

hospital without telling anyone. The hospital contained four beds and was empty at that time; I lay there for two days and two nights without being discovered. It was supposed that I had fallen overboard and had been eaten up by sharks. In the end I was discovered by a shipmate, and what was left of me was carried, rather than led, to the commander to report.

'Such a thing as that,' said Commander Haus, stroking his beard, 'such a thing as that never happened before! And you are planning to become an able sailor? Don't you know that Admiral Nelson won all his battles in spite of constant seasickness?'

I believed him. But I could detect no ambition in my heart to emulate the great English admiral. I was conscious of but one wish: Land — firm, reliable land under my feet!

The look of despair with which I met the sage and serene eyes of my officer probably shattered any remnant of faith in my ability to become a sailor

that still lingered in his heart. I got off with a mild reproof; I believe he did not think it worth the trouble to be severe with me.

Some years later I was serving in my native town of Pola as lieutenant of coast artillery. My company and I were lodged in barracks about an hour's walk from town. I had the permission of the naval authorities to use the steam barge that plied between that point and the city. And every day I made the trip in the company of my former commander, Anton Haus, who had become the captain of a frigate.

We talked of many things, but never of my past seamanship. Only once, as we both looked out into the open sea and beheld the old Friedrich, which was still a cadets' school-ship, just unfolding her sails to put out into the Adriatic, I caught a slightly ironic curving of his lips, as if he wanted to ask me again:

'Well, how does it stand with Doctor Oswald Stein and Melitta?'

OLIVE TREES

BY WILFRED THORLEY

[*Saturday Review*]

WHEN I was young in Italy, beneath the olive trees
I saw the sunburnt men in spring prune off the boughs and hoe;
And when I've done with London-town and won to greater ease,
It's there among the olive trees that back again I'll go.

The olive trees are silver-gray, and gnarled and old and maimed
By cruel years of pruning, yet their growth is never quelled;
And if I gaze again on them I'm sure that I'll be shamed,
And find my youth still seeking for the glory unbeheld.

The olive bears sweet resin and is topt with silver leaves,
And singing go the gardeners that hoe about the base,
And under it I'll soon forget the years that London thieves
And show, like all the hoary boughs, the sun a shining face.

RUDYARD KIPLING

BY EDWARD SHANKS

[*Mr. Shanks is assistant-editor of the London Mercury, author of several books, and well known in England as a critic and poet. In 1919 he was winner of the Hawthornden Prize for imaginative literature.*]

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It does not happen very often in English literature that the political opinions of a writer interfere with critical judgment of his work. Even at the beginning of last century, when the fear of all new things was powerfully aided by the fear of a particular new thing across the Channel which would be physically disagreeable if it ever came to England — even then the persecution of literary radicals seemed a little unnatural and a little absurd. Since then the question cannot be said to have arisen until the appearance of Mr. Rudyard Kipling. Tennyson wrote a good many poems on public subjects; but it would be hard to conceive of opinion as to his poetic merits being moved by them, either one way or the other. Browning wrote a sonnet called 'Why I am a Liberal'; but do many readers know what precisely were the reasons he gave? Morris preached Socialism; and his work in all kinds was acutely appreciated by the rich. In truth, as a rule, the English keep their enjoyment of literature and their interest in politics in separate compartments; and the political ideas of a poet or a novelist very rarely seem to them to be a genuine or an important part of the man himself.

With Mr. Kipling, however, it is altogether different. Since the height of his first fame he has been held to be a political figure; and political points of

view are almost always evident in critical considerations of his work, whether admiring or adverse. Mr. Kipling, so far as I know, never has complained and, it may be suspected, never would complain of this. If it gets him severe and obstinate opponents, it also gets him enthusiastic admirers. . . . Politics is really his ruling and most permanent interest. In the whole-heartedness with which he takes a side, preaching both its general doctrines and its particular manœuvres, in the earnestness with which he publicly admonishes the entire nation on its own public affairs, we must find a comparison for him, if anywhere, abroad, for there is none to be found at home. His position, that is to say, in his writings, must be compared with the position of Hugo in France or of D'Annunzio in Italy — in his writings only, it must be confessed. The English nation has made something of a concession in taking so seriously his utterances on public matters. It might not have made the further concession which would have been necessary if he had come definitely to the day-to-day handling of day-to-day politics. Yet there was a time when he was almost himself a symbol rather than a creator or celebrator of symbols, just as D'Annunzio was the symbol of Italy's movement into the war.

Mr. Kipling's sudden and amazing upward rush into fame, over thirty