Lord God of Battles, aid!" These titles for God are slight variations of the familiar descriptions the "Lord of Hosts" and the Lord who sends thunder or speaks through the thunder.<sup>28</sup> Confessing their previous negligent or rebellious attitudes, the petitioners beg God's mercy, not only for themselves but also for the benighted heathen who have answered their call for assistance, men who kneel "At altars not Thine own,/ Who lack the lights that guide us,/ Lord, let their faith atone." In realistic knowledge of themselves and warfare, the men pray to be kept from such evils as "panic, pride and terror/ Revenge that knows no rein--"<sup>29</sup> and that they may steadfastly choose "To taste the lesser death."<sup>30</sup> One stanza uses Catholic tradition to appeal for the gracious intervention of the

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<sup>27</sup>The Seven Seas, XXVI, 70-71.

<sup>28</sup>Ex. 9:23; I Sam. 7:10, 12:17-18; II Sam. 22:14; Ps. 18:13, 24:8, 77:18, 71:7, 104:7; Isa. 29:6; John 12:29.

<sup>29</sup>I Sam. 13:6.

<sup>30</sup>Matt. 10:28.

Virgin Mary; the final stanza suggests a modern version of the Children of Israel facing their enemies under the leadership of Samuel.<sup>31</sup> Like many Old Testament prophets and the Militant Christian Church, Kipling believed that God was involved in the battles of his people; he also believed that God was concerned for individual men and that His response was dependent upon the spiritual attitudes of those who sought His aid. Consequently, his prophetic language is appropriate and effective. Another traditional form of religious poetry, Christmas carols, gives both language and meaning to "A Carol."<sup>32</sup> This poem, in the manner of an old English carol, follows the story "The Tree of Justice," one of Kipling's re-creations of history. In keeping with its "setting," it reflects the harshness of peasant life as well as the simplicity of peasant religious concepts.

The first stanza:

Our Lord Who did the Ox command  
 To kneel to Judah's King,  
 He binds His frost upon the land  
 To ripen it for Spring,  
 To ripen it for Spring, good sirs,  
 According to His Word.  
 Which well must be as ye can see--  
 And who shall judge the Lord?

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<sup>31</sup>I Sam. 12:24, 13:5.

<sup>32</sup>Rewards and Fairies, XIII, 543-544.

sets the pattern for the rest of the poem; the last stanza includes a request for God's blessing upon the house before which the carollers sing, and upon all who "walk in honesty . . . / Of thought and deed and word!" While the poem uses no Biblical allusions, it is throughout a blending of the practical and spiritual that is characteristic of Kipling's prophetic message and language; for example:

"God . . . guard the fens from pirate folk, / And keep us all from sin." One other example of Kipling's writing for religious music, this time a Te Deum, is "The Supports."<sup>33</sup>

The sub-title, "Song of the Waiting Seraphs," indicates the presumed setting, Paradise, and dramatizes the message, that God is to be thanked for "the burden on our backs, the weather in our faces. . . . the petty creeds / That prescribe in paltry needs / Solemn rites to trivial deeds and, by small things, save us!" The seraphs are Powers, Glories, Toils, Gifts, Services, Patiences, Faiths, Hopes, and Loves; they sing "To Him Who bade the Heavens abide, yet cease not from their motion." Once again, by his use of a recognized religious form, by his use of religious language (there is only one specific Biblical allusion, to the miracle of

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<sup>33</sup> Debits and Credits, VIII, 251-253.

loaves and fishes<sup>34</sup>), and by his consistent presentation of a spiritual message, Kipling has united his art and prophetic language.

Another group of poems that contain elements of prayer use prophetic language to deepen their sincerity as well as identifying the religious point of view of their author. "My New-Cut Ashlar"<sup>35</sup> and "The Prayer of Miriam Cohen"<sup>36</sup> have already been cited as revelations of the poet's prophetic dedication. The first poem includes the traditional elements of Christian prayer: acknowledgment of God's supremacy, confession of personal inadequacies, gratitude for blessings, petition for continued guidance. It uses the metaphor of a stone mason praying over his work on a temple. Since the temple is identified as "that dread temple of Thy Worth" and the prayer is addressed to "Great Overseer," "Master" and "Thou . . . Who . . . made the Fire . . . [and] . the Clay," the temple is clearly not a pagan one but one reminiscent of Biblical temples--real

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<sup>34</sup>Matt. 14:15-21; Mk. 6:30-44; Lk. 9:10-17; John 6:1-14.

<sup>35</sup>Life's Handicap, IV, 413-414.

<sup>36</sup>Songs from Books, XXVII, 130.

and figurative<sup>37</sup>--as well as symbolic of God's eternal Design for history. Allusion is made to the divine-human relationship of Eden and its pattern for all subsequent creativity. The "vision" which this artist-craftsman-prophet cherishes was made possible by God's "Grace" and is described by allusion to Peter's vision on the housetop in Joppa.<sup>38</sup> The second poem, "The Prayer of Miriam Cohen," is addressed throughout to "Good Lord" and requests protection against too vivid an awareness of divine activity. Aside from the otherwise unidentified Miriam Cohen of the title, the poem suggests that Kipling himself had had extraordinary mystical experiences that could only be expressed in such comprehensive religious concepts as "Thy Works," "Thy Path, Thy Purpose," and such poetic images as "straining skies" and "trampling stars." References to the martyrs (who had faced "the wrath of Kings/ The faggot and the sword"), to life after death ("what Dream awaits/ The soul escaped alone"), and to the awesome experience of hearing a divine voice ("shattering whisper"), and the passionate appeal for "A veil 'twixt us and Thee, Good

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<sup>37</sup>The Temple at Jerusalem, center of Hebrew faith; the "spiritual house" of which each Christian is a living stone and Christ the corner stone, I Pet. 2:4-8.

<sup>38</sup>Acts 10:9-28.

Lord . . . Lest we should hear too clear . . . And unto madness See!" all add up to prophetic language--the diction, feeling and meaning necessary to express the experiences of one uniquely under divine mandate. Two other poems that reflect prophetic commitment in their intent and language are "A Pilgrim's Way"<sup>39</sup> and "Hymn of Breaking Strain."<sup>40</sup> The first of these poems, "A Pilgrim's Way," despite its witty, conversational tone ("I do not look for holy saints to guide me on my way,/ Or male and female devilkings to lead my feet astray."), is a prayer of commitment. It includes humble confession:

( . . . none are more amazed than I when I  
by chance do right),  
And I will pity foolish men for woe their sins  
have bred  
(Though ninety-nine percent of mine I brought  
on my own head).<sup>41</sup>

and affirmation of belief:

But when I meet with frantic folk who sinfully  
declare  
There is no pardon for their sin, the same I  
will not spare  
Till I have proved that Heaven and Hell which  
in our hearts we have  
Show nothing irredeemable on either side the  
grave.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 396-397.

<sup>40</sup>Miscellaneous, XXVIII, 298-299.

<sup>41</sup>Rom. 3:23.

<sup>42</sup>Rom. 8:35-39.

The poet asks to be purged of "all heresies of thought and speech and pen" that would cause him to "judge" others other than as he himself is judged<sup>43</sup> and that he "may sing of Crowd or King or road-borne company" with the "single faith in Life and Death and to Eternity: 'Thy people, Lord, Thy people, are good enough for me!'"<sup>44</sup> The poem's concern with such realistic matters of human relationship as boredom, attempts to impress others, doing "random wrong" or "random good," and hate, pride and judgment should not obscure its intent, a prophetic reiteration of the First and Second Commandments.<sup>45</sup> In like manner, the wry tone of the beginning of "Hymn of Breaking Strain" may obscure the passionate prayer with which it closes. Dated 1935, the poem may reflect Kipling's suffering from the ailment that marred his last years; what it surely reflects is his life-long habit of uniting the realistic and the spiritual and using prophetic language to express his conclusions. The poem ruefully comments that the breaking point is carefully determined and recorded for steel and other building materials, but not for Man. Nevertheless, since Man is the

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<sup>43</sup>Matt. 7:1-5.

<sup>44</sup>Lk. 10:27-28.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

only part of Creation that fails and knows he fails, this dear-bought knowledge is a precious link with the Power Whose paths Man seeks, is proof that God's "ways are true," and is the measure of Man's humanity, because, "In spite of being broken," he builds anew. While the opening stanzas speak of textbooks and "Gods" who have no "feeling/ Of justice toward mankind," the tone is increasingly religious, building from the somewhat irreverent "Sons of Adam," through allusions to God's command to Adam and Eve to subdue the earth and exercise dominion over all living things<sup>46</sup> and confession of Man's blindness to "each new miracle" this God-given power achieves, to the supplication of the final stanza to "the veiled and secret Power" Who can sustain man in his "hour/ Of overthrow and pain," and illuminate the experience so that he has the courage to build again.

Three other poems that reveal themselves as prayer-poems illustrate Kipling's use of prophetic language:

"The Settler,"<sup>47</sup> "McAndrew's Hymn,"<sup>48</sup> and "To the True Romance."<sup>49</sup> The first of these was written to commemorate

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<sup>46</sup>Gen. 1:28.

<sup>47</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 271-273.

<sup>48</sup>The Seven Seas, XXVI, 23-31.

<sup>49</sup>Many Inventions, V, xi-xiv.

the end of the South African War, in May, 1902, and is a pledge of reconciliation and peacemaking,<sup>50</sup> with the last two stanzas being a prayer for God's blessing upon these efforts. The most familiar marks of prophetic language, Biblical diction ("atone," "love," "shall redeem," "sin") and Biblical allusion ("The dead must bury their dead,"<sup>51</sup> "the bread we eat in the sweat of our brow,"<sup>52</sup> and "Bless to our use the rain and the sun"<sup>53</sup>) are used throughout the poem. The emphasis is upon the natural forces of seed-time and harvest, the enemies of these processes (hail, locust, murrain, flood), and God's intention that man and the land should find healing in working with these forces to "feed with our land's food/ The folk of all our lands!" "McAndrew's Hymn" is a long dramatic monologue between the Scotch engineer and his Calvinistic but approachable Lord, Who not only guides McAndrew's machines but McAndrew himself. McAndrew has time during the "middle watch" to discuss with the Lord his memories, his irritation with those who don't understand the spiritual nature of machines,

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<sup>50</sup> Matt. 5:9.

<sup>51</sup> Matt. 8:22.

<sup>52</sup> Gen. 3:19.

<sup>53</sup> Matt. 5:45.

and his faith in the divine-human creative partnership. In addition to the frequent addressing of his remarks to the Lord, McAndrew finds it as natural to describe his machines as "singin' like the Mornin' Stars for the joy that they are made," or to describe his passengers as travelling "from Grace to Wrath--to sin by folly led" as he does to speak of "coupler-flangs" or "spindle-guide" or to call one who sees no "romance" in steam "Damned ijjit!" This poem is a well-known example of Kipling's successful blend of the physical and the spiritual, of crafts and people, of art and message--a notable illustration of his prophetic language. "To the True Romance" has already been cited as a poetic statement of Kipling's prophetic vocation. While it poses as a chivalric pledge of a knight to his "lady," the language reveals the poet's object of allegiance to be the Spirit identified in the Bible as the Holy Spirit, part of the Triune God. This identification is accomplished by the prophetic language. Some of the allusions are to touching Jesus' garment hem,<sup>54</sup> the child-like spirit,<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>Matt. 9:20-21, 14:36; Mk. 5:27; Lk. 8:44.

<sup>55</sup>Mk. 10:15; Lk. 18:17.

singleness of heart,<sup>56</sup> Charity,<sup>57</sup> Faith,<sup>58</sup> and Comforter.<sup>59</sup> The Spirit existed before Creation, "or yet the Lights were set,/ A whisper in the Void."<sup>60</sup> Time and tide are subject to Its will,<sup>61</sup> and under Its guidance men "fashioned Heaven and Hell!"<sup>62</sup> It not only taught "all lovers speech/ And Life all mystery," but It rules all schools and communicates to "The children wise of outer skies" news of men's activities.<sup>63</sup> And It is the "veil" that must exist between "God His Law/ And Man's infirmity."<sup>64</sup> The Spirit is Master of all "fair design/ In Thought and Craft and Deed"; to deny It is to blaspheme, while those who "adore" It find It "perfect, wise and just." In this work prophetic language is not only appropriate, it is the key to the poem's meaning,

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<sup>56</sup>Acts 2:45; Matt. 6:22; Lk, 11:34; Eph. 6:5; Col. 3:22.

<sup>57</sup>I Cor. 13.

<sup>58</sup>Heb. 11:1.

<sup>59</sup>John 16:7.

<sup>60</sup>Gen. 1:1-2.

<sup>61</sup>Ps. 24:1-2.

<sup>62</sup>Ps. 139:7-8.

<sup>63</sup>Ps. 19:1-9.

<sup>64</sup>Ex. 33:20.

establishing it as a prayer of adoration and commitment.

Selections other than hymns and prayers that naturally make use of prophetic language are Kipling's re-creations of Biblical or other religious situations. An outstanding example of his re-creation of a Biblical situation is "The Church That Was at Antioch,"<sup>65</sup> based on Acts 11:19-30 and Galations 2:11-16. The story is told chiefly in the dialogue of Lucius Sergius, Prefect of Police of Antioch, and his fine young nephew, Valens, who has recently arrived from Constantinople to serve under him. Both are high-born Romans who make ideal administrators; both must officially render service to the Latin Trinity, Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, but find this religion unsatisfying and are secret followers of Mithras, "a soldier's religion." A hasty reading of this story might lead one to conclude that Kipling is attacking Christianity through Valens' assertion that every ceremony and symbol of the Christians was "stolen from the Mithras ritual." But the sympathetic portrayal of Peter and Paul and their argument over separate churches (for Jew and Gentile) or "one Church" not only creates a realistic interpretation of Paul's "But when

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<sup>65</sup> Limits and Renewals, X, 77-99.

Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face,"<sup>66</sup> but clearly identifies the theme of the story as "God hath made the world and all things therein . . . And hath made of one blood all nations of men . . . That they should seek the Lord, if happily they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us,"<sup>67</sup> the central theme of Paul's sermon on Mars' hill--also Kipling's chief prophetic theme. Kipling puts in Valens' mouth such pregnant lines as "Gods do not make laws, They change men's hearts. The rest is the Spirit."<sup>68</sup> There are allusions to Peter's denial of Jesus,<sup>69</sup> to Paul's conversion,<sup>70</sup> to his journeys,<sup>71</sup> to his work as a tent maker,<sup>72</sup> and to Christ's words upon the cross: "Forgive them for they know not what they do."<sup>73</sup> The closing lines recall

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<sup>66</sup>Gal. 2:11.

<sup>67</sup>Acts 17:22-27.

<sup>68</sup>"The Church That Was at Antioch," Limits and Renewals, X, 88.

<sup>69</sup>Mk. 14:66-72.

<sup>70</sup>Acts 9.

<sup>71</sup>Acts 13, 14, 15:36-41.

<sup>72</sup>Acts 18:3.

<sup>73</sup>Lk. 23:34.

Peter's housetop lesson in God's redemptive work,<sup>74</sup> already cited (in the discussion of "My New-Cut Ashlar") as a key to Kipling's prophetic message. Kipling has used prophetic language to effectively unite his artistic talent for creating realistic detail and convincing humanity with his interest in Biblical "prophets" and their messages. A second story reflecting his interest in Paul is entitled "The Manner of Men"<sup>75</sup> and quotes under its title "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts," part of I Corinthians 15:32. The story itself is based quite closely on Acts 27:1-28:11, the account of Paul's adventures enroute to Rome by ship, including shipwreck on Malta, but all is seen through the eyes of three seamen: the former captain of the ship that was wrecked, now a Roman port inspector; the second-in-command on the doomed ship, now commander of a port guard-boat; and the young Spanish captain of a grain ship approaching Marseilles, to whom the other men tell Paul's story. Despite their persistent reference to Paul's faith as "philosophy," both men acknowledge Paul's courage, and the commander of the guard-boat, whom Paul nursed through dysentery while they

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<sup>74</sup>Acts 10.

<sup>75</sup>Limits and Renewals, X, 197-216.

were on Malta, confesses to a deeper respect. Allusion is made to Paul's many afflictions (stripes, stonings, imprisonments, etc.)<sup>76</sup> and, obliquely, to his tentmaking,<sup>77</sup> but the emphasis is upon his fearlessness before the threat of "Beasts" (the allusion of the title), and the intent of the story seems to be an exploration of the impact of one of God's prophets upon the realistic world outside the church--the "congregation" for which Kipling felt his message was intended. With less sympathy, in fact with ironic detachment, Kipling creates another of Paul's encounters with the worldly-wise-but-spiritually-foolish in "Gallio's Song,"<sup>78</sup> which quotes Acts 18:17 under the title: "And Gallio cared for none of those things." What Gallio could not bother with was the Gospel; he also ignored such "trifles" as "the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat." Kipling repeats the damning line: "I care for none of these things," and suggests the issues with "Whether the God descend from above/ Or the Man ascend upon high," and "touching your clamour of 'Conscience' sake." As in the

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<sup>76</sup>II Cor. 11:23-27.

<sup>77</sup>Acts 18:3.

<sup>78</sup>Actions and Reactions, VIII, 531-532.

Bible account, Paul is not allowed to speak, but the language is prophetic both in its dependence upon a Bible situation and in its denunciation of those, particularly in public office, who ignore religion.

Kipling used prophetic language with obvious appropriateness in re-creations of other religious material. "Our Lady of Sackcloth"<sup>79</sup> is a poem, identified as an Ethiopian tale "founded on Brit. Mus. MS. Orient No. 652, Folio 9," about an aged priest, "Tongue-tied, feeble, and old," whose congregation's complaints about his mumbling result in his isolation from the adoration of Mary that makes his life meaningful. His faith and suffering earn him miraculous service and honor from the Virgin, appearing as a desert-dweller. The poem's language reveals Kipling's sympathy with any man sincerely in search of spiritual values and his prophetic conviction that God is likewise compassionately responsive to human spiritual need in the terms of the individual's real situation. This same prophetic conviction determines the satiric tone of "Tomlinson," the optimistic tone of "On the Gate: A Tale of '16," and the fabular manner of "How Fear Came."

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<sup>79</sup>Miscellaneous, XXVIII, 300-303.

"Tomlinson"<sup>80</sup> is a long dramatic poem relating the confrontation of Tomlinson with St. Peter at Heaven's Gate and the Devil at Hell's Gate. Both gate-keepers refuse to admit Tomlinson because he has never done anything, good or bad: all his experience is vicarious. While much of the poem's dialogue involves such ironic wit as the Devil's thoughtful balancing of "Holy Charity" (for Tomlinson's shivering spirit) and "his own good name," the last line identifies the poem's prophetic point, that "the God" one takes "from a printed book" is inadequate for anyone with a soul. "On the Gate: A Tale of '16"<sup>81</sup> is based on the same religious tradition--that St. Peter guards Heaven's Gate--but the language is more comprehensively prophetic and the key to the story is a verse of Scripture: "Samuel Two, Double Fourteen," as Peter calls it, which ends "Yet doth He devise means that His banished be not expelled from Him!" Allusions are made to Peter's denial of his Lord,<sup>82</sup> to Judas' betrayal of Jesus,<sup>83</sup> to "the Importunate

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<sup>80</sup>Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Verse, XXV, 300-306.

<sup>81</sup>Debits and Credits, VIII, 227-249.

<sup>82</sup>Mk. 14:66-72.

<sup>83</sup>Matt. 26:47-50, 27:3-10.

Widow,"<sup>84</sup> to Calvin's Institutio,<sup>85</sup> and to Jesus' promise of "many mansions";<sup>86</sup> and the "pickets" assisting Peter with the overwhelming numbers of war-dead include John the Beloved Disciple, Luke, Mary Magdalene, a redeemed Judas Iscariot, John Calvin, Joan of Arc, and Shakespeare, while the theme of universal hope of salvation is poignantly dramatized in the response of the celestial being Azreal--Death--who alone of all living spirits is doomed to eternal death.<sup>87</sup> Although the story begins with pointed satire of traditional, middle-class funerals, its prophetic language is not only effectively used but the key to understanding its serious intent. "How Fear Came"<sup>88</sup> illustrates both Kipling's persistent interest in religious themes and his artistic ability to clothe them in different forms of prophetic language. The frame tale of this Jungle Book story presents Mowglie and his friends at the almost dry Waingunga River. When the outlaw Shere Khan pollutes the water with the blood of his last kill--man--Hathi, the

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<sup>84</sup>Lk. 18:1-5.

<sup>85</sup>John Calvin, Christianae religiosus institutio (1559).

<sup>86</sup>John 14:2.

<sup>87</sup>I Cor. 15:26; Rev. 21:4.

<sup>88</sup>The Jungle Books, XI, 63-83.

elephant, tells a jungle version of the major events in Genesis 2:8-4:15: Creation, the Fall, and the first murder. A jungle Adam (the First Tiger, who is herbivorous) is left in charge of the jungle Eden by the "Lord of the Jungle"; his undisciplined actions introduce death and fear; he flees, to hide from his "Lord"; when he returns, stripes (the Mark of Cain) are placed on him, but he is promised that his punishment will not be more than he can bear; nevertheless, from then on there is enmity between man and beast. Thus, prophetic language addresses itself successfully to telling children a Bible "truth" in terms of its universal application.

There are a great many examples of Kipling's use of prophetic language in poems and stories that present a modern situation in terms of a Biblical parallel. Some of these selections identify their prophetic nature in the title. For example, "The Story of Uriah"<sup>89</sup> and "Delilah"<sup>90</sup> are poems relating Simla versions of these age-old stories of betrayal. In the first, Jack Barrett was sent to unhealthy Quetta, in September, and predictably died within a month. His wife was left in Simla, where she mourned his

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<sup>89</sup> Departmental Ditties, XV, 13-14.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 11-12.

death for "Five lively months at most." The poet comments that "when the Last Great Bugle Call" sounds, he would not like "to be the man/ Who sent Jack Barrett" to his death. The poem is based upon the story of David's taking of Bathsheba and having her husband, Uriah, killed;<sup>91</sup> it quotes under its title the beginning of the prophet Nathan's denunciation of David's sin: "There were two men in one city; the one rich and the other poor,"<sup>92</sup> not only recalling all that God's displeasure meant to David, but also clearly establishing the poet's prophetic viewpoint. The second poem gives the name of Samson's deceptive mistress to a Simla "lady," Delilah Aberyswith, "not too young . . . With a thirst for information and a greater thirst for praise." Since much of the poem deals with how a certain "depraved" Ulysses Gunne, who earned his money writing for papers, gave this Delilah the attention she craved and coaxed from her a viceroy's secret, the poet is giving the Biblical story a prophetic interpretation that does not lessen the foolishness of the Samson-Viceroy, but suggests that both Delilahs were victims of their own evil ways.<sup>93</sup> Two other

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<sup>91</sup> II Sam. 11.

<sup>92</sup> II Sam. 12:1.

<sup>93</sup> Gal. 6:7.

poems portray modern versions of Bible stories but comment satirically on the too shallow piety that approves the Biblical conclusion in words but not in practice. "Cain and Abel,"<sup>94</sup> sub-titled "A Cattle Song," retells the Genesis story of the first fratricide<sup>95</sup> in terms of cattle rather than flocks, and "corn" (British term for grain) rather than "fruit of the ground." The issue of the fatal conflict is not ritual sacrifice but water rights during drought. Since Abel's cattle destroyed Cain's crops (there really wasn't water enough for both), and Abel was as ready to strike as Cain, the poet questions the fairness of the final judgment--revealing to the reader his own mixed values. "The Prodigal Son"<sup>96</sup> is, according to its subtitle, a "Western Version" of the parable Jesus told the Pharisees, obviously denouncing their "older brother" role of unloving self-righteousness.<sup>97</sup> Kipling's Prodigal rejects his reinstatement into the security and refinement of his home because he prefers his hard-won independence and the exercise of his new skill in the "Yards" to the

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<sup>94</sup>Miscellaneous, XXVIII, 292-293.

<sup>95</sup>Gen. 4:1-15.

<sup>96</sup>Songs from Books, XXVII, 100-101.

<sup>97</sup>Lk. 15:11-32.

gloomy advice of his father, the prying concern of his mother, the sullen resentment of his brother, and the hypocritical comments of the servants. Considerably further from the original story<sup>98</sup> for which it is named is Kipling's story "Naboth,"<sup>99</sup> which he clearly states at the beginning is "an allegory of Empire." The poor native trader named in the title actually takes advantage of the kindness extended to him by the Anglo-Indian narrator, usurping his garden, demoralizing his servants, polluting the area with sewage, and fatally injuring the narrator's horse. In addition to the obvious argument against Liberal misinterpretations of the administration of empire, there is an implication that the Biblical Naboth's adherence to tradition may have been a courteous mask for other-than-admirable motives. One of Kipling's consistent prophetic emphases was honest recognition of the complex nature of reality.

Prophetic language heavily dependent upon Biblical incident was a favorite medium for Kipling to express his denunciation of modern events or people. "Gehazi,"<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>98</sup>I Kin. 21:1-24.

<sup>99</sup>Life's Handicap, IV, 396-402.

<sup>100</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 393-394; II Kin. 5.

by its title and internal references, re-creates for a corrupt English judge<sup>101</sup> the bitter end of the story of Naaman, Captain of the Hosts of Syria, and his healing from leprosy under the instruction of Elisha. Elisha refused all payment, but his covetous servant, Gehazi, deceitfully secured two talents of silver and two changes of raiment, for which conduct he received, at Elisha's sentencing, the leprosy of Naaman. With this implied prophetic authority, Kipling condemns his "Gehazi" with the last words of II Kings 5: "a leper white as snow." Kipling's prophetic judgment of the Catholic Church's "sins" during World War I he clothes in a parallel to Peter's denial of Christ,<sup>102</sup> entitled "A Song at Cock-Crow."<sup>103</sup> First recalling the Fisherman Peter's perfidy--out of fear--the poem moves to the Peter who is "Fisher of Men . . . With the Crown on his brow and the Cross on his shoe," whose manifold denials of his Lord are wickedness for which "The Father took from him the Keys and the Sword,/ And the Mother and Babe brake his Kingdom in two."<sup>104</sup> His reaction to the foolish liberalism

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<sup>101</sup>Rufus Isaacs, Carrington, p. 410.

<sup>102</sup>Mk. 14:66-72.

<sup>103</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 402-403.

<sup>104</sup>Matt. 16:18-19.

represented by the news items: "An attempt should be made to prepare a moral text-book based upon the fundamental principles of natural religion, such as may be taught in all Government and non-Government colleges" (Resolution of the Indian Government), he clothed in a devastatingly satiric masque, "'O Baal, Hear Us!'"<sup>105</sup> Appropriate allusions are made to Dagon, idol-god of the Philistines, who was humiliatingly thrown on his face when his followers desecrated the Arc of the Covenant,<sup>106</sup> as well as to such modern heresies as Robert Elsmere (1888), Mrs. Humphry Ward's popular novel about a clergyman's loss of faith in the divinity of Christ. Mrs. Ward was the niece of Matthew Arnold, poet and critic who popularized the term Philistines for those who pretend to culture; Arnold also was convinced that all mankind needed, in place of the traditional dogma of Redemption, was the "sweetness and Light" of Culture.<sup>107</sup> Other heretical intellectuals the masque mocks for offering men a substitute for religion are listed in the following "patter-song":

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<sup>105</sup>Departmental Ditties and Other Verse, XXV, 71-76.

<sup>106</sup>I Sam. 5:3-4.

<sup>107</sup>Matthew Arnold, Culture and Anarchy (1869).

Take a little Rabelais--just a garlic hint;  
 Out of Locke and Bacon steal something fit to print.  
 Grind 'em down with Butler, add morsels of Voltaire;  
 Don't forget the 'Precious Fools' sketched by Moliere!

Robert Elsmere, Mallock, Hume, Gibbon (on his knees).  
 Knock the Ten Commandments out if they fail to please;  
 Substitute the Penal Code--sections underlined.  
 There you have a perfect book to form the infant  
 mind!

This selection not only argues for Kipling's basic orthodoxy but illustrates the comprehensiveness of his prophetic language. German atrocities during the War Kipling castigated in the story "'Swept and Garnished,'"<sup>108</sup> based on Christ's parable on the worthlessness of self-reformation.<sup>109</sup> Frau Ebermann's delirious attempts to sweep and garnish her room that "Our dear Lord when He came might find everything as it should be" suggest a number of references, all demanding a sincerity of faith Frau Ebermann does not have.<sup>110</sup> And to admonish Americans against boasting of their part in World War I, Kipling retells the parable of the laborers in "The Vineyard,"<sup>111</sup> found in Matthew 20:1-16. This poem demonstrates the blending of Biblical language and poetry that is such an outstanding characteristic of Kipling's

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<sup>108</sup> Diversity of Creatures, IX, 361-372.

<sup>109</sup> Matt. 12:43-45; Lk. 11:24-28.

<sup>110</sup> Lk. 19:1-10; John 14:24; Rev. 3:20.

<sup>111</sup> Debts and Credits, VIII, 43.

language. Here are verses 6, 7, 11, and 12, and the first stanza of the poem:

And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive. . . . And when they [that had been first hired] had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.

At the eleventh hour he came,  
But his wages were the same  
As ours who all day long had trod  
The wine-press of the Wrath of God.

The poem also illustrates the courage with which Kipling added new dimensions to traditional interpretations of Scripture by applying old truths to new situations: the Biblical parable was told by Jesus to rebuke all status-seeking among his disciples; Kipling's message is that while the Lord rebuked the complaints of those who sought special recognition in that they had labored all day, His instruction in spiritual honesty applies equally to those who have labored only an hour.

### Spiritual Insights

These examples of Kipling's use of prophetic language with religious subjects are important to establish the

frequency with which he expressed his talent and his message in a traditionally prophetic manner; more significant in establishing his total prophetic orientation are the many examples of his use of prophetic language to express his artistic insights--thereby making them spiritual insights--into public events, common human experiences and his personal experiences and convictions. Several of the selections already cited reveal his consistent reaction to public events as spiritual and prophetic: "Recessional," "'Non Nobis Domine!'" "Gehazi," "The Settler," "The Vineyard," etc. The distinction is not easily made between a religious subject seen in terms of public events and public events seen in terms of a religious point of view. Furthermore, his use of prophetic language in his response to public events varied from selections rich in allusion and religious metaphor to works depending upon form or a single religious reference to establish the work's prophetic intent.

Outstanding examples of his comment on public events in prophetic language are "The Islanders," "The City of Brass," "The Choice," and "The Covenant." "The Islanders"<sup>112</sup> is famous (or infamous, depending upon one's point of view)

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<sup>112</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 258-262.

for its attack on the smug insularity of England's ruling classes and the people's unrealistic concepts of empire. Along with his own freshly created and unforgettable lines, such as "Then ye returned to your trinkets; then ye contented your souls/ With the flannelled fools at the wicket or the muddied oafs at the goals," the poem bristles with allusions that carry the weight of history and prophetic judgment: "Ye forced them glean in the highways the straw for the bricks they brought";<sup>113</sup> "Then were the judgments loosened";<sup>114</sup> "Yet ye were saved by a remnant";<sup>115</sup> "Also your gods are many; no doubt but your gods shall aid./ Idols of greasy altars built for the body's ease;/ Proud little brazen Baals . . ." <sup>116</sup> He closes the poem with an allusion to Paul's condemnation of the unresponsive Jews in Corinth:

And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads, I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. (Acts 18:6)

"The City of Brass"<sup>117</sup> scathingly castigates the element of

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<sup>113</sup>Ex. 5:6-19.

<sup>114</sup>Jer. 23:5; Amos 5:24; Matt. 12:20; John 12:31; Heb. 9:27; Rev. 14:7.

<sup>115</sup>Jer. 44:28; Ezek. 6:8, Isa. 1:9; etc.

<sup>116</sup>I Kin. 18:25-41.

<sup>117</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 415-418.

democratic rule which Kipling abhorred, the element that panders to mobs and demagogues who recognize no law but their own appetites. After asserting that all national splendor is due to God, Kipling describes a people drunk with pride, who chose new "prophets and priests" who would do their bidding,<sup>118</sup> turned their defenses into playgrounds and replied to "their well-wishers' fears" and "their enemies' laughter" that they had fashioned a new "God" that would save them.<sup>119</sup> "When they were fullest of wine and most flagrant in error," for them, as for Belshazzar, "Out of the sea rose a sign--out of Heaven a terror"<sup>120</sup> for "The tares they had laughingly sown were ripe to the reaping,"<sup>121</sup> and this nation disappeared "from the roll of the Nations." "The Choice"<sup>122</sup> is supposed to be spoken by The American Spirit when, in 1917, the United States entered the War. Its first stanza sets its tone:

To the Judge of Right and Wrong  
 With Whom fulfilment lies  
 Our purpose and our power belong,  
 Our faith and sacrifice.

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<sup>118</sup>I Kin. 22:13-28; Rev. 14:20.

<sup>119</sup>Ex. 32:1-6.

<sup>120</sup>Dan. 5.

<sup>121</sup>Matt. 13:24-30.

<sup>122</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 346-347.

In addition to such phrases as "the eternal choice/ Of Good or Ill" and "His Mercy," the sixth stanza contains a key allusion as well as the deeply religious point of view of the poem:

Then praise the Lord Most High  
 Whose Strength hath saved us whole  
 Who bade us choose that the Flesh should die  
 And not the living Soul!<sup>123</sup>

At the beginning of the War, Kipling had taken his own nation to task in "The Covenant."<sup>124</sup> The title recalls all the Biblical Covenants, while the first stanza echoes the tone of Amos and strongly resembles Jesus' denunciation of the Jews who thought that since they were "Abraham's seed" they had no need of Jesus' "truth."<sup>125</sup> Jesus tells these stubborn traditionalists that their real father is the Devil, Father of lies. The poem begins: "We thought we ranked above the chance of ill./ Others might fall, not we." Having permitted themselves to be drugged with lies, they discovered that "Neither God's judgment nor man's heart" had changed.<sup>126</sup> The second stanza turns to "His

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<sup>123</sup>Matt. 10:28.

<sup>124</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 330.

<sup>125</sup>John 8.

<sup>126</sup>Jam. 1:17.

Mercy," and ends in a challenge to rededication that, with God's help, may make them worthy to face Him, later. When the end of the War was in sight (October, 1918), Kipling wrote "Justice,"<sup>127</sup> sternly admonishing the Allies that it was "ancient sin" that led the aggressors to start the war, and that before anyone could "loose the word/ That bids new worlds to birth,"<sup>128</sup> justice must be established,<sup>129</sup> with "the sword,"<sup>130</sup> or the world would sink "back again/ Hopeless of God and Man." The "Evil Incarnate" must be made "To answer to mankind," but all must prepare to face Christ's judgment.<sup>131</sup>

Other examples of prophetic language used to express Kipling's reaction to public events often identify their intent with a single Biblical allusion. "The Declaration of London,"<sup>132</sup> written in response to the announcement of "strict party politics" immediately following the Coronation of George V, on June 29, 1911, caps its references to this

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<sup>127</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 419-420.

<sup>128</sup>"God said," Gen. 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14; John 1:1-3.

<sup>129</sup>Isa. 9:7, 56:11; Jer. 23:5.

<sup>130</sup>Gen. 3:24; Matt. 10:34; Lk. 22:36.

<sup>131</sup>Matt. 25:31-46.

<sup>132</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 326-327.

mockery of national ideals with "We may betray in time,  
 God knows,/ But we would not have it said,/ When you make  
 report to our scornful foes,/ That we kissed as we betrayed!"  
 an allusion to the greatest betrayal of all time, that of  
 Christ by Judas Iscariot.<sup>133</sup> In "The Hyaenas,"<sup>134</sup> these  
 traditionally despicable animals' treatment of the hastily  
 buried war dead is considered less despicable than man's,  
 for the hyaenas, "being soulless, are free of shame . . ./  
 Nor do they defile the dead man's name--/ That is reserved  
 for his kind."<sup>135</sup> While this poem has only one possible  
 allusion, its tone is unmistakably that of one who assumes  
 the role of the prophet--one who judges his nation's con-  
 duct by a higher law. The same may be said of "Meso-  
 potamia,"<sup>136</sup> dated 1917, and strongly attacking those  
 leaders whose "slothfulness" and "arrogance" wasted and  
 slew the "resolute, the young/ The eager and the whole-  
 hearted," but who were, following their exposure, creeping  
 back to position and power. The title is a puzzling  
 misnomer unless its allusion to Abraham's acceptance of

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<sup>133</sup>Matt. 26:47-49.

<sup>134</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 366-367.

<sup>135</sup>I Cor. 15:39.

<sup>136</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 364-365.

God's command to leave behind the corrupt culture of Mesopotamia and seek a Promised Land destined for God's Chosen People<sup>137</sup> is understood as the answer to the question the poem asks: "But the men who left them thriftily to die in their own dung,/ Shall they come with years and honour to the grave?" The tone is that of the denunciatory prophet; the allusion identifies the prophet's authority. "The Bonfires"<sup>138</sup> is dated 1933 and lists under the title some terms typical of liberal politicians: "'Gesture . . . outlook . . . vision . . . avenue . . . example . . . achievement . . . appeasement . . . limit of risk.'" Kipling labelled the promises offered by this jargon "Bonfires on the Ice." However, his reference in the third stanza to "Babe and Cockatrice/ Would play together, were they taught" draws into the poem the whole picture of the Kingdom of Heaven,<sup>139</sup> which liberal Christians are apt to believe can be achieved on earth by education, a position Kipling generally considered foolish, even heretical.<sup>140</sup> In 1890, Kipling had responded to a German proposal with "An

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<sup>137</sup>Gen. 42:38, 44:31; I Kin. 2:6; Job 5:26.

<sup>138</sup>Miscellaneous, XXVIII, 288-289.

<sup>139</sup>Isa. 11.

<sup>140</sup>"O Baal, Hear Us!" Departmental Ditties and Other Verse, XXV, 71-76.

Imperial Rescript,"<sup>141</sup> warning his nation even that early against those who became their enemies in 1914. Significantly placed, in the first stanza, is an allusion Kipling used a number of times, an allusion to the Israelite bondage in Egypt.<sup>142</sup> While "bricks without straw" is a widely used metaphor, Kipling's use here, as elsewhere, of this Biblical allusion illuminates the poem's deeper meaning. When the German Kaiser "sent word to the peoples, who struggle, and pant, and sweat,/ That the straw might be counted fairly and the tally of bricks be set," the audience of the poem are almost tricked into thinking "pleasant slavery" is freedom; "a girl's laugh" recalls them to the human values that are more spiritual than comfort. Furthermore, as the allusion suggests, they realize that they, like the Hebrews, must choose hardship to be free to serve God.

Kipling also used religious sources other than the Bible. In 1918 he responded to a Russian gesture of peace with "Russia to the Pacifists,"<sup>143</sup> a bitter parody of the Christmas carol "God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen." Again, he denounced the "Perseverance-Doubters," the "Present-

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<sup>141</sup>Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Verse, XXV, 297-299.

<sup>142</sup>Ex. 1-5.

<sup>143</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 352-353.

comfort shirks," "the State-kept Stockhomites,/ The Pope, the swithering Neutrals,/ The Kaiser and his Gott--" and all other saboteurs of England's war effort, in "The Holy War."<sup>144</sup> He identifies his manner and his title-- John Bunyan's allegory by the same name--and on Bunyan's metaphor of the Town of Mansoul, which could not be conquered without the "consent" of its inhabitants, Kipling builds a biting contrast between "true" and "traitor" peoples, the followers of Emmanuel and the minions of Apollyon. Even on the occasion of the death, in 1904, of a famous man whose efforts for the empire had been frequently attacked (Joseph Chamberlain), Kipling added prophetic emphasis to his praise of the man and denunciation of his detractors by quoting under the title of the memorial poem<sup>145</sup> Genesis 37:5: "And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren and they hated him yet the more."

As Kipling reacted to the broad spectrum of common human experience, his use of prophetic language--every possible means of expressing his prophetic point of view--ranged in tone from shocking to exalted. To prim and

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<sup>144</sup>Ibid., 348-350.

<sup>145</sup>"Things and the Man," Ibid., 384-385.

and proper Victorians, the frank description of British soldiers and native water boys and their possible relationship in Hell gave "shock appeal" to the poem "Gunga Din."<sup>146</sup> Nevertheless, Kipling is "ringing changes" upon two of his prophetic (and quite orthodox) convictions: that a "Living God" made these men, and that in His eternal Design, the qualities of an individual count for more than his education or the color of his skin. When Kipling received the news that a former schoolmate had been killed in India, he expressed in a letter to Lionel Dunsterville ("Stalky")<sup>147</sup> the idea that grew into the poem "Arithmetic on the Frontier."<sup>148</sup> The apparent callousness with which the poem dismisses the deaths of fine young men:

A scrimmage in a Border Station--  
 A canter down some dark defile--  
 Two thousand pounds of education  
 Drops to a ten-rupee Jezail--

shocked some readers and led to the mistaken notion that Kipling enjoyed cruelty and war. Actually, the quotation "All flesh is grass,"<sup>149</sup> in the first stanza, should alert

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<sup>146</sup> Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Verse, XXV, 180-182.

<sup>147</sup> Carrington, p. 74.

<sup>148</sup> Departmental Ditties and Other Verse, XXV, 88-89.

<sup>149</sup> Isa. 40:6; I Pet. 1:14.

the reader to the difference between a brash young verse-maker and a prophetic poet's complex understanding of religion's honesty and its concern with reality. Sometimes this understanding is an impudent but meaningful allusion to a wise saying of Solomon, as in "The Thousandeth Man,"<sup>150</sup> or to "Gehenna" and "the Throne," as in "The Winner,"<sup>151</sup> or by the use of a Bible name with elaborate connotations, as "Potiphar Gubbins" in "Study of an Elevation, in Indian Ink,"<sup>152</sup> or "Ahasuerus Jenkins" in "Army Headquarters."<sup>153</sup> In "General Summary,"<sup>154</sup> a statement of the perennial nature of the human exploitation of power, he alludes to Joseph's "sudden rise/ To Comptroller of Supplies" in Egypt as an example of "irregular" advancement.<sup>155</sup> The first six stanzas of his tribute to the Royal Engineers, "The Sappers,"<sup>156</sup> touch with the irreverence of a Believer on the Creation, the Flood, the Tower of Babel, Joshua's battle against the Amorites,<sup>157</sup> and (again) the bondage of

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<sup>150</sup>Rewards and Fairies, XIII, 493-494.

<sup>151</sup>The Story of the Gadsbys, II, 205.

<sup>152</sup>Departmental Ditties, XXV, 7-8.

<sup>153</sup>Ibid., 5-6.

<sup>154</sup>Ibid., 3-4.

<sup>155</sup>Gen. 41.

<sup>156</sup>The Seven Seas, XXVI, 121-123.

<sup>157</sup>Jos. 10:12-15.

the Children of Israel in Egypt. But in a tone of faith and gratitude he reacts to excessive rain and consequent flooding in "The Floods,"<sup>158</sup> a poem which recalls both the Noahic Covenant, following the Flood, and Psalm 121:1, which speaks of the real and the symbolic strength that comes from the hills.

Kipling found that most common human experiences had counterparts in the Bible and were traditional religious themes. The wisdom of a child is used in the Chapter Heading for "Tod's Amendment,"<sup>159</sup> an allusion to Psalms 8:2, Matthew 21:16 and Luke 18:16-17. The guilt basis of human judgment is alluded to in the Chapter Heading for "His Wedded Wife,"<sup>160</sup> using the story of Cain.<sup>161</sup> For the familiar conflict between "Faith and Works" he draws on the Biblical account of "Jubal and Tubal Cain."<sup>162</sup> Genesis 4:21-22 tells us that Jubal "was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ," while Tubal-cain, his half-brother, was "an instructor of every artificer in brass

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<sup>158</sup>A Diversity of Creatures, IX, 333-334.

<sup>159</sup>Plain Tales From the Hills, I, 239-248.

<sup>160</sup>Ibid., 193-202.

<sup>161</sup>Gen. 4:1-24.

<sup>162</sup>Songs from Books, XXVII, 75-76.

and iron." Kipling has Jubal sing "of the Wrath of God/ And the curse of thistle and thorn--" but Tubal set busily to work cultivating, defending, building; and the poet sees the conflict between them as endless because they are different kinds of people. A similar theme, without the sense of strife but with the poet's sympathies entirely with the workers, is dramatically expressed in "The Sons of Martha."<sup>163</sup> Kipling is certain that without the practical "sons" of one who was "careful and troubled about many things,"<sup>164</sup> none of the spiritually minded "Marys" would survive. The relationship of master and servant he portrays as a limited brotherhood in "Banquet Night,"<sup>165</sup> an imaginary banquet arranged by Solomon for all the workers on the Temple.<sup>166</sup> He emphasizes the opposite side of the picture--that some servants are incapable of master-ship-- in "A Servant When He Reigneth,"<sup>167</sup> which gets both its title and its argument from Proverbs 30:21-23. The

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<sup>163</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 372-374.

<sup>164</sup>Lk. 10:38.

<sup>165</sup>Debits and Credits, VIII, 47-48.

<sup>166</sup>I Kin. 5-7; II Chron. 3-5.

<sup>167</sup>Songs from Books, XXVII, 84-85.

power of money<sup>168</sup> Kipling wittily portrays in the poem "The Peace of Dives,"<sup>169</sup> a drama in the manner of the Book of Job and of Christ's parable of the rich man (which tradition names Dives) and the beggar, Lazarus.<sup>170</sup> One of the wrong responses to the loss of a loved one and the promise of life after death Kipling condemns in the poem "En-Dor,"<sup>171</sup> which quotes under its title I Samuel 27:7 and alludes to Saul's recourse to a "woman with a familiar spirit," which Kipling finds just as wrong today as it was when God first forbade it. The right response to death and immortality is pictured in "A Nativity,"<sup>172</sup> which shows how a war mother laments her son as a battle casualty until through The Babe, A Star, The Cross, and Easter Day, she knows that "It is well" with her child. The role of guilt in sorrow is dealt with in "The Gardener"<sup>173</sup> and the poem that follows it, "The Burden."<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>168</sup>Matt. 6:19-24.

<sup>169</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 263-267.

<sup>170</sup>Lk. 16:19-31.

<sup>171</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 358-359.

<sup>172</sup>Ibid., 356-357.

<sup>173</sup>Debits and Credits, VIII, 285-299.

<sup>174</sup>Ibid., 301-302.

In the story a woman who has always called her illegitimate son a nephew is assisted in finding his war grave by Christ, after He has quietly called him "son"; like the Bible's most famous sinful woman--Mary Magdalene, this woman mistakes, at least temporarily, her Master for a gardener.<sup>175</sup>

In the poem a woman who can reveal none of her sorrow because she can confess none of her earlier sinful relationship appeals to Mary Magdalene to assure her that hers is the greatest suffering. Instead, the Magdalene responds with an allusion to Easter, an event adequate for both the guilt and the sorrow. In the story "Uncovenanted Mercies"<sup>176</sup> Kipling shows how pride may work to the expiation of guilt, using the dramatic resources of Archangels on a visit to Hell. And in the beautiful poem "Cold Iron"<sup>177</sup> he has ambitious pride bow in repentance and and love to Man's true Liege Lord reenacting the Lord's Supper and the meaning of "Iron out of Calvary."

Kipling's use of Prophetic Language to express his spiritual insights adds complexity to his artistry. Two

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<sup>175</sup>John 29:11-18.

<sup>176</sup>Limits and Renewals, X, 323-346.

<sup>177</sup>Rewards and Fairies, XIII, 269-270.

stories illustrate this enrichment of his portrayal of common human experiences, "With the Main Guard"<sup>178</sup> and "A Madonna of the Trenches."<sup>179</sup> The first is a story of *The Soldiers Three*, Mulvaney, Ortheris, and Learoyd. It is a rather typical story-within-a-story in which Mulvaney talks the night out, at Fort Amara, to keep Learoyd, the big Yorkshireman, from going mad in the terrible heat; as the guards change and the day breaks, Mulvaney responds to the author's compliment on his effort with "'I've blandhered them through the night somehow, but can them that helps others help themselves?'" This is an allusion to lines found in all three Synoptic Gospels: "He saved others; himself he cannot save," words spoken of Christ.<sup>180</sup> Mulvaney is not a literary "Christ figure," but he is a means of conveying one of Kipling's prophetic beliefs in the Source of all virtue; furthermore, this key allusion reveals that the final incident of the story--a lost child returned to its home--is symbolic and the whole story becomes more meaningful. The second story uses prophetic language--allusions to the Bible, to church tradition, and

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<sup>178</sup> Soldiers Three, II, 150-173.

<sup>179</sup> Debits and Credits, VIII, 177-198.

<sup>180</sup> Matt. 27:42-44; Lk. 23:35-37; Mk. 15:29-32.

to a hymn--to reveal several layers of interpretation. On the surface this is a story of a young veteran suffering from recurrent shock and involved in a breach-of-promise suit because he has a new understanding of love. A second theme of the story is the power of love to bring a dead woman's image before the eyes of her lover and her nephew. A third theme questions the religious justification of a lovers' rendezvous through suicide. Still another theme deals with the significance of religious truths concerning love and immortality that Clem Stenbridge, the young veteran, had been taught but never before appreciated.

In addition to responding to common human experience with insights best expressed in prophetic language, Kipling relied on this religiously oriented language to express his own most significant experiences. A number of examples of this use of prophetic language have already been cited in the discussion of his prophetic vocation. Thus, "The Explorer"<sup>181</sup> uses several references to God and an allusion to the anointing of Saul to make this poetic statement of Kipling's "Vocation" truly prophetic. The language of "My New-Cut Ashlar"<sup>182</sup> not only identifies its prayer

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<sup>181</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 200-204.

<sup>182</sup>Life's Handicap, IV, 413-414.

form but also the prophetic nature of his dedication and his vision. The language of "To the True Romance"<sup>183</sup> turns a chivalric pledge into a prophetic dedication, and the religious terminology and Biblical allusions of "The Song of the English"<sup>184</sup> establish the prophetic viewpoint of Kipling's concern with Empire. In fact, nearly all of the works as well as the autobiographical references so far cited touch either Kipling's personal experience or his convictions, or both, and use prophetic language. But there are many other examples of his use of this medium to express his personal experiences. In "The Dream of Duncan Parrenness"<sup>185</sup> he reports a personal but also nearly universal experience, that of a young man confronting his prodigal habits, by dramatizing it in the manner of allegory--a personal confrontation with the Devil--beginning: "Like Mr. Bunyan of old, I Duncan Parrenness, have dreamed a dream," and concluding the dialogue with a bitter awakening. His quite natural review of his early writing, at some unspecified time, he turns into a visit to one of the chambers of Hell, in "The Last of the

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<sup>183</sup>The Seven Seas, XXVI, 72-75.

<sup>184</sup>Ibid., 3-4.

<sup>185</sup>Life's Handicap, IV, 403-412.

Stories,"<sup>186</sup> quoting under the title Ecclesiastes 3:22. Speaking on "Literature"<sup>187</sup> at a Royal Academy Dinner, May, 1906, he describes the mysterious nature of truly great writing as a "miracle." Expressing a nostalgic appreciation of India in "Song of the Wise Children,"<sup>188</sup> he suggests the parable of The Prodigal Son.<sup>189</sup> And paying tribute to a French curé he found especially admirable he alluded to himself in terms of the humility of John the Baptist.<sup>190</sup>

Prophetic language--poetic, fictional and prosaic--proved an effective medium for Kipling to express his convictions. In "A Legend of Truth"<sup>191</sup> the major argument is one frequently made by writers, that "Fiction" is often the best means of communicating "Truth"; but the allusion to "Pilate's Question" ("What is truth?")<sup>192</sup> indicates

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<sup>186</sup>Abaft the Funnel, XXIII, 265-281.

<sup>187</sup>A Book of Words, XXIV, 3-9.

<sup>188</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 217-218.

<sup>189</sup>Lk. 15:8-32.

<sup>190</sup>"The Curé," Limits and Renewals, X, 279-280; Mk. 1:1-8.

<sup>191</sup>Debits and Credits, VIII, 205-206.

<sup>192</sup>John 18:38.

that for Kipling Truth was inseparable from Him who said He was the Truth,<sup>193</sup> and whose challenge ("To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth")<sup>194</sup> evoked Pilate's question. The poem "Zion"<sup>195</sup> combines the metaphors of Psalm 84:10 and Hebrews 12:22 into "Doorkeepers of Zion" and alludes to I Kings 18 in "The Gatekeepers of Baal" to comment on the righteousness and the unrighteousness of the two sides of the War; but the final stanza emphasizes Kipling's life-long conviction that one must choose to serve Zion if he would understand the nature of the spiritual world. In "Some Aspects of Travel," a speech addressed to the Royal Geographic Society on February 14, 1914, he said, in speaking of men who make great leaders, especially in exploration, "It is one of the mysteries of personality that virtue should go out of certain men to uphold-- literally to ennoble--their companions."<sup>196</sup> This allusion to the incident in which Jesus knew, despite the multitude

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<sup>193</sup>John 14:6.

<sup>194</sup>John 18:37.

<sup>195</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 340-341.

<sup>196</sup>A Book of Words, XXIV, 104.

surrounding Him, "that virtue had gone out of him" to heal the woman with an issue of blood<sup>197</sup> identifies Kipling's conviction that all "virtue" was spiritual in nature, coming from a Divine Source. "'Bread Upon the Waters'"<sup>198</sup> takes its title from Ecclesiastes 11:1, a wise saying often quoted but seldom, Kipling was convinced, properly implemented. The story "proves" that greed and dishonesty do not and should not pay, and that one profits by "bread" cast upon life's waters if he is skilled and persistent in the process. Kipling's frequently misunderstood attitudes toward the relationship between East and West are stated in part in "The Ballad of East and West,"<sup>199</sup> in which the key line is "Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat." This line, found in the opening and closing stanzas, makes it clear that he believed in God, in God's eventual judgment of all men, and that in that hour, whatever irreconcilable differences existed in the imperfect world-of-the-here-and-now would disappear. Furthermore, he was convinced that "two strong men" may rise above the habits and prejudices of littler people and

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<sup>197</sup> Matt. 9:18-26; Mk. 5:25-34; Lk. 8:41-56.

<sup>198</sup> The Day's Work, VI, 257-288.

<sup>199</sup> Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Verse, XXV, 217-222.

taste that sublimer justice now. His conviction that work was meant to serve mankind he dramatizes ironically in the story "The Benefactors"<sup>200</sup> in which "Honest Pete Sugden" is unaware that he is in Hell and that the "Old Man," who explains how Sugden had benefitted mankind by forcing men to find a way to do without coal, is the Devil. The gruesome details of the effects of the coal strike Sugden used for personal power make grim humor of the Devil's compliments and the appropriateness of Sugden's punishment--shovelling coal for eternity--but underline Kipling's conviction that Man's work is evaluated by God. His well-known contempt for the Liberals who dreamed of improving on Biblical concepts he satirizes in such lines as the following from "The Sending of Dana Da":<sup>201</sup> "Once upon a time, some people in India made a new Heaven and a new Earth out of broken teacups, a missing brooch or two, and a hairbrush. . . ." <sup>202</sup>

Kipling's obvious contempt for shallow and heretical substitutes for "orthodox" religion and his consistent use of the Bible and similar "orthodox" religious resources

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<sup>200</sup> Other Stories, XXIII, 593-610.

<sup>201</sup> In Black and White, II, 287-300.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid., 287.

to make a language appropriate to his insights, whether he was dealing with religious subjects, a wide range of common human experiences or his own personal experiences and convictions, clearly identifies the nature of his Prophetic Language. It also identifies the basic point of view from which his major themes, the subject of the final chapter, must be understood.

## PROPHETIC THEMES

### Basis of His Art

The three criteria for identifying an author's chief characteristics are the nature of his "vocation," the nature of his "language," and the nature of his major themes. The first chapter presented a significant number of selections that identified Kipling's dedication of his talent with a religiously oriented sense of mission and message, to establish his prophetic vocation. The second chapter reviewed his wide and significant use of religiously oriented diction, allusion, image, and form, to establish his language as prophetic. This final chapter will seek to establish the prophetic nature of his major themes--Law, Love, Reality and Truth. Recognition of the prophetic nature of Kipling's major themes--in both the identification of his purpose and the comprehensiveness of his accomplishment--furnishes the key to the intensity and the design of his art. Failure to recognize the true nature of his prophetic point of view leads critics to resent the intensity as a presumption of "certainty of knowledge" and the pre-

rogative of "moral judgment"<sup>1</sup> and to attempt to reduce his design to a less complex as well as a less exalted vision.<sup>2</sup> For some the barrier to discovering his "ultimate scheme" (without which "no great creative work is possible")<sup>3</sup> is a limited or selective acquaintance with his work; for others it is personal convictions that are offended by the element of "God and goodness" that is mixed up with his other themes.<sup>4</sup> Even those who respond sympathetically to the obviously religious tone in some selections are apt to feel that a good deal of his work is alien to religion.<sup>5</sup> If his major themes are strongly and consistently prophetic, then appreciating his works necessitates understanding--beyond their narrative and/or artistic appeal--the philosophic or religious structure that serves as their frame of reference.

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<sup>1</sup>Brown, p. 88.

<sup>2</sup>Alan Sandison, "Kipling: The Artist and the Empire," in Kipling's Mind and Art, ed. Andrew Rutherford, p. 147.

<sup>3</sup>"Kipling," The Bookman, I (October, 1891), 134.

<sup>4</sup>"Extracts from Letters of Henry James, 1890-99," Kipling: The Critical Heritage, ed. Roger Lancelyn Green, p. 69; also, T. S. Eliot, "Kipling Redivivus," The Athenaeum, No. 4645 (May 9, 1919), pp. 297-298. Eliot's attitude changed as his own religious convictions changed.

<sup>5</sup>G. K. Chesterton, "Review of Just So Stories," The Bookman, XXIII (November, 1902), 57-58.

The thesis of this study is that understanding Kipling's personal and artistic philosophy as God-centered and prophetic--that is, founded upon a God who is Creator, Ruler, Redeemer and Father of the world and consequently involved in all life's experiences to the extent that one of his chosen interpreters finds spiritual truth everywhere<sup>6</sup>--establishes a frame of reference comprehensive enough to include all of the author's emphases, from the harshest portrayals of reality<sup>7</sup> to the most sensitive explorations of non-reality.<sup>8</sup> Such an approach is not intended to minimize the ugliness or exalt the meanness of life, any more than the Bible does; rather, it calls attention to the universality and permanence of the moral values working overtly or indirectly in all Kipling's work and throws illumination on the otherwise puzzling paradoxes in his attitudes: humble<sup>9</sup> and authoritarian;<sup>10</sup> progressive<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>"A Song of the English," The Seven Seas, XXVI, 3-4.

<sup>7</sup>Charles Eliot Norton, "The Poetry of Rudyard Kipling," Atlantic Monthly, LXX (January, 1897), 112-113.

<sup>8</sup>Brander Matthews, "Mr. Kipling Strikes a Deeper Note," Literary Digest International Book Review, IX (November, 1926), 745.

<sup>9</sup>Green, Kipling: The Critical Heritage, p. 10.

<sup>10</sup>Stewart, p. 52.

<sup>11</sup>John Leslie Palmer, Rudyard Kipling, p. 36.

and anti-utopian;<sup>12</sup> pragmatic<sup>13</sup> and mystical;<sup>14</sup> cynical<sup>15</sup> and reverent.<sup>16</sup> That some such illumination of his complexity and prophetic tone is necessary is indicated when Lionel Trilling, writing in 1943, charges Kipling with "swagger and swank, with bullying, ruthlessness, and self-righteousness" and antagonism to intellect,<sup>17</sup> but requests of Andrew Rutherford, in 1964, that the republication of his essay on Kipling be footnoted "to say that if he were writing on Kipling now he would do so 'less censoriously and with more affectionate admiration.'"<sup>18</sup> And Norman MacKenzie, writing on "Kipling's Imperial Conspectus," in 1969, begins by agreeing with Noel Annan's 1960 thesis that Kipling's "Law" is the structure of Civilization, but he hastens on to point out Kipling's obvious awareness of the complexities of life and his frequent severe criticism of the most "civilized" facets of society as well as his

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<sup>12</sup>LeGallienne, "Kipling's Place in Literature," p. 245.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>14</sup>Bodelsen, Aspects of Kipling's Art, p. 6.

<sup>15</sup>Richard LeGallienne, Rudyard Kipling: A Criticism, p. 129.

<sup>16</sup>Green, Kipling and the Children, p. 120.

<sup>17</sup>The Liberal Imagination, pp. 126-127.

<sup>18</sup>Rutherford, ed. Kipling's Mind and Art, p. 85.

uninhibited sympathy with those outside the law.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, MacKenzie ends his exploration of Kipling's understanding of the British Empire by finding Kipling a man with a "wide and uncanny, almost prophetic vision," and a writer whose "unwavering honesty" often alienated the public<sup>20</sup> and the critics.

Even the critical comments of the religiously oriented Bonamy Dobrée are sadly confused for lack of a grasp of Kipling's prophetic point of view. Dobrée answers the question "What then did he live by?" with "A curious religion of his own, which probably most nearly approaches that Stoicism which was the religion of the Victorian Public School . . . [plus] . . . a sense of Oriental religions which he had absorbed when an infant, and . . . as a young man."<sup>21</sup> Attempting another approach, Dobrée writes: "To the philosopher, Kipling's solution will appear a strange mixture of predestination and will, or of nihilism opposed by the will, and eternal recurrence tempered by slow change."<sup>22</sup> Still

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<sup>19</sup>The Kipling Journal, XXXVI, No. 171 (September, 1969), 8-11.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 14-15.

<sup>21</sup>Rudyard Kipling, p. 8.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

searching for an adequate definition, Dobrée adds the following pastiche: "His sense of the divine is much Matthew Arnold's, his mystic sense not unlike Meredith's, his feeling that man moves in an indifferent universe an echo of Hardy's vision,"<sup>23</sup> and he excuses his groping with "But Kipling is by no means all of a piece: the Wesleyan parson in him is offset by the man who loves life in all its forms, and does not measure it by any man-made moral yardstick."<sup>24</sup> This chaotic attempt to make Kipling's themes derivative--from Public Schools, "infant" experiences, opposing philosophies, inherited traits or literary contemporaries--is an irresponsible use of biographical and associational data, denies Kipling's genius, and exposes the critic's inadequate understanding of a prophetic point of view. Turning from such critical confusion to Kipling's works, the student discovers a consistency of tone and theme that can only be explained by a view of life that is comprehensive and religious--the frame of reference of one whose vocation, language and message are prophetic.

The most obvious of Kipling's prophetic themes is named Law, a term Mrs. Goddard insisted Kipling always

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

capitalized because he associated it with God.<sup>25</sup> T. R. Henn found that the "background of the law, and closely-linked concept of work," were both Virgilian and Biblical.<sup>26</sup> Samuel Rutherford Crockett was convinced that Kipling believed "'in God and the angels,' . . . and still more in the Law Inexorable."<sup>27</sup> And Roger Lancelyn Green concluded that

The "Law," obedience to which plays so important a part in Kipling's philosophy, is . . . the universal "Tao" varying in externals among the races and creeds of mankind and giving the dimension of Fable to Mowgli's Jungle: to Kipling it is a Divine Ordinance.<sup>28</sup>

Certainly Kipling's concept of Law is far more than Civilization's cumulative mores or the rules that govern Mowgli's Jungle, complex as these are.

It is the structure of the universe, the structure within which and upon which all Man's efforts, responses and ideas function. Such a structure is spiritual, universal, permanent, and effective. Kipling identifies these

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<sup>25</sup>"Lawsomeness, Aloneness, Kindness," The Kipling Journal, XXIV, No. 122 (April, 1957), 9.

<sup>26</sup>Kipling, p. 10.

<sup>27</sup>"On Some Tales of Mr. Kipling's," The Bookman, VII (February, 1895), 140.

<sup>28</sup>Kipling and the Children, p. 120.

four qualities in "The Settler,"<sup>29</sup> in which he prays that all the homely, peace-time chores of restoring a war-torn land to productivity will be blessed by being done "According to Thy Law." His allusions to Genesis 3:19 ("In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread") and to Matthew 8:22 ("But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.") identify not only this Law's religious or spiritual nature but also its permanence--as old as Eden; confirmed for the Dispensation of Grace; essential to the present. Kipling is also sure it is as universal as seedtime and harvest, is effective in bringing healing to a war-scarred land and people, and in supplying the motive for all the hard work--the need to feed themselves and others. In like manner, he defines the Law in "A Song of the English."<sup>30</sup> He first identifies the spiritual nature of the Law by asserting that it is "the Lord our God Most High" Who has given the English an empire to rule. This is reinforced by his Biblical allusions, and together the acknowledgement of God's supremacy and the allusions to Hebrew history and ideology claim for the Law the permanence of divinely created design and effectiveness. That the

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<sup>29</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 271-272.

<sup>30</sup>The Seven Seas, XXVI, 3-4.

Law's modern effectiveness may be fully understood, his admonition: "Keep ye the Law--be swift in all obedience" is spelled out:

Clear the land of evil, drive the road and bridge  
the ford.  
Make ye sure to each his own  
That he reap where he hath sown;  
By the peace among Our peoples let men know we  
serve the Lord!

In the "Dedication" of Barrack-Room Ballads,<sup>31</sup> Kipling names as a qualification of his ideal men that they "know God's Law is plain." These are men who have proved its effectiveness: they have "fought and sailed and ruled and loved and made our world." Again allusions to Eden establish the permanence of this structure of life; the fellowship with God identifies its spiritual nature; its significance throughout "our world" and even "Beyond the loom of the last lone star" proclaims its universality. And in "To the True Romance,"<sup>32</sup> the most complete and complex statement of the Spirit of Creativity that Kipling served, the spiritual, universal, permanent, and effectual qualities of the Law are identified by making them an important expression of the nature of God: "Romance," the Spirit of Creativity or the Holy Spirit (the portion of the

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<sup>31</sup>XXV, 161-162.

<sup>32</sup>Many Inventions, V, xi-xiv.

Triune God that is actively present in the lives of men<sup>33</sup>) is "A veil to draw" between "Man's infirmity/ And God His Law." "The Prayer of Miriam Cohen"<sup>34</sup> is linked to the preceding poem by repeating the image of "A veil 'twixt us and Thee, Good Lord"; this poem elaborates upon the Law as an expression of God by naming "the wheel and the drift of Things . . . . Thy Works . . . . Thy Wars . . . . Thy Path, Thy Purpose," all of which are the privilege of the "Dream [that] awaits/ The soul escaped alone," but are overwhelming to living "flesh and bone." Nevertheless, Kipling was sure that to the extent of his perception, Man is expected to obey this Law, as his wide application of his theme demonstrates.

Kipling applied his concept of God's Law to every facet of life. He saw it working in and through nature, man's work, his moral or social obligations, and his spiritual responsibilities. The poem "The Settler,"<sup>35</sup> already cited as defining the Law's spiritual, universal, permanent and effectual nature, is an example of the comprehensive application of that Law. The petitionary stanza

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<sup>33</sup>John 14:12-17.

<sup>34</sup>Songs from Books, XXVII, 130.

<sup>35</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 271-272.

asks God's blessing on lowly animals, crops, man's labor and his social obligation:

Bless then, Our God, the new-yoked plough  
 And the good beasts that draw,  
 And the bread we eat in the sweat of our brow  
 According to Thy Law.  
 After us cometh a multitude--  
 Prosper the work of our hands,  
 That we may feed with our land's food  
 The folk of all our lands!

Earlier stanzas of confession and dedication have mentioned plowing, planting, tilling, irrigating, and joining in "the holy wars" against locust, murrain, floods and other enemies of agriculture. But the chief emphasis of the poem--the purpose of all the activity--is a moral and spiritual redemption of the people and the land. The first stanza acknowledges the Law's judgment (of "wrong") and its spiritual continuity ("the living and the dead"): "I will repair the wrong that was done/ To the living and the dead." This he will accomplish in obedience to the Law--which governs both nature and social relations--by planting a tree, by digging a well, and by putting his hand in the hand of his neighbor (formerly his enemy), that together they may "atone/ For the set folly . . . the black waste of it all [the South African War]." He is sure that under the Law, which governs work and spiritual values, their labor and "love shall redeem unto life." He knows that they must forget the "sin" of

spilling the blood of each other's kin, for as Christ has commanded, "The dead must bury their dead, but ye--Ye serve an host unborn." And the Law--which is really one Law for all things--will make nature respond with both abundance of food and changed spiritual attitudes: "the corn [shall] cover our evil dreams/ And the young corn our hate."

Other selections illustrate that the Law is universal. "The Law of the Jungle,"<sup>36</sup> which follows the Eden fable "How Fear Came" and thereby gains Biblical overtones, begins "Now this is the Law of the Jungle--as old and as true as the sky." The poem is a statement of Kipling's conviction that the Law that controls nature (in this case, highly intelligent animals), reflects the universal structure of the Law. While much that Kipling wrote of Mowgli and his animal friends and their jungle is more romantic than scientific, his basic assumptions are accurate. Young animals (like young human beings) are taught self-discipline for their own health as well as for the security of the group. And wolf packs and other "social" creatures establish both individual rights and group prerogatives. Kipling could see strong similarity between the law that instructed the young wolf to

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<sup>36</sup>  
The Jungle Books, XI, 85-86.

Wash daily from nose tip to tail-tip; drink  
 deeply, but never too deep;  
 And remember the night is for hunting, and  
 forget not the day is for sleep.  
 The Jackal may follow the Tiger, but, Cub,  
 when thy whiskers are grown,  
 Remember the Wolf is a hunter--go forth and  
 get food of thine own.

and the advice of the sergeant to "The Young British  
 Soldier"<sup>37</sup>:

First mind you steer clear o' the grog-sellers  
 huts  
 For they sell you Fixed Bay'nets that rots out  
 your guts--

When the cholera comes--as it will past a doubt--  
 Keep out of the wet and don't go on the shout,  
 For the sickness gets in as the liquor dies out

But the worst o' your foes is the sun over'ead:  
 You must wear your 'elmet for all that is said:  
 If 'e finds you uncovered 'e'll knock you down  
 dead.

While all the sergeant's precepts are not of equal value,  
 they do apply the Law to the recruit's physical and emo-  
 tional survival needs. The poem "The 'Eathen"<sup>38</sup> raises  
 these simple articles of Jungle Law to a still higher level  
 when the recruit learns that the outer discipline that be-  
 comes inner discipline is the key to self-respect, courage,  
 leadership--in short the making of a man. Understanding  
 that Kipling is here writing of this inexorable Law clears

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<sup>37</sup>The Barrack-Room Ballads, XXV, 194-196.

<sup>38</sup>The Seven Seas, XXVI, 145-148.

away the fog of hastily pronounced accusations of racial prejudice and love of brutality; Kipling's charge that "The 'eathen in 'is blindness bows down to wood an' stone;/ 'E don't obey no orders unless they is 'is own," and his challenge to the young soldier: "Gettin' clear o' dirtiness, gettin' done with mess,/ Gettin' shut 'o doin' things rather-more-or-less" should be seen as the difference between the man who cooperates with the Law and the one who does not. Of course, the responsibility to obey the Law is greater for the white man because he knows more of both its Source and its nature; the poor heathen is religiously limited. And just as the Jungle Law proclaims "the strength of the Pack is the Wolf, and the strength of the Wolf is the Pack," so the soldier who has learned military and personal discipline often proves the interdependence of the individual and the group: he is made Colour-Sergeant, becomes the faithful leader of his group, and when they are all first under fire, though "'E's just as sick as they are . . . 'e lifts 'em . . . through the charge that wins the day!" When Kipling presents the same point in the closing lines of the poem "The Portent":<sup>39</sup>

Cease, then, to fashion State-made sin,  
Nor give they children cause to doubt

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<sup>39</sup>Debits and Credits, VIII, 131.

That Virtue springs from iron within--  
Not lead without.

it is clear that his concept of the Law is more than "any man-made moral yardstick"<sup>40</sup> because it is the structure God built into the universe. The State sins if it departs from this universal Law, and each person must learn that the Law is inescapably part of his personal and spiritual development.

In some selections the application of the Law is demonstrated in the lives of individuals. The protagonist of "'Love O' Women'"<sup>41</sup> breaks the social code of his day in the manner his nickname suggests; but Kipling makes it clear that this rake has also broken a greater code--the Law, for he is punished by its natural manifestation when his body is destroyed by venereal disease, and by its spiritual manifestation when he faces in remorse the woman he should have loved faithfully but instead forced into prostitution. Much more complex than this story, which is one of Mulvaney's tales, are the popular but often misunderstood "Without Benefit of Clergy"<sup>42</sup> and "Beyond the Pale."<sup>43</sup> Modern readers,

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<sup>40</sup>Dobrée, Rudyard Kipling, p. 16.

<sup>41</sup>Many Inventions, V, 325-354.

<sup>42</sup>Plain Tales from the Hills, I, 139-168.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., 211-220.

who tend to value romantic love above all else, see the "villian" in these two tragedies as society's racial or religious bigotry. However, both protagonists--for quite selfish reasons--deliberately take advantage of cultural practices clearly condemned by their own culture--a truer reflection of the Law. Because the lovers they thus acquire are pretty and winsome, both men learn love--a basically good thing; but neither man seriously contemplates accepting the attendant responsibility--one clearly established by God's Law--to rescue the loved one from the dangerous situation she is in. It is also a feature of the Law that disobedience to its precepts often leads to increasingly involved conflict. The deceit and misunderstanding of the double life each man lives contributes heavily to the tragedies. While Ameera, in "Without Benefit of Clergy," seems almost innocent of the evil system that sold her to John Holden, and while her possessiveness and morbid sorrow are entirely understandable in the light of her training, her refusal to go to a healthier climate does contribute to the tragedy. In "Beyond the Pale," Bisesa is, of course, more guilty; she initiates the affair, jealously terminates it, and, with Trejago, knows from the beginning that at any moment during their clandestine hours of love discovery will lead to terrible retribution. Society, too, is culpable in

such situations to the extent that the price it would exact from those who break with social norms is often too high for any but the heroic to pay. And while some of the reasons for which English social mores condemned inter-racial marriage were valid (a fairly accurate reflection of the Law that governs human relations), some were hypocritical, a fault Kipling dealt with on a number of other occasions.<sup>44</sup> Far more reprehensible than white prudery or hypocrisy in the eyes of the Law are the practices of the non-white society that treats women as sub-human objects of male gratification. Even here, however, the brutal imprisonment and mutilation of a girl widow, in "Beyond the Pale," was not required by Indian religion or custom; it was rather the expression of the viciousness of an individual man, Bisesa's uncle, Durga Charan. But the significance of the whole matter (of both stories) for Kipling was that it was the very evil such cultural and individual attitudes represented, attitudes that victimized countless girls and women,<sup>45</sup> that the White Man had been "sent" to India to overcome--by education and sanitation,

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<sup>44</sup>"'Yoked with an Unbeliever,'" Plain Tales from the Hills, I, 47-54; "Kidnapped," ibid., 163-170; "Georgie Porgie," Life's Handicap, IV, 383-398.

<sup>45</sup>"The Song of the Women," Departmental Ditties, XXV, 92-93.

but even more by his commitment to the Law that could "clear the land of evil" and establish a peace that proved its people served the Lord.<sup>46</sup> Holden and Trejago broke the Law with tragic results: they broke its moral or social obligation so that society punished them; they broke its natural rules (psychologically in "Beyond the Pale," with regard to health in "Without Benefit of Clergy") and jealousy and disease punished them; they broke the Law's spiritual standards in their failure to accept the full responsibilities of love, and loss and guilt punished them.

It is less painful for most readers to face the Law when Kipling uses archetypes or groups. Thus, in "Natural Theology"<sup>47</sup> the reader may even laugh at the representatives of cultural periods, from primitive to modern, who suffer physical or economic retribution for their sloth, ignorance, greed and misuse of religion; but the poem's conclusion asserts not only that men are wrong to charge God with capricious affliction but also that they are responsible for learning the Law that governs His universe:

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<sup>46</sup>"A Song of the English," The Seven Seas, XXVI, 3-4; also "The White Man's Burden," The Five Nations, XXVI, 221-223, and "A Song of the White Men," Miscellaneous, XXVIII, 209.

<sup>47</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 399-401.

This was none of the good Lord's pleasure,  
 For the Spirit He breathed in Man is free;<sup>48</sup>  
 But what comes after is measure for measure,  
 And not a God that afflicteth thee.  
 As was the sowing so the reaping<sup>49</sup>  
 Is now and evermore shall be.

Perhaps it should be pointed out here that the "natural theology" Kipling believed in was not scientific determinism any more than it was the divine causality of the Dark Ages. Nor are sociological pragmatism or "Evolution" adequate theories. The title could suggest either the unscientific pantheism of primitive men or the scientific atheism of modern man; what it actually indicates is Kipling's prophetic point of view--a God-centered universe controlled by a Law designed by the Creator and as effective in physical matters as in spiritual matters. Furthermore, the reference in each stanza to the misuse of religion--as a substitute for obedience to the Law--and the Biblical allusions in the conclusion make it clear that the Law has not changed since God created Man and Paul explained His Law. If the reader accepts this prophetic point of view, he is likely to respond with hearty approval when Kipling applies the punitive power of the Law to groups that abuse

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<sup>48</sup>Gen. 2:7.

<sup>49</sup>Gal. 6:7.

man's moral or social obligations. In "The City of Brass,"<sup>50</sup> that bitter denunciation of those who think they can "decree a new earth at a birth without Labour or sorrow," the poet-prophet lists infractions of the Law that range from spiritual to practical matters. "They chose themselves prophets and priests" who would cater to their wishes; they perverted justice; they tore down defenses and replaced them with playgrounds; they disbanded their fighting men in order to spend the money on "shouters and marchers"; they "fashioned a God" they were sure would save them; and "They said: 'Who is irked by the Law? Though we may not remove it,/ If he lend us his aid in this raid, we will set him above it!'" The italics are Kipling's and while he is attacking hated "liberal" characteristics, he is also implying far more. These pride-blinded disregarders of the Law "ran panting in haste to lay waste and embitter forever/ The wellsprings of Wisdom and Strength which are Faith and Endeavour," and they were punished by God's Law, for "God granted them all things for which they had striven,/ And the heart of a beast in the place of a man's heart" and oblivion. In the poem "Justice,"<sup>51</sup> written in October, 1918, the poet

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<sup>50</sup>The Years Between XXVI, 415-418.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 419-420.

declares that the Germans, "A People and a King/ Through ancient sin grown strong," must "relearn the Law," that is, the universal Law above all thrones but God's. In "The Covenant,"<sup>52</sup> another war poem, he reproves his own nation for thinking that they "ranked above the chance of ill" and for stupidly letting themselves be duped with lies, for "God's judgment" does not alter. He reminds the guilty that they must do what their forefathers did "When their Law failed them and its stewards were bought"; they must appeal to God's mercy. Here Man's law is seen as limited in effectiveness; not so God's Law. Nevertheless, Kipling believed that man's law often provided an effective introduction to the greater Law, as he implies in "In the Manner of Men,"<sup>53</sup> when Paul tells Quabil:

"Serve Caesar. You are not canvas I can cut to advantage at present. But if you serve Caesar you will be obeying at least some sort of law. . . . If you take refuge under Caesar at sea, you may have time to think. Then I may meet you again, and we can go on with our talks. But that is as The God wills."<sup>54</sup>

Kipling understood the Law as applicable to all kinds of work, mechanical and artistic, and to the worker as well

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 330.

<sup>53</sup>Limits and Renewals, X, 197-216.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 216.

to the work. In "McAndrew's Hymn"<sup>55</sup> both men and machines acknowledge the Law and its Source. McAndrew begins "Lord, Thou hast made this world," and he comments that scars of his first typhoon are nothing to those "deep in my soul an' black . . . The sins o' four an' forty years." He also hears his engines sing ("like the Mornin' Stars for joy that they are made") the song "'Law, Order, Duty an' Restraint, Obedience, Discipline!'" When, in The Light that Failed, Maisie questions Dick's insistence that one must sacrifice himself and "live under orders" to produce good art, he replies:

"There's no question of belief or disbelief. That's the law, and you take it or refuse it as you please. I try to obey, but I can't, and then my work turns bad on my hands. Under any circumstances, remember, four-fifths of everybody's work must be bad. But the remnant is worth the trouble."<sup>56</sup>

Earlier Dick had identified the nature of that Law, when, complaining to his friend Torpenhow about public failure to appreciate true art, he said:

"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----. . . Half a dozen epicene young pagans who haven't even been to Algiers will

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<sup>55</sup>The Seven Seas, XXVI, 23-31.

<sup>56</sup>XV, 90.

tell you, first, that your notion is borrowed, and, secondly, that it isn't Art."<sup>57</sup>

In this semi-autobiographical novel, the author-hero may be brash and cynical about society, but he never questions the Source of reality ("the thing as God gave it"), and of his talent ("the powers He has given you"), and of the Law that governs both (as an artist he must obey it or fail; "young pagans" cannot recognize it.). In "'Bread Upon the Waters'"<sup>58</sup> it is, by implication, the Law that governs Engineer McPhee's successful demonstration of the Biblical admonition the title quotes: "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days."<sup>59</sup>

The Law even works within Christianity--the religion of Grace. When Kipling brings confusion and defeat to the faith and work of pious Justus and Lotta in "The Judgment of Dungara,"<sup>60</sup> he is not condemning missionary work, as his introductory praise of specifically identified missionary groups proves. Rather, he is pointing out the necessity for all men to know all the Law that applies to their specific

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid., 40.

<sup>58</sup>The Day's Work, VI, 257-288.

<sup>59</sup>Ecc. 11:1.

<sup>60</sup>In Black and White, II, 301-329.

situations. One might even say Kipling was illustrating Christ's admonition to His Disciples as they set out on their first missionary effort: "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."<sup>61</sup> In Kipling's well-known story "Lispeth"<sup>62</sup> certainly the Law that condemns dishonesty and racial bigotry monitors the reader's reactions to the conduct of the white people who lie to Lispeth rather than confront her anger. What some readers miss is the judgment of the Law that falls upon Lispeth for her refusal to accept its spiritual requirements. Kipling did not maintain that natives of India could not be spiritually fine; he did report the fact that they often were not, either because they were blinded by ignorance or evil religious teaching or were personally responsible for choosing evil rather than good. Lispeth, like most people everywhere, was a product of both inadequate spiritual training and her own wilfulness; she knew long before she discovered the perfidy of the Chaplain's wife and the young Englishman that she had insisted upon doing only what she wanted to do and frightening the Chaplain's wife into acquiescence. The full

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<sup>61</sup>Matt. 10:16.

<sup>62</sup>Plain Tales from the Hills, I, 1-8.

consequences of Lispeth's disobedience is presented in Kim, for she is, many years after her angry departure from Kotgarh, the Woman of Shemlegh, head of a tiny Hill village, but "a gather of cow-dung and grass" who hungrily begs attention of Kim.<sup>63</sup>

Kim, Kipling's finest long work and far too complex an achievement to be explained by one thematic approach, offers many illustrations of the working of the Law but especially its greater effectiveness in Western, in contrast to Eastern, religious philosophy. Contrary to such opinions as that of Jeffrey Meyers<sup>64</sup> that Kipling betrayed the highest principles of the Law by having Kim join the white man's spy system rather than--somehow--joining the Indian culture that he loved, the novel is at its deepest level an exploration of two religious philosophies of life, both spiritual, but one affirming the total nature of the Law, the other denying it. The charm of the Teshoo Lama blinds many readers to his negation of life; much of the time he is dependent for daily sustenance and safety upon those who believe they should know as much as possible about the life around them and use that knowledge to help establish the Law

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<sup>63</sup>XVI, 494.

<sup>64</sup>"The Quest for Identity in Kim," Texas Studies in Literature and Language, XII (1970), 101-110.

that will "Clear the land of evil . . . make sure to each his own" and bring "the peace among Our peoples [that will] let men know we serve the Lord!"<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, the Lama's denial of the unity of the whole Law, his dogma that the body is a lie and a delusion, nearly succeeds in killing Kim and drowning himself. In contrast, the Law that decrees that all things have their places and each may serve the Lord<sup>66</sup> reasserts its supremacy when Kim feels

the wheels of his being lock up anew on the world without. . . . Roads were meant to be walked on, houses to be lived in, cattle to be driven, fields to be tilled, and men and women to be talked to. They were all real and true.<sup>67</sup>

Another of Kipling's finest stories, "The Miracle of Purun Bhagat,"<sup>68</sup> describes a "native" Kipling rated high above most "white" men spiritually but demonstrates again Kipling's considered judgment of the difference between the Eastern and Western understanding of the Law. Purun Dass for sixty years fulfilled every requirement an active world could demand of him. Then he turned his back on all this

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<sup>65</sup>"A Song of the English," The Seven Seas, XXVI, 3.

<sup>66</sup>Acts 10:15.

<sup>67</sup>Kim, XVI, 516-517.

<sup>68</sup>The Jungle Books, XI, 291-309.

and, as Purun Bhagat, set out as a holy man, dependent upon the charity of the wayside, that he might find a quiet place to "sit down and get knowledge."<sup>69</sup> He found such a place and lost track of time, as the nearby Hill villagers fed him and the wild things kept him company. Then one night the wild things warned him of a land slide--and the old involved-with-the-world ways reasserted themselves: "He was no longer a holy man, but Sir Purun Dass, K.C.I.E., Prime Minister of no small State, a man accustomed to command, going out to save life."<sup>70</sup> Surely Kipling is saying here, as he does in Kim, that there are admirable qualities in the Eastern ideals of holiness but that the Law of life, the Law God built into the universe, demands both body and soul,<sup>71</sup> and that a spiritual attitude utterly detached from reality is dangerous in the face of the Law that governs the universe and unworthy the Lord who created that universe. As Kipling puts it in "The Sons of Martha,"<sup>72</sup> those who know the Law "do not preach that their God will rouse them a little before the nuts work loose." And in

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid., 307.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., 307.

<sup>71</sup>Kim, XVI, 504.

<sup>72</sup>Traffics and Discoveries, VII, 193.

"Kaspar's Song in 'Varda,'" <sup>73</sup> he charges that those "three-dimensional preachers" who say "'Heaven is beautiful, Earth is ugly,'" cause spiritual "death!"

Kipling's theme of Law is prophetic because he saw the Law as the structural design of the Creator, hence, spiritual, universal, permanent and effective. He found proof of these qualities in situations that embraced nature, man's work, his moral obligations and his spiritual responsibilities. He found it universal, from the simple world of animals to the complex world of civilized man. He found it controlling the individual, the archetype and the nation. He found it the rule-book for both work and workers, whether the task was machines or art. He even found it intrinsic to religion, evaluating both the believer and the basic philosophy.

#### God's Love

Kipling's second major theme is Love. Since his concept of the Law is synonymous with the structure of the universe, divinely ordained and maintained, it is not possible to separate Law from the other major themes of Love, Reality and Truth. But tracing his use of Love as

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<sup>73</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 372-374.

a theme both corrects some misunderstanding of individual works and supports his prophetic viewpoint. Contrary to the popular notion that Kipling wrote little on romantic love,<sup>74</sup> a very respectable percentage of his stories and poems deals with this perennial favorite.<sup>75</sup> J. M. S.

Tompkins finds love pervasive in Kipling's work, although she specifies "especially family love and the friendship between men."<sup>76</sup> But by implication at least, she denies Kipling's prophetic concept of Love by identifying God's Mercy as one of the dark mysterious abysses<sup>77</sup> about which Kipling "claimed" no knowledge.<sup>78</sup> Noel Annan also cuts out any truly prophetic quality in Kipling's understanding of love. In discussing Kim, Annan sees both Kim and the Lama

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<sup>74</sup>Noel Annan, "Kipling the Conservative," The Kipling Journal, XXII, No. 113 (April, 1955), 4.

<sup>75</sup>Slightly more than a third (56 out of 163) of his short stories for adults and at least five of his Puck of Pook's Hill and Rewards and Fairies stories are chiefly concerned with romantic love or use it significantly; three of his five novels are romances, while "love" poetry is found from his Schoolboy Lyrics to his final collection, Limits and Renewals.

<sup>76</sup>The Art of Rudyard Kipling, p. 119.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., p. 185.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., p. 197.

finding "enlightenment and freedom--the comprehension of the order of things--through love,"<sup>79</sup> but this "enlightenment and freedom" is utterly earth-bound because Annan insists that "Kipling . . . regarded the truth of religion as irrelevant"<sup>80</sup> since it merely expresses men's aspirations and is, like his "Law"<sup>81</sup> and his "morality,"<sup>82</sup> purely a social product. No adequate statement of Christian dogma concerning love would presume to claim more than limited knowledge of God's Love, but there is considerable evidence to support the conclusion that Kipling understood human love as a reflection of Divine Love and Divine Love as the most powerful creative force in the universe, transcending all sociological limitations--a force spiritual, universal, eternal and effective.

Kipling defined his concept of Love as he did all his prophetic themes--as spiritual, universal, eternal and effective--because he understood it as a major expression of the nature of God, a God Who had created a universe

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<sup>79</sup>"Kipling's Place in the History of Ideas," Victorian Studies, III (1959-60), 344.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., 332.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., 328.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., 347.

in which Love was both creative and redemptive, the major means of establishing the divine-human partnership. He saw human love as a reflection of God's Love, worthy and attractive to the extent that it resembled that Perfect Love and ignoble to the extent that it ignored its Source. The most comprehensive poetic statement of Kipling's theme of Love is found in the poem "Rahere."<sup>83</sup> When the powerful Court Jester for whom the poem is named is stricken with Melancholy ("a Horror of Great Darkness"), Gilbert the Physician advises him that it is "the Spirit which abhorreth all excess" (Rahere has an excess of wealth, wit, power and fame) that is working to purge him. But not until Rahere sees human love victorious over all adverse circumstances (a healthy woman lovingly tending her leperous husband under a gallows) can Gilbert identify the Spirit that seeks to cure Rahere:

"So it comes,--it comes," said Gilbert, "as it  
came when Life began.  
'Tis a motion of the Spirit that revealed God  
to man  
In the shape of Love exceeding, which regards  
not taint or fall,  
Since in perfect Love, saith Scripture, can be  
no excess at all.

"Hence the eye that sees no blemish--hence the  
hour that holds no shame.

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<sup>83</sup>Debits and Credits, VIII, 95-97.

Hence the Soul assured the Essence and the Substance are the same.

Nay, the meanest need not miss it, though the mightier pass it by;

For it comes--it comes," said Gilbert, "and, thou seest, it does not die!"

Love is here defined as a Spirit, one that "came when Life began." Its purpose is to reveal God to man; it is universally available; it never dies; it is stronger than any "taint or fall." And through it the Soul discovers that "God is love" ("the Essence and the Substance are the same"); in fact, the "perfect Love" named in Scripture and the revelation of God as love are joined with the declaration that he who knows not love cannot know God in that beautiful definition of love found in I John 4:7-21, which begins: "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love." Kipling's prophetic point of view stands squarely on Scripture in this instance.

Kipling applied this concept of Love to all the usual--and a few unusual--interpretations of Man's experience with love. He recognized Man's need to believe in God's mercy and compassion and the consequent importance of God's acts of redemptive love. This is most clearly

portrayed in his parable-like poem "Cold Iron."<sup>84</sup> The situation of the parable is a war-like Baron's siege of the castle of "the King his liege," the Baron's defeat, and his conviction that when his conqueror speaks to him kindly he is being mocked--until the King blesses the Wine, breaks and blesses the Bread, and shows him His pierced hands. The King forgives the Baron's treason and redeems his "fall." The Baron kneels and acknowledges that "Cold Iron . . . Iron out of Calvary is master of men all!" In the poem "A Nativity"<sup>85</sup> it is a review of God's two great acts of redemptive Love, the Incarnation ("The Babe," "A Star") and the Crucifixion ("The Cross," "Easter Day") that leads the mother lamenting her son's death to the assurance that "It is well" with her child. It is part of the same Act of Love--Mary Magdalene's meeting the risen Christ in the Garden--that Kipling uses as the basis of his story "The Gardener"<sup>86</sup> and the poem "The Burden."<sup>87</sup> The first emphasizes God's compassion for the sinful as well as the sorrowing; the second emphasizes the life-after-death nature of God's intent for human love. These

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<sup>84</sup>Rewards and Fairies, XIII, 269-270.

<sup>85</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 356-357.

<sup>86</sup>Debits and Credits, VIII, 285-299.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., 301-302.

examples assert Kipling's belief in traditional religious beliefs concerning God's Love; in the beautiful little poem "The Answer"<sup>88</sup> he claims that God continues to Act in lesser ways to lead each human soul to eternal salvation. The poem pictures God responding graciously to the complaint of a fallen Rose at its untimely fate. He asks the Rose what voices she heard when she fell; when she repeats the question of an observant child and the wise answer of a religious father, He points out that just such a spiritual awakening was His intent. The Rose dies content; "While he who questioned why the flower fell/ Caught hold of God and saved his soul from Hell." Although God declares that "before we smote the Dark in twain . . . Time, Tide, and Space, We bound unto the task/ That thou shouldst fall, and such an one should ask," this is not, as a hasty reading might assume, either Islamic Kismet or Calvinistic Predestination. God is said to have arranged an unusual natural event to arouse a child's curiosity, but the child must make the crucial decision to accept the intent of an act of God.

Kipling recognized that for many minds so simple an act would not be insufficient, that some men thought in

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<sup>88</sup>The Seven Seas, XXVI, 53.

cosmic terms and others were too aware of mankind's many imperfections to trust the sufficiency of God's Love; to these doubters Kipling presented his own faith in traditional promises of God's redemptive intent. The poem "In the Matter of One Compass"<sup>89</sup> uses a refrain that recalls the Medieval and Renaissance theory that the universe is upheld by God's love. The line "By Love upheld, by God allowed" is used twice; the third use of the line shifts the emphasis from God's sustaining, permissive control of natural forces and men to a redemptive purpose: "By Love recalled by God allowed." This refrain is sung by the Compass, symbol of a guiding principle built into the universe. Again in the guise of Medieval language, "An Astrologer's Song"<sup>90</sup> asserts that "The Planets that love us" and "the Stars in their courses/ Do fight on our side." In such a universe we can be sure that:

No Power can unmake us  
 Save that which has made.  
 Nor yet beyond reason  
 Nor hope shall we fall--  
 All things have their season,  
 And mercy crowns all.

Kipling found confirmation of this promise in the convictions of one of his favorite "prophets," Paul, who was sure

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<sup>89</sup>Miscellaneous, XXVIII, 188-189.

<sup>90</sup>Rewards and Fairies, XIII, 467-469.

that nothing could separate him from the "love of God."<sup>91</sup> Even in war-time, Kipling had faith in the promises of God's love. In the unusual poem "The Sack of the Gods"<sup>92</sup> cosmic warfare and love between gods seem to overshadow the suffering or ordinary men and women, but the final lines of the poem reveal the poet's conviction that faith in Scriptural promises of God's Love would "open the eyes that are blind with hate" and join "the hands of foes" as well as redeem men for eternity: "He never wasted a leaf or a tree. Do you think He would squander souls?"<sup>93</sup> And in the story "On the Gate: A Tale of '16"<sup>94</sup> Kipling presents considerably more than a witty picture<sup>95</sup> of the strain war casualties might be imagined to place on traditional facilities for getting the dead properly settled in immortality. He portrays St. Peter and all his assistants--Joan of Arc, John Calvin, John the Beloved, a redeemed Judas Iscariot, etc.--delighted with the promise of "Samuel Two, Double Fourteen" that God desires to redeem even the most pathetic

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<sup>91</sup>Rom. 8:38-39.

<sup>92</sup>Songs from Books, XXVII, 11-12.

<sup>93</sup>Matt. 5:9; 10:29-31; Lk. 4:16-21.

<sup>94</sup>Debits and Credits, VIII, 227-249.

<sup>95</sup>Tompkins, p. 213.

human spirits by some means--even a limited time in Hell.

And Kipling was sure that God could and did use other means than traditional church dogma or ritual to express His redemptive love for men. One such means was the love between men and their pets, especially dogs. The poem "Dinah in Heaven"<sup>96</sup> precedes the story "The Woman in His Life."<sup>97</sup> In the story a loving servant and a little black Aberdeen dog save a war veteran from nightmares and alcoholism. In the poem both the dog and her master are admitted to Heaven. In "Garm--a Hostage"<sup>98</sup> Kipling pits discipline against love and reveals that both tough little Ortheris and his dog are obedient to discipline but they sicken unto death without love. He explores a more complex relationship between a dog and its owner in "The Dog Hervey,"<sup>99</sup> but again love is strong enough to cure alcoholism, a melancholy dog, and a serious case of inherited guilt.

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<sup>96</sup> Limits and Renewals, X, 33-35.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 31-61.

<sup>98</sup> Actions and Reactions, VIII, 351-372.

<sup>99</sup> A Diversity of Creatures, IX, 115-138.

A more unusual "means" used by God to redeem men to His Love--one especially dear to Kipling--was mirth. He identifies humor as one of the three ways in which a man may save his brother's soul in "The Jester."<sup>100</sup> And in the beautiful, cosmic poem "The Legend of Mirth"<sup>101</sup> the Seraph Mirth is sent by "the Word"<sup>102</sup> to teach the Four Archangels, Raphael, Gabriel, Michael, and Azrael, a sense of humor that will save them from over-zealousness and pride. When their laughter rings through "the abysmal Night" where "blank worlds" wait in "the womb of Darkness to be born," even the souls in Hell have hope that "They are not damned from human brotherhood." And in their new understanding that humility and compassion need a sense of humor, the Four Archangels tell "their tale against themselves" and receive "the Peace and Pardon of the Lord!" Kipling puts in one stanza of his prayer-poem "The Children's Song"<sup>103</sup> "Delight in simple things," "Mirth that has no bitter springs," "Forgiveness," and "Love to all men." Kipling was sure that Mirth was "Wiser than all the Norns,"<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>100</sup>Songs from Books, XXVII, 103.

<sup>101</sup>A Diversity of Creatures, IX, 289-292.

<sup>102</sup>John 1:1, 14.

<sup>103</sup>Songs from Books, XXVII, 93-94.

<sup>104</sup>"The Playmate," Limits and Renewals, X, 105.

was introduced into men's lives by "The selfsame power" that shaped "His planet and His Rose,"<sup>105</sup> and was not only essential to those who sought to witness to the Christian Faith<sup>106</sup> but might effectively open a man's soul to the healing power of God's Love.<sup>107</sup>

Kipling understood God's Love as a Creative Force. In "Sussex"<sup>108</sup> he declares "God gave all men all earth to love," because He wished men to be like Him and "of our love create our earth/ And see that it is good." In "To the True Romance"<sup>109</sup> the Spirit which is at one time called "Charity," that pseudonym of Love used in the great Love Chapter of the Bible, I Corinthians 13, is said to "teach all lovers speech/ And Life all mystery." It also is the Source of all "fair design/ In Thought and Craft and Deed," the guide of "Captains" of progress, and the inspiration of "new Beauty." And in "My New-Cut Ashlar"<sup>110</sup> Kipling insists that this

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<sup>105</sup>"The Necessitarian," Traffics and Discoveries, VII, 161.

<sup>106</sup>"The Conversion of St. Wilfrid," Rewards and Fairies, XIII, 439-460.

<sup>107</sup>"The Miracle of Saint Jubanus," Limits and Renewals, X, 277-295.

<sup>108</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 213-216.

<sup>109</sup>Many Inventions, V, xi-xiv.

<sup>110</sup>Life's Handicap, IV, 413-414.

Eden-like pattern of creativity is one of the major expressions of God's entire purpose for Creation--constantly re-establishing the divine-human partnership:

Who, lest all thought of Eden fade,  
Bring'st Eden to the craftsman's brain--  
Godlike to muse o'er his own Trade  
And manlike stand with God again!

Kipling believed that even the imperfect expression of Love found among average human beings was creative in that it was the motivation of many efforts that served others and brought improvement and fulfillment to individuals. In "An Imperial Rescript"<sup>111</sup> it is a girl's laugh that makes each man think of the girl he loves ("Saidie, Mimi, or Olga, Gretchen, or Mary Jane" and awakes in him the Spirit that makes him refuse the "German Kaiser's" offer of enslaved-security. Such concern for others is the basis of successful leadership, as Kipling portrays it in Bobby Wicks,<sup>112</sup> Orde and Tallentrie,<sup>113</sup> and "The Brushwood Boy."<sup>114</sup> He uses the words of a "follower" to describe such a leader: "'All the years I have known So-and-so, I've never known him

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<sup>111</sup>Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Verse, XXV, 297-299.

<sup>112</sup>"Only a Subaltern," Under the Deodars, III, 93-113.

<sup>113</sup>"The Head of the District," Life's Handicap, IV, 109-138.

<sup>114</sup>The Day's Work, VI, 329-370.

to say whether he was cold or hot, wet or dry, sick or well; but I've never known him forget a man who was."<sup>115</sup> It is love that brings Mowgli to contribute his special talents to the general welfare in "In the Rukh,"<sup>116</sup> and that gives courage and fulfillment to the lowly Muslim ferryman and the Hindu girl-widow he loves in "In Flood Time."<sup>117</sup> It is the motivation of many of the English efforts to improve the life of their imperial subjects, even when those uninitiated in the ways of God's Love find "the English mad" to give of "their treasure" to educate their former enemies.<sup>118</sup> Human acts motivated by Love are most creative when they result in a response of love, as they do in such efforts as the Lady Dufferin Fund to bring medical aid to the women of India.<sup>119</sup>

Kipling found God's Love working in and through human beings a powerful force, whether it was properly or improper-

<sup>115</sup>"Some Aspects of Travel," A Book of Words, XXIV, 104.

<sup>116</sup>Many Inventions, V, 267-301.

<sup>117</sup>In Black and White, II, 273-285.

<sup>118</sup>"Kitchener's School," The Five Nations, XXVI, 233-234.

<sup>119</sup>"The Song of the Women," Departmental Ditties and Other Verse, XXV, 92-93.

ly used. In "An Habitation Enforced"<sup>120</sup> the central characters find health and fulfillment when they relate their love to all facets of life--ordinary social relations, church attendance, charitable concerns, working skills, home building, acceptance of death, involvement in birth. The illicit lovers trying desperately to meet--in Hell--in "Uncovenanted Mercies"<sup>121</sup> win a measure of pity, even hope for eventual redemption, by the strength of their love. The man passes the test of "Ultimate Breaking Strain" by choosing his love with all its pain rather than the erasure of its memory offered him by a fiend-physician. And Grace Ashcroft's love for Harry Mockler, in "The Wish House,"<sup>122</sup> does "count" toward her eventual redemption because it is strong enough to make her willing to sacrifice her comfort and health to maintain his well-being. It leads Mrs. Delville, a woman whose appearance and conduct leads Mrs. Hawksby to label her "A Second Rate Woman,"<sup>123</sup> to defy scorn and risk her life to save the life of a child choking with diphtheria, despite the loss of her own child from the

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<sup>120</sup>Actions and Reactions, VIII, 307-348.

<sup>121</sup>Limits and Renewals, X, 323-346.

<sup>122</sup>Debits and Credits, VIII, 69-93.

<sup>123</sup>Under the Deodars, III, 71-94.

same disease. It can--when misused--turn a quiet, cold, proper spinster like "Mary Postgate"<sup>124</sup> into an inhuman avenger. Even for a nation, Love is a powerful force, as the poem "The Young Queen"<sup>125</sup> states; the Old Queen, the Spirit of England, speaks to the Young Queen, symbol of Australia, on the day that country is admitted to the Commonwealth, concerning the best gift that can be bestowed upon a nation: peace and growth are available at the discretion of God, but "thy people's love" is most to be desired of human gifts. Kipling feels that God approves of strong human love, even when it rearranges divine plans. So great is the blind Miss Florence's love for children that she is permitted to entertain some child spirits that prefer her beautiful home to Heaven, in the story "They."<sup>126</sup> The poem that precedes the story, "The Return of the Children,"<sup>127</sup> presents "Mary the Mother" taking the "Keys" from St. Peter, unlocking the Gates of Heaven to let the children go home; then Christ approves with: "Shall I that have suffered the Children to come to Me hold them against their will?"<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>124</sup>A Diversity of Creatures, IX, 371-391.

<sup>125</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 235-237.

<sup>126</sup>Traffics and Discoveries, VII, 271-274.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid., 273-274.

<sup>128</sup>Matt. 19:13-15; Mk. 10:13-16; Lk. 18:15-17.

And Kipling presents a similar picture of God's loving response to human affection for familiar places and activities, in "The Last Chantey."<sup>129</sup> Quoting Revelation 21:1 as a starting point, the poem has the Lord consult Angels and Souls, after Judgment Day, concerning the gathering up of the seas. When those who lived and died on the seas express a preference for their former activities over "singing in Paradise," God establishes the seas for all eternity that they may continue to serve Him there.

But the most important quality of Love in human experience is that it leads men to spiritual maturity--the emulation of its Divine Nature and for some a recognition of its Divine Source. Friendship love sustains and guides the spiritual maturing of Parnesius and Pertinax,<sup>130</sup> of Sir Richard and Hugh,<sup>131</sup> of Mulvaney.<sup>132</sup> It is love purified by suffering that changes hate to sympathy in

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<sup>129</sup>The Seven Seas, XXVI, 16-18.

<sup>130</sup>"A Centurian of the Thirtieth," Puck of Pook's Hill, XIII, 105-123; "On the Great Wall," ibid., 127-146; "The Winged Hats," ibid., 149-168.

<sup>131</sup>"Young Men at the Manor," ibid., 27-46 "The Knights of Joyous Venture," ibid., 49-73; "Old Men at Pevensey," ibid., 77-100.

<sup>132</sup>"The Madness of Private Ortheris," Plain Tales from the Hills, I, 339-350; "With the Main Guard," Soldiers Three, II, 57-76.

"Dayspring Mishandled."<sup>133</sup> It is love instructed by Christian charity that lifts the heroine of "The Record of Bedalia Herodsfoot"<sup>134</sup> from slum standards to saintly martyrdom. It is love that finally overcomes narrow piety in "The House Surgeon."<sup>135</sup> And it is love that transforms that supposedly cold-blooded Game of the secret police in India into the Game of Life for Kim.<sup>136</sup> Kipling makes it clear that the Little Friend of All the World, is loved by those who train him, Colonel Creighton, Mahbub Ali, Lurgan, Babu Hurree,<sup>137</sup> but he makes sure that Kim also learns to love-- not just the Lama, but Mahbub Ali and the Sahiba, all three of whom call him "sons," and even Lurgan and Hurree to the extent of appreciation and loyalty, before he is ready to play the larger Game, the Game of Life. In tragic contrast, it is Maisie's inability to love that is the failure in The Light That Failed;<sup>138</sup> because she cannot love, she will never know spiritual maturity in either art or human

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<sup>133</sup>Limits and Renewals, X, 1-27.

<sup>134</sup>Many Inventions, V, 355-384.

<sup>135</sup>Actions and Reactions, VIII, 533-564.

<sup>136</sup>Kim, XVI, 178-525.

<sup>137</sup>Ibid., 351, 368, 384, 389.

<sup>138</sup>XV, 1-242.

relations. But it is the spiritual maturity of the Reverend Amos Barraclough that enables him to face Learoyd's jealousy with courage and kindness and save Learoyd from an act that would have destroyed his love and damned his soul, in "on Greenhaw Hill."<sup>139</sup>

Kipling's theme of Love should be understood as prophetic because for him Love began with the nature of God and spread from there throughout the universe such a God created. Furthermore, it was both redemptive and creative, a major means of establishing the divine-human partnership by endowing human beings with spiritual maturity. To deny either the nature of Love or its power among men is, for Kipling, heresy. As he puts it in "A Pilgrim's Way,"<sup>140</sup> the people must not doubt God's Love ("the frantic folk who sinfully declare/ There is no pardon for their sin"), and a poet-prophet must lay aside "every pride . . . That bars me from a brother's side" and be purged of "all heresies of thought and speech and pen" that might interfere with the faith ("in Life and Death and to Eternity") that God loves His People and that this is the prime requisite for his prophet.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>139</sup>Life's Handicap, IV, 65-88.

<sup>140</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 396-397.

<sup>141</sup>Lk. 10:27-37.

God's Reality

Kipling's third major theme deals with many of the "facts of life" that are generally described as realism-- such harsh realities as discipline, work, war, suffering, the impersonal forces of nature, and death. But Kipling's prophetic point of view insisted that God had created this Reality and that He was still working in and through it; Reality was therefore inseparable from God's Design and is understandable only in spiritual, universal and eternal terms. It is natural that critics should choose to emphasize one or another of Kipling's realistic themes, but it is unfortunate that in doing so they should overlook the prophetic framework that gives them all depth, consistency and sincerity. Thus, Tompkins concludes her very perceptive discussion of Kipling's many explorations of work, suffering, death, and mystery with an apology:

It is not claimed that there is anything unusual about the point of view illustrated in this chapter. It could be considered as a natural result of a Methodist heredity, a wide view of the world, and the intellectual climate at the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>142</sup>Tompkins, p. 221.

Alan Sandison, bent on proving that "Kipling's artistic inspiration emerges 'en politique,'"<sup>143</sup> finds that the forces ranged against the individual, especially in Kipling's Indian material, are both physically and morally overwhelming<sup>144</sup> and all references to "religion, law, customs, morality, and the rest," are just "the paraphernalia of self-reassurance."<sup>145</sup> C. S. Lewis asserts that "Kipling is first and foremost the poet of work."<sup>146</sup> But starting from this position, he finds Kipling's "world . . . monstrous," and so shifts to his theory that Kipling's great variety of points-of-view are not inconsistencies in a basic philosophy but expressions of a personal need to belong to an "inner Ring," regardless of its purpose or character.<sup>147</sup> This lame-duck theory reduces "a very great artist"<sup>148</sup> to one "who is weary and skeptical," a "Pagan" whose whole energy "goes into his worship of the

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<sup>143</sup>"The Artist and the Empire," in Kipling's Mind and Art, ed. by Andrew Rutherford, p. 147.

<sup>144</sup>Ibid., p. 155.

<sup>145</sup>Ibid., p. 164.

<sup>146</sup>"Kipling's World," The Kipling Journal, XXV, No. 127 (September, 1958), 10.

<sup>147</sup>Ibid., No. 128 (December, 1958), 8.

<sup>148</sup>Ibid., No. 127 (September, 1958), 8.

little demigods or daemons in the foreground--the Traders, the Sides, the Inner Rings. Their credentials he hardly examines. These servants he has made masters; these half-gods exclude the gods."<sup>149</sup> The chief purpose of this study is not to expose the inadequate or distorted interpretations of Kipling's work but to discover within that work evidence that will identify his basic philosophy, reveal the consistency of his point of view and furnish a framework comprehensive enough to resolve the contradictions narrower theories produce.

Kipling identified his concept of Reality in the "l'Envoi" to The Seven Seas, better known as "When Earth's Last Picture Is Painted,"<sup>150</sup> when he asserts that the goal of each creative soul is to "draw the Thing as he sees It for the God of Things as They are!" Here is his conviction that creative work is the meaning of life; here the emphasis on individual but perceptive appraisal of life; here the absolute union of the spiritual and the physical, of God and "reality." He further defines his concept of Reality

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<sup>149</sup>Ibid., No. 128 (December, 1958), 11. It is hard to tell whether this is written as satiric comment or in ignorance of Kipling's "A Servant When He Reigneth," Songs from Books, XXVII, 84-85.

<sup>150</sup>XXVI, 157.

in "The Explorer."<sup>151</sup> He names God the Designer of History ("God took care to hide that country till He judged His people ready"); he acknowledges the importance of natural resources and their availability ("easy grades," "unharnessed rapids wasting fifty thousand head an hour," "leagues of water-frontage," "axe-ripe woods," etc.); he describes the impersonal forces that challenge men ("the Norther . . . Froze and killed the plainsbred ponies," and the desert drove him crazy and turned his "toes all black and raw."); and he points out the evil of the human injustice that will incorrectly award credit for the opening up of the new country ("I know who'll take the credit--all the clever chaps that followed--/ Came, a dozen men together--never knew my desert-fears). But the key to this and all of Kipling's statements on Reality is the spiritual perceptiveness that enabled a man to hear the Whisper of God, envision the "cities" God planned for His people, and realize that his reward was paid by God--paid in the realization of fulfillment in the divine-human partnership. For the issue is not whether or not Kipling wrote realistically of work, discipline, evil, the impersonal forces of nature and

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<sup>151</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 200-204.

death, but whether or not these fit into his prophetic framework.

When Kipling applied his prophetic point of view to the theme of work, he found men's ordinary work illuminated by God's Reality. At the lowest level of spiritual perception, men may serve God's will without knowing it. Thus "The Voortrekker,"<sup>152</sup> desiring loneliness, works his "seaworn sail in the shadow of new skies" or struggles to "win his food from the desert rude," unknowing that he is fulfilling God's design. Still other workers establish a very simple working relationship with God through a commonsense appraisal of their personal needs. Such is "Mulholland's Contract."<sup>153</sup> Mulholland promises God that if He will get him safely ashore from the midst of the storm-maddened cattle on the lower deck, he will "exalt His name!" While Mulholland is recovering from his injuries, he asks to be allowed to "preach Religion, handsome an' out of the wet," but God--realistic about Mulholland's talents and training--sends him back to the cattle-boats, to preach against "drinkin' an' swearin'," fighting with a knife, and gambling. Mulholland accepts both the harsh circumstances

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<sup>152</sup>Songs from Books, XXVI, 77.

<sup>153</sup>The Seven Seas, XXVI, 60-62.

of his ministry ("smit an' bruised, as warned would be the case")<sup>154</sup> and its effectiveness (he needs no knife or pistol, he never loses a steer, and he leads some men "up to Grace") as proof of God's involvement in the work of ordinary men. "McAndrew's Hymn"<sup>155</sup> presents the mature spiritual insights of a man who understands the "romance" of all productive effort, its spiritual quality. McAndrew properly calls the unimaginative "romanticists" who see romance only in the past "Damned ijjits!" They are not only fools<sup>156</sup> but very much in danger of damning themselves. By contrast, McAndrew believes that "From coupler-flange to spindle-guide I see Thy Hand, O God." Furthermore, he can be honest before God, proud of his service of his kind, wryly admitting that while "Hail, Snow and Ice . . . praise the Lord," he wishes he had anither route or they anither kirk," and very sure that the efficient performance of machines is praise equal to that of the "Mornin' Stars." Nowhere has Kipling more beautifully insisted upon God's concern with ordinary work than in "The Supports."<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>154</sup>Mk. 5:27-28.

<sup>155</sup>The Seven Seas, XXVI, 23-31.

<sup>156</sup>Ps. 14:1-2; 53:1-2.

<sup>157</sup>Debits and Credits, VIII, 251-253.

In this Te Deum the Seraphs praise "Him Who bade the  
Heavens abide yet cease not from their motion" for

. . . the unregardful hours that grind us in  
our places  
With the burden on our backs, the weather in  
our faces.

Not for any Miracle of easy Loaves and Fishes,  
But for doing, 'gainst our will, work against  
our wishes--  
Such as finding food to fill daily-emptied  
dishes.

For "He Who used the clay that clings on our boots to make  
us" knows that daily toil, even petty creeds and  
trivial ritual and "the everyday affair of business, meals,  
and clothing" serve as "a bulkhead 'twixt Despair and the  
Edge of Nothing," and may eventually lead even the apostate  
to salvation. For, as he puts it in "The Glory of the  
Garden,"<sup>158</sup> "the Glory . . . lies in more than meets the  
eye"--it lies in discovering two great truths about Reality,  
that everything beautiful depends upon hard work and that  
all true work makes the worker a partner of the God Who  
so designed Reality.

When Kipling wrote of the extraordinary work of the  
world, he found God's participation even more evident. As

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<sup>158</sup>Later Songs from Books, XXVII, 292-293.

an artist, Kipling insisted that his own best work was written by his Daemon,<sup>159</sup> and that the true artist is only the tool of a greater Source.<sup>160</sup> In matters of Empire, he reminded his people that they dare not forget under Whose Hand they held dominion;<sup>161</sup> for it is "the Lord our God Most High" Who "hath made the deep as dry" and "Smote for us a pathway to the ends of all the Earth."<sup>162</sup> Furthermore, it is His will that men "drive the road and bridge the ford" and do anything else that is necessary to establish a righteous peace, proof that they serve the Lord. In "Dedication" to Barrack-Room Ballads<sup>163</sup> he characterizes God as "master of every trade" and toiling daily to make new Edens, and he feels that those who are in that paradise have a right to fellowship with God because they "fought and sailed and ruled and loved and made our world," which means "they served His world." He sums up his prophetic view of work in "'Non Nobis Domine!'"<sup>164</sup> when he declares

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<sup>159</sup> Something of Myself, XXIV, 502-503.

<sup>160</sup> Haggard, p. 260.

<sup>161</sup> "Recessional," The Five Nations, XXVI, 316-317.

<sup>162</sup> "A Song of the English," The Seven Seas, XXVI, 304.

<sup>163</sup> XXV, 161-162.

<sup>164</sup> Miscellaneous, XXVIII, 291.

that all praise belongs only to God because it is through Him that "All knowledge or device/ That Man has reached or wrought," is achieved; in fact God is the "Power by Whom we live."

One facet of Kipling's theme of Reality that often is misunderstood by those unaware of his prophetic frame of reference is Discipline. Few people would deny that discipline is a very large part of skill, or that skill is necessary to many real situations. What they are reluctant to accept is its spiritual significance. For Kipling there was no question of God's intent in making Discipline such an essential part of Reality. He states this succinctly in "The Wonder":<sup>165</sup>

Body and Spirit I surrendered whole  
To harsh Instructors--and received a soul . . .  
If mortal man could change me through and through  
From all I was--what may The God not do?

And he was sure that "The Hour of the Angel"<sup>166</sup> arrives sooner or later for each individual, at which time the sum of all his past acts, habits, thoughts and passions would

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<sup>165</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 408.

<sup>166</sup>Stalky & Co., XIV, 25. Ithuriel was that Archangel whose spear had the magic property of showing everyone exactly and truthfully what he was.

bring victory or ignoble defeat. It is the discipline of years of frontier living that makes it possible for "The Explorer"<sup>167</sup> to survive and complete his exploration of a wilderness, discipline of both body and spirit. It is discipline founded upon the Christian religion that makes the White Man set out to accomplish the impossible: fight the savage wars of peace, feed the famine hungry, rid the land of pestilence, train frightened, sullen peoples to govern themselves aright. He must be disciplined to patience, to humility, to frustration, to unselfishness, because, as Kipling shows by Biblical allusion ("Have done with childish days"<sup>168</sup>), these characteristics are the mark of spiritual maturity and the proper use of God's Reality.<sup>169</sup> When he thinks of patriotism and discipline, he exalts the latter to a religious duty:

Teach us to rule ourselves always,  
Controlled and cleanly night and day;  
That we may bring, if need arise,  
No maimed or worthless sacrifice.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>167</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 200-204.

<sup>168</sup>I Cor. 13:11-12.

<sup>169</sup>"The White Man's Burden," The Five Nations, XXVI, 221-223.

<sup>170</sup>"The Children's Song," Songs from Books, XXVII, 93-94; Lev. 22:21-22.

And in his ringing challenge to fitness known by the refrain "Be fit!" he makes it clear that it is "The Soul unbroken when the Body tires" that is the goal of "boys and girls, men, women, nations, races."<sup>171</sup>

Of course it is the challenge to achievement and personal fulfillment that Kipling sees as God's intent in Discipline. For if it is love that leads the Lord to "chasteneth" men that they may become his children,<sup>172</sup> then men ought to understand that it is discipline that enables them to run their "races"<sup>173</sup> victoriously.<sup>174</sup> Certainly it is the challenge of being one of the "fit" that play the Game that makes Kim submit to the discipline Lurgan, Mahbub Ali, the Lama, even ordinary school teachers assign him; and it is the physical and spiritual discipline he practices that turns the Game of Life from child's play to the fulfillment of manhood.<sup>175</sup> It is the challenge-- God's call to explore the unknown--that makes "The Explorer"<sup>176</sup> choose danger and agonizing tests of his Discipline

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<sup>171</sup>"Preface," Land and Sea Tales, XIV, 381-382.

<sup>172</sup>Heb. 12:5-13.

<sup>173</sup>Heb. 12:1.

<sup>174</sup>I Cor. 9:24.

<sup>175</sup>Kim, XVI, 178-525.

<sup>176</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 200-204.

(the ability to keep going, the knowledge of how and what to explore, etc.), and it is the realization that he has been chosen for a special task by God (because he was physically and spiritually fit) that fulfills his life. In "My New-Cut Ashlar,"<sup>177</sup> it is the challenge to contribute a nearly perfect building block to the Temple of God's Worth that makes the artist submit to the controlling Hand of the Great Overseer and acknowledge that all achievement is God's, all failure Man's. And it is the special "vision" of God's Grace that makes it all worthwhile. It is the challenge to save his people from the wolves that gives the hero of "The Knife and the Naked Chalk"<sup>178</sup> the courage to test his priestly discipline, entering the dark forest, facing the forest people, sacrificing his eye, even accepting the loss of human fellowship. And it is the knowledge that he succeeded not only for his people but in part for all people that fulfills man's highest destiny--to be one of "the saviours of mankind."<sup>179</sup>

But for most realists the major test of an author's vision of Reality is the evil he recognizes. Of course

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<sup>177</sup> Life's Handicap, IV, 413-414.

<sup>178</sup> Rewards and Fairies, XIII, 351-372.

<sup>179</sup> "The Verdicts," The Years Between, XXVI, 363.

Kipling is especially within the prophetic tradition when he relates this ugly side of Reality to the Creator of a morally responsible universe. He unhesitatingly blames the same human propensity to avoid the demands of God's version of Reality that led to The Fall of Adam and Eve for such subsequent evils as murder, war, lust, shame, despair and death, in "'New Lamps for old!'"<sup>180</sup> In "Justice"<sup>181</sup> he describes the aggressors in World War I as "A People and a King" by "ancient sin" become "Evil Incarnate." He believes that Justice must wield a sword<sup>182</sup> if men are to rebuild the world with faith in God and Man. For an earlier war, the South African or Boer War, he had written in "The Islanders":<sup>183</sup> "Then were the judgments loosened; then was your shame revealed. . . . Ye were saved by a remnant and your land's long-suffering Star," and much more in Biblical language<sup>184</sup> in denunciation of England's undisciplined indulgences and selfish insularity. At the end of that war

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<sup>180</sup>Departmental Ditties and Other Verse, XXV, 114-117.

<sup>181</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 419-420.

<sup>182</sup>Matt. 10:34; Heb. 4:12.

<sup>183</sup>The Five Nations, XXVI, 258-262.

<sup>184</sup>Jer. 44:26-30; Ezek. 6:8; Isa. 1:9; 11:11; Ezra 9:8; Matt. 2:2; 9-10.

he expressed the hope that they had learned "The Lesson"<sup>185</sup> that God worked through Reality--that they could not make an Army to fit "an island nine by seven" and expect a special dispensation of God to turn it into an adequate tool of warfare on a continent the size of Africa. But when greed and stupidity left "the resolute, the young/ The eager and whole-hearted" to die in their own dung" in World War I,<sup>186</sup> he denounced the nation for thinking it "ranked above the chance of ill," for letting itself be poisoned with lies and thinking that God no longer was the true judge of conduct. He assures the persistent that God's Mercy is available to such as they if they seek it "Through wrath and peril" that will cleanse their wrong.<sup>187</sup> And in "A Song At Cock-Crow"<sup>188</sup> he finds the perfidy of the Church in Wartime so great that he insists that it denies its Lord more viciously than Peter did just before the Crucifixion,<sup>189</sup> and has therefore lost the Keys to the Kingdom.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> The Five Nations, XXVI, 248-249.

<sup>186</sup> "Mesopotamia," The Years Between, XXVI, 364-365.

<sup>187</sup> "The Covenant," Ibid., 330.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., 402-403.

<sup>189</sup> John 18:15-27.

<sup>190</sup> Matt. 16:16-19.

Kipling viewed civilian evil from the same prophetic point of view. He retold the Biblical explanation of the introduction of evil into Man's history<sup>191</sup> in "How Fear Came."<sup>192</sup> The First Tiger's original act of evil is not premeditated but, like most human sins, the result of failure to accept the full responsibility for his relationship to others and to the Lord of the Jungle. But the impatient blow that killed leads to fear, to self-pity, to intentional murder, etc. In the second of his "The Legends of Evil,"<sup>193</sup> Kipling tells in humorous tones of Noah's unwittingly inviting the Devil aboard the Ark when he is angry with the uncooperative Donkey. But the proliferating effect of Evil is the same and Man's responsibility is the key, just as it is when he listens to the love song of a female voice behind a barred window in a home "Beyond the Pale."<sup>194</sup> Whatever sympathy Kipling had for individual sinners was lost completely when he denounced such infamy as that described in "The City of Brass."<sup>195</sup> When such a

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<sup>191</sup>Gen. 3:1-4:15.

<sup>192</sup>The Jungle Books, XI, 63-83.

<sup>193</sup>Barrack-Room Ballads, XXV, 286-288.

<sup>194</sup>Plain Tales from the Hills, I, 211-220.

<sup>195</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 415-418.

city forgets that all its achievements are God-given and seeks to establish a new religion in which Man is God and there is no labor or sorrow or Law, God turns its men into beasts and wipes the city from men's memory. It is the "Liberal's" desire to ignore the Biblical concept of Evil<sup>196</sup> that Kipling satirizes in "Below the Mill Dam,"<sup>197</sup> when he would "throw raw and unnecessary illumination upon all the unloveliness in the world" by getting the Spirit of the Mill ("living in the old Wheel just at present") to cooperate with the God that designed "the earth [and] the waters under the earth."<sup>198</sup> And understanding Kipling's prophetic point of view leads to perception of serious comment on Evil in such stories as "The Mark of the Beast."<sup>199</sup> This Hawthorne-like story, set in the mysterious East as Hawthorne often set his stories in the past to make credible an exploration of the spiritual world Reality tries valiantly to ignore, takes its title from Scripture, Revelation 13 describing

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<sup>196</sup>Lewis, "Kipling's World," The Kipling Journal, XXV, No. 127 (September, 1958), 16.

<sup>197</sup>Traffics and Discoveries, VII, 329-349.

<sup>198</sup>Gen. 1:6-10; Ps. 136:6; Phil. 2:10.

<sup>199</sup>Life's Handicap, IV, 223-240.

the appearance of the Beast and his prophet and the use of his mark upon his followers, and Revelation 19:19-20 indicating their defeat at the hands of Christ in the Battle of Armageddon. The effect of the "Mark" upon Fleete--placed there by a leper, ancient symbol of spiritual contamination<sup>200</sup>--suggests all Man's most blood-thirsty characteristics. The harsh measures required to exorcise the curse; the role of Strickland, the perfect policeman; even the name Fleete and the title of the volume in which the story is collected, Life's Handicap, all indicate that the story is an allegory or a parable of Evil as the Bible sees it, and as a prophet would see it.

Still another premise difficult for many modern critics to accept is that God is actively concerned with the Reality represented by impersonal forces such as disease or famine, floods or storms at sea. Kipling's prophetic point of view--like the Biblical point of view--has compassion for individual victims of these forces but insists that in the larger context of the history of mankind God uses these forces to lead men to individual and historical fulfillment and that they are chiefly beneficial when men understand

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<sup>200</sup>  
II Kin. 5; "Gehazi," The Years Between, XXVI, 393-394.

their true nature. Thus the disease that took the lives of Holden's "wife" and son<sup>201</sup> was an evil thing, but the proper response to it and similar evils is that made by dedicated men who fight their causes and limit their deprecation.<sup>202</sup> Furthermore, the spiritually blind attitude that assumes that some religious ritual purchases immunity from the responsibility to master one's God-given Reality is heresy and will be punished.<sup>203</sup> Kipling understood that sometimes men were pitted in too few numbers or for too long against such impersonal forces as the sea or an unhealthy climate; he even seems to write about such individuals in condemnation of a society that would leave them thus.<sup>204</sup> But he also knows that some men must serve in lonely heroism, and he is sure they will find it possible if they sense the spiritual worth of their tasks. The

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<sup>201</sup>"Without Benefit of Clergy," Life's Handicap, IV, 139-168.

<sup>202</sup>"William the Conqueror," The Day's Work, VI, 165-206; "The White Man's Burden," The Five Nations, XXVI, 221-223.

<sup>203</sup>"Natural Theology," The Years Between, XXVI, 399-401.

<sup>204</sup>"At the End of the Passage," Life's Handicap, IV, 169-196; "The Disturber of Traffic," Many Inventions, V, 1-22.

prehistoric hero of "The Knife and the Naked Chalk"<sup>205</sup> is surprised to learn from Puck that he is one of many men whose efforts make all lands habitable, but he knows from the beginning that "The sheep are the people" and that "It is not right that the Beast should master Man."<sup>206</sup> The use of the familiar Biblical metaphor of "sheep" for people,<sup>207</sup> the almost as familiar connotations for "beast," and the complexly interwoven layers of meaning, both practical and spiritual, make this story a statement of Kipling's conviction that Man's challenge of the impersonal forces of nature--human and non-human--is both obligatory and successful if the spiritual basis of life is sensed, even in a limited manner. Kipling's retelling of one of Paul's major encounters with the sea<sup>208</sup> implies his agreement with Paul's belief that God is Master of the seas and can and does bend them to His purposes; it also illustrates Kipling's conviction that such spiritual knowledge is the basis of the courage and the mastery of men that Paul exhibited.

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<sup>205</sup>Rewards and Fairies, XIII, 351-372.

<sup>206</sup>"Song of the Men's Side," ibid., 373-374.

<sup>207</sup>Ps. 23; 100:1; John 10:1-18.

<sup>208</sup>"The Manner of Men," Limits and Renewals, X, 195-216; Acts 27:1-28:11; I Cor. 15:32.

The crucial issue in any discussion of the harsh, impersonal nature of Reality is the meaning of death. Here again, Kipling wrote often and sympathetically of death, but his consistent affirmation of a belief in immortality and a universe created and sustained by a God of Love makes it clear that his understanding of death was that of a Christian prophet. Thus the untimely death of Muhammed Din<sup>209</sup> should be matched with the interpretation of the power of love, both human and divine, found in "They" and "The Return of the Children."<sup>210</sup> For the untimely deaths of such men as Bobby Wicks<sup>211</sup> and Orde<sup>212</sup> there is the assurance that from lives "Clean, simple, valiant, well-beloved/ Flawless in faith and fame . . . new life springs."<sup>213</sup> This "new life" should be understood in two ways, as new life for other men and as a new life in the realm of immortality. Thus in "The Song of the Dead"<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>209</sup>"The Story of Muhammed Din," Plain Tales from the Hills, I, 351-356.

<sup>210</sup>Traffics and Discoveries, VII, 271-302.

<sup>211</sup>"Only a Subaltern," Under the Deodars, III, 93-113.

<sup>212</sup>"The Head of the District," Life's Handicap, IV, 109-138.

<sup>213</sup>"Lord Roberts," The Years Between, XXVI, 342-343.

<sup>214</sup>The Seven Seas, XXVI, 5-8.

men who responded to "the Whisper . . . the Vision . . . the Power . . . and the Soul that is not man's soul" could, when the wood and the food and the water failed, lie down and die "In the faith of little children,"<sup>215</sup> knowing that other men would "Follow after" to reap the "harvest" they had sown.<sup>216</sup> And all who make this world with the understanding that it is God's world shall know that, "purged of pride" by death, they shall join the fellowship of others of their kind and of God.<sup>217</sup> Even for the hosts of war dead Kipling believed there was the promise of a new and better life, with the possibility that in the end Death itself might not die but be transformed.<sup>218</sup> For the eternal purpose of the "God of Things as They are" is to reveal to men the continuing nature of His Reality, understandable in spiritual, universal and eternal terms, a challenge to individuals and nations in this life and promising fulfillment--in this life for some, in the life hereafter for all.

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<sup>215</sup>Matt. 19:14; Mk. 10:14; Lk. 18:16.

<sup>216</sup>John 4:37-38; I Cor. 3:6.

<sup>217</sup>"Dedication," Barrack-Room Ballads, XXV, 161-162.

<sup>218</sup>"On the Gate: A Tale of '16," Debits and Credits, VIII, 227-249; Rev. 20:14; 21:4.

God's Truth

Kipling's fourth major theme is Truth. Since Truth is by its very nature a summary of truths, this theme is to a large extent a summary of his other themes. And since what men believe in they call truth, Kipling's theme of Truth is sometimes named but more often implied. Nevertheless, a prophetic concept of Truth is discoverable and significant in his work.

One hesitates to becloud the issue with yet another display of the chaos of critical interpretation and misinterpretation. It is to be hoped that the evidence already cited is sufficient to set straight the distortion in such theories as the following:

Kipling is a passionate moralist, with a detailed and occasionally profound knowledge of part of things; but . . . His morality is onesided, desperately protective, sometimes vindictive. . . . Kipling tries so hard to celebrate and justify true authority, the work and habit and wisdom of the world, because he feels so bitterly the abyss of pain and insanity they overlie. . . . Kipling's morality is the morality of someone who has to prove that God is not responsible for part of the world.<sup>219</sup>

The conflict between Kipling's work and "orthodox" religion lies chiefly in the eye of the beholder--the critic's

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<sup>219</sup>Jarrell, pp. xvi-xvii.

inadequate understanding of the Bible and the religion it reveals. Equally open to criticism are such oversimplifying clichés as "His writings show his belief in Justification by Work rather than Faith." This commentator, a friend rather than a critic, goes on: "his personal creed . . . was deeply reverent. Rudyard Kipling had a religion and it dominated his life."<sup>220</sup> To such comment one is moved to reply that Kipling, like the author of The General Epistle of James, believed that one should be a doer of the word and not a hearer only, and that one proved his faith by his works.<sup>221</sup> For surely there was more than works to Kipling's religious beliefs; immortality is not an act, and as Bonamy Dobrée put it, Kipling "believed, or held a passionate hope amounting to belief, that there was indeed a hereafter."<sup>222</sup> Tompkins partially corrects an early assertion--"To him the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof,"<sup>223</sup> but that Lord is Mankind"<sup>224</sup>--with

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<sup>220</sup>Lucille Russell Carpenter, Rudyard Kipling, A Friendly Profile, p. 66.

<sup>221</sup>Jam. 1:22; 2:18.

<sup>222</sup>Rudyard Kipling, Realist and Fabulist, p. 24.

<sup>223</sup>Ps. 24:1.

<sup>224</sup>"Kipling," unsigned article in The Bookman, I (October and November, 1891), 28-30, 63-66, in The Critical Heritage, p. 130.

"However much he may glorify the craftsman, Kipling's world is never a man-made one. External forces are the unknown partners in the work."<sup>225</sup> Yet she cannot bring herself to name the unknown Partner or take Kipling's Biblical allusions seriously; of "On the Gate: A Tale of '16" she writes: "This is a fable. There is no harm in calling it a fairy-tale, if we remember how deeply the roots of fairy-tales run into the needs and hopes of human beings."<sup>226</sup> In consequence, as significant a poem as "To the True Romance" she considers a "glittering spume of rhyme and assonance" that obscures the argument, if there is one, which she doubts.

There is certainly a conviction that this Romance, this "handmaid of the Gods," conveys some truth. Kipling speaks at times of religions and mythologies as if they were such designs, drawn on the dark by the craving mind of man. What he himself inscribed there was, in "Tomlinson," a justice that requires positive action from the soul, preferring the sinner to the parasitic intelligence; in "On the Gate" a conception of transcending mercy; and in "Uncovenanted Mercies" a speculation as to how human waste material might be "reconditioned for re-issue, and what the true nature of spiritual "output" is. In such

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<sup>225</sup>Tompkins, p. 197.

<sup>226</sup>Ibid., p. 213.

work the writer ascribes to the abyss the qualities that he cannot bear it to be without. By such work, also, he temporarily hides the abyss and comforts his imagination.<sup>227</sup>

Forty years of creating works of art that reflect an unusually wide spectrum of interests and experiences furnish material to support a variety of interpretations; as has often been said, one can prove almost anything he wishes from selective evidence, even from the Bible. But converting all Kipling's spiritual insights and religious affirmations into projections of his own imagination and longings makes his "message" a mockery, and his denunciations of evil exhortations to heroic service self-righteous presumption--or worse, hypocrisy. Carrington, at the end of his biography of Kipling, points out the central problem and the essential conclusion: Kipling "could never accept the rationalized formulas of any church or sect"; nevertheless, "he never doubted the actuality of the unseen world, from which there came to him the words he was bound to speak".<sup>228</sup>

Kipling defined Truth in Biblical terms, as inseparable from God, discoverable by men, essential to

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<sup>227</sup> Ibid., p. 209.

<sup>228</sup> Carrington, p. 509.

individual and racial life, and glorious. These qualifications for Truth are named in "The Children's Song,"<sup>229</sup> Kipling's "creed" for youth. The prayer stanzas are addressed to "Father in Heaven Who Lovest All."<sup>230</sup> God is asked to

Teach us to bear the yoke in youth  
 With steadfastness and careful truth  
 That, in our time, Thy Grace may give  
 The Truth whereby the Nations life.

The "yoke" alluded to is Christ's, the mark of discipleship.<sup>231</sup> Steadfast and careful truth recalls Paul's admonition to Timothy: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."<sup>232</sup> The reference to God's Grace as the Source of the Truth that meets the needs of nations argues the prophetic or Biblical view of history as well as recalling many Scripture verses, such as Ephesians 5:9. "For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth," and many verses from the Gospel according to John, the book of the Bible that most often deals with Truth. For example:

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<sup>229</sup>Songs from Books, XXVII, 93-94.

<sup>230</sup>Matt. 6:9; John 3:16.

<sup>231</sup>Matt. 11:29-30.

<sup>232</sup>II Tim. 2:15.

And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. John 1:14.

For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. John 1:17.

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. John 17:3.

This glorious companionship with the divine source of Truth is reflected in another stanza of the poem: "That we, with Thee, may walk uncowed/ By fear or favour of the crowd." And that complex statement of Kipling's own "creed," "To the True Romance,"<sup>233</sup> identifies the Spirit to whom Kipling pledged himself as "that lovely Truth/ The careless [care-free] angels know!" When we check the appropriate Biblical reference, to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Truth, who will not only guide men into all truth but who speaks not of himself but what he hears from God,<sup>234</sup> we can see how appropriate is this allegiance of one whose message is prophetic. The Truth is clearly defined as divine; it is discoverable, for those who serve it "discover [it] perfect, wise, and just," the guide of all

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<sup>233</sup>Many Inventions, V, xi-xiv.

<sup>234</sup>John 16:13.

knowledge on earth and about heaven; it is essential--to wisdom, achievement, courage, love, faith; and it is glorious, not only creating beauty and joy but bringing within man's reach--if only a touch of the garments' hem<sup>235</sup>--that which walks with God.

When Kipling applied his concept of Truth, he found its Divine Source apparent everywhere. In "A Song of the English,"<sup>236</sup> he calls upon his people to recognize the Source of all their greatness, "the Lord our God Most High," and to respond to the Truth that God has revealed to His prophet "in the ends of all the Earth." In "A Legend of Truth"<sup>237</sup> man's usual attitude toward Truth is castigated, but the allusion to "Pilate's Question"<sup>238</sup> identifies Truth with Christ; for Pilate asked "What is truth?" and Christ asserted: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." In "Hymn of Breaking Strain"<sup>239</sup> it is God's ways that are true,

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<sup>235</sup>Matt. 9:20-21; 14:36; Mk. 5:27; Lk. 8:44.

<sup>236</sup>The Seven Seas, XXVI, 3-4.

<sup>237</sup>Debits and Credits, VIII, 205-206.

<sup>238</sup>John 18:37-38.

<sup>239</sup>Miscellaneous, XXVIII, 298-299.

and in "'Non Nobis Domine!'"<sup>240</sup> it is God who "crowns or brings to nought/ All knowledge or device/ That Man" achieves. In "The Fairies Siege"<sup>241</sup> the "Dreamer whose dreams come true" is invincible because his Master is God. In "Cold Iron"<sup>242</sup> the Baron learns that the true "master of men all" is God. In "Evarra and His Gods"<sup>243</sup> Evarra (Man) makes a variety of gods and "truths" about those gods, but in the end he stands before the true God and marvels that anyone could so have erred.

And Kipling was convinced that God's Truth was discoverable because the basic structure of the universe was "as old and as true as the sky."<sup>244</sup> In his autobiography he wrote: "But there is no such thing as a new people in this very old world."<sup>245</sup> Again: "Men and Things come round again, eternal as the seasons."<sup>246</sup> And discussing the spiritual truths that distinguish men from beasts, he

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<sup>240</sup>Ibid., 291.

<sup>241</sup>Songs from Books, XXVII, 37.

<sup>242</sup>Rewards and Fairies, XIII, 269-270.

<sup>243</sup>Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Verse, XXV, 280-282.

<sup>244</sup>"The Law of the Jungle," The Jungle Books, XI, 85-88.

<sup>245</sup>Something of Myself, XIV, 423.

<sup>246</sup>Ibid., 512.

wrote: "Things are said to change in the world. To a certain extent, they do; but the changes are largely confined to making wheels turn faster and throwing weights farther than our ancestors."<sup>247</sup> In "A Truthful Song"<sup>248</sup> he argues facetiously that truths that Moses and Noah trusted are still effective. In "En-Dor"<sup>249</sup> he compassionately reminds those seeking an "easy" balm to sorrow that such evasions of the Truth are just as crazy today as they were in the days of Saul. What man needs is the spiritual insights that sees God's Hand guiding the "coupler-flange" and the "spindle" of great machines<sup>250</sup> as clearly as it guides the circumstances that produce "The Miracle of Saint Jubanus."<sup>251</sup> Such a point of view recognizes that ploughing and planting as well as atoning for sinful folly are governed by God's Law,<sup>252</sup> and that a vast dynamo fits into a moral universe as truly as man does.<sup>253</sup> As Kipling says in "The Glory of the Garden,"<sup>254</sup> God's Truth

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<sup>247</sup>"The Magic Square," A Book of Words, XXIV, 134.

<sup>248</sup>Songs from Books, XXVII, 173-175.

<sup>249</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 358-359.

<sup>250</sup>"McAndrew's Hymn," The Seven Seas, XXVI, 23-31.

<sup>251</sup>Limits and Renewals, X, 277-295.

<sup>252</sup>"The Settler," The Five Nations, XXVI, 271-273.

<sup>253</sup>"Brazilian Sketches," Letters of Travel, XIX, 342.

<sup>254</sup>Later Songs from Books, XXVII, 292-293.

is understandable when men look behind the "stately views" and do their part in budding roses or killing slugs, until they find themselves partners with the God, who made Adam a gardener and "half a proper gardener's work" to be "done upon his knees," so that when his work was finished he would have learned the posture of prayer.

Kipling's application of his concept of Truth seems most prophetic when he argues that it is essential to survival. In his very early poem fragment "The Seven Nights of Creation"<sup>255</sup> he argues that it is the attempt to usurp God's power and create a substitute for His Truth that introduces evil and death into the world. In "'New Lamps for Old!'"<sup>256</sup> he traces Man's disasters, from the original Fall to modern disillusionment, to the human propensity to listen to "Lying Spirits."<sup>257</sup> "The City of Brass"<sup>258</sup> begins its destruction by denying God as the Source of all its splendor, creating a new religion with prophets and priests that will tell it only what it wants

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<sup>255</sup>Schoolboy Lyrics, XXVIII, 20-21.

<sup>256</sup>Departmental Ditties and Other Verse, XXV, 114-118.

<sup>257</sup>I Kin. 22:22; II Chron. 18:21.

<sup>258</sup>The Years Between, XXVI, 415-418.

to hear. "The Mother Hive"<sup>259</sup> tolerates perversions of the Truth until it is destroyed in a symbolic Judgment Day holocaust. And when men deny the Truth by assuming that Man's nature has changed or that the Biblical picture of the universe has been outgrown, disaster is imminent.<sup>260</sup> Kipling is sure that people who listen to "the Gods of the Market-Place" will periodically be called to account by "The Gods of the Copybook Headings"<sup>261</sup> who know "'The Wages of Sin is Death.'"<sup>262</sup> In "Hymn of Breaking Strain"<sup>263</sup> he warns that men who forget to "wonder" at their God-given talents and assume that they are the gods who create their world will fall into "multiple confusion," until their pride is broken by failure; then if they recognize that the uniqueness of their nature is their kinship to God, they may, with His help, find true paths and build anew. For God's

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<sup>259</sup>Actions and Reactions, VIII, 375-396.

<sup>260</sup>"Letters on Leave," Abaft the Funnel, XXIII, 179-198; "'O Baal, Hear Us!'" Departmental Ditties and Other Verse, XXV, 71-76; "The Dykes," The Five Nations, XXVI, 180-182; "The Bonfires," Miscellaneous, XXVIII, 288-289.

<sup>261</sup>Miscellaneous, XXVIII, 236-238.

<sup>262</sup>Rom. 6:23.

<sup>263</sup>Miscellaneous, XXVIII, 298-299.

Truth includes not only "The Truth whereby the Nations live"<sup>264</sup> but "His Mercy" which offers the penitent a second chance,<sup>265</sup> if not in this life then in the life to come.

Kipling found the Divine Nature of Truth glorious. Discovering and cooperating with God's design for nature, men and nations is "The Glory of the Garden."<sup>266</sup> Trusting the infinite capacity of the Love that prompted that design enabled Kipling to surrender all his most urgent concerns, even men who ignorantly knelt to strange gods, to God's mercy.<sup>267</sup> Such trust releases redemptive laughter that rings throughout the universe.<sup>268</sup> It makes the work of each craftsman god-like, a contribution to the eternal Temple of God's Worth,<sup>269</sup> an act akin to Creation.<sup>270</sup> Faith in such Truth expresses itself in paeans of praise

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<sup>264</sup>"The Children's Song," Songs from Books, XXVII, 93-94.

<sup>265</sup>"The Covenant," The Years Between, XXVI, 330.

<sup>266</sup>Later Songs from Books, XXVII, 292-293.

<sup>267</sup>"Hymn Before Action," The Seven Seas, XXVI, 70-71.

<sup>268</sup>"The Legend of Mirth," A Diversity of Creatures, IX, 289-292.

<sup>269</sup>"My New-Cut Ashlar," Life's Handicap, IV, 413-414.

<sup>270</sup>"Sussex," The Five Nations, XXVI, 213-216.

that declare the benign purpose of the universe: "The Planets that love us" and "the Stars in their courses/ Do Fight on our side." They have been "attuned since Creation/ To perfect accord." "No Power can unmake us/ Save that which has made." There is no room for fear in a universe in which "The Eternal is King."<sup>271</sup> Who holds to this Truth "hath Heaven in fee/ To gild his" earthly dross and possess "The joy of all the earth."<sup>272</sup> Truth so gloriously effective can only be understood in terms of its association with the Creator of the universe; such an understanding is clearly the basis of Kipling's use of Truth as one of his major prophetic themes.

### Conclusion

In such works as "The Explorer," "My New-Cut Ashlar," and "To the True Romance," Kipling identifies his artistic dedication as prophetic vocation. He repeatedly names the Source of his "call" as God, and claims that his "message" was a vision given by God's Grace. Kipling sustains this point of view with a consistent and meaningful use of

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<sup>271</sup>"An Astrologer's Song," Rewards and Fairies, XIII, 467-469.

<sup>272</sup>"To the True Romance," Many Inventions, V, xi-xiv.

prophetic language. His Biblical allusions are impressive in quantity and make a significant contribution to his artistry. He draws on other religious resources, such as the form of prayers, hymns, other religious music and allegory, as the appropriate medium for his artistic insights. His occasional use of non-Christian sources is justified by his subject matter and seldom conflicts with his prophetic point of view, for he understood the God of the Bible as the God of the universe, concerned if not always pleased, with everything in that universe. From this frame of reference, his major themes of Law, Love, Reality and Truth all become spiritual, universal and eternal, revelation of the God that gives the Truth whereby Men and Nations live.<sup>273</sup> This he was sure of because he knew Whose voice had sent him searching, Whose hand had guided his effort, Whose design was being fulfilled, Whose people were being served, and Whose glory had touched his life with eternal significance.<sup>274</sup> And this survey of his total work, representing in variety and chronology a valid

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<sup>273</sup> "The Children's Song," Songs from Books, XXVII, 93-94.

<sup>274</sup> "The Explorer," The Five Nations, XXVI, 200-204.

expression of his major themes and the consistency and sincerity with which he used religious material and spiritual insights, proves that the prophetic qualities in his work are significant enough to establish his literary philosophy, to resolve many of the inconsistencies of fragmentary analyses and to furnish new depth to interpretations of individual works.

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Esther Marian Greenwell Smith was born October 22, 1914, in Portland, Oregon. In June, 1937, she received the degree of Bachelor of Arts with a double major in English and Speech from Linfield College, McMinnville, Oregon. After teaching three years at Dallas High School, Dallas, Oregon, she began graduate work at Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, Massachusetts. In 1942 she married the Reverend Mr. Elton Edward Smith. In June of 1955 she received a Master of Education degree from Linfield College, teaching at Portland State College, Portland, Oregon, from 1954-1957. In 1957 her husband began graduate work at Syracuse University; Mrs. Smith did some graduate work and taught in North High School, Syracuse, and West Genesee High School, Camillus, New York. Upon Dr. Elton Smith's acceptance of a position at the University of South Florida, Tampa, in 1961, the family moved to Lakeland, Florida, where Mrs. Smith taught at Florida Southern College from 1961-1966.

She has taught at Polk Community College, Winter Haven, Florida, since 1966, with the exception of the 1970-71 academic year when she completed her residency requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree at the University of Florida.

The Smiths have three children, do considerable writing for publication and are active in religious work.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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