

Rudyard Kipling    A true British Patriot.

Viv Evans wrote: “Some time ago – well before Covid and Lockdowns, during the early days of the Brexit struggle, Independence Daily occasionally had a ‘Poet’s Corner’ where they published poems by various authors. One author who has always stood out for me, whose poems always hit the spot when it came to describe the state of our Nation and our thoughts, was [Rudyard Kipling](#).”

It is not by accident that his works are more or less banned in our British ‘educational’ establishments. I bet there’s hardly any teenie nowadays who even knows who Kipling was. The Left has declared him to be too imperialistic and too racist and thus young impressionable minds must on no account be contaminated by his verses.

However – many of us love reading him, again and again. Personally, in these lockdown times I’ve re-read ‘Kim’ – a book I’ve loved from the first time I read it many decades ago. So I shouldn’t have been that surprised when one of the wonderful readers of this site emailed me with his proposal to publish the following poem by Kipling” written about 1914-1918:

***The Fabulists***

*When all the world would keep a matter hid,  
Since Truth is seldom Friend to any crowd,  
Men write in Fable, as old Aesop did,  
Jesting at that which none will name aloud.  
And this they needs must do, or it will fall  
Unless they please they are not heard at all.*

*When desperate Folly daily laboureth  
To work confusion upon all we have,  
When diligent Sloth demandeth Freedom’s death,  
And banded Fear commandeth Honour’s grave  
Even in that certain hour before the fall,  
Unless men please they are not heard at all.*

*Needs must all please, yet some not all for need,  
Needs must all toil, yet some not all for gain,  
But that men taking pleasure may take heed  
Whom present toil shall snatch from later pain.  
Thus some have toiled, but their reward was small  
Since, though they pleased, they were not heard at all.*

*This was the lock that lay upon our lips,  
This was the yoke that we have undergone,  
Denying us all pleasant fellowships  
As in our time and generation.  
Our pleasures unpursued age past recall,  
And for our pains we are not heard at all.*

*What man hears aught except the groaning guns?  
What man heeds aught save what each instant brings?  
When each man's life all imaged life outruns,  
What man shall pleasure in imaginings?  
So it hath fallen, as it was bound to fall,  
We are not, nor we were not, heard at all.*

“Doesn’t this relate exceedingly well to our lockdown struggles? Should you think Kipling is surely a bit too pessimistic in this poem then keep in mind that he wrote these verses during the dark days of 1917. In the background notes accompanying this poem I found a reference to a later poem, published in 1926, which is also about unpleasant truths that might only be heard if they’re suitably disguised. Its title is ‘A legend of Truth’ and also provides much food for thought. Here it is” said Viv Evans:

## ***A Legend of Truth***

*ONCE on a time, the ancient legends tell,  
Truth, rising from the bottom of her well,  
Looked on the world, but, hearing how it lied,  
Returned to her seclusion horrified.  
There she abode, so conscious of her worth,  
Not even Pilate's Question called her forth,  
Nor Galileo, kneeling to deny  
The Laws that hold our Planet 'neath the sky.  
Meantime, her kindlier sister, whom men call  
Fiction, did all her work and more than all,  
With so much zeal, devotion, tact, and care,  
That no one noticed Truth was elsewhere.*

*Then came a War when, bombed and gassed and mined,  
Truth rose once more, perforce, to meet mankind,  
And through the dust and glare and wreck of things,  
Beheld a phantom on unbalanced wings,  
Reeling and groping, dazed, dishevelled, dumb,  
But semaphoring direr deeds to come.*

*Truth hailed and bade her stand; the quavering shade  
Clung to her knees and babbled, "Sister, aid!  
I am-I was-thy Deputy, and men  
Besought me for my useful tongue or pen  
To gloss their gentle deeds, and I complied,  
And they, and thy demands, were satisfied.  
But this-" she pointed o'er the blistered plain,  
Where men as Gods and devils wrought amain-  
"This is beyond me! Take thy work again."*

*Tablets and pen transferred, she fled afar,  
And Truth assumed the record of the War...*

*She saw, she heard, she read, she tried to tell  
Facts beyond precedent and parallel-  
Unfit to hint or breathe, much less to write,  
But happening every minute, day and night.  
She called for proof. It came. The dossiers grew.  
She marked them, first, "Return. This can't be true."  
Then, underneath the cold official word:  
"This is not really half of what occurred."*

*She faced herself at last, the story runs,  
And telegraphed her sister: "Come at once.  
Facts out of hand. Unable overtake  
Without your aid. Come back for Truth's own sake!  
Co-equal rank and powers if you agree.  
They need us both, but you far more than me!"*

RUDYARD KIPLING