CHAPTER - VI

KIPLING'S CRAFTSMANSHIP: VERSIFICATION AND DICTION

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The study of Versification and diction has been a matter of interest and choice to the critics and the reviewers of poetry. It is a tiresome business no doubt, yet it cannot be denied that its study also gives a kind of interest and pleasure to the readers and the critics. The readers find themselves helped in enjoying and knowing the technique and art that lie behind the creative work - poem/poetry when the critic points them out or when the readers themselves are the critics and are acquainted with the technique, art and method of that creative work; and the Versification and diction, thus, goes a long way to the manifestation and recognition of poetic genius.

And, with the above purpose in mind, an attempt is being made here to highlight some of the salient features of Kipling’s Versification, language and diction; though the study and research of Kipling’s Versification and diction require an independent work.

Kipling, like other poets, has freely exploited the resources of stanza-forms, rhyme, rhythm, metre, alliteration, language, etc. for making his poems melodious and musical. By using a great variety of stanza-forms and lines of different metrical length, he has excelled himself of other poets in his creative work; and, thus, he has presented difficulties in understanding his liking for his particular choice of stanza-form, language and scansion. T. S. Eliot says that Kipling’s Versification is not
"too regular" and "irregularities of scansion have a wide scope". Kipling's Verse does not "appear to scan". Here the views of Quiller-Couch on the Versification of Kipling, when he is being compared with Henley, may be observed with a benefit of knowledge: "...But while Mr. Kipling assails us with simple and even vulgar metres and dazzling crudities of speech, Mr. Henley's Versification is learned and elaborate, and his language charged with literary feeling..." Charles Eliot Norton speaking on "The poetry of Rudyard Kipling" tells of his qualities as a poet and of his Versification: "... And those who read the scraps of verse prefixed to many of his stories, if they know what poetry was, learned that their writer was at least potentially a poet, not by Virtue of fantasy alone, but by his mastery of lyrical Versification. The rhythm of these fragments had swing and ease of variety, and there was one complete little set of verses,... that the qualities which distinguished Mr. Kipling's Stories were not lacking in his poems. There was the same sure touch, the same insight, the same imaginative sympathy with all the verities of life, and the same sense of the moral significance of life even in its crudest, coarsest and most vulgar aspects." His verses of his youth period "had a boyish audacity and extravagance; they were exuberant, there was too much talent in them, usurping the place and refusing the control of genius: but underneath their boyishness, and though their manner was not yet wholly subdued to art, there was a vital spirit of fresh and vigorous originality, which combined with
extraordinary control of rhythmical expression, gave sure promise of higher manly achievement.” Kipling had the gifts of the frequent perfect mating of word with sentiment the graphic epithet, the force, freedom, directness, and simplicity of diction, the exquisite movement and flow of rhythm, the felicity of rhyme.” Robert Buchaman in his essay-The Voice of the Hooligan’ says that “the large majority” of the poems, “indeed, were cockney in spirit, in language, and in inspiration.” H.G. Wells found in his poetry “effective force, its lyric delight in the sounds and colours.” Dixon Scott on ‘Rudyard Kipling speaks of Kipling’s power as a Versifier that he had “a craftsman’s cunning and capacity for fitting these terse units” (a passion for definition-a hunger for certitude and system-and the imaginative instrument)” into complex patterns, adjusting them like the works of a watch with an exquisite accuracy, achieving miracles of minute mechanical pericision,” T.S. Eliot finds a comparison between Swinburne and Kipling : “...What emerges from the comparison is that Swinburne’s sound like Kipling’s has the sound-value of oratory, not of music.” Their verse lack “Cohesion” Gilbert Frankare calls him “the Supreme Present-day Craftsman”

Some views of the writers have been seen above. Let us see now the pattern of Kipling’s Versification in which too, he is a genius.

Kipling’s Stanza-forms

The Couplet — Kipling wrote several poems in this stanza-form. These poems are - The Betrothed, The Law of the Jungle.
To The Unknown Goddess, The Ballad of The King’s Mercy, The Ballad of the King’s Jest, The Ballad of Boh Da Thone, The Ballad of East and West, The Lesson, etc. All Kipling’s Couplets are not in the eam bic Pentameter. Some of them are in the heptameter. But each Couplet is complete in itself and generally the sentence ends with the Couplet. The Rhyme of the Three Sealers, The City of Brass, Tomlinson, etc., Show that Kipling was capable of writing long Verse paragraphs in it. The Couplets are neatly rhymed and precise. They show Kipling’s grip over words and rhymes.

**The Triplet** — This stanza-form did not appeal to Kipling’s taste. There are few poems in this form. Verses 16, 18, 19 of Certain Maxims of Hafiz, Dedication From “Barrack Room Ballads”, Mulholand’s Contract, The Runes on Weland’s Sword are in this Stanza-form. The pause comes at the end of the triplet which also marks the end of the Stanza.

**The Quatrain** — Kipling had love for the quatrains. The stanza-form in quatrain was his favourite. There are several poems in this unit- both long and short lines. Kipling used this with all possible Variations of meter and rhyme. One finds the ‘abab’ or the alternating rhyme unit in The Fires, The Miracles, The Oldest Song, Public Waste, The Song of the Wise Children etc., the ‘aabb’ Unit in Army Headquarters, The Galley Slave and Delilah, etc., the ‘aaba’ Unit in The Last Department, Study of an Elevation, The Rubaiyat of Omar Kalvin, etc.
The ‘abcb’ in The Sea-Wife, The Gipsy Trail, In The Neolithic Age, etc., the abca in Pink Dominoes, the ‘aaab’ in Buddha at Kamakura and the ‘abba’ unit in Possibilities. Ordinarily Kipling favoured the ‘aabb’ and the ‘abab’ Stanza-forms.

Quintet — Kipling’s some of the poems are in this form.

These are - As The Bell Clinks, Fair is our Lot, etc. Regular Quintets have been used in As The Bell Clinks (ababb), Fair is Our Lot (abccb), The Ballad of the Clampherdown (abcecb), When Drake Went (abcac), The Peace of Dives (aabba). In some poems like The Instructor, The Kingdom, The Widower, Frankie’s Trade, Kipling used the pentet with other Stanza-forms.

Sestet — After the four-lined stanzas Kipling seems to have favoured the six and the eight-line stanzas. Like the four-lined stanza, there are some variations in this stanza-form, for example, ‘ababcc’ - in Arithmetic on The Frontier, The Song of the Women, The Mare’s Nest, etc, ‘aabcbb’ - in The Derelict, The Undertaker’s Horse, etc., ‘abcadb’ in The Ballad of Fisher’s Boarding House, ‘abcdbb’ in The Jester, except the last stanza, ‘abcccb’ - in Mowgli’s Song, ‘ababab’ - in The Declaration of London, and ‘abbcac’ in - A Dedication. Some poems like The Grave of the Hundred Head, A Pilgrim’s Way (the last stanza has seven lines), The Jester etc. are irregularly rhymed.

Septains — Kipling also wrote some poems in this stanza :-

The Sea and the Hills, Soldier and Sailor Too, Chil’s Song, Mine Sweepers.
The Four Angels. The Sea and The Hills is a perfectly rhymed poem, ‘aabbbee’. In Soldier and Sailor Too one finds the aabbbbbb rhyme. Mine Sweepers has ‘ababedd’. Here the rhymes are mostly nasal and ‘cdd’ rhyme is found in all the stanzas. The refrain saves the poem from being monotonous. The Four Angels has an ‘aabbcdd’ rhyme. It is remarkable that it suggests the stages of budding, leafing, blooming, blossoming and decay.

Octrains — Christmas In India, The Moon of Other Days, White Horses, Cities and Thrones and Powers, Non Nobis Domine, etc. are in this Stanza-form. Many poems in Barrack Room Ballads have this Structure. One finds a variety of rhymes in this Stanza-form too - ‘ababc dcd’ - in The Burial, The Destroyers, Non Nobis Domine, ‘ababebdb’ in The Song of The Little hunter, ‘abcbdebe’ in - The Egg Shell and ‘abcbdef e’ in White Horses, Our Lady of the Snows. It is clear that Kipling had a firm grip over this stanza-form and the art of rhyming. These above mentioned poems are his finest and memorable ones.

Miscellaneous Stanza-forms - There are other Stanza-forms used by Kipling : the nine line stanza - Russia to the Pacifists, - ‘aabcdeedd’ with ‘good Sirs’ in all the four Stanzas in eighth line at its end; the ten line stanza in Zion - ‘abebadaaad’ and in Mandalay - aabbbbbbbb, aabccecd, aabbbbbe, aabbbba, aabbbbe, aabccecccc - are the rhyme-schemes. There are six stanzas in this poem : the first
and the last have ten lines, the rest have eight lines. Kipling also wrote poems in twelve line stanzas - Private Ortheris’s Song, Fuzzy-Wuzzy. He also used thirteen lines in a stanza of the poem - A Countingout Song. We find fifteen line stanzas in The Widow at Windsor and the seventeen line stanzas in Gunga Din.

We also find several mixed Stanza-forms in Kipling’s poems. There is a tendency to follow a regular form of combinations as if to see if they could be developed into any useful pattern. They can be termed as innovations and experiments made by Kipling in this direction. Here is a short list: The Merchantmen (8+4+8x10+4), A Song in Storm (12+8+8+12), The Long Trail (4+8x9+4), The Song of the Lathes (4+5+4x4+87), For All We have And Are (12+8+12+8), Mandalay (10+8x4+10) Cells (4+8+4x2+4+8), The Cure (8x5+4), The Wet Litany (8+6x3+8), Troopin (12+4x3+12), The Widow’s Party (9+8x4+9), Gentlemen Rankers (16+8x2+16), The Mother Lodge (8+4+8 x 5+8+4), The Sergeant’s Wddin’ (8+4+8x3+8+4), Old Mother Laidenwool, (4+5+4x4+4+5), A Smuggler’s Song (4+6+4x5+6) and Frankie’s Trade (5+4x9+5).

On the whole, Kipling’s stanzas are regular and elaborately executed. It seems that he favoured the use of regular and well-defined Stanzas. He liked the use of rhymes. In spite of Variations his Stanzas are either common ones used in English or their variations. Variety is there. He also liked to make experiments in this respect. Hence such innovation are also there.
Kipling's Rhymes

Almost the whole of Kipling's poetry is rhymed. One comes across a large variety of rhymes - monosyllabic (wine, mine; ease, seas; mirth, worth-p.3; day, way; own, tone; paly, they-p.5); bisyllabic (marry, carrie; quarters, daughters; gather, lather - p.11); trisyllabic (November, September - p. 26); polysyllabic (occupation, information - p.35), weak (breaking, shaking; morning, scorning, - p.28); forced (know, helio; p.13); manufactured ones ('Lar' in place of Law to rhyme with Bazar - p.15). There are initial rhymes when Kipling begins two or more lines of a poem with the same word as in The Song of the Women, The Peace of Dives, Christmas in India, etc.

Kipling was also very fond of internal rhyme. Prelude, Study of an Elevation, Pink Dominoes, As The Bell Clinks, Christmas In India, The Long Trail and The Wage Slaves owe their music to this free use of internal rhyming. It occurs in the third line of each stanza in Prelude, the first and the third line of each stanza in As The Bell Clinks, the fifth and the seventh line of all the stanzas in Christmas In India, and the first, the third and the seventh line in all the stanzas of The Long Trail.

Sometimes one finds the same part of speech used as a rhyme - knowledge, college - p.14; grubby, pubby - p.16; raised, praised - p.24; slowly, wholly - p.30; spoken, broken - p.52, etc. Sometimes a group of words or an expression is balanced as a rhyme - Sad to Sea.
Sometimes the rhyme words are linked with the theme of the poem. 'Marry', 'Carrie', 'ring', 'marrying', 'catch' and 'match' in The Post that Fitted are connected with Mr. Sleary's marriage. In The Masque of Plenty rhyme-words account for the poet's tone and attitude towards the hypocritical commission report. To denote the seriousness of the commission's work Kipling employs multi-syllabic rhymes in the beginning of the poem. Later on they become less in quantity. The interplay of monosyllabic and bisyllabic rhyme is clearly visible specially forwards of the close of the poem. In the last eight lines the final monosyllabic rhyme 'Crop' against the bisyllabic 'question' explodes the myth of the commission and the hollowness of the British India Administration.

Thus it is evident that rhyme in Kipling is functional and not merely a decorative device often found in lesser poets. It marks the end of metrical lines and groups them together into stanzas. It gives them compactness and adds to their melody and music. It is drawn from all kinds and categories of Words.

Kipling has used alliterations in his poetry in a large scale. His
poetry is rich in them of Vowels and Consonants. There is hardly a poem in which it (alliteration) is not to be seen. Some poems are exceptionally rich in it. The Plea of the Simal Dancers, The Song of the Women, A Tale of Two Cities, In Spring Time, To The True Romance, Zion, Buddha at Kamkura, The Song of the Banjo, Anchor Song, White Horses, The Long Trail, and The English Flag are a few poems of this kind. In them alliteration is in unison with the theme and rhythm.

Kipling employs this device for different purposes. Musicality is one such purpose. Its presence adds to music and melody. The poems mentioned above may be looked into for the Verification of this Statement. In Study of an Elevation, alliteration enhances the tone of mockery and humour concerning the promotion of Potiphar Gubbins earned on account of his Wife’s Corruption. Expressions like ‘bridge’ that ‘buckles or breaks’, ‘top of the tree’, ‘Smile’ and ‘style’, ‘Paid Post’, ‘mated to me’ deepen the tone of irony and sarcasm. In A Legend of the Foreign Office, alliteration serves as a Weapon of ridicule: “Cut temptations of the flesh - also cut the Bukhshi’s pay”.

The alliterative use of ‘cut’ is meaningful and enhances the Sarcastic meaning. In The Story of Uriah, the alliterative expression ‘big black Book of Jobs’ drives home in our minds the tragedy of Jack Barret’s death and his wife’s faithlessness. It also adds to our Sense of humour in A Code of Morals. Alliterative expressions like ‘hied away to the Hurrum Hills’, ‘her husband’s homilies’, ‘Dash, dot, dot, dot, dot, dash,

In The Last Department, alliteration gives eloquence and dignity to the official habit and its decorum when the same have been extended to the idea of Death. The Presence of alliteration contributes to the mood of romance and joy in The Lovers’ Litany. It also lends grace and charm to the description of the landscape in The Overland Mail:

From aloe to rose-oak, from rose-oak to fir,
From level to Upland, from upland to crest,
From rice-field to rock-ridge, from rock-ridge to spur,
Fly the Soft-Sandalled feet, Strains the brawny, brown -
From rail to ravine - to the peak from the Vale - Chest.
Up, Up through the night goes the Overland Mail.

The following lines show Kipling’s use of alliteration for an atmospheric effect:

The Summer Sun was setting and the Summer air was still,
The Couple went a - walking in the shade of Summer Hill.
The Wasteful Sunset faded out in turkis - green and gold,
Ulysses pleaded softly, and ... that bad Delilah told:

Delilah, p.8
Thus it is clear that alliteration in Kipling's poetry is a distinctive feature. It is found in all his poems and is artistically blended with their mood and melody. It is natural and effortless like his rhymes.

**Kipling's Refrains**

Kipling distinguishes himself in the masterly use of refrain. He employs a Variety of refrains in a Variety of Ways.

Some refrains are single words like 'Me' in *Chant-Pagan*, double-worded like 'M.I.' in M.I.; a group such as 'worse than a Piet' in Piet, or 'when the Cock crew' in *When the Cock Crew* and also in *Philadelphia*. In *Recessional* the expression 'Lest we forget' is repeated to form a refrain. Some refrains consist of single lines like 'Love like ours can never die' in *The Lovers Litany*, 'Said our Lady of the Snows' in *Our Lady of the Snows*, 'Once on a time there was a man' in *Things and the Man*. Some refrains consist of a couplet as in *An Old Song*. Some are triplets as in *The Irish Guards*; some consist of four lines as in *The Merchantmen* put in italics after the first and the last stanzas. In some poems italicised words are meant to be Sung as Choric refrains or group utterances as in *The Liner She's a Lady*, in *The Matter of one Compass*, *South Africa*, *The Feet of the Young Men*, *Rout Marchin' Ford o' Kabul River*, etc. This is so in many of the poems in *Barrack Room Ballads* where Kipling intended a group-Singing.

Kipling employs this device for many purposes. Ordinarily it
marks the end of a stanza as in *The Lovers’ Litany, An Old Song, Things and The Man, The Absent-minded Beggar, A Pilgrim’s Way, The Kingdom, The Floods, Cold Iron*, etc. It also made his poems musical and melodious. In *The Song of the Banjo* the refrain does not come at the end of the stanza, but is included in the form of a musical tune with some Variation within the stanzas:

- With my “Pelly-willy-winky-winky-popp!” (stanza-1).
- With my “Tunka-tunka-tunka-tunka-tunk!” (stanza-3).

and so on. These are quite in tune with the mood of hilarity and joy which the banjo Symbolises and expresses.

In *Shiv And The Grasshopper* Kipling gives the semblance of a choric refrain - Words put in italics —

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Mahadeo! Mahadeo! He made all,
Thorn for the Camel, fodder for the Kine,
And Mother’s heart for sleepy hand, O little son of mine!
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(first stanza)

and almost so on in the second and the third stanzas - for music and to emphasize the moral contained in the poem that Shiv, the Lord of the Universe gives every living creature food according to its toil and moil.

In *My Rival*, the refrain ‘And She is forty-mine’ is repeated in all the stanzas to prepare the readers for the Surprize which he is made
to feel when the girl would be forty-nine and her rival eighty-one. The mood of despair of the girl is suddenly changed into one of Satisfaction and hope.

In *As the Bell Clinks*, the refrain is made to Synchronise with the Volt and clink of the tonga-bar, but it also prepares the readers to receive the moral that an opportunity once lost is lost for ever. In some poems like - *An Old Song, The Lovers’ Litany, Our Fathers of Old*, etc, the refrain forms the Key-note of the poem.

In *A St. Helena’s Lullaby*, Kipling provides each stanza with a refrain in the nature of an adage. In *Great Heart*, the refrain is for a threefold function: to make the poem musical, to mark the end of each stanza and to keep the reader’s attention fixed on the man glorified in the poem.

Thus Kipling displays his mastery and grip on the art and the use of refrain.

**Meter and Rhythm**

Kipling’s poetry falls most satisfactorily into the iambic measure. He was capable of handling iambs with ease and confidence. There are poems in other measures also, for example - *To The Unknown Goddess* (anapaest hexa meter) and *South Africa* (trochee, tri meter with catalectic lines). But Kipling loved to move comfortably in the iambic measures of Varied metrical feet, tri, tetra, penta, and even Hexa
and Septa. Some of his memorable poems are in the tetra or tri meters either alone or in alternation with each other, for example, *Hymn Before Action*, *An Old Song*, *Arithmetic on the Frontier*, *Buddha at Kamakura*, *For All We Have And Are*, *The Last Suttee*, *The Moon of other Days*, *The Sea-Wife*, *Ulster*, etc. There are poems in the iambic pentameter also, for example, *The Song of the Women*, *Two Months*, *One Viceroy Resigns*, *The Last Department*, *The Plea of the Simla Dancers*, etc. In spite of this Kipling seems to have a fondness and liking for the hexa or the septa metric iambic feet. *Delilah*, *Army Headquarters*, *A Code of Morals*, *The Scholars*, *The Clerks and The Bells*, *The Ballad of East and West*, *The Ballad of the “Bolivar”*, *The Islanders*, *The City of Brass*, *Tomlinson*, *The “Mary Gloster”*, *A Legend of the Foreign Office*, Dedication from “Barrack Room Ballads”, *The Rhyme of the Three Sealers*, *The Post that Fitted*, *Mc Andrew’s Hymn*, *The Dykes*, *The Female of the Species* and *The Gods of the Copybook Headings* are some of the well-known poems of Kipling falling under this category.

Kipling generally favoured the use of monosyllabic words. This gave his Verse a Smooth movement. It is not, that he did not use multi-syllabic words, but he had a preference for the monosyllables. This kept the rhythm of his poetry very close to that of the common man’s speech. The use of different stanza-forms, rhyme, refrain and alliteration in conjunction with one another give a Symmetrical movement to the rhythm of his poems. Even a casual reader easily
experiences this feature of Kipling’s poetry.

The elision sign (‘) is found here, there and everywhere in his poems and one may Jump to a conclusion that Kipling was determined to impose some kind of Verse-pattern by Suppressing the Vowel or the Consonant in Syllabic Counting. But that is not always the case. In Mandalay, “be’ind” (p.419), in place of “behind” in the first line is quite legitimate and at the same time unconventional. The use of elision here is not a syllabic saving device. Here Kipling is not pre-occupied with metrical matters, but, he is only Putting the enunciatory peculiarity of the British soldier. Most of his poems in Departmental Ditties and Barrack Room Ballads are of this nature, It is more a reproduction of intonation of the British exiles and Soldiers Serving in India. They were in the habit of Suppressing a Vowel or a Consonant in their speech. Here are a few examples: - “‘My love’, i’ faith” (p.13); “We’ve tapped” (p.13); “Speakin’ in general, I’ve tried ’em all”; “the ’appy roads” (p.87); “to fill my cup o’ wrong” (p.122); “your mother ‘ud never ha’ stood ’er,...(p.133); “I’m sick o’ the ’ole clam’ business”, “Dick, you’re the son o’my body” (p.134); “’E can sit for twenty years” (p.395); “you big black boundin’ beggar” (p.401); “The eagles is screamin’ around us, the river’s a-meanin’ below”, (p.403); “A bit o’ beef”, “A bit o’ mutton” (p.421); “Follow me ’o me” (p.446); etc.

There are occasions when he employs the elision sign as a syllable reducing device. Here are some examples: -
i. At e’en, the dying sunset bore her husband’s
homilies (p.12)

ii. “I think We’ve tapped a private line...” (p.13).

iii. You’ll find us up and waiting

To treat you at the bar; (p.97)

iv. There’s no sense in going further -

it’s the edge of Cultivation,” (p.103).

v. Maggie is pretty to look at-Maggie’s a loving lass,(p.47).

vi. And you’re as wise as ever. So am I. (p.70)

vii. ...He’s your right-hand man, (p.70)

viii. You’re younger. You’ll dream dreams before you’ve done.

(p.71).

Kipling also employs the Punctuation and the Pause for Subtle rhythmic effects. In the June Sonnet in Two Months (p.80), the irregularity of the rainfall has been conveyed by means of irregular Punctuation marks which disturb the normal pause Structure of the poem. There are three punctuation marks in the first line. The fourth one occurs at the end of the third line; the fifth one is at the end of the fifth line; the sixth and the seventh are in the sixth line; the eighth one is at the end of the octave. These show the irregular torrents of the rainfall. The noise of the lightnings, their flash and continuance in the sky have been aptly mirrored and suggested by the use of a comma after the first two syllables in the ninth line and two Punctuation marks in the tenth line. The
pause is for a longer duration. The next pause and punctuation occur in the eleventh line after the first two syllables, as if, to show the recurrence of the lightning once again.

The next Pause and the Punctuation mark occur in the Same line followed by a Comma and a full stop toward the close and at the very close of the twelvth line. This is to Suggest monotony caused by the bad Weather. In the last two lines of the sonnet one finds a question mark, and two Commas in the thirteenth line with which the poem finally ends. The feeling of Sudden Joy and relief caused by the Sunrise and the Stopping of the rains are aptly conveyed by means of the punctuation marks and the Pauses occurring in the last two lines. The poem is being quoted here in full :-

**TWO MONTHS**

**JUNE**

No hope, no change! The clouds have shut us in,
And through the Cloud the Sullen Sun striked down,
Full on the bosom of the tortured Town,
Till Night falls heavy as remembered Sin,
That will not Suffer Sleep or thought of ease,
And, hour on hour, the dry-eyed Moon in Spite
Glare through the haze and mocks with Watery light
The torment of the uncomplaining trees.
Far off, the Thunder bellows her despair
To echoing Earth, thrice parched. The lightnings fly
In Vain. No help the heaped-up clouds afford,
But Wearier weight of burdened, burning air
What truce with Dawn? Look, from the aching Sky,
Day Stalks, a tyrant with a flaming Sword!

In another poem, The “Mary Gloster”, the Sorrow and
discomfiture of Sir Anthony has been fully conveyed by means of an
interplay of the Punctuation and the pause. Sir Anthony is sorry to see
that his son - Dick - was a total failure in business and his wife too had
failed to give birth to a male child who could continue the Gloster line.
The lines read thus :-

Not like your mother, She isn’t. She carried her freight each run.
But they died, poor little beggars! At sea she had ’em they died.
Only you, an’ you stood it. You haven’t stood much beside,
Weak, a liar, and idle, and mean as a Wolier’s Whelp -
Nosing for scraps in the galley. No help - my son wa no help!

The Punctuation determining the pause of the lines is in
tune with the disjointed emotional outbursts of a dying father addressing
his Son.

**Kipling’s Diction**

It is not the time and occasion to make up a detailed Study
of Kipling’s diction and to determine the number and the percentage of
different kinds of words and expressions used by him in his poetry. Let
it Suffice to say that the Common English and non-English words form
the base of his Poetry. In this respect he is in line with Wordsworth Who
advocated the use of common and everyday language in poetry. In Spite
of this Kipling has his own characteristics.

The influence of the Bible on his language and Style is
clearly visible. He makes a frequent use of the Bible, its Stories and
expressions alike. One may refer to Several Poems :- The Story of
Uriah, Zion, Delilah, Prophets at Home, Non Nobis Domine, Eddie’s
Service, When the Great Ark, Dedication from “Barrack Room
Ballads”, A Nativity Gethsmane, The Last Chantey, etc., Which he wrote
to comment on the events of his day. Biblical expressions like “gave up
the ghost”, “The Last great Bugle Call”, “The Big Black Book of Jobs”,
“graveyards give again their Victims to the air” (p.10), “they swore by
the Holy Water” (p.56); “Live such as fought and Sailed and ruled and
loved and made our World”(p.83); “The Pit’s red Wrath”, “So cup to
lip un friendship”, “to doff his pride or Slough the dross of Earth”(p.84);
“I prayed my cup may pass” (p.98); “His Whisper came to Me”! (p.107);
“So and no otherwise..”; “it racked me through and through”, “fretted
like a bain”, (p.111,123,125) lie scattered through-out his poetical
Writings.

The large scale use of the dialect in Poetry is another great
characteristic of Kipling’s language. The Last Rhyme of True Thomas.
Mc Andrew's Hymn, most of the Soldier Poems in Barrack Room
Ballads (Tommy, "Bobs", Danny Deever, Loot, Mandalay, Fuzzy-Wuzzy,
Route Marchin', etc. Anchor Song, The Three Decker, The Second
Voyage, etc. are good examples of the dialect and the Slang made into
gold by their free and artistic use in Poetry.

One also comes across Several Indian Words which find a
proper place in the poetic diction of Kipling. Some of them are given
here:- Bukshi Sahib, Dasturi, Zenana (p.9), Musth (p.20), Mallie,
Sheristadar (p.22), Shikarred (p.21), rupaiyat (p.25), bandar, bunnia’s
(p.34), byle, babu (p.36), dom, mag, thakur, thag, hat, brinjaree, ryot,
bazugar 9p.37), barsati 9p.61), etc. There are several Indain expressions
which have been made a part of the musical rhythm in some poems :-
"aggy Chal" (p.395), arder (p.396), panee Lao, Harry By, Juldee,
marrow (p.406), Oonts, Loot (p.408,410), "Kiko Kissywarsti don’t you
hamshe argy Jow?" (p.426). The poem, Shillin A Day is based upon
the tune of an Indian Song "Mera nam hai Chameli, main to aai hun
akeli", etc.

There are archaic words also in the diction of Kipling's
poetry. One finds him using charger (p.5), aught (p.3), ableit (p.81),
behold (p.43), cloven (p.186), gale (p.146), forlorn (p.86), Woe (p.3),
spouse (p.19), eld (p.14), eke (.14), quit (p.5), garb (p.14), artless (p.34),
loam (p.78) main (p.74), noontide (p.77), nay (p.74), twain (p.79), troth
(p.19), alien (p.19), etc.
In addition to these, Kipling used Words also from other languages of Europe :- Canoe, favouritism, monstrous, visage, dowered, queer, trifle mentioning, parabolic, eternally, elevation (p.4 to 7). Other instances may also be found out from other poems.

Kipling also used some rare or invented Words. Professor Bonamy Dobree gives a list of Such Words in Appendix III of his book on *Rudyard Kipling: Realist and Fabulist*. The list includes words like beazled, bewling, bivvering, gash, griff, Stubbing, etc.

Compound epithets lie sprinkled here and there in Kipling’s Poems. They are of different kinds :- (a) noun-noun - hoof-beats (p.68), Sea-lanes (p.141); (b) noun-adjective - girth-deep (p.146), league-long (p.193), (c) noun-past participle - Wind-Whipped (p.139), bull-mouthed (p.161); (d) noun-present participle - night-walking (p.141), monster-neighing (p.80); (e) present participle-noun - singing birds (p.5), Conning-tower (p.141), (f) adjective-adjective - blue-empty (p.152), white-hot (p.503), (g) adjective-past participle - red-splashed (p.187), loud-voiced (p.47), (h) adverb-past participle - well-ploughed (p.194), down-turned (p.210), (i) adverb-noun - after-years (p.46), after-time (p.611) and other compounds as otter-like (p.160), flail-like (p.80), O’er kind (p.487), etc.

Kipling is also in the habit of using Suggestive expressions to convey his ideas or to embellish his poems, ‘the gossip of the hour’ (p.5), ‘a chastened holy joy’ (p.12), ‘in Pious Patience’ (p.5), ‘By Word
or act official’ (p.13), ‘in letters of brass (p.14), ‘ready Pen’, ‘Wicked Wit’, ‘plucky game’ (p.17) ‘a fluent liar’ (p.26) ‘frenzied hours of Waiting’ (p.29), ‘a gleasome fleasome thou’ (p.35), etc.

Kipling also indulges in using inversions like ‘Steps uncertain’ (p.29), ‘Counsel Wise’ (p.13), ‘against the lattice blowing’ (p.46), ‘a notion Wild and daring’ (p.53).

Scansion

T. S. Eliot says that Kipling’s poems do not appear to scan and irregularities of Scansion have a Wide Scope. The fact is that ordinarily a poet puts his ideas into metres but it was otherwise with Kipling. “When the substance of a poem was forming in his mind he found a tune not a metre - and absorbed himself in its rhythm until the words arranged themselves, whereupon the poem was made”." It cannot be doubted that the art of musical composition in exploiting the resources of rhythm and metre. That is why Kipling’s poems do not Seem to be regular in respect of metrical design. This is true of many poems in Barrack Room Ballads which were Constructed to the tune of military Songs. Some poems like Prelude Ulster, To The Unknown Goddess, For All We Have And Are, The Moon of Other Days, etc. Scan well.

It is better to quote the lines of Edward Dowden to understand Kipling’s diction and Versification: “...Mr. Kipling, especially perhaps in
his Verse, has things to say; he says them in no halting or hesitating manner, but 'after the use of the English', as he has himself described that use, 'in Straight-flung Words and few'.”12

Norman Page's views about Hardy's Verse can also be applied in Kipling's: "... He practised a Variety of poetic genres - lyrics, narrative poems, dramatic monologues, epigrams, pastiches - and employed an extraordinary range of metrical and stanzaic forms; but almost throughout there is a remarkable uniformity of tone and a wholly individual use of language: Without displaying the immediately apparent innovative boldness of a Hopkins or a Pound (both of Whom were his poetic contemporaries), he forged an idiom that is unmistakably Personal.”13

On the whole, it can be said that Kipling with his metrical inventiveness, ingenuity and Constant experimentation with intricate Stanzaic forms and rhyme schemes evolved a technique of his own that is to Show him as a skilled craftsman in Seedling and flowering his poetry to a pattern and style, language and diction, Syntax and Sentiments.

In longer poems, Kipling seems to have fictionalized his experience as a good teller of tales; and, in shorter poems, his vein of Sarcasm and humour or of preaching is aptly seen. His diction at its oddest is the product not of whim nor of incompetence but of necessity. Like his contemporaries, Kipling Set about to find a poetic diction adequate to his personal needs. He drew, as others did, upon the broad
Sources of language: the idioms of Common Speech; the Vocabulary of Special groups - military, and Sea, Ships and Sailors, Bible; Old Words in new Senses; Coined Words and Compounds. His language looks sometimes very odd and Vulgar but is highly personal and individual and it has the Strength and Vitality of a fully realized Personal Vision. Sometimes that Strength is very great, and it is in large Part the product of the diction.

This brief Survey of Kipling's Versification and diction makes it crystal clear that his diction and versification are a rich and colourful fabric of many different Strands spun together for a harmonious effect. He makes use of all kinds of Vocabularies. His language has nothing high-brow and high-sounding in it. It has a true democratic ring. It is a living diction and Versification in Common Language.
REFERENCE

4. Ibid. p. 190-191
9. Ibid. p. 324
10. Ibid. p. 34 - On Kipling by Gilbert Frankau.

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