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## RUDYARD KIPLING AND RIDER HAGGARD

### I. *Friends and Collaborators*

MOST READERS ARE AWARE that J. K. Stephen linked Kipling and Haggard in a bit of doggerel deploring the state of writing in the 1890's and praying for a season

When the Rudyards cease from kipling  
And the Haggards Ride no more.

But Kipling and Haggard have more in common than their unusual names and this gentle abuse. Even in 1891, when Stephen's verse first appeared in the *Cambridge Review*, they were already well acquainted and were in fact at the beginning of a close friendship which was to last for over thirty-five years. The full story of that friendship, however, has not yet been told.

The two men met in 1889, when Haggard was thirty-three and Kipling ten years his junior. Haggard was at the crest of his fame and popularity, the successful author of *King Solomon's Mines* (1885), *She* (1887), and a number of other African romances. Kipling, although he had achieved some distinction in the East with his tales of Indian life, was, on the other hand, virtually unknown in England. It did not, however, take critics such as W. E. Henley and Andrew Lang very long after he arrived from India in 1889 to see in this moustached, reticent youth the makings of a literary giant. They quickly took him in tow, and it was Lang who shepherded him into the circle of Savile wits where he and Haggard first met.

They were strikingly different in physical appearance and in personal traits: Haggard tall, bearded, loud-voiced, and ebullient, an after-dinner speaker who was at ease in public affairs and as comfortable standing in the limelight as walking round his Norfolk fields; Kipling short, bespectacled, retiring, and intense, an observant man who could see into the heart of things at a glance but whose modesty largely restricted his public utterances to stories and poems.

Theirs was a casual acquaintanceship at first. Kipling must have read Haggard's Egyptian romance *Cleopatra* (1889) soon after he arrived in London, for in a parody of Bret Harte's "Truthful James" which Kipling wrote to amuse his ever-widening circle of friends at the Savile, he alludes critically to Haggard's tale. But this was all in good fun and did not prevent Haggard from supporting Kipling's nomination for membership in the Savile in 1891. Even earlier, however, although Kipling complained in a letter that "London is a vile place," he spoke of three literary friends, "Anstey and Haggard and Lang and Co. [who] are pressing on me the wisdom of identifying myself with some set."<sup>1</sup>

But Kipling did not have to bother planning a career; his fame was assured from the start. Within six months of his arrival in London, he was the literary man of the day. Editors scrambled for his stories and verses, critics praised them and sought to meet the young genius from the East, and the reading public was star-struck over the new cadences and colloquial language in his verse.

Some observers saw Kipling's sudden rise as a threat to Haggard's fame; they predicted that Kipling would eclipse his contemporary. As early as November 18, 1889, John Addington Symonds wrote of "making the acquaintance of Rudyard Kipling . . . a very extraordinary young man . . . . The Savile was all on the *qui vive* about him, when I lunched there once with Gosse. Rider Haggard appeared really aggrieved at a man with a double barrelled name, odder than his own, coming up. Literally."<sup>2</sup> Also, on March 21, 1890, Henry James wrote from London to R. L. Stevenson in Samoa: "We'll tell you all about Rudyard Kipling—your nascent rival. He has killed one immortal—Rider Haggard."<sup>3</sup>

But though Kipling and Haggard often appealed to the same audience, the texture, imaginative quality, and subject matter of their work were so different that one did not hurt the reputation or sales of the other. Neither the literary chitchat nor the courses of their individual careers created any personal rivalry between the two, and both men later had only pleasant memories of their early meetings. Kipling recalled that "I took to him at once, he being the stamp adored by children and trusted by men at sight; and he could tell tales, mainly about himself, that broke up the table."<sup>4</sup>

Because the rule of burning in-letters was seldom broken in the Kipling household, the friendship between Haggard and Kipling is chronicled mainly in Kipling's letters to Haggard, which range over a period of thirty-five years. The letters reflect the quality of the relationship the two men enjoyed from the time they met, and chart the way in which the friendship deepened.

The earliest extant letter must have been written in late spring, 1891. In it, Kipling thanks Haggard for a copy of *Eric Brighteyes* (1891), Haggard's Icelandic saga, which Haggard had left for him at the Savile. "It's all as strong as wire rope," says Kipling, and, alluding to a minor objection he makes earlier in the letter, adds that " 'twere impertinent of me to criticize."<sup>6</sup>

Haggard and Kipling, it seems, kept in touch through the years that Kipling and his American bride, Carrie, lived in Vermont (1892-96), though only one of the letters that passed between them survives. But after the Kiplings returned to England, and particularly after 1902, when they bought Bateman's, the home in Sussex where they would live out the remainder of their lives, the correspondence between Kipling and Haggard resumed and the friendship between them took on new meaning. In July, 1897, Kipling wrote to Haggard about an early draft of a poem and in the same letter asked advice about housekeeping in South Africa, where he and Carrie were planning a winter holiday. And in 1899 Kipling wrote enthusiastically about Haggard's agricultural chronicle *A Farmer's Year*. But the two men not only wrote to each other; in the mid- and late-nineties, they must have met often.

For Haggard these were years of politicking and business dealings in the City; he was much in London. Kipling, living in Rottingdean, was within easy reach of London, and he too got up to town often. Meetings at the Savile, the Society of Authors, and at the homes of mutual friends were frequent. On May 20, 1898, Haggard was chairman at a dinner of the Anglo-African Writers' Club at the Grand Hotel, and Kipling was guest of the evening. Haggard introduced Kipling to an overflow audience that included Sir Henry Bulwer, Sir Walter Peace (the Agent-General of Natal), Sir B. W. Greenacre (the Mayor of Durban), and other notables, and he read a telegram from Cecil Rhodes expressing his regret at not being present. Kipling had just returned from his second visit to South Africa and was to share his impressions with those present. Along with the report of the occasion in the following week's issue of the *African Review* appeared an anonymous poem in honor of Kipling in which Haggard was also mentioned:

#### A HUMBLE TRIBUTE

'I am but a 'umble waiter, Mr. Kiplin', that is all,  
 but I'm 'uman tho' I'm 'umble, an' I've got a 'cart an' brain;  
 An' I does a bit o' readin' of a evenin', off an' on,  
 An' on Sundays, for a instance, when I'm kept indoors by rain.

"I'm acquainted with your stories, an' by Gorn, sir, they're A II  
I 'ave laughed, an' I 'ave cried, an' felt as creepy as can be.  
There's Mulvaney, why, Lor' bless yer! 'e's a reg'lar pal o' mine,  
So are Ortheris an' Learoyd, they are real live pals to me.

"I am not much 'and at poetry, but I 'ear as you're a poet;  
(Once I 'eard a chap recitin' something called "The Bolivar,"  
But I can't say I remember what the verses was about.)  
Still they say that you're a poet, sir, an' I'll take my oath you are.

"I 'ave always said, 'Now Kiplin', 'e's a genius out an' out,  
There's no bloomin' doubt about it, an' I'd say so to 'is face!  
But o' course they're ain't no chanst o' that, cos why? well 'e's a gent,  
While I'm a 'umble waiter, which I 'opes I knows my place.

"At the *Grand* on Monday evenin' I was fairly took aback,  
An' I got no end excited when they said as you'd be there;  
But you might 'ave knocked me backwards when they all flocked in to dine,  
An' I found you at my table an' a-sittin' next the Chair.

"Oh! I waited on yer proper from the soup right to the end,  
There was nothin' as yer wanted but you got in 'arf a mo.,  
You'd the nicest cut o' saddle, you'd the pick o' the *menoo*,  
An' I kep' yer glass a-brimmin' — tho' you takes yer liquor slow.

"Then I listened to yer speakin' (I was 'id behind the screen)  
An' I said, 'Well, this 'ere Kiplin', 'e's a *man*, an' no mistake;  
An' I said, 'Oh — this waitin', chuck it, let's go out an' fight.  
I should like to punch some fellow's 'ead for good old England's sake!

"Now the Chairman, Mr. 'Aggard, 'e's a hauthor I admires,  
I 'ave read 'is stories many times, I fairly dotes on 'She,'  
All the same — an' Mr. 'Aggard, 'e'll agree with this, I know —  
For a general good all-rounder you're a greater man than 'e.

"Mr. Kiplin', Mr. Kiplin', ah! you little knew that night  
'Ow I wanted just to speak to you an' tell you what I thinks,  
I'd 'ave given my night's earnins' to 'ave 'ad a word with you,  
I'd 'ave given up my week's, sir, to 'ave treated you to drinks.

"I am but a 'umble waiter, Mr. Kiplin', that is all,  
But I'm 'uman tho' I'm 'umble, an' I've got a 'cart an' brain;  
An' you've got one constant reader who can swear that you're a brick,  
An' I'll say so to your face, sir, if I waits on you again!"<sup>6</sup>

When the Kiplings settled in the country, away from London, they needed practical advice about their land, and they sought it from Haggard.

Rider Haggard would visit us from time to time [Kipling wrote later of this period].

and give us of his ample land wisdom. I remember I planted some new apple trees in an old orchard, then rented by an Irishman, who at once put in an agile and hungry goat. Haggard met the combination suddenly one morning. He had gifts of speech and said very clearly that one 'might as well put Satan in an orchard as a goat.' I forget what he said about the tenants, but I know I acted on it.<sup>7</sup>

The letters that passed between them were full of practical questions and answers—not about literature, but about crops and vineyards, and show how Kipling appreciated Haggard's agricultural knowledge:

I— alas! — hold land now which I trust you will see next summer [Kipling writes on December 22, 1902]. An old house and a 25 acre farm of good hop land and fruit and a mill (water) that dates from 1196. The farm is let down and neglected: the tenant is a glib-tongued impostor and the buildings are disgraceful. I shall probably lose much in getting the farm into shape because if I grub out the hops no one will take it and if I don't I might as well keep a small Monte Carlo for hops are a demoralizing gamble. Now you see why your book [*Rural England*] touches me nearly. I shall have to put up at least two decent cottages in the place . . . and I *do* want to make it possible to rear clean and healthy men on my fraction of England. That is why I want to see you when we come back from the Cape.

Kipling obviously valued Haggard's advice about how best to manage his estate:

Your advice of gold [he writes a few days later]. Apples, as you say, are likely to be the game. I have 335 trees bearing already mostly good sorts but grievously in need of oil and lime-wash and salt and soap and shaping which they will get this spring.

But it's difficult about the tenant. You see there's that blessed mill which is a convenience for grinding pig food and any man who takes that wants a few acres of land. However I will lay my woes before you in the spring. Meanwhile I have to spend (£239! (two thirty-nine pounds!)) on making neglected cottages habitable! Dog kennels aren't in it with their present state of filth.<sup>8</sup>

In 1904 Kipling took Haggard's advice about buying a vineyard. Kipling's failures and successes with animals, trees, and tenants are catalogued in his letters through the following years, and Kipling evinces respect for Haggard's advice on practical matters in 1916, no less than he had in 1902:

You know your letters are family possessions with us . . . it's good to get in touch with you again. You'll be badly wanted down here in the spring to hear what we've tried to do in the farming line. . . . We all send our love, especially Elsie [the Kiplings' second child, Mrs. George Bambridge referred to in note 5], when spring comes (D.V.) we'll meet and colloquy and let the years go by. I'd like to hear the gist of what Roosevelt said to you if you would dictate it.<sup>9</sup>

Haggard's farming books delighted both Rudyard and Carrie Kipling, who read them avidly:

I wish you knew how much the wife and I have enjoyed your 'Farmer's Year' [Kipling wrote on November 12, 1899]. . . . In our tiny way we also have made experiments with land: and your figures made us groan sympathetically. Over and above the actual facts I don't think there has ever been a better book of the sane, common (which is uncommon) quiet humorous real country life in England. I've been going back and re-reading it slowly and leisurely: for the mere taste of it — same as Gilbert White.

Three days later Kipling added, "I think the Year book [*A Farmer's Year*] will last—as a study of certain facts and conditions at a certain date in our history—like Tusser." When *Rural England*, Haggard's two-volume survey of English agriculture, appeared, Kipling bracketed Haggard with England's two greatest agricultural economists.

Dear Cobbett-Young-Haggard. For the last week or more the wife and I have been reading *Rural England*, with deep joy (I don't mean on account of the state of things revealed) and admiration. I bought it lawfully in market overt and it stands with your Farmer's Year between Young's Agriculture of Sussex and Selborne. I take off my hat to you deeply and profoundly because it's a magnum opus and altogether fascinating and warning and chock full of instruction. . . . Of course like all the people who have written to you from other counties, I am exceedingly disappointed and wroth and all the rest of it that you did not devote at least 200 pp. to my own county. Sussex, Se. has been badly treated by you. You have neglected the fattening grounds of the Ose and the meetings of the curious old river-leet or whatever they call it, which apportion the rental of these pastures once a year I think. Likewise you haven't made enough of our down shepherds nor of our fruit: nor of our most primitive peasantry. . . . I am going to have my Rural England bound in pigskin for real use. . . . it's an immense book in every way.<sup>10</sup>

And when Haggard's *A Gardener's Year* appeared, Kipling again expressed his enthusiasm. "Everything in the book delights my sympathetic soul except your orchids," he wrote on January 31, 1905. But Haggard even got the Kipling to share his love of orchids by giving them some of his plants as a gift.

The two men found similar interests in more than farming. Their love of England made both of them bristle at the incompetence displayed by the denizens of Whitehall. Kipling and Haggard held similar beliefs on many contemporary issues, and they took most seriously both England's mission to civilize the backward parts of the world and her struggle for supremacy among nations. Kipling, by nature a campaigner than Haggard, did not stomp the countryside making speeches and rarely expressed his indignation publicly in prose. His poetry was the medium for his sharp and stinging commentary of political events, and Kipling's verse is today a gallery where the monuments of England's political blunders are exhibited and bitterly denounced. Kipling's letters to Haggard reflect his indig-

tion over the government's bungling through the years and his great concern for the national good. They show also that although Kipling himself would not sit on commissions, he read Haggard's commission reports eagerly and followed his friend's activities with keen interest:

I was glad to get your letter of the 4th and to learn that you approved of operations as conducted on my flank of the attack [Kipling wrote from Cape Town on January 28, 1902]. . . . Your side of the attack — the question of food supply is as you say *the vital one*. You have the figures and facts and the influence: and for goodness sake keep on hammering at it. What makes me sick is what makes you sick — the way, to wit, in which the responsible politician admits the cold truth of one's contentions and then explicitly says that he doesn't dare 'go in advance of public opinion' and so on.

Well here's luck! We need it.

Later that same year, a month after Haggard's *Rural England* appeared in print, Kipling was willing to help the cause of English agriculture with his poetic talents:

Your suggestion about the Rural Muse appeals to me mightily [he says in an undated letter Haggard received on December 27, 1902]. I am slowly discovering England which is the most wonderful foreign land I have ever been in. As you say it has no grub and no trained men except a few days' supply of each and it spends its time telling some velvet-plush lies. But the man-question is serious. I entirely agree with you about the town-bred person. He has to spend half his time keeping fit outside his employment which ought to be making him fit while he works. If there is any way in which my Agriculture Muse may be of service later, why then as Virgil says 'Come on, oh (young) husbandman' and command me.

Six years later, after Haggard had helped write the report for a special commission on afforestation, he and Kipling still shared the old indignation over the government's blindness:

I am as you know *not* a lover of the present Govt [wrote Kipling from the Hotel Catani, Engelberg, on January 28, 1909]. . . . But what an England we could make if we could only get half of your programme put through. Forgive me if I am a pessimist. They are all such a set of flagrant and persistent liars that I can't believe in their *maud* over anything. I shall be enormously pleased tho' if they develop any sparks of decency or gratitude towards you.

Well here's luck! We need it.

And later that same year, Kipling warned Haggard again about the ingratitude of politicians. "You've got a long and a hard, but a very good row to hoe," he wrote to Bateman's on December 14, 1909. "Only remember that sooner or later you will be let down and given away and generally repudiated by the Beasts with whom you *now* associate. They are only united on one thing and that is lying."

Already seeing eye to eye on many things, Kipling and Haggard found an-

other cause in common in 1920, when a group of eminent Englishmen founded the Liberty League to combat the advance of Bolshevism. A long letter explaining the League's intentions appeared in the *Times* (March 3, 1920, p. 12), above the signatures of its chairman, Haggard, and other founders, including Kipling; and on the following day, the *Times* reported the League's inaugural meeting. This public joining of Haggard and Kipling led to another set of mildly satirical verses:

"Every Bolsh is a blackguard,"  
Said Kipling to Haggard.  
"And given to tipling,"  
Said Haggard to Kipling.  
  
"And a blooming outsider,"  
Said Rudyard to Rider.  
"Their domain is blood-yard,"  
Said Rider to Rudyard.  
  
"That's just what I say,"  
Said the author of *They*.  
"I Agree; I agree,"  
Said the author of *She*.<sup>11</sup>

However interesting the two men's political and agricultural concerns, it is their literary relationship that deserves particular attention. They thought highly of each other's abilities. Haggard regarded Kipling as a true "poet-watchman of our Empire" and "one of the most brilliant men alive."<sup>12</sup> "I never knew a man so full of 'light' as Kipling," Haggard wrote in his diary in February, 1922, "nor anyone quite so quick at seizing and developing an idea. He has a marvellously fertile mind."<sup>13</sup>

And of Haggard, Kipling wrote that "never was a better tale-teller or, to my mind, a man with a more convincing imagination."<sup>14</sup> And though we lack Haggard's remarks on Kipling's individual works, Kipling's opinion of many Haggard tales are recorded and worth noting.

Commenting on Haggard's *The Way of the Spirit* (1906), which was dedicated to him, Kipling testified to the power that Haggard's stories held over him. "I did as I have done with a many of your books—simply surrendered myself to the joy of reading and read on. That's better than any criticism."<sup>15</sup> Returning the manuscript of *The Wanderer's Necklace* (1914), Kipling praised it too: "The Necklace I like *immensely*—it all goes with a rush and a whirl and holds like all the others of yours."<sup>16</sup> On January 7, 1916, commenting on a play Haggard had written, Kipling shows himself fascinated by the working of Haggard's imagination.



even in drama form: " 'Oro' promises well. Gad what an undefeated and joyous imagination you have! I want fuller details, please, of what Oro did when he re-entered upon life on the earth. . . . Can you send me a typed scenario?" Haggard's power to captivate Kipling was evident time and time again, even during the war years. "Thank you!" Kipling wrote on January 9, 1916. "I'd have to be pretty far gone before a book of yours didn't take me altogether out of myself." And on March 31, 1917, returning the manuscript of *When the World Shook* (1919), his response was similar. "A thousand thanks for the privilege. As I told you yesterday it's as fresh and as convincing as the work of a boy of 25 and it held me like a drug. That's your d-d gift!"

Haggard's books were favourites not of Kipling alone, but of his entire family, and Kipling reports that the arrival of a new tale caused some pleasant competition at Bateman's. "Dear old man — Just back from Edinburgh to find (and I've told Elsie she isn't to touch or look at it till I've done) 'Finished'," Kipling wrote on September 1, 1917. "Any book of yours takes one out of oneself more potently than any drug. I know and as soon as I'm finished with a d-d pile of accumulated mail, I go to my study, curl up and enjoy myself. Thank you, Sir." Another scramble took place over Haggard's *Moon of Israel* (1918); after it appeared Kipling wrote from Brown's Hotel in London on November 6, 1918:

[Elsie] bagged it first tho' I got it for myself. What is your secret, old man? It goes, and it grips and it moves with all the first freshness of youth and — I got into a row with the wife because I had to finish it in bed with the electric lights turned on. It's ripping good and I'm d-d jealous. . . . You've developed [that] which Scripture makes plain but which no one else dwells on — the essential turbulence and unaccommodativeness of the Israelites in the captivity. . . . Next time you come along bring your diary with you. I want to see how it [World War I] struck you day by day.

The scuffle for Haggard's books continued, with, it seems, Carrie participating. When, in February 1922, *The Virgin of the Sun* arrived, Kipling wrote, "E.—trust her!—has swiped and stands guard over it! I shan't get it till she and Carrie have done. (My God! I wish I had your flaming vitality.)"<sup>17</sup>

It was not just Haggard's historical knowledge or storytelling ability that Kipling admired. Writing about a story in the *Smith and the Pharaohs* (1920) volume, Kipling said, "Best of all . . . I like Little Flower for its power and justice and humanity (it's a young gem) but,—as ever, it is the amazing freshness of your work that always hits me between my envious eyes."<sup>18</sup> Kipling was not completely uncritical of his friend's work, and often he made suggestions for improving the manuscripts he read. His opinion of Haggard the man was obviously high, and

when he felt that Haggard the writer was not fulfilling himself, he would say so. Of *Wisdom's Daughter* (1923), the last of the "She" tales, Kipling wrote at some length:

The more I went through it the more I was convinced that it represented the whole sun and substance of your convictions along certain lines . . . the whole book is miles and miles above the head of the reader at large. . . . Damn it man — you have got the whole tragedy of the mystery of life under your hand, why not frame it in a wider setting? (This comes well from a chap who could not write a novel to save himself.)

. . . You are a whale on parables and allegories and one thing reflecting another. Don't cuss me. You wanted to know what I thought and so I send it to you.<sup>19</sup>

The many similar experiences the two men had in common, the resemblances in the external circumstances of their lives, and a strong inner affinity strengthened the ties between them. Neither had had a university education, and both had spent the impressionable years of their youth in one of the distant colonies of the Empire, Kipling in India, Haggard in South Africa, where they had gained experience and knowledge of imperial affairs. Each in turn had suffered the pangs of unrequited love, but both had made suitable matches for themselves. Both men had small families with whom they lived on country estates, close to the land. Each had lost his first-born child, and with the loss of Kipling's son in the war, the men shared another grief, the loss of an only son. Though Haggard was by no means the artist Kipling was, this fact did not divide them and seems to have eluded them altogether. What is more, both insisted that they were essentially "un-literary", and it was easy for them to see the superficial similarities, if not the qualitative differences, of their literary output. Each had written of new places and new things, each had grown popular with a newly shaped reading public, and to each fame had come overnight. They also shared a deep feeling for the land, the land as a symbol of England, not England the island but England the Empire, the England of Allan Quatermain and Umslopogaas, of Tommy Atkins and Kim.

But Kipling and Haggard had something else in common. They shared with each other something they could not share with anyone else, the gift of imagination. Haggard, and even more Kipling, could not discuss his literary prompting with many friends, and certainly neither Haggard nor Kipling explored with anyone else outside his immediate family the shadowy recesses of what Haggard called his "second sight" and Kipling his "daemon." Generally, Kipling shied away entirely from discussing matters of a deeply spiritual or psychic nature, for his sister, "Trix", had suffered greatly because of her attraction to psychic phenomena. The shadowy

problems never really left Kipling; they crept into his tales time and again. But Haggard was the only human being with whom he talked about them at great length. Haggard, on the other hand, fanned the psychic spark within himself, indulged it and let it influence his life in many ways; but it seemed that he, too, saved most of his thoughts on the subject for Kipling. There is no question that the long afternoons they spent together in Kipling's study at Bateman's were full of talk about reincarnation, spiritualism, and fourth-dimensional psychic promptings they both felt, and that these afternoons invariably gave rise to much of the strange atmosphere of psychic mystery that infuses many of their stories.

Kipling and Haggard never published a book together. But although the two did not collaborate in the formal sense, they quite naturally consulted each other about their own work, often helped each other in plotting tales, and even wrote in each other's company. Speaking of Haggard in his short autobiography, Kipling said, "We found by accident that each could work at ease in the other's company. So he would visit me, and I him, with work in hand; and between us we would even hatch out tales together—a most exacting test of sympathy."<sup>20</sup> Writing some two decades earlier, before the friendship had grown to maturity, Haggard said much the same thing:

Among my pleasantest recollections during the last few years [Haggard is writing in 1912] are those of my visits to the Kiplings, and one that they paid me here [Ditchingham House, Norfolk], during which we discussed everything in heaven above and earth beneath. . . . We do not fidget each other. Thus only last year Kipling informed me that he could work as well when I was sitting in the room as though he were alone, whereas generally the presence of another person while he was writing would drive him almost mad.<sup>21</sup>

An entry in Haggard's diary of the same period reports specifically on one such occasion: "On Sunday and Monday I sat in his study while he worked and after a while he got up and remarked to me that my presence did not bother him a bit; he supposed because we were two of a trade. He told me I was the only literary person with whom he could associate at all."<sup>22</sup> In later years, after Kipling suffered the loss of his son, he kept even more to himself, and his circle of friends grew much smaller. His study at Bateman's, lined with books and filled with hard wooden furniture, a long work table, a settee, and two or three globes, became more and more inviolate to family and friend alike. Only Haggard still needed no invitation, and he would spend an occasional long week-end with the Kiplings, sometimes on his way from his house in St. Leonards to his estate in Norfolk, or else when he made a point of going down from London expressly for a visit. These days he

spent largely with Kipling himself in the study, discussing the philosophical problems of life, empire, religion, immortality, reincarnation, and other matters. Here they wrote out plots together, and sitting at the long table, passed papers back and forth, for the one or the other to read and perhaps to add to. Here they read their tales aloud to each other, here they speculated on the outcome of the war, and here they shared the grief it brought. Haggard's war diary, some of the letters that passed between the two men, and a few quarto sheets of stationery with scribbled plot outlines and other jottings which Haggard judiciously saved from extinction enable us to recapture the atmosphere of Kipling's study when both men worked there together and something of their thoughts and feelings. On May 22, 1915, after one of his visits to Bateman's, Haggard wrote in his diary:

Most of the day I have spent with the Kiplings at Bateman's. Rudyard is not well. . . . Seated together in his study in the old house at Bateman's, we had a most interesting four hours together while he fiddled about with fishing tackle with which he tries to catch trout in the brook. There are two men left living in the world with whom I am in supreme sympathy. Theodore Roosevelt and Rudyard Kipling. The rest . . . have gone. What did he talk of? So many things that it is difficult to summarise them. Chiefly they had to do with the soul and the fate of man. Rudyard apparently cannot make up his mind about these things. On one point, however, he is perfectly clear. I happened to remark that I thought this world was one of the bells. He replied he did not *think*, he was *certain* of it. . . . As for the future he is inclined to let the matter drift. . . . His humility is very striking. We were talking of our failings. I said that what grew on me from day to day was a sense of my own utter insufficiency, of complete humiliation both in the case of those things that I had done and left undone. . . . I commented on the fact that he had wide fame and was known as "the great Mr. Kipling," which should be a consolation to him. He thrust the idea aside with a gesture of disgust. "What is it worth — what is all worth?" he answered. Moreover he went on to show that anything which any of us did *well* was no credit to us: that it came from somewhere else: "We are only telephone wires". As an example he instanced (I think) "Recessional" in his own case and "She" in mine. "You didn't write *She* you know," he said. "Something wrote it — through you!" or some such words.

. . . He opined in his amusing way, that if the present taxation, etc., goes on much further, he and I should be seen on opposite sides of the Strand selling "Recessional" and "She" for our daily bread. How interesting it would be to have a shorthand report of such a three hours' conversation as ours, . . . of which I can only recall a part here and there. . . . I believe honestly that outside of his own family, there is no one living to whom Rudyard opens his heart except to myself. Practically he lacks intimate friends, it is not his nature to make them; he said he could count those he cared for "on my fingers", although all mankind interested him.

... He parted from me with much affection and said how delighted he was to have had the opportunity of a good mental and spiritual clean out. So was I.<sup>23</sup>

Later that year, just after the armistice was declared, Haggard recorded his impressions of another visit, describing well the rapport between him and Kipling:

I have been spending the day at Bateman's. . . . As usual, we discussed all things in Heaven and earth. . . . I took this diary over, as R. had asked me to do, and read him passages of it, till I was tired. These interested him greatly.

. . . After the reading I happened to say to him that I wished I were a poet, as so many things occurred to me of which I should like to make poems. R. answered in these words, as nearly as I can remember them: "Don't you see, Rider, that much of what you write, in your reflections, etc., is poetry, and very fine poetry? Only the rhyme is lacking; the fall of the sentences and the essentials of poetry are all there, also the poetic imagination. You do not chance to have the gift of rhyme as I have it, and I'm glad of it, as I should not like your competition." . . . He and the others were full of the "Moon of Israel", which they seem to know much better than I do myself; no single point in the tale has escaped R's piercing attention. . . . "All the same," I answered, "seeing how poorly many of the critics seem to rate me, you would not dare to say over your name that you thought me a great writer?" "Wouldn't I just, if it came my way to do so!" he exclaimed. Well, it is pleasant to have one competent admirer left now that Andrew Lang is dead.

. . . A long talk with Kipling is now one of the greatest pleasures I have left in life, but I don't think he talks like that with anyone else; indeed he said as much to me.<sup>24</sup>

In the course of their association, Kipling suggested the idea for at least one of Haggard's tales (*When the World Shook*), he took a considerable hand in plotting five others (*The Ghost Kings*, *Red Eve*, *Allan and the Ice-Gods*, *The Mahatma and the Hare*, *The Way of the Spirit*), and he read (or was read) at least six stories in manuscript (*Child of Storm*, *A Wanderer's Necklace*, *When the World Shook*, *Wisdom's Daughter*, *The Way of the Spirit*, *Moon of Israel*). For this much we have evidence.

"On my return to England (from his second trip to Egypt in 1904)," Haggard tells us, "I wrote 'The Way of the Spirit,' . . . [a book] that interested him [Kipling] very much. Indeed he and I hunted out the title together in the Bible, as that of 'Renunciation,' by which it was first called, did not please him."<sup>25</sup>

But of all the help Haggard received from Kipling, the most interesting is in the plotting of three of Haggard's tales, *The Ghost Kings* (1908), *Red Eve* (1911), and *Allan and the Ice-Gods* (1927). Because these tales are so widely separated in time, it is quite possible that Haggard got help from Kipling on other tales that he wrote between 1908 and 1925. The evidence of these three, however, is conclusive.

Haggard himself mentions Kipling's assistance on *The Ghost Kings* in his autobiography. He reports that late in 1905, he entered a nursing home for an operation. "When I escaped from that nursing home," he later wrote, "very feeble and with much shattered nerves, I went to stay with my friend Lyne Stevens [a physician friend of Haggard's who had restored him to health during the difficult time following his son's death and who had been an attending physician at Haggard's operation] to recuperate, and thence for a day or two to Kipling's. Here I remember we compounded the plot of 'The Ghost Kings' together, writing down our ideas in alternate sentences upon the same sheet of foolscap."<sup>26</sup> The foolscap Haggard mentions is preserved.<sup>27</sup> Actually there are four pages (three quarto sheets) on which the tale is plotted in exacting detail. At the top of the first page, in Kipling's handwriting, are two titles. "The Shapes" is crossed out and over it is written "The Ghost Kings." Then seventeen lines in Kipling's hand outline the beginning of the tale; Haggard's hand then takes up the plot and carries it on for some fifty-four lines, leaving off in the middle of a sentence, where Kipling's hand again takes up and finishes the plot in some additional twenty-eight lines, ending with the word *Curtain* and a flourish of the pen. On the reverse side of the second sheet, some plot emendations appear in Haggard's hand.

Just how much Kipling helped with *Red Eve* is not entirely clear; we are certain, however, that he created or helped create the character of Murgh, as a sheet of Bateman's stationery indicates. For evidence there is the derivation of Murgh's name, looking like a genealogical chart. The two men, we may infer, started with the idea of "Death" and worked their way through "Morgue" to "Murgh." It is all in Kipling's writing and is arranged thus:

Death's name				
	Takht	}	Adm	
			Adam	
			Mada	
			Fa	
Taung	}	}	Kôth	Kaf Salm
Maung				Kaf
Paung			Rukhm	
			Mar	
		Tarkoth		
		Koth	Kôth	
		Murth	Morg	
Morgue		Murg	Murg	
		Murg	Murg	<u>Murgh</u> (name chosen)

In addition to the name chart, there is a pencil sketch of the head of Murgh mask

Kipling and very like the word description of Murgh in the book. In Haggard's card are the following notes:

Title — El Murgh

The Herald

The Ambassador

Wears gleaming black furs —

His hands hid in perfumed gloves [illegible word in parentheses after *gloves*]

Big quiet large boned man

His interview with Pope

and over on one side, in Haggard's hand, is written: "Bateman's/Kipling's idea of Murgh, 5. 10. 08."

Kipling seems to have given Haggard the most elaborate assistance on *Allan and the Ice-Gods*, which they worked over on Haggard's visit to Bateman's in February, 1922. The evidence rests in a group of seven pages (four quarto sheets) containing detailed plotting, alternating between Haggard's and Kipling's handwriting; three pencil sketches; a list in Kipling's hand of the characters of the tale, with accompanying phrases that either explain the meaning of their names or give a thumb-nail description (e.g. "WHAKA—a kind of ill-omen—one who howls; PITOKITE—a churl—one of the unlucky"); and a series, also in Kipling's hand, of suggested manuscript changes. On the reverse side of one page, Haggard wrote: "Synopsis of story drawn up by Rudyard K. and myself at Bateman's [Feb. 1922] H. Rider Haggard." Of particular interest is the fact that the larger part of the writing is in Kipling's hand. When Haggard returned from the visit to Bateman's, he acknowledged his debt to his friend in an entry in his diary: "We spent a most amusing two hours over the plot and I have brought home the results in several sheets of MS. written by him and myself."<sup>28</sup>

Because we know that the two men were sympathetic, that Kipling enjoyed reading his work aloud to close friends and family, and that he helped Haggard with his tales, it is hard to believe that Kipling did not consult his friend about his own work and that Haggard did not return the courtesy of letting Kipling benefit from his own prolific imagination. Carric Kipling's careful selection of the papers that would be kept for posterity may have put an end to the possibility of determining the extent to which Kipling accepted help from Haggard. But some threads of evidence do survive, and these lead to interesting speculations.

In late June and early July, 1897, Kipling (in Rottingdean) worked over a pen around the refrain "Lest we forget." There were many interruptions, and the verse did not shape easily. Not until July 16 did he arrive at a satisfactory ver-

sion.<sup>29</sup> The poem was his "Recessional", and when it was published in the *Times* on July 17, it immediately became the hymn of the nation. A week earlier, before he had arrived at the completed version, Kipling wrote to Haggard to explain what he wanted to get across in the poem:

Dear Haggard Your note did me much good — and thank you for it.

I've just come off a fortnight with the Channel Squadron off the North Coast of Ireland — rather a jolly time. Now, any nation save ourselves, with such a fleet as we have at present, would go out swiftly to trample the guts out of the rest of the world; and the fact that we do not seems to show that even if we aren't very civilized, we're about the one power with a glimmering of civilization in us. As you say, we've always had it somewhere in our composition. But my objection to that hymn is that it may be quoted as an excuse for lying down abjectly at all times and . . . seasons and taking what any other country may think fit to give us. What I wanted to say was:—"Don't gas but be ready to give people snuff" and I only covered the first part of the notion.<sup>30</sup>

The letter clearly implies that Kipling had sent "Recessional" in even an earlier letter, undoubtedly to get Haggard's opinion of it, and that Haggard had already commented on it once.

In two different places, Kipling acknowledges that reading Haggard's *Nada the Lily* (1892) helped give him the idea for the *Jungle Books*, his most popular tales to this day:

It chanced that I had written a tale about Indian Forestry work which included a boy who had been brought up by wolves [Kipling writes in his autobiography]. In the stillness, and suspense, of the winter of '92 some memory of the Masonic Lions of my childhood's magazine, and a phrase in Haggard's *Nada the Lily*, combined with the echo of this tale. After blocking out the main idea in my head, the pen took charge, and I watched it begin to write stories about Mowgli and animals, which later grew into the *Jungle Books*.<sup>31</sup>

Closer to the time when he composed the *Jungle Books*, Kipling acknowledged his debt in a letter to Haggard. "It was a chance sentence of yours in *Nada the Lily*," he wrote from Vermont on October 20, 1895, "that started me off on a track that ended in my writing a lot of wolf stories. You remember in your tale when the wolves leaped up at the feet of a dead man sitting on a rock? Somewhere on the page I got the notion. It's curious how things come back again, isn't it? I meant to tell you when we met: but I don't remember that I ever did."

Both Haggard's and Kipling's tales of wolf men are remarkable expressions of their individual imaginations, but there is a striking similarity between charac-



Two men create (Mowgli and Gilazi, for example) and a close relationship between some of the incidents.

Haggard's notebooks and war diaries reveal that Kipling sometimes discussed plots with him and read his tales aloud to him before publication. One such entry appears for September 30, 1911: "We talked a great deal on many subjects, making plots for books, etc. He read me some of his plays and we discussed others, especially one that would deal with the fall of the British Empire."

And there are many more suggestions of Haggard in Kipling's tales. Anna Weygandt, in her study of *Kipling's Reading*, realizes that Kipling's "genuine enthusiasm" for Haggard's tales was bound to have an effect upon his own imagination. "If Haggard could supply an impulse . . . [for the Mowgli stories]," Miss Weygandt argues, "he must indeed have meant much to Kipling." She recognizes the influence of *Allan Quatermain*, *She*, and *King Solomon's Mines* in other works of Kipling,<sup>32</sup> but there are also similarities in the stories of reincarnation the two men wrote, in their Boer tales, and in a remarkable tale each wrote about communicating with spirits in their cosmic resting places by means of telegraphy.

Haggard's affection for Kipling and the kinship between the two men is perhaps best reflected in Haggard's dedication to his friend in *The Way of the Spirit* (1906). It is worth noting that it is dated August 14, 1905, quite early in the annals of the friendship:

My dear Kipling, — Both of us believe that there are higher aims in life than the weaving of stories well or ill, and according to our separate occasions strive to fulfil this aim.

So, when we talked together of the plan of this tale, and when you read the written book, your judgment thereof was such as all of us hope for from an honest and instructed friend—generally in vain.

So, as you found interest in it, I offer it to you, in token of much I cannot write, but you will understand.

This record of Kipling's and Haggard's natural affinity, mutual interests, similar views, and working collaboration, as it survives through the years, at best only suggests the friendship between the two men. Their frequent meetings made long letters unnecessary, and even when they met, there was between them an understanding that transcended expression. Their spiritual rapport would be difficult to gauge even if the record were far more detailed than it is, though it is certainly implicit throughout the letters and diary entries quoted here and in one other set of unpublished letters written in 1925 by Kipling to Haggard, when Haggard was on his deathbed. But it is the earlier letters and documents, reflecting as they

do Kipling's and Haggard's interest in the land, concern for the Empire, literary confidences and cooperation, and spiritual agreement, that tell us how they were drawn to one another and how their friendship grew.

It is clear that Kipling supplied Haggard with the understanding he seldom got within his family circle and the firm prop his ego required. Haggard, in turn, offered Kipling a friendship and companionship he also needed and appreciated. They found in each other the qualities of person, mind, and imagination they most admired, and these qualities drew them together and fashioned a remarkable friendship and literary collaboration.

## II. *Letters from a Friend*

Kipling once wrote that "without . . . a friend, man would perish."<sup>23</sup> Whether he had a specific friend in mind when he wrote these lines, we do not know. But if so, he might very well have been thinking of Haggard. It was in the last three months before Haggard's death that Kipling wrote his friend a series of sixteen letters that offers us a rare insight into the association of these two literary figures. The letters serve, furthermore, as a glass in which we see reflected a clear image of Rider Haggard at the end of his active life.

On November 5, 1924, the sixty-eight-year-old Haggard delivered the major address at a luncheon in Stationers' Hall celebrating the bicentenary of his publishers and friends, Longmans, Green, and Company. It was a moving speech, and witty, and the *Times* ran a rather detailed account of it on the following day. On the way home from Stationers' Hall, however, Haggard was stricken with "a violent digestive upset and chill." He was confined to his Norfolk home for the long winter months that followed; the illness grew worse, and he became gaunt and weak. "He . . . changed in some intangible fashion", his daughter remembers. "His hands had grown oddly thin, so thin that the heavy Egyptian rings which he wore almost slipped off them. Also his face had settled into . . . [a] sadness."<sup>24</sup> All the same, the months through which Haggard lay bedridden were not without activity. He was a quick-minded, high-spirited, vigorous person, and he did not take to illness easily. His mind remained energetic, and through his illness he continued to dictate to his secretary and, when he felt up to it, even wrote himself.

But he also brooded, for he saw that his once robust body was betraying him at last. Making a final reckoning of his life was not easy, and he welcomed the solace that came to him from his family and his few remaining friends.

Kipling, on hearing of Haggard's illness, wrote to him at once, and, as the weeks passed and he became aware that Haggard's condition was serious, he faithfully performed the last offices of friendship. The letters he wrote the ailing Haggard were frequent, long, and intimate, letters from a most affectionate friend. Nor did he write them all from his comfortable study at Bateman's, for he and his wife were on a motor trip through France for much of the spring of 1925. Yet Kipling wrote regularly, never allowing the exigencies or diversions of travel to interfere with his kind employment.

The letters came, every few days, full of chitchat about France and Kipling's experiences there, replete with observations about life and nature, body and spirit. And although we do not have Haggard's replies, Kipling's words are a counterpoint to Haggard's thoughts and feelings during his final months, and show too how Kipling shared his friend's hopes and apprehensions and the news of his advances and reverses.

The letters begin at Bateman's on February 15, 1925, after Kipling first hears of Haggard's illness:

Dear old man,

I heard, a day or two ago that you are under the weather at Ditchingham; and I write at once to send you mixed condolences and congratulations. In a hell-broth of a winter like this, bed's the best and soundest place there is; and anyhow, all England is one filthy ditch (full) at present. So lie up in peace: only send me a line when you feel like it. . . . [Turning to politics and Lloyd George, Kipling continues:] He has just gone out—him and his sunsets and his mountains and his banners of dawn. You said he would. You said the mob threw him up and the mob would throw him down.

He asks what Haggard is writing or whether he is simply answering crank letters, and he requests that Haggard recommend a film of one of his books for him to see. Six days later he writes again, another chatty letter, in which he reports that he had met the "Norweege Minister who had just discovered Egypt. He went down there, this year, led, he says, by your words: and he was immensely full of it and of them." At the end of the letter, he adds: "I've been putting in a spare time of self-examination, rather envying your record."

The following week, Kipling writes again, answering Haggard's heated reaction to a flippant remark Kipling had made about small holdings in one of his earlier letters: "Keep your hair on' as the boys used to say. I haven't your Isaiah-like gift of promiscuous fulmination", and he assures him he is really on his side in these agricultural matters. Kipling goes on to complain about his farm and to tell Haggard of how fond the Kipling children are of him, adding,

It must be nice to inspire affection at short notice. I haven't the gift . . . . My dear Rider you be glad you're in bed — even if those damnable nights are long and even Ecclesiasticus who is my refuge, doesn't help always. I've had a touch of it and done a deuce of a lot of thinking — the sum and substance of which is that I wish I had as straight and high a record as you have of work done. But I never took on commissions and now I rather regret it . . . . Dictate me another letter sometime.

Two days later Haggard did, and this is one of the few letters of his to Kipling that survive. In part he writes:

I am glad to say that I am somewhat better. I got up yesterday & sat in the old study next door for a little while, but of course my limbs are like sticks & the sight of *meat* is abhorrent to me. You would laugh to see me being fed by the nurse with milk pudding from a spoon just like a baby. Also my rings fall off my hands & there was the deuce of a hunt for one of them the other night — finally retrieved from the seat of my pyjamas.

By the way, I think I saw you had a birthday not long ago. Would you like a present of a ring to use as a seal, for it is too massive to wear, copper I think with a little gold in it, Egyptian 18th Dynasty, & very curious in its way, probably a memorial ring of Akhenaton whose name has been perverted on it, perhaps because it was not lawful to use it after his death as it stood; just as the Zulus in my youth would not mention the names of their dead kings.

The truth is I fought against this illness too long; I ought to have gone to bed much earlier. But I kept at it sitting on that E. African Committee after the dark to suit Lord Southborough's convenience & so forth, & the thing grew until it bowled me over.<sup>26</sup>

Within a week came another message from Kipling in which he thanks Haggard for the seal, "which you needn't tell *me* has no duplicate. . . . I don't care so much about Akhenaton's dealings with it (he probably countersigned a lot of trash of the Social Progress nature before he was busted) but that it has been yours and that you've given it to me *does* mean a lot to this teacher of the alphabet."<sup>26</sup>

And two days later, Kipling replied to another note from Haggard about the seal:

Yes I value old Akhenaton's thumb-piece but more than that I value your exceedingly cock-eyed p.c. (no I won't sell it for an autograph!) which shows "evidence of design"—and improvement. *Did* you fabricate it lying on your belly, or did you do it from underneath — the thing held above you as I've done under like circumstances? . . . There's no news except that spring is here (with a hell of a N.W. wind) full of good intentions and on her way to Norfolk to make you whole again and exceedingly fractious, against my return. Don't let your attendants persuade you that you're getting better. Mine tried that trick on me, whereupon I would burst into tears . . . . [Kipling

then suggests that Haggard read Doughty's *Arabia*] It's stytic . . . in style and as Calpeper would say, "helps mightily against the emeralds."

Four days later, the Kiplings were off on a chauffeured auto holiday in France. But throughout the trip, there was a regular exchange between Kipling and Haggard. On March 12, Kipling writes a long letter from the R.M.S.S. *Norsetia*, waiting to sail from Southampton: "I wish you were along too. You'd cuss the cold — in spite of the lavish and odorous steam-heat — but you'd like the smell of the docks again." From Chartres two days later another letter: "I'll write soon. You can't tell me to stop because I haven't an address." Five days later came Kipling's remarkable tale of a visit to the chateau of the Princess of Monaco. Her Royal Highness had urged the Kiplings to stop even though she herself would be away, and they did. Although they found the chateau undergoing extensive repairs, Kipling and his party were regally entertained by the staff. After an *haute-cuisine* luncheon, they were shown the hen houses, "brick villas", with plumbing that would fright an English vicar's wife.<sup>27</sup> Six days later Kipling, now at Biarritz, acknowledges two of Haggard's letters:

Your signature, Sir is vastly improved and the fact that you can (whether vertical or horizontal) tell good tales is *most* gratifying . . . Thank you *ever* so much for the tale of "Her" adventures with the Huns [a German representative had probably called on Haggard about filming *S&K*]. It's exactly what they would do — energetically and dandlessly — as I've said: but it's also exactly like you that the hairy-chinned man should have stuck you for railway fares. Some folk are born to be benefactors: and you, old man, were long ago scaled of that tribe. But he'll pay you back; and I prophesy that "She" will begin to pay you royalty—on a big scale. *Only* of course, I can't imagine how the tale could be adequately presented—even by all the means known to filmmakers. Can you tell me when there's a chance to have a look at it? . . . There are worse things in the world than to lie abed and read your books. I've done it. So I know. But it must give you peculiar satisfaction to run through 'em again: and to find out how big pieces of 'em you've utterly forgotten. Odd, though, that you don't mention "Joss": whereof I minegelf have something of an opinion. . . . If you habitually eat British Yorkshire pudding and gravy, it will end by depressing your morale and giving you what I have heard called "tweezies in the trash bag". England's all right as he'll be in—owing to the sedative qualities of the air & the inhabitants—but it's no oach for a convalescent. When do you think they'll let you move out a little bit? You'll now of getting up in the afternoons. When will you arise in the morn, and stagger to a stater—say even as far as Hull—and go "foreign" for awhile?

Five days later, still from Biarritz:

You may be suffering from incurable diseases . . . but you've still got a fine glow of soul wrath over the suffering S. Africa . . . I don't quite accept your ideas of your

travelling days being over: and the fact of calling a disease by a name as long as a probe don't make it any more obscene nor violent than it is. When they cut me open sideways, I rejoiced in a lovely lot of names of disgusting import—but words beloved Rider, to men of *our* calling, do not kill. Put that in your Kaffir Calabash pipe and smoke it . . . I've written to a lunatic in Florida trying to make him understand that it is not my job to transplant him from that remote state to British India . . . for which . . . he is homesick unto death. Now you would have sent him a first class ticket by return post—which was practically what he demanded I should do. . . . By some error, I find that I have gone on right up to the end of the 4th page, thinking it was the 3d; so you'll have to stick it a little longer. . . . Your letters always cheer me and make me laugh. Rummy! Seeing that *you* are the sick man, but it's all a question of temperament (I come, I am persuaded, of a long line of bankrupt undertakers).

On April 5, five days later:

Dear old man: Nothing from you for the past few days, & as I've got to pull out of here in a day or two, I'm launching another yarn at you . . . . The wife has bought her a new dress. You and I don't rake the first new town we come to for a pair of new trousers—why. Because, O Rider, we are Superior Animals. Here she cuts in and says we are by *no* means superior, because when the dress is worn, we enjoy looking at it. That *does* rather knock the bottom out of the argument.

*Apr. 6 Palm Sunday:* And here comes yours of the 3rd (I was hoping it would with the priceless tale of the drunkard & the leper (shall send it on to Elsie that whom you have no more fervent appreciator) . . . . I don't marvel that in your damnable weather you get setbacks. All nature is in conspiracy of course to chill you and go in under the bedclothes for that purpose. But I note you've contributed two lines in your own fist—not so bad either—which greatly cheers me. . . . Do write if you've time. New mind what you say: all the letters are duly-burned and so you can, if you feel like it, open the door at your pleasure. It's good for a man sometimes to say what is in his heart—even if he *is* running a temperature. Ever affectionately, Rudyard.

From Paris, five days later:

Dear old man — Just in from Tours, to find yours of the 8th with the *good news* that you've been trekking about in a Bath chair. Hurroo! It isn't quite the same as a Boer pony or even an ox-wagon; but 'twill serve for a start; and you've got the spring winds in your rear (on reflection this isn't a happy simile; but I'll let it stand. . . . Send us another line *here* to let me know how you are going out and getting on. Tho' I'll be home (In's hallah). Ever affectionately, Rud.

At this point in Haggard's illness, the doctors decided that he had best be taken up to London for a more thorough examination than was possible at Ditchingham House. The nurse dressed him, the ambulance came, and Haggard, daffodil in buttonhole, was driven to London. Kipling gets the news of this development on April 20, while still in Paris. He replies immediately:

Dear old man — Your last dictated letter catches me on the very edge of going off to Boulogne for the evening's boat. You don't tell me *when*, exactly, you go up for your exam: but I'm going to write to Ditchingham when I get back. One advantage of a committee of experts sitting on one is that (like Councils of War) they rarely recommend operations. It's the individual surgeon who does that.

More likely 'twill be some kind of treatment—of infinite length & boredom. But you've got the year with you and the love of your friends round you — Bless you a thousand times. Ever with affection, Rud.

Two weeks later, from Bateman's, Kipling writes to Haggard in the nursing home:

*Me voici* returned. . . . And I've got your note of yesterday; and this, you need not be told, comes to you with all-love (Bosch locution: but you know what it means) and sympathy not the less keen 'cause it has been shoved through the same mill.

Don't know what happens to the Philistine in nursing homes and hospitals, but the man who lives by his imagination pays for his gift a thousandfold in such places. The mere smell of 'em makes that terrible machine turn on its alleged owner and rend him to pieces. One pays in advance but—one never gets back the price of one's baseless apprehensions. And the grub matches the wallpaper; and the slow, sickening pully-bally of internal observations sinks one's soul into one's boots. So we are persuaded that our vitality is lowered, which, luckily, it isn't. Only we feel that way: so it is deadly real. Can you, by any means, relax and let go altogether—either in tears or lamentations? It's better that way, if one can—all alone. I've tried but stuck halfway which was worse than not beginning it at all. . . . But a council of surgeons, as a rule, is a heap safer than one individual with a knife and a theory. They all ride jealous on such occasions, I believe, and operate as limitedly as may be. But there is this—and just this to be said—when the big Machine of Fate is felt and realized to have us in its hold, one gets a blessed igcuriousness and content on the matter—on all matters: and the odd feeling that somewhere at some time the self-same thing has happened before and that, try as one may, one can't put a foot wrong. I know that will come over you as you go up on the table—if you've got to: and it beats any known anaesthetic.

And I've put in a long wholly absorbed evening over your lady of the Dawn [*Queen of the Dawn*]*—and—how the dickens* do you do it? How do you keep and support the vitality and the conviction and *how* do you contrive to nail down and dish the *interest* that keeps a man lying along on one elbow till the whole arm is tone-camped? That's what I want to know. I don't pretend (that 'ud be cheek) to judge the book in the least. I only know, in my own person, that it held me as a drug night—but it was a good drug. And here I am piddling and piffing with a tuppenny-w'penny short story that I can neither patch, punch or pot (try saying that aloud!) into any satisfactory shape. You have the mastery of the incommunicable gift of catching and holding—for the good reason that you breathed your own good spirit into it. (And I ain't good). Voila the little difference. Qua Stuff—I think the movement, fights and fights before and during the Babylonian Army's battle are as good as anything I've ever touched of yours. That's no small thing either, old man. And while I read, I was overcome by the ancient marvel, as I lay, that a man's carcass should be

such a disgusting, ill-perfumed, vilely packed bag of tricks while his soul, at the same moment, or almost, should sit cheerily trumpeting above it all!—and therefore all my thanks and—for what they may be worth—my abundant blessings.

. . . I'll be writing again in a day or two. Bless you and believe in all the affection of your many many hundred thousand friends the world about. And for me I am always lovingly, Rud.<sup>28</sup>

Two days later:

Dear old man — Just a line . . . to acknowledge your note of the 6th. The Lord is treating you rough. It's the hanging about indefinitely which makes the life unendurable indeed! I went to ask after Milner . . . but (and this is a good omen, isn't it: he being 71-72) he is making a most amazing recovery of it. So I went away much cheered—about you. I believe in these signs and significations. It's those d-d specialists who gather round a man and depress him. . . . By the way, has it occurred to you lately that your prophetic "Doctor Therne" [Haggard's one novel with a cause argues strongly for universal vaccination and appeared in 1898 amid the heat of the vaccination controversy of the time] is in a fair way of coming true? Have you noticed how steadily smallpox is digging itself into certain crowded centres, and . . . is really getting ready to explode. I've been watching it for the last two years—but you foresaw it a good ten or twelve before that. And 'twill be d-d serious.

Haggard was operated upon during the second week of May, and there is only one more letter from Kipling, this to Haggard's secretary:

Dear Miss Hector:

I am tremendously in your debt for your notes about Sir Rider: and your bulletin of this morning made me feel a little easier.

Seeing that the operation was last Saturday morning and he is reported as reading & smoking on Tuesday, there seems to be a chance of the luck turning.

I'm off tonight for *Brussels* where I shall be staying at the *Hotel Astoria* till Sunday in case there should be anything to tell me or wire in a hurry. I expect to be back in London on the 19th or 20th. I shan't trouble him with a letter unless you tell me. Very sincerely, Rudyard Kipling.

When Kipling wrote this letter, his friend was already in a coma, and on the following day, May 14, 1925, Rider Haggard died. But it is quite clear that in the troubled, painful months before his death, Haggard had taken much comfort from the "sheltering tree of friendship" that Kipling helped provide.



## NOTES

1. C. E. Carrington, *The Life of Rudyard Kipling* (1955), p. 108.
2. Horatio F. Brown, ed., *Letters and Papers of John Addington Symonds* (1923), p. 228.
3. Janet Adam Smith, ed., *Henry James and Robert Louis Stevenson* (1948), p. 184.
4. Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself* (1937), p. 85.
5. I am indebted to Mrs. George Bambridge, Rudyard Kipling's daughter, for access to and permission to quote from forty-one unpublished letters written by her father to Rider Haggard. Unless otherwise indicated, the quotations below are from the typescript copies of these letters in the Bambridge Collection, and undated.
6. XV (May 21, 1898), 311-13.
7. Kipling, *Something of Myself*, p. 193.
8. Date of receipt: December 27, 1902.
9. Dated January 7, 1916. Haggard had met Roosevelt in 1905 when he had gone to the United States as Commissioner to inspect Salvation Army Settlements, and a mutual respect had grown between him and the President. They corresponded and met on numerous occasions. In 1916 Haggard travelled to Canada as part of his mission (on behalf of the Royal Colonial Institute) to look into the prospects of British ex-servicemen settling in the various Dominions. In July he took an opportunity to visit New York and spend a day with Roosevelt.
10. Dated December 22, 1902.
11. "G. S.," "Two Hearts that Beat as One," *Daily Herald*, March 4, 1920.
12. *African Review*, XV (May 21, 1898), 312; Lillias Rider Haggard, *The Cloak that I Left* (1951), p. 194.
13. Lillias Rider Haggard, *The Cloak That I Left* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1951), p. 271.
14. *Something of Myself*, p. 193.
15. Dated December 2, 1904.
16. Dated Saturday [1914].
17. Dated February 8, 1922.
18. Dated November 26, 1920.
19. Lillias Haggard, *Cloak*, pp. 271-72.
20. Kipling, *Something of Myself*, p. 193.
21. C. J. Longman, ed., *The Days of My Life*, II (1926), 208.
22. J. E. Scott, "Rudyard Kipling: Two Footnotes, II," *New Colophon*, I (1948), 335-65.
23. Haggard's unpublished World War I diary (twenty volumes) is in the Norwich Public Library. I am indebted to Miss Lillias Rider Haggard for permission to quote from the original Haggard papers and copyright material.
24. Entry dated November 15, 1918.
25. *Days of My Life*, II, 159.

26. *Ibid.*, 207-208.
27. The original plot outlines referred to here and below are part of the James Mc Gregor Stewart Kipling Collection, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia.
28. Lillias Haggard, *Cloak*, p. 271.
29. Carrington, pp. 205-206.
30. Dated July 10, 1897.
31. Kipling, *Something of Myself*, p. 113.
32. (1939), pp. 97-98.
33. Parnesius is speaking to Dan in "On the Great Wall," *Puck of Pook's Hill* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1906), p. 156.
34. Lillias Rider Haggard, pp. 277-78.
35. March 2, 1925.
36. March 6, 1925.
37. March 19, 1925.
38. May 5, 1925.