

written and didn't should read something like this:

It was our fault, and our very great fault,  
that angered the Lord to smite;  
And black are the weeds the widows wear  
for the bones on the veldt bleached  
white.

The bones bleach white on the rain-washed  
veldt where the red stain lingers long  
To bid us curb our stiff-necked pride and  
purge our souls of wrong.

—Public Opinion of Aug. 8.

#### THE DECLINE AND DECAY OF KIP- LING.

Doubtless there is something sufficiently pathetic in the passing of any once popular favorite. The inevitable contrast of old days and new, of vanished honor and present neglect, the potent reminder of the instability and vanity of all human affairs—even the overturning of a heathen idol—must suggest some melancholy reflection.

But when we hear that in this country the works of Mr. Rudyard Kipling are no longer in demand, I submit that, aside from sentimental considerations, the occasion is for thanksgiving and a feeling of relief.

We may indulge this feeling without prejudice or malice, and without denying or trying to obscure the splendid ability of the man. Surely it is a wonderful gift that has gone so far astray.

What powers of expression, what strength and indomitable vigor of style, what command of words marshalled and aligned with what skill and variety of resource! A vision so clear in some ways if so clouded in others, and the apparent possibility of the gods' own grace of utterance—all gone awry for the lack of a soul and guiding spirit.

And for this lack no gifts, no powers, no graces atone. It is the inward spirit that determines the ultimate value of every artist's work, and with all his magnificent technical endowment the spirit animating Kipling's work was always bad, always reactionary, always indurating and blinding to him that read.

Of this American readers seem to have made clear discovery. No swifter fall from favor has been known in literature. Four years ago this was the most popular of living authors; today the sale of his books is merely nominal.

In his own lifetime he has become a name and a tradition. Of a collected edition issued by an American publisher two years ago, not enough sales have been made to pay for the binding, and for separate volumes the booksellers report a demand almost imperceptible.

At the libraries it is said that Kipling, once most in request, is now less read than any one of 20 American authors.

Exactly what Kipling stood for in the essence of his writing was not revealed to us until the beginning of the South African war, a struggle already of more and even stranger results than the ruin of Britain's military glory.

Then it came upon men in a flash that this was the thing he had always meant and always apotheosized—the strong arm, the dominance of brute instincts, the coarse, hard fiber of life, the love of cruelty and savagery, the negation of sympathy and brotherhood, the lust for power and land and wealth, the right of might, the cynical indifference to justice, the burden of strong races upon the weak, the thirst for preying and plundering.

With the "Absent-Minded Beggar" the illusion snapped like a thread. We had not seen that under the wonderful brilliancy and fascination of the man's style these were the springs of his faith; the war and his view of it and callous delight in it were all made clear. Men perceived that the "Recessional" was mere sound; that its author had no heart in it, and that while with front of brass he sang of Christian peace, he was casting about for further feats of national brigandage and shame that he might sing these with all his soul.

In the narrower view, we may be glad that the difference between English civilization and American civilization has been so sharply revealed.

We may be glad to see so clearly that we have not drifted so far from the lines of progress that the destruction of a brave people fighting for liberty seems admirable. We can see no glory in the triumph of 40,000,000 over 200,000. We are not stirred to joy by the fall of a little republic before a huge empire.

We may think with pride also that evidently we do not delight in cruelty. We do not greatly care for brave force, we are not charmed by the savage spirit of aggrandizement.

We have some belief that suffering calls more for tears than for laughter, and we have no joy in battle for the sake of battle, nor for the sake of gold.

We are not of this man's race.

Moreover, in a broader view, here is a sign of progress. The world has known a time when the singer of blood and battle and the glory of physical strength was the dearest of all lyrists. We have passed from that state as

from the state of skin clothing and the work of the stone hatchet.

The world at heart has grown sick of these things. It asks for literature now, not so much the entertainment of cleverness as some note of help or hope. In all Kipling has written is no such note.

From the reading of him no man has ever arisen with any renewed sense of the sorrowful state of man, with any new tenderness for his brother, with any kindlier or gentler purpose, with wider sympathy or with deeper feeling.

It is better that such a man should pass.

After all, one touch of the universal heart is above all possible achievements of style. After all, it is better to pity than to be clever. After all, sympathy is the soul of art. After all, it is only love that endures.—Charles E. Russell, in *New York Journal* of July 20.

#### SOME OF THE HORRORS OF WAR.

The following graphic description of the taking of Peking, and the terrible march thither, was written on the ground at the time by a member of the Fourteenth United States infantry to his brother in England, and has been furnished to *The Public* from the original manuscript by a member of his family.

Peking, China, Aug. 18, 1900.

Dearest Brother: I will ease your mind at once by stating that I am unscathed and unscratched, and safely encamped here in the suburbs of Peking. I have passed through two of the most fierce and inhuman battles here that I ever had read, heard or thought of.

The first big battle took place at a large, well fortified town, 18 miles from Tientsin. The name of this town, or in fact of any of those we passed through, is not known to me at this date. This town was garrisoned by about 50,000 Chinamen, soldiers; and all had the best, most approved, modern artillery, with which they sadly raked our ranks. The Fourteenth in fatalities and casualties lost in that battle 103; the date was the 5th of this month. The Japanese lost (killed and wounded) three hundred odd, and the English 36 men.

After routing the Chinese we rested half a day, and then moved forward toward Peking, which is 125 miles from Taku, where our first landing was made. The Japanese forces now took the lead; they having an army here of over 60,000 men, had no difficulty in routing the enemy from the small towns along the trail, which towns were very numerous; in fact we

passed one every mile on an average.

The Chinese apparently had lost heart after their awful defeat at Tientsin and again on August 6, and did not make a very good stand, all of them evidently retreating toward Peking, there to unite in great force. Truly they did muster there, and on our approach to the outer walls of Peking we were met with a disastrous shower of lead, fired from large holes and embrasures in the walls. This outer wall is, I should say, 60 feet high and 35 thick, and is intersected with turrets and small lookout castles on its summit, which gives an awful advantage to the besieged. The mode of entrance is through immense solid iron doors, 18 inches thick, and braced and riveted with monster bolts, with heads as large as mine.

Through one of these seemingly impassable doors, which were locked and barred securely, we made an entrance, alas! wading through the blood of our comrades, who died in the breach. The loss to the Japanese and Russians was fearful, and to the Americans proportionately great.

How did we open their doors? Thereby hangs a tale. They could not be opened by any ordinary means, nor is there a battering ram in the world of weight sufficient to accomplish it.

Well, we shot the door open with cannon balls! The United States light artillery backed up two of their cannons to within six feet of the door, and aiming precisely where the bars and locks on the inside should be, they sent heavy projectiles crashing continuously in the same places, until finally, with a rusty shriek and groan, the immense double doors swung asunder. In rushed the infantry—Russian and American—to be cut down horribly by the enemy concealed in garrets and on roofs of houses.

Fortunately, and for some unknown reason, the Chinese used hardly any artillery fire against us here, although they had cannon of first class make. Our loss must have been terrific had they poured shells into our ranks as we rushed through the doorway. As it was, O God! the thought of that doorway makes my flesh creep. Men were dead *standing on their feet*, had not room to fall, so were they propped up by their dead comrades.

We were now in Peking. (All this August 15th.) But, alas! we had four solid hours' fighting, and had to scale the inner side of the wall, with impromptu ladders made from rope, to get to the enemy, ere we had a chance to draw a breath, or rest an aching limb. \* \* \*

Here we camped (rather say "fell down") for the night, and early next morning marched 800 yards to a second wall, similar in every respect, I think, to the first.

There again the key used to unlock the doors was Capt. Riley's U. S. artillery projectiles. Here, alas! Capt. Riley was killed, shot through the head, while leading his stout battery through the breach he had so nobly made. Here many another poor soul went home to its Maker, both Russian and American. Well, to shorten the story of door forcing, we shot our way through *four doors* and advanced through *four walls* ere we halted; and Gen. Chaffee (commanding the American forces here) said that the Americans had now done their share, and that Russia must do the rest (if more remained to be done), but he expected the enemy would now surrender. He informed us that there still remained three walls to be passed, yet ere arriving at the inner or imperial portion of Peking. That would make in all seven walls. \* \* \*

Between the fourth and fifth walls we encamped for that night. Early next morning we were relieved by the Russians, who were to continue the assault, if continuation of it were necessary, and we retreated to a portion of the grounds between the outer and second wall, where we now are. Everything is quiet now, and has been for two days; the result as yet is known to none. It is said the queen and royal family have fled from Peking, and are traveling to another town.

I am stretched beneath a mighty palm tree, where the shade is glorious, and my haversack makes quite a nice desk. Fortunately I saved a pencil and this paper through all the strife, else I could not have written, for the Lord knows when. Even now I see no way of sending it for awhile. The railroad between here and Tientsin has been destroyed, and no mail can go out until it is repaired.

Aug. 19.—Dear Brother: Just here occurred an interruption. "Call to arms" was sounded in the camp, and I hastily bundled this letter into my haversack. A scout had come in with news that 10,000 armed Chinamen were rapidly advancing to attack us in camp. Not desirous of being caught like rats in a trap in this sylvan, wall-surrounded glade, we at once got on the march to the ascent, or "Ramp," leading to the wall top. There we could have full view of the

enemy, and woe betide him if he advanced through the open space between the outer and second wall, we being in skirmish line, and with our artillery on crest of second wall. This proved a false alarm, and after lying out there all night we came back to this same camp this morning. News has reached us now that the Russians, making their attack where we left off (on the door of the fifth wall), were attacked by legions of the enemy and repulsed with great loss; that fortunately the Japanese immediately reenforced them, or rather "ran over" them, and turned the tables, causing the Chinese to vacate the entire inner or most sacred imperial city. Therefore Peking is now ours.

It is worthy of remark that the Fourteenth infantry was foremost in the first battle over here, and were again the first to enter the city of Peking. 'Tis said no foreigner ever trod the soil inside the second wall of Peking. If that is so then Col. Daggett, of the Fourteenth, and Capt. Riley, of the Fifth artillery (God rest him), were the first white men to stand within the walls.

The dirty part of Peking, between the outer and second wall, is not called sacred or reserved, but after passing the second wall it is sacred ground, and from there it is called "The Imperial City."

I cannot yet tell you the losses to the allied forces, as they have not been summed up. I should say on a rough guess, the United States lost 450, killed and wounded; the Japanese, 1,000; the Russians, 200 or 300, and the English about 63 men. If the Germans or French lost any it is not known. I don't think they took part in any fight, and the English took but little. The English troops here, I should say, muster about 2,000, the Russians 8,000 or 9,000, the French 1,000, the Germans 1,000, Japanese 60,000, United States 2,000. It is said the Chinese had in all over 7,000,000 men bearing arms against us. This I think a slight exaggeration, but really cannot corroborate or deny.

From the second wall inward this is a delightful city and resembles more a country tract interspersed with fantastic and picturesque mansions than it does a metropolis. Shade trees and waving grass have here a home indeed. Delicious wells of ice cold water abound. The birds of Ireland are here, and some of those of America also. The climate is identical with that of New York, U. S. A. That

part of the inner city which we have not as yet gained admittance to is, so far as we can see from the top of the walls, even more beautiful than what we have seen. In there are the domes and spires of glittering palaces and places of worship, surrounded by, and peeping here and there through, the grandest old shade trees imaginable. The houses are not huddled together, but dotted here and there through sylvan glades. The buildings are, however, very fantastic, being built in all kinds of impossible shapes, and decorated and painted like Christmas toy houses. The walls are red and yellow, the eaves blue and green, and the roofs of yellow tiles. On some of these roofs sod is placed and gardens bloom; rare exotics and choice flowers send their tendrils and blossoms down from above to peep in at the windows, being met by luxurious tree tops and creeping vines of sweet peas, etc., from the gardens below. The "Heathen Chinese" may not understand God, but he certainly "saves" Heaven, and he has made Peking a Heaven on earth.

The magpie of Ireland is here, also some of the smaller Irish feathered tribe, none of the songsters though, I think. There are rookeries, but the crows do not congregate in such large bodies. The climate, when one can avoid the heat of midday sun, is lovely, and I imagine China is a healthy country.

All the Chinese I have seen are very dark skinned, nearly brown, far darker than those to be met at Manila, this probably being because all or nearly all were warriors and exposed to the weather while on this campaign. Those we captured are very docile and make willing servants for us. They don't seem to have much spirit. They are good soldiers as marksmen, shoot straighter than the Spanish or Filipinos, but they sadly lack the persistent courage which a soldier must have to accomplish anything when it comes to the point of grim death or glory in a charge.

You know the United States had only eight companies of the Fourteenth infantry here, and the entire Ninth regiment of infantry, together with some of the marine corps. Our Sixth cavalry arrived at Taku too late to take part in any active service.

Now for a brief description of the foreign soldiers of all nations—"our allies" here.

The English, of course, you know, but it is not their white troops they have here, with the exception of a

few; they are their "Indian" soldiers—mounted "Lancers" and foot soldiers, immense, strapping, straight-backed men, wearing a drab duck uniform, and a fantastic head-dress of cloth wound round the skull like a Turk. The English were sensible not to waste their white troops over here. These Indians are fine in appearance and very clean and neat in their persons. There are, I fear, a number among them not overburdened with courage, however; or, as we say, they are "cold footed." This term is applied to a soldier who lacks "grit." I suppose it means that a man who runs must want to warm his feet. It only applies, of course, to those who run to the rear. Well, I saw some of these Indian British soldiers, in our first battle, dodge and hide behind mounds and trees when their presence was in request in their ranks. I saw them, ostrich-like, try to bury their heads in the ground when the shells flew thickest, instead of trying to retaliate on the opposing artillery with their rifles. Speaking of this to an English soldier subsequently, he became offended and asked me: "What the bloody 'ell I meant." As we were warned to have no disagreement with our allies, silence was my answer. Speaking to an English corporal after that first battle, of our losses on the American side, he remarked: "Well, I always did 'ear as 'ow the bleedin' Hamericans were 'ot 'eaded, but I didn't think they were such bloody bloomin' idiots as all that hamounts to." He referred to our charge on that day; which indeed was made a little prematurely, and many a poor lad's life would be spared had we waited until our artillery had more demoralized the enemy, ere we charged them on foot.

Now as to the Russian soldiers—they are a brutal, lustful, dirty, undisciplined mob. The name of soldier should not apply to the Russian butchers and cut-throats composing its army. After the taking of Tientsin they attacked unfortunate Chinese women on the very threshold of their places of religious worship, robbed, outraged and then murdered them; all this in the eyes of their officers, who are as bad as their men, and who even in some instances took a part in such proceedings. They love war only for the chances it gives them for looting and sacking towns. In appearance they are dirty, villainous and brutal, wear a linen uniform and cap once white, I suppose, and hideous big knee boots. They carry one filthy kettle to cook everything in. This they never

wash, though a river flows at their feet. But what wonder, when they never wash their faces or hands? They carry some of their rations, principally rye bread and horse meat, in their caps. Imagine (if your stomach is not weak) a man eating soggy bread that has been broiled and baked between his perspiring filthy head and Old Sol overhead. Ugh! enough of them.

The German martial representatives here are few, as far as I have seen. They also wear a linen cream-colored uniform and square cap, and have high boots. They are clumsy and heavy looking, look sleepy and stupid, but harmless. The Germans have not done anything in the line of fighting here that I can discover.

The French here are the marines only. I see none of those gaudy uniforms of France we read of. The French marines are horribly poorly clad in short-sleeved, sky-blue duck jackets and trousers, and wear a white (?) helmet with anchor design on front. They have done nothing here either except loot and rape, and they keep dirty as possible. Weaker than the Russians, they are as vile in every way.

The American army you know of. We wear brown khaki uniform to fight in, and broad brimmed drab campaign hats, with tan shoes of calf skin.

Now last, but not by any means least, the Japanese soldiers. Hal! what a relief to think of those neat, trim, active, honest, energetic, brave little warriors! They are a credit to any army. And, as they say, they could whip the Chinese without any help. They wear a neat-fitting white uniform, kept wonderfully clean, a white cap bearing a silver star in front on a yellow band, neatly fitting short brown leggings and small boots. They are all small men and brave as lions, generous and cheerful on all occasions. Having a bitter enmity to the Chinese, they do indeed execute some cruelties on the prisoners they take; but I will say nothing against them for that, as it is hereditary, I guess.

Speaking of the Japanese, their homes in Nagasaki are kept clean and neat as a pin, their women are always washing and cleaning and scouring. Some Japanese women are extremely pretty, and wear a chronic smile. Nagasaki is as pretty as a poet's dream. On approaching by boat you see before you sloping green hills, dotted here and there with picturesque towns. It isn't one town, but a series of little towns. Imagine Queenstown, Ireland, on first view from the open

sea—how the city rises from the water edge back up the slope to a peak. Now imagine a lot of little Queens-towns, and you have Nagasaki, the difference being that all through are parks and open spaces, trees and fountains, houses built of wood and stone with tile roofs. There are no horses in use, people are drawn about the streets by natives in harness in sedan chairs, called "rickshaws." I took a ride in one of them; found it a novel sensation to be drawn by a man instead of a horse; didn't enjoy it much though, on that account; hadn't the heart to witness the poor fellow perspire, so only went a short distance and paid him double per hour what he asked, which was only ten cents American money. The folks are hospitable and generous to a fault with strangers; God bless the Japanese!

Now, brother, I will speak of our long and arduous march from Tientsin to Peking in the sweltering August sun. My God! I have been on many a march in the past 14 years in America, Cuba and the Philippines; but none to compare to that one for hardship, misery and horrors. You see Gen. Chaffee's orders were to rush us to Peking with the greatest expedition, and it had to be done. The roads were fearfully bad, knee deep lay the dust, and when the wind blew we were blinded and choked by it. When it rained the rain was cold as ice, and then we floundered through mud like glue. Our principal suffering was from thirst. Wells there were, but few and far between; no streams, no surface water, indeed, except a river hot and muddy, which we only encountered twice anyway on that march.

Each man carried two days' rations, hard tack, bacon and canned corn beef. We had a blanket roll to carry, containing a shelter tent and change of underwear. These rolls with all they contained the men were forced to throw away, as utter exhaustion and weakness compelled us to march as light as possible. Here the Japanese put the United States government to shame; they have thousands of ponies and little carts to follow them on their march, and in these are transferred all their bedding and clothes. They carry only a canteen of water and day's rations. We had to either carry the burden or sleep cold and miserable without a blanket. But the nights were so chilly we did not sleep at all, and usually a frigid rain poured on us.

Just think of the Fourteenth infantry arriving on a sweltering August day, parched with thirst and suffocated with dry dust, at one little

well, very deep, and only about three feet in circumference at its mouth. The halt was only of three to five minutes' duration, and over 900 men were to secure a drink of the coveted nectar in that impossible time. Did they get it? Of course not. Perhaps from 100 to 200 got a mouthful. The bugle sounded and the weary disappointed others had to move on, to tramp a mile—maybe two or three—to another well; there to meet the same disappointment in many cases. Gen. Chaffee had orders to get to Peking with all speed possible; military reputation was at stake; Gen. Chaffee ordered "FORWARD!"

At these wells a rope was necessary to dip water; the government does not furnish ropes. Some men picked up strings of various kinds along the route, and knotted them together. On reaching a well some found the impromptu rope too short by a foot—might as well be a mile. They ran wildly about looking for more string; the bugle sounded; Gen. Chaffee ordered "FORWARD!"

I tore three pocket handkerchiefs into strips. It served very well for hauling up water. Lent it to others when there was time; most of them had discarded kerchiefs with their blanket rolls. I saw a man whose tongue hung swollen from his mouth, hurriedly lower his tin cup into the well, when within a yard of the surface the frail rope broke; cup fell back into the well; Gen. Chaffee ordered "FORWARD!"

An exhausted, half-crazed soldier, completely worn out with heat and fatigue, was urged forward by his comrades. He staggered along to within eight feet of the next well. The comrade begged a rope to get the sick one a drink. No one even heard him. The minutes flew; the bugle sounded; the men hastened to their places in ranks; there was a rifle report; the poor man who was so sick had put himself out of his misery. Some of us envied the dead man. Gen. Chaffee was told of it; he ordered "FORWARD!"

One unusually hot day, two days' march from Peking, the men fell exhausted by dozens. Some became insane, and bit into the banks of the roadside where the clay looked moist; thus choking themselves with dirt. The regimental doctor informed Gen. Chaffee of the condition of the troops, said they must have rest. Gen. Chaffee had Peking in his eye! Gen. Chaffee said he was "going onward to

Peking, if there was not a man left." Order was given: "FORWARD!"

I think if the shade of Milton had been along that line of march with a kodak he would have produced some choice sketches for "Dante's Inferno."

During the first battle we had, things were if possible still more horrible.

A wounded comrade falls by your side. He says: "For God's sake, don't leave me, chum." You must leave him, or be called "cold-footed" for loitering in rear, or shot as "deserter."

An exhausted man falls, not wounded. Hospital corps men ask: "Are you wounded?"

He replies: "No, but I am sick as a dog; cannot go another inch."

They reply: "We are looking for wounded."

They leave him. Ten minutes later they find his remains so completely chopped to pieces by some blood-drunken, sulking Chinese that he is almost beyond recognition. It is dangerous to fall exhausted in battle, the Chinese always have cut-throats skulking in rear for such tid-bits.

Now, brother, as I could not even begin to tell you one-fiftieth part of the incredible horrors of this war, I will drop the gruesome theme and close my poor scrawl. Indeed, this pencil is but a stump, one-half inch long, stuck in a ferrule of a Chinese opium stem; and I fear it will scarce suffice to write any more.

Rumors reach us that the Fourteenth infantry will return to the states inside of a month. I hope it is true. This regiment has surely done its share of foreign service—two years in Manila, and then over here, and I by changing regiments, caught all the wars. But alas! I pine no more for glory; too many horrors are attendant on such honors. Will close now, dear brother, hoping you can master the contents of this wretched scrawl. Will try and mail this letter as soon as possible. If you address me at Peking, China, perhaps it will be all right—anyhow it would follow me anywhere in the army. Ever your loving brother.

#### HE WAS ONLY A MONKEY.

There was once a solemn monkey lived within a southern grove, And filled himself with fruit and nuts wherever he did rove; But his fellows held convention when he was not around, And parceled out a thousand trees to each one on the ground;