**THE REEDS OF RUNNYMEDE**

by Rudyard Kipling

At Runnymede, at Runnymede,

What say the reeds ay Runnymede?

The lissom reeds that give and take,

That bend so far, but never break,

They keep the sleepy Thames awake

With talk of John at Runnymede.

At Runnymede, at Runnymede,

Oh, hear the reeds at Runnymede:

"You mastn't sell, delay, deny,

A freeman's right or liberty.

It wakes the stubborn Englishry.

We saw 'em roused at Runnymede!

When through our ranks the barons came,

With little thought of praise or blame,

But resolute to play the game,

They lumbered up to Runnymede

And there they launched in solid line

The first attack on Riight Divine --

The curt, uncompromising sign,

That settled John at Runnymede!

No freeman shall be fined or bound

Or dispossessed or freehold ground,

Except by lawful judgement found

And passed upon him by his peers.

Forget not, after all these years,

The charter signed at Runnymede."

And still when mob or monarch lays

Too rude a hand on English ways,

The whisper wakes, the shudder plays,

Across the reeds at Runnymede

And Thames, that knows the moods of kings

And crowds and priests and such like things,

Rolls deep and dreadful as he brings

Their warning down from Runnymede!